

ABSTRACT
THE HEALTHY PASTOR:
SURVIVING IN MINISTRY WITHOUT LOSING YOUR SOUL

by

Terry L. Roberts

The Christian Church is facing a severe problem with ministers finishing early, if at all in their calling. Each month seemingly brings another case of immorality or suicide among prominent ministers. Among those less well known it is even more widespread.

Most reasons for not finishing well can be traced to mental and emotional problems. Usually, it is a soul problem more than anything else. Many things can cause harm to the emotional health and soul of ministers to keep them from finishing well. There are many reasons for burnout and bail out. It is vital to discover what ministers are doing right and what they are doing wrong in relation to emotional health. If those reasons can be identified, best practices can be established to better disciple and prepare ministers for longevity in ministry.

Many statistics exist about the longevity and health of pastors. Some are out of date, but many are current. In addition to researching the current literature about the mental health of pastors, the subjects were given a survey to find what most contributed to their emotional health. I used a survey designed by Peter Scazzero to evaluate the general emotional health of the ministers of the Ozark region of Rhema Ministerial Association International. Additionally, I interviewed a smaller group to gather more specific information.

Chapters 4 and 5 summarize the findings of this project. One of the most glaring lessons learned is the lack of personal discipleship for those entering the ministry. Much time and effort are being spent on their training in the Bible and practical ministry practices, but much too little is being spent on their personal development.

Another lesson that this project highlights is the coming structural changes in the Church around the world, and especially in the West. The future Church will most likely look much different than the present model with hybrid churches meeting online and in public spaces much more often. COVID-19 and technological improvements, among other changes, are ushering the Church into a whole new world.

The present model for training pastors and ministers, as well as the entire Church structure, must be prayerfully brought into the twenty-first century. Hopefully this project adds some insight into that reality.

THE HEALTHY PASTOR
SURVIVING IN MINISTRY WITHOUT LOSING YOUR SOUL

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Doctor of Ministry

by

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CHAPTER 1

NATURE OF THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter establishes the foundation for researching the emotional and mental health of pastors within the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International. I begin by telling my history and experience with the subject after over thirty-five years as lead pastor. A rationale for the project is presented, evolving from personal experience to research, and finally best practices. This chapter includes an overview of relevant literature and research on this subject as well as research design and research participants. A purpose statement, the research questions, and how results were gathered and analyzed, are included.

Personal Introduction

While visiting my daughter and future son-in-law at Bible school, I asked my son-in-law what he wanted to do in the future. He responded that he wanted to be a pastor. With the nudging of the Lord, I held back what I wanted to say, “Why would you want to do that?” That might have colored his perspective coming from a pastor of over three decades. I realized that deep in my soul I carried a fear for them and possibly a resentment of how difficult the last three decades had been for my wife and me. We were viewed as successful by most and outwardly everything was alright. Yet, it had been a full-on battle for our souls most of those years. God’s grace came through for us innumerable times, but I did not want to see them face the same battles we had faced.

In the beginning days of my ministry, I realized how important emotional health was in ministry and how neglected the subject had been. I asked a seasoned minister how

he stayed healthy in ministry, and he nervously moved on to another subject. He was not comfortable with the topic and later in his ministry experienced a moral failure due to burnout and emotional issues. This response was common and after decades of ministry I realized that this issue of mental and emotional health in ministry and in churches was a major reason ministers and churches were failing and why ministers were leaving the ministry, getting divorced, or experiencing severe depression.

Failure and abandonment were the results of not just a single issue, but usually the accumulation of issues and an inability to deal with single issues as they arose. When I talked about this subject at pastor and leader's conferences it was very well received and seemed to hit a nerve.

After decades of being in pastoral ministry as well as traveling internationally, I have realized that the primary reasons ministers burn out and leave ministry are emotional and mental versus simply spiritual reasons. What is happening inside them eventually leads them toward wrong decisions.

Without a firm grasp of what is happening and how to combat it, more and more ministers are reacting to stressful situations by just getting out of ministry. Ministers who feel alone, isolated, and beyond their personal ability to cope with pressure have very few places to go to.

Identifying and strengthening the factors that lead to healthy leaders and exposing the attitudes, beliefs and practices that distract from healthy ministry, are important. The high rate of church and pastoral failures needs to be honestly addressed and evaluated.

I am in a unique place with my thirty-five-year-plus in pastoral tenure and exposure to many ministers in churches of various sizes, to honestly expose the reality of ministry and help the next generation of pastors to not be saddled with the same issues.

Personally, my journey has included many feelings of failure, mediocrity, and isolation. The running joke is that Monday mornings are the worst time for pastors after the unmet expectations and frustrations of Sunday. The question I asked the seasoned minister referenced earlier was an honest question that I knew I needed to get some answers to. I have stumbled through to find some answers and hopefully some of those answers can be made more accessible by transparently examining the problems and addressing some real solutions.

After thirty-five years of pastoral ministry, I have begun to consider the unrealistic expectations of the American and Western church model for ministry. A lead pastor must be a motivational speaker, corporation CEO, counselor, leader of leaders, building contractor, and serve in many other roles as well. Some can possibly be good at a few of those things, but rarely do we see all those abilities and skills in one person. Even if they can do all those things well, it is exhausting.

In my study of biblical and current church planting, the models involved are much different. Multiplying churches are much more oriented towards shared ministry rather than the heavy dependency of the lead pastor or even the church staff. The biblical mandate for ministers to "... equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12 NLT), is shared ministry. Lead pastors and staff become trainers of ministers rather than doers of ministry. I personally believe that the Western church model will not be the primary way by which God reaches the world through the

Church. The Old Wineskin model has its place, but the New Wineskin is structurally able to handle the new wine (Mark 2:22).

Change can be slow and difficult, but the area of pastoral overload and unrealistic expectations have been major factors for burnout, illness, and overall frustration. Few occupations require the level of skill or the workload of pastors. A few supermen lead pastors may be found around, but they cannot be held up as the model for most ministers. The biblical model is for the pastor to oversee a realistic number of people, and to train and release others to do most of the ministry.

Many pastors are inwardly frustrated and feel like they are letting the church down if they are not always available. Jesus was not always available in his ministry. In Mark 1:38 Jesus said no to the crowds that were looking for him to follow their desires and plans for Jesus' life and ministry. He said yes to the Father's plan and thereby no to everything else. Insecure pastors are often unable to say no.

My dream is to help those in ministry be able to finish strong and not be ambushed by those things that have caused so many to fall short of their destiny. I have sat in too many rooms or received too many phone calls where the failure or fall of a minister was announced. The desire of God for his servants is that they reach their destiny and calling. It would be great if those in ministry could enjoy their calling and feel God's pleasure as they gave their lives for others.

Ruth Haley Barton sums up the problem of pressing on in life and ministry with a limp in your soul. "Losing your soul is like losing your credit card. You think it's in your wallet so you don't give it much thought until one day you reach for it and can't find it" (13).

Statement of the Problem

Several recent high-profile pastor suicides have made the news. While most do not commit suicide, many pastors leave ministry due to emotional and mental issues that are never addressed and, most often, just ignored until they are out of control. The pastors who do stay often still find themselves limping through ministry. The number of pastors leaving ministry, the number of churches closing yearly, and the overall lack of health in American pastors demand a closer look at the problem. Not enough has been done to study and alleviate the emotional and mental issues faced by pastors.

Much of the focus has been on factors that cause ministers to leave the ministry. Those statistics are debatable but not enough emphasis has been made to help those who stay in ministry and are not mentally and emotionally healthy enough to reach their full potential. This of course affects their ability to serve and help others effectively.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to evaluate the current state of and discern the best practices for achieving and maintaining the mental and emotional health of pastors within the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International with wider implications for the whole Church.

Research Questions

To discover and evaluate the mental and emotional health of pastors in the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International, the research was guided by the following three Questions:

Research Question # 1

According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what contributes most to achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association?

Research Question # 2

According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what obstacles inhibit achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches?

Research Question # 3

Moving forward, what are best practices for achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in the Ozark Region?

Rationale for the Project

It is important to discover what causes pastors and ministers to abandon their call to ministry or fall into moral problems. The problem could easily be blamed on a demon or some other spiritual issue. While one of those things could be a root cause, most likely it is due to emotional and mental health issues. It is important to set up a framework to train and prepare ministers for the stress and strain of ministry before the pressure comes. Support systems can be utilized by the minister to help him navigate the cold waters of loneliness, insecurity and the false expectations of themselves and others.

Spiritual and emotional health for ministers has been a topic of interest recently due to several high-profile suicides of seemingly successful pastors. American culture also has a renewed interest in mental health due to mass shootings and a need to

understand what is driving them. Hopefully a renewed interest in the subject will help get to the answers that were long ignored due to the stigma of addressing the subject of mental health. The subject is often ignored and avoided at the risk of seeming to be crazy or mentally deficient. Much time has been spent addressing the physical health and needs of ministers, but emotional and mental health has often been taboo.

The first reason this study matters is because of the incredible need for healthy pastors to finish strong in ministry. Burnout, moral failures and emotional exhaustion have caused many ministers to not finish their course.

This project is important because most leaders in the Bible did not finish strong or else had major failures.

There are around eight hundred or so leaders mentioned in the Bible. There are about one hundred who have data that helps you interpret their leadership. About fifty of these have enough data for evaluation of their finish. About one in three finished well. Anecdotal evidence from today indicates that this ratio is probably generous. Probably less than one in three are finishing well today (Meyers).

This project is important because more ministers are dropping out of ministry due to mental and emotional pressure than spiritual attacks. The ones who are not dropping out often function below their potential because of problems that can be addressed and often removed.

This project is important because church planters and pastors who are unhealthy are not fruitful and effective in ministry.

Definition of Key Terms

Mental Health: “Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices” (Mental Health).

Mental health is a state of successful performance of mental function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and the ability to adapt to change and to cope with challenges. Mental health is essential to personal well-being, family and interpersonal relationships, and the ability to contribute to community or society. Mental disorders are health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, and/or behavior that are associated with distress and/or impaired functioning. Mental disorders contribute to a host of problems that may include disability, pain, or death. Mental illness is the term that refers collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders (Mayo Clinic).

Emotional Health: “Emotional health, a concept synonymous with wellbeing, is vital to living a life of wholeness, balance, and contentment. Simply put, an emotional health definition is one that includes resilience - getting up when life knocks you down. Rather than living a problem-free life (quite impossible if you are a human being), emotional health means that one can bounce back from setbacks and thrive despite problems” (Peterson). A non-clinical definition of emotional health is the state of experiencing biblical peace and joy.

Spirit versus Soul: In this research project the terms spirit and soul shall be distinguished from each other in the following way: a person’s spirit is the essence of their life before God and the means of communicating with and knowing him. It is the part of a person that receives eternal life upon submitting to Jesus Christ and is the part of them that is recreated (justification). A person’s soul is their intellect, emotions and will. With the mind—one thinks, with the will—one decides, and with the emotions—one

feels. The soul is changed by a process that begins at salvation and continues throughout their lifetime as the soul is restored and renewed (sanctification). The mind and soul are transformed as the mind is renewed and the thinking process is changed (Rom. 12:1-2). They often overlap and are difficult to separate. The body and soul are easy to differentiate while the Bible says only Scripture itself can distinguish between spirit and soul. “For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires” (Heb.4:12). Scripture can cast light on the depths of the human soul.

While they seem to always function together in some sense, the soul will be the primary study of this project. That is where mental and emotional health will be addressed.

Soul: The term soul is derived from the biblical use of the word. It includes the human will, intellect, and emotions. It is differentiated from the human spirit. Hebrews 4:12 makes this distinction “... piercing to the division of soul and of spirit,” (ESV). Paul again makes this distinction in 1 Thessalonians 5:23; “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (ESV). This Scripture makes a clear distinction between body (*sōma*), soul (*psuchē*) and spirit (*pneúma*) (Greek word definitions from Zodhiates).

In the Old Testament the term for soul seems to refer often to the entire person. In Genesis 2:7 the text uses the Hebrew word “*nepeš*” to refer to Adam as a living person (Waltke 587). “Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He

breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person" (NLT).

Your soul is what integrates your will (your intentions), your mind (your thoughts and feelings, your values and conscience), and your body (your face, body language, and actions) into a single life. A soul is healthy-well-ordered-when there is harmony between these three entities and God's intent for all creation. When you're connected with God and other people in life, you have a healthy soul (Ortberg 43).

Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International: The Ozark Region encompasses the ministers ordained with Rhema Ministerial Association International in Missouri and Arkansas. The total number of lead pastors in that region is approximately forty.

To be ordained with Rhema Ministerial Association International (R.M.A.I.), the participants had to be graduates of one of the two hundred fifty plus worldwide Rhema Bible colleges and apply for ordination. R.M.A.I. is limited to these restrictions and qualifications.

Effectiveness in ministry: Effectiveness in ministry as defined in this study is not determined by numerical growth but by finishing the course of ministry and leaving or quitting only as determined by the Lord's leading and not circumstances.

Delimitations

To focus the research obtained in this project, its scope was limited to the approximately forty lead pastors within the Ozark Region of Rhema Association International, which included Missouri and Arkansas. That district had a close network of relationships and gathered several times yearly for fellowship and small conferences. While the research was limited to this group, the literature studied, and the results have

wider implications for the entire Church. These churches have similar doctrine and philosophies of ministry. Most of the churches in this region were rural.

Review of Relevant Literature

This project consulted a wide variety of literature in the theological as well as psychological fields. A great deal of theological as well as biblical background were provided as a foundation to the project.

J. Robert Clinton is often quoted as saying about one third of leaders finish well based on the criteria he lays out in his books. He studied biblical leaders extensively and has expanded it to contemporary leaders as well. His research as a leadership professor at Fuller Theological Seminary has been used by many as the standard for judging the effectiveness of leaders.

There are around eight hundred or so leaders mentioned in the Bible. There are about one hundred who have data that helps you interpret their leadership. About fifty of these have enough data for evaluation of their finish. About one in three finished well. Anecdotal evidence from today indicates that this ratio is probably generous. Probably less than one in three are finishing well today (242).

Thrall comments on the conclusions reached by Clinton. He includes the criteria that this statistic is based on.

After having conducted extensive research, Dr. J. Robert Clinton, professor of leadership at Fuller Theological Seminary, believes that more than 70 percent of leaders do not finish well. He bases this startling statistic on six criteria, gleaned from common traits among leaders who did not finish well according to their self-analysis, the analysis of their peers and followers, or the teachings of their professed religion. First, leaders who did not finish well lose their learning posture. They stop listening and growing. Second, the attractiveness of their character wanes. Third, they stop living by their convictions. Fourth, they fail to leave behind ultimate contributions. Fifth, they stop walking in an awareness of their influence and destiny. Finally, leaders who finish poorly lose their once vibrant relationship with God. (14).

The Bible has many instances of leaders who struggled with mental and emotional health. Elijah, Jonah, David, and many others wrestled with depression. The Bible gives a lot of information about how to combat mental and emotional issues as well.

Many recent autobiographical studies from pastors and leaders deal with burnout, stress, and psychological issues that have affected their ministries. Peter Scazzero has authored several books about emotional health for pastors and churches in general. Wayne Cordeiro tells his story of how he was forced to take a sabbatical to recover from exhaustion and psychological stress that impacted his physical health. Cordeiro discovered by experience how burnout affects your soul when we rely on our own strength rather than God's.

Other leaders echo the same concerns about ministering in human strength alone.

A major reason for the high incidence of burnout in the ministry today could be that we are ministering in our own strength rather than in the Spirit's inexhaustible resources. Susan Pearlman, a leader in the Jews for Jesus ministry, once said, "Burnout takes place when the wick and not the oil is burning (Fernando 36).

Denominations and networks have studied this area as well and their works were consulted. Many previous statistics about pastoral burnout and pastor statistics in general are traced back to the *Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership Development*. Their studies started in 1989 as a *Fuller Institute* project and have been picked up by others since. Some have challenged the accuracy of these statistics, but they were included here as the gold standard for pastoral statistics.

History is full of leaders who struggled with some form of mental illness such as Winston Churchill, Abraham Lincoln, Virginia Woolf, Beethoven, Isaac Newton, and many others. It is obvious that mental illness did not disqualify leaders from

accomplishing great things whether they were secular or Christian, but it has made many lives miserable. In many cases it has caused pastors to limp their way through the ministry. A pastor may continue in leadership as a heretic, but few continue after an emotional breakdown. Neither of those conditions are desirable, but it points out the paralysis that emotional issues can bring. Current psychology provides statistics and updates on the current state and frequency of mental health issues. Mental health is a topic of much debate as it relates to mass shootings and the homelessness problem.

Research Methodology

Type of Research

This project was a mixed method, pre-intervention study, which researched the mental and emotional health of lead pastors with the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International. Both the quantitative method of a questionnaire and survey as well as the qualitative method of interviews were used to collect data to obtain a balanced and well-rounded research.

The research was conducted to discover and analyze the current state of mental and emotional health of the lead pastors in the Ozark district. The results were compared to the surveys, statistics and information presented about lead pastors in other parts of the Church in America. The literature review provided a framework for information that was then focused specifically on the issues faced by the R.M.A.I. pastors in the Ozark region. Additionally, some lead pastors were given a separate interview concerning the issues they dealt with the most to delve deeper into possible emotional issues pastors face.

Best practices for current and future lead pastors were developed from this research. The conclusions formed by other researchers and authors again provided the skeleton of these best practices which were focused and made more specific for R.M.A.I. pastors.

Participants

The ministers and pastors of the Ozark Region (Missouri and Arkansas) of the Rhema Ministerial Association International (R.M.A.I.) took part in this research. At the time of this research, there were currently about forty licensed and ordained ministers in the Ozark region. That number is not exact due to the mobility of pastors.

Emailed questionnaires were sent to all of them, and interviews were conducted with several of them at the annual retreat held in Branson, Missouri. Questionnaires were emailed to the leaders of the region as well as personal interviews.

Instrumentation

Qualitative analysis of the questionnaires and interviews looked for specific recurring themes or issues. This portion of the analysis was confidential and consisted of questions relating to mental and emotional health. Peter Scazzero's inventory of spiritual/emotional health from the book, *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, helped discover the spiritual and emotional health of the leaders surveyed (61-67). This inventory provided a general overview of the emotional health of leaders specifically around personal discipleship. The interpretation guide provided by Scazzero rates each participant in one of the following areas of emotional maturity; emotional infant, emotional child, emotional adolescent, or emotional adult (66-67). The survey did not

include the interpretation guide but mentioned that a guide is available from Scazzero if desired to see their level of emotional maturity.

Additionally, an accompanying researcher-designed survey asked the participants to rate the factors that have most contributed to their spiritual and emotional health in several areas.

The questionnaire and survey were used to answer Research Questions #1 and #2 to determine the most pertinent issues the pastors faced as related to mental and emotional health.

The interviews further refined these issues and helped develop best practices to overcome these issues for those involved with wider implications for the Body of Christ.

Data Collection

The research was gathered using pre-intervention mixed methods. The questionnaires and survey used quantitative analysis. The questionnaire consisting of fifty-six questions was emailed to all Ozark Region pastors within R.M.A.I. and summarized. The questionnaire and survey, consisting of questions related to Research Questions #1 and #2, concerned what most contributes to mental and emotional health for lead pastors; as well, they identified obstacles to mental and emotional health. The questionnaire was known as the *Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment* and the *Researcher-Designed Pastor Survey*.

Qualitative methods were used as well to conduct the interviews. The interviews were performed in a semi-structured format and consisted of twelve questions. These questions built on the research and asked what best practices would create and help

maintain mental and emotional health in lead pastors. The document used to conduct the interviews is known as the *Pastoral Interview*.

Data collection occurred in 2021 between April and September.

Data Analysis

The research data, specifically the questionnaire and interview manuscript, were reviewed multiple times to observe trends and patterns. Tim Sensing's comments, on Moschella's suggestion of three ways to read the data, were followed. "A literal reading will highlight particular words, phrases, language, interruptions, and gestures. An interpretive reading of the data allows you to select and organize the document according to "implied or inferred meanings." Finally, she suggests a reflexive reading that brings to bear your personal feelings and understandings of the data" (Sensing 196).

The interview manuscripts were coded into sub-themes. "Miles and Huberman call this "pattern coding" and suggest four important functions: "1) It reduces large amounts of data into a smaller number of analytic units. 2) It gets the researcher into analysis during data collection, so that later fieldwork can be more focused. 3) It helps the researcher elaborate a cognitive map, an evolving, more integrated schema for understanding local incidents and interactions. 4) For multi-case studies, it lays the groundwork for cross-case analysis by surfacing common themes and directional processes" (Sensing 204).

Generalizability

The results of this project are transferable to other situations beyond the Ozark region of R.M.A.I. since it deals with general mental and emotional health for lead pastors.

The findings are significant because they relate to lead pastors in almost any location or situation. The size of the churches and responsibilities of the lead pastors differ but the general principles and findings are transferrable. The desired result of this research, though specific to the Ozark region of R.M.A.I. is to provide wider implications to other settings and the entire Body of Christ.

Project Overview

A literature review in Chapter 2 shows the theological, biblical, and current state of the mental and emotional health of pastors. Chapter 3 shows how this research was structured to assess the current mental and emotional state of lead pastors in the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International. Chapter 4 analyzes the results of the research obtained through the questionnaires, and interviews. Chapter 5 discusses the overall results and conclusions of the study with best practices for gaining and maintaining mental and emotional health as a lead pastor.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of the Chapter

The goal of this project was to evaluate the current state of and discern the best practices for achieving and maintaining the mental and emotional health of pastors within the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International with wider implications for the whole Church. In order to accurately evaluate the current state of the mental and emotional health of pastors as well as consider other's best practices, an in-depth review of current literature in both areas was required. Due to recent pastor suicides and ministry failures, there is an abundance of discussion about the subject is available, both in print and in conferences. Steve Austin addressed the issue in a recent USA Today article:

The death by apparent suicide of Pastor Jarrid Wilson stunned many of us, forcing us to try to answer the question: How do we deal with mental health in church? I don't know Jarrid's story intimately, but I do know what it's like to long for death when I feel hopeless. I was a pastor when I nearly died by suicide. If you had to read that sentence a second time, I get it. It's pretty jarring to read. At 29 years old, my life had reached a point where I felt there was no hope, so I tried to die in a hotel room, with a Bible in my lap, as I feverishly wrote my suicide notes. I prayed I would never wake up. That was seven years ago this month. Speaking of prayer, "I'm praying for you," is not a solution, even though it feels like the right thing to say. I'm no longer in formal ministry and no longer a pastor, but I speak to congregations offering tangible changes they can make to help those of us who are struggling. After years of therapy, I've decided churches need to look more like psych wards.

Austin's inference is of course that churches do not usually address properly the whole area of mental and emotional health. Other prominent church leaders have begun to champion the issue as well. Pastor Rick and Kay Warren became advocates for mental health after losing their son to suicide. Her website makes her new perspective clear, "It

is difficult to imagine that 50% of adults will experience mental illness in their lifetime. The commitment of Saddleback Church to people living with mental illness greatly increased on April 5, 2013, when Pastor Rick and Kay's youngest son, Matthew, took his life after a lifelong struggle with mental illness" (Mental Health).

Mental and emotional health are not usually addressed directly in public settings. More often they are discussed and addressed in specific pastoral or care provider settings. Therefore, most of the literature is addressed to pastors and leaders.

Part of the literature review highlights the stories of pastors who were affected by mental and emotional health issues and what they did to address those challenges. The Bible contains an abundance of information dealing with the soul, mind, and emotions. The review is built on the primary foundation of Scripture as the ultimate answer to mental and emotional problems.

Biblical and Theological Foundations for Mental and Emotional Health

The Bible is surprisingly full of characters who faced seemingly insurmountable depression, fear, or other emotional issues. Strength and effectiveness in ministry within Scripture are almost always accompanied with insecurity and inner struggles. They are more apparent in some characters, but seems to be present in most of the players within Scripture. Some of the greatest feats of faith are followed by times of depression and the desire for God to kill them.

Old Testament Foundations for Mental and Emotional Health

The Old Testament provides many examples of men and women who faced struggled with mental and emotional health for various reasons. The overarching reason for emotional problems and the primary occupational hazard of ministry seems to be

discouragement. While not the best way to function, Bible characters and ministers can continue in ministry or plant churches while in moral failure or heresy, but discouragement seems to be the biggest obstacle they face. Various reasons account for discouragement and emotional problems. Four ways of viewing obstacles to ministry mental and emotional health in ministry are as follows: lack of confidence and self-esteem issues, loneliness and isolation, physical exhaustion and burnout, and opposition. These four issues arise in the Old Testament, the New Testament, history, and currently in pastoral ministry. While there are other factors, these four encompass a great deal of the obstacles to emotional and mental health.

1. Lack of confidence and self-esteem issues

The issue of self-esteem is central to mental health. Without a healthy self-esteem, an individual typically is unable to succeed either in love or work. In love, individuals may be afraid to express unique, even idiosyncratic, aspects of their own personalities for fear of being rejected by others. Instead, they will disguise more personal expressions of self under the mask of social convention. For example, an individual with low self-esteem often may appear stilted and pompous. The situation in work is analogous and equally constricting. Individuals may be afraid to express their own ideas and, thus, their own creativity because of their fear of criticism and their need for approval. They will be afraid to be different and thus inhibit what might be their most valuable contributions. They may be totally unable to utilize their special gifts and may be paralyzed by any imperfections or disabilities (Schwartz and Kaplan 29).

Biblical characters resisted their calling and assignments often by citing the reasons for their lack of qualifications.

- Moses said he could not speak. (Exodus 4:10)

Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush shows him as the reluctant deliverer.

Moses and God have a humorous interaction in Exodus 3-4. After God tells Moses that he has a plan to deliver the Israelites through him Moses responds, "Who am I to

appear before Pharaoh?" (3:11 NLT). God then informs Moses that it did not matter because he would be accompanying him (3:12). Moses desires to know in that case, who God is (3:13). What follows is God revealing his divine name to Moses, but Moses is still not convinced (3:14-15). God assures Moses that miracles will follow his obedience and he demonstrates them to Moses. Still, Moses thinks he is unable to speak, and God should send someone else. God becomes angry but agrees to send his brother Aaron to be his spokesman.

An interesting comment in the New Testament about Moses shows how God viewed him and his ability to carry out his ministry, "Moses was taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was powerful in both speech and action" (Acts 7:2 NLT). God did not see Moses as someone who was unable to speak effectively even though Moses saw himself that way. The lesson for Moses was to see himself and his calling from God's perspective instead of from a human point of view.

- Jeremiah complained that he was too young. (Jeremiah 1:6)
- Deborah was reluctant to be the leader because she was a woman. (Judges 4:4-9)
- Gideon was concerned that he was too unknown to be a leader in Israel. (Judges 6:12-15)
- King Saul was humble and unassuming when he began serving the Lord and the people of Israel but later had jealousy and insecurity issues with his successor, David. 1 Samuel 10:20-23 records Saul hiding when he was called upon to become king. He went from humility to tyranny during his reign. 1 Samuel 18:8-16 records Saul's transformation:

This made Saul very angry. “What’s this?” he said. “They credit David with ten thousands and me with only thousands. Next they’ll be making him their king!” So from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David. The very next day a tormenting spirit from God overwhelmed Saul, and he began to rave in his house like a madman. David was playing the harp, as he did each day. But Saul had a spear in his hand, and he suddenly hurled it at David, intending to pin him to the wall. But David escaped him twice. Saul was then afraid of David, for the LORD was with David and had turned away from Saul. Finally, Saul sent him away and appointed him commander over 1,000 men, and David faithfully led his troops into battle. David continued to succeed in everything he did, for the LORD was with him. When Saul recognized this, he became even more afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David because he was so successful at leading his troops into battle (NLT).

Few Old Testament Bible characters exuded confidence in their ability to be a spokesperson for God. That quality of humility is admirable but false humility or insecurity can paralyze one’s ability to be bold in action and speech. A common human response to God’s calling is to feel unqualified. The response of faith that God qualifies humans for ministry and service is what makes the difference when the person ultimately accepts the call from God.

2. Loneliness and isolation

Old Testament characters often seemed to feel like they were isolated and all alone in their assignments. Whether by circumstances or choice, they seldom functioned on a team.

Elie Wiesel said, “Moses was the greatest legislator and commander-in-chief of the first liberation army. He was a prophet, God’s representative to the people and the people’s representative to God. And he never had a good day in his life. Either the people were against him or God was against him” (Barton 157). Half of the time God wanted to

kill the Israelites and Moses wanted to kill them the other half. Fortunately, it was never at the same time!

After facing opposition from the Egyptians, the Israelites, and his own sister Miriam, Moses got used to conflict. Many times, he appeared to be all alone as he obeyed the call of God to lead the Israelites into freedom. Although the task was difficult, to say the least, he persevered. His emotions were obvious as he displayed anger because of Pharaoh's obstinance in Exodus 11:8, "And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger" (ESV).

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His anger is expressed itself again in the incident with the golden calf in Exodus 32:19-20:

And as soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. He took the calf that they had made and burned it with fire and ground it to powder and scattered it on the water and made the people of Israel drink it (ESV).

In a third display of anger recorded in Numbers 20:10-12 Moses was forbidden from entering the Promised Land because of his emotional outburst.

Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels: shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation

drank, and their livestock. And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them (ESV).

The emotional struggles of Moses are best revealed in his prayer to God in Exodus 33:12-16 when he struggled with the enormity of his calling and the responsibility he felt:

Moses said to the LORD, “See, you say to me, ‘Bring up this people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.” And he said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” And he said to him, “If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth? (ESV)

The above passage reveals how much Moses felt alone. He had previously faced marital and leadership issues, but his sense of loneliness was so extreme that he asked God to reconsider his plans to use him as a leader.

Elijah had a great ministry victory in 1 Kings 18 where he confronted and defeated the prophets of Baal. What a contrast with 1 Kings 19 where Elijah was threatened by Jezebel and ran for his life. He was overcome by fear and discouragement, immediately after a great success.

He complained to the Lord is that he was all alone in his struggle against evil. He said, “I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away (ESV).

God let him know that there were at least seven thousand more who were on God’s side as well.

David ran from King Saul and hid in the cave of Adullam in I Samuel 22. Told that he will be the next King of Israel, but he looked like an outcast. He often had to run when pursued by his enemies. King Saul and even his own son pursued him to kill him. He faced isolation frequently. He expressed faith in God during loneliness and opposition in Psalm 3:

O LORD, how many are my foes! Many are rising against me; many are saying of my soul, "There is no salvation for him in God. But you, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head. I cried aloud to the LORD, and he answered me from his holy hill. I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the LORD sustained me. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around (ESV).

David openly addressed his soul struggles and spoke Psalms to himself to help him come out of it.

"Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation" (Psalm 42:5 ESV). He seemed so frustrated at himself that he allowed his discouragement to overtake him. He typified the struggle between a downcast soul and a heart that wanted to trust God.

Emotional issues may be caused by isolation, but they may also push a person to further isolation. Seeking out a friend when feeling bad about oneself is not a natural response. David developed the habit of worship and pursuing God when he struggled emotionally. His affair with Bathsheba is a good indicator that he did not have a close relationship with his family or friends.

3. Physical exhaustion and burnout

Many Bible characters experienced exhaustion and burnout from physically overtaxing themselves. David experienced exhaustion from running away from King Saul

and his son. Elijah likewise was tired from running away from Queen Jezebel. In both cases, it was the result of physical exertion as well as the threat to their lives.

Jonah exhibited the signs of tiredness and burnout after delivering God's message to Nineveh. He was completely distraught with God's mercy towards the Ninevites:

This change of plans greatly upset Jonah, and he became very angry. "So he complained to the LORD about it: "Didn't I say before I left home that you would do this, LORD? That is why I ran away to Tarshish! I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. You are eager to turn back from destroying people. Just kill me now, LORD! I'd rather be dead than alive if what I predicted will not happen. The LORD replied, "Is it right for you to be angry about this? Then Jonah went out to the east side of the city and made a shelter to sit under as he waited to see what would happen to the city. And the LORD God arranged for a leafy plant to grow there, and soon it spread its broad leaves over Jonah's head, shading him from the sun. This eased his discomfort, and Jonah was very grateful for the plant. But God also arranged for a worm! The next morning at dawn the worm ate through the stem of the plant so that it withered away. And as the sun grew hot, God arranged for a scorching east wind to blow on Jonah. The sun beat down on his head until he grew faint and wished to die. "Death is certainly better than living like this!" he exclaimed (Jonah 4:1-8 NLT).

Ruling out physiological or physical factors without actual examination of the Bible character's psychological and physical health is impossible in all of the above cases. In every case of mental and emotional health in Scripture, the possibility exists of a medical issue or chemical imbalance contributing to the character's state of mind. No way exists to know whether those issues were part of the problem. In each case, other factors such as heredity and environment may have had a role in the emotional state of those involved.

Mental illnesses, in general, are thought to be caused by a variety of genetic and environmental factors:

- Inherited traits. Mental illness is more common in people whose blood relatives also have a mental illness. Certain genes may increase your risk of developing a mental illness, and your life situation may trigger it.
- Environmental exposures before birth. Exposure to environmental stressors, inflammatory conditions, toxins, alcohol or drugs while in the womb can sometimes be linked to mental illness.
- Brain chemistry. Neurotransmitters are naturally occurring brain chemicals that carry signals to other parts of your brain and body. When the neural networks involving these chemicals are impaired, the function of nerve receptors and nerve systems change, leading to depression and other emotional disorders” (Mental Illness).

4. Opposition

Opposition takes two forms. First is personal opposition to God’s plan. This is exemplified in Jonah’s case. He received a call to ministry to the Ninevites. The problem was that he disliked, and you might even say despised them. They were known as cruel enemies of the Israelites. After running away from his assignment, he returned to obey God’s call. Even though he obeyed, he never corrected his attitude. He was opposed to God’s plan, and it troubled him greatly. God made it clear through the prophet Isaiah that action must be accompanied with the proper attitude. “If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken” (Isaiah 1:19-20 ESV). Your body and soul must both be willing with God’s purpose and plan.

After Nineveh repented, Jonah was so discouraged he wanted to die. Interestingly, the request of several biblical characters after great success is “please kill me God” (e.g., 1 Kings 19:4 and Jonah 4:9).

After relenting from punishing the Ninevites Jonah whined to God in Jonah 4:3, “Just kill me now, LORD! I’d rather be dead than alive if what I predicted will not happen” (NLT).

The second form of opposition that leads to emotional issues is opposition from others. This was illustrated in the Israelites' opposition to Moses. Moses experienced exhaustion from the murmuring and criticism of the Israelites. Distinguishing between emotional and physical exhaustion is difficult because they are often so closely merged. The condition of the soul and the state of the physical body have an undeniable link. Anastasia Stephens addresses that link:

Our emotions have a capacity to harm and heal – not just psychologically but physically. Research has shown that having to deliver a speech can double the severity of allergy symptoms for two days, while crying is soothing because stress hormones are carried out of your body in tears. So, just how do feelings affect our health?"

God makes the emotional-physical connection even stronger in the book of Proverbs; “A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, ...” (Prov. 14:30 ESV).

Jeremiah faced opposition from Judah. Not taking that personally would have been extremely hard, despite the calling he had on his life from God.

As hinted earlier, an aura of conflict surrounded Jeremiah almost from the beginning. He lashed out against the sins of his countrymen (44:23), scoring them severely for their idolatry (16:10–13,20; 22:9; 32:29; 44:2–3,8,17–19,25)—which sometimes even involved sacrificing their children to foreign gods (see 7:30–34 and notes). But Jeremiah loved the people of Judah in spite of their sins, and he prayed for them (14:7,20) even when the Lord told him not to (7:16; 11:14; 14:11). Judgment is one of the all-pervasive themes in Jeremiah's writings, though he was careful to point out that repentance, if sincere, would postpone the otherwise inevitable. His counsel of submission to Babylon and his message of “life as usual” for the exiles of the early deportations branded him as a traitor in the eyes of many (Intro to Jeremiah).

The Old Testament records many examples of men and women who faced emotional issues, both positive and negative. The Scripture records the honest events and emotional highs and lows of its characters.

New Testament Foundations for Mental and Emotional Health

Matthew 26 records Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane before he was taken captive. He was obviously troubled about what he is getting ready to face and asked his disciples to at least pray with him for an hour. Jesus interacted with the Father in his prayer and told his disciples that he was struggling. “He took Peter and Zebedee’s two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. He told them, “My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me” (37-38 NLT).

Luke recorded the scene and included the fact that Jesus was troubled to the point of sweating drops of blood (22:44). In the Garden of Gethsemane and in the wilderness after Jesus was tempted, angels came to minister to him (Matt. 4:11). Both cases imply that Jesus had needs that the angels attended to.

Jesus was human as well as divine, and he faced real soul issues—being tempted like humans yet without giving in (Heb. 4:15). In that sense, he is a good example of the types of pressure all followers of Jesus as well as everyone else will face. He was able to face every issue and problem while remaining emotionally healthy.

Mental and emotional problems seem to take the same pattern in the New Testament as in the Old Testament. The major causes seem universal.

1. Lack of confidence and self-esteem issues

The acceptance of oneself is the essence of the whole moral problem and the epitome of a whole outlook on life. That I feed the hungry, that I forgive an insult, that I love my enemy in the name of Christ—are all undoubtably great virtues. What I do unto the least of my brethren, that I do unto Christ. But what if I should discover that the least amongst them all, the poorest of all the beggars, the most impudent of all the offenders,

the very enemy himself—that these are within me, and that I myself stand in need of the alms of my own kindness—that I myself am the enemy who must be loved—what then? As a rule, the Christians attitude is then reversed; there is no longer any question of love or long-suffering; we say to the brother within us “Raca,” and condemn and rage against ourselves (Jung 235).

Except for Jesus himself, every New Testament character had to face the reality of their human limitations and the effects and residue of sin. Sin is presented as the cause of confusion and every other work of the flesh. Every follower of Jesus had to come to terms with the fact that it was not their human worth but God’s worth that made them accepted before God.

Judas lost his self-worth and value after betraying Jesus to the point where suicide was the only answer he saw. Peter, on the other hand, committed a sin that arguably was as severe as what Judas did. Peter was overcome with grief, but he did not commit suicide. Jesus restored Peter to the point where he had the confidence to preach the first New Testament sermon in Acts 2. Jesus made it clear that Peter was restored and forgiven at a breakfast meeting after the resurrection (John 21:15-22). Self-loathing brought Judas to suicide, whereas Peter was able to accept forgiveness and moved forward.

The Apostle Paul faced self-doubt due to his past persecution of Christians. He was able to overcome it in part due to the direct intervention of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11-12), appearances of angels (Acts 27:23-24), and a probable trip to heaven (2 Cor. 12:1-7). His revelation of the New Creation helped him overcome his past and press on to the future. Paul told the Galatian Church that he had privately met with the leaders of the Jerusalem Church to make sure that he and his message were doctrinally correct (Gal. 2:1-3).

2. Loneliness and isolation

The degree of isolation and loneliness that the Apostle John must have felt as the last living Apostle of the Lamb is difficult to imagine. He outlived them all and faced banishment to the Isle of Patmos. He had a supernatural outcome, but not before wondering why he was where he was.

Paul faced a similar situation at his last imprisonment in Rome before his death. His raw emotions came out in his letter to Timothy.

Timothy, please come as soon as you can. Demas has deserted me because he loves the things of this life and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus has gone to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Bring Mark with you when you come, for he will be helpful to me in my ministry (2 Tim. 4:9-11 NLT).

In his appearance before the judge, he was all alone: “The first time I was brought before the judge, no one came with me. Everyone abandoned me. May it not be counted against them” (4:16).

John the Baptist is often seen as someone who was completely unshakeable. After declaring Jesus to be the Messiah and “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29 NLT), he privately sent his disciples to Jesus to question whether he was indeed the Lamb of God and Messiah or whether it might be someone else (Matt. 11:3). John asked that from prison after being jailed by Herod. John was later executed by Herod and no Bible reference is given to clarify whether John died believing he had failed or not. In any event, he clearly faced the isolation and loneliness of jail and being a unique voice for God that was often misunderstood by those who heard him.

3. Physical exhaustion and burnout

Considering the travel methods and lack of other conveniences of the time, all the followers of Jesus were tired, especially those spreading the message around the Roman Empire.

The Gospel of Mark portrays Jesus constantly in search of a place for his disciples to get some rest. One gets the picture of rush hour traffic in most ministry situations in that account of Jesus' life and ministry. As Jesus was getting off of boats on the Sea of Galilee, he was usually met by a ministry need which affected the other disciples as well (5:1-2, 21 and 6:34, 55-56). Stanley Hauerwas stated that those in ministry could become "a quivering mass of availability" (qtd. in Seamands 26).

Jesus was aware of the toll of ministry on his disciples. Mark 6 says the apostles returned to Jesus from their ministry tour and told him all they had done and taught. Then Jesus said, "Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile." He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat (30-31 NLT).

Jesus let the disciples participate in his ministry while he was with them on earth.

Seamands makes the point that:

All authentic ministry participates in Christ's ongoing ministry. Ministry is essentially about our joining Christ in his ministry, not his joining us in ours. So much stress and burnout is the direct result of our failure to grasp this basic truth about ministry. We are carrying burdens we were never designed to carry-burdens that Christ never intended for us to carry. Instead of following Christ the Leader, we wrongly assume the burden of leadership ourselves. No wonder we collapse under its weight (21).

Jesus was made the point to his disciples and is still endeavoring to make that point to his current disciples.

Paul moved throughout the empire. His schedule was non-stop and very taxing. As a Jewish believer he was probably accustomed to keeping the weekly sabbath, which provided the opportunity for some rest and refreshment but his movement throughout the epistles seemed to be constant. Many of his encounters were high stress and full of tension as well. Paul often went to sleep exhausted. He commented on his schedule and problems to the Corinthians:

Are they servants of Christ? I know I sound like a madman, but I have served him far more! I have worked harder, been put in prison more been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm. Then, besides all this, I have the daily burden of my concern for all the churches (2 Cor. 11:23-28 NLT).

Completely ruling out hereditary and physiological factors in mental and emotional health is impossible with regard to Old Testament characters. Environment and upbringing also play a part but, in each case, little can be uncovered in those areas from what the Bible reveals about each one.

Mental health has a direct effect on physical health and the reverse is true as well.

Good physical health has a positive effect on mental health:

To put it simply, having high positive mental health seems to prevent future mental illness and also future physical health problems. This is important, so let me say it again: the evidence seems to indicate that having high positive mental health achieves a double punch of preventing future mental illness and preventing future health problems. We know this largely through a series of studies using the Midlife in the US (MIDUS)

data, which come from a random sample of adults in the United States in 1995 and ten years later, in 2005 (Proeschold-Bell and Byassee 116-17).

4. Opposition

The entire period of the New Testament was marked by opposition, persecution and martyrdom. All believers, not just the leaders, were subjected to persecution at the hands of the Romans.

John is the only one of the company generally thought to have died a natural death from old age. He was the leader of the church in the Ephesus area and is said to have taken care of Mary the mother of Jesus in his home. During Domitian's persecution in the middle 90's, he was exiled to the island of Patmos. There he is credited with writing the last book of the New Testament—Revelation. An early Latin tradition has him escaping unhurt after being cast into boiling oil at Rome (Curtis).

As mentioned earlier, Paul faced persecution and probable martyrdom at the hands of Rome. He was there because he had to appeal to Caesar in Israel to escape the plots of the Jews. His ministry was marked by those who followed him around trying to make the Christian message more Jewish. In 2 Corinthians chapters 11 and 12, Paul listed his trials and opponents. Talking about his thorn in the flesh Paul said, “even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said:

My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong (12:7-10 NLT).

Paul clarifies what the thorn consists of in the context of verse 10: insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles. Paul's opposition was organized and persistent. Opposition from others plays a significant role in long term emotional and mental health.

Harvard Business Review addresses the pushback and opposition that can come from leading change in an organization. It can lead to personal attacks. The Apostle Paul and the early church certainly led a major change.

Responding to an adaptive challenge with a technical fix may have some short-term appeal. But to make real progress, sooner or later those who lead must ask themselves and the people in the organization to face a set of deeper issues—and to accept a solution that may require turning part or all of the organization upside down. It is at this point that danger lurks. And most people who lead in such a situation—swept up in the action, championing a cause they believe in—are caught unawares. Over and over again, we have seen courageous souls blissfully ignorant of an approaching threat until it was too late to respond.... The hazard can take numerous forms. You may be attacked directly in an attempt to shift the debate to your character and style and avoid discussion of your initiative. You may be marginalized, forced into the position of becoming so identified with one issue that your broad authority is undermined. You may be seduced by your supporters and, fearful of losing their approval and affection, fail to demand they make the sacrifices needed for the initiative to succeed. You may be diverted from your goal by people overwhelming you with the day-to-day details of carrying it out, keeping you busy and preoccupied. Each one of these thwarting tactics—whether done consciously or not—grows out of people's aversion to the organizational disequilibrium created by your initiative. By attempting to undercut you, people strive to restore order, maintain what is familiar to them, and protect themselves from the pains of adaptive change. They want to be comfortable again, and you're in the way (Heifetz and Linsky).

This quotation provides a good description of the personal emotional challenge faced by leaders bringing a new and living way such as Paul, Peter and of course Jesus Christ himself.

A pastor is in a care giving role and cannot forget his own personal needs. Before being able to adequately serve as a shepherd, one must first embrace the role of a sheep. Taking care of one's own soul before attempting to care for others is not wrong. As with most Christians, pastors become followers of Jesus Christ first and foremost, to receive forgiveness and deliverance for their own lives.

Jesus made it clear to his disciples that their relationship to him took precedence over ministry responsibilities. Mark 3:13-14 records this priority:

And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons (ESV).

When the Apostles were called on the carpet by the religious leaders in Acts 4:13 the outstanding characteristic is that they had been with Jesus.

This idea is expanded in John 21 where Jesus restored the Apostle Peter to ministry. Jesus focused first on relationship by asking Peter three times if he loved him. He then commanded Peter to feed the sheep which makes the point again that relationship should precede ministry work. All shepherds must be a lamb before being a shepherd.

Paul encouraged the Ephesian elders to follow this same priority of self-care before ministry in Acts 20:28: "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood" (ESV).

The idea of self-sacrifice to the point of exhaustion is not biblical and can cut short someone's ministry and possibly even their health. A common saying among ministers is that they would rather burn out than rust out. That is very unbiblical and harmful.

Theological and Historical Foundations for Mental and Emotional Health

“When the early Wesleyan bands of Christ-followers get together in small group meetings, their first question to each other was ‘How is it with your soul?’” (Barton 24). That is still a very pertinent question to ask leaders. Jesus asked what it would profit if they gained the whole world but lost their soul (Matt. 16:26).

1. Sin, separation from God, and shame are at the root of all mental and emotional problems.

Not everyone with a mental or emotional problem is in sin. Many reasons exist to explain why people suffer in their souls. The fact that a problem exists is not an indictment of anyone who struggles in this area. Hereditary and physical health play a major role in causes of soul issues. The point is that every ailment and disease that mankind suffers from is the consequence of original sin and separation from God.

In the Garden of Eden, God told Adam and Eve that they would die when they ate from the forbidden tree. Although they did not physically die until later in life, an immediate separation from God took place inside them. Death as defined by separation from God took place immediately. They were separated in relationship from God. Jesus further emphasized the connection between real life and knowing God in relationship in the New Testament. “And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3 ESV).

After sin came self-consciousness and shame. Adam and Eve hid from God because they were ashamed.

God gave Adam and Eve a luxurious, sumptuous garden in which to live, eat, work, and play. The very thing we all long to experience. There was limitless provision, unhindered learning, and a strong sense of vocation and purpose. There was no disease, no death, no despair. No worry, no

hurry, no fury. But it wasn't the absence of famine or even the absence of funeral homes that made Eden a paradise. It was a total absence of shame. There was no such thing as shame before sin entered the world (Wright 63).

Many times, pastors, and Christians in general face the residue of sin in the form of shame. Shame can have the effect of a low-grade fever that plagues every other aspect of a person's life. The writer of Hebrews presents the possibility of shame being completely removed from a believer's life although it certainly does not happen automatically.

Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer could cleanse people's bodies from ceremonial impurity. Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins (9:13-14 NLT).

It is possible to live a shame-impaired life as a follower of Jesus even though a solution has been presented.

Sin and shame color the vision and attitude of anyone who has not accepted the answer that the writer of Hebrews presents. The shame from the Garden of Eden is the default mode for all human beings. Actively walking in forgiveness and a clear conscience is the gift that can undo the shame handed down to all human beings from the first sin in Eden.

One element of this portrayal of the complex phenomenon of human sin merits separate treatment here, however—namely, the text's account of shame as the first pair's most immediate affective response to their newly gained "knowledge of good and evil." The text straightforwardly reports that, in contrast to their earlier stance, the first perceptible result of the consumption of the fruit was a new attitude toward their nakedness (Gen 3:7). As is often the case with biblical narrative, the straightforward nature of this report, i.e., its lack of explanation and definition, raises at least two questions for contemporary Western interpreters. The first, a long-standing, historical-critical interpretive crux, involves the nature of

the relationship between the first pair's shame and their nakedness. The second, hermeneutical, issue deals with the cultural aspects of a definition and understanding of shame, namely, the question of the extent to which ancient Israelite notions of shame correspond to modern Western assumptions. That is, how does Genesis 3 inform a contemporary Western analysis of shame as a component of the contemporary manifestation of the problem of being human? Why Were Adam and Eve Ashamed of Their Nakedness? Many interpreters have taken the collocation of the theme of the forbidden knowledge and the human pair's sudden shame at being naked as a clue to a conjectural sexual background myth or, seen together with the serpent, to a psychological interpretation of shame in Freudian or Jungian terms. Examinations of the terminology regarding the knowledge of good and evil elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, however, do not support this sexualization of Eden.⁵ As Walter Vogels has pointed out, for example, the couple's shame at their nakedness was not the result of new awareness of their genderedness or their nudity, but of a new attitude toward those facts. Already before consuming the fruit, "they recognized one another as man and woman (2:23); and, in particular, they knew that they were naked (2:25)."⁶ 361 Indeed, the first pair's shame at their nakedness typifies, rather, the essence of shame—discomfort at the complete exposure of one's creatureliness (Biddle).

2. Peace is the foundation for mental and emotional health.

Proverbs 14:30 lays out the conditions for overall health: "A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones" (NLT). Obversely, the lack of peace results in poor health mentally as well as physically.

In recent years, the point has been made that intelligence quotient (I.Q.), may not be as important to success and well-being as emotional quotient EQ. "Studies indicate that EQ (emotional quotient) is so critical that it accounts for 58 percent of performance in all types of jobs" (Bardberry and Greaves 20-21). Intelligence helps one know what to do but emotional intelligence keeps one stable so that one can do it.

Author Daniel Goleman, one of the leading authors on emotional intelligence, underlined the importance of EQ by sharing the story of research project that began in the 1950's. Eighty Ph.D. students in science at the University of California, Berkeley, went through an intensive battery of IQ and personality tests. They also had exhaustive interviews with

psychologists, who evaluated them on such qualities as emotional balance, maturity and interpersonal effectiveness. Forty years later, when these former students were in their seventies, researchers tracked them down again. They evaluated each person's career success based on their resumes, assessment by peers in their field and sources like *American Men and Women of Science*. The conclusion drawn from this analysis was that issues of EQ—the capacity of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management—were about four times more important than IQ in determining professional success and prestige for these scientists (qtd in Burns, Chapman and Guthrie 102-03).

A direct connection lies between happiness and productivity. Being your best and doing your best work while suffering from mental or emotional problems is exceedingly difficult. Success in life and work is causally related to one's mental and emotional state.

Emotional health can lead to success in work, relationships, and health. In the past, researchers believed that success made people happy. Newer research reveals that it's the other way around. Happy people are more likely to work toward goals, find the resources they need and attract others with their energy and optimism—key building blocks of success” (Emotional Health).

The Kingdom of God, according to Paul, is about righteousness (right relationship with God), peace (right relationship with yourself), and joy (the fruit of fellowship with others). Peace with God brings righteousness (Rom. 5:1). Without this relationship being the foundation of mental and emotional health, any peace is not reality based and not lasting.

In the same way, peace with others is encouraged as much as it depends on your ability to maintain it (Rom. 12:18). Even when peace is not possible with others, forgiveness will maintain peace in your heart. This peace overflows in the joy of relationships and fellowship with others.

Rabbi Lapin makes a connection between emotional health and relationships with others:

God created a world dependent upon connection. Words, musical notes, and even the chemical elements of the periodic table all must connect before they are useful to humans. Most importantly, we God's children were created to connect. Connectedness is necessary for our own sense of identity. Loneliness is painful partially because it alienates us from ourselves. Admittedly, killing other people is an extreme and thankfully rare response to excruciating loneliness. Nonetheless, while most of us do not react violently to the pain of disconnectedness, we still suffer. Being without authentic human contact does to our souls exactly what oxygen deprivation or starvation does to our bodies. God created us with obvious physical needs, but He also created us with spiritual needs. Connectedness with others is one of these needs and being deprived of this harms us just as surely, though perhaps not as quickly, as deprivation of oxygen or food. You may well have experienced this very problem without diagnosing it. Perhaps you felt a subtle difficulty at summoning up feelings of happiness. Perhaps you felt a little depressed and could think of nothing about which you could be happy or for which you could feel grateful. Seek no further. The first and most likely explanation is insufficient authentic connection (Lapin).

In addition to our intelligence quotient IQ and emotional intelligence quotient EQ, it can be argued that our emotional health is also dependent on our connectedness quotient (CQ). Our CQ is a measure of how well people connect with other people in relationships.

3. Competition and comparison harm your mental health.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:12-13: "Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding. But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you"(ESV). Competition and comparison are natural human tendencies, but they result in frustration. Social media can drive comparison as other ministers and churches only present the wins and victories they are experiencing. God included the good, the bad, and the ugly of Bible characters so that

a full picture could be seen. Social media encourages individuals and churches to put their best face on. Because everything looks good on social media, it is easy for a pastor to measure the picture of someone else's life against their own imperfect life.

This point is brought out further by Sally Brown who studied the impact of social media on young girls' health in *Caught in the Net*:

The girls we interviewed talked about a constant sense of not living up to ideals, of not meeting the images of perfection. There was a lot of pressure on how they should look, but also how happy they should be with their life. In the old days, we would advise our children to surround themselves with people who make them feel good about themselves. Now girls are surrounded by people who whisper things to them that make them feel less satisfied with themselves and their lives.'

The negative effects can be significant, despite young people being social-media savvy, says Apter, who worked with The Female Lead to launch Disrupt Your Feed, a project based on a qualitative study involving interviews with girls from five schools. 'Girls talked about knowing the photos they looked at were filtered and carefully curated, presenting an artificial view of someone's life. As one girl said: "I know this is fake, but I still look at how her external image presents and compare it with how I feel inside (Brown).

In much the same way as teenage girls compare and compete with the images that culture gives them, the same sense of inadequacy is felt by pastors who may wrongly use social media and other publications to see how they measure up. The Bible clearly says not to do that. "Oh, do not worry; we would not dare say that we are as wonderful as these other men who tell you how important they are! But they are only comparing themselves with each other, using themselves as the standard of measurement. How ignorant!" (2 Cor. 10:12 NLT).

Although some studies have shown that social media use is associated with beneficial effects (e.g., higher self-esteem; Gonzales & Hancock, 2011), others have identified potential negative effects on well-being via the promotion of stress (Meier, Reinecke, & Meltzer, 2016), loneliness (Liu & Baumeister, 2016), and depression symptoms (Appel, Gerlach, & Crusius, 2016). Social media's adverse effects may come from passive

social media use (PSMU)—that is, scrolling through news feeds or browsing photographs of friends. Experimental research has shown that PSMU decreases affective well-being (Verduyn et al., 2015), sense of belonging (Tobin, Vanman, Verreynne, & Saeri, 2015), and life satisfaction (Wenninger, Krasnova, & Buxmann, 2014). Furthermore, cross-sectional research indicates that PSMU positively correlates with depressed mood (Frison & Eggermont, 2016). As depressed mood is a core symptom of and a strong predictor of depression (Boschloo, van Borkulo, Borsboom, & Schoevers, 2016), this observation suggests that PSMU may constitute a risk factor for depression (Aalbers et al.).

The ill effects of comparison are evident between the disciples of John the Baptist and Jesus. In the gospel, John's disciples saw that people were going to Jesus for baptism rather than John. John was very aware of his calling and limitations. He expressed the healthy soul's answer to competition:

John replied, "No one can receive anything unless God gives it from heaven. You yourselves know how plainly I told you, 'I am not the Messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him.' It is the bridegroom who marries the bride, and the bridegroom's friend is simply glad to stand with him and hear his vows. Therefore, I am filled with joy at his success. He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less (John 3:27-30 NLT).

John obviously had the ability to stay focused and be secure in his calling. Because each person and calling are unique, John proves it is unwise to compare. He was extremely comfortable with the limitations of his calling. Pastors would be wise to make their calling and election sure and then be content with that calling. The competition of the culture easily finds its way into ministry settings.

4. The stigma of admitting mental or emotional problems keeps many from getting help.

Mental health is often equated with crazy. It may not be seen as a treatable and temporary illness. Most people, including pastors can be very secretive about any mental

or emotional problems they face. Physical illnesses are seen as curable but mental issues are viewed as permanent.

Stigma is when someone sees you in a negative way because of a particular characteristic or attribute (such as skin colour, cultural background, a disability or a mental illness). When someone treats you in a negative way because of your mental illness, this is discrimination. Stigma happens when a person defines someone by their illness rather than who they are as an individual. For example, they might be labelled 'psychotic' rather than 'a person experiencing psychosis'. For people with mental health issues, the social stigma and discrimination they experience can make their problems worse, making it harder to recover. It may cause the person to avoid getting the help they need because of the fear of being stigmatized (Greenstein).

Mental illness is much more widespread than previously thought. It has affected large portions of the population, but the stigma of mental illness has kept it in the shadows.

A major study by the World Health Organization, the World Bank, and Harvard University found that in terms of the burden it places on health and productivity, mental illness (including suicide) ranks as high as second in established market economies, such as the U.S. (cardiovascular conditions hold first place, and the various types of cancer third place). A 1990 estimate by the NIH put the annual cost of mental illness in the U.S. at \$148 billion. Data indicate that more than a fifth of all Americans suffer from a mental disorder during the course of a year, and roughly 15 percent of American adults use mental health services in a given year. Not all the people who need help receive it, however. One major reason for this, according to the 1999 Surgeon General's Report, is that many people still fear the stigma attached to mental illness and hence often fail to report it or to seek help. A 1999 White House Conference on Mental Health called for a national anti-stigma campaign (HealthyPeople.gov).

Possibly the biggest problem facing pastors is the stigma that goes with admitting a problem. This same principle is true with addicts. Many live in denial and cannot be helped until they face the facts of their addictions.

Our folk psychological conception of denial has been influenced by elements of psychodynamic theory and clinical practice, where it is considered a core psychological defence mechanism. Psychological defence mechanisms are typically understood, not only to perform the function of protecting a person from experiencing psychological pain and distress, such as is commonly associated with negative emotions and critical self-evaluations, but to do so by design. Within our psychodynamically-influenced folk psychological perspective, denial is commonly understood as a refusal to acknowledge the reality of one's situation, when doing so would cause such psychological pain and distress. It therefore protects a person against this negative experience by 'denying' the reality that would otherwise cause it. As such, denial appears to be a form of motivated belief or self-deception. When psychological pain and distress would result from reckoning with the reality of one's situation, aversion to such pain and distress may motivate denial (Pickard 285).

Gleb Tspursky tells his decision to overcome the stigma of getting help for mental illness:

My hand jerked back, as if the computer mouse had turned into a real mouse. Would they think I am crazy? Would they whisper behind my back? Would they never trust me again? These anxious thoughts ran through my head as I was about to make a post revealing my mental illness to my Facebook friends. Whenever the thought of telling others about my mental illness entered my mind, I felt a wave of anxiety pass through me. My head began to pound, my heart sped up, my breathing became fast and shallow, almost like I was suffocating. If I didn't catch it in time, the anxiety could lead to a full-blown panic attack, or sudden and extreme fatigue, with my body collapsing in place. Not a pretty picture. For 6 months, I had been suffering from a mood disorder characterized by high anxiety, sudden and extreme fatigue, and panic attacks. I really wanted to share much earlier. It would have felt great to be genuinely authentic with people in my life, and not hide who I am. Plus, I would have been proud to contribute to overcoming the stigma against mental illness in our society, especially since this stigma impacts me on such a personal level. Ironically, the very stigma against mental illness, combined with my own excessive anxiety response, made it very hard for me to share. I was really anxious about whether friends and acquaintances would turn away from me. I was also very concerned about the impact on my professional career of sharing publicly, due to the stigma in academia against mental illness, including at my workplace, Ohio State University, as my colleague and fellow professor described in his article. Still, I did eventually start discussing my mental illness with some very close friends

who I was very confident would support me. And one conversation really challenged my mental map, in other words how I perceive reality, about sharing my story of mental illness. My friend told me something that really struck me, namely his perspective about how great would it be if all people who needed professional help with their mental health actually went to get such help. One of the main obstacles, as research shows, is the stigma against mental health. We discussed how one of the best ways to deal with such stigma is for well-functioning people with mental illness to come out of the closet about their condition.

5. Some mental and emotional problems are the direct result of physical issues.

Anxiety and stress affect the mind and body. Certain cultures tend to separate humans into divisions made up of physical, mental, and spiritual compartments. Jesus and the Bible seemed to see people without compartments. "Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again" (1 Thess. 5:23 NLT). Completely compartmentalizing or separating the three parts, while keeping them from overlapping, is impossible, even though a distinction and uniqueness exists between them.

Kirsten Weir addressed the possible underlying causes of mental illness and pushed further the idea that it is fruitless to try to separate mental issues from physical ones.

Diagnosing mental illness isn't like diagnosing other chronic diseases. Heart disease is identified with the help of blood tests and electrocardiograms. Diabetes is diagnosed by measuring blood glucose levels. But classifying mental illness is a more subjective endeavor. No blood test exists for depression; no X-ray can identify a child at risk of developing bipolar disorder. At least, not yet. Thanks to new tools in genetics and neuroimaging, scientists are making progress toward deciphering details of the underlying biology of mental disorders. Yet experts disagree on how far we can push this biological model. Are mental illnesses simply physical diseases that happen to strike the brain? Or do these disorders belong to a class all their own? Eric Kandel, MD, a Nobel Prize laureate and professor of brain science at Columbia University, believes it's all about biology. "All mental processes are brain processes, and therefore all disorders of mental functioning are biological diseases,"

he says. "The brain is the organ of the mind. Where else could [mental illness] be if not in the brain?" That viewpoint is quickly gaining supporters, thanks in part to Thomas R. Insel, MD, director of the National Institute of Mental Health, who has championed a biological perspective during his tenure at the agency. To Insel, mental illnesses are no different from heart disease, diabetes or any other chronic illness. All chronic diseases have behavioral components as well as biological components, he says. "The only difference here is that the organ of interest is the brain instead of the heart or pancreas. But the same basic principles apply.

If a physical cause is the root of mental or emotional issues, it is pointless to try and make other changes until the physical issues are addressed is pointless. As the above article points out, biology can be the cause of brain issues and may be alleviated by medicine or proper prescriptions.

In ministry or church settings emotional issues are often attributed to a spiritual issue or even a demon. Those reasons are possible but sometimes there is an underlying chemical imbalance or a diagnosable health issue.

As a young pastor I was spiritually counseling an older woman for a season without any results. She was facing depression and severe mood swings. She seemed to be getting no better in her soul. I recommended that she see a gynecologist and she did. After a prescription to stabilize her emotions, she was a new woman. She and her husband were extremely glad it was dealt with, and it was not a demon at all. In retrospect it is almost comical that she and I were dissecting all the possible causes we could think of without any headway. A simple hormonal adjustment fixed the problem.

After dealing with similar issues several times I realized and began to understand that the brain is an organ and chemical reactions in the brain can cause very deep feelings and emotional struggles. Most things like that can be addressed with nutrition or a

prescription. A good physical exam as well as an honest emotional evaluation is the best place to start when considering the reason for emotional and mental health issues.

It may have come as no surprise that people with a medical illness or condition are more likely to suffer from depression. The reverse is also true: the risk of developing some physical illnesses is higher in people with depression. People with depression have an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, stroke, and Alzheimer's disease, for example. Research also suggests that people with depression are at higher risk for osteoporosis relative to others. The reasons are not yet clear. One factor with some of these illnesses is that many people with depression may have less access to good medical care. They may have a harder time caring for their health, for example, seeking care, taking prescribed medication, eating well, and exercising (Chronic Illness & Mental Health).

Doubtless, physical and mental illness often go together. Scripture is clear about the connection between physical and mental health (see Proverbs 14:30). Richard A.

Swenson agrees with the connection between physical and emotional health. He addresses the concept of emotional rest.

More important to our overall health than physical rest is the resting of our emotions. Ask physicians about the frequency of anxiety or depression they find in their patients, and you will be stunned to learn how few in our midst are emotionally healthy and well rested. We worry about our jobs, our marriages, our children, our looks, our age, our health, and our future. The unacceptably high rate of tranquilizer use is a reliable indicator of our lack of emotional rest. Physical rest and emotional rest often go hand in hand, but we have no guarantee the resting of our bodies will produce rested psyches (230).

Many people, including Christians seem to be dealing with emotional exhaustion as the result of the COVID-19 as well as election fatigue. After many months of exposure to seemingly unchangeable circumstances their emotions had have a hard time processing life. Healthy distractions and hobbies have often been eliminated due to the need to quarantine. The effect of a normal life of work followed by fun and recreation has been

eliminated for many. Recreation is really re-creation. It is a necessary part of mental and emotional health.

6. Spiritual oppression as a cause of mental and emotional problems.

Jesus encountered people who may have been considered mentally ill, but he dealt with those situations by casting out demons. This is an area that cannot be ignored. Although some may blame all emotional problems on demons, they may be the root cause at times.

In the Old Testament King Saul was oppressed by a spirit and his only remedy came by King David's music. It did not solve the problem permanently, but it did bring relief (1 Sam. 16:14-23).

Demonic activity is certainly a part of spiritual, physical, and emotional oppression in Scripture, assigning every problem to just one causal area is naive. An overlap exists, as various root causes of oppression. Each case and each person must be assessed and treated according to their unique situation.

When assessing your mental and emotional health and that of others, any accurate diagnosis would cover all the bases as a foundation. Correct treatment can only follow a correct diagnosis. Spiritual, physical, and emotional issues may be connected and interrelated. Wise treatment can only happen in an atmosphere of truth. Discipleship and counseling can only go so far in treatment if a physiological or psychological root is there as well. A full-orbed treatment is based on an accurate diagnosis.

7. Addictions affect ministers too.

The inability to control one's own behavior is seen as a habit or an addiction. The recent opioid crisis along with increasing alcoholism is testimony to that.

Mental health and substance use challenges can take many forms. There's depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, addiction and the list goes on. Some of these challenges are more visible and you might recognize them immediately. Others can be harder to see when you're not looking for them. But, they are still there. These statistics provide a look at how many people face a mental health or substance use challenge, whether we see it or not:

1. In the United States, almost half of adults (46.4 percent) will experience a mental illness during their lifetime.
2. 5 percent of adults (18 or older) experience a mental illness in any one year, equivalent to 43.8 million people (Kapil).

Addictions to alcohol, substance abuse, and pornography affect all classes and types of people. Pastors are no exception. The difference is that pastors are less apt to admit it or seek help because of the shame and consequences of admitting it.

Amy Simpson describes the struggle a pastor had with alcoholism.

When members of his congregation staged an intervention, Pastor Howard Hoekstra was ready. He had tried for 10 years to quit drinking—on his own. So, when faced with others' concern, he simply responded, "You're right; I have a problem." That was the day he started his recovery. Ten years earlier, working as a youth pastor, Hoekstra first wondered if he might have an addiction. Preparing to lead his students in a study about alcoholism, he found a self-assessment in an Alcoholics Anonymous manual. He answered the questions and "flunked" the test. So he tried to curb his drinking.

Pornography has become a major issue due to the increase of technology and availability of it and pastors are not exempt. What was often inaccessible to most of the population is now several clicks away from almost anywhere on the internet. Some think it is harmless but a brain connection like drug or alcohol addiction has been made by many. Because of the physiological connection to the brain, pornography addiction can create many more problems for someone who is already struggling with mental and emotional problems. The pornography addiction can become more of a problem than the original issue the person is facing.

People who are addicted to pornography show similar brain activity to alcoholics or drug addicts, a study has revealed. MRI scans of test subjects

who admitted to compulsive pornography use showed that the reward centres of the brain reacted to seeing explicit material in the same way as an alcoholic's might on seeing a drinks advert (Withnall).

For a Christian and especially for a Christian minister to admit that they have a problem is even more difficult. The shame associated with this, or any addiction is a hurdle that is often not overcome. It becomes an endless cycle of addiction, shame, and more addiction.

Pornography can be deeply problematic in the general population, so it should be no surprise that it's also impacting church communities. Yet how many pastors are willing to come forward with their struggles? A Barna research study found most pastors (57%) and youth pastors (64%) admit they have struggled with porn, either currently or in the past. But less than 1% recommended telling their congregation. This makes sense, because it's hard enough for people in the general population who struggle with sexual or porn-related compulsive behavior to acknowledge the problem, let alone a pastor whose job is to expound on spiritual truths and be a living example of morality above reproach. The Barna researchers asked 3,000 Christians what should happen if a pastor is caught using porn. Just over 40% of adult Christians believe the pastor should be fired or asked to resign. However, only 8% of the pastors agreed with termination or resignation as the appropriate protocol. With such a wide discrepancy, it's no wonder why so few pastors are willing to admit their struggles with pornography or other problematic sexual behaviors (Louie).

In all cases of addiction, the pastor's mental and emotional health is affected. If help is not intentionally sought, it would be difficult to have a healthy soul. Any preoccupation may cause a distraction and what the New American Standard Bible calls "dissipation" in Ephesians 5:18. Dissipation is best defined as simply wasting away. A person is not able to live out their purpose and calling if they are distracted by sin or shame and the result is a wasted life or dissipation.

8. Some historical leaders suffered with mental and emotional issues.

Many famous people outside of Scripture dealt with emotional illness yet accomplished great things in their lives. Interestingly, God left the mental and emotional struggles of biblical characters in the narrative of Scripture. Leaders such as Moses, Elijah, Saul, and David had regular bouts with depression and other emotional issues. It should come as no surprise that a person is subject to mental and emotional problems, even if they are or were famous.

Mental health conditions have often mistakenly been associated with weakness, and the stigma of being labelled “mentally ill” is sometimes as big a burden as the condition itself. While mental health literacy might be improving, too many of us still believe in dated ideas such as the one that says people with mental health problems can’t hold down a job. In fact, some of our most iconic leaders suffered from mental health conditions. “Mania enhances creativity and resilience to trauma, while depression increases realism and empathy,” writes Nassir Ghaemi, a professor of psychiatry, who has carried out extensive research on the link between mental illness and leadership. Ghaemi’s research not only proves that people suffering from a mental health illness can be great leaders – it also suggests they can make better leaders: “When times are good and the ship of state only needs to sail straight, mentally healthy people function well as political leaders. But in times of crisis and tumult, those who are mentally abnormal, even ill, become the greatest leaders (Thomson).

The above article uses the examples of Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Martin Luther King Jr., and Princess Diana as well-known people who suffered with depression and other emotional problems. Winston Churchill referred to his bout with depression as “the black dog” (Thomson).

Charles Spurgeon is associated with great preaching and being the pastor of a megachurch before they were popular. His youthful success in London as a pastor is celebrated still but little is known about his mental or emotional issues.

It comes as a surprise to some that Charles Spurgeon had a lifelong battle with depression. His reputation as a famed and powerful preacher, his cheery wit, and his cigar-smoking manliness might lead us to imagine there could never be a chink in his Victorian Englishman's armor. It shouldn't be a surprise, of course: being full of life in a fallen world must mean distress, and Spurgeon's life was indeed full of physical and mental pain. Aged twenty-two, as pastor of a large church and with twin babies at home to look after, he was preaching to thousands in the Surrey Gardens Music Hall when pranksters yelled "fire," starting a panic to exit the building which killed seven and left twenty-eight severely injured. His mind was never the same again. His wife, Susannah, wrote, "My beloved's anguish was so deep and violent, that reason seemed to totter in her throne, and we sometimes feared that he would never preach again." Then, from the age of thirty-three, physical pain became a large and constant feature of life for him. He suffered from a burning kidney inflammation called Bright's Disease, as well as gout, rheumatism, and neuritis. The pain was such that it soon kept him from preaching for one-third of the time. Added to that, overwork, stress, and guilt about the stress began to take their toll. And all this was in the public eye and was jumped on by his many critics, not making it easier to bear. The suffering, they argued rather predictably, was a judgment from God. The pain, the politics, the opposition, and the overwork (as well as bereavements, like that of his young grandson) all affected him deeply, if in waves. So much so that today he would almost certainly be diagnosed as clinically depressed and treated with medication and therapy. The depression could hit him so intensely that, he once said, "I could say with Job, 'My soul chooseth strangling rather than life' [Job 7:15]. I could readily enough have laid violent hands upon myself, to escape from my misery of spirit (Reeves).

Spurgeon took summer vacations in Scotland but in winter he spent a month more in the South of France at Menton. He was escaping the chill of winter as well as the responsibilities of pastoring to have a break. His mental and physical health probably benefited greatly from his frequent vacations.

Spurgeon was very productive if not a workaholic. It can be argued whether his schedule produced more effectiveness in short spurts followed by a vacation or if he could have paced himself better to avoid the yearly burn outs.

Martin Luther is known as the Father of the Reformation. His life and ministry serve as a foundation to modern day Protestantism, yet he battled emotional health. He invited opposition and persecution, but he brought with him a deep struggle with personal issues and emotional health.

Luther's depression was always marked by the same features: a feeling of profound aloneness, a sense that God was singling him out for suffering, a loss of faith that God is good and good to me, and a resulting inward self-reliance. Luther's depression only intensified under the burden of the Reformation's unforeseen fruit. The more that regularly hurting Christians sought him as a physician of souls, the more acutely he felt the weight of responsibility for his teaching and writing. He couldn't shake the notion that the reforms he advocated might destroy—rather than revive—the church. Sickness, unbelief, and anxiety conspired and drove him to the brink of despair. In a letter to his friend Melancthon on August 2, 1527, Luther wrote: I spent more than a week in death and hell. My entire body was in pain, and I still tremble. Completely abandoned by Christ, I labored under the vacillations and storms of desperation and blasphemy against God. But through the prayers of the saints (his friends), God began to have mercy on me and pulled my soul from the inferno below. Luther understood this to be more than simple temptation. He referred to it as *anfechtung*, “assault.” Hell, the Devil, the shadow of death, and the forces arrayed against gospel progress all combined in an insidious assault, reducing Luther to unbelief, depression, and despair (Griffith).

Saint John of the Cross is associated with the dark night of the soul. Emily Stimpson, along with other authors, see the dark night of the soul as part of the Christian growth and experience—an experience that brings a deeper knowledge of and relationship to God. To some this experience is seen not as something evil but like a surgical process where a negative part of a life is cut away.

From the outside, depression and the dark night of the soul bear a striking resemblance to one another. And they're not entirely separate things. As St. John of the Cross noted long ago, depression (or as they called it in the 17th century, melancholia) can go hand in hand with a dark night, whether by exacerbating it or resulting from it. But while clinical depression is triggered by an objectively sad event (losing a loved one, fatal illness, etc.)

or by a biochemical problem, the dark night of the soul is purely an act of God; it is God working in our souls to draw us closer to him.

Scazzero expands on the purpose for the dark night of the soul.

Here is how John of the Cross describes the purpose of the dark night: “God perceives the imperfections with us, and because of his love for us, urges us to grow up. His love is not content to leave us in our weakness, and for this reason he takes us into a dark night. He weans us from all of the pleasures by giving us dry times....No soul will grow deep in the spiritual life unless God works passively in that soul by means of a dark night (taken from E. Allison Peers, *St. John of the Cross, Dark Night of the Soul* (New York: Image, Doubleday, 1959), (qtd. in Scazzero 284).

While Saint John made the most of it in a positive way, he certainly experienced the pain of emotional turmoil. The very phrase dark night of the soul paints a picture of an inner struggle, whether spiritual or emotional or both. Whether it is a dark night of the soul, or a dark night followed by a healthier more robust soul is arguable.

Saint Francis of Assisi was known as a carefree man, but he had deep emotional issues. Deeply felt emotions seem to be a prerequisite to a deeply held relationship with God. A deep emotional life is one of the forces that drive people to seek out God and life's meaning to bring stability and peace to emotional questions and needs.

Francis's life was encumbered by dark shadows, to the point that he experienced long periods of anguishing separation from God. His psychological trauma began with his military service in Assisi's war against its more powerful neighbor, Perugia. He saw men he knew since childhood torn limb from limb in a devastating battle, and was taken prisoner for a year, thrown in a dark, damp hole in the ground. This left Francis a broken man. His earliest biographer, Thomas of Celano, indicates as much when he recounts that Francis, after his release, felt nothing when he looked at fields and mountains that once thrilled him. We can't expect Celano to put this in modern psychological terms, but from what we now know, Francis was traumatized. He was a physical and emotional wreck, too ill and depressed to go out of the house. Some

experts believe he had contracted malaria, which would return periodically for the rest of his life (Moses).

Followers of Jesus throughout history have not been exempt from emotional and mental problems. It is arguable that deep spiritual experiences are accompanied by deep emotions. Mother Theresa, King David and many others were emotional and passionate. God uses highly emotional people as he does all people.

The Psalms encourage readers to see the range of human emotion from joy and exhilaration to deep foreboding and depression. Followers of God are fortunate that David as well as others had their emotions and feelings recorded. I do not think David knew he was sharing his innermost thoughts and feelings to the coming generations in Scripture. In many ways the book of Psalms is David's personal prayer journal published for all posterity to read.

Jeremiah recorded his emotional highs and lows as well. He wrote an entire book about lamenting in which he expresses sorrow and mourning. It is painful to read. His pain serves, along with David's, as a help to many who have experienced the same turmoil. Those throughout history who have recorded their journeys have served to let others know they are not alone.

There are so many men and women who have gone before us who leave us with an example of running the race with perseverance. Rite (John Mayer's wife) and I read a daily devotional called "On this day in Christian history" and it's full of stories of known and unsung heroes of the faith. Here are a few to inspire you:

George Mueller: In 1835 with a burden for homeless children, he opened his first orphanage in Bristol, England for 26 children. Other houses soon started. He refused to ask for funds but God miraculously provided for

their needs. During the course of his 93 years, Mueller housed more than ten thousand orphans, prayed in millions of pounds, traveled to scores of countries preaching the gospel and recorded fifty thousand answers to prayer. The day before he died, he was still handling orphanage correspondence and protesting that he felt fine.

Eric Liddell: The film *Chariots of fire* focused on his running career and reminded us of his decision to not run the 100-meter race because it was on Sunday. He won a gold for the 400-meter race the next day. However there was another passion that began as a child born to missionaries in China. The following year after winning the gold medal, he left Scotland to become a teacher in China, married Florence and started mission work there. He was imprisoned in a Japanese camp during the war and died of a brain tumor in 1945.

Catherine Booth: Born in 1830 to a puritan family, she had read the bible eight times before the age of twelve. She excelled in studies after several severe illnesses thought she could be the most useful to God by being a minister's wife. Catherine Booth was eloquent and compelling in speech, articulate and devastatingly logical in writing and for over twenty years defended the right of women to preach the gospel on the same terms as men. At first, Catherine and her husband William had shared a ministry as traveling evangelists, but then she came into great demand as a preacher in her own right, especially among the well-to-do. She died at 61 having had a great influence in missions through the Salvation Army that they had pioneered and encouraging single and married women in ministry.

Raymond Lull: He didn't start well being saved from an immoral lifestyle in Majorca, but at thirty-two while writing erotic poetry he met with Christ and was powerfully converted. He had a burden to reach Muslims, learned Arabic and started a school for the training of missionaries. He then spent years meeting with popes and cardinals trying to persuade them to establish similar schools in Europe. At fifty-five, he began his real missionary work targeting North Africa. He made repeated trips even in his eighties at the risk of his life to reach Muslims. He advanced Christian missions like no one else in his age. He died in 1314 (Mayers).

9. The health of the pastor and the health of the church are connected.

Scazzero said, "The starting point for change in any nation, church, or ministry has always been the leader: As go the leaders, so goes the church" (36). John C. Maxwell reaffirms that the leader is the lid of any organization "because everything rises and falls on leadership" (1).

This principle is not just related to leadership skill but the entire internal condition of the pastor. This includes mental and emotional health. A pastor's soul can be a limiting factor upon the entire church. Most pastors instinctively know this is true and that can be an emotional issue in itself. The health of church leadership is the lid for congregational health. A church congregation seems to be limited by the mental and emotional health of its leaders, especially the senior leader.

The health of the church and the health of church leaders are tied together and reciprocal. While they depend on each other, the pastor must take the lead in addressing his own health before addressing church health.

That principle is laid out by the Apostle Paul to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:28 to watch over their own lives and the flock assigned to them. In the same way Jesus made it clear that the blind cannot lead the blind (Luke 6:39). Sick pastors lead sick churches. Conversely, healthy pastors can lead healthy churches.

Scazzero, voices a perspective held by most church health writers. He says, "The overall health of any church or ministry depends primarily on the emotional and spiritual health of its leadership. In fact, the key to successful spiritual leadership has much more to do with the leader's internal life than with the leader's expertise, gifts or experience" (20).

Much time is spent in Bible schools and seminaries training the pastor future pastor to be a Bible scholar, discipler, and skilled care giver. Considering Scazzero's statement, much more time should be spent developing the mental and emotional health of the pastor. He argues that emotional health is the indicator of spiritual discipleship and

maturity. “The link between emotional health and spiritual maturity is a large, unexplored area of discipleship” (19).

Rick Warren drew the connection between church growth and church health. He says, “I believe the key issue for churches in the twenty-first century will be church health, not church growth” (16). The connection is easily made between healthy church leaders and healthy churches.

Christian A. Schwarz makes the same implication. in his book. His study of over one thousand congregations on five continents led him to eight quality characteristics of growing churches: empowering leadership, gift-oriented ministry, passionate spirituality, functional structures, inspiring worship service, holistic small groups, need-oriented evangelism, and loving relationships. He lays out what a healthy pastor in a growing church usually looks like:

Our study demonstrated that while pastors of growing churches are not usually “people-persons” who lose themselves in interaction with individuals, yet on the average they are somewhat more relationship-, person-, and partnership oriented than their colleagues in declining churches. The key distinction is probably expressed by the word “empowerment.” Leaders of growing churches concentrate on empowering other Christians for ministry (22).

His entire focus in his book is the healthy church which would certainly include healthy leadership. He does not focus on the emotional health of the pastor but organic healthy maturity in all aspects of church growth and health. An unhealthy pastor could not impart to others what he does not himself possess. If he or she is insecure or threatened when challenged, they give off signals of being emotionally unhealthy.

If as Maxwell says, everything rises and falls on leadership, the health of the leadership is the first step to bringing real health to a church. Sooner or later, the

unhealthy leader must change or leave. Carey Nieuwhof speaks a hard to accept truth to pastors, “Unhealthy leaders can’t lead healthy churches. Not over the long haul. If you think your church is unhealthy, look in the mirror. As hard as it is to admit, you reproduce who you are, not who you want to be.”

A painful reality is that as the pastor’s soul and life go in the long term, so goes the church. A pastor’s spiritual, emotional, and overall health are a vital part of the church they pastor. That is probably why Paul emphasized that the church leaders he met with in Ephesus on his journey to Jerusalem were told to guard themselves and the flock (Acts 20:28).

Maxwell teaches the twenty-one laws of leadership. One of the primary laws is the law of the lid. He defines it in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. “So here it is: leadership ability is the lid that determines a person’s level of effectiveness. The lower an individual’s ability to lead, the lower the lid on his potential. The higher the individual’s ability to lead, the higher the lid on his potential” (1).

Current Statistics and State of Pastor’s Mental and Emotional Health

Many studies of pastors and ministers have been done over the years. The overall feel of the early studies was negative and left the impression that most pastors would leave the ministry behind if they could. Recent updates and more thorough studies have discounted the idea that most pastors are hanging by a thread while their families are in disarray. While previous reports seem exaggerated, ministry can be an unfulfilled lifestyle. Even when properly prepared, there are many setbacks, disappointments, and frustrating times.

Charisma leader reports:

A landmark new study by Barna Group, conducted in partnership with Pepperdine University, offers a revealing look into the lives of America's pastors. Drawn from interviews with more than 14,000 Protestant pastors from 40 denominations spanning the theological and political spectrum, *The State of Pastors* is both hopeful and troubling, with unexpected bright spots and worrisome levels of struggle for some clergy. The findings are available as a 175-page full-color book that includes the full study data, analysis and infographics. The bad news for the church is the graying of America's clergy: "As other careers woo millennials and older generations struggle to hand the baton to younger pastors, the median age of pastors has risen from 44 to 54 over the last 25 years." Protestant churches face a massive leadership shortage in the coming decades, similar to that seen in the Catholic Church. The situation appears bleak: seven out of 10 pastors report that it's becoming more difficult to identify promising pastoral candidates. The good news—one of the report's major findings—is that contrary to conventional wisdom, most pastors are faring well: 91 percent reports a good overall quality of life, and 88 percent describes their spiritual well-being as excellent or good. Still, a troubling number of pastors are at risk of burnout (one in three), and nearly half face relational risks in their marriages, families and friendships (Barna Research Group *The State of Pastors*).

Winfield Bevin gave statistics on the current state of the pastor's emotional health in a class at Asbury Theological Seminary on July 27th, 2019. He concluded that pastors were suffering in the areas of burnout, stress, family issues, and general lack of soul care. Because of emotional issues, pastors and church planters face severe internal battles and not just spiritual warfare.

The Francis Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership did research studies of pastors in 1998 and 2006 and updated the statistics in 2015-2016.

In 2015-16, we conducted several major studies involving 8,150 participants using randomly selected ministers. The studied included those identified as Evangelical or Reformed. Data sources included 163 long-form handouts with 20 questions, 30 personal interviews, several social media polls, and over 900 alternate email surveys to check validity as well as to retest results from different samplings. The goal: factfinding, causes, and motivations.

A brief overview of the statistics:

- 79% of Evangelical and Reformed pastors are happier personally
- 88% of churches are treating their pastors better, too

- 88% have a high view of Christ
- 57% are more satisfied in their calling
- However, 54% of pastors still work over 55 hours a week
- 57% can't pay their bills
- 54% are overworked and 43% are overstressed
- 53% feel seminary had not properly prepared them for the task.
- 35% battle depression
- 26% are overly fatigued
- 28% are spiritually undernourished and 9% are burnt-out
- 23% are still distant to their families
- 18% work more than 70 hours a week and face unreasonable challenges
- 12% are belittled.
- 3% have had an affair
- 90% feel honored to be a pastor! (Krejcir 22)

Pastors are apparently doing better than originally thought. The initial study from 1998 was often used to show the poor condition of pastors' overall state until the information was updated. Many pastors are happy and healthy. Job satisfaction is much higher than originally thought among ministers. In the *State of Pastors* Barna Research Group reports:

Most pastors are, in fact, content. Seven in 10 U.S. Protestant pastors say they are very satisfied with their pastoral vocation (72%). One-quarter says they are "somewhat satisfied" (25%), and the remaining 3 percent admit they are "not too" or "not at all" satisfied (94).

Contemporary Literature on Pastoral Mental and Emotional Health

Cordeiro, pastor of New Hope Christian Fellowship in Honolulu, Hawaii, wrote a book about his experience with pastoral burnout. In the height of church growth and guest speaking he had an emotional breakdown. In the introduction of his book, he records the incident. "It was a balmy California evening. I had gone for a jog before I was to speak at a leadership conference. I still can't recall how I got there, but I found myself sitting on a curb, weeping uncontrollably. I couldn't tell if it took place suddenly or gradually, but I knew something had broken inside. I remember lifting my trembling

hands and asking out loud, “What in the world is happening to me” (13). That was the beginning of three years of discovering the causes of his burnout and recovery.

His story is an account of being prescribed a sabbatical by a physician and beginning it in a silent monastery. His humorous account highlights the two extremes of silence versus full on ministry engagement.

He uses the helpful analogy of a tank that is filled by some experiences and people and drained by others. The key is to find the experiences that fill your tank and limit the experiences and people that drain your tank. He tells his story of coming back to health and ends the book with some hard-earned lessons that are listed at the end of this chapter.

Cordeiro was told by his Christian psychologist that his physical body had been affected by his burn out as well.

You have depleted your system,” he said. “Your serotonin levels are completely exhausted. Serotonin is a chemical like an endorphin. It’s a natural, feel-good hormone. It replenishes during times of rest and then fuels you while you are working. If, however, you continue to drive yourself without replenishing, your store of serotonin will be depleted. As a substitute, your body will be forced to replace the serotonin with adrenaline. The problem is that adrenaline is designed for emergency use only (25).

The psychologist prescribed six months to a year time of rest, followed by an examination of trigger points and a restructuring of the way he was living. That seemed like a drastic step for a busy minister of a large church but at the point of breakdown, he truly had little choice.

Scazzero has written the classic text for overcoming emotionally unhealthy spirituality. He has written over half a dozen books about emotionally healthy leaders and churches Additionally, his wife Geri Scazzero has written several as well. His testimony

of his unhealthy emotional state reveals three things that caused him to begin to address the idea of unhealthy emotional spirituality:

First, I was not experiencing the joy or contentment Scripture promises us in Christ. I was unhappy, frustrated, overworked harried. God had brought me into the Christian life with the offer, “My yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:30), an invitation to a free and abundant life. But I wasn’t feeling it. A yoke, in ancient Palestine, was made of wood, handmade to fit perfectly to the neck and shoulders of oxen and prevent chafing or cutting. In the same way, Jesus’ assurance of a “light, easy yoke” can be translated as follows: “I have crafted a life for you, a yoke for you to wear that perfectly fits who you are. It is light and easy, I promise.” The reality, however, is that after many years as an active Christian, I felt exhausted and in need of a break. My life was lived life was more out of reaction to what other people did or might do or what they thought or might think about me. I knew in my head we were to live to please God. Living like that was another matter. Jesus’ yoke felt burdensome. Second, I was angry, bitter, and depressed. For five years I attempted to do the work of two or three people. We had two services in English in the morning and one in Spanish. I preached at all of them. When my associate in our afternoon Spanish congregation left the church with two hundred and fifty members to start his own church, I found myself hating him. I tried, without success, to forgive him. I experienced the growing tension of a double life—preaching love and forgiveness on Sundays and cursing alone in my car on Mondays. The gap between my beliefs and my experience now revealed itself with terrifying clarity. Third, Geri was lonely, tired of functioning as a single mom with our four daughters. She wanted more from our marriage and grew frustrated enough to finally confront me. She had finally come to a place where she would not accept my excuses, delays, or avoidant behavior. She had nothing else to lose. Late one evening, as I was sitting on our bed reading, she entered the room and calmly informed me: “Pete, I’d be happier single than married to you. I am getting off this roller coaster. I love you but refuse to live this way anymore. I have waited...I have tried talking to you. You aren’t listening. I can’t change you. That is up to you. But I am getting on with my life.” She was resolute.: “Oh, yes, by the way, the church you pastor? I quit. Your leadership isn’t worth following (16-17).

His wife Geri was in a unique position to speak truth to her husband about his emotional condition. Not all wives are that bold or well spoken. It would still serve all pastors well to open a place in their lives for their spouses or other close associates to be that honest. Out of their turmoil came an in-depth study of the causes and some ways for

others to avoid going through the same things. She recounts the experience of her drastic decision to leave the church her husband pastored.

I quit! I told my husband. I'm leaving our church. This church no longer brings me life. It brings me death. I am going to another church." I had been imagining this very moment for months. Since my husband was the senior pastor of our church, this was no small decision. For years, I made feeble attempts to get him to pay attention, to see my tiredness and frustrations. Finally, I was finished (G. Scazzero 25).

Craig Groeschel presents a very enlightening description of what he really thought and felt, even though he never described a breakdown or burnout. His book is more of a remedy to avoid burnout before it occurs by taking off the mask and being real with God, yourself, and others.

Early in ministry, Groeschel became aware that he could perform the duties of a pastor without being a fully committed follower of Jesus.

One Sunday, after another week of performing my best for God, I stood to preach His life-changing Word. As I approached the pulpit, the truth hit me squarely between the eyes. I had not prayed at all. Not that day. Not the day before. Not the day before that. To the best of my knowledge, I had not prayed all week. And I called myself a pastor. That's when it dawned on me: *I had become a full-time minister and a part-time follower of Christ.* From the outside I looked the part (11).

The unfortunate truth is that a pastor can have a good technique and skill to pastor and lead a church and do it without the presence and anointing of God in their lives.

Groeschel was honest about his duplicity. One of the problems that seems to emerge in pastor's lives is that they have often been trained in ministry skills but never really disciplined. Bible school and seminaries tend to develop ministry skills rather than discipleship. Charisma (your spiritual gift) is often the focus rather than character. Character is what keeps you where charisma can take you.

What are the Characteristics of a Mentally and Emotionally Healthy Pastor?

Many lists and opinions deal with the qualities and characteristics of a healthy pastor. What contributes most to healthy leadership and specifically healthy pastoral leadership is disputable among experts. The issue of which factors contribute more is also arguable. In the personal stories included, it is obvious that some factors differed among pastors who faced burnout. Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie give five themes of resilient ministry:

- spiritual formation
- self-care
- emotional and cultural intelligence
- marriage and family
- leadership and management (*16*)

Jesus is the only example we have of someone who got life completely right. He offers that same soul health to us in Matthew's gospel. "Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light" (Matt.11:28-30 NLT). Charles Hummel addressed Jesus' lack of stress in his life and ministry:

Is there any escape from this pattern of living? The answer lies in the life of our Lord. On the night before He died, Jesus made an astonishing claim. In the great prayer of John 17 He said, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (verse 4). How could Jesus use the word "finished"? His three-year ministry seemed all too short. ... Yet His life was never feverish; He had time for people. He could spend hours talking to one person, such as the Samaritan woman at the well. His life showed a wonderful balance, a sense of timing. When His brothers wanted Him to go to Judea, He replied, "My time has not yet come" (John 7:6). Jesus did not ruin His gifts by haste. ... (qtd. in Johnson).

As in every area, Jesus exemplified how to live. His life was pulled and pushed every moment, yet he was able to live the only truly balanced life ever lived. He began his day in prayer (Mark 1:35). After prayer, he lived out his instructions in a focused and balanced way.

Plenty of statistics show the problem of ministry and how poorly many are doing. Less accessible are descriptions of those who are well adjusted and emotionally healthy in ministry.

Holly Tate wrote about balance in ministry in her interview with Senior Pastor Jeff of Rolling Hills Christian Church in El Dorado Hills, CA.

Holly: So, Jeff, you've sat in the shoes of the pastors joining us today. You were the Senior Pastor of Rolling Hills Christian Church in El Dorado Hills, CA. What were the emotional pressure points you felt as a senior pastor that those of us outside the pulpit don't see on Sundays?

Jeff: I was an expert at losing sleep as a senior pastor. I felt the constant weight of my role as the shepherd to my church. I felt the weight of wanting to change lives with every sermon. My nightmare was that I wouldn't be prepared when it was time to preach on Sunday. I put immense pressure on myself to deliver an effective and compelling sermon each Sunday. I poured at least 30 hours of my week into preparing for my sermons. It was overwhelming!

Holly: Absolutely. Most people only have to prepare a few key speeches or talks in their life, but pastors are responsible for delivering compelling sermons each week. As you think back over your years as a Senior Pastor, what are some tips you found helpful to maintaining a healthy balance in your life and keeping anxiety from getting the best of you?

Jeff: I was fortunate to be a part of a great church and a great family that loved me well and allowed me to grow as a person and as a pastor (Tate).

A healthy sense of humor serves as a great lubrication for the gears of life.

Picturing Jesus and his disciples as never laughing and having fun at each other's expense is hard to imagine. Often humor is overlooked in reading Scripture, but sarcasm, hyperbole, and exaggeration had their place. Humor is the sedative for the pains and aches in life.

Humor is observed in all cultures and at all ages. But only in recent decades has experimental psychology respected it as an essential, fundamental human behavior. Historically, psychologists framed humor negatively, suggesting it demonstrated superiority, vulgarity, Freudian id conflict, or a defense mechanism to hide one's true feelings. In this view, an individual used humor to demean or disparage others, or to inflate one's own self-worth. As such, it was treated as an undesirable behavior to be avoided. And psychologists tended to ignore it as worthy of study. But research on humor has recently come to light, with humor now viewed as a character strength. Positive psychology, a field that examines what people do well, notes that humor can be used to make others feel good, to gain intimacy, or to help buffer stress. Along with gratitude, hope, and spirituality, a sense of humor belongs to the set of strengths positive psychologists call transcendence; together they help us forge connections to the world and provide meaning to life. Appreciation of humor correlates with other strengths, too, such as wisdom and love of learning. And humor activities or exercises result in increased feelings of emotional well-being and optimism (Gibson).

Proverbs 17:22 says, "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength" (NLT). The power of humor cannot be overestimated in a setting where the pastor is a care giver dealing with life and death matters. In the same way that a physician must rise above the crisis to bring help and healing, a pastor has to be able to not be overwhelmed by the circumstances. Of course, the strength that God provides is the greatest help, but humor provides a powerful distraction.

A healthy pastor would have the same characteristics and balance as a healthy Christian in general. Possibly the best way to portray a healthy Christian is by the fruit of the spirit from Galatians 5:22-23. If Jesus had sat for a portrait and then was described, the fruit of the spirit would be the perfect description of his countenance.

Sarah Eekhoff Zylstra made her attempt to explain what a healthy balanced Christian life looks like.

I'm wondering all the time if I should stay the course, if I should change jobs (I'm topped out where I am), if I should switch to part-time so I can homeschool (I'd love to do this but not sure we can afford it). I wonder

what I'm even aiming for. As a mom, what does a well-balanced, healthy, God-honoring life even look like? ... But I do think we can define some qualities that make up "a well-balanced, healthy, God-honoring life.

Zylstra went on to describe her perspective of a God-honoring life that prioritizes seeking God, serves close relationships well, includes serving in a local church body, caring for your own health, and engaging your mind and imagination regularly.

What are the biggest factors preventing mental and emotional health in pastors?

As followers of Jesus, pastors have access to possibly the most important aspect of mental health, a life with purpose and meaning. The biblical view of life provides meaning that can be a structure during difficult or stressful times.

Research from health psychology and medical science has shown that a considerable number of cancer patients tend to rely on meaning while coping with stress caused by their illness. One of the main reasons lies in the fact that focusing on meaning structures enables individuals to cope with stress (e.g., meaning-focused strategies), interpret and organise their experience, identify important elements of life, and achieve a sense of purpose and significance (Carlson 1).

Many other factors contribute to mentally and emotionally unhealthy pastors.

Peter Scazzero lists the primary symptoms of emotionally unhealthy spirituality and describes a pathway for spiritual life.

Before I describe this pathway, it is essential for us to clearly identify the primary symptoms of emotionally unhealthy spirituality that continue to wreak havoc in our personal lives and our churches. The following are the top ten symptoms indicating if someone is suffering from a bad case of emotionally unhealthy spirituality:

Using God to run from God

Ignoring the emotions of anger, sadness, and fear

Dying to the wrong things

Denying the past's impact on the present

Dividing our lives into "secular" and "sacred" compartments

Doing for God instead of being with God

Spiritualizing away conflict

Covering over brokenness, weakness, and failure

Living without limits

Judging other people's spiritual journey (24).

Barry Howard lists five areas that can strain a pastor's mental health: unrealistic expectations, perpetual preparation, a pendulum of emotional encounters, problem people (not people with problems but those who are in a perpetual state of chaos or causing chaos in others), and confidentiality cache (being entrusted with confidential information that must be locked away in the pastor's mental inbox).

Those in every vocation experience varying levels of stress, distress and duress. However, because the pastoral task requires remarkable investment in the lives of others, a pastor who neglects mental hygiene can gradually slip into a state of melancholy or emotional chaos and then compound the dilemma by ignoring the symptoms for fear of stigmatizing his or her ministry.

William Vanderbloemen gives eight questions to ask to recognize someone who is emotionally healthy: Do they always compare themselves to others? Do they have a victim mentality? Do they talk about forgiveness? Do they need to be the center of attention? Can they say "no"? Are they high on the drama meter? Do they have a record of giving back? Do they know joy is a choice?" (qtd. in Rainer)

When Walt Disney said, "Happiness is a state of mind," he was on to something. Emotionally healthy people know that they have control of their attitude and their responses to situations. Listen for persons choosing to live out all the fruit of the spirit, which are clear determiners of emotional and spiritual health: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Here's a news flash about churches and Christian organizations: They are led by a bunch of people who need a Savior. No team member is perfect and waiting to find the perfect one means you will always be a team of one. Everyone you bring into your organization will have flaws. But you can mitigate the effect of those flaws if you seek people who are balanced and healthy. When emotionally healthy people are in leadership in the church or other Christian organizations, it creates an entire culture of emotional health and healing. It will make a bigger difference than you can imagine (qtd. in Rainer).

Looking at the various lists of the traits of emotionally healthy pastors, many of the practices would seem to be common sense and basic discipleship theology. Pastors are so susceptible to emotional issues that it becomes an excuse to just accept them and thus get a victim mentality. Pastors must adopt an attitude that resists this mentality and believes that grace is available from God to face and overcome every situation and circumstance.

The Trap of Comparison

To be emotionally healthy, the comparison trap must be conquered. Paul declared as unwise finding your value in light of other's lives (2 Cor. 2:12). Often when pastors attend conferences, they leave with great frustration because of how much better other churches seem to be doing compared to where one leads. A pastor attending a conference was once asked how many he was running. His response was, five thousand. The person asking the question said, "really?" The pastor said, "Not really, I just wanted you to like me better." The whole idea is that you must be a better person if your church or ministry is bigger.

Dale O'Shields addressed the comparison trap in a talk about "13 Ways to Combat Comparison." He addressed areas like identity in Christ, embracing your uniqueness, understanding the difference between significance and prominence, deciding your relationship with social media, shutting yourself off to gossip as well as other things.

Only very secure leaders can stay in their lane and finish the race God set out before them, regardless of how well or how poorly others seem to be doing. The clearer the purpose and calling are clear to the pastor and church, the lesser the temptation to keep score by comparing to others.

The pastor is serving an invisible boss and living the ultimate example of delayed gratification. Often the rewards and true score is not clear in this present life and will not be truly made known except in eternity. The competition trap is truly only conquered by living the life of faith.

The Pain of People Leaving the Church

The go-to line among pastors and church leaders when someone leaves the church is, “Don’t take it personally.” The problem with this advice is that it is ridiculous. Of course, it seems to reflect a pastor’s leadership and even whether the person who left liked or disliked the pastor personally. It seems to recall the mafia response to an execution, “It is just business, nothing personal.” In both cases the appeal to address these things with a total lack of emotion is absurd.

People leave churches for various reasons. Thom Rainer lists some of the common reasons people leave a church. They include getting out of the habit, leaving after high school, not liking, or being hurt at a church, not connecting and never returning after moving away.

These and other reasons often mask personal reasons that have nothing to do with the reasons they give. It could just as easily be sin or a personal problem that causes someone to leave. Regardless of whether it is perceived as a good reason or not, it is usually taken as a personal affront to the church pastor and leadership. To some pastors it is a personal rejection and can seem like a sort of divorce.

In their heads most pastors know that the church is really about the larger Kingdom of God, but the local church is a family and losing any family member can be painful. Seeing someone go even for the right reasons can be exceedingly difficult, and

much more so when it is for a bad reason. Pastors by nature usually have a total commitment to the local church and cannot understand others who see their relationship to the church much more casually.

Most Pastors Lack Close Friends

Ministry makes it difficult to have close friends. The fear of trusting is deeply embedded in the typical pastor. Many have faced betrayal and been the brunt of others using a relationship with the pastor to gain social approval.

Consider the following ways that pastoring aggravates loneliness:
 Working alone. While I'm widely accountable as a pastor, most of my work is self-directed and done solo: I set my schedule, prioritize my work, and daily make countless judgment calls about what I will or will not do. Such solitude lends itself to loneliness. In *Christian Ministry*, David J. McFarlane and Thomas H. Yorty note that "pastors tend to be loners. We spend a lot of time alone in our studies, alone in our cars, alone in the chancel, alone with the needs and joys of our congregants. The spiritual journey requires some degree of silence and privacy. . . . We function as extroverts, but at our center we tend to be introverts. Though to be alone is not necessarily to be lonely, the isolation of pastors is a bane as well as a blessing (Boers; qtd. in Boers).

Jesus called his disciples friends in John 15:15. He demonstrated vulnerability to those whom he served in ministry with. That is a risk most pastors are reluctant to take. Some Bible schools and seminaries teach pastors to never make friends within the congregation. That was part of my training in the early years of ministry. The difficulty of that is that it creates an air of professionalism rather than the vulnerability of being a real person. Pastors can feel cut off from the very culture they live in. P. Scazzero speaks to the issue of dual relationships with coworkers who are friends or maybe even family. "Let me repeat this: I do not believe it is healthy or Biblical to try to eliminate dual relationships from Christian leadership" (262).

The Bible records many instances of family working together in ministry. This is true in Moses' family as well as David's. In the New Testament, James served as the leader of the Jerusalem church, and he was the half-brother of Jesus. Jesus had several sets of siblings among his close followers.

Despite relationships that exist outside of work and ministry, complete vulnerability and openness with those who work for you or look to you as their spiritual leader is difficult. Isolation is common even though a pastor may be around people and crowds often.

Yet pastoral isolation is common. Sometimes it's self-isolation, either out of a fear of being known or a fear of being hurt again by those he considers friends. More often, though, it's a public isolation, caring for and befriending many, with very few friends to care for him. A pastor can seem like he's known by many — he reveals a bit of himself each week to hundreds or thousands — while he's really known by few. Revelations of himself during sermons are often like revelations over social media: Controlled vulnerability that keeps people at a distance either through over- or under-sharing. It's tough to blame them. Pastoral work can be dehumanizing. People know and appreciate you for the work you do — the sermons you preach, the care you give, the prayers you pray, the visionary leadership you provide — more than who you really are. Since you perform publicly every week, appreciation can be a fickle thing. Good counselors guard against dual relationships, knowing it's nearly impossible and often unethical to have a personal friendship with a professional client. Pastors experience some of that reality as well (Grudem).

Loneliness is prevalent in the American culture in general. Homelessness is often linked with the lack of relationships and friends more than with the lack of money and resources. Those in close relationships are seldom homeless:

Relationships are important to all people. Fellowship is one of the essential elements of early and contemporary Christianity. A definite link has been drawn between homelessness and lack of relationships possibly more than poverty. “

Almost one-third of families who became homeless in Dublin in the first six months of this year lost their housing because of “relationship breakdown”, not eviction, according to new research. According to the

report from the Dublin Region Homeless Executive., more families are becoming homeless because of “family circumstances,” including overcrowded accommodation, and the breakdown of relationships between family members or partners, than are being served notice to quit by their landlords (Kelly).

Tom Rath makes the connection between effectiveness and healthy relationships, “Friendships are among the most fundamental of human needs. The fact is, we are biologically predisposed to this need for relationships, and our environment accentuates this every day. Without friends, it is very difficult for us to get by, let alone thrive” (15).

Seamands develops this idea further.

No matter, then, how much our parents and caregivers did right, especially our years of infancy and childhood when our personhood was being shaped and established, all of us exhibit brokenness and unhealthiness in interpersonal relationships to one degree or another. These areas of relational dysfunction can have profound effects on our ministry. In fact, our most consequential failures in ministry are often failures in relationships. Who we are in our relationships with people generally trumps what we do for people (40-41).

Everyone needs friends and personal relationships. Isolation is now considered a health risk as serious as smoking or being overweight. We truly all do get by with a little help from our friends:

A number of studies reveal that people’s circle of true friends and confidants is steadily shrinking. One study by the health insurer Cigna reveals that nearly 50 percent of Americans report only one close relationship. And 13 percent of those surveyed said they have zero people with whom they can confide. What’s more, a study from Brigham Young University found that loneliness can actually be deadly. In fact, researchers say loneliness is now a major public health issue and represents a greater health risk than obesity and is as destructive to your health as smoking fifteen cigarettes a day. The study, published in the journal *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, was a meta-analysis that looked at seventy studies covering over 3 million people. The results: social isolation and loneliness can increase mortality risk by up to 32 percent, depending on other factors (qtd in Sanders 49).

Church Structure and Burn Out

A factor that is seldom considered when addressing pastoral stress and burnout is the issue of church structure. Often the structure is built around the teaching and leading gifts of one person. Howard Snyder quotes David Mains from *Full Circle* on this problem.

How disabled the body of Christ has become because our primary purpose for church attendance has been to hear one man exercise his gifts, rather than to prepare all the people to develop their gifts for ministry, not only within the church but also to society (qtd. Snyder 134).

Paul addressed this error in church structure in his letter to the Ephesian Church:

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13 NLT).

That model is a complete reversal of the parish priest model where the pastor does the ministry to the people. The biblical model is for the pastors and other leaders to serve as trainers, equippers and coaches as they release the rest of the church to do ministry. A good metaphor is a sports team where the church is the locker room, the world is the field, the pastor is the coach, and the church members are the players.

These days, the pastoral/ministry role is much more complicated. Now, in addition to those basic responsibilities, many pastors are expected to function like CEOs of large corporations. They are expected to be strategic thinkers and planners. They are expected to be good managers. They are expected to preach sermons that are culturally relevant and contribute expertise and innovative ideas regarding production and programming. They are expected to lead fundraisers and capital campaigns. They are expected to be skilled at interpersonal relating but also to command the

attention of large crowds. Such expectations generate many places of paradox that will respond to nothing less than the tough, resourceful, savvy resilient soul that was so hard to coax out in the first place (Barton 28).

Snyder writes an entire chapter entitled “Must the Pastor Be a Superstar?” In it he says:

Meet Pastor Jones, superstar. He can preach, counsel, evangelize, administrate, conciliate, communicate, and sometimes even integrate. He can also raise the budget. He handles Sunday morning better than any quizmaster on weekday TV. He is better with words than most political candidates. As a scholar he surpasses many seminary professors. No church social function would be complete without him. His church, of course, is fortunate. Alas, not many churches can boast such talent. I confess my admiration, perhaps slightly tinged with envy. Not because of the talent, really, the sheer ability. But for the success, the accomplishment. Here is a man who faithfully preaches the Word, sees lives transformed by Christ, sees his church growing. What sincere evangelical minister would not like to be in his shoes? Not to mention his parsonage. I think of all the struggling, mediocre pastors, looking on with holy envy (if there be such), measuring their own performance by Pastor Jones’ success and dropping another notch into discouragement or, perhaps, self-condemnation (75-76).

He brings out clearly an often-overlooked problem in the modern church, a mismatch between the gift, DNA and calling of the typical pastor compared to the expectations of the church and surrounding culture. The leadership model described by Snyder requires a pastor to function as corporate CEO, accountant, motivational speaker, psychologist, theologian, and best friend to all. That expectation is not biblical. Most pastors are not gifted or trained for that level of leadership. Too much responsibility has fallen on the pastor and too little has rested on the people in the church.

Christian culture places too much responsibility on the pastor as well. Many cultural issues that confront the church are laid at the feet of the pastors and church

leaders. People often say, “If only the leaders of the church would address this properly it would not be such an issue.” Because pastors lead local churches, failings of local churches and Christians are often attributed to the pastor. The perception is that a pastor has much more control than is true.

My wife and I were driving to a Christian patriotic rally with a well-known speaker a few years ago. During the drive I commented to my wife, “Sometime tonight it will be said that America would be in better shape if the pastors would do better and be more responsible.” Unfortunately, I was correct. The failure of the Christians in America to properly be salt and light was attributed to the failure of pastors in America to lead them properly. Apparently, anytime the Church is blamed for problems, pastors by default are the root of that failure.

Pastors do have an awesome responsibility, but not the responsibility that others have laid upon them. Church structures must reflect the leadership role of the pastor and leaders as well as the ministry role of everyone else in the church.

The Western church model has served America and Europe well for most of the twentieth century. The question of whether it has fulfilled its purpose and now needs to be replaced by a more workable model must be asked. The parish priest model has been so deeply engrained in the culture that it will require a revolution of sorts to jar it loose. A more Biblical model based on the practices of the Apostle Paul should be considered.

Malcolm Gladwell argues, “Perhaps the most interesting natural limit, however, is what might be called our social channel capacity. The case has been made, most persuasively, by the British anthropologist Robin Dunbar” (177). Gladwell goes on in his

book to give several illustrations of social capacity at what he calls, “The Rule of 150” (184). He believes that a social structure breaks down at around one hundred and fifty people.

This number corresponds with the common growth barrier never overcome by most churches, the two hundred barrier.

Many leaders are surprised to discover that the dividing line is 150 in average attendance on Sunday mornings. In his recent book *Small Congregation Big Potential*, Lyle Schaller presents a strong argument why the dividing line should be set at 150. He points out that there is strong statistical evidence to support this number (Martin 11).

Conferences are presented to pastors to help them transform their leadership styles from a shepherd to a rancher and conquer this barrier. “But in order to get through the 200 barrier and sustain a healthy rate of growth, the pastor must be willing to pay a price too high for some: he or she must be willing to shift from a shepherd mode to a rancher mode” (Wagner 58-59). Is it possible that most pastors should not be leading churches beyond this number? Is it possible that not all shepherds should become ranchers? Rather than striving to transform into a super pastor with a different DNA and gift, maybe those pastors are meant to pastor a smaller church that reproduces by multiplying other churches. Not all personalities are able to shift from a hands-on model of personal interaction with everyone to overseeing others who provide pastoral care as well. Growth, evangelism, and mission is always God’s will for all churches and Christians. Maybe it should be pursued by multiplication rather than by constant growth.

For growth or multiplication to happen, church leaders must be willing to delegate leadership to others. Some pastors are insecure and find it difficult to share the praise for ministry that often comes with the parish model. For a pastor to hear another minister or

layperson receive praise for a wedding or funeral can be unsettling if they are insecure or codependent. Many pastors need to be needed and find it difficult to share ministry. This is a flaw regardless of what size the church is.

Church structure is a major factor in pastoral burnout and stress. That could be anything from having a church board that is overbearing and abusive to the pastor to having to conduct monthly congregational meetings where every detail of the church is debated. A few harmful personalities can make it exceedingly difficult to lead a congregation forward regardless of size.

As the church grows, the staff becomes an issue. The pastor of a larger church must deal with different personalities and work styles among staff members. Times may even occur when the pastor is called upon to fire an employee or volunteer. That can be exceedingly difficult if the person has been at the church long or is very well liked by the congregation. As they leave a certain amount of the congregation may leave with them.

A church must be run at a certain level like a commercial establishment and some pastors want to keep the church small to avoid the discomfort that comes with running a business. Just like a business, the church must handle payroll, I.R.S. issues, staffing issues, insurance for the property and the employees, and many more. Most people became pastors because they fell in love with Jesus, the Bible, and God's people and may have a hard time with this model when it is outside their gifting.

In their 2016 State of the Church report, the Barna Group looked at church size. They found that 46 percent of Americans attend churches with 100 or fewer members. Another 37 percent attend churches with more than 100 members, but fewer than 500. That means that 83 percent of the people who attend church go to churches with fewer than 499 members—with the lion's share worshipping in churches of 100 or fewer. As larger churches, nine percent of Americans attend churches with 500 to 999 attendees, while eight percent attend churches of 1,000 or more. WHAT DO THESE

STATISTICS TELL US? While most Christian marketing and media attention focuses on the American megachurch, this isn't the standard by a long shot. Pastors are all too easily lured into believing the myth that a healthy church is the same as a big church. It is amazing how many pastors know that the average church size is less than 100 people, but still feel like failures for leading smaller churches. Maybe it's time for the church to acknowledge and recognize the importance of the megachurch movement while celebrating the significant value that smaller, normal churches bring to the Kingdom (Bradley).

Most pastors lead smaller churches by design. Rather than pushing them to pastor larger churches, they should be taught to multiply as a church possibly in partnership with other churches. Church growth is the goal of all pastors, but it should not be approached the same way in every situation.

What are we looking for when we think of church growth? Are we hoping to convert the entire world? Are we content with transfer growth from other churches? Would we be happiest living in a rapidly growing subdivision where most growth comes from people moving from other congregations because they moved into our neighborhood? ...Families grow biologically and families have babies. This is addition. Another form of addition occurs when member transfer from other churches. But even conversion growth is actually addition. When newly converted people join our congregation, we are still adding names to our role. While addition is good, it doesn't compare to multiplication (Moore 79).

All churches, large or small can multiply other churches. Each seed reproduces after its kind. Trying to just grow bigger reaches its limit. Healthy pastors can pastor healthy small churches if they see the Great Commission as including multiplication and not just continual addition. "This doesn't mean that every local church should keep getting bigger and bigger. Most warm-blooded things grow to a point and reproduce" (Cole 9).

Pastors are under the pressure not only to grow the structure bigger and bigger, but also to make them more and more complex. Programs can pile up and clutter the church and the pastor's mind. "As a whole, cluttered and complex churches are not alive.

Our research shows that these churches are not growing. Unfortunately, the overprogrammed and bust church is the norm” (Rainer and Geiger 14). Complexity adds more and more pressure to leadership along with the fear that something is being left out.

Saying yes to the important things, allows us to say no to everything else and reduce the complexity of our churches and personal lives. “Everywhere you go these days people are overloaded with, and sometimes paralyzed with, choices. Not only is the number increasing, but the speed at which choices are coming at us also is accelerating. We suffer from option overload. The average grocery store carries more than thirty thousand products” (Witt 132). Lance Witt goes on to comment on his niceness which keeps him from saying no to choices and complexity.

Gone are the days of the country pastor interacting on the farms and in the businesses of the members of the congregation. Ministry has become an industrial machine made up of systems, disciples, campuses, and staff. Not all pastors have been able to or even should be able to make the switch.

Pressure is part of life and ministry. It cannot be avoided, and many times is healthy and good. Many pastors struggle with anxiety. Anxiety is the fear of doing things wrong that hurt the future. “Anxiety is linked to the future, and depression is connected more directly with the past. Or, put another way, anxiety is the future superimposed on the present, and depression is the past superimposed on the present” (Minirth, Meier, and Hawkins 28). Jesus said “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today” (Matt. 6:34 NLT).

Complexity and anxiety in ministry rob the pastor from a sense of purpose. Staying up with life becomes the goal rather than the Great Commission or enjoying the life given by God. “Imagine, for a moment,

that you are out on the sea in a boat that springs a leak. Your purpose immediately becomes mobilized around keeping the boat from sinking. But so long as you are busy bailing water, you can't navigate towards a destination. The same is true in our lives. When we are preoccupied with filling our own holes to stay afloat, we have little energy available to define any deeper or more enduring purpose. By contrast, when we are able to move from the inner experience of threat to one of challenge, we introduce a whole new range of possibilities into our lives. Rather than reacting to fear, we can focus on what moves us and feels meaningful (Loehr and Schwartz 135).

Much pressure and anxiety are the results of a pastor trying to be something besides whom God created them to be. False expectations are based on false criteria and a life can be spent trying to live up to an unreal standard. Accepting yourself, your gifts, and your limitations are the fruit of making one's calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10). The more secure a pastor is in his calling; the less pressure and anxiety accumulates in the soul.

What are the Best Practices for Obtaining and Maintaining Mental and Emotional Health in Ministry?

Many perspectives and opinions abound about the best practices for a leader's mental and emotional health. Whether maintaining or restoring mental and emotional health, common factors are considered helpful and included by many pastors and authors.

Cordeiro writes about "Seven Lessons Hard-Learned": do not overproduce (admit when your energy and effectiveness is gone), steward your energy, rest well, exercise your way to recovery, eat your way to a good life, recharge daily, and fight for your family (113-44). Pastors should not neglect their families for ministry, or they will be acting unwisely. At the end of the day, their families are their most important ministry priority. Cordeiro's lessons came from failure and an unbalanced life and his eventual restoration to balance and mental health.

Christine and Tom Sine provide a contemporary version of the Twenty-third Psalm to illustrate the need to rest:

The clock is my dictator; I shall not rest.
 It makes me lie down only when exhausted.
 leads me into deep depression, it hounds my soul.
 It leads me in circles of frenzy for activities' sake.
 Even though I run frantically from task to task,
 I will never get it all done, for my "ideal" is with me.
 Deadlines and my need for approval, they drive me.
 They demand performance from me, beyond the limits of my schedule.
 They anoint my head with migraines, my in-basket overflows.
 Surely fatigue and time pressure shall follow me all the days of my life.
 And I dwell in the bonds of frustration forever (qtd. in Cordeiro 122-123).

The ability to rest guilt-free must be learned. Workaholics are often driven by insecurity to please others and feel guilty when rest is not properly valued. Cordeiro tells a story from a safari that illustrates the need to rest and pace yourself.

A man went on safari in an exotic country, hiring some local guides to manage his procession. Because he had arrived late, he was already three days behind schedule, and the original safari had left without him. So the hired men sprinted to catch up. After the first day of running in the jungle heat, the men fell exhausted at the evening campfire. Early the next morning, the visitor blew his whistle: "Come on! Let's go! Let's catch that safari!" The men jumped up, strapped on the bags, and started running. Long after the sun had set, they finally stopped, once again falling in sheer exhaustion. The foreigner was well-pleased, saying, "If we keep up this pace, we may catch the others!" So the next morning, they got up in a hurry and ran again-all day long. On the fourth day, the eager visitor sprung to his feet and exclaimed, "Today we shall surely catch them! Let's go!" But the hired men just sat around the dying fire, poking the embers with sticks. "Get moving right now!" urged the man. The leader of the men replied, "We're not moving." Indignant, the foreigner insisted, "I paid you to help me catch up with the safari!" "Sir," said the leader with a firm calmness, "we are not going to move all day. You have pushed us so hard these first three days. Now we will have to wait a whole day...to let our souls catch up!"(Cordeiro 127-128).

The idea of some's soul catching up is easily transferrable from the safari to a typical modern-day busy schedule, especially in ministry. The point is that until

someone's soul catches up, they are less effective. It is easier to make a physical schedule for appointments than to schedule when a person will be emotionally present. It is possible to be physically present but emotionally absent. This is true for students attending classes, parishioners attending church services, and even pastors caring for other's needs. It is very important for someone's entire being—spirit, soul, and body—to be present in the same place at the same time.

Only God can restore our souls. Spending regular time in his presence and in his Word is the key to that restoration. His mercies are new every morning and every day is a do over. It is important to start fresh into a new beginning every day.

Scazzero describes his transformation from “a nonvocational view of leadership (I am a leader who happens to be married) to a vocational view (I lead out of my marriage)” (94). His changed view of marriage was transformational to how he viewed ministry. Marriage was an add on before he realized that his call to marriage preceded his call to pastoral ministry. That change within him made the ministry more effective. Until marriage and family become a higher priority than ministry, the ministry will suffer,

In Bevin's notes, he presented the results of a research project where he

...interviewed long-term church planting pastors throughout the United States. They came from 19 different states and their churches varied in size from 50-4500. The average tenure of the church planting pastors I interviewed was 20 years. These pastors spread across 13 different denominational backgrounds, and although they had different backgrounds, they were all examples of ministry health and longevity. They had weathered through the highs and lows of church planting and lead [sic] their churches to a place of health, vitality, and multiplication (4-5).

This research resulted in some essentials recommended for health and longevity in ministry. They included a God-centered vision, prioritizing marriage and family,

self-care, prayer, healthy relationships including the ability to handle conflict, and outside ministry involvement.

Outside ministry involvement is a huge part of longevity. My wife and I were able to make over forty mission trips while pastoring. Even though the trips included preaching and teaching, they did not include administration and staff oversight. Mission trips ended up being a vital part of our overall health. For other pastors, this may be a hobby, a part-time job they really enjoy, or teaching at a Bible school or seminary. The diversion is healthy simply because it is different, and the pastor can step out of the day-to-day grind.

Of course, vacations or study trips can have the same effect if they are long enough to be able to lay down the pressures of back home. A Bible study tour of Israel or Paul's travels can be a great diversion, and yet fulfill a spiritual need.

Bevin listed being a life-long learner as one of the factors. I received my master's degree after being at the church for well over ten years. The church grew significantly during this time. The degree program was a great diversion from ministry that helped and enhanced ministry in the church and overseas. While working on my doctorate, church members commented on my preaching being better. Continued education is vital and extremely helpful for the pastor as well as the ministry.

Bevin also mentioned in the same paper some practices that help prevent burnout. They included knowing yourself, cultivating relationships, setting boundaries, resting, and developing a rule of life which includes spiritual disciplines. Spending time enjoying your family and regularly turning off all technology can also help prevent burnout. (Bevin 2-3).

Judah Smith talks about a healthy soul environment from Genesis 2:7-9. He says that sometimes God just wants us to enjoy the trees.

Then, starting with verse 8, there is a description of the optimum, soul-nurturing environment that God created for mankind. It just might surprise you. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. (verses 8-9) (23).

The fact that the tree was pleasant to the sight implies part of God's purpose for man was simply to observe and enjoy them. That principle of enjoying nature is a vital part of health. The heavens declare his glory and the beauty of nature can be therapeutic. Some enjoy hunting, outdoor photography or just being outside. Nothing can put on a performance quite as well as God's creation. The very inability to be still and turn off the mind is an indicator of the stress level present.

“Dr. J. Robert Clinton, professor of leadership at Fuller Theological Seminary, believes that more than 70 percent of leaders do not finish well” (qtd. in Meyers). Many leaders come to mind who started well but got off track somewhere along the way. It seems to be a popular topic of interest currently due to recent pastor suicides and prominent moral failures.

Chuck Lawless presented *10 Characteristics of Pastors Who Finished Well*:

1. They oozed humility. Though they, like all leaders, at times wrestled with a desire to be somebody, they knew from the beginning that the work of the gospel was not about them—it's about Jesus.
2. They always knew they could be steps away from a fall. They weren't so foolish as to think they could not fall. Their honest recognition of the possibility made them ever alert and prayerful.
3. At the same time, the thought of failing Jesus was almost a foreign thought. They just loved Jesus, and serving Him meant more to them than anything. Even the thought of letting Him down broke their hearts.
4. They *planned* to finish well. That is, they didn't end well by accident. They made a commitment to finish well each day, and the faithful days became years.
5. They were firmly committed to their

families. They adored their spouses and children, and everybody knew it. Serving God meant building their homes on His Word, praying daily with their family, and protecting their time with them. 6. They had some kind of mentor in their lives. These relationships weren't always formal, but they were intentional. The pastors I've known who finished well always had somebody walking with them and encouraging them. 7. They lived in the Word and on their knees. They knew the Word so well that it naturally flowed from them. Prayer was not ritual to them; it was relationship. 8. They were committed to integrity. Their "yes" really did mean "yes," and their "no" really did mean "no" (Matt. 5:37). Never once did I question the truthfulness of their lives or their words. 9. They evangelized regularly. This characteristic may be surprising, but I can't deny what I saw in their lives. These pastors wanted others to know about Jesus. Their world was first and foremost about Him. 10. Their only ambition was to please Jesus. Some of these pastors were elected to significant denominational positions, but none of them sought those roles. Hearing "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:21) was more important to them than hearing the accolades and applause of man.

Lawless included a few unexpected characteristics like evangelizing regularly and the place of humility in their lives. His perspective focuses on simple biblical principles.

A well-known poem often quoted in reference to longevity in ministry is: "Great it is to dream the dream when you stand in life by the starry stream. Greater still, to fight life through, and say at the end, the dream is true" (source unknown).

Adam Ramsey recounted a dinner conversation with Ray Ortlund:

At one point over dinner, the conversation turned to the topic of longevity in ministry and the various ways Satan will try to trip us up and take us out. Ray looked me square in the eye, with an intensity matched only by a genuine sense of care, and asked: "Adam, who in your city knows you and loves you, and isn't in the least bit impressed by you?" That's one of the most important questions anyone has ever asked me. There are many vital parts to ministry endurance: a rich and meaningful devotional life, faithfulness to God's Word, a healthy marriage, integrity, wisdom, courage, patience, pace, focus—the list could go on. But there are two manifestations of "the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:10) that perennially threaten us. I'm talking about those ancient human proclivities to hide and to impress. Eden and Babel. Fig leaves and skyscrapers. We hide weaknesses because of a desire to impress. And we desire to impress because we fear weakness (Ramsey).

Paul Chappell recounted a dinner conversation with a minister he admired that turned out differently:

One of the defining moments in my life occurred at a restaurant table nearly thirty years ago. Across the table was a man who had been one of my childhood heroes. Years earlier, he had preached in our church and signed my Bible. So, when he called me to tell me he would be in the area and would like to take me to lunch, I was thrilled. I could hardly wait to tell him what God was doing in our ministry and to ask him questions. I pictured a mentoring-type of conversation, and I was humbled that he wanted to make himself available to me. To my great disappointment, he didn't bring up spiritual topics at all. In fact, within a few minutes, I learned that he was out of the ministry and had actually taken me to lunch because he wanted to sell me life insurance! In those moments, I quietly resolved in my own heart to finish my life doing what God called me to do from the beginning. I love the imagery the Apostle Paul gave as he told Timothy that he would soon be departing. With an unbroken record of faithful ministry behind him, he wrote, *"I am now ready to be offered, and the time my departure is at hand"* (2 Timothy 4:6). As you read that, you can picture a ship preparing to pull out of the harbor—the time of departure has come. That time will come for all of us. And when it comes for me, I want to have spent my life in such a way that I don't have regrets. Like the apostle, I want to be able to say, "I am now ready."

He follows up with four important points to finish strong:

1. NURTURE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
2. ALWAYS FORGIVE
3. WITNESS TO EVERYONE YOU CAN
4. INVEST IN YOUR FAMILY

Many people have given many points to finish strong as a pastor. Some overlap and some are unique to their opinion. This paper seeks to identify and focus on as many common denominators as possible that are applicable to the current environment.

Research Design Literature

This project was a mixed method, pre-intervention study, which researched the mental and emotional health of pastors with the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial

Association International. I used both the quantitative method of a survey and the qualitative method of interviews to collect data to obtain balanced and well-rounded research. Purposive samples instead of theoretical or random samples were used. According to Sensing, “Purposive samples select people who have awareness of the situation and meet the criteria and attributes that are essential to your research” (83).

The research discovered and analyzed the current state of the mental and emotional health of the lead pastors in the Ozark district. The results were compared to the surveys, statistics and information presented about lead pastors in other parts of the Church in America. The literature review provided a framework of information that was then focused specifically on the issues faced by the R.M.A.I. pastors in the Ozark region.

This research as well as the questionnaires, a researcher-designed survey, and interviews, yielded best practices for current and future lead pastors. The conclusions formed by other researchers and authors again provided the foundation of these best practices which were focused and made more specific for R.M.A.I. pastors.

Summary of Literature

Many reasons deal with why pastors suffer with mental and emotional issues. Both the Old and New Testaments record instances of leaders who battled depression and mental struggles. History as well is full of examples of famous leaders who faced times of self-doubt and insecurities.

These are helpful to know but do not always counteract the potential sense of shame that goes with mental issues. One of the biggest issues is the reluctance of pastors to admit that they sometimes battle things internally. If it were a physical illness, it would not carry the same stigma and potential shame. Reading personal accounts of well-known

and well-respected pastors who faced emotional issues, such as Wayne Cordeiro and Peter Scazzero, might be of some help.

Just as many causes of mental and emotional problems exist, so too do many solutions. A holistic approach would address physical, genetic, environmental, and exhaustion issues. Ministers are in a unique place to be stressed, but all people, even Christians, face difficulties in life. Other professions such as physicians, police officers, and many other jobs have the same or more stress.

The spotlight has recently been placed on pastors due to the high-profile suicides and moral failures. Hopefully, this will result in greater preventative and proactive care and result in fewer pastors getting to the place of emotional breakdown.

One of the areas not addressed enough in the literature is the church structure that exists in the American and Western church which creates unreal expectations and burnout. Jesus said that putting new wine in old wineskins would burst the old wineskins. That principle might be applied to pastors as well as churches (Mark 2:22). New structures, less unrealistic expectations, and a better support system could result in a much higher rate of pastors who finish their course. The evidence shows that changes are needed in pastor's personal lives, but the contention should be made that changes are needed in the church structure as well. The Church in America must address the issue of pastoral burnout and help pastors deal with and repair broken hearts, minds, and emotions.

“Clergy health could be one of the most vital issues we have in the world. The greater the level of individual clergy health, the more effective pastors and clergy will be

able to serve their congregations and communities with the message of hope, grace and love” (faith and health connection).

In the process of writing this chapter, another high-profile pastor has died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, and a high-profile pastor of a mega-church on the east coast of America resigned due to moral failure. Ministry organizations are scurrying to hold mental health webinars to help struggling pastors.

One of those webinars on mental health conducted by Association of Related Churches was held on May 28th, 2020, hosted by Henry Cloud, Christian psychologist, and pastor Stovall Weems. They reported that seventy percent of pastors are constantly depressed, and thirty-eight percent of pastors are divorced or else seeking a divorce (Cloud).

One of the comments made on this webinar was that current stars like singer Arianna Grande and others were doing so well because they were sharing with their fans the depth of their mental and emotional struggles. By contrast, pastors tend to project wholeness and health in their mind and soul. By not being vulnerable, they are isolating themselves from the real needs of the people as well as a place where they can be real themselves. The idea is projected theologically that if something is wrong the person suffering must have done something wrong. Rather than embracing suffering, the sufferer is attacked for being deficient in some way. I am more confident than ever that the subject matter of this paper is essential to the expansion of the good news about Jesus Christ to the world.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to review the nature and purpose of this project followed by the research methodology used. The research instrumentation for each of three research questions is provided. The participants and context of the study is provided as well. Finally, the method of data collection and analysis are provided.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

The Purpose of this project was to evaluate the current state of and discern the best practices for achieving and maintaining the mental and emotional health of pastors within the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International with wider implications for the whole Church.

Considering recent pastor suicides and moral failures of high-profile national ministry leaders, this subject is important to discover and highlight ways to help Christian leaders finish strong. The hope of this limited project is to provide implications to the larger Body of Christ by discovering and identifying common denominators among those who finish strong as leaders as well as among those who do not. The discovery of ways to improve the health of ministers in the Ozark Region of R.M.A.I., as well as in the wider Church, is important.

Research Questions

RQ #1. According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what contributes most to achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association?

The first step in this research project is to determine what is going well. To discover the spiritual and emotional health of the leaders surveyed, Scazzero's inventory of spiritual/emotional health was used (61-67). This inventory provided a general overview of the emotional health of leaders, specifically around personal discipleship.

Scazzero's interpretation guide rates each participant in one of the following areas of emotional maturity: emotional infant, emotional child, emotional adolescent, or emotional adult (66-67). The participants did not receive the interpretation guide, but were told how to access it if they desired to.

Additionally, an accompanying researcher designed survey asked the participants to rate the areas that have most contributed to their spiritual and emotional health in the following areas:

A. Relationships

1. Their relationship with God.
2. The health of their marriage and family relationships.

B. Dealing with Life Issues

3. Their ability to handle stress constructively.
4. Their financial state and handling of money personally.
5. Their ability to rise above and avoid temptation and cultural traps.
6. Their ability and willingness to seek outside help and counsel as needed.

C. Security of Calling

7. Their sense that they are adequately prepared and able to oversee the Church as it is presently structured.
8. Their sense of being called and equipped by God for ministry.

D. Balanced Life

9. How balanced their life is between family and ministry.
10. Whether they can adequately rest on a weekly sabbath, an annual vacation, and an occasional sabbatical.
11. What part hobbies and distractions play in mental and emotional health.
12. Whether they are involved in ministry outside of their local church and its value to their mental and emotional health.

RQ #2. According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what obstacles inhibit achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in Missouri?

This question was addressed by a researcher-designed semi-structured interview entitled Pastoral Interview. Interviewees were selected from among those present at the annual conference in June or electronically when unavailable in person.

Additionally, some obstacles can be identified by analyzing the questionnaire. Obstacles are recognizable from the negative answers given on the questions.

RQ #3. Moving forward, what are the best practices for achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in the Ozark Region?

This research question is answered by comparing and analyzing the input from the questionnaire as well as the interview. Additional information was used from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

Ministry Context

This project studies the pastors and church planters in the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Alliance Association. The purpose of the research is to discover what promotes and what hinders healthy pastors. The hope is to discover information and best practices that have wider implications for Christian leaders everywhere.

Rhema ministers have a unique perspective theologically as graduates of a Charismatic Bible college with a strong emphasis on faith. Within that background there are various beliefs and approaches to life and ministry, but the faith component is especially strong.

Within this theological background, a strong emphasis is placed on faith and confession of the Word of God. Sometimes that theology is misconstrued as the idea that nothing negative should be acknowledged. To do so would be a form of unbelief. It could be argued that it is a form of denial of reality. Because of that, some ministers have the idea that it is wrong to admit weakness in any way. This denial of reality can hinder a minister from receiving healing.

The Bible teaches to confess sin to another Christian so healing can come (Jas. 5:16). Additionally, Abraham did not deny the reality that he and Sarah were unable to have children at their ages. He simply believed God was not limited by that reality. “And Abraham’s faith did not weaken, even though, at about 100 years of age, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah’s womb” (Rom. 4:19 NLT). Abraham faced the fact rather than deny the problem.

The challenge of extreme faith teaching is to be able to acknowledge problems and weaknesses without giving up the fact that God can heal and help when they are

truthfully admitted. While that extreme position on faith is rare, it still exists to a certain degree.

The Ozark Region of R.M.A.I. is very connected relationally. That friendship has created an atmosphere of unusual trust and openness among many of the forty ministers. Because of this level of connectedness and trust, the honesty level is extremely high with each other.

Participants

Criteria for Selection

The Ozark Region of R.M.A.I. is made up of ministers who have graduated from Rhema Bible Training College, have been licensed or ordained with R.M.A.I., and make their home in Arkansas or Missouri. All the pastors in the region were invited to participate in the survey.

I chose interview participants from those present at the annual conference in June or electronically, with preference shown for those in supervisory positions. Presumably, they had a broader depth of understanding as to what the ministers around them were experiencing. The interview was named “Pastoral Interview.”

Description of Participants

The ministers of the Ozark Region had a good mixture of backgrounds and ages. Most of the churches were under two hundred and many of the pastors had served for an extended time. Most of the ministers served rural churches. All the pastors were, except for one, male, the selection of mostly male participants was not intentional.

Some of the pastors were bi-vocational and some were in full-time in ministry. The survey sample represented a good mixture of ages and seasons of life. Most have had

a long tenure as pastors. The pastors were in traditional Western style churches. None were pastors of micro churches or house churches. The traditional method of getting enough people to buy or rent a building was the standard method among all the pastors surveyed.

Ethical Considerations

Those participating in the survey were informed of the nature of the study and a consent form was attached as part of the survey. Confidentiality was protected by gathering no names of individuals or churches served by the participants.

The subjects of the interview were confidential as well. The raw data was kept confidential and only the summary results are provided in the findings. All electronic data has been deleted at the end of the compilation of the results.

The Survey Monkey results were returned via email and kept confidential. They were tabulated to an excel spread sheet by Rory Bergman without accompanying names. After tabulation, the surveys were deleted.

Permission was sought and granted by R.M.A.I. leadership to conduct this study among the Ozark Region pastors. Additionally, the regional director for R.M.A.I. was asked for permission to conduct the questionnaire and interview. Doug Jones from the International office referred me to Tom Cromwell for permission. Rhema Ministerial Association International granted permission at every level to conduct the research.

Instrumentation

The first instrument deployed was a Survey Monkey survey sent to all Ozark region R.M.A.I. pastors made up of Scazzero's Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Personal Assessment. The accompanying interpretation guide determined the participant's level of

emotional maturity. The four categories were emotional infant, emotional child, emotional adolescent, and emotional adult (Appendix A). The interpretation guide was not included in the survey. A note was added to give them information about the book if they desired to use an interpretation guide to see their own results.

In addition to that assessment, a researcher designed survey specifically determined what areas most contribute to the mental and emotional health of the participants (see appendix A). Both surveys were included in the Survey Monkey survey sent to all ministers in R.M.A.I. These two assessments helped identify what contributed to mental and emotional health as well as identified some obstacles. Additionally, information from the literature review in Chapter 2 were included and considered.

Obstacles to mental and emotional health as well as best practices going forward were further studied by an in-person or electronic interview with at least six participants (Appendix A). More will be included if possible.

Expert Review

Since the project included an interview instrument that was researcher-designed, three expert reviewers evaluated and fine-tuned the questions. A cover letter explaining the project, its purpose, and the research questions were sent along with the instrument and an evaluation of the interview questions to each reviewer. The helpful comments of the reviewers made the questions better fit the desired results.

Reliability and Validity of Project Design

The object of this research was to highlight positive and negative contributions to a minister's mental and emotional health, and to outline possible future best practices going forward to assure mental and emotional health.

The questions adapted from Scazzero and developed by the researcher were aimed at discovering those three things. The areas covered in the questions included personal as well as professional areas.

Personal Areas:

- Relationship with God
- Marriage and family
- Resting habits
- Church and community relationships
- Attitudes
- Family history
- Hobbies and distractions from ministry
- Personal discipleship

Professional Areas:

- Sense of calling
- Adequate preparation for ministry
- Church structure
- Ministry outside of the local church

The interview sample size was kept small in order to go more in-depth. “A rule that guides this decision is “Quality is more important than quantity”” (Sensing 85). The hope of a more in-depth interview was to get the participant talking and possibly raise issues that were not considered by the researcher.

I conducted the interviews among those specially selected and considered to have had more experience to draw from. They were selected primarily from those present at

the R.M.A.I. annual gathering in Branson, Missouri. I sent the questionnaires to all R.M.A.I. ministers in the Ozark region.

Data Collection

This project used a pre-intervention type of research. Analysis of the gathered research data resulted in best practices recommended for the way forward. The project encompassed mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative research. I took the following steps to collect the data.

1. I obtained verbal permission from the national office of R.M.A.I. to do the study on the Ozark Region. Doug Jones was contacted by email and by phone. He referred me to the regional director, Tom Cromwell without any need for further permission from the national office. (Appendix E. Rhema Ministerial Association International Permission Letter)
2. I obtained permission from the regional director of the Ozark Region of R.M.A.I. to do the study and to mail the questionnaires to all. All the questionnaires were sent to him for forwarding to the R.M.A.I. mailing list.
3. Survey Monkey was used to email a survey to all licensed and ordained R.M.A.I. ministers in R.M.A.I. This questionnaire used the quantitative method of research. No names were included on the questionnaires. At the end of each questionnaire was a consent form.
4. Some ministers present at the annual conference were asked to take part in person or by phone, in a semi-structured interview, which is “somewhere in between the structured and free-flowing interview style” (Sensing 107). As needed, more interviews were conducted electronically. All the participants in the Pastoral

Interview signed a consent letter. (Appendix D. Informed Consent Letter for Interviews)

5. The interviews, a qualitative method of conducting research, were transcribed into print after being recorded each time.
6. The data was processed after it was all received. Rory Bergman, my personal assistant helped me place the information in an Excel spreadsheet to compare answers from the questionnaire and interviews. (She had completed a nondisclosure form and the data was coded by number rather than by name.)
7. As a pre-intervention project, possible best practices were compiled from the data. After compilation, the raw data was destroyed.

Data Analysis

The questionnaires were coded as Q¹ and so on for as many as were returned. The pastoral interviews were coded as PI¹ and so on for as many as participated.

The process of data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data. It involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data (some qualitative researchers like to think of this as peeling back the layers of an onion), representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data (Creswell and Creswell 183).

The data was analyzed by observing which answers were frequent enough to become themes by reoccurring the most often. “The greater degree of convergence attained through the triangulation of multiple data sources, methods investigators, or theories, the greater the confidence in the observed findings” (Sensing, 198). Creswell refers to this method as pattern theory which “contains an interconnected set of concepts and relationships” (qtd. in Sensing 198). Scriven refers to this as “pattern analysis” (qtd. in Sensing 199).

The data was compiled and compared in an Excel spreadsheet to observe consistent themes and conclusions.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Ministers around the world face difficult situations that lead to immorality, burn-out, and even suicides. The purpose of this research was to study and evaluate what factors contribute to these trends in positive and negative ways and to discover some best practices to help ministers navigate around the obstacles and hurdles that keep them from finishing strong. The research evaluated the mental and emotional health of the participants.

This chapter profiles the participants and explains the qualitative data obtained from the pastoral interviews as well as the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires. Finally, the research outcome is summarized in a list of five major findings.

Participants

The participants consisted of lead pastors from the Ozark region of Rhema Ministerial Association International. The quantitative data from the questionnaires was collected confidentially through Survey Monkey. Over forty questionnaires were sent to lead pastors by the Regional Director, Tom Cromwell. Eighteen were returned. Some declined to participate in the study. The only thing known about these eighteen is that they were lead pastors in the region.

The interviews were conducted by the researcher with assistance from Tony Tiller through transcription of the recordings. Seven people were selected by the me who had been in ministry for approximately five or more years.

The Ozark Region is a good mixture of ministerial backgrounds and ages. It is made up of ministers who graduated from one of two hundred fifty plus Rhema Bible Colleges around the world. All of the ministers who participated in the interview and survey graduated from the United States Rhema Bible College. Most of the churches were under two hundred in weekly average attendance and many of the pastors had served for an extended time. Most of the ministers served rural churches. All the pastors except for one were male, although the selection of mostly males for the research was not intentional.

Some of the pastors were bi-vocational and some were full-time in ministry. The participants represented a mixture of ages and seasons of life even though most pastors were middle age or older. Most have had a long tenure as pastors. The pastors were in traditional Western-style churches. None were pastors of micro churches or house churches. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected from interviews that were conducted with participants selected by me. The chapter concludes with five major findings.

Since the questionnaires that were sent out directly from Survey Monkey were confidential, very limited demographic information about those who responded became available. Over forty were sent out with eighteen responding at least partially. The questionnaires consisted of sixty-nine questions including the informed consent (question 1) and a place to make additional comments (question 69). Questions 2-48 were from Scazzero's spiritual and emotional health assessment (47 total). Questions 49-68 were researcher designed survey questions (20 total).

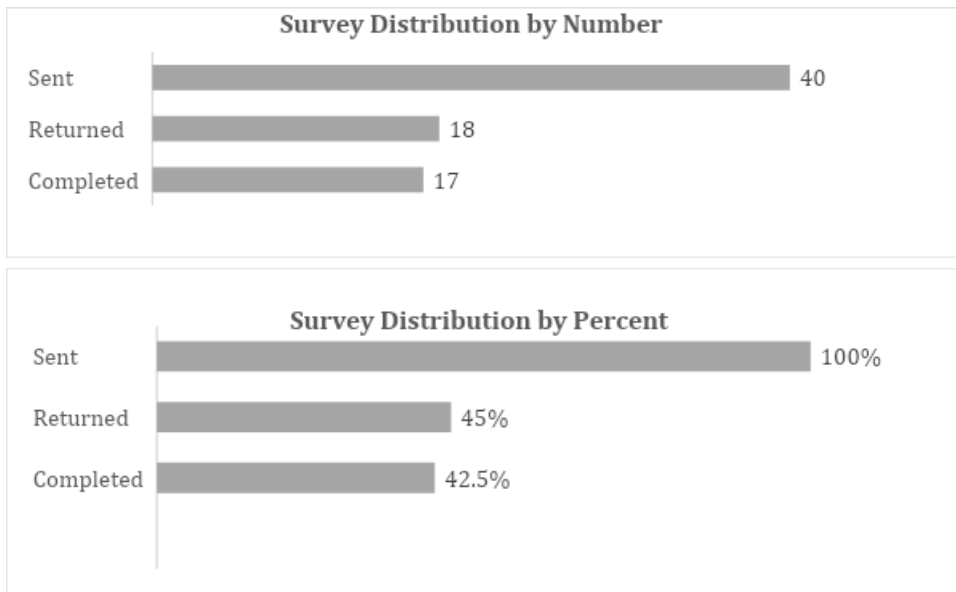


Figure 4.1. Survey distribution.

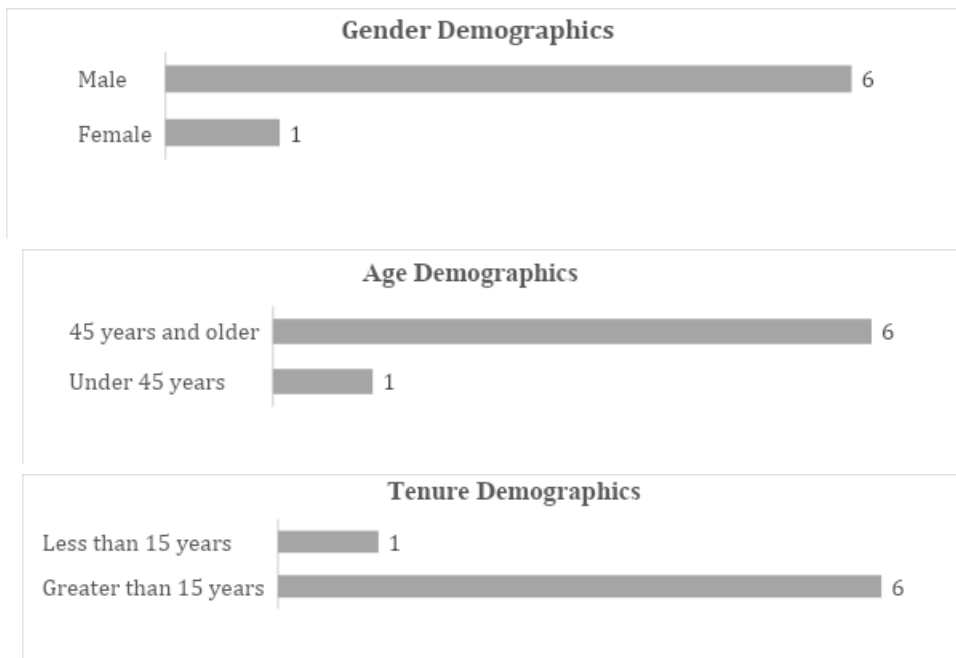


Figure 4.2. Demographics of interview participants.

If the Scazzero questionnaires were combined and used as a sample the following would be the resulting average scores:

Part A

General Formation and Discipleship 7 questions - 26/28 – Emotional Adult

Part B

Principle 1 Look Beneath the Surface 6 questions-19/24 – Emotional Adolescent

Principle 2 Break the Power of the Past 6 questions – 20/24 – Emotional Adult

Principle 3 Live in Brokenness and Vulnerability 7 questions – 23/28 -Emotional Adult

Principle 4 Receive the Gift of Limits 6 questions – 16/24 – Emotional Adolescent

Principle 5 Embrace Grieving and Loss – 5 questions – 14/20 – Emotional Adolescent

Principle 6 Make Incarnation Your Model for Living Well-5 questions-15/20-Emotional Adolescent

Principle 7 Slow Down to Lead with Integrity-5 questions-16/20-Emotional Adolescent

The average participant in the questionnaire scored three as an emotional adult and five as an emotional adolescent. In chapter four P. Scazzero defines the four categories of emotional maturity as follows:

Emotional infants. I look for other people to take care of me emotionally and spiritually. I often have difficulty in describing and experiencing my feelings in healthy ways and rarely enter the emotional world of others. I am consistently driven by a need for instant gratification, often using others as objects to meet my needs. People sometimes perceive me as inconsiderate and insensitive. I am uncomfortable with silence or being alone. When trials, hardships, or difficulties come, I want to quit God and the Christian life. I sometimes experience God at church and when I am with other Christians, but rarely when I am at work or home.

Emotional children. When life is going my way, I am content. However, as soon as disappointment or stress enter the picture, I quickly unravel inside. I often take things personally, interpreting disagreements or criticism as a personal offense. When I don't get my way, I often complain, throw an emotional tantrum, withdraw, manipulate, drag my

feet, become sarcastic, or take revenge. I often end up living off the spirituality of other people because I am so overloaded and distracted. My prayer life is primarily talking to God, telling him what to do and how to fix my problems. Prayer is a duty, not a delight.

Emotional adolescents. I don't like it when others question me. I often make quick judgments and interpretations of people's behavior. I withhold forgiveness to those who sin against me, avoiding or cutting them off when they do something to hurt me. I subconsciously keep records on the love I give out. I have trouble really listening to another person's pain, disappointments, or needs without becoming preoccupied with myself. I sometimes find myself too busy to spend adequate time nourishing my spiritual life. I attend church and serve others but enjoy few delights in Christ. My Christian life is still primarily about doing, not being with him. Prayer continues to be mostly me talking with little silence, solitude, or listening to God.

Emotional adults. I respect and love others without having to change them or becoming judgmental. I value people for who they are, not for what they can give me or how they behave. I take responsibility for my own thoughts, feelings, goals, and actions.

I can state my own beliefs and values to those who disagree with me—without becoming adversarial. I am able to accurately self-assess my limits, strengths, and weaknesses. I am deeply convinced that I am absolutely loved by Christ and, as a result, do not look to others to tell me I am okay. I am able to integrate doing for God and being with him (Mary and Martha). My Christian life has moved beyond simply serving Christ to loving him and enjoying communion with him (Chapter 4 Kindle).

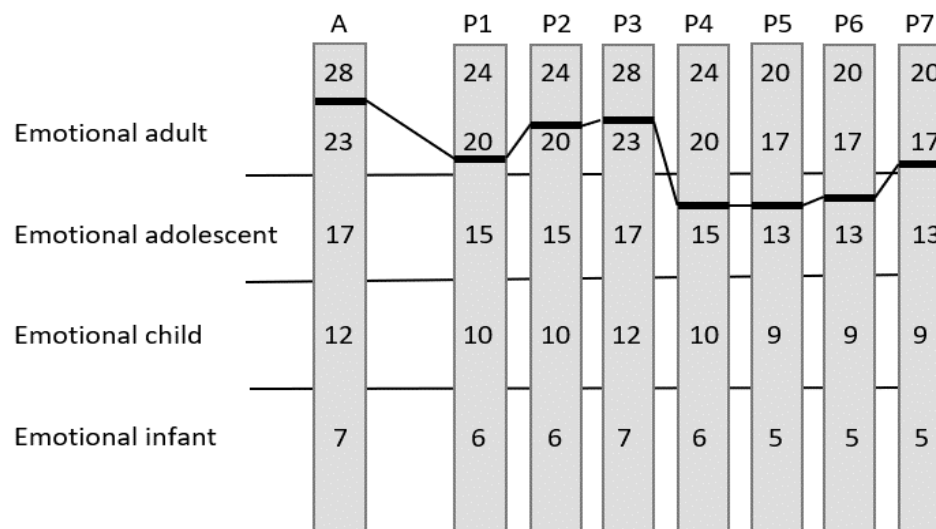


Figure 4.3. Emotional ages, adult, adolescent, child and infant.

Research Question #1: Description of the Evidence

According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what contributes most to achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association?

The researcher-designed survey contained twenty questions. The top five responses from this survey revealed the following top five contributors to emotional and mental health according to the returned questionnaires.

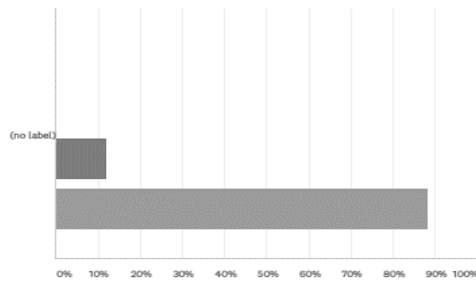
Relationships with God and family were the most important contributors to mental and emotional health in this survey. The highest-percentage contributor by far at 88.24% “always contributes” was “your relationship to God” (#49). The health and balance of family and ministry were also very high-percentage contributors.

In addition to relationships, a sense of calling and equipping by God was an important contributor followed by the ability to rise above and avoid temptations.

The Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment contained forty-seven questions. The top five responses from this survey revealed the following top five contributors to emotional and mental health according to the returned questionnaires.

Q49 Your relationship with God.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 8

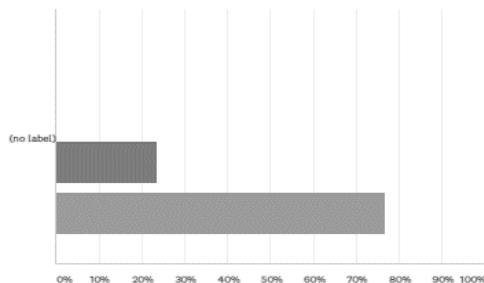


Legend: Never Contributes, Sometimes Contributes, Often Contributes, Always Contributes

	NEVER CONTRIBUTES	SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTES	OFTEN CONTRIBUTES	ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	0.00%	11.76%	88.24%	17	3.88
	0	0	2	15		

Q50 The health of your marriage and family relationships.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 8

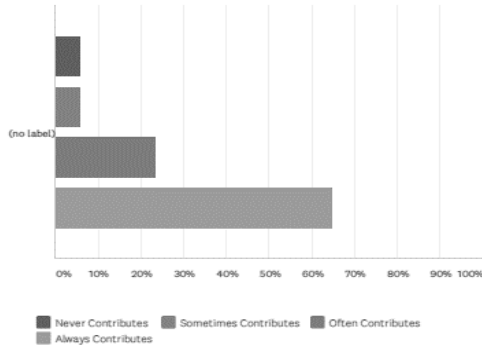


Legend: Never Contributes, Sometimes Contributes, Often Contributes, Always Contributes

	NEVER CONTRIBUTES	SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTES	OFTEN CONTRIBUTES	ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	0.00%	23.53%	76.47%	17	3.76
	0	0	4	13		

Q58 Your sense of being called and equipped by God for ministry.

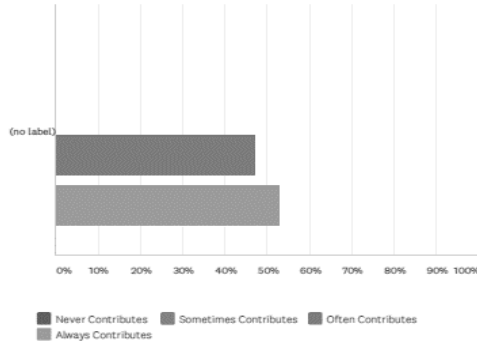
Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NEVER CONTRIBUTES	SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTES	OFTEN CONTRIBUTES	ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	5.88% 1	5.88% 1	23.53% 4	64.71% 11	17	3.47

Q59 A balanced life between family and ministry.

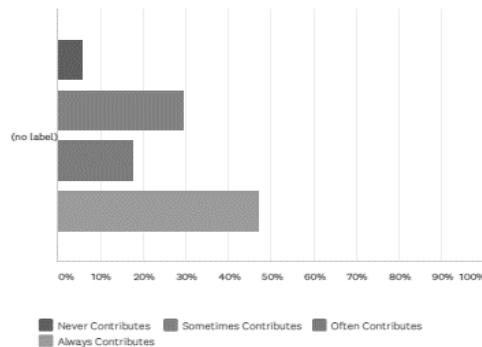
Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NEVER CONTRIBUTES	SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTES	OFTEN CONTRIBUTES	ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	47.06% 8	52.94% 9	17	3.53

Q55 Your ability to rise above and avoid temptation and cultural traps.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NEVER CONTRIBUTES	SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTES	OFTEN CONTRIBUTES	ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	5.88% 1	29.41% 5	17.65% 3	47.06% 8	17	3.06

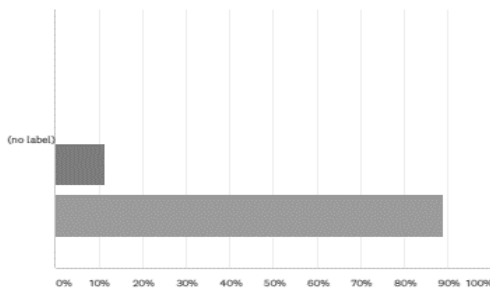
Figure 4.4. Scazzero top five contributors to emotional and mental health.

The top responses identifying positive contributors to mental and emotional health from the Scazzero assessment seemed a little unrelated and disjointed. The top response for contributors to emotional and mental health was about confidence as a child of God. The second response was that they are active in a community of believers followed by a response about stewardship, then worship, and then accepting responsibility for their past. Taken together, this test revealed the emotional maturity of the respondent but the answers did not seem to take on a definitive pattern. Seventeen people responded with one partial response.

A pattern emerged of staying in the middle range of answers by answering sometimes true and mostly true. Very true and not very true were less often the answers. Evidently, most respondents found it safer to stay in the mid-range.

Q2 I feel confident of my adoption as God's son/daughter and rarely, if ever, question his acceptance of me.

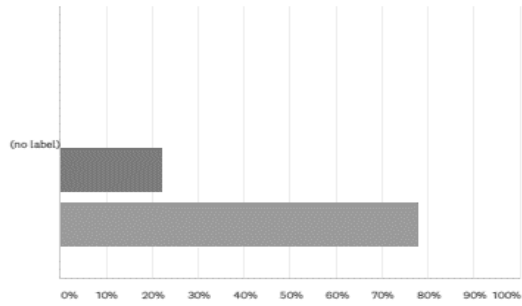
Answered: 18 Skipped: 7



	NOT VERY TRUE	SOMETIMES TRUE	MOSTLY TRUE	VERY TRUE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	18	3.89
	0	0	2	16		

Q6 I am a vital participant in a community with other believers.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 7

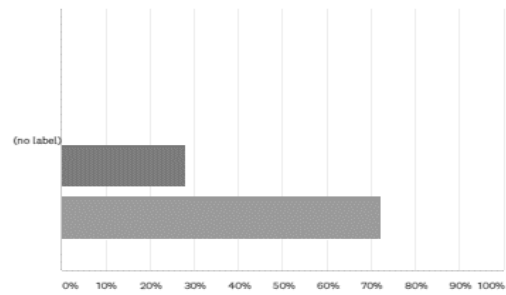


■ Not Very True ■ Sometimes True ■ Mostly True ■ Very True

	NOT VERY TRUE	SOMETIMES TRUE	MOSTLY TRUE	VERY TRUE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%	18	3.78
	0	0	4	14		

Q7 It is clear that my money, gifts, time and abilities are completely at God's disposal and not my own.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 7

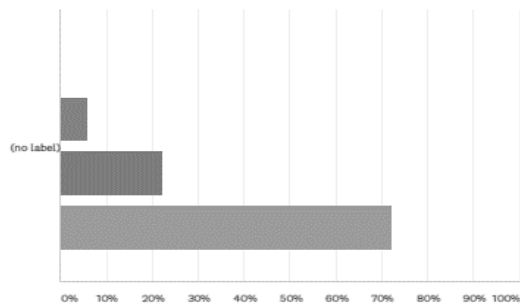


■ Not Very True ■ Sometimes True ■ Mostly True ■ Very True

	NOT VERY TRUE	SOMETIMES TRUE	MOSTLY TRUE	VERY TRUE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	0.00%	27.78%	72.22%	18	3.72
	0	0	5	13		

Q3 I love to worship God by myself as well as with others.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 7



■ Not Very True ■ Sometimes True ■ Mostly True ■ Very True

	NOT VERY TRUE	SOMETIMES TRUE	MOSTLY TRUE	VERY TRUE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	5.56%	22.22%	72.22%	18	3.67
	0	1	4	13		

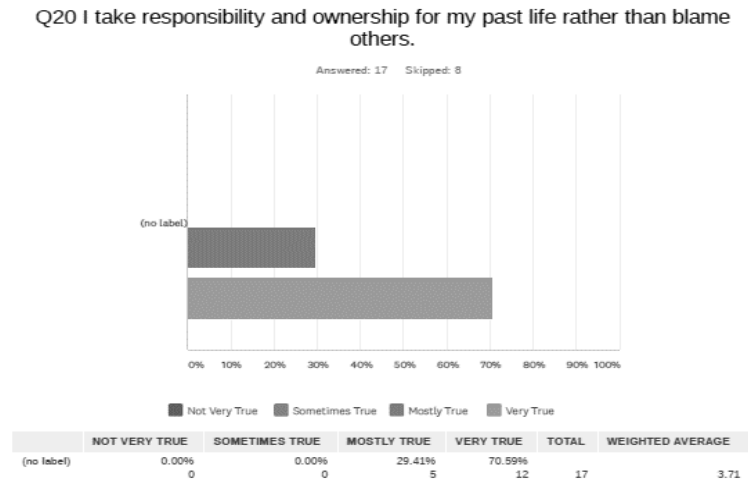


Figure 4.5. Scazzero top five positive contributions to mental and emotional health.

Finally, seven of the questionnaire respondents were interviewed with a researcher-designed interview. The following answers were their opinions of what contributed most to their mental and emotional health in ministry. Most of the interview questions focused on obstacles in ministry rather than the positive aspects.

A very common response to what contributed to health was their reliance upon the Bible to answer questions they could not answer and to help them stay strong. PI⁴ said, “And so coming back to God, and coming back to his Word, and coming back to prayer has always been the helpful thing to me personally...” Similarly, PI¹ said a contribution to his health mentally and emotionally was to “refer back to Scripture. Scripture is crucial.” PI³ made an almost identical statement as PI¹.

Relationships with others scored high but most also said they wished they had discovered that earlier and had more people-skills training. Several people said their relationships with family had been a strength, although most said their families had suffered from ministry and bad time management in this area. As stated earlier, most of

the questions in the interview were designed to discover obstacles and problems so most did not address contributions to mental and emotional health.

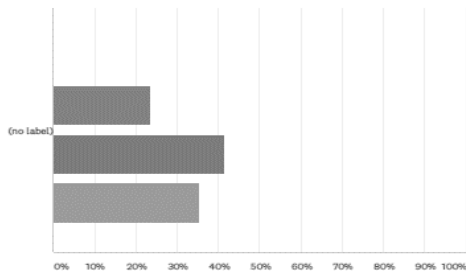
Research Question # 2: Description of the Evidence

According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what obstacles inhibit achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches?

The researcher-designed survey of twenty questions revealed obstacles for mental and emotional health in ministry. The following are the highest factors according to the respondents.

Q64 My discipleship as a believer before entering ministry training plays a role in the current ministry.

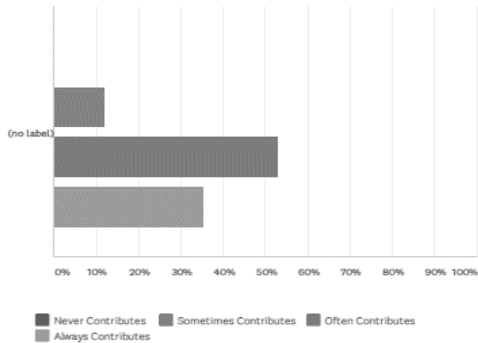
Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NEVER CONTRIBUTES	SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTES	OFTEN CONTRIBUTES	ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	23.53%	41.18%	35.29%	17	3.12
	0	4	7	6		

Q67 How has your hope for the future affected your ministry?

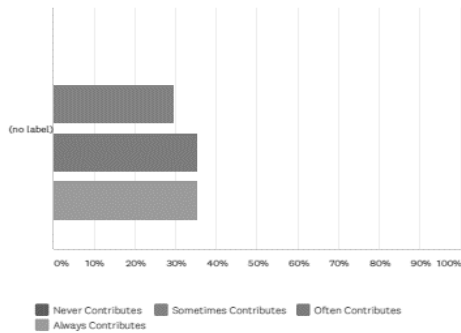
Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NEVER CONTRIBUTES	SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTES	OFTEN CONTRIBUTES	ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00% 0	11.76% 2	52.94% 9	35.29% 6	17	3.24

Q60 Adequate rest on a weekly sabbath, an annual vacation, and an occasional sabbatical.

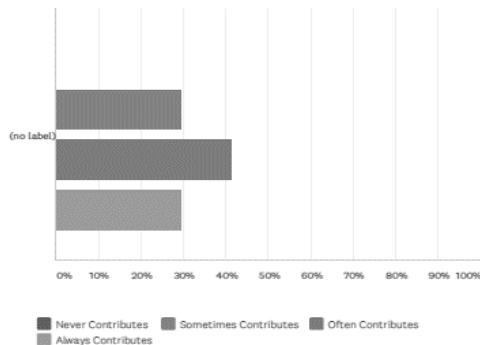
Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NEVER CONTRIBUTES	SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTES	OFTEN CONTRIBUTES	ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00% 0	29.41% 5	35.29% 6	35.29% 6	17	3.06

Q53 Your ability to handle stress constructively.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NEVER CONTRIBUTES	SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTES	OFTEN CONTRIBUTES	ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00% 0	29.41% 5	41.18% 7	29.41% 5	17	3.00

Q57 Your sense that you are adequately prepared and able to oversee the church as it is presently structured.

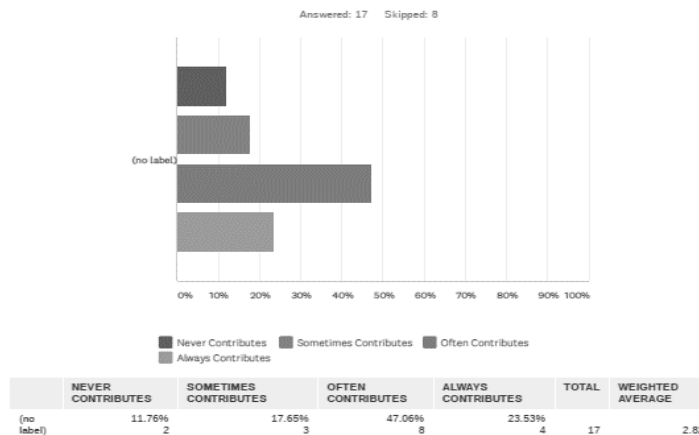


Figure 4.6. Researcher Designed Survey top five obstacles for mental and emotional health in ministry.

Respondents mentioned as factors or obstacles, such as the effect of COVID 19 (#66), the impact of change (#65), the ability or inability to seek outside help when struggling (#56), church splits (#51), and building programs (#52).

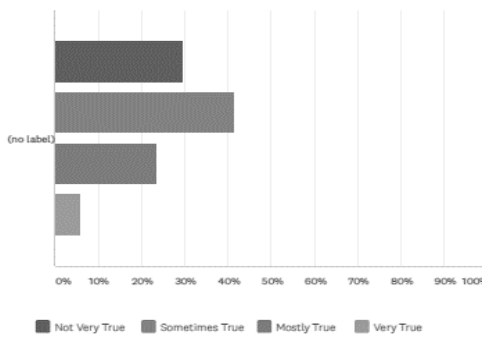
Several questions fell under the recommended best practices category because they were factors but could either be positive or negative. The health and balance of the family was recognized as important but could have been positive or negative (#50 and #59). Church structure was also one that is a factor but could have had a positive or negative impact (#63).

The Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment revealed the following as perceived obstacles to mental and emotional health in ministry. For the most part, the respondents were very positive about how they handled obstacles and identified very few things that that were major problems. This assessment was much more positive from the respondent’s perspective than the researcher-designed survey and pastor interviews.

The respondents recognized which factors could be a problem, but the answers for most were very much in the middle without taking an extreme position. They scored themselves high on how they handled the obstacles. They did acknowledge doing too much in ministry (#28). Most agreed that they did not take enough time to grieve losses (#36). The only other question where most acknowledged a problem was concerned the weekly sabbath (#45).

Q28 I've never been accused of "trying to do it all" or of biting off more that I could chew.

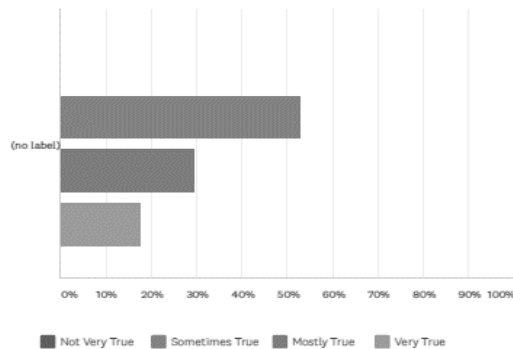
Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NOT VERY TRUE	SOMETIMES TRUE	MOSTLY TRUE	VERY TRUE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	29.41%	41.18%	23.53%	5.88%	17	2.06

Q36 I take time to grieve my losses as David and Jesus did.

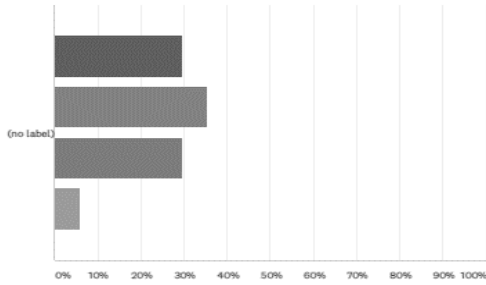
Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NOT VERY TRUE	SOMETIMES TRUE	MOSTLY TRUE	VERY TRUE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	52.94%	29.41%	17.65%	17	2.65

Q45 I regularly take a 24-hour period each week for Sabbath-keeping - to stop, to rest, to delight, and to contemplate God.

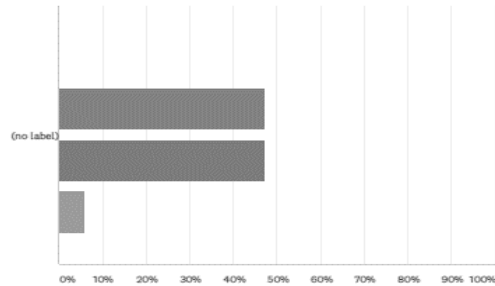
Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NOT VERY TRUE	SOMETIMES TRUE	MOSTLY TRUE	VERY TRUE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	29.41%	35.29%	29.41%	5.88%	17	2.12
	5	6	5	1		

Q33 Those close to me would say that I am good at balancing family, rest, work, and play in a biblical way.

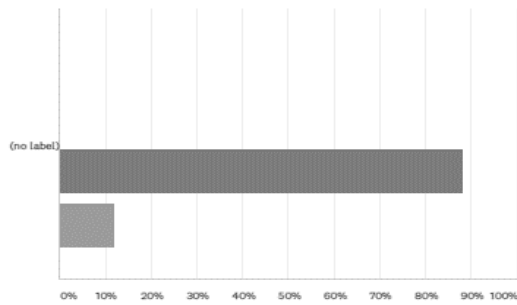
Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NOT VERY TRUE	SOMETIMES TRUE	MOSTLY TRUE	VERY TRUE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	47.06%	47.06%	5.88%	17	2.59
	0	8	8	1		

Q19 I don't need approval from others to feel good about myself.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 8



	NOT VERY TRUE	SOMETIMES TRUE	MOSTLY TRUE	VERY TRUE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	0.00%	88.24%	11.76%	17	3.12
	0	0	15	2		

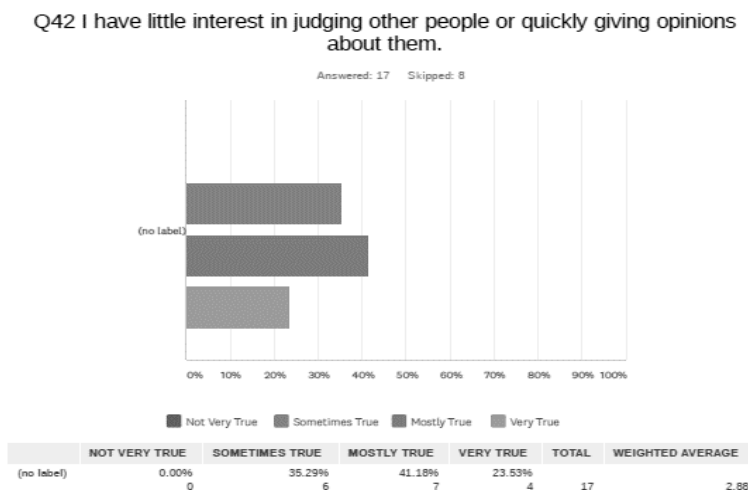


Figure 4.7. Scazzero’s top six obstacles to mental and emotional health in ministry.

The researcher-designed interview was the instrument that most identified obstacles to mental and emotional health in ministry. The questions gave them the freedom to bring up things that were not covered in the assessment or survey.

In every interview, the response to whether they were adequately prepared for ministry was an overwhelming no. PI⁵ said, “No, emphatically no!” PI³ responded, “Absolutely not, without hesitation or reservation.” Not one of those interviewed said they were adequately prepared for ministry. Closely related to that was the lack of personal preparedness. The need and ability to develop friendships and people skills in general came up often.

Two people responded that their families were not harmed by ministry, but everyone else said theirs were affected negatively. Closely related to that was the lack of time off with them and the lack of family vacations. Some, at the time or in the past, were or have been bi-vocational pastors and struggled to balance family with other responsibilities.

When asked what the greatest obstacle to emotional and mental health in ministry was, the responses differed. One said fear, another said personal development. One mentioned the inability to prioritize time and rest, along with very draining people. Two people said their biggest obstacle was “trying to solve problems on their own.” One said maintaining a positive thought life and finally, one said managing unrealistic expectations. Almost everyone said that they struggled with some form of leading and managing people.

Most said that they struggled with workaholic tendencies. Some of that went back to their overly busy schedules. One expressed the obstacle of “problem fatigue”, not because they couldn’t handle the problems but because there seemed to be too many of them.

Five of the seven respondents said that they were affected by the moral fall of other ministers. Several said the experience was positive in that it made them be extra careful and diligent to not follow their examples.

Research Question # 3: Description of the Evidence

Moving forward, what are the best practices for achieving and maintaining the spiritual, mental, and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in the Ozark Region?

The researcher-designed survey revealed the following possible actions as best practices for mental and emotional health according to the respondents. Obviously, the same principles and ideas from Research Question #1 of the researcher-designed survey

that contributed to mental and emotional health were incorporated. Those top contributions from Research Question #1 were:

- #49-Your Relationship with God
- #50-The health of your marriage and family relationships
- #58-Your sense of being called and equipped by God
- #59-A balanced life between family and ministry
- #55-Your ability to rise above and avoid temptation and cultural traps.

Added to those were the importance of a weekly sabbath, annual vacations, and sabbaticals. (Question 60). Very closely related is the need to have hobbies and distractions (Question 61). Of those surveyed 23.53% said hobbies and distractions always contributed to mental and emotional health. 41.18% said they often contributed followed by 29.41% who said they sometimes contributed. Ministry activities outside of the local church also scored high on their helpfulness (Question 62).

Discipleship before entering ministry was an important factor (Question 64) but one cannot go back in time. That said, honestly evaluating what part of discipleship might still be missing in the minister's life would be helpful.

Hope plays an important role in staying emotionally and mentally fit (Question 67). Hope is the by-product of the Bible and a relationship with God, as well as relationships with other believers. The relationship questions in the rest of the survey addressed this area very well.

The Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment revealed some best practices as well by observing the positives and negatives from the survey answers. The top contributors to mental and emotional health according to that survey were:

- Q2-Confidence of adoption as God's son/daughter and confidence in his acceptance.
- Q6-Be a vital participant in a community with other believers.
- Q7-Live your life at God's disposal.
- Q3-Be a worshipper of God.
- Q20-Take responsibility and ownership of your past life and do not blame others.

Additionally, the following things were mentioned as helpful toward maintaining mental and emotional health.

- Spend regular quality time in the Word of God and prayer (Question 4).
- Discover and use the spiritual gifts God has entrusted to you (Question 5).
- Spend time alone with God in quiet reflection (Question 11).
- Regularly take a sabbath to rest, delight in and contemplate God (Question 45).
- Discover your emotional life and push to develop it and express your true self (Questions 9,10,12,13,14,16,19,22,30,32,35,36,38, and 39).

A best practice would incorporate considering and developing the role of the soul in overall health. Mental and emotional needs would be considered just as physical and spiritual health.

The best practices revealed from the Pastor Interviews are listed below:

- Learn the balance of family and ministry.
- Grow personally in your relationship to God in the Word of God and prayer.
- Deal with depression or whatever issue arises mentally or emotionally without condemning yourself or being ashamed to ask for help.
- Identify unrealistic expectations and disregard them (PI ⁴).

- Detach, detoxify, and be with your family more (PI⁴).
- Do not try to solve problems on your own (PI¹).
- Go to the Bible/God for answers (PI¹ and PI³).
- Be careful who you listen to. Skip the news (PI³).
- Study leadership and teamwork so you can delegate to others (PI²).
- Do not neglect your soul (PI²).
- Develop friendships (PI⁵).
- Lower your expectations of others (PI⁶).

Many of those findings overlap with each other. The importance of relationships, whether with God or with other people, came out in this survey in many ways. People skill or something similar was mentioned as something that would have been helpful to learn more about before or early on in ministry.

Summary of Major Findings

The three research instruments revealed several major findings. They are listed as follows:

1. Pastors are not being adequately disciplined and trained for ministry.
2. The ability to read, study, and find answers from the Bible for ministry issues is vital.
3. Family must be a priority with adequate time spent with spouses and children.
Balancing ministry and family are essential.
4. Value the place of the soul and mental health in ministry and find a way to refresh and replenish that to remain healthy.
5. Know that you are called and equipped by God to fulfill your ministry.

6. The current structure of church ministry must be reevaluated.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Pastors and ministry leaders face serious emotional and mental health issues now more than ever before.

Data collected from Barna's pastor poll throughout 2021 indicate that U.S. pastors are currently in crisis and at risk of burnout. Notably, in 2021 alone, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of pastors who are thinking about quitting ministry entirely. With pastors' well-being on the line, and many on the brink of burnout, 38 percent indicate they have considered quitting full-time ministry within the past year. This percentage rose 9 full points (from 29%) since Barna asked church leaders this same question at the beginning of 2021" (Barna).

This research project investigated the current state of and discerned the best practices for achieving and maintaining the mental and emotional health of pastors within the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International Churches with wider implications for the whole Church. Clearly, the situation has not improved but in fact is getting worse.

This chapter explains six findings from this research project are explained and shows how they correspond to personal observations, my literature survey, and the biblical and theological framework of the project. Also, limitations of the research study, unexpected observations, and recommendations for further study are considered.

Major Findings

Pastors are not being adequately disciplined and trained for ministry.

The research revealed that not a single minister who was interviewed thought that they had been adequately trained and prepared for ministry. Usually, lack of personal

discipleship stood out more than practical training to carry out ministry assignments. More time was spent training future ministers to preach the Bible, conduct weddings and funerals, and counsel congregants than in focusing on the spiritual and emotional state of the minister. Whether ministry training started too soon, or not enough time was allowed at all, was debatable.

The Literature Review supports the notion that ministry and personal issues are connected. Scazzero voices a perspective held by most church health writers. He says, “The overall health of any church or ministry depends primarily on the emotional and spiritual health of its leadership. In fact, the key to successful spiritual leadership has much more to do with the leader’s internal life than with the leader’s expertise, gifts or experience” (20).

Bible schools and seminaries are not keeping up with the changes that ministers and churches are experiencing in the twenty-first century. “The president of a seminary stood before a meeting of his peers and said, ‘I have just been elected president of a seminary that trains men and women for a world that no longer exists! What do I do?’” (Roxburgh xv).

The biblical and theological argument for putting one’s personal emotional, mental, and spiritual health as a priority is outlined by Paul in his address to the elders of Ephesus in Acts 20:28. “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood” (ESV). Jesus made it clear that to freely give, you first must freely receive.

Ability to read, study, and find answers from the Bible for ministry issues is vital

My interviews with the ministers in this project revealed that most saw their vitality and success because they went directly to the Bible for answers. Looking elsewhere for solutions to problems that only God and the Bible could address was an exercise in futility.

The ministers did not tell how they reached this conclusion and what sources they had tried and exhausted first. In most cases, that God's Word was relevant and adequate to address the problems they were facing in ministry seemed almost a revelation.

The Literature Review confirmed the value of seeking Scripture and God directly for answers. Several authors addressed the futility of seeking answers from culture alone. Groeschel tells the result of being a minister but not a faithful Christian devoted to the Word of God and prayer.

One Sunday, after another week of performing my best for God, I stood to preach His life-changing Word. As I approached the pulpit, the truth hit me squarely between the eyes. I had not prayed at all. Not that day. Not the day before. Not the day before that. To the best of my knowledge, I had not prayed all week. And I called myself a pastor. That's when it dawned on me: *I had become a full-time minister and a part-time follower of Christ.* From the outside I looked the part (11).

Ironically, one of the biggest temptations for a minister is to not see the Bible as the primary source of answers for themselves and others. Revisiting scripture for answers, and finding that they are there, is very encouraging.

The biblical and theological support for this conclusion is obvious. Psalm 19 and Psalm 119 are great summaries of the value of the Bible as a guide for life and ministry. The Bible gives a lighted path to those who are walking in darkness.

Ministers are tempted to use the Bible as a tool for teaching and preaching without first taking it to heart personally. To be filled and instructed personally first, and then to lead and preach from the overflow, is much healthier.

Paul addresses the need to personally apply Scripture to life in 1 Corinthians 9. He makes it clear that if he failed to personalize and be transformed by the Bible and the Holy Spirit, he could be disqualified. He placed a high priority on Scripture and its place in the life of a minister as he admonished Timothy to make Scripture the theme of his teaching and, implicitly, his life as well.

Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths (2 Tim. 4:2-4 ESV).

Balancing family and ministry a priority with adequate time spent with spouses and children.

With only a few exceptions, most of those interviewed said that their families had suffered because of their ministry, mostly it had to do with time spent away from them for the sake of ministry. There were only a few exceptions to this. Possibly, that all ministers think that they should have done more to prioritize family, but there exists a real deficit in this area as well. Many of those interviewed had grown children and were reflecting on earlier years.

The Literature review contained a reference to Geri Scazzero. She wrote a book because of her reaction to her husband Peter Scazzero's neglect of his family and misplaced priorities. She told him he was a bad leader and did not want her children to be subjected to his out of balance priorities.

She probably could be the voice of countless thousands of other ministry families who have felt misplaced by the mistress of ministry. The result of her bold confession was an honest confrontation with reality for Peter and the emotionally healthy minister's material that subsequently arose from that.

The theology of the Bible concerning priorities and the place of the family is throughout Scripture beginning with the order of creation in Genesis 1. Many families have been sacrificed at the altar of ministry.

Jesus made it clear that commitment to him should come first. He said in Luke 14:26-27, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple" (ESV).

The context of this passage is discipleship and personal commitment to God, not ministry. Jesus must come first in a person's personal life but that should be distinguished from ministry where it is possible to offer others in sacrifice rather than yourself. A commitment to God is to be first in everyone's life, but the ministry should never be the reason spouses and children are neglected. It sends a message to family that they aren't important, and they did not have the same choice as the minister whether to be a part of ministry or not.

The soul and mental health in ministry are valued by finding a way to refresh and replenish them for health.

Ministers often find out too late in ministry that the soul matters. Emotions have been portrayed as the enemy of our spiritual lives and therefore are to be repressed rather than expressed.

In conversations with those being interviewed several expressed that they had not seen the value of the emotions and the health of the soul for longevity. That may be especially true due to the emphasis on faith in the Bible school attended by all of those interviewed. The spiritual is often emphasized at the expense of the soul, unintentionally, I am sure. Any acknowledgement of “feelings” can be seen as a sign of weakness and lack of faith. Because of this, emotions and a sick soul can be long ignored until something traumatic brings it to the surface. Many of those interviewed expressed that they had found the balance and the place of the emotional life but that it had taken too long.

The material in the Literature Review strongly expressed the place of the soul. The Scazzeros talk almost exclusively about that part of the minister’s and church’s life. Cordeiro dealt with his lack of addressing his soul in the testimony of his breakdown.

Much of the material in this section addresses how to recognize and deal with oneself as well as other’s emotional issues. The most convicting assessment comes from

P. Scazzero:

The following are the top ten symptoms indicating if someone is suffering from a bad case of emotionally unhealthy spirituality:

Using God to run from God

Ignoring the emotions of anger, sadness, and fear

Dying to the wrong things

Denying the past’s impact on the present

Dividing our lives into “secular” and “sacred” compartments

Doing for God instead of being with God

Spiritualizing away conflict

Covering over brokenness, weakness, and failure

Living without limits
Judging other people's spiritual journey (24).

Howard also lists five areas that can strain a pastor's mental health. These include unrealistic expectations, perpetual preparation, a pendulum of emotional encounters, problem people (not people with problems but those who in a perpetual state of chaos or causing chaos in others), and confidentiality cache (being entrusted with confidential information that must be locked away in the pastor's mental inbox).

Jesus addressed the place of the soul better in Scripture than anyone else. He says in Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (ESV).

In the Book of Mark one of the most used words is *immediately*. Seemingly, everything happened fast and suddenly. This gospel reveals the hurried and hectic life Jesus and the disciples experienced. Often in this book, Jesus looks for times and places to be alone and rest with his disciples.

Arguably, Jesus sweat blood in the Garden of Gethsemane before the crucifixion as result of extreme anguish of soul. He demonstrated and said that the answer for anxiety and heartbreak is to press into a relationship with God and receive the peace that only comes from him.

The Bible makes a definitive connection between a peaceful heart and soul and overall health. "A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body" (Prov. 14:30 NLT). The starting place for health is the spirit and soul. Spurgeon took extended vacations to Scotland and France to separate from ministry and maintain his health.

Knowing the call and equipping of God to fulfill ministry

Those who are called of God must make their calling and election sure. While conducting the interviews and interacting with the ministers in this study, this area was very strong. Participants had a very real sense that the calling of God was present as well as a willingness to equip and empower them to minister. They may also have had a sense that they had not always lived up to the calling, but it was present, nonetheless.

The emotional pain and rejection of parishioners leaving the church would have been enough by itself to cause people to leave the church if the calling had not been strongly present in them. Many pastors think of this sort of personal rejection as a type of divorce and without a sense that God is with them it is overwhelming, especially if it happens many times. Even worse would be losing a position as pastor where the entire church seemed aligned against a minister.

Jesus experienced rejection and only by identifying with him is it possible to overcome it. Some ministers may have thick skin and not be fazed by it, but most are.

The Literature Review brought out many people who would have been willing to do other things in life, if not for God's call on them. When Cordeiro had an emotional breakdown, he checked to see if he was able to retire. P. Scazzero obviously had a heart check to see if he was in the right place since his wife and family were suffering because of the wrong way he was going about his calling.

The change that has been accelerating in the last 18 months has left a lot of pastors with their heads spinning and their hearts spinning as well," says Joe Jensen, Barna's vice president of church engagement. "All the chaos, all the pressure, the magnifying glass of social media, the pandemic, the politics, the hyper digital context, it makes sense that you have a lot of pastors saying, 'Is this really what I signed up for? Is this what I was called into?' "Figures like king David, Moses, other biblical figures—they had questions, they had doubts about their calling. Now's a great opportunity to lean into the tension, to go deeper into their relationship with Jesus, and to come out more resilient, more sure of who

they actually are, whether that's being a vocational minister or not. (*Barna Year in Review*).

The Bible talks about characters with self-doubt, such as Paul who dealt with his past of persecuting Christians. Despite that, he could say that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision (Acts 26:19). His sense of being called by God as an apostle to the Gentiles caused him to overcome doubt and regret.

Peter said to make our calling and election sure. It is vital that all Christians, especially pastors resolve the purpose and calling of God for their lives. Jeremiah decided to stop preaching and proclaiming the things God was saying to him but when he kept quiet it became like fire shut up in his bones (Jer. 20:9).

Current structure of church ministry reevaluated

A major issue with pastors is the expectation to be a success according to the standard of nickels and noses. There is an unspoken comparison and competition with other churches to do as well as them or surpass them. When a pastor in South Carolina was asked the question "how many are you running" he responded, "five thousand." This surprised the questioner until the pastor said, "Not really, I just wanted you to like me better." Only in their most vulnerable moments will pastors admit that they feel like failures because the standard they are using is "compared to them."

In the Literature Review, it was brought out that Gladwell in his book talks about the "The Rule of 150" (184). He and others discovered that the social channel capacity of culture is about one hundred and fifty. With the average American church hovering close to the one hundred mark, is it unnatural to try to force it beyond its God-given DNA? Seminars abound on breaking the two hundred barrier. It may better to teach the church to multiply the next generations of churches as a parent and grandparent. If a pastor is called

to a church with the DNA of one hundred, it is painful for him and the church to become something they are not.

Snyder writes about the “superstar” pastor who does everything from preach to counsel to administrate (75-76). It is exhausting. Especially if, as in David’s case, the armor just does not fit. It can warp a soul to try to make it something that it is not. This does not give permission to the pastor and church to be lazy and content with few people but does change the way the pastor and church reach out to make disciples.

Theology and the Bible presents no such demands on a church’s structure or size. The Apostle Paul planted primarily house churches. They were very organic and adapted to the culture they were planted in.

Jesus talked about the old and new structural ways in Matthew 9:17. “Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved” (ESV). He encourages creativity and change but not at the expense of the old wineskin. New structures should exist side by side with old structures. In Western culture, it should not be either-or but both.

When asked which type of church is best, micro, macro, or mega, the answer is “yes.” The culture and DNA of a church should determine the type and size of a church, not an artificial barrier. While the traditional church and megachurch will probably exist for our lifetime, the future is demanding a new model for church structure and size. As a result, pastors should be more secure in their calling and identity. Not all pastors can fulfill the role of CEO, nor should they.

Ministry Implications of the Finding

The impact of this study reveals the inadequate preparation of pastors for sustained ministry. The first implication concerns the personal discipleship and training of future ministers. To better prepare future pastors and ministers for longevity in ministry, more time must be spent on their personal lives. Before practical training for ministry a structure of discipleship and accountability must be established within them.

Pastors who have a deep personal relationship with God and habits of accountability, prayer, and Bible reading are more likely to last. The Wesleyan revival in England was a testimony of discipleship with the societies, classes, and bands. A modern version of that needs to be implemented before ministry training begins.

Hopefully, this study can inform Bible school and seminary personnel of the great lack in the personal discipleship of its students. This is an area where a personal mentor is prescribed or an internship recommended and less classroom work in the beginning.

Spiritual formation is often addressed in the classroom, but it is not adequate to discover and bring change to someone who is often skilled in hiding behind ministry anointing. The Wesley small group model of the band is probably the best way to get to the root of the people, and where they need help from others to be challenged and grow.

The impact of this study is to possibly shock the church and those responsible for training pastors, that our present system is woefully inadequate to produce church leaders who are healthy and sustain ministry pressures for the long haul.

These findings should be used to establish a new emphasis on the emotional and mental health of pastors before, during, and after ministry is needed. The stigma of

mental and emotional health being a weakness will only be conquered when it is sufficiently talked about and discussed.

Pre-ministry assessments should include mental and emotional health along with family and faith issues. Additionally, some intentional training in this area as part of ministry training is needed. It might even be advisable to place new ministers with a counselor from day one to help navigate emotional storms.

Facing a battery of psychological and emotional tests often carries a stigma, but it is less of a stigma than facing a total burnout in ministry in a way that could bring harm to themselves, their families, and others. Good testing could reveal weaknesses. Everyone has a weakness somewhere, but if it is known in advance, provision could be made to recognize and shore up this area as it becomes a problem.

I plan to use this information to assist in preparing training materials online and possibly in a book or curriculum. Paul said in the letter to the Corinthians that his weakness became his strength (2 Cor. 12:10).

This study should inform the practice of ministry by causing a rethinking of the church in Western culture. New wineskins are needed and should be given permission to form. Fresh expressions of church are beginning to form in the Western church. They already exist in developing nations organically by default because of the expense and effort of planting the Western model.

Less training and more discipleship are the new modes of ministry training. Rather than push shepherds to full-time ministry, it may be better to disciple them and help them learn to disciple others and so reproduce organically rather than formally as in the past. Personal discipleship should be valued as much, if not more than any other part

of ministry preparation. The iceberg is ninety percent underwater and so is the source of the effectiveness of pastors and church leaders.

These findings should especially guide the methods of training in Bible schools and seminaries. Additionally, out of this project our church has begun a website called, inthethirty.com. It is based on Clinton's perspective that thirty percent of Bible leaders finish strong. The purpose of that website is to provide tools and encouragement to be among the thirty percent who finish strong.

Our church has accepted the call as a traditional church to help create a trail and build a bridge from the current model to the future church. My role as senior pastor will transition to that in the next few years. I hope to write a book about that transition beginning in the fall of 2022.

Limitations of the Study

Overall, I was satisfied with the study, but it would have been nice to talk to more people. I had some who would not respond, and one of the people who said he was having emotional struggles would have been just the type of person that would have been helped. Some people skipped hard questions on the surveys and again, that would have been the information that would have helped.

If I did this project again, I would look for a bigger sample and think harder about a way to not lose the very people I would like to have involved. Another thing that would bring more accuracy to the study is to include pastors and ministers from a variety of backgrounds. A single denomination or network brings its own unique perspective such as faith to the Rhema ministers. A larger, more diverse pool to draw from would probably have made the project more accurate.

Unexpected Observations

An unexpected observation was how deeply pastors thought they were unprepared for ministry. This including personally in discipleship as well as ministry training. I did not talk to one who thought they had been adequately prepared. They may have learned more of the Bible, but were unprepared for the pressures they would face in real ministry. After the study, I began to question the discipleship competence of the Western church in general. This is an area where there could be much improvement and it needs to happen quickly.

Another unexpected observation concerned the structure of the Church. Most pastors know something is wrong, but they are not sure what to do about it. Many think the future church will be radically different, but they are in the trenches of the present model, and it is difficult to adjust to major changes.

A surprise to me was how resilient the survivors are. Almost everyone I interviewed had been involved in crisis and problems, but their commitment and faith in God kept them going, even when they thought they were not adequate for the task, they kept going.

Recommendations

1. Bible schools and seminaries should be restructured to spend much more time on discipleship. The stronger the individual is, the more effective they will be in ministry. Character should be recognized and developed more, and less time spent on skill development. Pastors and leaders need to first experience a true relationship with Jesus before they can help someone else experience it. Pastors and leaders who are trying to perform in ministry without being spiritually healthy themselves cannot last. Paul told the

Ephesian elders to care for themselves first and the flock they were responsible for (Acts 20:28). A personal relationship with the Lord will go much further in equipping someone for ministry than techniques and skills even though they are helpful.

2. Churches and ministers need to think differently about church size. Leadership gifting and church DNA should be considered, and a one-size-fit-all approach should be dropped. Organic is best. Along with this approach would need to come an adapted training for pastors, shepherds, and elders that releases people to lead small churches without going into full-time ministry. Many pastors are trying to lead beyond their gifting and calling. It is wiser to find your lane and stay in it to finish the race. Trying to conform to the current trends and models is unnatural and leads to exhaustion and frustration. The point with church size is to stay healthy and let it grow to the size God has determined.

3. Closely related to number two, churches need to be able to adapt fast and not get bogged down with buildings, debt, and corporate structure. The Church must go back to the future and use the biblical model of discipleship and church planting. This will require creativity and a willingness to adapt to a better way.

This will also require an open mind to allow others to follow the church wherever it leads whether that is a traditional model or a fresh expression of church. Strategic planning can be helpful if it is infused with a good dose of prayer and following the Holy Spirit. Paul and his team made several attempts to preach the gospel in several places, but the Holy Spirit prevented them. He sent them to Europe after a supernatural vision. Even there, they ended up in a jail cell after God clearly led them (Acts 16:6ff). It seems they had not strategic plan but simply a willingness to follow God and see how he wanted to extend the church.

Real God-given revival and awakenings move faster than building programs. The Western church is so building focused it might spend as much time on real estate as discipleship. The Western church needs more discipleship and church planting and less buildings.

4. Other churches and ministers should begin a mentoring program or network to emphasize disciple making movements and church planting movements. Our thirty percent initiative is working toward that goal. I hope to write a book about creating a trail from the church today to the future church. As a pastor for many years, I have a connection to traditional pastors, and I hope to use that to help them do hybrid models of church after I cease to be senior pastor in a few years.

5. More research could and should be done on discipling future leaders. Many programs exist but the Wesleyan model that worked so well in England is not really being practiced like it could be. The use of bands, classes, and societies had a huge impact on the British Isles at the time. It can be argued that it had the same influence in America's early days. It seems that the Wesleyans discovered a model that was closer to the early church model than the one used today in the West.

The early Methodists relied much less on educating their ministers and much more on discipling them. They were very effective in spreading churches and disciples among the early Americans. A firm reliance on discipleship appears to have been more effective than classroom instruction. We need both.

Postscript

This project helped me by confirming some things I suspected but it exposed me to a few things that were new thoughts. I concluded what I had earlier suspected, the Church must adapt and change to keep up with what God has in mind for the Western church. I am excited for the future, and I am humbled that I get to be a part of the changes that are coming. The Western church must experience a transformation from being primarily a corporate model to a more organic model led less by professional ministers and more by bi-vocational or volunteer pastors. The present form of church will probably survive but it must be done in addition to this new wineskin.

In countries where genuine revival and awakening occur, the church grows faster than building programs, projects, and Bible schools can keep up with. The streamlined model used by the churches in the first few centuries will again become the method and model of choice.

Training will have to be focused on personal discipleship and less on classroom instruction. The only model that can keep up with a genuine awakening is the model Jesus left us. He preached to the masses, but he poured his life into twelve and prayed in John 17 for all who would be reached through them. That method worked for that generation as well as every generation that has followed.

I was able to connect with many ministers and develop a deeper respect for them and their commitment to just not quit. I survived as a pastor for thirty-seven years at the same church and the real underlying reason at the end of the day is that God held me up and helped me overcome my many mistakes. My prayer is that this project helps others and me to help other ministers finish their race.

APPENDICES

A. QUESTIONNAIRES, SURVEY, AND INTERVIEWS



You are invited to be in a confidential research study being done by Terry Roberts, a doctoral student from Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are part of the Ozark Region Rhema Ministerial Alliance Association.

Steps have been taken to keep this survey completely anonymous and confidential. Your personal information and your IP address will not be accessible to anyone associated with this survey.

This study will help determine what contributes to and what obstacles exist for ministers to be mentally and emotionally healthy for the duration of their ministry to finish strong.

You can refuse to respond to any or all questions, and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time without penalty.

Completing this questionnaire means that you have read this, or had it read to you, and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not continue. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be upset if you do not want to participate or if you change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do. By sending in this survey, you are agreeing to participate in this study.

*** 1. Informed Consent**

I have read and understand the Informed Consent statement.

Terry Roberts
Dissertation Survey

Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment

PART A: General Formation and Discipleship

Please answer these questions as honestly as possible.

1. I feel confident of my adoption as God's son/daughter and rarely, if ever, question his acceptance of me.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

2. I love to worship God by myself as well as with others.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

3. I spend regular quality time in the Word of God and in prayer.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

4. I sense the unique ways God has gifted me individually and am actively using my spiritual gifts for his service.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

5. I am a vital participant in a community with other believers.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

6. It is clear that my money, gifts, time and abilities are completely at God's disposal and not my own.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

7. I consistently integrate my faith in the marketplace and the world.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

Terry Roberts
Dissertation Survey

Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment

PART B: Emotional Components of Discipleship

Please answer these questions as honestly as possible.

1. It is easy for me to identify what I am feeling inside.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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2. I am willing to explore previously unknown or unacceptable parts of myself, allowing Christ to transform me more fully.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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3. I enjoy being alone in quiet reflection with God and myself.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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4. I can share freely about my emotions, sexuality, joy, and pain.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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5. I am able to experience and deal with anger in a way that leads to growth in others and myself.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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6. I am honest with myself (and a few significant others) about the feelings, beliefs, doubts, pains and hurts beneath the surface of my life.

Not Very True

Sometimes True

Mostly True

Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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7. I resolve conflict in a clear, direct and respectful way, not what I might have learned growing up in my family, such as painful putdowns, avoidance, escalating tensions, or going to a third party rather than to the person directly.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. I am intentional at working through the impact of significant "earthquake" events that shaped my present, such as the death of a family member, an unexpected pregnancy, divorce, addiction, or major financial disaster.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. I am able to thank God for all my past life experiences, seeing how he has used them to uniquely shape me into who I am.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. I can see how certain "generational sins" have been passed down to me through my family history, including character flaws, lies, secrets, ways of coping with pain, and unhealthy tendencies in relating to others.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. I don't need approval from others to feel good about myself.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. I take responsibility and ownership for my past life rather than blame others.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. I often admit when I'm wrong, readily asking forgiveness from others.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. I am able to speak freely about my weaknesses, failures, and mistakes.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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15. Others would easily describe me as approachable, gentle, open, and transparent.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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16. Those close to me would say that I am not easily offended or hurt.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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17. I am consistently open to hearing and applying constructive criticism and feedback that others might have for me.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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18. I am rarely judgmental or critical of others.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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19. Others would say that I am slow to speak, quick to listen, and good at seeing things from their perspective.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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20. I've never been accused of "trying to do it all" or of biting off more than I could chew.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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21. I am regularly able to say "no" to requests and opportunities rather than risk overextending myself.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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22. I recognize the different situations where my unique, God-given personality can be either a help or hindrance in responding appropriately.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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23. It's easy for me to distinguish the difference between when to help carry someone else's burden and when to let it go, so they can carry their own burden.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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24. I have a good sense of my emotional, relational, physical, and spiritual capacities, intentionally pulling back to rest and fill my "gas tank" again.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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25. Those close to me would say that I am good at balancing family, rest, work, and play in a biblical way.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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26. I openly admit my losses and disappointments.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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27. When I go through a disappointment or a loss, I reflect on how I'm feeling rather than pretend that nothing is wrong.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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28. I take time to grieve my losses as David and Jesus did.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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29. People who are in great pain and sorrow tend to seek me out because it's clear to them that I am in touch with the losses and sorrows in my own life.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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30. I am able to cry and experience depression or sadness, explore the reasons behind it, and allow God to work in me through it.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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31. I am regularly able to enter into other people's world and feelings, connecting deeply with them and taking time to imagine what it feels like to live in their shoes.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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32. People close to me would describe me as a responsive listener.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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33. When I confront someone who has hurt or wronged me, I speak more in the first person ("I" and "me") about how I am feeling rather than speak in blaming tones ("you" or "they") about what was done.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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34. I have little interest in judging other people or quickly giving opinions about them.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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35. People would describe me as someone who makes "loving well" my number one aim.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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36. I spend sufficient time alone with God to sustain my work for God.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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37. I regularly take a 24-hour period each week for Sabbath-keeping - to stop, to rest, to delight, and to contemplate God.

Not Very True Sometimes True Mostly True Very True

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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38. Those closest to me would say that my marriage and children take priority over church

ministry and others.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

39. I am not afraid to ask difficult, uncomfortable questions, to myself or to others, when needed.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

40. I do not divide my leadership into sacred/secular categories. I treat the executive/planning functions of leadership as meaningful as prayer and preparing sermons.

Not Very True	Sometimes True	Mostly True	Very True
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Terry Roberts
Dissertation Survey

Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment

Permission is granted for any purchaser of this book to make copies of this inventory as long as it is not changed or sold for a profit, and this credit is included:

Taken from Peter Scazzero with Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church:*

Updated and Expanded Edition (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009). For more information and further resources, contact emotionallyhealthy.org. See chapter four of Scazzero's book for an interpretation guide for this emotional maturity survey.

Researcher Designed
Survey

WHAT FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH?

1. Your relationship with God.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. The health of your marriage and family relationships.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Have church splits or division affected your mental and emotional health?

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Building programs affected your mental and emotional health?

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Your ability to handle stress constructively.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Your financial state and handling of money personally.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Your ability to rise above and avoid temptation and cultural traps.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Your ability and willingness to seek professional outside help and counsel as needed.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Your sense that you are adequately prepared and able to oversee the church as it is presently structured.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Your sense of being called and equipped by God for ministry.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. A balanced life between family and ministry.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. Adequate rest on a weekly sabbath, an annual vacation, and an occasional sabbatical.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. What part do hobbies and distractions play in your mental and emotional health?

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Your involvement in ministry activities outside of your local church play a part in your emotional health.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. The current church structure contributes to or distracts from your mental and emotional health.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. My discipleship as a believer before entering ministry training plays a role in the current ministry.

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Has the need to change negatively affected your ability to handle ministry?

Never Contributes	Sometimes Contributes	Often Contributes	Always Contributes
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. How has Covid-19 affected your ability to handle ministry mentally and emotionally?

Never Contributes Sometimes Contributes Often Contributes Always Contributes

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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19. How has your hope for the future affected your ministry?

Never Contributes Sometimes Contributes Often Contributes Always Contributes

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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20. Has the thought of staying long term in ministry contributed to your mental or emotional health?

Never Contributes Sometimes Contributes Often Contributes Always Contributes

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Are there any additional comments you would like to add?

*Permission is granted for any purchaser of this book to make copies of this inventory as long as it is not changed or sold for a profit, and this credit is included: Taken from Pete Scazzero with Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: Updated and Expanded Edition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009). For more information and further resources, contact emotionallyhealthy.org. (pp66-67 Kindle version). See chapter four of Scazzero's book for an interpretation guide for this emotional maturity survey.*

B. INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

What Factors Contribute Most to Your Mental and Emotional Health?

Emotionally Healthy Personal Assessment and Researcher Designed Survey

You are invited to be in a research study being done by **Terry Roberts, a doctoral student** from Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are part of the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Alliance Association.

If you agree to be in the study, please complete the questionnaire and submit it to Survey Monkey.

If anyone else is given information about you, they will not know your name. A number will be used instead of your name.

This study will help determine what contributes to and what obstacles exist for ministers to be mentally and emotionally healthy for the duration of their ministry to finish strong. If something makes you feel uncomfortable in any way while you are in the study, please tell Terry Roberts who can be reached at terry@fcf.net. You can refuse to respond to any or all the questions, and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Terry Roberts at terry@fcf.net.

Completing this questionnaire means that you have read this, or had it read to you, and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not continue. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be upset if you do not want to participate or if you change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do. By sending in this survey, you are agreeing to participate in this study.

(The questionnaires were sent by Tom Cromwell, the regional R.M.A.I. director and returned to the researcher and submitted online to Survey Monkey's database confidentially.)

C. PASTORAL INTERVIEW

This interview is confidential and will become part of the research gathered for a doctoral dissertation by Terry Roberts for Asbury Theological Seminary.

The research is to discover what contributes to the mental and emotional health of R.M.A.I. pastors and church leaders in the Ozark Region. Additionally, this research is trying to identify obstacles to mental and emotional health as well as best practices moving forward.

Your answers will be confidential and destroyed after the results are tabulated.

1. What do you identify as the greatest obstacle for mental and emotional health for R.M.A.I. pastors in the Ozark region?
2. What sort of distractions do you face as you fulfill your ministry?
3. Do you think you were and are adequately prepared for ministry?
4. What part of ministry do you wish you had known more about?
5. Is your church structure an obstacle for ministry?
6. Has your family suffered from you being in ministry?
7. What changes do you wish you would have implemented earlier to maintain better emotional and mental health in ministry?
8. How have you been personally impacted by the moral fall of a ministry leader?
9. Do you get an annual physical exam?
10. Has your spouse or others close to you ever expressed concern about your mental/emotional health?
11. Do you struggle with workaholic tendencies?

12. What warning would you give to younger or new ministers to maintain mental and emotional health in ministry?
13. Has anything surprised you concerning your and others' mental and emotional health in ministry?

Are there additional comments you would like to add related to your mental and emotional health in ministry?

D. INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR INTERVIEWS

What Factors Contribute Most to Your Mental and Emotional Health?

Emotionally Healthy Personal Assessment and Researcher-Designed Survey

You are invited to be in a research study being done by **Terry Roberts, a doctoral student** from Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are part of the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Alliance Association.

If you are asked to participate in the interview, you will be invited to a lunch or be asked the questions by phone. This interview should last approximately one-half hour.

If anyone else is given information about you, they will not know your name. A number will be used instead of your name.

This study will help determine what contributes to and what obstacles exist for ministers to be mentally and emotionally healthy for the duration of their ministry to finish strong.

If something makes you feel uncomfortable in any way while you are in the study, please tell Terry Roberts who can be reached at terry@fcf.net. You can refuse to respond to any or all the questions, and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Terry Roberts at terry@fcf.net.

Signing this paper means that you have read this, or had it read to you, and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be upset if you do not sign this paper or even if you change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do.

A Recording device will be used for the interview and transcribed into print. All data will be destroyed after the results are tabulated.

Signature of Person Agreeing to be in the Study

Date Signed

**E. RHEMA MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL PERMISSION
LETTER**

Tom Cromwell

Wed, Jan 20,
1:22 PM

1/20/21

Dear Rev. Terry Roberts,

You asked for permission to conduct research in the Arkansas - Missouri RMAI (Ozark Region) for your dissertation. Along with Doug Jones' approval, I also approve and look forward to participating in as well as learning from your findings.

Your title couldn't be more relevant and needed given the statistics on the mental, emotional and spiritual health of ministers.

Contact me if you have questions or need more assistance as the time of the research approaches.

Sincerely,

Rev. Tom Cromwell
RMAI Ozark Regional Director
tcrom@windstream.net
573-578-6495

F. EXPERT REVIEW REQUESTS

Terry Roberts
Doctoral Candidate
Asbury Theological Seminary
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

Dr. Bryan Collier
Asbury Seminary
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

415 Sherwood Oaks Court
Wentzville, Missouri 63385

Dear Bryan,

Thank you for your willingness to consider, critique, and improve the questions I hope to use for my Doctor of Ministry dissertation research. You are one of three experts who have been asked to help improve the quality of the questions I am asking the participants to answer. In addition to a Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment from his book *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, the participants are being asked to complete a twenty-question researcher designed survey. Both of those surveys will be conducted on Survey Monkey and the responses will be confidential. Additionally, a smaller group will be asked to participate in person or by phone in a researcher designed pastoral interview. *The Purpose of this project was to evaluate the current state of and discern the best practices for achieving and maintaining the mental and emotional health of pastors within the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International with wider implications for the whole Church.* The following research questions have been approved by my research coach:

1. According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what contributes most to achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association?
2. According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what obstacles inhibit achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in Missouri?
3. Moving forward, what are best practices for achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in the Ozark Region?

Please evaluate the attached documents and return them to me as soon as possible. You are free to type directly into the documents and feel free to share any perspective or addition you might have.

In Him,

Terry Roberts

Terry Roberts
Doctoral Candidate
Asbury Theological Seminary
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

Dr. Milton Lowe
Asbury Seminary
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

415 Sherwood Oaks Court
Wentzville, Missouri 63385

Dear Milton,

Thank you for your willingness to consider, critique, and improve the questions I hope to use for my Doctor of Ministry dissertation research. You are one of three experts who have been asked to help improve the quality of the questions I am asking the participants to answer. In addition to a Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment from his book *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, the participants are being asked to complete a twenty-question researcher designed survey. Both of those surveys will be conducted on Survey Monkey and the responses will be confidential. Additionally, a smaller group will be asked to participate in person or by phone in a researcher designed pastoral interview. *The Purpose of this project was to evaluate the current state of and discern the best practices for achieving and maintaining the mental and emotional health of pastors within the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International with wider implications for the whole Church.* The following research questions have been approved by my research coach:

1. According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what contributes most to achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association?
2. According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what obstacles inhibit achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in Missouri?
3. Moving forward, what are best practices for achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in the Ozark Region?

Please evaluate the attached documents and return them to me as soon as possible. You are free to type directly into the documents and feel free to share any perspective or addition you might have.

In Him,

Terry Roberts

Terry Roberts
Doctoral Candidate
Asbury Theological Seminary
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

Rev. Tony Cooke
PO Box 140187
Broken Arrow, OK 74014-0187...

415 Sherwood Oaks Court
Wentzville, Missouri 63385

Dear Tony,

Thank you for your willingness to consider, critique, and improve the questions I hope to use for my Doctor of Ministry dissertation research. You are one of three experts who have been asked to help improve the quality of the questions I am asking the participants to answer. In addition to a Peter Scazzero Emotionally Healthy Assessment from his book *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, the participants are being asked to complete a twenty-question researcher designed survey. Both of those surveys will be conducted on Survey Monkey and the responses will be confidential. Additionally, a smaller group will be asked to participate in person or by phone in a researcher designed pastoral interview. *The Purpose of this project was to evaluate the current state of and discern the best practices for achieving and maintaining the mental and emotional health of pastors within the Ozark Region of Rhema Ministerial Association International with wider implications for the whole Church.* The following research questions have been approved by my research coach:

1. According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what contributes most to achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association?
2. According to pastors in Rhema Ministerial Association churches in the Ozark Region, what obstacles inhibit achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in Missouri?
3. Moving forward, what are best practices for achieving and maintaining the spiritual and emotional health of pastors within Rhema Ministerial Association Churches in the Ozark Region?

Please evaluate the attached documents and return them to me as soon as possible. You are free to type directly into the documents and feel free to share any perspective or addition you might have.

In Him,

Terry Roberts

G. CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENTS

Confidentiality Agreement

I, Rory Bergman, will be assisting the researcher by compiling the confidential data to an Excel document.

I agree to abide by the following guidelines regarding confidentiality:

1. Hold in strictest confidence the identity of any individual(s) that may be revealed in the course of performing research tasks throughout the research process and after it is complete.
0. Keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the *Researcher(s)*.
0. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession (e.g., using a password-protected computer).
0. Return all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the *Researcher(s)* when I have completed the research tasks.
0. After consulting with the *Researcher(s)*, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the *Researcher(s)* (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

(Print Name) _____
(Signature) _____
(Date)

Researcher

(Print Name) _____
(Signature) _____
(Date)

Confidentiality Agreement

I, Anthony Tiller, will be assisting the researcher by assisting with the audio recording for the interview and transcribing the audio into print text.

I agree to abide by the following guidelines regarding confidentiality:

1. Hold in strictest confidence the identity of any individual(s) that may be revealed in the course of performing research tasks throughout the research process and after it is complete.

2. Keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the *Researcher(s)*.

3. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession (e.g., using a password-protected computer).

4. Return all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the *Researcher(s)* when I have completed the research tasks.

5. After consulting with the *Researcher(s)*, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the *Researcher(s)* (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

(Print Name) _____
(Signature) _____
(Date)

Researcher

(Print Name) _____
(Signature) _____
(Date)

Confidentiality Agreement

I, Rebecca Roberts, will be assisting the researcher by being present for a telephone interview with a woman pastor.

I agree to abide by the following guidelines regarding confidentiality:

1. Hold in strictest confidence the identity of any individual(s) that may be revealed in the course of performing research tasks throughout the research process and after it is complete.
1. Keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the *Researcher(s)*.
1. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession (e.g., using a password-protected computer).
1. Return all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the *Researcher(s)* when I have completed the research tasks.
1. After consulting with the *Researcher(s)*, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the *Researcher(s)* (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

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