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Raising up the Next Generation of Pastors

A Qualitative Study on Intentional Mentorship and Church Leadership Development

By
Rev. James S. Dickson

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of Covenant Theological Seminary
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry.

Saint Louis, Missouri

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Dr. Robert W. Burns
Faculty Advisor _____

Dr. D. Clay Smith
Second Reader _____

Dr. Joel Hathaway
Director of DMin Program _____

Mr. Steve Jamieson
Library Director _____

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate how pastoral leaders raise up the next generation of pastors in their ministry contexts. In recent years, the number of students pursuing a Master of Divinity degree has noticeably declined, leading to fewer candidates for vocational ordained ministry. Research indicates that a large percentage of pastors first sensed the call to ministry between the ages of 14 and 21, indicating that pastoral leaders and the local church play an outsized role in raising up future pastors. Yet much of the literature addressing the call to ministry is directed at those seeking to discern their own call rather than to pastoral leaders in their role of raising them up.

This study utilized a qualitative design using semi-structured interviews with eight pastors from various church contexts who had a proven track record of raising up future pastors. The interviews focused on gaining data with three research questions: 1) How do pastoral leaders communicate the need for the next generation of pastors? 2) How are pastoral leaders involved in raising up the next generation of pastors? And 3) How are pastoral leaders leading church systems to raise up the next generation of pastors?

The literature review focused on four key areas, beginning with the literature concerning vocation and calling, discipleship and mentorship, and leadership development within the church. The review then concluded with a study on relevant Bible passages to provide a biblical framework for how pastors are called to serve.

This study concluded that it is the calling and responsibility of pastoral leaders to intentionally seek out and mentor those whom they believe may be called to pastoral ministry. For this work to be sustainable and replicable, the research indicated a need for

pastoral leaders to develop a clear framework for pastoral calling, a proactive intergenerational mentorship ministry, and a culture of leadership within the church. Further pastoral characteristics were identified as common among the pastors interviewed. It is recommended that these findings be adapted through a broader philosophy of ministry to be embraced by an entire church, according to its staff and resource context. It is further believed that the adaptation of these findings can be used by the Lord in the process of raising up the next generation of pastors for the church.

To Anna, my helper, in life and in ministry.

"When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'"

— Matthew 9:36-38

Contents

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It is impossible to pinpoint the genesis of this work. It began in seed form through conversations with family, church, and mentors. It grew through the patient and wise guidance of advisors. To all I owe a debt of gratitude.

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Abbreviations

ARP	Associate Reformed Presbyterian
ATS	The Association of Theological Schools
EPC	Evangelical Presbyterian Church
FAW	Faith At Work
JD	Doctor of Jurisprudence
MDiv	Master of Divinity
OPC	Orthodox Presbyterian Church
PCA	Presbyterian Church in America
RUF	Reformed University Fellowship
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature

Chapter 1

Introduction

Who will pastor the church in the next generation, and what is the church doing to identify and raise up those future pastors? As churches wrestle with these questions, they can do so trusting in the ongoing care and provision of Jesus Christ. In some of his final earthly words to the apostles, he assured them, "And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age."[1] And yet, in those same closing remarks, Jesus gave specific commands: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."[2] This Great Commission speaks to the dual truths of God's sovereign provision and humanity's responsibility. These complimentary truths apply to evangelism, discipleship, and the work of raising up future pastors.

The Role of Pastors and Churches

The Master of Divinity (MDiv) is the standard educational degree for students pursuing vocational ordained ministry and is thus a helpful proxy for the number of candidates in the pastoral pipeline. Over the past ten years, the number of MDiv students has noticeably declined, leading to fewer candidates for vocational ordained ministry. The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) reported a total of 31,381 MDiv students in 2013 among their member institutions. By 2023 that number had dropped to 26,143.

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[1] Matt. 28:20

[2] Matt. 28:19-20

Narrowing that larger data set down into a smaller subset of evangelical denominations reveals a similar trend. Students who self-reported as Reformed (e.g., ARP, EPC, OPC, and PCA) dropped from 952 to 731 over the same reporting period.[3] The drop represents a consistent decline from 2013 to 2023.

For comparison purposes, it is instructive to look at law school enrollment over the same period. The Doctor of Jurisprudence (JD) serves as the legal profession's corresponding degree program, similar in credit hour requirements. While the overall numbers from 2013 to 2023 also indicate a drop in enrollment, a closer look reveals a different story line. The American Bar Association (ABA) reported total JD enrollment in 2013 of 127,626 students, with a corresponding drop to 116,851 students in 2023. However, those overall numbers mask an initial dramatic drop in the first few years of the timeline to an enrollment of 110,951 in 2016. From that point forward there has been a gradual and steady increase up to the 116,851 students enrolled in 2023.[4]

At minimum, these divergent statistics indicate that decreasing MDiv enrollment is not merely a matter of fewer young people pursuing advanced education. There is more going on than trends in graduate level education. They indicate a trend in vocational direction among young people.

The Barna Group reports that over half of U.S. pastors sense a call to ministry between the ages of 14 and 21, and 85 percent of pastors attended church as young children.[5] This would indicate the local church plays the most vital role in raising up the

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[3] https://www.ats.edu/Annual-Data-Tables

[4] https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/statistics/

[5] The Barna Group, "Common Experiences of Pastoral Calling," barna.com, May 3, 2017, https://www.barna.com/research/called-to-pastoral-ministry/.

next generation of pastors. While trends in seminary recruiting and enrollment practices also figure in, the heart of the issue is pastoral leadership in the local church.

Author and pastor of Capital Hill Baptist Church Mark Dever asserts, "In the Bible, the local church—a community where people are known, their conversion is testified to, and their gifts are witnessed—is the appropriate place to make a statement about God's gifting and calling in somebody's life. Raising up leaders is part of the church's commission."[6] The data indeed indicates that pastoral leaders and churches are most effective at raising up the next generation of pastors. Fundamental to that process is defining the calling to pastoral ministry and seeking to identify that calling in others.

A Question of Calling

Calling is one word with broad implications. It is helpful here to think of calling in terms of its definition, its balance, and its cultivation.

Calling Defined

In his classic work *The Call*, author Os Guinness explores the process of discerning one's calling. At the outset he broadly defines calling as "the truth that God calls us to himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is invested with a special devotion and dynamism lived out as a response to his summons and service."[7]

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[6] Mark Dever, "Raising Up Pastors Is the Church's Work," *9Marks eJournal*, September 21, 2011.

[7] Os Guinness, *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life* (Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group, 2003), 4.

This definition speaks to the totality of calling and the identity of the Caller. Primarily, to be called is to be called to Christ. This is the primary calling in the life of a Christ follower. The specifics of vocation, whatever that vocation may be, then form a secondary calling. For this reason, Guinness' definition, though vague for some thinking in terms of vocation, does provide a helpful corrective.

He drives home this point by writing, "First and foremost we are called to Someone (God), not to something (such as motherhood, politics, or teaching) or to somewhere (such as the inner city or Outer Mongolia)."[8]

Calling in Balance

Oftentimes the word "calling" has been used to describe a "call to ministry." Knowingly or unknowingly, this notion furthers a sacred/secular divide that elevates full time Christian service to a higher spiritual calling and thereby minimizes the value of "lesser" secular work.[9]

Nineteenth-century pastor Andrew Murray wrote of calling in *God's Plans for You*. Murray may not espouse a sacred/secular divide, but his emphasis is most definitely on the sacred. He approaches the question of calling from a perspective that the calling placed on all Christians is to make Jesus Christ known. He writes, "Everyone cannot go abroad, or give his whole time to direct work; but everyone, whatever his calling or

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[8] Guinness, *The Call*, 31.

[9] Guinness, *The Call*, 31–32. Guinness speaks of this sacred/secular divide as a "Catholic distortion" because it rose in the Catholic era and is the majority position in the Catholic tradition. He goes on to balance his critique by speaking of the "Protestant Distortion" which likewise elevates the secular at the expense of the spiritual.

circumstances, can give his whole heart to live for the winning of souls and the spreading of the Kingdom."[10]

While in no way minimizing the universal call for Christians to make Christ known, author, seminary professor and pastor Daniel Doriani emphasizes the balance of calling in his book *Work*. Speaking to the Reformation teaching of the dignity of all work, Doriani looks to scripture, literature, and personal interviews to propose five elements of *good* work: need, talent, disciplined effort, direction, and correct social appraisal.[11] His emphasis on the "goodness" of work is meant to broaden the definition of calling beyond simply a reference to vocational ministry.

Doriani speaks to the value of all work while pushing back on the notion that all work is equal. In doing so, he provides a helpful nuance. The value of the worker is equal, but the value of the work is not. Some work has greater impact, and thus, it is appropriate to say it has more value. Ultimately, Doriani speaks to the value of leadership as a differentiator in the value of work when he writes, "All work is important, but leadership is more important."[12] This same point also argues for the important role of mentors and mentorship in raising up others. It is a matter of multiplication.

Calling Nurtured

Calling is not discerned in a vacuum. It is nurtured in community. When referencing a calling to pastoral ministry, Dever asserts that such a community should

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[10] Andrew Murray, *God's Plans for You* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1997), 18.

[11] Daniel M. Doriani, *Work: Its Purpose, Dignity, and Transformation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2019), 7.

[12] Doriani, *Work*, 10.

likely be the church. Theologian John Frame speaks to the role of the church as he connects vocation to divine calling, stating that the term "vocation" suggests a divine revelation, though not a special revelation received directly from God. Therefore, he suggests an approach to discerning and developing calling rooted in the work of God in an individual and through the church. He argues that a call comes in four ways: 1) God gives gifts to his people; 2) The Spirit enables people to discern their gifts through self-examination and the confirmations of the church; 3) God provides opportunities to develop and exercise those gifts; 4) God grants wisdom to use gifts to glorify him and to extend his kingdom.[13]

Doriani builds on Frame's work by speaking of an iterative process whereby individuals grow in their calling as they sense, test, and receive encouragement and critique from mentors.[14] This cycle leads to growth in gifting and responsibility. Importantly, this cycle is also on some level guided by mentors, which points to the question of leadership.

A Question of Leadership

Echoing comments already highlighted from Dever on the role of the church in raising up pastors, pastor and author Phil Newton writes in *The Mentoring Church*, "The most effective mentoring teams together pastors and congregations to help shape those who will serve Christ's churches."[15] Newton writes specifically on the role of older

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[13] John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2008), 312–13.

[14] Doriani, *Work*, 98–99.

[15] Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church: How Pastors and Congregations Cultivate Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2017), 16.

mentors in ministry training the younger generation, and yet throughout his writing, he emphasizes the partnership between the pastor and the church. He is calling for the wise guidance of a seasoned pastor combined with the involvement of a healthy church.

Newton presents a thorough case for the partnership between pastor and church in mentoring men for ministry. In doing so, he summarizes essential elements of that partnership: mentoring that takes place within a congregational framework; mentors who actively speak into their mentees' lives; mentoring that focuses on relationships; mentoring that utilizes a team approach to training; mentors who trust their proteges.[16]

This type of mentorship at the congregational level requires leadership gifting of the senior pastor and a culture of leadership development within the church. James Kouzes and Barry Posner are professors and authors who have written broadly about organizational leadership, largely with "secular" audiences in mind. In their book *The Leadership Challenge*, they articulate (and even trademark) what they call "The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership." They are 1) Model the Way, 2) Inspire a Shared Vision, 3) Challenge the Process, 4) Enable Others to Act, 5) Encourage the Heart.[17]

In speaking to these practices, Kouzes and Posner make an important distinction. "Leadership is not about personality. It's about behavior."[18] These behaviors are meant to be embraced by the leader in such a way that they shape the organization.

Influenced by Kouzes and Posner, researcher Kevin Hall speaks to the impact of these behaviors when embraced and modeled by the leader. He writes, "Leadership

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[16] Newton, *The Mentoring Church*, 180–82.

[17] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 6th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2017), 12–13.

[18] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 13.

development is an intentional process of influencing established and potential leaders to acquire, reinforce, and translate proper leadership character and behaviors into effective leadership."[19]

Pastor and educator Chuck Miller bridges the sacred/secular divide in leadership development in his book *The Spiritual Formation of Leaders*. In this book he states, "I want the church to develop leaders who, by God's grace, fully integrate spiritual formation and leadership development. Such leaders are able to effectively serve the Lord and His people as well as those people who have not yet named Jesus as their Savior."[20]

Without using the word "mentorship," Miller connects leadership development to a personal, integrated relationship with "mentees" by pointing to Jesus' ministry to the disciples.

> It's significant to note that Jesus never talked about gifts while he was training the Twelve. Instead, he simply invited them to come and follow him. He called his disciples then – and I believe he calls us today – to a life of integration, not a life of specialization....when Jesus was shaping the leaders of the early church, he wanted the tapestry of their lives and ministries to reflect the solid integration of communion with God, community with one another, and commissioning to live in the world.[21]

Miller speaks of Jesus' "invitation." It was his speaking out to a group of men and calling them to follow him, that he might "raise them up" for the pastoral ministry. Jesus initiated this work by inviting them into an intensive mentorship relationship. Mark 1:16-17 captures this invitation: "Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and

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[19] Kevin Hall, "Leadership Modeling: Christian Leadership Development Through Mentoring as Informed by Social Learning Theory," *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 14, no. 2 (2020): 29.

[20] Chuck Miller, *The Spiritual Formation of Leaders: Integrating Spiritual Formation and Leadership Development* (n.p.: Xulon, 2007), 1.

[21] Miller, *The Spiritual Formation of Leaders*, 7.

Andrew the brother of Simon casing a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.'" Jesus' work of initiating the call is clear in the biblical record.

The prevailing literature speaks to the meaning of "calling" and the process of discernment required of the one being called. It also mentions leadership development and mentorship to develop those called. However, most of the literature on calling speaks to the one trying to discern the call. And most of the literature on training young men for the ministry focuses on those who have in some respect already discerned a calling for themselves. There appears to be a gap in the research and literature on how pastoral leaders seek out and raise up future pastors toward vocational ministry.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to investigate how pastoral leaders raise up the next generation of pastors in their ministry contexts. Three main areas are central to this process: discernment of the call to ministry, discipleship and mentorship, and leadership development within the church.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the qualitative research:

1. How do pastoral leaders communicate the need for the next generation of pastors?
2. How are pastoral leaders involved in raising up the next generation of pastors?
3. How are pastoral leaders leading church systems to raise up the next generation of pastors?

Significance of the Study

This study has significance for the future of the church and the vitality of current pastors. As has already been pointed out, the number of MDiv students is dropping as fewer men are preparing for vocational ministry. Unfortunately, this is consistent with the population-wide decline in regular church involvement.

In 2024, Gallup wrote on the decrease in regular church attendance, reporting that in 2021-2023, 44 percent of those who identified as Protestant Christians attended church services weekly or nearly every week. This was down from 49 percent in 2011-2013. Focusing more specifically on young people, Gallup reported that 35 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds say they have no religious preference versus 32 percent who identify as Protestant/nondenominational Christian or 19 percent as Catholic. Additionally, young adults, both those with and without a religious preference, are much less likely to attend religious services. Gallup's statistics show 22 percent of young adults attend regularly, eight points below the national average for all ages.[22]

Understanding that God has promised not to abandon his church, growth in the church will be limited unless the pipeline of future pastors is increased. Unless the church does a better job of identifying and raising up the next generation of pastoral leaders, the future church will be leaderless.

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[22] Gallup, "Church Attendance Has Declined in Most U.S. Religious Groups," Jeffrey M. Jones, March 25, 2024, https://news.gallup.com/poll/642548/church-attendance-declined-religious-groups.aspx. The combined 2021-2023 data comprise interviews with more than 32,000 U.S. adults and at least 200 respondents in each religion, except for Orthodox churches and Hinduism. Gallup also constructed similar aggregates using 2011-2013 data to assess changes in religious service attendance over time.

Beyond the significance to the broader church in terms of future pastors, this study has import for the ministry of existing pastors. A dwindling pipeline of pastors can lead to greater burnout for those currently serving. Additionally, mentoring young people towards pastoral ministry grows a discipleship muscle that atrophies if not used. That atrophying muscle creates a self-fulfilling prophesy leading to fewer pastors being raised up for the ministry.

For these reasons, this research is needed to encourage the work of pastors and to bless the broader church with increasing numbers of called and prepared men for the ministry.

Definition of Terms

In this study, key terms are defined as follows:

Calling – From a Christian biblical perspective, the notion of calling presupposes that there is a Caller, and the Caller is God. Guinness defines calling as "the truth that God calls us to himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is invested with a special devotion and dynamism lived out as a response to his summons and service."[23]

Discipleship – Discipleship is the process of teaching and investing in others with the goal that they grow in maturity as equipped followers of Christ.

Eschatology – Eschatology refers to the study of end times. In the context of this research, it refers to an orientation, particularly in the area of work, focused on the culmination God's redemptive work of making all things new in the last days.

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[23] Guinness, *The Call*, 4.

External Call – The external call refers to the external means by which God calls an individual to vocational ministry. This external call comes either as an external confirmation of an individual's internal sense of call or as an external declaration that an individual or a collective body such as a church recognizes the call of God is placed on the called individual.

Internal Call – The internal call refers to an individual's internal sense of the Holy Spirit's work of calling to vocational ministry, experienced often through a reflection of experiences, desires, and personal gifting.

Master of Divinity (MDiv) – The Master of Divinity degree is the standard graduate level degree awarded by theological institutions for the pastoral profession.

Mentorship – Mentorship is the patronage, influence, guidance, or direction given by someone (a mentor) who teaches or gives help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person (a mentee).

Parachurch – A parachurch ministry is one that often seeks to accomplish a ministry goal alongside of the church but exists outside of the authoritative structure of the church.

Protology – Protology refers to the study of first things or beginnings. In the context of this research, it refers to an orientation, particularly in the area of work, focused on God's creation and his creation ordinances in Genesis 1-2.

Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) – Reformed University Fellowship is the denominational college campus ministry of the Presbyterian Church in America.

Seminarian – One who is intentionally preparing for vocational ministry by studying in a seminary.

Vocation – Vocation is a subset of calling. From a Christian Biblical perspective, vocation entails service in the place where God has given gifts and a desire to make a difference in this world.[24]

[24] Doriani, *Work*, 19.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to investigate how pastoral leaders raise up the next generation of pastors in their ministry contexts. The literature review begins with three particularly relevant areas of literature that provide a foundation for the qualitative research. These areas focus on vocation and calling, discipleship and mentorship, and leadership development within the church. The literature review then concludes with a study on relevant Bible passages to provide a biblical framework for how men are called to serve as pastors.

Vocation and Calling

To better understand how pastors are called to ministry, the literature review begins with a look at the prevailing literature surrounding the topic of vocation and calling. This examination is divided into three main divisions: a theology of work, the Faith at Work movement, and discernment of calling.

Theology of Work

Luther's Views on Vocation

For modern Protestant Christians, an examination of the theology of work begins with a study of the influence of Martin Luther. Gustaf Wingren has compiled Luther's views on vocation in his work, *Luther on Vocation*.[25] In this work, Wingren explores

[25] Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation* (Philadelphia, PA: Muhlenberg Press, 1957).

Luther's views on vocation, and more specifically on profession (*beruf*), speaking to Luther's rejection of the notion that profession was limited to a priestly class living a cloistered life. As Wingren writes, "Luther's doctrine of vocation presupposes that the monastic ideal has already been overthrown from within."[26]

Wingren notes that for Luther, this "definitive rejection of the cloistered life had been made in *De votis monasticis*, 1521."[27] Luther viewed vocation not in terms of a higher calling to the priesthood for a select few but rather in terms of one's station in life, or his "office." He separated the general, or spiritual, call of the gospel from the particular calling to a station in life. Speaking to Luther's view of 1 Corinthians 7:20, Wingren summarizes, "Man is not to give up his *Stand* when the *ruff des Evangelii* (call of the gospel) comes to him. He is to remain in his office, *im Beruf* (profession). But when the call of the gospel comes, it is a call to membership in a kingdom above all stations."[28]

This teaching elevated the worth of common labor, noting that it was service to the Lord. Wingren pointed out, however, that this view exposes a tension between stability and mobility. He writes, "Sometimes life in vocation appears as subjection to predetermined and fixed reality; but at other times, man, through faith and love, bursts through the external and stands free and recreative over against the given."[29]

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[26] Wingren, viii.

[27] Wingren, ix.

[28] Wingren, 64.

[29] Wingren, 64.

Luther's view of vocation is rooted in creation, or protology. He views humanity in its vocation as serving in the earthly kingdom yet hoping for the heavenly kingdom that comes through the gospel. The vocation of Christians then is their service to God and neighbor. Luther speaks to the sanctifying work of vocation for the individual and for the blessing of love of the neighbor. Wingren writes of Luther's thought, "Thereby the old man is crucified, the neighbor is helped, and through his cross, man himself is advanced on the way toward heaven and salvation, all by one concrete action of God."[30] This help of neighbor, or love of neighbor, is the ethic of vocation. Therefore, for Luther, work is sanctifying, but sanctification is not the goal. Love is the goal, whereby God is glorified.

Notably, this work is rooted in God's work of providence. Again, Wingren summarizes, "Man is forced to follow the God who directs and leads, through works, places, times, persons, and situations which were previously unknown to him. This is the instruction of faith…according to his particular vocation."[31]

While not in any way denying the providence of God, more recent scholars have sought to articulate a theology of work with a greater emphasis on mobility. In the next section these positions will be reviewed.

More Recent Views on the Theology of Work

Miroslav Volf, author and professor of theology at Yale University Divinity School, has thought deeply about the theology of work in his book, *Work in the Spirit*.[32]

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[30] Wingren, 65.

[31] Wingren, 73.

[32] Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001).

In this work, Volf summarizes, at times critiques, and builds on the work of Luther. In doing so, he notes that Luther's work to overcome the monastic reduction of vocation to a particular kind of religious life might be one his most culturally influential accomplishments.

Summarizing Luther's views on Christian vocation, Volf writes: "(1) all Christians (not only monks) have a vocation, and (2) every type of work performed by Christians (not only religious activity) can be a vocation."[33] He also summarizes Luther's major contribution to "calling," noting that Luther spoke of the double vocation of every Christian: spiritual vocation (or calling) and external vocation. The spiritual vocation is the call of the gospel common to all Christians. "External vocation is God's call to serve God and one's fellow human beings in the world. It comes to a person through her station in life or profession."[34]

Volf agrees with this two-fold calling in structure and division but disagrees with Luther's particular application of the external. Luther's view of "profession" was rooted in his exegesis of 1 Corinthians 7:20 and led to his emphasis on stability rather than mobility. Volf critiques Luther's exegesis of 1 Corinthians 7:20, stating that calling in this verse refers not to a calling to a state but rather the state in which he is in when he is called by God.[35] This exegesis leads to another of Volf's critiques. He believes while

[33] Volf, 105.

[34] Volf, 105-06.

[35] Volf, 110.

elevating all work to the level of divine service, Luther reduces the need to "reform" work that is dehumanizing.[36]

These critiques lead to two major points of departure. First, Volf argues against Luther's notion that vocation is rooted in protology and instead points to his own eschatological view. He notes the eschatological framework for the entire Christian existence and argues for the biblical justification for continuity between creation and new creation. He makes the eschatologically punchy statement: "The significance of secular work depends upon the value of creation, and the value of creation depends on its final destiny."[37] He believes a theology of work is to be normative (objective) and transformative. By transformative he means, "The task is not merely to interpret the world of work in a particular way, but to lead the present world of work towards the promised and hoped-for transformation in the new creation."[38]

Volf's second (and perhaps most notable) point of departure from Luther is his "call for a pneumatological theology of work based on the concept of *charisma*."[39] In building his case for a pneumatological view, he offers this clarification on the gifts of the Spirit: "The gifts of the Spirit are related to the specific tasks or functions to which God calls and fits each Christian."[40]

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[36] Volf, 108.

[37] Volf, 93.

[38] Volf, 83.

[39] Volf, x.

[40] Volf, 111.

Volf cautions against so narrowly defining gifts (or *charisms*) that they relate only to gifts used within the body of Christ. He uses the term "charisms" to refer to the spectacular and the ordinary. Connected to this "ordinary" use, he refers to skills learned through interaction in the world in various settings.[41]

For Volf, these ordinary gifts are developed in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Arguing for more mobility and transformation in work, he pushes back on Luther's vocational understanding and instead points to what he calls the ambiguity resulting from an undefined relation between spiritual calling through the gospel and external calling though one's station. In doing so he states:

> Yet charisms remain different from their mediations and should not be reduced to or confused with them. For the Spirit who gives gifts "as he wills" (1 Cor. 12:11) by social and natural mediation is not the Spirit of human social structures or of a persons' psychosomatic makeup, but the Spirit of the crucified and resurrected Christ, the first fruits of the new creation.[42]

Volf is not denying that the Spirit works through these "mediations," but he cautions against assigning those mediations the authoritative nature seen in Luther's concept of vocation.

Further emphasizing his view on mobility, Volf points to scripture to state that charisms are not "irrevocable." They can change and grow. "The sovereignty of the Spirit does not prohibit a person from 'earnestly desiring' spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1, 12) and receiving various gifts at different times."[43] Driving home the movement of the

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[41] Volf, 113.

[42] Volf, 115.

[43] Volf, 116.

Spirit, he writes, "One can change jobs without coming under suspicion of unfaithfulness. If the change is in harmony with the charisma given, then changing can actually be an expression of faithfulness to God."[44]

In his *Theology of Work,*[45] pastor, lecturer and author Darrell Cosden builds upon Volf's work. He describes his book as a "theology of work," as opposed to an "ethics of work," noting that a book focused on ethics would simply be a discussion on how one should carry out work.[46] He moves beyond instrumentality, speaking also to the relational and ontological aspects of work.

This ontological aspect of work is what Cosden considers to be his primary contribution to the broader conversation. While affirming the practical or instrumental aspects of work, he believes its essential nature to be ontological. He writes, "The person is a worker, not as an accident of nature but because God first is a worker and persons are created in his image."[47] Though he looks to creation, or protology, like Volf, Cosden believes a full-orbed theology of work must be rooted in Christological and eschatological doctrines.[48]

Cosden sees value and limitation in the Reformation/Lutheran view of vocation. He leans on this view to develop his ontological aspect but pushes back on its implied

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[44] Volf, 116.

[45] Darrell Cosden, *A Theology of Work: Work and the New Creation*, Paternoster Theological Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004).

[46] Cosden, 5.

[47] Cosden, 17.

[48] Cosden, 42.

stability in life station. He views work as a transformative activity to be evaluated, as indicated in his definition of work:

> Human work is a transformative activity essentially consisting of dynamically interrelated instrumental, relational, and ontological dimensions: whereby, along with work being an end in itself, the worker's and others' needs are providentially met; believers' sanctification is occasioned; and workers express, explore and develop their humanness while building up their natural, social and cultural environments thereby contributing protectively and productively to the order of this world and the one to come.[49]

Cosden offers this definition as a diagnostic to evaluate work, and when needed, make necessary changes. Holding his three aspects of work (instrumental, relational, ontological) in balance, he emphasizes the transformative activity of work when speaking of the ontological aspect, as a fundamental facet of creaturely existence. This ontological status is derived "teleologically" (protologically and eschatalogically) from humanity's essence as an image-bearer of God.[50] Thus Cosden offers a normative and transformative theology of work, creating a rubric by which work can be evaluated and calling assessed.

Faith at Work

Building on the theology of work, several books trace the modern Faith at Work movement. Scholar David Miller in *God at Work*[51] provides a history of the movement and its relative engagement with the church. In tracing that history, Miller notes that what he refers to as the Faith at Work ("FAW") movement has ancient roots. He unpacks the

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[49] Cosden, 178-9.

[50] Cosden, 177-78.

[51] David W. Miller, *God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Hebrew word *avodah,* assigning a meaning of "work and worship," as well as "service," suggesting that work can be a means of honoring God and serving neighbor, thus providing greater meaning and purpose to work.[52]

Linking the movement to this long theological tradition that "recognizes work as central to Christian anthropology and claims that someone's faith should be a central and informing part of all spheres of life, including work,"[53] he notes three historical eras culminating in the modern Faith at Work movement.

- The Social Gospel Era (1890s – 1945)
- The Ministry of the Laity (1946 - 1985)
- The Faith at Work Era (1985 – present)

Particularly related to FAW, Miller builds the case that the movement, as a movement, came about because of the neglect of the church on the topic of work. He is critical of the silence of the church. "Despite some exceptions, the evidence strongly suggests that the church in general seems uninterested in, unaware of, or unsure of how to help the laity integrate their faith identities and teachings with their workplace occupations, problems, and possibilities."[54] Again, with some exceptions, the result has been a largely laity-led or parachurch approach to integrating faith and work issues.

In her book, *Kingdom Calling,*[55] scholar and author Amy Sherman calls the church to shepherd the laity toward a life of work faithful to the kingdom of God. Her

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[52] Miller, 6.

[53] Miller, 12-13.

[54] Miller, 81.

[55] Amy L. Sherman, *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011).

emphasis on kingdom-minded work rests on themes of justice and peace. Influenced heavily by a sermon preached by Timothy Keller titled, "Creation Care and Justice,"[56] Sherman builds a framework for her book around Proverbs 11:10: "When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices, and when the wicked perish, there are shouts of gladness."

For explanation, she refers to Keller's definition of "the righteous" (*tsaddiqim*), stating they are the people who follow God's heart and ways and who see everything they have as gifts from God to be stewarded for his purposes.[57] According to Sherman, this definition of the righteous then calls for Christians to employ a "vocational stewardship," by which she means "the intentional and strategic deployment of our vocational power – knowledge, platform, networks, position, influence, skills and reputation – to advance foretastes of God's kingdom."[58]

Sherman devotes a significant portion of her writing to "Discipling for Vocational Stewardship." Her premise is that while many professional organizations integrate faith and work, little discipleship occurs within the church. Hers is a call to cast vision that integrates faith and work so Christians can use their gifting in the marketplace. She suggests three categories: inspiration, discovery, formation.

Sherman begins her treatment of inspiration by offering a theological basis for FAW. Her first point is protology. Work is not a consequence of the fall but is part of God's good creation. Then, connecting with Volf and Cosden, she goes on to

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[56] Timothy Keller, "Creation Care and Justice" (Sermon, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NY, January 16, 2005).

[57] Sherman, 16.

[58] Sherman, 20.

eschatology, pointing out that one's work lasts into the new heaven and new earth. In between, she offers categories of God's work emphasizing that as his image-bearers, humanity's work similarly falls into the following categories:[59]

- Redemptive work
- Creative work
- Providential work
- Justice work
- Compassionate work
- Revelatory work

She then speaks to the false narrative (or idol) that work is all about "me," countering that while not primarily self-focused, it still is filled with purpose and meaning. This leads to her discussion about discerning appropriate work. She speaks of finding the "sweet spot," which she defines as "that place where our gifts and passions intersect with God's priorities and the world's needs. To the greatest extent possible, Christians should seek to work there."[60]

Connected to her call for the church to engage in this work of discipleship and given her terminology of "inspiration," she calls on pastors to exhort congregants, largely from the pulpit, as to whether or not they are serving in their sweet spot.[61]

The second category of Sherman's framework of discipleship in the church is "discovery." In discovery, Sherman references Ephesians 4:11-12 to call church leaders

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[59] Sherman, 103-4.

[60] Sherman, 107-8.

[61] Sherman, 112-13.

to build on their inspirational vision casting by providing "a *system* that helps their people to examine their gifts, passions and 'holy discontents,' and the dimensions of their vocational power."[62] In offering the framework for a system, she cautions against stopping at mere examination and calls for a process of implementation.

Finally, Sherman's third category in the discipleship framework is "formation." She writes, "Faithful vocational stewardship is not only about *doing*; it's also about *being*. To deploy their vocational power for the common good, believers must possess a character that handles this power humbly and eschews its misuse."[63]

Sherman recognizes Miller's point that the FAW movement has consisted of mostly laity and parachurch initiative. Her scholarship bridges the gap between the FAW movement and the church, calling the church to equip its members to live out their faith in the workplace.

Keller, who helped inspire Sherman in her writing, took seriously the call to equip his congregants for a life of ministry in the workplace. His book, *Every Good Endeavor,*[64] serves as a practical resource for churches teaching on the FAW movement.

He structures his work around three profound questions: "Why do you want to work? Why is it so hard to work? How can we overcome the difficulties and find satisfaction in our work through the gospel?" These questions and this book help workers (predominantly in "secular" fields) find meaning in their work. Ironically, and helpfully, these same questions are helpful for the pastor in his work.

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[62] Sherman, 116.

[63] Sherman, 129.

[64] Timothy Keller and Katherine Leary Alsdorf, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work*, Redeemer (New York: Dutton, 2012).

Discernment of Calling

A third sub-category of literature dealing with vocation and calling concerns discernment of calling. While there is a growing discussion around how people discern their calling, there is surprisingly little literature available on the discernment of a pastoral calling.

The Framework for Discerning Calling

Author and professor of religion Douglas Schuurman offers a bridge between the theology of vocation and the practical application of discernment in his book, *Vocation: Discerning our Callings in Life*.[65] He notes that classic Lutheran theology of vocation, while containing implications for career choices, was less concerned about vocational guidance counseling than it was about relating one's Christian faith to the totality of life.[66] Schuurman considers various cultural movements in vocation since the Reformation and the biblical record in building a case for discernment.

In terms of cultural changes, Schuurman notes that "the term 'calling,' synonymous with 'vocation' for much of the Protestant tradition, today seems less secularized and restricted to paid work than the term 'vocation.'"[67] He notes that in popular usage, 'calling' can often refer to someone's passion apart from their paid work. They consider calling in terms of what they love to do and vocation in terms of what they

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[65] Douglas James Schuurman, *Vocation: Discerning Our Callings in Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 2004).

[66] Schuurman, x.

[67] Schuurman, 2.

are paid to do. The implication of this practical separation of calling and vocation is that Christians are less likely to see the whole of their lives in terms of vocation.[68]

Schuurman is advocating a nuanced move back in the direction of Luther's definition of vocation. He acknowledges, "Luther saw paid work and other significant relational settings as domains not freely chosen but providentially assigned to each person."[69] Volf pushed back on this stationary view of vocation. In interacting with Volf, Schuurman rejects the outright rejection of stations in life. And yet he points out that even "Luther and Calvin also qualified the ascriptivism of their day. They acknowledge God's freedom to call someone to a station in ways that run contrary to their society's expectation."[70]

Interestingly, Schuurman makes the point that this "freedom from society's expectation" that allows for vocational choice is most thoughtfully discerned in community. Emphasizing the supernatural work of God mediated through his people, Schuurman writes, "With some exceptions, the process (of discernment) is communal, flexible, and dynamic. As new needs and gifts are recognized, the Spirit – most often through the Christian community – selects and commissions individual Christians in their callings."[71]

This communal aspect of discernment is one of Schuurman's greatest points of emphasis. In offering biblical examples of this communal element, he points out that the

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[68] Schuurman, *Vocation*, 3.

[69] Schuurman, 117.

[70] Schuurman, 121.

[71] Schuurman, 38.

community, moved by the Spirit of God, often initiates this movement rather than the individual.[72] He does not find a New Testament formula for discernment but rather identifies key elements that are worked out in community: gifts, needs, obligations, discussion, and prayer. The individual's self-assessment and willingness to serve factor into discernment, but he emphasizes the community's vital role in discovering one's calling.[73]

Frame also speaks to the role of the church in his work *The Doctrine of the Christian Life* as he connects vocation to divine calling, stating that the term "vocation" suggests a divine revelation, though not a special revelation received directly from God. Therefore, he suggests an approach to discerning and developing calling rooted in the work of God in an individual and through the church. He argues that a call comes in four ways: 1) God gives gifts to his people; 2) The Spirit enables people to discern their gifts through self-examination and the confirmations of the church; 3) God provides opportunities to develop and exercise those gifts; 4) God grants wisdom to use gifts to glorify him and to extend his kingdom.[74]

Doriani builds on Frame's work with an iterative process whereby people grow in their calling as they sense, test, and receive encouragement and critique from mentors.[75]

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[72] Schuurman, 38. – Citing Acts 9:17-19, he notes that while Paul's encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus was a private affair, Ananias was sent by the Spirit of God to lay hands on Paul and to pray for him. Then, the community baptized him.

[73] Schuurman, 38.

[74] Frame, 312-13.

[75] Doriani, 98–99.

This cycle leads to growth in gifting and responsibility. Importantly, this cycle is also on some level guided by mentors.

The Process of Discerning Calling

Murray, speaking and writing in the nineteenth century on calling, captures the more modern divide between the terms "vocation" and "calling" noted by Schuurman. In his book *God's Plans for You,* he comes at the question of calling from a perspective that the calling placed on all Christians is to make Jesus Christ known. In his writing he speaks of God's plans less in terms of career paths and more in terms of what might be considered "purpose." He writes, "Everyone cannot go abroad, or give his whole time to direct work; but everyone, whatever his calling or circumstances, can give his whole heart to live for the winning of souls and spreading of the Kingdom."[76]

In the twentieth century, Guinness explored the process of discerning one's calling in his classic work, *The Call*. At the outset he broadly defines calling as "the truth that God calls us to himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is invested with a special devotion and dynamism lived out as a response to his summons and service."[77]

Guiness builds his framework around the distinction between the Caller (God) and the called (individual). Echoing Luther, Guiness speaks of the primary calling in the life of a Christ follower as their salvific calling to Christ. The specifics of vocation,

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[76] Murray, 18.

[77] Guiness, 4.

whatever that vocation may be, then form a secondary calling.[78] He writes about the process of discovering the secondary calling in light of the primary.

Guiness further roots his concept of calling in what he describes as the Hebrew meaning of "to call" as "to name." He references Genesis 1:5 where "God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." He then looks forward to God's calling, and thus naming, his people Israel. Making his point, Guiness writes, "Calling is not only a matter of being and doing what we are but also of becoming what we are not yet but are called to be."[79] In this way, he fuses being and becoming. In terms of vocational calling, Christians will spend their lives growing into what God has called them to be.

Regardless of the vocational path, Guiness echoes Luther, saying, "Calling means that everyone, everywhere, and in everything fulfills his or her (secondary) callings in response to God's (primary) calling."[80] He differs from Luther on his view of the relative stability or mobility of station.

In the process of discernment, Guiness speaks of recognizing gifting. However, he insists that the secular pattern of choosing a job based on perceived gifting is reversed in that the Caller gifts according to his choosing of the individual. That said, the individual's unique (and given) gifts are part of the discernment process. But importantly, those gifts are to be stewarded for the glory of God and the good of others – not selfishness.[81]

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[78] Guiness, 31.

[79] Guiness, 30.

[80] Guiness, 34.

[81] Guiness, 45.

For Guiness, this stewardship connects to "becoming" and to obedience. In terms of becoming, there is a process of growth in one's gifting that must be embraced as an element of discernment. In terms of obedience, the gifts given by God are meant to be used for his service. That use is the Christian's obedience. Guiness summarizes his point by writing, "Disciples are not so much those who follow as those who *must* follow."[82]

Guiness' work provides an analytical framework for "calling." In more recent years, Stanford professors Bill Burnett and Dave Evans have contributed to the overall discussion on vocational calling with their teaching summarized in *Designing Your Life*.[83]

Burnett and Evans approach the question of calling and vocation through the lens of design. As such, they advocate for a process of discernment built around what they call "5 mind-sets:" curiosity (be curious), bias to action (try stuff), reframing (reframe problems), awareness (know it's a process), and radical collaboration (ask for help).[84]

In developing their design-based approach, Burnett and Evans deal with passions and desires differently. They advocate for experimenting first, understanding that passions can develop only after a person has experienced something. Using their words: "Passion is the result of a good life design, not the cause." A little later they go on to say, "Once you know how to prototype your way forward, you are on the path to discovering the things you truly love, passion or not."[85]

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[82] Guiness, 65.

[83] Bill Burnett and Dave Evans, *Designing Your Life: How to Build a Well-Lived, Joyful Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2018).

[84] Burnett and Evans, xxvi - xxviii.

[85] Burnett and Evans, xxix.

Their concept of experimentation, or prototyping, is iterative, which assumes failure along the way. Wisely they give the person undergoing the process of discernment the license to fail, noting, "It's worth emphasizing that failures and hardships are a part of every life, even the well-designed ones."[86]

As a starting point in their concept of designing a life, they speak of "building a compass." This is the process of people coming to understand who they are and what is most important to them. Burnett and Evans speak in terms of understanding one's "Workview" and one's "Lifeview." Having discussed these views, they then speak of "coherence" and "integration" between the workview and lifeview. That is about direction setting, or "building a compass."[87]

With compass in hand, Burnett and Evans speak of "wayfinding" as a process of further discernment. In doing so they talk about "flow," which they define as "that state of being in which time stands still, you're totally engaged in an activity, and the challenge of that particular activity matches up with your skill."[88] They then measure flow as the intersection of "engagement" and "energy." These concepts put practical teeth to what is often referred to in the church as "gifting." They also provide a framework for differentiating between actual gifting and desired gifting.

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[86] Burnett and Evans, xxx.

[87] Burnett and Evans, 31-37. By "workview," they are trying to answer the following questions: "What does work mean to you? What is work for? Why do you do it? What makes good work good?" By "lifeview," they are trying to answer the following questions: "What gives life meaning? What makes your life worthwhile or valuable? How does your life relate to others in your family, your community, and the world? What do money, fame, and personal accomplishment have to do with a satisfying life?" Given that Burnett and Evans are writing to a secular audience, it is worth noting connection between the joint concepts of "workview" and "lifeview" and what Christians understand as a Christian Biblical Worldview. Their point remains, however, that one must know what is most important at a foundational level so as to set a direction for life and vocation.

[88] Burnett and Evans, 44-48.

In this iterative design-based process of vocational discernment, Burnett and Evans offer a helpful point about allowing freedom for failure and embracing one's decisions in their chapter titled "Choosing Happiness." They identify the following four steps in the "choosing process": gather and create, narrow down, choose, let go and move on. In explaining the fourth step, they make an important contribution, pointing out the difference between "agonizing" and "letting go and moving on."[89]

Discerning a Pastoral Calling

In examining the literature on discerning the call to pastoral ministry, the discussion was divided between the external call and the internal call. It has already been acknowledged that there is a relative lack of literature focused on the discernment of a pastoral calling. Of that literature, more is written on the internal call.

Dever speaks of the role of the church in affirming external calling in his article, "Raising Up Pastors is the Church's Work." His article, however, deals more with a discussion of the priority of the church in affirming calling than of the process by which that affirmation takes place. Dever writes, "In the Bible, the local church—a community where people are known, their conversion is testified to, and their gifts are witnessed—is the appropriate place to make that kind of heavy statement about God's gifting and calling in somebody's life."[90] He emphasizes the role of the church in raising up pastoral leaders.

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[89] Burnett and Evans, 159.

[90] Dever, "Raising Up Pastors."

Matthew Price studied the role of mentors in affirming vocation, particularly in the local church. In his study, he interviewed undergraduate students to explore their sense of calling to vocational missions and ministry. His findings speak to the intersection of the internal and external call, also emphasizing the role of mentors within the church. Price's findings do reference categories for the process of discernment.

He notes that nearly all the student responses spoke to the role of the church in providing an "arena for experiences of vocational awakening." He identified the role of youth groups in providing an assuring environment but placed more emphasis on the role of mentors within the church. He writes, "Students typically sought out adults for counseling and assurance while these adults also made themselves available and approachable. Rarely did a student perceive divine guidance without attempting to find assurance through relationships with older mentor figures."[91] Finally, he speaks of the importance of participation in organized group ministry settings that give students the opportunity to recognize and respond to a sense of vocational calling to ministry.

Two general audience books written for men as they consider the call to ministry were also considered: *Discerning Your Call to Ministry*[92] by Jason Allen and *Am I Called?*[93] by Dave Harvey. They overlap in terms of the target audience and message,

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[91] James Matthew Price, "Undergraduate Perceptions of Vocational Calling into Missions and Ministry," *Missiology* 41, no. 1 (January 2013): 87–96.

[92] Jason K. Allen and R. Albert Mohler, *Discerning Your Call to Ministry: How to Know for Sure and What to Do About It* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2016). While this is a helpful popular level book for those exploring a call to ministry, Harvey is emphasized in the literature review due to his more extensive discussion and focus on what he calls the "summons."

[93] Dave Harvey, *Am I Called?: The Summons to Pastoral Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012).

and both emphasize the biblical qualifications for an elder found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

Harvey speaks of the call to ministry but prefers to use the word "summons." He explains, "A summons is a call away from one thing and into another."[94] He goes on to write, simply and concisely: "Calls come from callers."[95] He is making the point that the call comes from God, and therefore God sets the terms. That term is primarily a call to him. Consistent with Guiness' framework (and Luther before him), Harvey defines the call as a general call to Christ. Therefore, the call to ministry is tied to the call to salvation.

As he guides men in their process of discernment, Harvey gives ample time to his exposition of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Based on those biblical texts, he asks six questions to reveal whether a man has received a genuine call to ministry:

- Are you godly?
- How's your home?
- Can you preach?
- Can you shepherd?
- Do you love the lost?
- Who agrees?

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[94] Harvey, 18.

[95] Harvey, 33.

These questions frame Harvey's chapters and his work in general. Summarizing the major point, he writes, "Men don't become pastors because of potential. They become pastors because God's grace is already at work in them."[96]

While his work is primarily focused on helping one discern the internal call, Harvey speaks strongly of the role of the church in confirming the external. In his chapter titled "Who agrees?", he offers his "threefold cord" illustration for confirmation. Cord #1 is the internal calling. Cord #2 is the process of preparation. Cord #3 is the external confirmation, or the "process of evaluation whereby the church affirms God's call to the man."[97]

Finally, a third book was reviewed that speaks to the individual considering a call to ministry. Edmund Clowney's *Called to Ministry*[98] has served would-be pastors and the church for decades. His themes overlap with more recent works, but as a churchman he places emphasis on the role of the church in testing and examining calling. Clowney directs the church when he writes, "The church does not choose out a man and then proceed to equip him with spiritual enduement. It seeks for the man or men God has chosen whether through direct prophecy or through the perception of his gifts."[99] He then goes on to speak to pastoral candidates to emphasize their connection to the church when he writes, "Your gifts will become evident on the field. Neither private meditation nor

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[96] Harvey, 76.

[97] Harvey, 167.

[98] Edmund P. Clowney, *Called to the Ministry* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1964).

[99] Clowney, 86.

personal counseling can prove your calling. That comes with God's blessing on your active service in the body of Christ."[100]

Summary of Vocation and Calling

The modern examination of a theology of work largely builds on the work of the reformer, Martin Luther. For Luther, the call of the gospel was a call to membership in the kingdom of God and not to a vocation. Luther believed the Christian should remain in his office, or profession. Luther's view of vocation was rooted in creation (protology). This led to a tension in Luther's thought on work between stability and mobility.

More recent scholars like Miroslav Volf and Darrell Cosden articulate a theology of work with greater emphasis on mobility, leaning more on an eschatological view of work. This view leads to an emphasis on the transformation of work.

While theologians have debated the theology of work, the church has often neglected this area of discipleship. This has led to what has largely been a laity and parachurch-led movement known as Faith at Work. Movement leaders like Amy Sherman, through their writing and speaking, are advocating for a greater embrace of discipleship in the church around vocation and work. Tim Keller and his ministry at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York has served as an example of pastor and church seeking to embrace this discipleship.

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[100] Clowney, 89.

Discipleship and Mentorship

Having studied the literature surrounding the topic of vocation and calling, the literature review now turns to the area of discipleship and mentorship. This examination is divided into three main divisions: discipleship in the church, distinguishing mentorship from discipleship, and mentorship in the church.

Discipleship in the Church

In looking to the literature on discipleship, it was noteworthy how much is written by leaders in parachurch ministries. LeRoy Eims served in a variety of leadership roles with one of those parachurch ministries, the Navigators. His book, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making,*[101] was written to share lessons learned in the parachurch about discipleship with pastors and church leaders. At the outset of the book, Eims describes an interaction with a pastor that highlights the need for discipleship in the local church. The pastor realized that unless he "trained some spiritually qualified workers among the men and women of his congregation, many people would not get needed help in the initial stages of Christian growth."[102] Recognizing the need, Eims advocates for individual ministry in the lives of a few to grow them as spiritually qualified disciples.

Eims writes of this individual-focused ministry as the process of making disciples. He starts with a diagnosis of the spiritual condition and needs of a new convert. He considers the starting point, the desired end, and the intentional process it will take to

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[101] Leroy Eims and Robert E. Coleman, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980).

[102] Eims and Coleman, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, 17.

grow the disciple. In this process orientation, he operates with a presupposition that the new convert's faith will grow. He sees this call for growth in the Bible and calls for it in the life of a believer. Eims' practical ministry is consistent with his theology in that it is designed to foster a pathway for growth in the believer.[103]

Eims builds his model of discipleship based on the model of Jesus' ministry focused on the Twelve. As he studies Jesus' ministry of training, he draws out three principles: the principle of selection, the principle of association, the principle of instruction.

The principle of selection explains how the disciple-maker selects disciples. Rooted in the example of Jesus in Luke 6:12-13, Eims encourages the disciple-maker to soak the process in prayer, be patient, and refrain from focusing only on people of high status. He advocates for diversity of background and talent among disciples.[104]

The principle of association is the ministry of "being with" that he draws from Mark 3:14. Eims writes of the cost of this principle on the pastor: "To train men a person must be willing to spend time with those men in hours of conversation and association in the normal affairs of life."[105]

The principle of instruction serves as a reminder that in addition to spending time with them, Jesus set aside time for instructing just the disciples. Here, Eims looks to

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[103] Eims, 59-72.

[104] Eims, 29-30.

[105] Eims, 31.

Mark 4:11. For the pastor, this instruction includes on-the-job training as he takes his disciples with him in the regular course of ministry and mission.[106]

In his instruction to the church, Eims speaks of the blessings of discipleship for the overall ministry, in the life of the disciple, and in the life of the discipler. He writes, "When you start spending individual time with another Christian for the purpose of having a ministry in his or her life – time together in the Word, prayer, fellowship, systematic training – something happens in your own life as well."[107]

Randy Pope, founding pastor of Perimeter Church, writes about the ministry of discipleship more particularly from the perspective of the local church in his book, *Insourcing*.[108] In advocating for a church model rooted in a discipleship focus that he calls the Life-on-Life Model, Pope writes of coming to realize he needed to define the goal of his church ministry. He goes on to define a mature and equipped believer.

According to Pope, a mature and equipped believer is someone who:

1. Is living consistently under the control of the Holy Spirit, the direction of the Word of God, and the compelling love of Christ
2. Has discovered, developed, and is using their spiritual gifts
3. Has learned to effectively share their faith, while demonstrating a radical love that amazes those it touches
4. Gives evidence of being
    a. A faithful member of God's church,

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[106] Eims, 34-36.

[107] Eims, 26.

[108] Randy Pope and Kitti Murray, *Insourcing: Bringing Discipleship Back to the Local Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013).

b. An effective manager of life, relationships, and resources,

c. A willing minister to others, including "the least of these," and

d. An available messenger to non-kingdom people; and

5. Demonstrates a life characterized as

a. Gospel driven,

b. Worship focused,

c. Morally pure,

d. Evangelistically bold,

e. Discipleship grounded,

f. Family faithful, and

g. Socially responsible.[109]

Pope speaks strongly of the role of the pastor in leading this life-on-life effort, but emphasizes that to be effective, it must reside in the culture of the church. In building his case for a discipleship culture, he outlines a progression of four church models.

- The Pastoral Model – This is a model of ministry "whose basic building blocks are a small, stable flock and a loving, multitalented, maintenance-oriented shepherd."[110]
- The Attractional Model – The attractional model makes a conscious move away from maintenance to relevance. The message, the music, and the method are all

[109] Pope and Murray, *Insourcing*, 15.

[110] Pope, 20.

crafted to suit the tastes of a new breed of Christians. He notes that while effective, consumerism has blossomed in this model.[111]

- The Influential Model – In the influential model, the church sees the need to impact the communities around them, so they take the message and the ministry outside the walls of the church. The focus is on the larger kingdom.[112]
- The Life-on-Life Model – With this model, Pope is not trying to throw out the previous models. Rather, he is adding an element of discipleship designed to more consistently produce mature and equipped followers of Christ.[113]

Pope asserts that the words and names matter. With that in mind, he defines this approach to discipleship with a specific name and a specific definition in a single, meaty sentence. He writes, "Life-on-life missional discipleship is laboring in the lives of a few with the intention of imparting one's life, the gospel, and God's Word in such a way as to see them become mature and equipped followers of Christ, committed to doing the same in the lives of others."[114]

Like Eims, Pope also looks to Jesus' ministry as a framework for his discipleship model. Eims drew out three principles for discipleship, while Pope lists a four-part model of discipleship. His four parts are truth (directing), equipping (coaching), accountability

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[111] Pope, 21.

[112] Pope, 23.

[113] Pope, 25–27.

[114] Pope, 106.

(support), and mission (delegating). He goes on to say that supplication (prayer) sits atop all four elements of the model.[115]

While Eims writes from a parachurch campus ministry background, Pope writes as a pastor in a local church. Both advocate for the importance of individual discipleship in the church.

Distinguishing Mentorship from Discipleship

Eims and Pope emphasize discipleship, one in the parachurch and one in the local church, both with the goal of influencing the church. For both, the emphasis in discipleship is relational. The extent of that relationship, though, may vary. The broad review of literature around this topic sought to examine discipleship and mentorship. The nuanced difference between the two speaks to the extent of the relationship involved. Two books were reviewed that spoke to this nuanced difference. One was *Connecting*[116] by Paul Stanley of the Navigators and Robert Clinton of Fuller Theological Seminary. Another was *The Fine Art of Mentoring*[117] by Ted Engstrom, former president of Youth for Christ International and former CEO of World Vision.

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[115] Pope and Murray, *Insourcing*, 36–38. See also: Ken Blanchard, *Leadership and the One Minute Manager Updated Ed: Increasing Effectiveness Through Situational Leadership II* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2011), 54-56. Pope is building upon the situational leadership paradigm taught by Ken Blanchard. In his book, *The One Minute Manager*, Blanchard specifically speaks of a four-part model of leadership consisting of coaching, supporting, delegating, and directing. Pope adapts this paradigm in terms of discipleship.

[116] Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1992).

[117] Ted W. Engstrom and Norman B. Rohrer, *The Fine Art of Mentoring: Passing on to Others What God Has Given to You* (Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2005).

Engstrom distinguishes between discipleship and mentorship. Describing the role of discipleship, he writes, "A discipler is one who helps an understudy to (1) give up his own will for the will of God the Father, (2) live daily a life of spiritual sacrifice for the glory of Christ, and (3) strive to be consistently obedient to the commands of his Master." He goes on to differentiate mentorship from discipleship, stating, "A mentor, on the other hand, provides modeling, close supervision on special projects, individualized help in many areas – discipline, encouragement, correction, confrontation, and a calling to accountability."[118]

Engstrom emphasizes the difference between discipleship and mentoring. He writes, "Discipling talks about discipline, while mentoring talks about a relationship. Mentoring can't happen outside the context of relationship. No one is in a better position to carry this out than the shepherd."[119]

Stanley and Clinton also emphasize the importance of relationship in mentoring. With that emphasis, they place relational discipleship under mentorship as a specific form of mentoring. Of mentorship they write, "Mentoring is a relational experience through which one person empowers another by sharing God-given resources."[120]

They go on to summarize differing types and intensities of mentor/mentee relationships as follows:

1. Discipler (Intensive) – enablement in basics of following Christ.

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[118] Engstrom, 4.

[119] Engstrom, 73.

[120] Stanley and Clinton, *Connecting*, 40.

2. Spiritual Guide (Intensive) – accountability, direction, and insight for questions, commitments, and decisions affecting spirituality and maturity.
3. Coach (Intensive) – motivation, skills, and application needed to meet a task, challenge.
4. Counselor (Occasional) – timely advice and correct perspectives on viewing self, others, circumstances, and ministry.
5. Teacher (Occasional) – knowledge and understanding of particular subjects.
6. Sponsor (Occasional) – career guidance and protection as leader moves within organization.
7. Model (Passive)
    a. Contemporary – a living, personal model for life, ministry, or profession who is not only an example but also inspires emulation.
    b. Historical – a past life that teaches dynamic principles and values for life, ministry, and/or profession. [121]

In summary, mentoring is relationship focused, with the emphasis on a one-to-one basis. Discipleship is relational, and it can be relationship focused. Discipleship can take place at a macro[122] level where the pastor/shepherd/teacher instructs a group. Personal one-on-one discipleship is a subset of mentorship and has a more narrow, more specific purpose. As Engstrom writes, "Mentoring is much more expansive than simply teaching

[121] Stanley and Clinton, *Connecting*, 42.

[122] The distinction between macro and micro shepherding will be explored more fully in the Leadership Development discussion under the heading of Leadership Plumbing.

and/or training. It is investing time and prayer. It is building relationships and investing emotionally in the transfer of values and skills and attitudes."[123]

Mentorship in the Church

As has been discussed, mentorship can be viewed as a broader approach to relational training, and one that often includes vocational training and/or influence. The literature that was examined regarding mentorship can be broken out into two general categories: mentoring individuals and mentoring seminarians.

Mentoring Individuals

In distinguishing mentorship from discipleship, Engstrom emphasizes mentoring beyond mere verbal instruction. Quoting Wayman Michell of Prescott, AZ, he writes, "People are not very good at taking orders, but they are great at imitating." That imitating, Engstrom says, is an important part of the mentoring process.[124]

Under the subtitle "The Pastor Mentor," Engstrom writes, "Forward-looking pastors desire to add the useful third dimension of mentoring to a congregation's evangelistic and worship programs." He celebrates what he sees as evangelistic fruit among many churches but laments the lack of intentional follow up in many churches. He notes, "(The church) has too often allowed the world to be the agent of change in the

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[123] Engstrom and Rohrer, *The Fine Art of Mentoring: Passing on to Others What God Has Given to You*, 73.

[124] Engstrom, 70.

lives of its members rather than taking its cues from the Great Shepherd represented by the pastor."[125]

Engstrom is emphasizing the importance of the pastor leading the mentorship efforts in the church, though the pastor is not to be the only mentor. In any case, mentoring is meant to be intensely relational. Citing 1 John 1:1, Engstrom speaks of the importance of a mentee hearing, seeing, and touching the mentor. He writes, "This implies that the mentor had a mutual experience with someone that is worth sharing. It's one thing to hear, but an important added dimension to be able to see the implications of what has been heard." He then adds the element of "touch," explaining, "This describes the experience of being with someone and being involved in circumstances with active, intentional risk."[126]

While Engstrom emphasizes mentorship in the church, Walter Wright, who served as the Executive Director of the De Pree Leadership Center at Fuller Theological Seminary, speaks to a broader audience. In his book *Mentoring: The Promise of Relational Leadership,*[127] Wright explains, "Mentoring is a strategy for leadership development, for personal leadership renewal."[128] Similar to Engstrom, Wright emphasizes the all-encompassing nature of the mentorship relationship. However, in his emphasis on leadership development, he connects the impact of the mentorship relationship to the organization. He writes:

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[125] Engstrom, 70.

[126] Engstrom, 72–73.

[127] Walter C. Wright, *Mentoring: The Promise of Relational Leadership* (Bletchley, UK: Paternoster Press, 2004).

[128] Wright, xxix.

> Leadership is a relationship of influence that connects the character of the leader with the culture of the community and ultimately impacts the bottom-line productivity of the organization. Mentors encourage leaders to reflect on who they are (pace), what is important (journey) and how they are shaping the culture of their organization (relationships).[129]

This leadership and vocational development impact that Wright is seeking occurs in mentorship relationships within an organization or church. Authors and consultants Scott Thomas and Tom Wood write about mentorship relationships that can exist across organizations in their book *Gospel Coach: Shepherding Leaders to Glorify God*.[130]

In *Connecting*, Stanley and Clinton noted three intensive mentoring-type relationships: the discipler, the spiritual guide, and the coach.[131] Thomas and Wood focus on the coach. They define gospel coaching as "a means to glorifying God through Spirit-filled, cross-centered relationships that produce gospel-centered identity in Christ, worship, unity with a community of believers, and mission to people of all nations."[132]

For Thomas and Wood, coaching is a shepherding process that takes place in a vocational coaching/mentoring relationship. They describe coaching as "gospel coaching," noting the intention is to help mentees work out the implications of the gospel in their life.[133] Importantly, a central aspect of those gospel implications is the individual's vocation.

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[129] Wright, xxix.

[130] Scott Thomas and Tom Wood, *Gospel Coach: Shepherding Leaders to Glorify God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012).

[131] Stanley and Clinton, *Connecting*, 47–85.

[132] Thomas and Wood, *Gospel Coach: Shepherding Leaders to Glorify God*, 36.

[133] Thomas and Wood, 36.

Author and consultant Keith Webb also writes about coaching in his book, *The COACH Model for Christian Leaders*.[134] He distinguishes between advising and coaching. He writes, "(Coaches) lead in empowering, non-directive ways by listening, asking questions, and helping people form their own answers rather than providing them."[135]

Webb offers a structured approach meant to be used in formal, defined coach/coachee relationships. That structure is meant to guide the interaction between professional coaches and their coachees, yet his underlying assumptions are helpful in less formal pastoral mentoring relationships as well. Of particular note, he speaks of "double-loop learning," encouraging coaches to probe not merely actions but also assumptions behind those actions. He notes, "Changes at the assumption level can produce significant differences and will automatically produce ideas for new actions, producing different and hopefully better results."[136]

In summary, Webb offers helpful coaching mindsets that also apply to pastoral mentorship. He encourages coaches to look for the Holy Spirit to teach and remind, to shift their approach from problem-solver to solution-discoverer, and to value the coachee's ideas over their own.[137]

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[134] Keith E. Webb, *The COACH Model for Christian Leaders : Powerful Leadership Skills for Solving Problems, Reaching Goals, and Developing Others.* (n.p.: Active Results LLC, 2012).

[135] Webb, 25.

[136] Webb, 40–41.

[137] Webb, 165.

Mentoring Seminary Students

While the literature on mentoring referenced above was more general in nature, two books spoke of mentoring seminarians. In the first, David Jones builds a case from scripture and history to advocate for the role of pastors mentoring seminary students in his book aptly titled, *The Pastoral Mentor*.[138]

Jones writes of the early rise of seminaries in America as coming out of the private mentorship model. Recognizing the need for trained clergy in the colonies, Harvard and Yale were established. But beyond the New England institutions, much of the early training in America was done by individual pastors bringing candidates for ministry under their personal care and mentorship. "This kind of personal mentoring eventually gave way to the establishment of seminaries by the various denominations during the last quarter of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries."[139]

While not rejecting the importance of seminaries, Jones advocates for the pastoral mentor in the context of theological field education. In doing so, he emphasizes the pastor as a friend. Jones uses the word "mentor" rather than "supervisor," reinforcing the importance of his theology of friendship. He writes, "It is not accidental that the relationship of the pastoral mentor as a friend to his trainees should follow his relationship as a friend to God, to his clergy colleagues, and to his parish."[140]

In the context of field education, the pastoral mentor should emphasize professional development. "But," he writes, "as a true friend, the mentor will be honest

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[138] C. David Jones, *The Pastoral Mentor: A Handbook for Clergy Counselors and Supervisors* (Richmond, VA: Skipworth Press, Inc., 1980).

[139] Jones, 17.

[140] Jones, 43.

and frank and will treat the student with candor tempered by kindness and love." Finally, summarizing the role of the pastoral mentor, he states that this ministry will bear the hallmarks of:

1. A professional ministry
2. An ecumenical ministry
3. A spiritual ministry
4. An exemplary ministry
5. A prophetic ministry
6. An experimental ministry
7. A Christian ministry[141]

The second book reviewed for mentoring seminary students is *The Mentoring Church.*[142] In this work, pastor and author Phil Newton writes of the important partnership between the pastor and the church in mentoring seminary students. Newton provides a broad historical overview to build his case. Biblically he points to Jesus' ministry, then on to the early church, focusing on Luke, Acts, and the Pastoral Epistles.

He then goes on to look at historical movements within the church which he summarizes as: "Magisterial Mentoring," highlighting Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin; "Modeling Ministry," highlighting the Puritans and Jonathan Edwards; and finally, "Training Communities," highlighting Charles Spurgeon and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.[143]

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[141] Jones, 43.

[142] Newton, *The Mentoring Church: How Pastors and Congregations Cultivate Leaders*.

[143] Newton, 83-114.

Newton offers several models as case studies for the partnership between pastor and church: "Ecclesiology Boot Camp" highlighting Capitol Hill Baptist Church and Mark Dever (intensive five-month fellowship); "A Sending Church," highlighting Summit Church and J.D. Greear (focus on "sending out" necessitating equipping); Face to Face highlighting Grace Community Church and Scott Patty (humble pastor initiating mentoring with one or two, complemented by others within the church); Church and Academy Partnership highlighting Lakeview Baptist Church and Al Jackson (church with a lead role in ministry preparation in partnership with distance-learning at a seminary).

Newton summarizes what he sees as essential mentoring elements derived from the church and pastor partnerships he studied. Those key elements are:

- Mentoring with a congregational framework
- Mentors speak into the lives of their trainees
- Mentoring focuses on relationships
- Effective mentoring utilizes a team approach to training
- Mentors trust their proteges.[144]

Summary of Discipleship and Mentorship

While the church historically has emphasized discipleship and mentorship, in more modern times, it has had to learn from the parachurch. Parachurch ministries like the Navigators emphasize discipleship and mentoring to help young converts grow in spiritual maturity and ministry leadership. Some churches have listened to these experts and are implementing recommended structures that emphasize life-on-life discipleship.

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[144] Newton, 180–82.

Discipleship in the church may or may not emphasize individual mentoring. For this reason, use of the word "mentorship" can provide a helpful emphasis on mentoring individuals. This mentorship can and should include an emphasis on vocation. The literature reviewed that did speak to vocational ministry was limited to mentoring those already preparing for ministry. There seems to be a gap in the literature around the topic of mentoring people towards a calling in vocational ministry.

Leadership Development Within the Church

Having studied the literature surrounding discipleship and mentorship, the literature review now turns to leadership development. Leadership development is closely connected to the broader question of raising up pastors. While there is a vast amount of literature available concerning leadership development, the following categories have been found to be most pertinent for this study: phases of leadership development and the setting for leadership development, further divided into leadership "plumbing" and leadership "poetry."[145]

Phases of Leadership Development

Professor and author Robert Clinton has written on the phases of leadership development in his book, *The Making of a Leader*.[146] There he articulates the lifelong

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[145] Bob Burns, Tasha Chapman, and Donald Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us about Surviving and Thriving* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2013). The phrases "leadership plumbing" and "leadership poetry" are taken from *Resilient Ministry* and will be explored in the course of this literature review.

[146] Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership Development*, 2nd ed (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress Publishing Group, 2018).

process of leadership formation. At the outset he describes his "leadership emergence theory":

> God develops a leader over a lifetime. That development is a function of the use of events and people to impress leadership lessons upon a leader (processing), time, and leader response. Process is central to the theory. All leaders can point to critical incidents in their lives where God taught them something very important.[147]

In this succinct quote, Clinton highlights the central elements of his thought. First, God is sovereignly at work in the formation of leaders. And over a lifetime, God uses other leaders and events, combined with the individual's personal processing of those influences, to develop a leader.

Clinton writes that "leadership is a lifetime of lessons."[148] He then builds this point out by speaking of the development of leaders in terms of the timeline of their lives. This timeline concept is broken out into the following phases:[149]

- Phase I Sovereign Foundations: Beginning at birth, God providentially works through family, environment, and historical events.
- Phase II The Inner-Life Growth Phase: The emerging leader pursues knowing God in a personal, intimate way. In this phase, growing leaders invariably begin in ministry, learning by doing, where they gain inner life lessons.
- Phase III Ministry Maturing: The emerging leader reaches out to others and begins to experiment with spiritual gifts, even though doctrine may not be fully

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[147] Clinton, 22.

[148] Clinton, 33.

[149] Clinton, 37–40.

formed. In these early phases, God is working primarily in the leader, not through the leader.

- Phase IV Life Maturing: The leader has identified and is using spiritual gifts in a satisfying ministry.
- Phase V Convergence: God moves the leader into a role that matches gift-mix and experience so that ministry is maximized. In this phase, Life Maturing and Ministry Maturing peak together.
- Phase VI Afterglow: Clinton notes that not all leaders will experience this phase. Here, the fruit of a lifetime of ministry and growth culminates in recognition and indirect influence at broad levels.

Clinton outlines these phases for the benefit of emerging leaders and for those experienced leaders who would develop them, so they can recognize the development stages and provide guidance along the journey. He expects each phase to be "terminated by specific boundary events."[150] As he mentioned in his "leadership emergence theory," processing is central. The most helpful aspect of the timeline may be that it is a helpful tool for processing leadership development.

As Clinton notes, the prevailing themes are the work of God in the emerging leader, through other leaders, and through the system/culture in which they are located. The system in which emerging leaders are located can be thought of in terms of the tasks and relationships involved in the organization.

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[150] Clinton, 40.

The Setting for Leadership Development

James March, emeritus professor of international management at Stanford University, describes two essential dimensions of leadership as plumbing and poetry. According to March, "What I call 'plumbing' is what most people call 'management.' And what I call 'poetry' is what most people call 'leadership.'"[151] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie borrow from March in their book *Resilient Ministry*.[152]

This distinction between leadership plumbing and poetry applies to the setting in which leaders are developed. In describing this setting, the authors of *Resilient Ministry* note, "The church is both an organization and an organism. Leaders must give attention to both the organizational and organic needs of the church for healthy congregational life."[153] They cite Miller in his work *The Spiritual Formation of Leaders*. There Miller writes, "The tension between organism and organization is very real and continual. The tension between intimacy and strategy is constant."[154]

Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie write, "Pastoral ministry contains a multiplicity of tasks and responsibilities, each of which incorporates expectations of organization and organism, results and relationships."[155] They distinguish between two plumbing-related tasks, organizational (or task-oriented) and organic (those that are relationally oriented). Then they ask, "Which congregational needs do I most quickly address: the

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[151] Lan Liu, *Conversations on Leadership: Wisdom from Global Management Gurus* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 159.

[152] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry*, 199.

[153] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, 224.

[154] Miller, *The Spiritual Formation of Leaders*, 190.

[155] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry*, 224.

organizational (governance structure, budgets, program planning and meetings) or the *organic* (shepherding, caregiving, discipleship and leadership development)?"[156] The authors are highlighting that personal wiring towards results or relationships orients a leader towards either plumbing or poetry, organization or organism.

These notions of plumbing and poetry, organization and organism overlap in *Resilient Ministry*. Leadership plumbing is required in the organizational and organic aspects of the church. Leadership poetry focuses on the church as organism. In the sections that follow, both settings for leadership development will be considered.

Leadership Plumbing

As has already been noted, the authors of *Resilient Ministry* borrow from March to describe management responsibilities within the church as "leadership plumbing." These responsibilities consist of a mixture of leadership tasks and relationships nurtured by the leader. The authors identify five essential plumbing tasks of most concern to pastors: modeling, shepherding, managing expectations, supervising conflict, and planning.[157]

Regarding modeling and shepherding, there is much overlap with what has already been discussed in "Mentorship and Discipleship." The task orientation of leadership plumbing, which according to these categories is ultimately about relationships, lends itself well to the mentorship of experienced pastors bringing along younger pastors.

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[156] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, 223–24.

[157] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, 223.

Pastor and author Tim Witmer distinguishes between "micro" and "macro" shepherding in his book, *The Shepherd Leader.*[158] He defines micro shepherding as "personal care and interaction with the sheep."[159] He then offers the contrast of macro shepherding, which he says is dealing with corporate, congregational level ministry.[160] Though individual in practice, mentoring pastors and leaders provide care for the broader church.

Pastors and ministry leaders serve the broader church by developing leadership plumbing. They strengthen the organizational structure and the organic relationships that make up the church. Having taken a brief look at leadership plumbing, the literature review turns to leadership poetry.

Leadership Poetry

The authors of *Resilient Ministry* distinguish leadership poetry from leadership plumbing as the difference between "leadership" and "management."[161] This leadership is more oriented toward relationships than tasks and more connected to culture. The ministry leader leads by setting or shaping the culture of the organism. To further examine this work, a distinction will be made between exemplary leaders and exemplary systems.

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[158] Timothy Z. Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Pub, 2010).

[159] Witmer, 103.

[160] Witmer, 103.

[161] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry*, 199.

Exemplary Leaders

It takes a leader to develop leaders. In their book, *The Leadership Challenge,*[162] Kouzes and Posner argue for leadership that is exemplary. They define leadership as "an observable pattern of practices and behaviors, and a definable set of skills and abilities."[163] From the beginning they set out those behaviors in what they call "The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart."[164] They then explain their first leadership principle: "If you don't believe in the messenger, you won't believe the message."[165] Their second leadership principle flows out of the first: "Do What You Say You Will Do."[166]

Their argument is that people follow a leader they respect, and the behaviors worthy of respect (exemplary) define leadership. This same principle applies to leadership development. While there is a connection to the "modeling" described in leadership plumbing, the exemplary nature of this leadership also applies to poetry.

Miller points to Jesus' development of the disciples to add another element of the exemplary nature of leadership development. He writes, "It's significant to note that

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[162] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*.

[163] Kouzes and Posner, 302.

[164] Kouzes and Posner, 12–13.

[165] Kouzes and Posner, 41.

[166] Kouzes and Posner, 44.

Jesus never talked about gifts while he was training the Twelve. Instead, he simply invited them to come and follow him."[167]

Miller speaks of integration rather than specialization in the formation of leaders. He writes, "When Jesus was shaping the leaders of the early church, he wanted the tapestry of their lives and ministries to reflect the solid integration of communion with God, community with one another, and commissioning to live in the world."[168] By highlighting the "tapestry of their lives and ministries," Miller speaks to the culture-shaping effect of an exemplary ministry leader actively following Jesus. This point resonates with Kouzes and Posner on exemplary leadership behaviors.

Writing in the *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, Kevin Hall continues the argument for exemplary leadership. He writes, "Leadership development is an intentional process of influencing established and potential leaders to acquire, reinforce, and translate proper leadership character and behaviors into effective leadership."[169]

Hall connects secular writers to scripture to advance his argument. Citing Kouzes and Posner, he writes, "Modeling leadership is part of the process for creating an appealing leadership development climate."[170] He then references Hebrews 13:7: "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith."

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[167] Miller, *The Spiritual Formation of Leaders*, 7.

[168] Miller, 7.

[169] Hall, "Leadership Modeling: Christian Leadership Development Through Mentoring as Informed by Social Learning Theory."

[170] Hall, 40.

Another aspect of exemplary leaders is their capacity to engage in adaptive leadership. Heifetz and Linsky define adaptive leadership, at least partially, by distinguishing it from technical leadership. In their book, *Leadership on the Line*, they define technical challenges as those for which leaders already have the "necessary know-how and procedures."[171] By contrast, adaptive challenges require experiments, discoveries, and adjustments from numerous places in the organization or community.[172] The ability to engage in these adaptive challenges sets a leader apart from those unable to stretch beyond existing technical skills.

Experimentation, discovery, and adjustment by definition include the presence of failure. Therefore, effective adaptive leadership must allow for the healthy presence of failure, both among developing leaders, and within the systems they are seeking to lead. In her book *Teaming*, Amy Edmondson speaks to the impact of not allowing for failure within organizations when she writes, "A natural consequence of punishing failures is that employees learn to avoid identifying them, let alone analyzing them or experimenting if the outcome is uncertain."[173]

Edmondson goes on to speak of the shift needed in organizations to allow for healthy failure. She writes:

> A fundamental reorientation is needed to successfully learn from failure. Individuals and groups must be motivated to embrace the difficult and often emotionally challenging lessons that failures reveal. Doing so

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[171] Ronald A. Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2017), 13.

[172] Heifetz and Linsky, 13.

[173] Amy C. Edmondson, *Teaming: How Organizations Learn, Innovate, and Compete in the Knowledge Economy* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 158.

> requires a spirit of curiosity and openness, as well as exceptional patience and a tolerance for ambiguity.[174]

This reorientation is an adaptive task that impacts future leaders and the cultures, or systems, within which they are being developed. In this way, exemplary leaders shape exemplary systems.

Tod Bolsinger speaks of adaptive leadership in his book *Canoeing the Mountains.*[175] He characterizes adaptive leadership as having three common characteristics:

1. A *changing* environment where there is no clear answer,
2. The necessity for both leaders and followers to learn, especially the leader's own ongoing *transformation*, and
3. The unavoidable reality that a new solution will result in *loss*.[176]

Bolsinger further defines the leadership required to meet adaptive challenges as transformational leadership, stating, "Both leaders and followers will become vastly different people after they have ventured forth to live out the mission of God in a changing world." He further defines this leadership as lying at the "overlapping intersection of three leadership components: technical competence, relational congruence and adaptive capacity."[177]

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[174] Edmondson, *Teaming*, 168.

[175] Tod E. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*, Expanded Edition (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2018).

[176] Bolsinger, 42.

[177] Bolsinger, 43.

The relational congruence Bolsinger speaks of is key to the exemplary nature of leadership where followers are also developed into leaders. Leadership development takes place where leaders are leading in this way. It also takes place in the (church) systems conducive to this type of development.

Exemplary Systems

Rabbi and counselor Edwin Friedman writes about the impact of healthy leadership on systems in his book *A Failure of Nerve*.[178] Friedman interacts with Bowen's Family Systems Theory to make his case for healthy leadership, most succinctly described in his statement: "The most critical issue in understanding human institutions is how well they are able to handle the natural tension between individuality and togetherness."[179]

While the concept is not unique to Friedman, he makes the case for differentiation among leaders, which he defines as:

> (A well-differentiated leader is) someone who has clarity about his or her own life goals and, therefore, someone who is less likely to become lost in the anxious emotional processes swirling about. I mean someone who can be separate while still remaining connected and, therefore, can maintain a modifying, non-anxious, and sometimes challenging presence. I mean someone who can manage his or her own reactivity in response to the automatic reactivity of others, and therefore, be able to take stands at the risk of displeasing.[180]

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[178] Edwin H. Friedman, Margaret M. Treadwell, and Edward W. Beal, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*, 10th anniversary revised edition (New York: Church Publishing, 2017).

[179] Friedman, Treadwell, and Beal, *A Failure of Nerve*, 63.

[180] Friedman, Treadwell, and Beal, *A Failure of Nerve*, 15–16.

This rather long definition does more than define. Friedman addresses chronic anxiety within a system and the impact of a leader able to remain emotionally separated yet connected. He defines a healthy leader as a well-differentiated leader.

According to Friedman, the well-differentiated leader leads through impact more than through information. Connecting the biochemical functioning of brain and body with the Bowen Family Systems, Friedman makes the case for the hormonal impact of leaders. He states, "a 'head' must find a way to be present in the body it is leading," and "the nature of that presence is felt through its impact, not its messages."[181] By hormonal impact, he is asserting that the healthy, well-differentiated leader can lower the anxiety within the system and therefore impact the health of the system by their presence.

Owing to the emotional connection between members in the system, the overall health of the system also impacts the individual members. Therefore, an emotionally healthy church system with appropriately differentiated leaders is likely to serve as an exemplary system where healthy leaders are developed.

Summary of Leadership Development Within the Church

The literature speaks to the development of leaders taking place over the course of a lifetime. God sovereignly works through leaders, events, and systems to accomplish this formation. As such, it is important for the developing leader to process these factors with a wise mentor who has a patient view of the development process.

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[181] Friedman, Treadwell, and Beal, *A Failure of Nerve*, 134.

A Biblical Model for Raising up Ministry Leaders

Finally, the literature review now turns to the scriptures to examine a biblical model for raising up ministry leaders. The Bible has much to say about identifying, training, and commissioning the next generation of leaders. Notable Old Testament examples include the leadership transition from Moses to Joshua[182] and Elijah's transfer of the office of prophet to Elisha.[183]

Further examples abound in the New Testament. Perhaps chief among them are the accounts of Jesus' calling[184] and commissioning[185] his disciples. While these accounts of pastoral and leadership transition have much to offer, the scope of this study is focused on how pastoral leaders raise up the next generation of pastors. Therefore, the biblical literature research will focus on the Apostle Paul's selection and training of ministry leaders in Acts and the Pastoral Epistles 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus.

The following outline will serve as a guide for the examination of the biblical text: 1) ministry leaders select future leaders; 2) there are biblical qualifications for future leaders; and 3) the Holy Spirit is at work throughout.

Selection of Ministry Leaders

In question is the balance between the internal and external call in identifying and developing ministry leaders. While not excluding the importance of an inner sense of call

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[182] Deut. 31:1-8, 23.

[183] 1 Kings 19:19-21 and 2 Kings 2.

[184] Matt. 4:18-22. See also Matt. 9:9, Mark 1:16-20, Mark 2:14, Luke 5:2-11, Luke 5:27, and John 1:40-50.

[185] Matt. 28:16-20. See also Luke 24:48-49 and Acts 1:8.

among candidates for ministry, the text throughout highlights the importance of selection in the external call. This selection is seen in Paul's own calling, in the selection of elders, and in the selection of apprentices for ministry.

Selection in Paul's Calling

The process of selection in Paul's calling is seen in Paul's conversion story and in his calling to ministry. As is consistent with a Reformed understanding of soteriology, Paul's conversion evidences the gracious and sovereign work of God in the life of a sinner. Acts 9:1-18 recounts the story of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. It is clear from the text that Paul was not on a search for the gospel. To the contrary, he was on a self-appointed mission to persecute Christ followers.

Commentator R. Kent Hughes describes Saul (Paul) as the "hunter," writing, "He was a brutal, implacable, bloody man. His goal was nothing short of the complete extermination of the Way!" Yet "as Saul (Paul) set out on his bloodthirsty hunt, he, unknowingly, was the hunted."[186]

There on the road to Damascus, Paul was confronted by Christ, blinded for a time, and sent to await instructions. In vv. 10-17, the Lord Jesus spoke to Ananias, instructing him to go to Saul (Paul) to restore his sight and give instructions, declaring "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the

[186] R. Kent Hughes, *Acts: The Church Afire*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1996), 126–27.

children of Israel."[187] Hughes summarizes, "Christ is always the Hunter and the initiator."[188]

Evidence of selection in Paul's calling continues as the particulars of his calling are clarified. In Acts 11, Barnabus, under the initiating influence of the Holy Spirit, sought out Paul for a missionary work. The text describes this movement, "So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people."[189]

This pattern of selection initiating external call is continued in Paul's ministry as he goes on to select elders and apprentices.

Selection of Elders

Two passages speak to the selection of elders flowing out of Paul's church planting ministry in the New Testament. Both Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5 speak of "appointing" elders, as translated in the ESV.

In the first instance, Acts 14:23 records, "And when [Paul and Barnabus] had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed." The level of "active" or initiating selection in this verse depends on how the word "appointed" is to be understood. Commentator Simon Kistemaker writes, "In Greek, the term *to appoint* actually means to approve by a

[187] Acts 9:15

[188] Hughes, *Acts*, 129.

[189] Acts 11:25-26.

show of hands in a congregational meeting. With the approval of an assembly, individuals were appointed to serve in a particular office."[190]

Kistemaker acknowledges the difficulty of context where the text excludes the congregation. He looks to the broader context of Acts to "demonstrate that the assemblies chose the candidates, then prayed and fasted, and afterward ordained them."[191] Kistemaker concludes that rather than initiating the selection themselves, in Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabus are approving selections made by the churches.

Then in Titus 1:5, Paul writes to his apprentice Titus, "This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you." Commentator William Hendriksen writes, "Though Paul says, 'that *you* might appoint,' he by no means excludes the responsible co-operation of the individual congregations."[192] Similar to Kistemaker, he references other processes of selection in Acts 1:15-26 and Acts 6:1-6, noting the same verb in Acts 6:3.

Professor and commentator Robert Yarbrough, also writing on Titus 1:5, places greater emphasis on the initiating work of Titus in selecting elders. He writes that per the instruction of Paul, "Titus is to locate and 'appoint' fit individuals."[193] Yarbrough acknowledges that the Greek word *kathistemi,* translated as "appoint," can also be used in

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[190] Simon J. Kistemaker, ed., *New Testament Commentary. Acts: Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992), 525.

[191] Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary. Acts*, 525. Kistemaker specifically cites Acts 1:23-26, 6:1-16, and 13:1-3 in referencing the broader context.

[192] William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1957), 345.

[193] Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018), 478.

the sense of "ordain." He summarizes, saying, "Still, Titus is in charge of putting others in charge."[194]

In Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5, whether referring to apostles or a congregation, there is a process of selection in appointing elders, with an emphasis on the external call.

Selection of Apprentices

The Bible records that Paul took the initiative in selecting elders to serve the church and also in initiating relationships with ministry apprentices. Beginning with his first missionary journey, recorded in Acts 13-14, Paul surrounded himself with young apprentices.

Acts 12:25 introduces John Mark, whom Paul and Barnabus brought with them on their return journey from Jerusalem back to Antioch. Then in Acts 13:5, as Barnabus and Paul set out on their first missionary journey, the text includes this record of John Mark: "And they had John to assist them." Barnabus and Paul were the missionaries "set apart"[195] for the journey. While it may be an argument from silence, it can be inferred that these missionaries took it upon themselves to enlist the young John Mark as an apprentice.

The pattern of Paul's selection and utilization of apprentices continued throughout his second missionary journey. At that point, Paul forcefully opted not to include John Mark, having made an evaluation of his qualifications during the first journey.[196] Instead,

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[194] Yarbrough, 478.

[195] Acts 13:1-3 describes the call of Barnabus and Paul and their subsequent commissioning for their first missionary journey.

[196] Acts 15:37-39.

Paul *chose*[197] Silas as his apprentice for the second mission. Kistemaker draws out this distinctive relationship with Silas by contrasting it with Paul's relationship to Barnabus. He writes, "Luke (in Acts) never calls Silas an apostle, yet he refers twice to the apostle Barnabas. Silas accompanied Paul not as an equal but as a subordinate."[198]

Then, as the mission was beginning, Paul identified another apprentice. Acts 16:3 records that selection: "Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him." While the record on Paul and Timothy's relationship is extensive, the point is that Paul selected Timothy and Silas as ministry apprentices for this work.

Paul impresses upon Timothy this same ministry pattern later, to continue raising up ministry leaders. In 2 Timothy 2:2[199], Paul instructs Timothy, "And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

The scriptures offer more than a mere model for pastoral selection. The Bible also provides qualifications for ministry leaders.

Biblical Qualifications for Future Leaders

In the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles records the early formation of the church. When paired with the Pastoral Epistles of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, a scriptural model lays out how the post-apostolic leaders of the church should be selected. While the

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[197] Acts 15:40.

[198] Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary. Acts*, 571.

[199] This emphasis noted here is on Paul's instruction to Timothy related to pastoral selection. See also Matt. 9:36-38 for Jesus' instruction to pray for future evangelists and pastors and Acts 6:4 for the ministry focus of the pastors.

book of Acts indicates some objectivity in the selection of leaders,[200] 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 offer a more detailed list of the qualifications for elders in the church.

Biblical commentator Andreas Köstenberger notes, "In both cases (1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), Paul instructs his apostolic delegates to ensure that the church in their respective location is properly led and protected from false teachers."[201] Bryan Chapell adds that these instructions given to Titus were not merely for Titus on the island of Crete. He writes, "Paul's willingness to have leaders appointed from among the Cretan converts…makes it clear that the leadership qualifications he will give do not solely apply to apostolically chosen leaders such as Titus."[202]

While the lists in 1 Timothy and Titus apply to the modern church just as they did in the first century, they do not capture the full measure of leader qualifications. Hughes writes in his commentary on 1 Timothy, "The characteristics (included in 1 Timothy 3:1-7) are not exhaustive but represent the bare minimum for elders if they are to grace both the church and the world."[203]

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[200] In Acts 6:3, 15:36-41, and 16:2 there are indications that the apostles applied some measure of qualitative objectivity to their selection of leaders for the church. These measures include a good public reputation, spiritual maturity, and wisdom from Acts 6:3. In Acts 15:36-41, past ministry faithfulness is a consideration. Then in Acts 16:2, Timothy's public reputation was a factor in Paul's decision to enlist his service in the missionary journey. These examples are further detailed and expanded upon in the 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 passages.

[201] Andreas J. Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy & Titus*, Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 311.

[202] R. Kent Hughes and Chapell, Bryan, *1&2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 292.

[203] Hughes and Chapell, 77.

The passage in 1 Timothy 3 speaks of the office of overseer, another word for "elder."[204] It begins with a nod to the internal call. Kostenberger notes, "Paul does not mention a divine call to the ministry as a requirement here, but instead speaks of an aspiration or desire."[205] Following the text, however, the internal desire must be affirmed by outward evidences.

Both passages, 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, include qualifications to guide the Apostle Paul's delegates, and later the church, in recognizing evidence of the candidate's internal desire. Kostenberger summarizes the list in 1 Timothy 3 as follows:

> (The passage is structured as) a list of qualifications, both positive and negative (vv. 2-7), including a parenthetical statement regarding the overseer's household management in v. 5. Specifically, Paul first lists seven positive traits (v. 2), followed by four negative ones (v. 3), and then elaborates on three final qualifications in greater detail, in each case supplying a rationale (vv. 4-7).[206]

In Titus 1:5-9, Paul provides similar guidance to Titus, following a similar structure. In both passages, the emphasis falls on the character of the candidate more than his ministry competencies, though those competencies are not ignored altogether. As noted in 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:9, the elder should be able to teach, and in 1 Timothy 3:4 and Titus 1:6, he should manage his household well.

There is much overlap between the two passages, but the two are not identical. The differences, slight as they may be, could indicate that the passages serve as important

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[204] Dr. R. Kent Hughes points out the word translated as "overseer" in 1 Tim. 3:1 in the Greek is *episkopoi*, from which we get the word "bishop." He notes this word is interchangeable with another Greek word, *presbyteroi* ("elders"). He then cites Acts 20:17, 28 and Titus 1:5 to indicate they are synonymous. - See R. Kent Hughes and Chapell, Bryan, *1&2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit*, 77.

[205] Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy & Titus*, 124.

[206] Köstenberger, 123.

guides, but that they are not meant to be exhaustive. This, at least partly, also serves as a reminder that the candidate for ministry is not a finished product. Fortunately for ministry leaders, then and now, the Scriptures provide rich evidence of the Holy Spirit's work, both in them and in the church.

The Holy Spirit Is at Work

While the emphasis of this study focuses on Paul's ministry and writings, the opening chapter of Acts lays out a framework for what is to come: The Lord sovereignly calls his messengers; the Holy Spirit directs those who are agents of calling; and the Holy Spirit works to clarify and empower those who are called. These elements of the Spirit's work are seen most concisely in Acts 1:8 where Jesus gathers, commissions, and promises power to those apostles whom he has sovereignly called. There he says, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

This work of the Holy Spirit is not limited, however, to the calling of the apostles. It is evident in the growth of the call to serve Christ's mission beyond the initial witnesses. Later in Acts 11, Barnabus is sent to the church in Antioch. He is described in Acts 11:24 as a "good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." While in Antioch, Barnabus connects with Paul and the two are later commissioned by the Holy Spirit for their work as missionaries.

Acts 13:2 records this commissioning: "While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" This is an echo of the work of the Holy Spirit in the next generation of witnesses who would continue the ministry of the initial apostles.

Evidence of the Spirit's guiding and empowering work abounds throughout Paul's missionary work. Notably for the scope of this research, his work of identifying, empowering, and commissioning future ministry leaders is also seen in his communication with his apprentice Timothy. In 1 Timothy 1:18-19a Paul writes, "This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience."

In his commentary on 1 Timothy, Köstenberger describes these "prophecies" as "a reference to the recognition of Timothy's gifts for ministry and God's appointment and its prophetic announcement to the congregation in the public laying on of hands."[207] Hendricksen elaborates on those "prophecies" to include the Holy Spirit's guiding Paul to Timothy in the first place and then granting Paul the "inspired words which had been spoken in connection with Timothy's ordination."[208]

Then, near the end of his life and in his final letter to Timothy, Paul exhorts his protégé in 2 Timothy 1:14: "By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you." Paul's charge to Timothy summarizes what was also noted in the first chapter of Acts: The Lord sovereignly calls his messengers; the Holy Spirit directs those who are agents of calling; and the Holy Spirit works to clarify and empower those who are called.

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[207] Köstenberger, 88.

[208] Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles*, 85.

Summary of the Biblical Model for Raising up Ministry Leaders

The scriptures place a heavy emphasis on the external call to ministry, not merely in terms of the church approving a potential pastor and ministry leader's internal sense of call but also of the church initiating the process of calling a candidate to ministry. This initiating work is seen in Paul's own call to ministry, as well as in Paul's calling to elders and young apprentices. The scriptures go on to provide a foundation for qualifying a candidate's (elder's) sense of call to ministry. This process of initiating and qualifying the call to ministry is led throughout by the Holy Spirit at work in the church of Jesus Christ.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature review examined the areas of vocation and calling, discipleship and mentorship, and leadership development within the church. It then concludes with a study on relevant Bible passages to provide a biblical framework for how men are called to serve as pastors.

In terms of vocation and calling, the literature in some way either engages with, critiques, or builds upon the work of Martin Luther. For Luther, the call of the gospel was a call to membership in the kingdom of God and not to a vocation. Luther believed the Christian should remain in his office, or profession. Luther's view of vocation was rooted in creation (protology). This led to a tension in Luther's thought on work between stability and mobility.

More recent scholars have agreed with Luther that the primary calling for a Christian is a call to Christ and his kingdom. Like Luther, they see holy value in work. However, recent scholars have also examined vocation through an eschatological lens, leading to a transformative view of vocation and calling with greater emphasis on

mobility. Proponents of the Faith at Work movement have sought to integrate those teachings more fully into the discipleship ministry of the church.

The literature also pointed to the influence of parachurch ministries in broader areas of discipleship. Ministries like the Navigators have placed great emphasis on discipleship and mentoring, helping young converts grow in spiritual maturity and ministry leadership. Some churches have listened to these experts and are implementing recommendations that emphasize life-on-life discipleship.

Discipleship in the church may or may not emphasize individual mentoring. For this reason, use of the word "mentorship" can provide a helpful emphasis on mentoring individuals. This mentorship can and should include an emphasis on vocation.

Additionally, the literature surrounding leadership development was reviewed. This literature speaks to the development of leaders over the course of their lifetime. God sovereignly works through leaders, events, and systems to accomplish this formation. As such, developing leaders must process these factors with a wise mentor who has a patient view of the development process.

Finally, the scriptures (specifically Acts and the Pastoral Epistles) were examined in the area of the call to pastoral ministry. The text places a heavy emphasis on the external call to ministry, not merely the church approving a potential pastor and ministry leader's internal sense of call, but also the church's active selection and initiation of the call. This initiating work is seen in Paul's own call to ministry, as well as in his calling to elders and young apprentices. The scriptures also provide a foundation for qualifying that sense of call found in ministry candidates (elders). This process of initiating and

qualifying the call to ministry is led throughout by the Holy Spirit at work in the church of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to gain a rich description of how pastoral leaders identify and raise up the next generation of pastors. Its assumption was that some pastors have learned important principles for communicating a theology of calling and vocation and that they have implemented a system of personal mentorship to guide others toward their unique calling. It was not assumed whether those principles and systems were based on implicit or explicit knowledge. Therefore, the study sought to draw out those common practices. To address this purpose, the researcher identified three areas of focus. To examine these areas more closely, the following research questions guided the qualitative research:

1. How do pastoral leaders communicate the need for the next generation of pastors?
2. How are pastoral leaders involved in raising up the next generation of pastors?
3. How are pastoral leaders leading church systems to raise up the next generation of pastors?

Design of the Study

This study employed a qualitative research design. Sharan Merriam and Elizabeth Tisdell, experts in the field of qualitative research, note that this "research is based on the belief that knowledge is constructed by people in an ongoing fashion as they engage in

and make meaning of an activity, experience, or phenomenon."[209] This they contrast with quantitative research methodologies that rest on a belief that knowledge, rather than being constructed, is either preexisting or waiting to be discovered. Along with this understanding of "constructed knowledge," Merriam and Tisdell add that "individuals construct reality in interaction with their social worlds."[210] Thus, the goal of basic qualitative research is to understand (1) how people interpret their experiences, (2) how they construct their worlds, and (3) what meaning they attribute to their experiences.

Participant Sample Selection

This research required participants who can communicate in depth about their personal theology of calling and about their experience with identifying potential candidates for vocational ministry and mentoring them toward that calling. To gain data towards best practices, the participants self-reported to the researcher that they had more than five years of experience in pastoral ministry and felt that their efforts increasingly resulted in hoped-for outcomes. Therefore, the purposeful study[211] sample consisted of a selection of pastors with a proven track record of raising up others for ministry.

Participants were chosen for a "unique" type of sample to highlight those practices common among the sample group but more rare in the broader population of

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[209] Sharan B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 4th ed., The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series (San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 23.

[210] Merriam and Tisdell, 24.

[211] Merriam and Tisdell, 96.

pastors and churches.[212] Participants were purposefully chosen to provide variation in geography and church size. They also varied in their educational backgrounds and the sizes of their church staffs. The initial selection of participants represented a series of informal interviews to gain a broad pool of potential interviewees. The final study was conducted through personal interviews with eight pastors from varying church contexts. They were invited to participate via an introductory letter, followed by a personal phone call. All expressed interest and gave written informed consent to participate. In addition, each participant signed a "Research Participant Consent Form" to respect and to protect the human rights of the participants. The Human Rights Risk Level Assessment is "minimal" to "no risk" according to the Seminary IRB Guidelines. The following is a sample of this consent form.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

I agree to participate in the research which is being conducted by Rev. James Dickson to investigate how pastoral leaders raise up the next generation of pastors for the Doctor of Ministry degree program at Covenant Theological Seminary. I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary. I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the results of the participation, to the extent that they can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed from the research records, and/or destroyed.

The following points have been explained to me:

1) The purpose of the research is to investigate how pastoral leaders raise up the next generation of pastors.
2) Potential benefits of the research may include a broader understanding of a) how pastors can proactively mentor young people in their vocational calling, b) how pastors can lead their church systems to do the same, and c) growing the number of candidates for vocational ministry who will be the next generation of pastoral leaders. Though there are no direct benefits for participants, it is hoped that they will be encouraged by the experience of sharing their experiences with an eager listener and learner.

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[212] Merriam and Tisdell, 97.

3) The research process will include a one-on-one interview to be held with 6-8 individual pastors. During the interview, the interviewer will ask a series of questions and engage in follow-up discussion with the goal of learning from the interviewee's experience in pastoral ministry and leadership. The interviewer will make an audio recording of the interview which will be transcribed for the purpose of data collection.
4) Participants in this research will be asked to share from their personal experience of pastoral ministry and leadership. The interview process will last approximately 1 hour.
5) Potential discomforts or stresses: For some, the reality of a recording provides a measure of stress. There may also be a level of discomfort or stress related to the scheduling process. In both cases, every effort will be made by the interviewer to minimize any discomfort or stress.
6) Potential risks: Minimal – Potential minimal risks include:
    - Participants are asked to reveal personal information regarding individual viewpoints, background, experiences, behaviors, attitudes or beliefs.
    - People are selected to participate based upon particularly unique characteristics, or extraordinary life experience.
    - Topics or questions raised are probably politically, emotionally, culturally, spiritually, or psychologically sensitive.
    - Participants are required to reflect upon their own behavior, values, relationships, or person in such a way that one might be influenced or affected, and/or anxiety or concern might be raised regarding the subject matter of the inquiry.
    - Participants may have regrets, concerns, afterthoughts, or reactions to the interview.
    - Participants may become tired, weakened, or be mentally or physically impacted in any way from the research interview.
    - The research may inconvenience participants by causing a delay or intrusion into their activities and/or may take more than 20 minutes of the participants' time.

7) Any information that I provide will be held in strict confidence. At no time will my name be reported along with my responses. The data gathered for this research is confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without my prior consent, unless otherwise required by law. Audiotapes or videotapes of interviews will be erased following the completion of the dissertation. By my signature, I am giving informed consent for the use of my responses in this research project.
8) Limits of Privacy: I understand that, by law, the researcher cannot keep information confidential if it involves abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, or plans for a person to harm themselves or to hurt someone else.
9) The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the study.

_____

Printed Name and Signature of Researcher Date

Printed Name and Signature of Participant Date

Please sign both copies. Keep one. Return the other to the researcher. Thank you.

Research at Covenant Theological Seminary which involves human participants is overseen by the Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding your rights as a participant should be addressed to: Director, Doctor of Ministry; Covenant Theological Seminary; 12330 Conway Road; St. Louis, MO 63141; Phone (314) 434-4044.

Having completed the IRB requirements for human rights in research and the risk assessment in the Covenant Theological Seminary's "Dissertation Notebook," and according to the Human Rights Risk Level Assessment, this research is "no risk" according to the Seminary's IRB guidelines.

Each participant completed a one-page demographic questionnaire before the interview. The questionnaire asked for information concerning the selection criteria above. It also requested information of particular interest in this study. The analysis in Chapter 4 describes the relevance of the demographic data to the participant's experience in pastoral leadership.

Data Collection

The process of researching a subject's "constructed knowledge" requires a probing curiosity to peel back the layers of experience. To do so, the interviews followed a semi-structured protocol.[213] Such a format calls for the interviewer to devise a mixture of more and less structured questions. Those questions are used without a predetermined wording and order. Merriam and Tisdell note that "this format allows the researcher to

[213] Merriam and Tisdell, 110.

respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic."[214]

Initial interview protocol categories were derived from the literature but evolved around the explanations and descriptions that emerged from doing constant comparison work during the interviewing process. Coding and categorizing the data while continuing the process of interviewing also allowed for the emergence of new sources of data.[215]

The researcher interviewed eight pastoral leaders for approximately one hour each. Prior to the interview, the participants were given a brief description of the study's purpose as well as an overview of the interview process. The researcher audiotaped the interviews with a digital recorder. Directly after each interview, the researcher wrote field notes with descriptive and reflective observations on the interview time.

The interview protocol contained the following questions.

1. Questions regarding Communication
    a. Talk to me about how you think about the development of calling in young people.
    b. In what ways are you communicating with others about that process of development?
        i. Teaching others?
        ii. Communicating directly?
    c. Does your thinking change if you are talking about a calling to pastoral ministry? If so, in what ways?
    d. How do you talk about both the beauty and the difficulty of pastoral ministry?
    e. Talk about your sense of the need for raising up the next generation of pastors.
    f. How are you communicating that need within your church?
2. Questions regarding Personal Involvement
    a. Do you differentiate between discipleship and mentorship, and if so, how?

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[214] Merriam and Tisdell, 110.

[215] Merriam and Tisdell, 196–99.

    b. In what ways are you personally connected to younger generations in the church?
    c. Share an example of when you have been personally involved in intergenerational mentoring.
        i. How was that relationship initiated?
    d. How do you talk about calling in that mentoring?
    e. When you talk to young people about ministry, what is your approach?
3. Questions regarding Leadership
    a. How have you modeled intergenerational mentorship for your staff and membership?
        i. Is it formal or informal?
        ii. Is there ongoing training?
    b. How are you actively leading others in the area of intergenerational mentorship?
4. We've spent time talking about intergenerational mentorship and vocational calling. Is there anything I haven't asked you that you would like to add in our remaining time?

Data Analysis

As soon as possible and always within one week of each meeting, the researcher personally transcribed each interview using computer software. The software provided a draft transcript that the researcher edited while listening to the audio recording. This study utilized the constant comparison method of routinely analyzing the data throughout the interview process. This method provided for the ongoing revision, clarification, and evaluation of the resultant data categories.[216]

When the interviews and observation notes were fully transcribed into computer files, they were coded and analyzed. The content analysis[217] focused on discovering and identifying (1) common themes, patterns, and activities across the variation of

[216] Merriam and Tisdell, 32.

[217] Merriam and Tisdell, 179.

participants; and (2) congruence or discrepancy between the different groups of participants.

Researcher Position

This section reveals areas of researcher preference, relevant experiences, and potential researcher bias that may affect the findings. First, the researcher has planted and pastored a church in the PCA. His pastoral leadership experience is limited to the PCA, and his discipleship training has been led by PCA adjacent organizations. This background could limit the scope of his research and interview questions.

Second, the researcher has sent multiple people from his church on to seminary in pursuit of a pastoral calling. Those experiences led the researcher to form a personal framework for raising up future pastors and a personal belief in the need for pastoral mentorship and the importance of pastoral initiation in the process of calling. This experience could overly influence the direction of his line of questioning.

Third, the researcher had a prior relationship with several but not all of the participants. For those unfamiliar to the researcher, the researcher possessed background knowledge about them and the ministries they led. This background knowledge may have led to a overly narrow sample set and an overly directed line of questioning.

Finally, the researcher is currently employed by the denominational seminary of the PCA. While the data examined affirms the growing need for future pastors, the researcher approaches this topic with a predetermined sense of need. He also has access to empirical and anecdotal information about seminary recruiting.

It is the researcher's opinion that while these factors may limit the scope of his research, they do not invalidate or alter any of the reported findings. Alternatively, his

belief is that his experiences and background knowledge of the participants impact the research positively.

Study Limitations

Due to limited resources and time, this study is limited to current or former senior pastors who are serving or have served in the PCA. Further research is needed to broaden the participant selection to include pastors serving in other Protestant and Evangelical denominations. Additional research among campus ministry leaders may also prove fruitful. Therefore, the study's findings may be overly narrow and skewed by theological and church governance distinctions within the PCA. Some of the study's findings may be generalized to other similar church ministries in similar theological and denominational settings. Readers who desire to generalize particular aspects of these conclusions on the role of pastoral leaders in raising up pastors should test those aspects in their context.

As with all qualitative studies, readers bear the responsibility to determine what can be appropriately applied to their context. The results of this study may also have implications for mentoring and leadership development in other Christian organizations.

Chapter 4

Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate how pastoral leaders raise up the next generation of pastors in their ministry contexts. This chapter provides the findings of eight pastoral interviews and reports themes and relevant insights from the research questions. To address the purpose of this study, the following research questions guided the qualitative research.

1. How do pastoral leaders communicate the need for the next generation of pastors?
2. How are pastoral leaders involved in raising up the next generation of pastors?
3. How are pastoral leaders leading church systems to raise up the next generation of pastors?

Introductions to Participants and Context

The researcher selected eight current or former lead pastors to participate in this study. Each pastor had a demonstrable track record of raising up pastors from their ministry context, evidenced by a history of sending ministry candidates to seminary. All names and identifiable participant information have been changed to protect identity.

Interview with Pastor Andrew

Pastor Andrew was the youngest pastor interviewed and the pastor who had served for the least amount of time in a leadership role. He was in his late 30s and had served as lead pastor for less than ten years. Prior to serving in his current role, Andrew

served as a youth pastor in two churches in two different denominations. He is married and is the father of four young children.

Andrew pastors a mid-sized PCA church in a large Southwestern city. He is the only pastor on a staff of five, but the staff size has fluctuated. At the time of his interview, two staff members had left to attend seminary, and another was in the process of examinations for ordination. Andrew was not recommended as an interview candidate, likely owing to his age and the size of his congregation. Instead, he was identified by the researcher after a series of conversations revealed his intentionality and track record with the subject matter.

The interviewees were asked to describe their personal call to ministry. In describing his own sense of call to ministry, Andrew shared his story and related two noteworthy points that influenced his leadership. In his early years after college, Andrew wanted to do "something ministry related" but had no direction. In that season, he worked for a nonprofit "focused mainly on humanitarian aid" and served alongside an older gentleman named "Mike" who influenced him greatly.

Andrew frequently led the Wednesday staff Bible studies, stating "It always frustrated me that people didn't sign up." Then one day while working in the warehouse, Mike turned to him and said, "Man, when are you going to seminary? You sign up to teach the Bible study all the time, and you're great at it. You need to go and learn actually how to do it." Andrew described that moment as when he first heard the external call and something "really clicked."

Second, Andrew described serving as a youth pastor in a Baptist church while in seminary. He served under an executive pastor who became a "spiritual father in the

faith." This pastor invited Andrew into what he called "pastoral ride-alongs." He invited Andrew to listen, learn, and then process afterward. This experience shaped Andrew's understanding of pastoral mentorship as he transitioned out of seminary.

Andrew's own call to ministry, combined with his personal experiences of suffering while following Jesus and his natural thoughtfulness, influenced Andrew's approach to raising up future pastors. In his interview, Andrew displayed a distinct intentionality toward this aspect of his ministry.

Interview with Pastor Doug

At the time of the interview, Pastor Doug was serving as an associate pastor in a Presbyterian denomination adjacent to his home denomination, the PCA. That call was an intentional move in his 60s to step back and help mentor a younger lead pastor. Earlier in his ministry, Doug served as a campus minister with Reformed University Fellowship ("RUF") and then went on to be the lead pastor in two PCA churches in the Southeast. Doug is married, with three married children and multiple grandchildren.

Pastor Doug's experience as a campus minister with RUF shaped much of his philosophy and practice in raising up future pastors. That experience carried forward when he served as lead pastor for the two consecutive PCA churches, the second of which was in a college town. Additionally, Doug was shaped by his own call to ministry and the church and pastors who influenced him.

When asked about his call to ministry, Doug shared first his call to faith. He came to faith in Christ at a young age and kept a relationship with his childhood pastor. That pastor, in his 90s at the time of the interview, remained a friend and mentor to Pastor Doug.

Doug then described the phone call he received from his home church while he was a sophomore in college. The caller shared with him "the elders want you to consider going to Covenant Seminary. They see some gifts and want you to consider seminary and gospel ministry as a calling." Those elders then paid for Doug to visit the seminary and investigate furthering his education in pursuit of a call to ministry. He described that experience as an early confirmation and an encouragement. It would also serve as a pattern for Doug's intentionality with other potential candidates for ministry.

Interview with Pastor Brad

Pastor Brad served as the lead pastor of a larger PCA church in a mid-sized Southeastern city alongside multiple pastors and a staff of non-ordained ministry leaders. Prior to this position, Brad served as an RUF campus minister at multiple universities, also in the South. Brad is married with three grown children.

Brad expressed affection for both the Presbyterian church of his childhood and his experience as a college student involved in RUF. Though that affection extended to the then lead pastor, he also spoke warmly of the community he experienced with elders and Sunday school teachers who invested in him. All these influences were apparent in Brad's personal approach to ministry.

When asked about his own call to ministry, Pastor Brad began by describing his conversion. Having grown up involved in the church, Brad said the "lights didn't come on until youth group in the tenth grade." Soon after, he began to wonder about becoming a pastor. In those years, people in the church began giving him "Banner of Truth" books. He loved reading the rich Reformed theology described in those books.

Then while in college, Brad's RUF campus minister challenged him. The campus minister said, "You love learning this stuff, but are you putting feet to it? Do you pursue people? Do you love people? Do you want to share the gospel with people?" Later, that campus minister served as a conversation partner when Brad was more seriously considering ministry.

After college, Brad served as an RUF intern and described that time as a "great couple of years" to test his gifts doing "one-on-ones, leading small groups, just helping behind the scenes and serving, watching an ordained minister and getting his feedback." Brad summarized that feedback when he relayed the campus minister's admonition, "I think you ought to keep going."

Interview with Pastor John

At the time of the interview, Pastor John had retired from his role as lead pastor, though he continued in an unofficial role as pastor and mentor to younger pastors and men in his city. Though not a Southerner, John served as lead pastor of a large, multi-pastor church in the Southeast. Prior that pastorate, John led a smaller Southern church. He also had prior youth and campus ministry experience. He is married with three adult children and multiple grandchildren.

Pastor John was not raised in a home that valued the local church. He was converted while in high school and soon after found himself in college desperately looking for Christian fellowship. He quickly joined several campus ministries at his Northern college, was discipled by a Campus Crusade director, and began leading Bible Studies himself. Those around him during those years recognized his gifts and began to suggest, "You really ought to consider ministry."

Though still a relatively young Christian at the time, John was self-aware enough to realize he needed further confirmation. He went on to seminary for one year but said, "I knew that being called to the ministry included an external call, and I had none of that because I wasn't in a church." With that realization, he took a year off to serve a church in the west. Reflecting on the experience, John said, "The people that were overseeing me, watching me carry on ministry as a chaplain, said to me at the end of that year, 'You go back. We think you're called.'"

He did go back to seminary and went on to a fruitful ministry in the church. Throughout the interview, John relayed stories of discipleship, mentoring, and evangelism deeply shaped by being led by older mentors. Like many of the interviewees, the way he experienced his call to ministry impacted the way he mentored others.

Interview with Pastor Hugh

Pastor Hugh leads a parachurch ministry he founded in his retirement to train pastors in third world countries. Before retirement, he pastored a large, multi-pastor church that he planted in a Southeastern college town. That church planting experience came after, and was certainly influenced by, his time as an RUF campus minister on multiple campuses. Pastor Hugh is married with four adult children and multiple grandchildren.

Hugh grew up in a family that he colorfully described as wild. Though he attended church and had heard solid doctrine preached from the pulpit, those truths about Jesus and the call to a personal relationship didn't land until later. Hugh described being confronted with the reality of his own sin, and in that moment everything he had heard

about Jesus became personal. With that background, Hugh has felt comfortable around non-Christians for the entirety of his ministry and considers himself an evangelist.

After college, Hugh got married and went to work in business. He served the church and led others to Jesus, but he wasn't considering full-time vocational ministry. Then one day, while his wife was cutting Hugh's hair, she challenged him saying, "I don't want to get swallowed by a whale with you. You're going to Tarshish, and you need to go to Nineveh and preach."

Her challenging use of the Jonah story spurred Hugh to pursue seminary. When in seminary, Hugh described another early affirmation from his preaching professor who said, "Never doubt that God's called you to be a minister." Those direct challenges and affirmations shaped Hugh's later ministry. Additionally, he cherished his time as an RUF campus minister and talked at length about how that experience shaped his approach to the church and to raising up other pastors.

Interview with Pastor Ron

Pastor Ron planted and served as lead pastor of a medium-sized PCA church in a Midwestern city alongside an associate pastor and multiple staff. Prior to planting the church, Ron served in youth ministry while in seminary and then as the RUF campus minister on two different Southern campuses. He is married, with four adult children.

Ron was converted as a young child in a relatively small church. He admired his older brother and watched him serve, even as a young man, as a lay preacher. Ron wanted to be like his brother and considered being a preacher from a young age. Looking back on the church of his childhood, Ron doubted the doctrine preached but was blessed

by the hospitality and community he experienced. He described it as a "works righteousness" message told "a million different ways."

Later in college, Ron struggled with his faith. He was still clinging to the "works" orientation of his childhood and didn't know what to do with his internal sin struggles. Then as a junior, his RUF campus minister explained the doctrines of grace. Ron said, "It freed me from a lot of things. And from that point on, I never wanted to do anything else."

He said adopting a grace orientation has been a hallmark of his ministry ever since. Ron was a product of RUF and said he has taken that philosophy of ministry to the campus and to the church.

Interview with Pastor Mark

At the time of the interview, Pastor Mark was serving as the newly installed lead pastor of a small PCA church in the Pacific Northwest. He came to that position after having planted and pastored a larger church in the Northwest and leading a ministry network. Mark's ministry had been characterized by his focus on mentoring others. In this new calling, Mark was mentoring a church recovering from a difficult season of ministry. He is married with three adult children and multiple grandchildren.

Mark's journey to ministry came largely through his participation in parachurch ministries. He became a Christian through the ministry of Young Life and then went on to be heavily involved in Campus Crusade during his college years. After college, Mark went to work in the marketplace and volunteered with Young Life fifteen to twenty hours per week. He loved that ministry, but the church was not a part of his Christian life. Then a friend invited him to a PCA church. He described being "blown away" by a church that

"preached things like (the pastor) did" and that "sang hymns like they believed the words."

After some time, Mark went to lunch with the pastor and shared his story. Halfway through the lunch, the pastor said, "Yeah, you should definitely quit your job and go to seminary." Mark went on to say, "I laugh about it now. But he had never met with me and yet halfway through lunch told me I should definitely quit my job and go to seminary."

With that background, Mark was unique among the interviewees. His experience of the call to ministry did not translate to his later practice of raising up others. While he went on to intern under the pastor who encouraged him to go to ministry, he also took a more intentional approach to raising up others. Mark has thought deeply and systematically about how others are called to ministry and was intentional about identifying pastoral gifts in others. That process, and those experiences, surfaced in the interview.

Interview with Pastor Oliver

At the time of the interview, Pastor Oliver led a mid-sized Korean PCA church in a large East Coast city alongside multiple ordained pastors. He has focused on mentoring that staff, while also investing broadly in other younger pastors across the denomination. Prior to his current call, Oliver planted another PCA church. Prior to that he had experience in college ministry. He is married, with three grown children.

Oliver grew up in the church, but understood Christianity through a works-based lens, having "no awareness of the gospel." Early in his college years, he lived a "prodigal life." Then during the summer after his freshman year, he heard the gospel at a large

Christian rally. As he described it, he was "amazed by grace." He immediately got involved in the church again and began to grow in his faith. On a mission trip, he found himself loving the morning devotional time, and his friends began to ask him if he wanted to be a pastor. Initially he thought that idea was crazy, but he began to consider it.

Not wanting to just be caught up in a wave of emotion, he spent a year after college doing missions – and reading theology. Coming out of that year, Oliver went to seminary. When asked if he had "conversation partners" to guide him on that journey, Oliver was quick to say "yes." He had great respect for the men in his church and college ministry who modeled what it meant to "give your life for mission and to sacrifice for the sake of the gospel and to lay your life down on the altar of ministry." He sought to honor those men who were so instrumental in his life. His use of the word "model" would show up during the interview to describe his ministry to young men in his church and denomination.

Communicating the Need

The first research question sought to determine how pastoral leaders communicate the need for the next generation of pastors. To further explore the main question, a series of questions was asked regarding the pastors' understanding of the framework of calling, their personal conviction of the need for future pastors, and their individual communication styles.

Framework for Discerning Calling

The participants were all able to provide a theological and practical framework for the development of calling in individuals, though there was a range in the amount of prior

thought they had devoted to the subject. For a few, it was not a conscious thought, but they were able to quickly draw on their theological training to articulate their understanding of calling. Others had considered the question and mentored young people with a particular framework in mind. One interviewee had thought deeply about the subject and captured those thoughts in writing. All spoke of the important role of testing in the process of an individual's discernment of gifting and calling.

Theological Influences and Personal Insights

Of those who had mentored young people with a particular framework in mind, three specifically referenced Clowney's book *Called to Ministry*.[218] One interviewee said that he gave the book to young people who expressed an interest in ministry and then met to discuss it together. Another summarized the book into a one-page document which he gave to others to discuss it together. The third spoke specifically about Clowney's emphasis on the prophetic, priestly, and kingly gifts derived from Christ's threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King.

The participant who spoke of the threefold office structure as a framework for exploring call went on to describe what he saw as his role in helping others. Reflecting on Clowney's structure, Pastor John said, "Everybody is called to priestly responsibilities, prophetic responsibilities, and kingly responsibilities. Well, it occurred to me that it was part of pastors' priestly responsibilities to help people understand their gifts." He explained that he saw this as a ministry of prayer, interceding on behalf of others.

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[218] Clowney, *Called to the Ministry*.

Pastor Mark had thought deeply about how calling presents itself in those called to ministry. His intentionality was driven in part by what he perceived to be the lack of intentionality in the development of his own call. It was then fueled by his role in identifying others for a ministry he led in his region of the country.

Biblical study, experience, and observation formed his personal insight. Pastor Mark looked for three distinct characteristics in potential pastors: presence, influence, and commitment. Referring to presence, he spoke of young people who were "just at church all the time doing all the church things or ministry things outside of church." He was looking for young people who were engaged, curious, and correctable. He didn't assume that those who demonstrated this "presence" were automatically called to ministry, but it "put them on his radar."

Pastor Mark's second category was "influence." He was looking for young people who were leaders, who were effective, and who were steadfast. He was also quick to point out that this influence showed up in a variety of areas, including something as simple as influencing others regarding dinner choices.

Finally, Pastor Mark looked for "commitment." He defined that commitment in terms of their pursuit of godliness through spiritual disciplines. He wanted to see if they were committed to Christ. Then he defined commitment in terms of "adaptability." Mark wanted to see if young people would consider testing their gifts.

The Role of Testing

Six of the eight participants discussed the role of testing in discerning a call to ministry. As mentioned already, Pastor Mark included testing in his determination of commitment. He described offering opportunities to exercise gifts by doing things like

leading a smaller ministry or teaching a class. He called these "stepping stones" into ministry.

Pastor Hugh spoke of the need to make these opportunities for testing accessible. He used the analogy of a river, saying you step into the edge first before standing in the deep middle. Hugh was careful to give young leaders opportunities to grow in their understanding of the gospel and their gifting for ministry.

Two interviewees mentioned "temperament" as a characteristic they watched for in the process of testing. Interestingly, both described a version of the same concern: that potential candidates for ministry should not be overly sensitive to the difficulties of conflict negotiation and personal challenges. Pastor Doug said, "A pastor has to have a heart of gold and a backbone of steel."

Pastor John spoke of the role of testing in terms of a "parade of providence." He referenced the applicability of the Parable of the Talents[219] to the issue of calling. John said, "We are to steward that which God entrusts to us for his glory. And as one stewards their gifts well, a parade of providence begins to form." That "parade" forms as patterns repeat, providing confirmation of God's call on a person's life.

Conviction of Need

Though there was variation in how the pastors communicated the importance of raising up future pastors, all expressed an awareness of the need. Pastor Mark described what he perceived as a "famine of rising leaders." Pastor Oliver identified this need as a

[219] See Matthew 25:14-30.

top personal conviction and one that he has dedicated much of his ministry to addressing. Again, the strength of conviction varied, but all the interviewees expressed concern.

In addition to a personal conviction of the need to raise up future pastors, a few of the participants defined addressing this need as a core conviction of their church. Pastor Andrew was perhaps the clearest in defining this conviction for his church. “Calling” is one of the articulated core values of the church. This led him to speak of calling from the pulpit and to include it in adult education and mentorship led by his elders.

Beyond the verbal communication, however, was the financial implication for the church. Andrew spoke of the church’s financial commitment evidenced by their willingness to offer “curated internships” to those exploring a call to ministry. They also made a practice of financially supporting seminary students who go out from their church. This financial commitment was echoed by two other interviewees, Pastor Doug and Pastor Mark. Both spoke of supporting seminary students whom they sent out. Mark also described a time when he “elbow-roomed financial space” for a candidate to exercise his gifts. This emphasis on financial support was one of the ways in which the pastors communicated the importance of raising up future pastors.

Communication

The interviewees were asked how they speak to the issue of calling and how they communicate the need to raise up future pastors. These questions revealed data related to the platform for communication and the points of emphasis within that communication.

Platform for Communication

Most acknowledged making specific points of application in sermons when opportunities presented themselves from the text. Most of those references were directed toward individuals considering their personal sense of calling. Two pastors mentioned making application to parents of young children.

Pastor Oliver and Pastor Mark spoke of challenging parents from the pulpit to encourage their children to consider ministry. Mark said, "(Parents), you need to ask your children and encourage them if they're called to go into ministry, and you just need to have that kingdom mindset about your kids." Oliver offered similar challenges that he considered countercultural given his ethnic background.

While most pastors communicated about calling while preaching, many also said that one-on-one discussions were their primary connecting points. Four of the pastors spoke of the importance of one-on-ones. Pastor John emphasized one-on-ones more broadly saying, "You cannot separate preaching from pastoring."

Two pastors said they were not involved in one-on-one discussions at the time but acknowledged how important they had been during their days as RUF campus ministers. Finally, one pastor said he does not engage in one-on-ones but that his staff does.

Points of Emphasis in Communication

While discussing points of emphasis in communication, interviewees addressed the beauty and the challenge of pastoral ministry. Most acknowledged the unique difficulties experienced in pastoral ministry, but five of the participants described their intentional practice of emphasizing the beauty. Pastor Ron said, "I really, really try hard to stay away from all the war stories. When somebody tells me they're considering

(ministry), the first thing I say is you'll never find a better job." Pastor Mark also emphasized this importance saying, "I can't believe I get to be here and watch this in somebody's life."

In addition to emphasizing beauty, three pastors, either directly or indirectly, embraced a communication style meant to make vocational ministry more accessible. Pastor Hugh repeatedly said, "I'm just a normal guy." Pastor Oliver was more explicit. He said he believed this was one of the differentiators that has drawn others into vocational ministry.

Pastor Oliver said, "The pastors and people in full time ministry at our church get to do our ministry in a way that is beautiful and attractive." He continued, "I think seeing people in ministry and that they're normal people demystifies the ministry. We're just normal human beings who need and love the grace of God, and we want others to experience it too. And I think that humanizes ministry."

Personal Involvement

The second research question sought to determine how pastoral leaders are personally involved in raising up the next generation of pastors. To further explore the main question, a series of questions was asked regarding the pastors' understanding of and personal engagement in mentorship and intergenerational initiatives.

The Role of Mentorship

The conversations around mentorship can be further subdivided in three categories. The pastors interviewed offered a sense of their general view and practice of discipleship and mentorship. During their conversations, they were also asked about their

experience in initiating discussions of calling. Finally, it became apparent that many of these pastors were also mentoring younger pastors already in ministry.

Mentorship Practices

To explore the interviewees' views and practices around personal mentorship, the researcher first asked if they differentiated between mentorship and discipleship. Initially, only two of the interviewees described a difference between the two. In describing his view of the difference, Pastor Andrew spoke to what many of the other interviewees would eventually articulate. In doing so, he described the practice of the other pastors.

Andrew said, "I think that discipleship is a broader category than mentorship because I think that discipleship could include a small group with guys talking about marriage and family from the Bible. I look at mentorship as more of a one-on-one intentional task." Other pastors described similar distinctions between small group discipleship and individual engagement but conflated the two, describing them as either "discipleship" or simply "pastoral ministry."

The content and structure of those relationships varied among the pastors. Broadly, the distinction could be summarized as a formal structure versus an organic relationship. All eight participants were engaged in a mentoring/discipling relationship. Three described a formal, committed structure in the relationship. Five self-described their style as more organic, though two of those went on to speak of mentoring relationships that were regular and committed.

Of those who espoused a more formal structure, Pastor Doug spoke most pointedly. He shared about one of his current mentor relationships saying, "Every Friday morning for the last eighteen months we've gotten together to study the Word, to pray

together. I don't know that the Lord is calling him to gospel ministry, but that's what young men want. And I think if we take the initiative, we'll be surprised at how fruitful that harvest might be."

Three of the five who took a more organic approach described it as "RUF style." Pastor Hugh kept referring to the "RUF philosophy of ministry." When asked to summarize what he meant, Hugh responded, "Every avenue that you create, whether it's a large group or whether it's a small group or one-on-one, you are doing one thing. Diagnostics."

By "diagnostics," Hugh was describing an approach that focuses on the individual. He believed a "one size fits all approach to discipleship is not loving." So, he nurtured a sense of personal curiosity about the person in front of him, to minister to individuals wherever they were in their faith journey at the time. His approach was likely the most unstructured of those who espoused an organic style. The remaining pastors fit somewhere in between, but all were engaged mentoring others on some level.

Among the pastors interviewed, mentorship also took place in the context of ministry activity. Pastor Andrew described the pastoral ride-alongs he participated in as a seminary student. On those occasions he was mentored in his calling but also described a growing confirmation about his calling. He and three of the other interviewees then described elements of their mentorship in terms of "bring-alongs." They would bring others who were considering pastoral ministry (as well as other younger pastors) along as they shepherded their members. Those opportunities became opportunities for testing gifting and calling. Pastor Mark said he would give away ministry roles to those he brought along with him.

Initiating Discussions About Calling

During the interviews, the pastors were asked if they initiated the discussion about a call to ministry or if they simply responded to the questions of their mentees. Five of the pastors described times when they had initiated the conversation because of what they had seen in the life and ministry of another person. One pastor had not made a practice of initiating those discussions, but he acknowledged wrestling with the issue and feeling a need to be more proactive.

Pastor John described an occasion with a younger man in his congregation. This younger man was an active professional, growing his career. Yet as John talked with him, he could see the man shepherding others. He asked, "Are you sure you're just supposed to (continue in this role)." John continued, "What do you think about applying (to seminary) and just testing the waters? Test Providence." The young man did, and John said he is now serving faithfully in a ministry where he can draw on his experience from his former profession.

Pastor Doug was also willing to initiate conversations about calling. He recounted a time when he sent van full of young men from his campus ministry to go visit seminary. Doug had been influenced by those who initiated the conversation about vocational ministry when he was a young college student. That mindset of looking for future pastors marked his own life in ministry as he looked for the next generation.

During the interviews, it became evident that among those pastors with a proven track record of sending future ministry leaders to seminary, most did not simply wait passively for others to develop an internal sense of calling to ministry. Many sought out future pastors and initiated the conversation when they saw the potential for calling.

Pastors Mentoring Pastors

Over the course of the interviews, several of the participants revealed that they were mentoring other pastors. Though not part of the interview protocol, this commonality reflected the age of the pastors interviewed. Many had been pastors for at least two, and some three or more, decades.

Pastor Oliver was one pastor mentoring younger ministry leaders. He acknowledged that he does not engage in one-on-one mentorship relationships with members in his church. Instead, he is mentoring his staff. They then mentor the membership. However, Oliver's mentoring work extends beyond his staff. He is mentoring other young pastors in his local area and around the country. Oliver said, "That is probably one of my top three convictions and core desires in life. The church needs the next generation of leaders to sense their call and to rise, put their fears aside, put their desires to establish their own mini kingdoms aside, and to join the task of establishing the kingdom of God. And I am committed to mentoring, supporting, empowering younger pastors."

Oliver was the clearest about this priority. However, four other pastors described their work of mentoring other younger ministry leaders. For those remaining four, the role of older mentor had taken shape as they continued to age and mature.

View of General Pastoral Ministry

Connected to the question of the pastors' active involvement in raising up the next generation of pastors was their general level of engagement with the congregations they pastored. All the pastors interviewed were deeply connected with their congregations and ministries. Pastor John captured this involvement most succinctly, saying, "I do not

believe we can separate preaching from pastoring. If you are not individually with people, you are not pastoring as Jesus did."

Pastor John said his pastoring the flock was fueled by "carefully observing" his people. Pastor Hugh described it as constantly doing "diagnostics." Others related similar thoughts, which could be summarized as pastoral awareness.

This pastoral engagement was found in all the pastors interviewed. Seven of the pastors described one-on-one pastoral engagement as fundamental to their ministry. The one pastor who did not emphasized his role in establishing it as their philosophy of ministry for the broader congregation by engaging his staff.

In exploring the question of the participant's personal involvement in raising up future pastors, the conversation began generally and then focused on intergenerational connection.

Intergenerational Engagement

Intergenerational engagement was repeated across the interviews. That engagement was described as involvement with children, youth, and college students.

Engagement with Children

The pastors interviewed emphasized the importance of pastoring the whole flock, across the age spectrum. Four spoke of the importance of knowing the children in the church. Pastor John described his involvement in the church's Vacation Bible School.

Pastor Mark talked about his personal delight in engaging with the children, connecting it to his family role as a grandfather. Beyond the personal enjoyment, Mark said there are "biblical, covenantal, and historical reasons for pastors to spend time with

young people in the church." Driving the point home, he said, "You've just got to notice them." That "noticing" was expressed in the pastors' intentional effort to know the names of children in their churches.

Pastor Ron extended this connection to engaging the children through his pulpit ministry, speaking to the children from the pulpit. He and Mark both described casting a vision for children to serve as pastors when they grow up.

Engagement with Youth

Five of the pastors had served in youth ministry. That experience included ministry before, during, and after their seminary training. Of those who had worked in youth ministry, echoes of this experience continued into their later roles as lead pastors. Pastor Andrew in particular had most recently made the transition from youth pastor to lead pastor. Relationships he had developed among the youth had continued, though his role as lead pastor gave him a broader platform with the youth and their families.

Pastor Brad had not served in youth ministry for many years, but he described his engagement with high school students. He shared that he was hosting a group of tenth grade boys each week in his home. They ate a meal together and read through the book of Proverbs. Brad described the gatherings as a time to invest in the boys and engage them in a mentoring discussion centered on God's Word.

Engagement with College Students

Six of the pastors interviewed had spent time in college ministries. Four of the six had served with RUF, and all four described how that experience shaped their future ministries. Pastor Doug, late in his ministry, was still involved with local college

students. He said he was serving as an unofficial chaplain with one campus organization and was given opportunities to invest in the lives of college students.

For Pastor Hugh, that ongoing engagement with college students was direct and indirect. The church he planted and pastored was in a college town. He described the shaping influence of RUF on his life and ministry and talked about how the church adopted the RUF philosophy of ministry. Both he and his staff members valued the college students in the church and engaged them in the life and ministry of the church.

Engagement with Younger Adults

While all the pastors interviewed were mentoring others, four of the interviewees described current relationships. At the time of the interview, Pastor John was no longer serving on staff at a church, and yet he remained busy with multiple mentorship relationships. In at least one case, he was mentoring a young man who was considering seminary and vocational ministry.

Pastor Doug said he had stepped down from his role as lead pastor but was still serving in a church as an associate. He too was mentoring multiple young men. As has already been mentioned, Doug desired to see this ministry become more commonplace, saying, “I think if we take the initiative, we’ll be surprised at how fruitful that harvest might be.”

Leadership Development

The third research question sought to determine how pastoral leaders lead church systems to raise up the next generation of pastors. To further explore the main question, a

series of questions was asked regarding the pastors' leadership of their staffs and how they were setting a culture within their churches.

Staff Leadership

Participants were asked how they lead their staffs to create a system of leadership development. In response, six of the eight spoke about modeling and mentoring, though the specifics varied. The pastors understood that their staffs were watching their behaviors, and over time they would be mimicked.

All the pastors interviewed modeled behaviors. Pastors Brad and John were storytellers whose stories were intentionally crafted to perpetuate certain behaviors. Those stories were shared in the pulpit, in session and staff meetings, and in one-on-one conversations. In addition to the storytelling, or perhaps as an illustration of it, Pastor John described bringing his staff members along and then sharing the pastoral role with them. That sharing of roles included pastoral visitations, mentorship relationships, and preaching.

Though most mentioned modeling and mentoring, all were doing it in some capacity. Conversely, few mentioned creating intentional systems to develop the next generation of pastors. Pastor Andrew was one. He developed a mentor matching program that paired older men with younger men. He also trained those older mentors, gathering them a couple of times per year. Andrew described that training as a round table format where the group discussed how to bring scripture to bear in a young man's life.

Pastor Mark was systematic in raising up future pastors, having developed a written framework while leading a church planting ministry. He spent time teaching his elders and staff about his framework for calling. Additionally, he set a tone for the

leadership team and the broader church so that they give young leaders time and space to grow in their giving and calling.

In connection with the discussion about leadership development and training, two participants described a methodology they learned in RUF. Pastors Doug and Brad referenced TDOEE: teach, demonstrate, observe, evaluate, and encourage. They said they taught their church leadership this framework and believed it to be an important part of training their leaders to raise up other leaders.

As has been described, most of the leadership development described by the pastors meant modeling behaviors. Though that can be a form of culture setting, the interviews revealed additional details around the topic of culture.

Culture Setting

The pastors interviewed often described leadership development within their churches in terms of "culture." Those church cultures were developed and nurtured in a variety of ways. Several described an undefined core value. Pastor Andrew, however, articulated it as one of the four defined core values for the church.

Andrew's church identified "calling" as one of its core values. By "calling," he referenced broad discussions around vocation, which he included in his preaching, teaching, and mentoring. These discussions were not limited to identifying individuals called to vocational ministry, but they did reveal intentionality around the topic.

Pastor Brad also mentioned core values. He described himself as a storyteller who models behaviors through the stories he told. He went on to describe those stories as culture-setting core values. Brad said, "Unless I'm just telling a story that's just too funny not to tell, the story is always to foster something we want to be core." He went on to say,

"Core is something that's presently true, and we want to keep it true. When I hear good things about (intergenerational mentorship), I share that because I want them to have joy that that is happening. And boy, we want that to keep happening."[220]

While not identifying it as a defined core value of the church, Pastor Mark spoke about creating and nurturing a culture of grace. He looked back to his initial preaching on Galatians as the first sermon series in his new church plant. Describing the impact, Mark said, "God used that profoundly to create a culture of grace that still prevails."

Mark went on to describe the impact of that culture of grace on the culture of leadership, particularly around developing a sense of calling in young people. He said, "What you do with your elders, especially at first, is you make it safe for letting men and women not be good at their job. In other words, anything worth doing is worth doing poorly." He went on to say, "We just had a tolerance for that. You just have to let young people be young." His descriptions revealed that he was not being reckless but was creating a culture where young people could test their gifts in pursuit of their calling.

Pastor Oliver spoke of "core commitments" rather than core values. He said, "One of the core commitments of our church is we are not a community around a few ministers. We're a community of ministers." He explained, "Apart from the preaching ministry, every other ministry is open to laypeople at our church, and particularly to young people. We're intentional about inviting younger people to participate in ministry."

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[220] Patrick Lencioni, *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012). Pastor Brad described being influenced by Lencioni's teaching in *The Advantage* as he distinguishes between aspirational values and core values. Lencioni speaks to the difference on pp. 95-100. There he writes, "A core value will have been apparent for a long time and requires little intentional provocation."

Beyond the activity of ministry, Oliver mentioned the culture-setting impact of the way he goes about ministry. He said, “I think modeling a joyful, grateful posture and heart as you do ministry has more impact at our church than simply talking about should you go into ministry.” For Oliver and his staff, it wasn’t enough to nurture a culture of participation. Their focus was nurturing a culture of joy.

That joy accompanied references to celebrations that shaped the cultures of the churches and ministries represented among the interviewees. Two pastors identified the shaping impact of celebrations during worship services. These pastors said they celebrated when their members left to pursue ministry callings by offering commissioning prayers. They also emphasized personal testimonies during worship services.

All the participants spoke of the importance of celebrations in the life of the church, particularly the raising up of others for ministry. Joy was a reoccurring theme, seen in sendoff parties thrown for those leaving to pursue ministry. These celebrations were identified as an important aspect of culture setting.

Additional Noteworthy Data Points

At the conclusion of each interview, the interviewee was asked if there were any questions that were not asked but should have been. Over the course of the interviews, several responses repeated.

Four different pastors mentioned family involvement during their interviews. Three mentioned the importance of their wives in their own ministry to the church in general and in their approach to raising up others specifically. Pastor Andrew wrestled with the tension of how much to involve his family in his ministry. He mentioned this,

not as a question, but as a topic he spent time thinking about. Andrew said, “I can say ‘no’ to a lot of things in my church. It's really hard for me to say ‘no’ to the young people kind of training, raising up aspect.” He had young children and wanted to protect his time with them. He respected and desired time with his wife. At the same time, he acknowledged how fruitful it was for young people to spend time around his family. It was also his wife’s desire to be involved. However, he said finding the balance was difficult.

Pastor Hugh described the importance of his wife’s voice in his own call to ministry. Pastor John spoke at length about the partnership he experienced with his wife. Finally, Pastor Ron talked about the importance of mentoring marriages. He was intentional about talking with wives as he counseled couples considering ministry. He viewed this as a differentiator in his ministry, saying, “I've talked to people a lot about their marriages. One place I know that I have been helpful is being able to help these guys see their wives.”

Another noteworthy theme was the topic of risk. Two pastors mentioned the risks involved with raising up future pastors. Pastor Doug reflected on his ministry and said, “I know of at least two very gifted young men who ended up crashing and burning as well. So, you always remember those things are challenges in ministry, and they're heartaches with the guys you pour your life into and invest time into.” Similarly, Pastor Mark said:

> There is an inherent risk to identifying and empowering guys. Don't lay hands hastily on somebody. But the tension is some sessions and some pastors are so afraid of that that they won't create on-ramps for people, and I think the net result is that we eliminate, or we don't listen to or don't encourage guys that should be in ministry maybe more often than we put guys in ministry that shouldn't be so. But it hurts, man, when it doesn't work.

Pastor Mark recognized the risk and felt it deeply when those pastors struggled. He also recognized that risk was always going to be present. He encouraged pastors to be wise, and where appropriate, to point others to vocational ministry.

Summary of Findings

This chapter sought to document the experiences and lessons learned from pastors who had a proven track record of raising up future pastors.

Summary of Communicating Need

While all the pastors interviewed were able to communicate a biblical framework for understanding calling, three did so with reference to Clowney's book, *Called to the Ministry*. One spoke about Clowney's emphasis on the prophetic, priestly, and kingly gifts derived from Christ's threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King. Pastor Mark described his framework for clarifying calling. He talked about looking for candidates who fit the three distinct characteristics he had noted for potential pastors: presence, influence, and commitment.

In discussing the process of clarifying calling, six of the participants spoke of the role of testing. They described the need to make opportunities accessible and prioritized them as a way to involve others in ministry and to test their personal gifts. This time of testing was also prominent as the pastors shared their personal call to ministry.

All the interviewees recognized the great need for raising up the next generation of pastors. A few put financial resources behind that conviction, to fund internships and to support students while in seminary.

Finally, the pastors were asked how they communicated the need for future pastors. Their responses included a mixture of speaking from the pulpit and individual conversations held in ministry one-on-ones. From the pulpit, these pastors were not only making application to those considering ministry but also exhorting parents to pray that their children might respond to a call to ministry. Seven talked about the importance of one-on-ones. One of the seven was not involved in one-on-ones but encouraged his staff to do so.

Interestingly, in communicating the need for pastors, five of the interviewees emphasized the beauty of pastoral ministry, to make it attractive. Additionally, two mentioned the importance of demystifying the role, making it accessible.

Summary of Personal Involvement

During the interviews, it became evident that personal pastoral ministry was a priority. This philosophy of ministry centered on pastoral engagement was found in all the interviews. Seven of the pastors described one-on-one pastoral engagement as fundamental to their ministry. The one pastor who did not emphasized his role in setting that tone for the broader congregation by engaging his staff.

Specific to the question of raising up pastors, a majority of the interviewees did not wait on others to ask about the call to ministry. Many sought out future pastors and initiated the conversation when they saw the potential for calling.

Finally, most of the participants had experience in youth and/or college ministry. For most, this ministry experience translated to an ongoing interest in and engagement with the young people in their congregations.

Summary of Leadership Development

Among those pastors interviewed, systematic leadership development through intergenerational mentorship was rare. Most of the participants were naturally investing in the lives of others, but their predominant method was through modeling. There were, however, a couple of notable exceptions where pastors nurtured core values within their churches and trained their staffs and leadership in this area.

Though systematic training and leadership development was not the norm, an emphasis on culture was. Most had nurtured a culture within the church marked by joy and shared ministry. Again, with notable exceptions, these cultures were nurtured largely through modeling.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to investigate how pastoral leaders raise up the next generation of pastors in their ministry contexts. The church needs pastoral leadership for present day needs and to fill a pipeline for future generations. It was believed that lessons from the literature and from the experience of pastoral leaders would prove fruitful in identifying and calling those future pastors.

To accomplish this research, qualitative methods were employed. Literature addressing vocation and calling, discipleship and mentorship, leadership development within the church, and the biblical framework for how men are called to serve as pastors was reviewed. Additionally, eight pastoral interviews were conducted to learn from their personal experiences to identify themes and insights pertaining to the research questions. To address the purpose of this study, the following research questions guided the qualitative research.

1. How do pastoral leaders communicate the need for the next generation of pastors?
2. How are pastoral leaders involved in raising up the next generation of pastors?
3. How are pastoral leaders leading church systems to raise up the next generation of pastors?

Summary of the Study and Findings

This study reviewed relevant literature in four areas and analyzed interview data from eight senior pastors. Reflection on the data indicates nine specific findings in both the literature and the experience of the pastors interviewed. In summary, these nine pastoral characteristics or points of emphasis emerged as key elements of a consistent, effective, and sustainable effort to raise up the next generation of pastors:

1. A clear framework for calling – The pastors interviewed each possessed a clear framework for calling. Though the specifics differed from pastor to pastor, certain elements remained consistent, and any differences were less relevant in terms of raising up future pastors. The research indicated that what was most important, regardless of the specifics, was that a pastoral leader possessed and could communicate a clear framework for calling.
2. Intergenerational awareness and engagement – At various times and in various ways, most of the pastors knew and engaged the younger generations within their church. This engagement included relationships with children and youth.
3. Providing multiple on-ramps to ministry – A consistent theme in the framework for calling was the need for practical ministry experience and the testing of gifts. The pastors interviewed and the churches they led were intentional about providing those opportunities in a variety of ways.
4. Mentoring that includes vocational discipleship – While the experiences with and terminology for mentorship varied, one-on-one mentorship proved to be an effective form of reaching the next generation. This mentorship covered a

variety of topics, but in raising up pastors, according to these pastors, it often included vocational discipleship.

5. A willingness to initiate conversations about pastoral calling – Pastoral leaders with a track record of raising up pastors did not wait for an individual to sense an internal call before broaching the subject. They said they sought out those who could be called to ministry and initiated the discussion with them. This pattern was consistent with the biblical review.
6. Active prayer for future ministry leaders – Though this practice was not as widely present as may have been expected, multiple pastors described their personal prayers for future pastors, as well as for elders. Several also encouraged parents to pray that the Lord would call their children to ministry.
7. A culture that seeks out, supports, and celebrates those who leave to pursue ministry – The participants led churches that celebrated when the Lord called their members into ministry, including when those members left to pursue pastoral training or to serve in new ministry contexts.
8. Communicating a winsome view of pastoral ministry – Though the pastors did not try to hide the difficulties of pastoral ministry, most said they emphasize the beauty of the calling.
9. Building systems that are sustainable and replicable – Three of the eight pastors interviewed formed structured systems within their churches and ministries to raise up future pastors. The remaining pastors were relationally organic and unstructured in their approach. While they were effective as

individual pastors, they were less overtly focused on building systems that would last beyond themselves.

In some cases, these summary findings represented characteristics or practices espoused by the majority of pastors interviewed. In some cases, they reflected minority practices that were nonetheless notable in their effectiveness. A more detailed discussion of these findings will follow.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, the literature and interview research are compared to further examine the summary findings listed above. This discussion will follow the outline of the research questions and will be categorized under the following headings: The Framework for Calling, The Practice of "Raising Up," and Leading Systems that Replicate.

The Framework for Calling

The word "calling" can carry a range of meaning. In the research interviews for this study, it was often used as shorthand for the "call to ministry." However, it is helpful to see the call to ministry as a specific vocational calling that follows the broader calling to the Lord. The literature review sought to nuance these terms.

Calling in the Literature

As was noted in the opening chapter, from a Christian biblical perspective, the notion of calling presupposes that there is a Caller, and the Caller is God. Guinness defines calling as "the truth that God calls us to himself so decisively that everything we

are, everything we do, and everything we have is invested with a special devotion and dynamism lived out as a response to his summons and service."[221]

Vocation then is a subset of calling. From a Christian biblical perspective, vocation entails service in the place where God has given gifts and a desire to make a difference in this world.[222] The "call to ministry" should be viewed as a specific vocational calling which can take a variety of forms depending upon the specific gifting and desires of the individual called.

As outlined in the literature review, for many Protestants, the modern view of calling and vocation can be traced back to Luther. Luther's influence should not be understated. As was noted in the literature, Luther viewed vocation not in terms of a higher calling to the priesthood for a select few but rather in terms of one's station in life. The effect was to break down the vocational sacred/secular divide, thus elevating the worth of common labor, recognizing all work as service to the Lord.

Luther's teaching was rooted in protology, or his high view of creation. Wingren summarized the impact of Luther's perspective stating, "Man is forced to follow the God who directs and leads, through works, places, times, persons, and situations which were previously unknown to him. This is the instruction of faith…according to his particular vocation."[223]

Luther's teaching set the modern framework for calling embraced by theologians and pastors in the centuries since, though with important additions to that foundation.

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[221] Guinness, *The Call*, 4.

[222] Doriani, *Work*, 19.

[223] Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, 73.

One of Luther's contributions emphasized stability. His protological basis did not encourage transitions in vocation. Theologians since have taken a more eschatological/transformative view of work that opened the door to greater mobility in calling and vocation. The work of Volf[224] and Cosden[225] were highlighted for their contributions in this movement.

The work of Frame was cited specifically in the vocational call to ministry. In his work *The Doctrine of the Christian Life,* he connects vocation to divine calling, stating that the term "vocation" suggests a divine revelation, though not a special revelation received directly from God. Therefore, he suggests an approach to discerning and developing calling that is rooted in the work of God in an individual and through the church. He argues that a call comes in four ways: 1) God gives gifts to his people. 2) The Spirit enables people to discern their gifts through self-examination and the confirmations of the church. 3) God provides opportunities to develop and exercise those gifts. 4) God grants wisdom to use gifts to glorify him and to extend his kingdom.[226]

Doriani builds on Frame's work by presenting an iterative process whereby people grow in their calling as they sense, test, and receive encouragement and critique from mentors.[227] This cycle, experienced in relationship with a wise mentor, leads to growth in both gifting and responsibility.

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[224] Volf, *Work in the Spirit*.

[225] Cosden, *A Theology of Work*.

[226] Frame, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life*, 312-13.

[227] Doriani, *Work*, 98–99.

Calling from the Pastors' Perspective

Perhaps with one exception, the pastors interviewed did not regularly teach this theology of work. Their framework, however, informed their individual mentorship, particularly while in active campus ministry.

When asked, the interviewees provided a theological and practical framework for the development of calling in individuals, though some had thought about it more than others. The interviewees drew on their theological training, pastoral experience, and personal observation to form their personal framework for calling.

One pastor described his framework for identifying those whom he believed were called to ministry. Informed by his biblical study, pastoral experience, and personal observation, this pastor looked for three distinct characteristics in potential pastors: presence, influence, and commitment. The framework was insightful, but what may have been more replicable was how he used the framework. Having identified his target characteristics, this pastor used the framework to seek them out. In short, he used the framework as a tool for raising up future pastors.

One specific element of the framework emphasized testing. The participants provided multiple on ramps to ministry that gave future pastors opportunities to test their gifts in pursuit of a call to ministry.

The on ramps were informed by their personal calling and pastoral experience. They described the need to bring others along with them in ministry work to test their gifts and grow their passions. They also described the need to send others out to minister on their own.

These on ramps to ministry were often experimental. Therefore, it was helpful to hear the pastors describe the need to give others permission to fail. One pastor described

the culture of his church, saying it was "ok for people to not be good at their job." This statement was in the context of allowing people the time to grow their gifts. It described the pastoral patience needed to allow for vocational growth.

Though the specifics differed from pastor to pastor, certain elements remained consistent, and the differences were less important for raising up future pastors. The research indicated that what was most important, regardless of the specifics, was that a pastoral leader possessed and could communicate a clear framework for calling.

The Practice of "Raising Up"

This discussion has focused on the need for raising up the next generation of pastors. At this point I believe it is appropriate to make a distinction between "raising up" and simply "receiving in" pastors. To receive them in is largely passive. Alternatively, to "raise them up" requires identifying, growing, and employing or sending pastors. I believe the literature and the research indicates that process is best led by a pastor who knows and is engaged in the lives of his people.

Pastoral Engagement

While the pastors interviewed for this research often differed, they agreed on taking a pastoral approach to the ministry. One put it most succinctly saying, "I do not believe we can separate pastoring from preaching." To pastor is to shepherd.

At its most basic level, to shepherd is to care for the nourishment and growth of the sheep and to guard and protect them from their enemies. Volumes have been written to unpack the role of shepherding. For the purposes of this research, however, I will summarize by saying the pastors interviewed consistently shepherded their flock in the

following ways: knowing them, praying for and with them, engaging, encouraging, and exhorting them. And as noted above, this pastoral task is active – not passive.

The pastors interviewed actively pastored their flock, but they also consistently pastored across the generations. Though there were differences in practice, their ministries were marked by an intergenerational awareness and engagement. That engagement took place at both the macro and micro level.

In the literature review I cited Witmer in his book, *The Shepherd Leader.*[228] There he speaks of this distinction, defining micro shepherding as "personal care and interaction with the sheep."[229] He then offers the contrast of macro shepherding, which he says deals with the corporate, congregational level ministry in the church.[230]

Witmer's categories were seen in the way the participants went about raising up future pastors. Again, there were differences among the pastors interviewed, but the macro/micro distinction was evidenced and should be applied in the areas of prayer, preaching, mentoring, and leadership development.

The pastoral work of raising up future pastors must begin with and be constantly undergirded by prayer. Matthew 9:37-38 serves as the biblical guide for this prayer. There, Jesus instructs the disciples (and therefore the church) saying, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

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[228] Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*.

[229] Witmer, 103.

[230] Witmer, 103.

At a macro level, pastors lead their congregations and their leadership teams by praying, and leading them to pray, for the Lord to raise up pastors who will go out into the harvest. This prayer also takes place at the micro level as pastors pray with those whom they believe the Lord is calling. This individual pastoral engagement was more prevalent among the pastors interviewed, though both were present on some level.

The macro/micro call to shepherding is also seen in the dual pastoral calls to preach and to mentor. The pastors interviewed described their practice of making sermon applications regarding the call to ministry. At times, those exhortations were directed toward parents, encouraging them to pray that the Lord might call their children to vocational ministry. At times, those exhortations were directed towards individuals themselves to consider whether the Lord was calling them. In both cases, the participants exercised their pastoral responsibilities on a macro level, shepherding the broader church through the ministry of the Word of God.

Additionally, the pastors interviewed also shepherded on a micro level, engaging with the members of their congregations across the generations. From a semantic perspective, few pastors distinguished between discipleship and mentorship. However, from a practical perspective, there was a difference between their work of discipleship and the more personal engagements that could be described as mentorship. In those mentoring relationships, pastors discipled individuals in the Word of God and provided personal application and exhortation across a wide variety of topics, often with a dual focus on relationships and vocation.

In either case, the pastors were shepherding on a micro level. However, I find the discussion about individual mentoring relationships to be a helpful distinction. In the

instances where pastors engaged in longer term, committed, personal mentoring relationships with individuals, the fruit was striking. In fact, most of the specific examples the pastors shared about raising up pastors out of their ministry came from these types of relationships.

As noted in the literature review, Engstrom makes the case for this distinction in *The Fine Art of Mentoring.* There, he offers his description of the role of discipleship stating, "A discipler is one who helps an understudy to (1) give up his own will for the will of God the Father, (2) live daily a life of spiritual sacrifice for the glory of Christ, and (3) strive to be consistently obedient to the commands of his Master." He goes on to differentiate mentorship from discipleship stating, "A mentor, on the other hand, provides modeling, close supervision on special projects, individualized help in many areas – discipline, encouragement, correction, confrontation, and a calling to accountability."[231]

Admittedly, the roles (and goals) Engstrom describes for discipleship and mentorship overlap. However, I find the intentional relational emphasis helpful. Making a distinction between the two does not lessen the importance of either while drawing out the importance of both. Engstrom ties the two together with an encouragement to pastors when he summarizes, "Discipling talks about discipline, while mentoring talks about a relationship. Mentoring can't happen outside the context of relationship. No one is in a better position to carry this out than the shepherd."[232]

Individual mentoring relationships are not, and should not be, the sole form of pastoral engagement. Time drastically limits the number of engagements a pastor can

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[231] Engstrom and Rohrer, *The Fine Art of Mentoring*, 4.

[232] Engstrom and Rohrer, 73.

have, and yet the practice bears fruit in the lives of mentees and proves to be culture setting for pastor and church.

The literature indicated that this type of mentorship is rare in the church. The interviews corroborated that storyline. But both pointed to the outsized impact of these relationships in raising up the next generation of pastors. Within those mentoring relationships, the participants also noted modeling, an aspect also referenced in the literature. Quoting Wayman Michell of Prescott, AZ, Engstrom writes, "People are not very good at taking orders, but they are great at imitating." That imitating, he says, is an important part of the mentoring process.[233]

One particular aspect of modeling surfaced in the interviews. While not shying away from discussions about the difficulties of ministry, they intentionally described the beauty of the calling. They took a winsome approach to describing the work of ministry, and in their interactions with others, they spoke of their desire to make themselves and the position of pastor accessible.

On both the macro and micro level, many of the participants cited the importance of modeling in their pastoral ministry. As mentioned above, it was discussed in discipleship and mentorship, but also in leadership development. Before exploring leadership development in relation to raising up future pastors, I will briefly address the topic of pastoral initiative.

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[233] Engstrom and Rohrer, 70.

Pastoral Initiative

As was noted from the outset, much of the prevailing literature speaks to those who are processing the internal call to ministry with the aim of helping them discern the call in relation to their character, gifting, desires, and experiences. Conversely, much of the literature examined that dealt with training individuals for ministry was targeted at mentoring those who had already responded to the internal call. However, even in the literature aimed at the individual in the process of discernment, there was an acknowledgement that the church is ultimately responsible for issuing the call to ministry.

The biblical record presents a different emphasis than much of the prevailing literature. Whether it was the selection of elders to lead the church or apprentices who would continue his missionary work, the Apostle Paul initiated the selection process. He then instructed his protégé Timothy to do likewise in 2 Timothy 2:2 writing, "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

The Scriptures do include lists of qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, but notably, those lists were given to church leaders as instruction for discernment while raising up elders. While these biblical qualifications should be thoughtfully and prayerfully examined by individuals wrestling with their own sense of internal calling, they are given to the church as a means of guiding the external call.

Clowney speaks of the primacy of the church in raising up pastors when he writes, "The church does not choose out a man and then proceed to equip him with spiritual enduement. It *seeks* (emphasis mine) for the man or men God has chosen

whether through direct prophecy or through the perception of his gifts."[234] In connection to the discussion about pastoral initiative rather than pastoral passivity, I will emphasize Clowney's use of the word "seek."

In practice, most of the pastors interviewed talked about the importance of external initiation in describing their own experience of calling. Of the eight pastors interviewed for this research, seven shared that on some level another individual or pastor initiated the discussion about calling. Whether a direct call or an insightful suggestion, the Lord used the wisdom of others to move these pastors toward ministry.

This emphasis on proactive selection was also present in their ministries. Five of the pastors interviewed described times when they had initiated the conversation of calling because of what they had seen in the life and ministry of another person. It was evident among the participants that a majority did not wait on others to ask about the call to ministry. Many made a practice of seeking future pastors and initiating the conversation when they saw the potential for calling.

There was a word of caution from two pastors about the risks involved with initiating the conversation about calling. One pastor cited 1 Timothy 5:22, "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands." He shared the personal grief he experienced when one individual failed in ministry and left the faith. At the same time, he acknowledged that fear of such failure prevented some sessions and pastors from creating on ramps to ministry. This tension is to be acknowledged rather than feared. It also emphasizes the need for pastors to lead systems that replicate the effort to raise up pastors.

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[234] Clowney, *Called to the Ministry*, 86.

Leading Systems that Replicate

The literature and practical wisdom indicate that if a movement of raising up the next generation of pastors is to last, the passion and work must extend beyond the lead pastor. The research indicated a mixed bag of results among the participants in leading this task. Pastoral engagement across the generations was a key factor in raising up future pastors. However, for this type of mentorship to continue beyond the tenure of current lead pastors, they must not only be doers, but leaders.

Newton speaks of this partnership in his book, *The Mentoring Church,* when he summarizes, "The most effective mentoring teams together pastors and congregations to help shape those who will serve Christ's churches."[235] Newton's work is targeted at churches mentoring those already called to ministry who are in the process of formation and training. The point, however, remains true for the work of raising up those future pastors. Specifically, two of his five key elements connect: mentoring that takes place within a congregational framework and mentoring that utilizes a team approach to training.[236]

Leadership is required to create and nurture congregational systems and cultures that reproduce this effort. Kouzes and Posner provide a helpful structure for this leadership in *The Leadership Challenge* where they describe "Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership:" 1) Model the Way, 2) Inspire a Shared Vision, 3) Challenge the Process, 4) Enable Others to Act, and 5) Encourage the Heart.[237] With several notable

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[235] Newton, *The Mentoring Church*, 16.

[236] Newton, 180–82.

[237] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 12–13.

exceptions, the majority of the pastors interviewed focused their efforts on number 1 while all but neglecting numbers 2-5.

Those pastors who focused on modeling as their primary leadership device acknowledged as much when asked about how they were leading their staff and church body to share in the call to mentor potential future pastors. It should be acknowledged that this modeling is an important aspect of leadership. Miller makes this point, and perhaps broadens it, in *The Spiritual Formation of Leaders*. He writes, "When Jesus was shaping the leaders of the early church, he wanted the tapestry of their lives and ministries to reflect the solid integration of communion with God, community with one another, and commissioning to live in the world."[238] By connecting the "tapestry of their lives and ministries," Miller speaks to the culture shaping effect, not merely of exemplary behaviors but of an exemplary life marked by following Jesus.

The power of an exemplary life was certainly seen in the impact of the interviewees' ministries. Yet while not disagreeing with Miller's point, Kouzes and Posner go beyond him to emphasize the behaviors and to speak of intentionality within the system. Influenced by Kouzes and Posner, Hall writes in the *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, "Leadership development is an intentional process of influencing established and potential leaders to acquire, reinforce, and translate proper leadership character and behaviors into effective leadership."[239]

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[238] Miller, *The Spiritual Formation of Leaders,* 7.

[239] Hall, "Leadership Modeling," 40.

Intentional Systems

All the pastors interviewed had a proven track record of raising up future pastors, evidenced by the candidates they had sent to seminary for further theological training. What was less uniform was their approach to leadership systems and structures. Of the eight, three were intentional about forming structured systems within their churches and ministries to raise up future pastors. The remaining pastors ministered organically in their approach. While they were effective as individual pastors, they were less overtly focused on building systems that would last beyond themselves. This lack of leadership development exposed a point of divergence between the literature and the practice of the participants and presents an area of needed growth that I believe is applicable to the broader church.

Pastor Mark was one of those three who led systemically. He had been intentional about developing and articulating his view on the framework for the pastoral calling. As has already been discussed, he looked for three distinct characteristics in potential pastors: presence, influence, and commitment. Pertinent to the discussion about leading systems that replicate, he took two important steps beyond thinking. Mark committed his thoughts to writing and then he shared them. In doing so, his framework became a tool to guide the work of others. He taught his elders and staff the framework, thus creating a system that would replicate his efforts to identify and mentor future pastors.

Pastor Andrew was another of the interviewees who took a systemic approach to leadership development, particularly in mentorship. He described one initiative as a mentor-matching program that paired older men with younger men for mentorship. He gathered those older mentors multiple times per year to train them in how to bring scripture to bear in a young man's life.

It should be noted that among those whom I didn't consider to be creating and leading structured systems, Pastor Hugh took a different, but still effective, approach. He said his more relationally organic approach was born out of the RUF philosophy of ministry. While he was a self-described non-systems thinker, he was intentional about creating a church that shared his philosophy of ministry. He led by talking, teaching, and modeling. He didn't build structures, but he did nurture a philosophy of ministry that was built around equipping others to do the work of ministry.

Several others referenced the RUF philosophy of ministry but were less intentional about teaching it to their staff. They described their leadership approach in terms of modeling, espousing a "caught" rather than "taught" method of teaching and leading. While this modeling can be effective, Kouzes and Posner at least imply that it is only half of the equation. Their second principle of leadership states: "Do What You Say You Will Do."[240] They imply that both "doing" and "saying" are important. Put another way, modeling is most effective when paired with articulating the necessary leadership principles.

Though systemic training and leadership development were not the norm among the participants, an emphasis on culture was. Most pastors interviewed sought to nurture a culture marked by joy and shared ministry conducive to identifying and raising up future pastors.

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[240] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 44.

Intentional Cultures

Intentionality around church culture was far more prevalent among the interviewees than was intentionality around systems. Pastor Andrew, however, was one of those who combined the two. He said that "calling" is one of four stated core values for the church he leads. Thus, he preaches on calling from the pulpit and includes it in adult education and mentorship led by his elders.

However, for Andrew, the cultural impact of this core value extended beyond his teaching and mentoring. Raising up future pastors was a financial priority. In fact, the three pastors who took a more structured systems approach to leadership development all spoke of making this a financial priority. For some it meant finding ways to include internships in the church budget to provide additional on ramps to ministry. For some it meant financially supporting the seminary students who came out of their ministries. This financial priority was embraced by the churches these pastors led, which had cultural impacts, deepening the church's priority around raising up pastors.

Pastor Mark described another, perhaps surprising, element of intentionality he was building into the church culture. He described creating a culture of grace in the church where it is "safe for letting men and women not be good at their job." He said, "We just had a tolerance for that. You just have to let young people be young." His emphasis echoed Edmondson's writing in *Teams* on the cultural reorientation needed in order for individuals and groups to successfully learn from failure.[241] This created a culture within the church where young people could test and grow their gifts in pursuit of their calling.

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[241] Edmondson, *Teaming*, 168.

Finally, almost all the pastors interviewed spoke of nurturing a culture of celebration in their churches. One noteworthy aspect was the way the pastors and churches celebrated those who left to pursue a pastoral calling. Those celebrations included commissioning prayers during worship, personal testimonies, and send off parties. Regardless of the form, the celebrations were identified as important ways in which the church nurtured a culture that was conducive to raising up future pastors.

An Adaptive Leadership Challenge

The leadership task of creating and nurturing systems that will multiply the efforts of pastoral leaders to raise up future pastors and to extend that work beyond the lead pastor's tenure is an adaptive leadership challenge. While a set of summary findings have been identified from this research, it should not be assumed that implementing these findings will produce more pastoral candidates. Rather than a technical formula, they should be considered important elements in an overall philosophy of pastoral leadership.

Bolsinger defined adaptive leadership as having three common characteristics:

1. A *changing* environment where there is no clear answer,
2. The necessity for both leaders and followers to learn, especially the leader's own ongoing *transformation*, and
3. The unavoidable reality that a new solution will result in *loss*.[242]

These characteristics well describe the work of raising up future pastors from within the church, which is marked by shifting generational behavior patterns, deep emotional connections within the system, and the relational and leadership implications

[242] Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 42.

of raising up and sending out members from within the system. It can be difficult enough for a pastoral leader to embrace the call to personal transformation and change required to raise up future pastors. Leading a church system to embrace and perpetuate that work adds an additional layer of complexity.

Bolsinger recognizes this complexity as requiring transformational leadership, stating: "Both leaders and followers will become vastly different people after they have ventured forth to live out the mission of God in a changing world." He further defines this leadership as lying at the "overlapping intersection of three leadership components: technical competence, relational congruence and adaptive capacity."[243]

The pastors interviewed uniformly exhibited a strong degree of technical competence in their pastoral duties, particularly in preaching and discipleship. They all displayed a high level of relational congruence. They were consistent in their relationships with their people across the range of the times and tasks involved in their ministry, and their people were drawn to them. These two factors alone had much to do with their track record of raising up future pastors.

Adaptive capacity, however, differentiates pastors who lead systems that replicate. Bolsinger defines adaptive capacity as "the capacity to lead a process of shifting values, habits and behaviors in order to grow and discover solutions to the greatest challenges brought on by a changing world."[244] Some of the pastors interviewed displayed this type of adaptive capacity as they established flexible but intentional

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[243] Bolsinger, 43.

[244] Bolsinger, 44.

systems meant to replicate and multiply their work. Though not uniform among all the interviewees, this leadership must be considered in the recommendations for practice.

Recommendations for Practice

Considering the findings described above, pastoral leaders are well advised to heed their pastoral call to raise up the next generation of pastors. Two passages in scripture highlight this call and the hope that undergirds it: Matthew 9:36-38 and 2 Timothy 2:1-2. These passages encourage pastors to be awakened to the need and their role of raising up the next generation of pastors. First, I'd like to point out Matthew 9:

> [36]When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. [37]Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; [38]therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."[245]

When citing these verses, we often begin with verse 37, with an emphasis on the plentiful harvest. While true, we miss something of the heart of Jesus and the purpose of the call if we don't look first to v. 36. Jesus is imploring the disciples to pray because he has compassion on the people. They are "sheep without a shepherd." The net effect of declining numbers of men entering pastoral ministry is sheep without a shepherd and churches without pastors.

A central focus of Jesus' earthly ministry was to disciple the disciples. He was preparing them to go and plant the worldwide church. In doing so, he was mentoring them, preparing them to be the shepherds needed by the sheep. He taught them to be pastors in practical ways. Yet in recognizing the need his people had for shepherds, Jesus

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[245] Matt 9:37-38

not only instructed the disciples to go and pastor the people. Here he also instructed them to pray for other shepherds. I believe he was teaching the disciples that fundamental to their work of building the church and shepherding the people was the raising up of other shepherds. And, according to Jesus, the starting point for that work is prayer.

Having seen Jesus' compassion for his people and resulting instruction to the disciples in Matthew 9, we look to 2 Timothy 2:1-2:

> [1]You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus,
> [2]and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses
> entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

This is a word of instruction from one pastoral leader to his protégé, and by virtue of its place in scripture, an appropriate word for pastoral leaders today. First, Paul is calling Timothy to be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. He must know experientially the hope of his salvation. He must know the very foundation of that salvation, which rests not in his ministry success but in the grace that is his in Jesus.

Second, Paul instructs Timothy to entrust what he has learned from Paul to faithful men. He is to seek out faithful men of godly character and Spirit-given ability who will carry on the pastoral calling, teaching others and multiplying the ministry. There is a generational emphasis in this instruction. Timothy is the second generation of Paul's ministry. The "faithful men" are the third, and "others" are the fourth. In his care for the church, Paul is modeling pastoral awareness and engagement, pastoral boldness, and pastoral leadership.

These passages taken together call for those who follow in the line of Paul, Timothy, and the disciples to pray, be strengthened by Christ, and entrust the work of ministry to the next generation. The research has revealed a set of fruitful pastoral characteristics and practices worthy of adapting to raise up others. However, rather than

simply implementing a set of initiatives, I recommend pastors and churches develop a philosophy of ministry that encompasses those findings. This approach embraces the wisdom and experience of others while remaining flexible to the local context.

I recommend a philosophy of ministry that includes 1) A Call to Pastoral Awareness and Engagement, 2) A Call to Pastoral Initiative and Boldness, and 3) A Call to Pastoral Leadership. The action points associated with each are meant to be succinct to be clear, yet broad so as to maintain methodological flexibility.

A Call to Pastoral Awareness and Engagement

Pastoral awareness includes awareness of the elements of calling, the need for pastors, and an awareness of one's own people. While these points might seem simplistic and therefore assumed, what is assumed can often be ignored. Therefore, to avoid that oversight, a philosophy of ministry must be revisited after it is approved. Under the heading of pastoral awareness and engagement, I recommend pastors do three things: write, know, and engage.

Write

As has been noted, the participants had a clear framework for calling. However, two points regarding their frameworks stand out. First, the specifics of each framework varied from pastor to pastor. Second, when asked to articulate their framework for vocational calling generally, and the calling to pastoral ministry specifically, not all the pastors were able to quickly answer. Each drew from his experience, practical observation, and theological training to provide a framework, but for some it required time and thought to articulate.

There was an exception. One pastor had thought deeply about the calling to pastoral ministry, had condensed it to a concise framework, and committed it to writing. That act of writing gave him a ready lens through which to seek out future pastors.

For their own edification and for increased effectiveness in the work of raising up future pastors, I recommend pastoral leaders think deeply about the framework for calling to pastoral ministry and commit their framework to writing. This process should include theological reflection and an application appropriate to their local church context. The act of writing will sharpen their thinking, provide an opportunity for clarity and brevity, and give them a tool they can share broadly with their leadership.

Know

Effective pastoral leaders are more than pulpit preachers. They are shepherds who tend the entire flock. Their pastoral engagement informs their pulpit ministry, and the pulpit ministry fuels their pastoral engagement. The two cannot be separated. And for pastors who raise up the next generation of pastors, this engagement with the congregation must cross generational lines.

The philosophy of ministry that emphasizes raising up future pastors must include the pastor's intentional efforts to know the congregation, including the children, youth, and young adults. Knowing requires investing time with the individuals in these generational groups and nurturing a sense of curiosity about their lives. It requires the pastor to know their gifts, desires, and struggles. As will be noted in the call to leadership, the lead pastor should not engage on his own but rather should lead the church to be a "knowing church." This notion of becoming a "knowing church" can be

accomplished by building formal shepherding care systems among the leadership and by shaping a culture of relational intimacy and engagement among the congregation

Engage

The philosophy of ministry must build on this "knowing" so that pastors and churches are engaging. The summary findings indicated that pastors interviewed displayed a pattern of intergenerational awareness and engagement. This engagement took many forms. Among them, I recommend implementing a philosophy of intentional mentorship. The research indicates that this one-on-one relational engagement proved so effective, I further recommend that churches include mentorship in the lead pastor's job description.

Mentorship can be considered a subset of the broader discipleship ministry of the church. While discipleship is certainly relational, mentorship requires individuals to invest their time in the life of another for the pastoral purpose, at minimum of imparting spiritual, relational, and vocational wisdom.

The responsibility for mentorship does not rest solely on the lead pastor. It is far better for the pastor to invest this dedicated time with a few while nurturing a culture of mentorship among the leadership and within the church. This mentorship will take many forms, with varying requirements of time and duration. To provide for methodological flexibility that fits the local church context, I recommend pastoral leaders adopt a philosophy of ministry that calls them to engage in one-on-one mentoring. As will be noted in the call to pastoral leadership, this philosophy of ministry should include building systems and shaping a culture that encourages the leadership and congregation to also engage in one-on-one mentoring.

A Call to Pastoral Initiative and Boldness

A central thesis of this research is that the church must take a more active role in raising up future pastors. The biblical record and the experience of effective pastors indicates that this role requires pastoral initiative and boldness. Therefore, I recommend a philosophy of ministry that calls pastors and churches to do two things: pray and initiate.

Pray

Jesus' compassion for shepherd-less sheep was highlighted in Matthew 9:36. That compassion led him to instruct the disciples, and thus the church, to pray for "the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."[246] Any movement toward pastoral initiative and boldness must rest on the foundation of prayer. Such prayer was present in the lives and ministries of the participating pastors.

A philosophy of ministry that incorporates prayer for future ministry leaders will include multiple applications. In Acts 6:4, the apostles speak to the primacy of prayer in their shepherding ministry stating, "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." At its most basic level, pastoral leaders heed the words of Jesus in Matthew 9:38 by devoting themselves to pray for future pastors. Additionally, they are to lead their leaders and their congregations to pray in the same way.

Several of the pastors interviewed added another application of prayer. From the pulpit, they applied the text by calling individuals to pray, asking the Lord whether he might be calling them to vocational ministry. These pastors also called on parents to be willing to pray, asking the Lord to call their children to vocational ministry.

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[246] Matt. 9:38

There is an appropriately humbling effect of this type of prayer. It acknowledges that God has the wisdom to call his chosen servants to ministry and the effective power to do so. Humility and dependence are two pastoral characteristics even more necessary for initiating the conversation about calling.

Initiate

The biblical record certainly indicates that Jesus called his disciples to follow him. It also indicates that the Apostle Paul initiated the conversation about calling with those whom he appointed to serve local churches and those whom he called to join him on missionary journeys. I believe it is appropriate for us to then understand the role of shepherding includes the call to intentionally seek out future pastors.

There seems to be a gap, however, between this biblical call and the emphasis in the prevailing literature. Much of the literature around the call to ministry is written to people trying to determine whether they are called to ministry. Little is written to pastors and churches about identifying the call in their people and mentoring them towards ministry. This gap may be leading to what could be considered a stance of "receiving in" rather than "raising up."

Among the pastors interviewed for this research, almost all had another individual or pastor initiate the conversation about vocational ministry. While not universal in their current ministry, it was still prevalent among the majority. I believe this to be a key aspect of a philosophy of ministry that emphasizes raising up future pastors. Pastoral leaders must be willing to initiate the conversation about calling with those individuals in their congregation whom, through their ministry of knowing and engaging intergenerationally, they sense the Lord may be calling to ministry.

This pastoral initiation must be built on a foundation of prayer and should heed a word of biblical and practical caution. In 1 Timothy 5:22, Paul warns Timothy, "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands." Two pastors echoed this caution by sharing the pain they experienced over witnessing a protégé fall from ministry and even the faith. It should be noted that the call to initiate is only a step in a long, deliberate, prayerful process of pastoral mentorship and discernment. Pastors should feel the weight of it but should not shrink from it.

Finally, it should be noted that the call to pastoral boldness and initiation does not always mean that a pastor is declaring the calling of an individual. It also includes a more ready willingness to sow the seeds of pastoral calling to a broader number of people. It includes a willingness to talk about the call to pastoral ministry from the pulpit, in small group settings, and one-on-one. And importantly, it includes an intentional effort to sow seeds among a younger generation, to give them a vision for the possibility of vocational ministry as a worthy calling for their lives.

A Call to Pastoral Leadership

A philosophy of ministry that includes the call to raising up future pastors is not merely for the lead pastor. It is a philosophy to be embraced by the entire church. Pastors often embody many of the characteristics and actions described here. What is less prevalent is the leadership required to lead the church to adopt and embody the philosophy.

Personal pastoral shepherding has proven to be an effective investment in identifying and raising up pastors. However, to shepherd well means to shepherd the individuals and the collective body that is the church. Wise pastors will shepherd the

collective body on a macro level by leading the church in such a way that the work of raising up future pastors continues after their tenure.

If the church is responsible for affirming and issuing the call to ministry, then churches must lead in raising up pastors. Pastors who are effective at raising up future pastors must lead their churches so that the work is shared. This work, and the leadership it requires, is adaptive in nature, meaning it presents problems that require more than a simple, known technical solution.

The final element of the philosophy of ministry is this call to pastoral leadership. Again, rather than simply implementing a set of technical initiatives, it is a call for pastors to foster a convergence between pastor and congregation in intentions and behaviors. To do this, I recommend a philosophy of ministry that calls pastoral leaders to do two things: build and shape.

Build

Unless the pastor builds flexible but intentional systems to multiply the work, raising up future pastors will not extend beyond the ministry of the lead pastor. To the contrary, the wise pastoral leader will build systems that are sustainable and replicable. The structures and systems will vary from church to church depending on staff and congregational giftedness, denominational norms, and the local context.

Regardless of these factors, the research indicates that these systems should include a plan for mentoring that includes vocational discipleship. It is not enough for the lead pastor to mentor others. Leadership requires that the lead pastor build a system for mentorship that includes staff and congregation.

The research also indicates that pastors who provide multiple on ramps to ministry prove to be more effective at raising up future pastors. These on ramps and the systems that sustain them require a financial commitment from the church. Wise pastoral leadership can recognize this need, cast a vision for meeting it, and lead others to follow.

Shape

Organizational leadership over the long term must focus on culture, recognizing that all organizations possess a culture, whether it be intentionally or organically formed. Wise leadership will see the need and shape the culture of the church, particularly in raising up future pastors. The research indicated that the participants fostered cultures that sought out, supported, and celebrated those who left to pursue ministry.

Cultures which nurture this movement will be marked by relational intentionality within the congregation and generosity among the broader church. These cultures joyfully celebrate when the Lord calls an individual to ministry. They also reject a scarcity mindset that would prevent those individuals from leaving to pursue their calling.

Common among the participants was a winsome communication of pastoral ministry. They recognized that their communication shaped their listeners' responses, and they glorified God while being honest about the rigors and joys of the calling.

Another key cultural element for churches where future pastors are raised up is an environment where the people have permission to fail. The testing of gifting will include failure in some areas and success in others. Even in those areas of success, there is a process of spiritual, emotional, and practical maturity that must take place. Lead pastors should shape the culture of the church to embrace this reality by explicitly reminding their congregations of this truth, thus developing congregational patience with those who

are developing in their gifting. Effective pastoral leaders will shape the church culture through their broad pulpit ministry, their engagement with elders, leadership and staff, and their one-on-one mentoring.

Pastoral leadership that embraces the need for raising up future pastors will do well to shape the church culture in missional alignment with its role in sustaining and multiplying the work. This long-term adaptive leadership is integral to the broader philosophy of ministry.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study focused on the role of pastoral leaders in raising up future pastors. As with any study, there are limitations as to how extensive the research can be. Therefore, pursuit of the following areas of study could be highly valuable for the church in identifying ways to further expand the pipeline of pastors pursuing vocational ministry.

The qualitative research has been limited to pastoral leaders from a Reformed background within the PCA. It is recommended that further research be done on pastors across a spectrum of denominational and theological backgrounds to determine what additional lessons could be learned.

The research has also been focused on the role of pastoral leaders in raising up future pastors. It is further recommended that additional research be done on generational communication and vocational trends to better aid in the application of the findings across different generational lines.

Conclusion

This research sought to investigate how pastoral leaders raise up the next generation of pastors in their ministry contexts. This question was predicated on the realization that fewer numbers of pastoral candidates were pursuing Master of Divinity degrees, resulting in fewer pastors entering ordained vocational ministry. It was believed that the church would benefit from a study of the literature combined with qualitative research involving pastoral leaders with a proven track record of raising up pastors.

The research did highlight several pastoral and leadership traits and practices common among the pastors interviewed. It also revealed gaps in the literature connected to the subject matter. While the literature confirms the role of the church to confirm and issue the call to pastoral ministry, little is mentioned of the role of the church (and the pastors who lead the church) in raising up those future pastors.

Ultimately, the literature combined with the practical experience and ministry of the pastoral leaders interviewed showed that a clear framework for pastoral calling, a proactive intergenerational mentorship ministry, and a culture of leadership within the church are key ingredients for raising up future pastors. It is believed that a ministry will be most fruitful when these factors coincide with an active prayer ministry that honors Jesus' exhortation in Matthew 9:36-38.

While the research specifically identified nine pastoral characteristics common among the pastors interviewed, it is recommended that these commonalities be implemented through a broader philosophy of ministry embraced by an entire church. It is recommended that the philosophy of ministry be written specifically with the local

church in mind and include a call to pastoral awareness and engagement, pastoral initiative and boldness, and pastoral leadership.

It is the hope and prayer of the researcher that this work and the conclusions drawn from it will bear the fruit of future generations of pastors born out of the intentional ministry of pastors ministering in their local context. Finally, it is the hope and prayer of the researcher that this work and the conclusions drawn from it will bring glory to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Soli Deo Gloria!

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