

4-1-1982

Concerns of Pastoral Ministry With a Biblical Perspective From the Gospel of Mark

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CONCERNS OF PASTORAL MINISTRY
WITH A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE FROM THE
GOSPEL OF MARK

BY

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A research paper
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF DIVINITY

WESTERN EVANGELICAL SEMINARY

Portland, Oregon

April 1, 1982

Approved by Dr. Bruce A. Hicks

Date May 1, 1982

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Problem

The area of study for this paper was pastoral ministry. The research focused on three areas of concern: the recruitment of persons for pastoral ministry; the attrition of pastors from the parish ministry; and, the training of ministers.

Purpose

The paper attempted to define the concerns of pastoral ministry reflected by respondents to a survey questionnaire. It was the intention of the writer to keep the research confined to its contemporary context with a biblical perspective.

Method

The writer's major field of study in seminary was English Bible with an emphasis on New Testament. With this background, the Gospel of Mark was chosen to discern the approach of Jesus to pastoral ministry. The writer's background is limited in Greek, but the use of language tools was made to gain a fuller understanding of the Biblical teaching.

One complete sermon manuscript was presented. The sermon was

presented true to homiletical form, to be preached in the congregation. Footnotes were not used, but where credit was required, notes were included in the text.

Limitations

The bibliography with the exception of biblical tools, was generally restricted to works written since 1975. This restriction was used to confine the study to a contemporary context rather than a historical perspective.

Even though a biblical perspective was desired, the study is confined to the Gospel of Mark. Portions of the gospel were selected for their value to the concerns of the research in pastoral ministry. Other passages from the Gospel were used for illustrative purposes, and in a few instances illustrations were taken from other biblical passages.

Another limitation of the study was made in confining as much application as possible to the writer's denomination (Free Methodist Church). The study was limited to the use of annual conferences in the United States for statistical purposes.

All the quotations from the Bible were taken from the Revised Standard Version, second edition of the New Testament, unless otherwise noted.

The Survey

The survey questionnaire was sent to 160 persons who were mostly members of the writer's denomination. The only non-Free Methodists receiving the questionnaire, were professors in colleges and seminaries.

In each case these persons were affiliated with denominations of the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition.

Ninety one (91) pastors were requested to respond. Included in this number were nineteen (19) conference superintendents. Twenty (20) persons serving in higher education were asked to respond. Twenty (20) requests were sent to denominational administrators, including all the Bishops of the Free Methodist Church. Twenty nine (29) laypersons were selected at random because of their involvement on boards and committees of their respective conferences. In many instances they were members of the denomination's Board of Administration. Care was given to select women in positions of leadership in each of the categories, including pastors.

The survey requested the respondent to list the five most crucial issues the evangelical church must address during the 1980's. In their response, they were asked to identify at least one theological issue, one ecclesiastical issue, and one sociological issue. A list of seventy three (73) issues was given to provoke their thought.

A total of ninety five (95) responded. The respondents identified a total of 255 issues. The five most frequently mentioned issues were the authority of scripture, marriage and the family, the pastoral ministry, abortion, and political activity of the church.

The Graduate Research and Examination Committee when reviewing the issues determined that pastoral ministry was the most valid area of research in relation to the Gospel of Mark.

Of the ninety five (95) persons who responded to the survey, a total of twenty five (25) expressed concerns for twelve areas related to pastoral ministry. In reporting the results, pastors and conference

superintendents have been divided, making five different categories of respondents.

Superintendents

Eight superintendents enumerated nine different areas of concern for pastoral ministry. The concerns most frequently mentioned were the recruitment of ministers and those leaving the pastoral ministry. Recruitment was mentioned six times and those leaving the ministry was mentioned four times. The training and continuing education of ministers was listed three times.

Other areas of concern of superintendents were ministerial ethics, the role of the minister, pastoral morale, the minister's authority, and homosexuality among ministers.

Pastors

Four concerns were expressed by the seven pastors who responded. They were most concerned about the recruitment of persons for the ministry. After this concern, the pastors listed the areas of the ethics and integrity of ministers, their communication skills, and the pastor who leaves the ministry.

Administrators

Three denominational administrators indicated four areas of concern. Each of them were mentioned once: drop out; recruitment; training; and, the role of the pastor.

Educators

Two educators responded with only two concerns expressed, the training and recruitment of persons for the pastoral ministry.

Laypersons

There were five laypersons who responded, and each expressed concern for the recruitment of persons for the ministry, and the problem of drop out.. One expressed concern that congregations needed to accept greater responsibility for the care of their pastors with better salaries, and to help in preventing pastoral "burn-out".

Summary

Of the five categories of respondents only superintendents expressed all three of the concerns on which this study was focused. There seems to be a balance in their response to the need of training and continuing education of ministers. A higher level of concern was expressed for the recruitment of persons for the pastoral office.

While educators were not concerned about the problem of persons leaving the ministry, they did express the other two areas of research for this paper, the recruitment and training of persons for pastoral ministry.

Laypersons and pastors did not mention the training and continuing education of ministers, but share common concern for the recruitment of ministers and those leaving the ministry.

TABLE I
SURVEY RESULTS

Concern	Superintendents	Pastors	Laypersons	Administrators	Educators	Total
Recruitment	6	3	2	1	1	13
Drop out	4	1	2	1	0	8
Training	3	1	0	1	1	6

The Concern of Recruitment

Even though the concern of recruitment was identified more times by all five categories of respondents, there were fewer definitive statements made about the problem by those who listed it. However, there were several statements that would seem to reflect that the concern was for the recruitment of "quality" in relationship to the leadership abilities.

In reference to recruitment, one pastor said, "the need for adequate pastoral leadership is one of the greatest needs in my denomination." A layperson who serves on the committee in the conference with the responsibility of assigning pastors to their charge said, "We should be getting the cream from our church young people. I see a real need for good pastors."

A conference superintendent expressed to the writer in conversation the need for quality leadership. He said that many of the pastors he now has in his conference would not have been the kind that would have been asked to lead a prayer meeting twenty years ago.

A denominational administrator cited the problem of drop out of those ministers who are highly trained, talented, and qualified.

His concern was that there were not as many being recruited as were dropping.

All of these statements reflect the need for recruiting "qualified" ministers to serve in the pastoral ministry.

Another area of concern was discovered by the writer for recruitment of ministers. In surveying the denominational YEARBOOKS of the Free Methodist Church it was learned there are not enough ordained ministers to supply the existing churches.

A survey of the 1975¹ and 1981² YEARBOOKS of the Free Methodist Church revealed that the number of pastors in the interim years of 1975 and 1980³ has decreased. In the same number of years the count of churches has declined, although not as much as the decline in pastors.

Table II shows the comparisons. It cites ministers in special relationship as an area of concern for the supply of ministers to local congregations. Included in this category are retirees, headquarters personnel, missionaries, educational personnel at colleges and seminaries, and evangelists. In addition there are ministers in secular employment, parachurch organizations, and those attending school.

¹YEARBOOK 1975 of the Free Methodist Church Around The World (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1975).

²YEARBOOK 1981 of the Free Methodist Church Around The World (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1981).

³Because of a change in reporting procedure, the statistics for the year 1980 are included in the YEARBOOK 1981. All statistics used are from various sections of the YEARBOOK except the percentages which are the writers.

TABLE II

SUPPLY OF PASTORS IN RELATIONSHIP TO CHURCHES

	1975	1980
Number of churches	1,054	1,036
Number of ordained ministers	1,580	1,669
Number of ministerial candidates	227	271
Total number of ministers	1,080	1,940
Conference Administrators	36	34
Ministers in special relationships	880	1,064
Available pastors	891	842
Deficit of pastors	163	194

TABLE III

MINISTERS IN SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

	1975	1980
1. Retirees	329	435
2. Denominational service	143	138
3. In multi-staffed churches	81	123
4. Attending school	85	122
5. In secular work	55	77
6. Para-church ministries	60	74
7. Leave of absence	90	48
8. Evangelists	37	47
Totals	880	1,064

Table III gives the numerical breakdown where ministers in special relationship are serving. The category of multi-staffed churches represents those ordained ministers and ministerial candidates serving in a local church under the supervision of a senior pastor. Parachurch ministries are those with a definite Christian ministry but free of denominational ties.

From these tables, these observations are made:

1. Even though the number of ministers has increased by 7.4 percent there is an increase in the short fall of pastors by 19 percent.

2. The table reflects a 21 percent increase in the number of ministers in special relationships with a decrease in the number of pastors available.

3. Not only is there a significant increase in the number of ministers in special relationships, it represents 54.8 percent of all ordained ministers and ministerial candidates in ministries outside the parish ministry. Only 45.2 percent serve the local church as pastors.

4. A sharp increase of 51.9 percent is revealed of ministers in multi-staffed churches in the five year period.

5. There is a 40 percent increase in ministers leaving for secular employment.

6. Ordained ministers involved in parachurch ministries has increased by 28.3 percent.

The concern of the respondents for the recruitment of ministers appears to be a valid concern as revealed by these statistics.

The Concern of Pastoral Drop Out

The second most frequently mentioned concern of pastoral ministry was the drop out of ministers from parish ministry. From Table III it is learned that in 1980 there were 199 ministers in secular employment, parachurch ministries, and on a leave of absence compared to 205 in 1975.

One other statistic had to be considered not included in the tables. In 1980 there were nine (9) ministers who located compared with thirty (30) who located in 1975. Once again, the statistics reveal a decrease. A located minister is defined as one whose membership is discontinued in the conference and placed in a local church.⁴ No other category has been included in the located minister total, those who have withdrawn their membership from the denomination altogether.

The statistics show an actual decline in the number of ministers dropping out of the pastoral ministry. In 1980 10.7 percent of the total ministerial census left, while there was 13 percent who left in 1975. But it is observed that there is a strong shift in motivation to enter areas of service outside the parish ministry.

From these statistics it would seem to indicate the number leaving the ministry shows little cause for concern. However, when

⁴THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE (Winona Lake: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1980) p. 111.

considering the statement of Gordon MacDonald in Christianity Today, there would be cause for concern if it is true. He said, "about one-third of all pastors do ponder the implications of leaving what they thought might be a life work."⁵

MacDonald is not alone in his feelings. Arthur Herzog is quoted as saying, "Almost a fourth of those in the pastoral ministry are trapped in their profession and want out."⁶ Herzog quotes an Episcopalian bureaucrat who said, "from ten to twenty percent of our clergy would quit tomorrow if they had a job option."⁷

Statistics may reveal that pastoral demissions are not increasing in the Free Methodist Church. But, if the statements given in the preceding paragraph have any validity, the church should make every endeavour to determine "why" pastors demit, and where the reasons exist, work to diminish their effects.

Concern for the Training of Ministers

A conference superintendent who responded to the survey questionnaire said, "One of the greatest needs that the church has today is that of training pastors so they are ready for ministry when they come to a church."

The area of ministerial training is an area which can become

⁵Gordon MacDonald, "Dear Church, I Quit", Christianity Today (June 27, 1980) p. 16

⁶DeWitt Matthews, Capers of the Clergy, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), p. 113

⁷Ibid., p. 113

the whipping post for many pastoral deficiencies. It is the feeling of the writer that many of the charges brought against colleges and seminaries in the survey were misplaced. At times the deficiencies are due to the lack of training, but other times it can be that the candidate himself does not have the overall fitness for ministry.

Specific concerns in this area were the lack of ability to relate to people, expertise in evangelism, the development of a message, spiritual fervency, practical training, and communication skills. These concerns represent the need for a commitment on the part of the student. Training in the area of communications is good, but if the student does not commit himself/herself to improvement in this area, all his/her training is of little value.

Jesus is portrayed as a teacher in the Gospel of Mark. He was the trainer of the twelve for their ministry. He used a variety of methods. Jesus taught his disciples from the everyday experiences of real life situations. After periods of training, he thrust them out on their own for ministry. The disciples would then return to report their work and receive further training. The indication is that practical experience is a necessary part of theological training. It cannot replace the academic, but the two must be integrated to more fully equip the candidate for the ministry.

Chapter 2

RECRUITMENT OF QUALITY PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

A midwest pastor in his response to the survey said, "Pastoral leadership as a whole is of great importance. The effectiveness of the church is affected a great deal by the pastoral leadership it has". The statement expresses the need for recruiting quality pastoral leadership to lead the local congregations.

Quality pastoral leadership is the concern of this chapter. What do we mean by "quality"? The answer is not easy. But, for the purposes of this paper, quality is to mean the dedication of the person called by God which compels him/her to loving obedience to the Master in ministry. By this loving obedience the gifts of ministry can be brought to maturity.

In consideration of quality leadership, consideration will be given to the process of securing pastoral leadership in the Free Methodist Church. Each annual conference has a Board of Ministerial Education and Guidance whose duties are to screen ministerial candidates. This body is commonly referred to as the MEG Board and will be so called in this paper.

Because the call to preach must be the basis of recruiting pastoral leadership, the material surveyed from the Gospel of Mark will focus on this aspect. Observations will be made from three separate accounts where persons were called, and commissioned for service to God.

Recruitment of Ministers

The process of recruiting ministers in the writer's denomination can be compared to the present situation with free agency in professional baseball. It is characterized by a reshuffling of personnel to fill certain positions with an occasional rookie making his appearance.

It is not an uncommon occurrence that a competent minister will be wooed from his church to fill a vacancy in another conference. When this takes place the number of quality pastors does not increase, quality is merely transplanted.

Geographic location has played an important role in the concentration of pastoral leadership. The metropolitan areas of the United States seem to have a greater appeal than the rural areas. The Midwest and agricultural areas lack an appeal when in competition with the Pacific Northwest. The more progressive and population growth regions are far more attractive than the more conservative and static, if not decreasing, population localities.

The use of this method perpetuates the short fall of ministers. The present practice does not increase the supply of pastors. Many churches are still without leadership. The method only encourages quality leadership to migrate to the most desirable places of ministry.

This practice then does not fulfill the need stated by the respondents. Recruitment needs to take place from the rank and file of the youth of our churches. Each conference should pursue the course of fostering the climate that assists their youth to hear the call of God to preach, and responding to become pastors in their own region.

When Jesus called his disciples, he did not go to Rome to find his men. He selected them from the land his ministry was to be focused. His candidates knew the social and cultural customs of the people. They were familiar with the leadership expectancy of the people. It seems that if annual conferences could produce ministerial leadership within their congregations many obstacles of leadership would be overcome.

Denominational Procedure To Recruit Pastoral Leadership

The BOOK OF DISCIPLINE of the Free Methodist Church is careful to give guidelines to conference MEG Boards to use in procuring pastoral leadership. It gives some preliminary procedures for local congregations to follow when a person declares their call to preach.

Local Procedures

The first stage in becoming an ordained minister in the Free Methodist Church is initiated in the local church. The person who is a candidate is to be considered by the local church to determine if they have the qualities and gifts expected of a Christian minister. Three qualities are used as criteria: spirituality, good conduct, and attitudes.¹

The initial examination of the candidate is done by the local official board. Six questions are to be used "to determine the candidate's call of God to the ministry, and quality of spiritual life."²

¹BOOK OF DISCIPLINE of the Free Methodist Church. (Winona Lake: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1980), p. 209.

²Ibid., p. 210.

The questions are:

- a. When and how did you come to know Christ as Saviour and Lord?
- b. What is your understanding of the doctrine of entire sanctification?
- c. Have you experienced the fullness of the Holy Spirit in your life?
- d. Are you open to the call of God to full-time ministry?
- e. What preparations and plans are you making in order to follow God's will for your life?
- f. What types of ministry and witness do you plan to participate in as a preacher?³

Provided the candidate is able to give answers which satisfy the Official Board, a local preacher's license is given. The pastor and his cabinet are assigned the responsibility of further counseling.

When a person is granted a local preacher's license the church is to inform the conference MEG Board, and the denominational Department of Higher Education and The Ministry.

Once a license has been granted, it can be renewed four times. If the candidate has not become a ministerial candidate⁴ within four years the license is forfeited. During this four years, the licensee must become enrolled in a college or seminary, or enroll in the course of study outlined in the BOOK OF DISCIPLINE for local preachers.

Conference Procedures

The BOOK OF DISCIPLINE assigns activities to conference MEG Boards in the recruitment of ministerial candidates. Three key words describe the boards duties: recruiting, screening, and identification.⁵

³Ibid., p. 210

⁴A ministerial candidate is a person who is recognized by an annual conference as intending to enter the ministry and is formally making preparations for it.

⁵Ibid., p. 107-108.

The description gives recruitment as an area where they are to assist the local church, while the remaining areas are of primary concern.

The screening process is for the purpose of ascertaining the qualifications of the candidate to meet the demands of the holy office. To gain knowledge of the fulfillment of these demands the board is to give guidance and council. As the candidate meets the spiritual qualifications and the educational requirements of the church, advancement toward ordination is approved.

The BOOK OF DISCIPLINE states, "The early identification of young people sensing God's call to the ministry shall be a primary responsibility of the board of ministerial education and guidance in cooperation with the local church. Every attempt shall be made to discover such young people before they graduate from high school."⁶ This statement emphasizes the necessity for cooperation between the local church and the conference. The work of the conference in recruiting pastors is hampered unless the local church is alert to the call of God in the lives of the youth and reports it to them. If the local church does not recognize the call of God in the lives of their young people, the identification of those being called, and the early counsel that is needed will not be realized.

The church has placed a premium on the early recognition of the call to preach. The writer sensed his call to preach early in life, when in the sixth grade. The call was made public when a junior in high school. The writer was fortunate to have an alert pastor and local congregation to accept their responsibility and proper guidance was given

⁶Ibid., p. 108.

to fulfill that call in his life.

Denominational Procedure

The Department of Higher Education and The Ministry has not been vested by the BOOK OF DISCIPLINE to participate in the recruitment process of persons for pastoral ministry. They have duties of assisting the conferences as they do their work of giving guidance to candidates for the ministry.

In the mid-seventies, the department published a recruitment tool entitled, "God Is . . . Calling You to Minister". The booklet is divided into three parts. The first part identifies six ways God calls persons to ministry. The second part identifies the character of the person God calls. And, the last part describes the work of the minister.

The booklet closes with the questions, "Does this challenge you? Are you interested in becoming all things to all men in order to win them to Christ? Do you believe all followers of Christ have been called?"⁷

The Call To Preach

Henlee Barnette in his book, Has God Called You?, says:

At the very heart of the Bible is the drama of the mighty act of God summoning and sending people as instruments of his divine purpose in the world . . . So central is the concept of calling in the Bible that it becomes the integrating symbol of the Christian life. It symbolizes the experience of being drawn into a redemptive relation with God in Christ and commissioned

⁷This quotation is from a booklet entitled "God Is . . . Calling You To Minister." It was written by the Secretary of Higher Education of the Free Methodist Church. The greatest liability is that it has been filed and is no longer in circulation.

to service in the kingdom of God.⁸

The Gospel of Mark has three passages which demonstrate the summons of God to service in the kingdom. The gospel opens with the historical account of John, the Baptist in chapter one verse two. Further into the chapter in verses sixteen through twenty, Mark writes the account of Simon, Andrew, James and John being called by Jesus to follow him. In chapter two Mark gives the story of Levi being called by Jesus. The character of John the Baptist's mission is described in this way.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare the way."

Mark records Jesus' call of Peter, Andrew, James and John in these words.

And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going a little further, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and followed him.

Levi was called by Jesus, and it is described by Mark:

He went out again beside the sea; and all the crowd gathered about him, and he taught them. And as he passed on, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office, and he said to him, "Follow me". And he rose and followed him.

To see the significance of calling from these accounts there are four Greek words to be studied. They are: ἀγγελος, ἀποστέλλω, καλέω, and ἀκολουθέω.

⁸Henlee Barnette, Has God Called You? (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1969), p. 13.

ἄγγελος

The simplest meaning of ἄγγελος is "messenger". Usually it has the emphasis on "one who is sent out".⁹ Throughout the New Testament it is used mostly in relationship to angels.¹⁰ It is used only six times in reference to human messengers, and one of those times is in Mark 1:2. It is used to identify John, the Baptist, as the messenger of God.

In this verse ἄγγελος is the object of the sentence, and it is used with the genitive μου, denoting possession. The possessor in this case is the subject who is God. The fact here is that God has his own messenger. God in his sovereignty sends his messenger, and gives him His message.

It is learned from this verse that John's mission was not one that he took upon himself. God sent him. He was commissioned by God. William Lane stresses this when he says, "His mission was shaped by the summons of God which came to him in the wilderness."¹¹

From the context of this verse the unfolding of the concept of servanthood in the call of God is seen. John was not proclaiming his own message for his personal benefit. It was a message which had for its own purpose the revealing of another person, Jesus Christ.

⁹William Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, trans., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 7.

¹⁰Gerhard Kittel, ed. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), Vol. 1 p. 83.

¹¹William L. Lane, The Gospel According to Mark (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), p. 48.

John perceived his subservient role when his preaching was described in verses seven and eight. He preached, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." William Lane says that "John is important not for his own sake but as the beginning of an unfolding drama which centers in Jesus of Nazareth."¹²

Ἀποστέλλω

This word basically means "to send away".¹³ Another word πέμπω carries the same basic meaning "to send". Yet there is a distinct difference between the two words. πέμπω signifies the basic fact of sending while ἀποστέλλω emphasizes sending with a purpose.¹⁴ Colin Brown stresses that the usage of ἀποστέλλω carries the meaning of one sent with a clearly defined task. One who is sent is always acting under the authority of the sender. Even in classical Greek there was always the understanding that a messenger was always under divine authorization.¹⁵

Karl Heinrich Rengstorf writing in the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament states that the "word does begin to become a theological term meaning to send forth to service in the kingdom of God with

¹²Ibid., p. 48.

¹³Arndt, p. 98

¹⁴Kittel, Vol. 1, p. 398.

¹⁵Colin Brown, ed. The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), Vol. 1, p. 127.

full authority (grounded in God)."¹⁶ He points out a very interesting usage by Jesus in the Gospel of John.

In John's gospel ἀποστέλλω is used by Jesus when His concern to ground His authority in that of God as the one who is responsible for His words and works and who guarantees their right and truth. On the other hand he uses the formula ὁ πέμψας με (πάτηρ) to affirm the participation of God in his work in the action of his sending.¹⁷

Ἀποστέλλω is used in Mark 1:2 in relationship to John being sent as God's messenger. It is used in Mark 3:14 and 6:7 in relationship to the disciples being sent out to preach. In Mark 4:29 it is used of the sickle being sent because the harvest is ready.

From the brief description of John the Baptist's mission in Mark two things are learned about the call to preach. The "called one" is under the authority of a higher power. More emphasis is placed upon "the sender" than "the sent". "The sent one" bears the message of the sender, not his own.

Καλέω

The literal translation of καλέω is "to call".¹⁸

This word is common to the writings of Luke. It occurs the least in the Gospel of Mark. In respect to calling persons to service it is used in the summons of James and John in the first chapter, verse twenty.

K. L. Schmidt writing in the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament says it "is the technical term for the process of salvation."¹⁹

¹⁷Ibid. The use of ἀποστέλλω is found in Mark 3:17 and 5:36. πέμπω is used in Mark 4:34 and 7:28.

¹⁸Arndt, p. 399.

¹⁹Kittel, Vol. 3, p. 489.

Its primary usage in the New Testament is the calling of persons to salvation. It is used especially in calling sinners to repentance. Jesus uses it this way in Mark 2:17 when he said, "I come not to call the righteous, but sinners."

The use of a cognate, *προσκαλέω*, in Mark occurs very frequently in respect to the disciples and the multitudes being called to Jesus. Schmidt asserts in these instances, especially with the disciples, "we may certainly think of the divine calling as fulfilled by Jesus as the Christ."²⁰

The use of *καλέω* never carried the idea of vocation in Greek culture with the exception of priests and those involved in intellectual and administrative tasks.²¹ Even though it is not used in respect to vocations, it may be assumed that it does in the New Testament. In the account of the calling of the disciples to himself in chapter three, it continues by saying that Jesus sent (*ἀποστελλω*) them out for the purpose of preaching. The idea of vocation is inferred because God appointed them to this task, and it became their life's work.

According to Colin Brown, *καλέω*, means "to speak to another . . . in order to bring him nearer, either physically or in a personal way."²² And, from an ancient papyrus, it is used with respect to God calling men to a life of obedience.²³ The usage then would imply the fact that God confronts men, calling them to service and obedience in a definite vocation. To remain effective they must stay in close relationship to God.

²⁰Ibid., p. 501 ²¹Brown, Vol. 1, p. 271. ²²Ibid.

²³Kittel, Vol. 3, p. 490.

Ἀκολουθέω

Ἀκολουθέω is a gospel term meaning "to follow". It is found sixty six (66) times in the New Testament of which there are fifty six (56) occurrences in the gospels. In all but two of these instances the word is used to indicate the following of Jesus. The only exceptions to this are found in John's writings.²⁴

The traditional use of the term describes the pupil-teacher relationships of the rabbis. The pupils of a rabbi would follow him every where he went for the purpose of learning from him and to serve him. The act of following was always by the follower's choice.²⁵

The concept of following always included fellowship and participation on the part of the pupil in the life of the teacher. There was a commitment on the part of the pupil to break all former ties in order to become exclusively attached to his teacher.

Kittel writing on following Jesus emphasizes that it is more than an invitation to follow his example but, "exclusively a fellowship of life and suffering with the Messiah which arises only in the fellowship of his salvation."²⁶ Wuest describes the act of following as the road of self-sacrifice, separation, suffering, and holiness.²⁷ Brown further emphasizes that the self-denial in following is an unconditional discipleship resulting from giving oneself wholly to God.²⁸

²⁴Brown, Vol. 1, p. 482. ²⁵Ibid., p. 481.

²⁶Kittel, Vol. 1, p. 214.

²⁷Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), Vol. 1, p. 52.

²⁸Brown, Vol. 1, p. 483.

Peter, Andrew, James, John and Matthew all were invited by Jesus to follow him. Except for Peter and Andrew each was asked to follow him by the use of the verb, ἀκολουθέω . In the call of Peter and Andrew a figurative expression found in the New Testament was used: " δευτέ ὀπίσω μου ." ("follow after me"). Traditionally this phrase was used for invitation to discipleship.

Each of these men received the same invitation. They were to break every previous tie they had. The four fishermen left their nets. Matthew left his seat of customs. And, in each case, they took on a new allegiance. The focus of their lives became Jesus.

It was Jesus who chose them. It was an honor. They attached themselves to him, and became learners.

The response to the call from these men appears to indicate a radical obedience. However, Gould suggests that "the immediate following is due probably to a previous acquaintance with Jesus and his teachings."²⁹ He was no stranger to them, having been introduced to Jesus by John the Baptist. Their decision was no doubt made on the basis of an intelligent decision founded on a knowledge of his teachings, and a knowledge of what "follow me" meant in their culture. True discipleship and a positive response to the call of God must be an intelligent decision based on the knowledge of the consequences.

What about quality pastoral leadership? It might seem that Mark does not address this issue. Mark does address a quality of leadership in his concept of the call. Is one willing to be a servant for

²⁹Rev. Ezra P. Gould, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St Mark (London: T & T Clark, 1975), p. 18.

another? Is he willing to be a learner? Is he willing to attach himself to another in loving obedience? A positive answer to these questions is indicative of the traits the church should look for in defining quality pastoral leadership.

But, Mark does address quality from another viewpoint in each of these accounts. The respondents to the call were possessed by God. But, that possession did not come without any promise from the caller. He told Peter, Andrew, James, and John, "I will make you." A willing person in God's hands can be developed into the quality God desires of His servants.

Summary

The supply of needed pastors can be met only when persons respond to the call of God to preach the gospel. The characteristics of this relationship is one of pupil-learner and servant-master. Barnette describes the call in his book, Has God Called You?, as "the experience of being drawn into a redemptive relationship with God and commissioned to service in the kingdom of God."³⁰ This relationship gives "the called" a real mission for life that should add meaning to everything he does.

A. T. Robertson expresses well the mystic of the call when he said, "Preachers are made out of laymen who are willing to leave their business for the service of Christ."³¹ He seems to be stating

³⁰Barnette, p. 13.

³¹Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1930), Vol. 1, p. 257.

what Mark is indicating about quality, that it is found in willing obedience to the call of God. It is God who knows the man who can be developed, and He seeks this kind rather than the gifted leader who cannot be molded. In this way God meets the supply of persons needed to do His work.

Responding to the call definitely meets the need of the supply of pastors. But, this paper is also concerned with the conservation of the supply God has given to the church. The attrition of persons from pastoral ministry diminishes the supply of pastoral leadership. The next chapter focuses on this concern of pastoral ministry.

CHAPTER 3

THE ATTRITION OF MINISTERS FROM PASTORAL MINISTRY

Gordon MacDonald writing in Christianity Today says, "The ministry is spiritual warfare and war assumes casualties."¹ The statement no doubt expresses fate, yet strong reality. Pastoral ministry challenges the spiritual and emotional areas of a minister's life. All ministers will not be able to meet these challenges and continue in the parish ministry.

Leaving pastoral ministry does not always answer the problem. Demitting the ministry leaves its scars of failure and worthlessness on many, while others take up different careers with the conviction they are still in the ministry though in a different role.

The Gospel of Mark does not deal extensively with the laying aside of the call to preach. In chapter fourteen Jesus foretells that all of the twelve will fall away. The fulfillment of that statement is realized later in the chapter where it is recorded, "And they all forsook him and fled."

This Chapter's purpose is to review some of the current literature and some academic research to show why persons leave the pastoral ministry. Contemporary writings are also suggesting some remedial activity to slow down the rate of attrition. A review of this

¹Gordon MacDonald, "Dear Church, I Quit", Christianity Today, 12 (June 27, 1980): 17.

literature will be included.

Motives For Demitting Ministry

Why would a person who has the call of God upon his life for pastoral ministry forsake it for other work? Why, after being examined by a denominational board of ministry, would a person leave the ministry? Why, after being ordained, serving for years in the pastorate, and receiving some measure of success, would a person leave the ministry.? These are questions which may not legitimately have a clear answer. It could be the person who has left the ministry and states a reason(s) may not feel sure within themself why.

Gordon MacDonald, a minister, writing in Christianity Today, refers to a Gallup Poll survey that states that at least four percent of all ministers often give thought to leaving the ministry. Twenty four (24) percent give it an occasional thought. The largest age group who give serious consideration to dropping out are from thirty (30) to forty nine (49). Statistics show that the more liberal theological persons tend to consider discontinuing with greater frequency.²

Motive

Why a person enters the ministry is often related to the reason for leaving. Many enter the ministry for wrong motives, not being called by God, and soon become disenchanted and leave.

One motive frequently observed for entering the ministry is

²Ibid., p. 19.

an unnatural desire to please a significant person in their lives. This person may be a parent, grandparent, spiritual parents, or hero. This motive may be recognized as a need for affirmation and acceptance. The ministry is not an easy place to find this kind of fulfillment.

A person who enters the ministry because of this motive will be disillusioned. Louis Mc Burney in his book Every Pastor Needs A Pastor says, "Not a few ministers play out their role in life as miserable misfits having responded to the demand of a domineering parent rather than the call of God."³

Another motive is a misconception about what commitment to full time Christian service means. Larry Peabody relates in his book, Secular Work Is Full-Time Service, of a business man in a reverse situation. He desired to sell his agency and become a business manager of a Christian organization where he could "really" serve the Lord."⁴ His concept was if one is to serve God in a total way you must choose a career as a minister, missionary, or work in a Christian organization.

A friend of the writer believed this to be true. He understood that full-time Christian service was the ministry. When he made the commitment to full-time Christian service he began to prepare for pastoral ministry. He progressed to the point of ordination. But, demitted in favor of teaching in a Christian college. He was relieved to have his misconception cleared before it was, as he said, "too late."

³Louis Mc Burney, Every Pastor Needs A Pastor (Waco: Word Books Publisher, 1977), p. 58.

⁴Larry Peabody, Secular Work is Full-Time Christian Service (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1978), p. 11.

Another motive is being in a place of authority. The pastor does enjoy a great deal of influence among people. He shapes values, determines the direction of a local church, and is in the limelight of leadership. But, the one who seeks pastoral ministry with this motive, sooner or later, will be challenged for his self ambition.

The writer a few years ago assisted a person to leave the ministry. It was discovered as we conversed about his call to preach, there was none. Rather, he was attracted to the ceremonial function of the clergy to enter pastoral ministry. He wanted to perform weddings, baptize babies, and conduct funerals. It was little wonder that within six months on his first pastorate he wanted to quit. He had performed none of those functions.

Ray Ragsdale writing in The Mid-Life Crisis of a Minister says,

Most ministers begin their careers with lofty ideals and high expectations. Their commitment to serve God and humankind, and there is just enough of the messiah complex in the young to believe they are going to change the world before they are done.⁵

MacDonald in Christianity Today says that the first crisis a minister usually faces is that congregations don't change.⁶

At times the motive for entering pastoral ministry is to create change. There is no question this is the purpose of the gospel; to change, to see persons recreated after the likeness of Jesus. But, a desire to effect change does not constitute a call to the ministry.

Ministerial Burnout and Depression

⁶MacDonald, p. 18.

Enos D. Martin, a psychiatrist, says "depression is a significant problem afflicting clergy."⁷ Ministers are not privileged and must accept and experience the same problems as their parishoners. He is emphatic to point out because of the minister's set-apart status they suffer additional stresses unique to their position.

H. Newton Maloney a psychologist, and Donald Falkenberg, a former pastor, describes "burn out" as a "malady that makes once-counted jobs seem like thankless chores."⁸ The cause is attributed to three factors: (1) "misconceptions about the nature of Christian ministry;" (2) "reluctance to change traditional pastoral roles;" (3) "unrealistic idealism about a minister's humanity."⁹

Dr. Herbert J. Fruedenberger in Burn-Out The High Cost of Achievement says the helping professions are most vulnerable to burn out. Basic to its cause is the inability to see the difference between failing and not having success. The very nature of the tasks in the helping professions puts many circumstances beyond the control of the helper. When this happens on a continuing basis it becomes easy for the person to loose his objectivity.¹⁰

One of the crisis of mid-life is the potential lapse into depression. Jim Conway writing in Man In Mid-Life Crisis says, "De-

⁷Enos D. Martin, "Depression in the Clergy", Leadership (Winter 1982) : 81.

⁸H. Newton Maloney with Donald Falkenberg, "Ministerial Burnout", Leadership 4(Fall 1980) : 71

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Dr. Herbert J. Fruedenberger, Burn Out The High Cost of Achievement (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), p. 153.

pression is the natural outcome of the conflict of forces pressing upon his life and the explosive anger, frustration, bitterness and self-pity building within him."¹¹

Depression and burn-out are psychological terms. They are the emotional disorders that occur when external circumstances produce stress with which one cannot cope. Martin names seven stresses which contribute to depression. Some of them could be cited as reasons for leaving the ministry. These stresses are role expectation, financial pressures, interpersonal conflicts, self-image.

Role Expectations

When a person accepts the call to pastoral ministry they usually have the idea the main duty is to preach. How many congregations affectionately refer to their minister as "our preacher"? This terminology often is the beginning of crisis for the minister. For most of the congregation this is the role they see him in most of the time. It is the role the minister wants to fulfill. But, Bruce Hicks, in his study on career change of ministers, discovered the minister spends a very small portion of his time in this area.

What is the pastor's role? This question is not easily answered. In How To Kill A Minister, Pastor X relates how he was called to his first pastorate. There were sixty five persons voting on his candidacy, and he was confident "there were at least that many ideas as to what my duties were, especially as those duties related to each

¹¹Jim Conway, Man In Mid-Life Crisis (Elgin: David C. Cook Publishing Company, 1978), p. 72.

individual personally."¹²

The description of a minister's responsibilities presents a conflict on two fronts. First, the person responding to God's call does so on the basis of their knowledge of the work. He has received the role of the minister as a preacher, teacher, and caller. Second, when the time comes for the person to assume their first pastorate, they soon discover the ministry entails further duties such as administrator, fund raiser, public relations person, custodian, counselor, organizer, and many more.

Stress in the ministry begins to mount when the minister senses that he is expected to do more than his training has prepared him for adequately. Usually, the discovery is made that the things in which he feels the most inadequate consume most of his time. The areas of fulfillment and enjoyment such as the preaching, teaching, and calling do not find sufficient time for preparation.

In the article, "Ministerial Burnout", Mahoney and Falkenberg cite this area of stress as a reason for burnout. They state, "Four dimensions necessary to job success have been identified through vocational studies: interest in the work; demands of the job; skills required; and fulfillment provided."¹³ Usually satisfaction is not found in all four areas in equal realization. But, when one area is weak or missing, problems occur.

Bruce Hicks discovered in his research for his dissertation

¹²Pastor X, How To Kill A Minister (Old Tappan: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1970), p. 8.

¹³Mahoney., p. 74.

on career change of ministers, that fifty percent of the clergy's day is spent on the unenjoyable administrating and organizing functions. He cites the observation of Samuel Blizzard that the minister enjoys the "traditional" roles, but "parishoners tend to judge the pastor by the twentieth century functional expectations."¹⁴

These stresses of the minister in role expectations are external in nature since they originate outside himself, usually from the congregation. But, Enos Martin says that the ministers ability to cope with these are contingent upon the condition of his inner world. "If pastors are preoccupied with conflicts about personal self-worth and the appropriateness of personal feelings, their ability to respond to the external problems is impaired."¹⁵

Self-Image

Self-image addresses the question, "How do I see myself?" and "How do others view me?" The minister does not have conflict with the tasks he sees as part of his job, but strong negative feelings arise when the clergyman is expected to fulfill projections of the congregation not a part of his/her idea. Pastor X says, "The problem is not objection to what they consider the real work they are called to, but a hatred for the peripheral and for the image they have inherited."¹⁶

¹⁴Bruce Hicks, Career Change Divisions of Western Evangelical Seminary Alumni: A Study in Sociological, Ecclesiastical, and Theological Perspectives: A dissertation. 1979.

¹⁵Martin, p. 82.

¹⁶Pastor X, p. 38.

In his questioning of pastors and ex-pastors about their personal image in relation to other professions, Bruce Hicks learned the minister thinks less of himself as a professional than five other professions. These pastors rated themselves higher in image than teachers and social workers.¹⁷ The five professions they viewed above the clergy were physicians, lawyers, bankers, business executives, and college professors.

Hicks stated that this low self-image of the pastors was considerably lower than the image the public has of them. And, self-image does affect the overall performance of work.

Pastor X describes the image projected upon the minister by the congregation as "bars" that imprison him. He says, "It is whatever laymen think a pastor should say, do, or think, or however act, that is the image these laymen demand before a man fulfills himself in their eyes. They do not stop to ask themselves how they came to the conclusions they register on the life of this man in the pastoral office."¹⁸

McBurney talks of self-image with the idea of imprisonment even as Pastor X. He explains it as the congregations need for a hero to be placed on a pedestal. He states:

To have someone to lean on whom we see as always dependable offers us great security. When doubt bombards us and our faith, there is little consolation in an uncertain counselor. To combat fear, we crave the fearless; to bind our wounds, the healer; to reassure, the confident. We expect you pastors to be all these things.¹⁹

¹⁷Hicks, p. 109.

¹⁸Pastor X, p. 36.

¹⁹McBurney, p. 81.

This pedestal, asserts McBurney, is beneficial in many ways to the clergy. We all need acceptance, but acclaim is really icing on the cake. At times it becomes the pastor's stability when undergoing the pains of failure. The pedestal's negative side is that it prevents the minister from seeking the help he needs.

There is a resolution to the self-image crisis. Daniel Williams is quoted by Bruce Hicks as saying, "When people understand what we conceive our job to be, and when it is evident we work hard to do the job as we have described it, they respect us and don't expect us to do the impossible."²⁰

Family Considerations

The wife is the center focus of family consideration in crisis of the minister. McBurney says, "We can't fully approach the problem of the ministry without looking at the difficulties the wife must face and how they affect her relationship with her husband."²¹

Pat Valeriano reported her findings from a survey of minister's wives in Leadership. The survey revealed that ninety percent of minister's wives "always" or "often" enjoyed their position. Eighty five (85) percent declared under no circumstances did they desire a change of profession for their husbands.²²

²⁰Hicks, p. 37.

²¹McBurney, p. 120.

²²Pat Valeriano, "A Survey of Minister's Wives", Leadership 4(Fall 1981) : 65.

In response to the question "If you could change anything about being a pastor's wife, what would it be?" Twenty one (21) percent responded by saying they would not change anything. But, there were specific concerns expressed. The biggest problem the clergy's spouse faces is friendship. This concern was followed by the husband's busy schedule, and the "fishbowl" environment of the family with expectations and pressures.²³

Even though friendships may have been established there was the betrayal of confidence and manipulation by friends that cause conflict. Along with the busy schedule, many wives expressed the desire to be more involved in their husband's ministry. Valeriano summed up her finding; "The end result of many of these conflicts and struggles is intense loneliness."²⁴

McBurney and Ragsdale observe two kinds of minister's wives that contribute to the development of conflict. Many women fall in love with the man who is going to be a minister and marry him. Their primary love is the man and not his office. Just the opposite, is the woman who feels a call to be the wife of a minister.²⁵ The conflict arises from the demands of the congregation. One wife described it as being asked to do things not because it was within her abilities, but because she was the minister's wife.

McBurney sees the primary conflict of minister and wife as

²³Ibid., p. 67-69.

²⁴Ibid., p. 68.

²⁵McBurney. p. 124.

one of answering the question of how both can achieve self-satisfaction, support of each other. Of the wife, he says:

The minister's wife shares all the pressures and pitfalls that hurt her husband, and she is victim on two levels. As an individual, she feels the loneliness and isolation, the fear and insecurity, the unexpressed hostility, the effects of poverty, etc. Then all of those sensitive wounds are compounded as she shares her husband's hurts.²⁶

A contented, supportive wife is a necessity for an effective minister. If the husband is not being encouraged and supported by his wife it will affect his ministry. Hicks points out, "If this highly important member of the pastor's support system fails to lend that support, a career change decision becomes a probability--if not an inevitability."²⁷

Help in Distress

There is general agreement among the writers that it is difficult for the minister to seek help when he is in distress. To seek help is to let your congregation down. It is admitting to imperfections. It is a way of admitting God isn't all sufficient.

In order for the minister to seek help, at times, requires him to leave the ministry to find the help he needs.

Academic Research on Attrition

Reference has been made to a dissertation by Bruce Hicks on career change of ministers. The writer surveyed three dissertaion ab-

²⁶Ibid., p. 121.

²⁷Hicks., p. 118.

stracts from the seventies that confirm the contemporary writer's view on attrition and add some other reasons.

Arnold A. Coody researched the motives of ministers of the Church of God (Anderson, Ind) to leave the ministry. He identified twelve factors. They are: "ministerial dissatisfaction and frustration; strain from ego strength; opportunity; personality problems; value or theological conflicts; lack of acceptance; financial need; clarification of call; health; wife and family; stress event; religious quest."

The greatest factor revealed in Coody's research was personality problems. Close to this factor was a change to a vocation that offered greater personal fulfillment.

Two studies have been made among United Methodist ministers. Thomas Fulcher did a study on attrition of parish ministers of the North Carolina Conference. Dallas Blanchard did a similar study for the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

Blanchard discovered career change was affected by factors classified as pastoral frustration and support systems. There was a variable discovered in attrition in relation to the educational institutions where the minister received training. Graduates of university seminaries were more likely to demit from the ministry than those who graduated from denominational seminaries. There was definitely motivation for dropping out where the minister could not realize support from his superiors and his wife.

Fulcher's research uncovered family concerns as the predominate factor. The wife's dissatisfaction with the ministry, the pressures inflicted on the parsonage family, and salary inadequacies were basic.

Job satisfaction and relationship with superiors played a definite role in leaving.

Preventive Measures To Ease Attrition

It is impossible to eliminate ministers leaving the parish ministry. But, there should be some curative steps taken to assist those in crisis in ministry and preventive measures to reduce the attrition rate. Ragsdale in The Mid-Life Crisis of the Minister offers some treatment possibilities. David McKenna writing in Leadership proposes some preventive steps in his article, "Recycling Pastors".

Treatment For Ministers In Crisis

In a time of crisis hostility and anger are directed toward superiors. The questions are asked, in meaning if not straight forward, "Is there anyone to understand my situation?"; "Is there anyone who cares about my dilemma?" If some positive steps are not taken, the person asking these questions will become a ministerial casualty.

Ragsdale says, "Leaving the ministry is a serious step. It should not be taken precipitously. Before making such a move a minister should seek career guidance or retreat center."²⁸ Boards of Ministry should take the appropriate steps to seek professional assistance in establishing and operating programs of their own, or refer their minister in crisis to already established ministries. Churches should give as much attention and concern to the problem stricken pastor, to restore him, or assist him with dignity to leave the ministry.

²⁸Ragsdale, p. 48-49.

One such program is directed by Louis McBurney and his wife Melissa. McBurney is a psychiatrist. His residency in psychiatry was done at Mayo Clinic, and while there he spent much time counseling with ministers and their families. He felt the leading of God to establish a retreat and therapy center. That center was established as Marble Retreat in Marble, Colorado.

McBurney had heard so often the statements "I really don't have any place to turn that is safe" and "Everybody in my community expects me to be the helper; they don't realize that I need help." At the retreat center, persons in Christian vocation can come for a short period, at a minimal expense, and a certain degree of anonymity. Through personal and group counseling a person is able to express their concerns and work through them.²⁹

According to Ragsdale, the time spent in retreat and treatment centers such as this, one should be able to confirm their call, evaluate their strengths, and weaknesses, and determine areas of success. In some situations the person may find out they should seek another vocation. If so, they can do it with a higher degree of dignity.

Recycling Pastor

David McKenna in his article, "Recycling Pastors", says, "Pastoral leadership is not an unlimited commodity to be used up and thrown away; it is a scarce and precious resource to be conserved, renewed, and expanded."³⁰ He suggests in his article the necessity for

²⁹McBurney, p. 108.

³⁰David L. McKenna, "Recycling Pastors", Leadership 4(Fall 1980) : 24.

not only the replenishment of the pastor's physical energies, but the spiritual and intellectual, also. One new dimension is added, the expansion of these powers.

McKenna charges that once appointments are made the attitude is taken by the superior that the appointee is on their own. While showing confidence in the person, it really is negative in that it says "I don't care." To remedy this attitude, he feels churches should sit down with their pastor and not only discuss what his spiritual and intellectual goals are, but chart out a program with him to realize them.

McKenna feels "Sabbaticals should be introduced for pastors" so that they can experience spiritual and intellectual renewal. It is different from vacation. He structures this program as "an unencumbered block of time so the mind and spirit can be renewed by pursuing an idea or a project on the growing edge of ministry."³¹

This time could be fit into a three to six month block after every five to seven service years. The time should be so structured to benefit the pastor and the congregation. There must be lines of accountability established to assure the effectiveness of the programs to include unmeasurable goals as well as the comparative numbers.

McKenna says, "A sabbatical is a biblical sound investment in the growth potential of pastoral leadership as a scarce and valued natural resource of the church."³²

Casualties are bound to happen in pastoral ministry with demissions. However, the church must show its concern by extending the

³¹ Ibid., p. 29.

³² Ibid., p. 29.

healing hand to ministers in crisis. Pastors in this condition need support in working through their problem to survive the ministry, or finding new employment.

Role conflict is a major factor for attrition. Mark presents a perspective on the pastor's role as a servant. Jesus lived this model. He is the example for pastors to follow. In the next chapter the role of servant will be presented.

CHAPTER 4

THE SERVANT MODEL

Role conflict and self image are two crises that often lead to demitting from the ministry. These are external and internal reactions to the job description that is usually unwritten for the minister. As Pastor X states of the minister, "the greatest burden his office carries is the lack of definitive outlines in the New Testament."

Even though the Gospel of Mark speaks very little about laying aside the call to preach, the gospel does speak rather forcefully on the role and image of the minister. In Mark 9:33-50 Jesus teaches that his followers must be servants. He stresses that to serve people in need is the path to fulfillment in the ministry rather than the attainment to a high position.

This chapter will focus on the humble servant of the Lord, the role the minister is to fulfill and the image he/she must bear. The first part will be a word study on *δουλος*. The second part will be a sermon manuscript with Mark 9:33-50 as the pericope.

Word Study

Colin Brown gives the translation of *δουλος* as "servant". In secular Greek the verb form usages was in relationship to waiting on tables. Its expanded use was to care for household needs, and finally the general meaning of serving.¹

¹Brown, Vol. 3, p. 545.

In Greek culture servitude was not an honor. It was not a virtue or grace to be sought after except when done for the advancement of self. Judaism brought virtue to *δράκονος*. It became an acceptable position when the servant was under a great master.

Serving was given greater significance with the establishment of the great commandment, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength", and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."² The idea of servant/master relationship was elevated because of the motivating force of love.

Jesus proclaimed himself as a servant in Mark 12:45. When Jesus instituted the last supper he stated to his disciples that, "I am among you as one who serves."³ He urged his disciples to follow his example. Servitude is the position of greatness.

Servitude is associated with sacrifice. When James and John sought places of prestige from Jesus, he could not grant it. But, as servants they were to follow Jesus into his cup of death and baptism. He showed them their position was one of serving rather than ruling.

In the Christian sense of serving, one does it in obedience to Jesus. It is following him. By this action Jesus promises fulfillment - job satisfaction - when he said, "whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel will find it."⁴

²Mark 12:30-31.

³Luke 22:27.

⁴Mark 8:35.

The Humble Servant

The scripture for the message is Mark 9:35-50. Give attention to the reading of God's word.

And they came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house He asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" But they were silent; for on the way they had discussed with one another who was the greatest. And He sat down and called the twelve; and He said to them, "If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." And He took a child, and put him in the midst of them; and taking him in His arms, He said to them, "Whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me."

John said to Him, "Teacher, we saw a man casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him; for no one who does a mighty work in My name will be able soon after to speak evil of Me. For he that is not against us is for us. For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ, will by no means lose his reward.

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung round his neck and he were thrown into the sea. And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched. For every one will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

There is a desperate scramble for the top.

Hardly a week passes that a report is not heard that some regime has been overthrown, and a new junta has taken over the reins of government.

The story is repeated almost daily, on the business page of the newspaper, that a new person has been appointed to replace a top executive.

The happening is repeated on the sports page. Who is going to be the starting quarterback for Sunday's game? The veteran forward has been benched in favor of a promising rookie.

There is a lot of prestige at the top. But, permanence is not part of it.

Positions of authority are desired! People use unscrupulous means to get there.

The church isn't exempt from this jockeying. Its an old problem. The disciples started the movement. They were on the road to Capernaum when they had a discussion about who was to be the greatest among them.

Would it be Peter? After all he had just declared that Jesus was the Christ!

Would it be James or John? They were privileged, along with Peter, to witness the transfiguration of the Lord.

Why all this discussion? Jesus had just informed them that he was going to be killed. Who would take his place? Who would the new leader be?

They argued these questions. But, when Jesus took them aside, he revealed a different concept of what the "top" meant. The greatest among them would not be a master, he would be a servant. Their ambition was commendable, but its focus was misdirected.

Jesus revealed to them the price of servanthood that would gain them the recognition of God. There would be personal sacrifice. They would need to be reclothed in a different spirit. And, they would be sanctified unto God.

I. The Personal Sacrifice (vs. 33-37)

The disciples were very ambitious. They were desirous of the greatest position. The Lord did not chide them for their ambition. He merely redirected that ambition to a more noble end. He said, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all, and servant of all" (Mark 9:35). If their ambition was to be found praiseworthy, they would have to sacrifice position and power to become a servant.

A. The Concept of Servant

There is a tension with servanthood between Greek and Jew. The disciples were influenced by the Greek culture, yet they were Jews. The Greek perceived the servant role as below the dignity of man. The only time one would become a servant was if self could be promoted.

Judaism brought a respectable meaning to being a servant. Being a servant helped a person to fulfill the great commandment "Love thy neighbor". Jesus brought true dignity to servanthood. He came as a servant, not a master. Jesus declared, "I am among you as one who serves." (Luke 22:27)

Jesus made servanthood a requirement of discipleship through his example and his teaching. Do you want greatness? Jesus said, you have to become a "servant of all".

B. The Sacrifice

To be the "servant of all" Jesus made it clear you had to forsake the first position and become "last of all". This is sacrifice!

What does this mean?

The disciples were not quick to learn this lesson, just as they were with many other lessons Jesus taught. In chapter 10 of Mark, James and John came to Jesus requesting places of honor and power. They asked, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." (10:37)

Jesus emphasized that places of prestige are available only to those who become servants and slaves to all. This was not a requirement just for them. It was the way Jesus achieved his place of honor at the right hand of God. William Lane in his comments says, "the way to glory leads through suffering and death" (pg. 340).

A person can still miss glory, if he takes on the servant role, especially if he assumes it for the sake of gaining honor. If this happens, he has missed the point.

Greatness is service, not a prestigious position.

Greatness is serving, not being served.

Greatness is bestowing love on others, not having authority over them.

The sacrifice required is to renounce the standards of greatness set by men to accept Jesus' standard of greatness. Man's standard is position and power. Jesus desires a servant compelled by love. Man has a standard of self-centeredness, while Jesus sets a standard which focuses itself on people.

C. An Illustration

Jesus illustrated his point by setting a young child before

them.

The child is dependent! Children must have things done for them!

The child has very little influence to promote or advance another person's cause.

Jesus said our deeds of love and service must be centered on these kinds of persons. If you do, you will be serving God and them.

Here is the essence of sacrificial service. Seek out human need, meet it, even if you may never be recognized for it. Put self out of it. Place God and others as the central motivation for doing your act of love.

Any position you may be thrust into, regardless of where it is on the hierarchical ladder, human need must be recognized and met. All of us before God have the same position--servant of God.

II. The Spirit of the Servant (vs. 38-41)

Servanthood is not an exclusive club!

A. Recognize other servants.

John brought an interesting report to Jesus. He had seen a person casting out demons in Jesus name. He was not one of the twelve so John plainly told the man to stop.

This person, not being "one of us" was a threat to the disciples. There may have been jealousy, too, since he was experiencing success, and the disciples had just failed to heal the demoniac boy.

Whatever, their reason, the man was told to stop. Jesus quickly

told the disciples not to prevent the man because one doing a mighty work in my name will not be able to speak evil of me. (vs. 39)

It is sad that even today many fail to recognize "other" servants of the Lord. They are forbidden, or not accepted, because they are not "one of us". Denominational tags, theological differences, spiritual experiences, all given by a beneficent God, are often barriers that are built to divide the servants of God.

The servant must recognize that his office is not to be a "prima donna" institution. As servants we are under the same Master, Jesus Christ, and the same focus, the needs of people. The measuring criteria of the servant is his humility, faith, and obedience to Jesus Christ. If there is any "edge" in this arena it is this, not what group I am a part.

Paul recognized this in his ministry. Some were preaching Christ to inflict harm on him while he was imprisoned. Others were declaring Jesus because of sincerity. His response was, "Only that in every way, whether in pretense or truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice." (Philippians 1:8)

There may be different distinguishing marks of the servant. But, only one matters. Is the authority of Jesus being used to meet human need unselfishly by the servant? If so, recognize Him, and His service, for He is "with you" in spirit.

B. Accept the service of others to you.

The servant is not beyond the need of ministry. Even Jesus recognized the ministry of the woman who came to him in the house of Simon the leper. She poured an alabaster box of ointment on him.

Some accused this woman of waste. But, Jesus recognized her act of love as anointing his body for burial. He needed that!

In our scripture of consideration, Jesus told his disciples, "whoever gives YOU a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ."

As servants we must love our neighbor. But, we should not prevent our neighbor from loving his neighbor, who just might happen to be you!

For years it was difficult for me to accept the love of others in ministry. After all, God called ME to serve, not to be served. In so feeling, I often refused to recognize the same call in others. I did not realize that through God's guidance they saw a need in me that required selfless love to be shown.

Servanthood is a brotherhood of support and caring. This spirit cannot be sacrificed. At times the servant must lower himself to a position of need to be a recipient of ministry.

Servants of God are a precious commodity that must be preserved.

C. Service receives rewards.

Two truths are taught by Jesus in his words, "whoever gives you a cup of water will by no means lose his reward".

The first truth is that service is rewarded. The second, is magnitude of service is not important. It is the fact of service that counts. Even if it is just a cup of water in Christ's name.

The spectacular is not demanded in serving. It might be the simple holding of the hand, the wiping of a tear, or placing the

arm around a hurting person. The spirit of the servant says, "whatever it takes, whether great or small, I will do it for Jesus' sake.

The end result is reward. Lane puts it so simply for both of these truths: "there is no distinction between 'trivial' and 'important' tasks. There is only faith and obedience shown in devotion to Jesus, and wherever these qualities exist they call forth the approval of God." (pg. 345)

III Sanctified for Service (vs42-50)

The servant must keep himself fit through a sanctified life.

Jesus uses the illustration of "salt" to show the necessity of the sanctified life. He said: "Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltness, how will you season it? Have salt in yourself, and be at peace with one another." (vs 50)

Servants are salt. They are to flavor and preserve the lives of people from destruction. But, servants can lose their saltness--their effectiveness. R. A. Cole observes that salt can be adulterated. When it is, it loses its taste and the purpose for its existence is no more.

Jesus points out two offenses the servant must always be aware, and keep himself free. The first offense is a bad example. And, the second is sin.

Paul told Timothy, "If any one purifies himself from what is ignoble, then he will be a vessel for noble use, consecrated and useful to the master of the house, ready for any good work." (I Timothy 2:21)

A. The offense of a bad example

Jesus was concerned that the servant's life be so far above reproach that it would not cause "one of these little ones who believe in me to sin." (vs 42)

Paul was sure of his life, not through pride, but humility. He told the Corinthians, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." (I Corinthians 11:1) He placed this same charge for the Ephesians to follow. "Be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us..." (Ephesians 5:11)

The life of the servant is to be exemplary so that no believer will lose confidence in him, and be led astray.

B. The offense of sin

Sin destroys the servant. Jesus admonishes his servants to be purged from the cause of sin in their lives. He speaks metaphorically of "cutting of the hand", "cutting off the foot", and "plucking out the eye" if it causes you to sin.

Elwood Sanner points out that the heart is the ruler of the hand, the foot, and the eye. It must be cleansed to keep them from sinning.

Charles Wesley gives the appropriate prayer for the servant of God in one of his hymns:

O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free,
A heart that always feels thy blood,
So freely spilt for me.

A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's throne;
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.

The servant belongs to God. But, he is not above sin. He must ever be vigilant, pleading the blood of Jesus to cover his sin, being purified from "what is ignoble" so he can be used by Jesus, his master.

Conclusion

With all the clamor for the top, and its lack of permanence, it seems the position at the bottom, the servant, is attractive. It has much security. Not too many people are making application for the job. With a little sacrifice for Jesus' sake, the position can be yours.

Even though it requires humility, faith, and obedience, its remuneration is high. God approves of it!

Humility is not too bad though. After all, James said, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble...Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you." (James 4:6, 10)

The road of humility leads to servanthood that takes you to a pinnacle from which no man can topple you.

CHAPTER 5

THE TRAINING OF MINISTERS

George Truett is given credit for saying that a call into ministry is a call to get ready for it.¹ His thought is compatible with the meaning of ἀκολουθῆω (to follow) in the New Testament. To follow means to learn. Without doubt a person's effectiveness in ministry is dependent upon the training for his vocation.

The Gospel of Mark is compatible for the study of ministerial training. The word, διδάσκω, and its cognates are used thirty five (35) times in the gospel.² No other book of the New Testament has this concentration. The Lord is referred to constantly as teacher or Rabbi. In eleven of the chapters the words "he began to teach", or similar words, are used to tell of Jesus' activity.

The purpose of this chapter is to study the training of ministers from the training of the twelve by Jesus. A new emphasis in ministerial training in the Free Methodist Church will be presented. A pilot project on pastoral internship was initiated in the fall of 1981 in cooperation with Western Evangelical Seminary.

The Training of The Twelve

Ralph Martin in his book Mark Evangelist and Theologian says:

¹ Matthew, p. 39.

² Moulton, p. 208.

Jesus role in the gospel includes a part cast for him as a teacher. Against the popular idea that the Markan Jesus is ceaselessly on the move and active as healer and worker on behalf of God's kingdom, we must set the counterbalancing view that considerable attention is given to Jesus as teacher.³

During Jesus' ministry he invested his time in the life of his disciples to train them. Yet, his instruction was not like the ordinary schooling of his day by the other teachers. Martin uses T.W. Manson's description of Jesus' style and the relationship of the disciples as not "bookish". Rather it was practical, and in the company of Jesus in everyday life's situation with real people. The disciples were more like "learner-apprentices" than classroom students.⁴

The content of Jesus teaching was centered more on the fundamentals of the kingdom rather than procedure. The fundamentals were taught in their positive form through the parables and positive announcements. The negative form in his teaching was contrasting the kingdom to the rigid legalism of the Pharisee.

Private Lessons

In Mark 4 Jesus gives four parables. The first parable was given in public, then in private he explained to his disciples the full meaning. The Lord then proceeded to give three more parables to the disciples. In this teaching Jesus let his purpose be known for teaching in parables. He said, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God."⁵

³Ralph Martin, Mark Evangelist & Theologian. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), p. 111.

⁴Ibid., p. 112.

⁵Mark 4:11.

The carefulness of Jesus is an attempt to be sure the disciples were understanding his teachings as emphasized by Mark's statement, "privately to his own disciples he explained everything."⁶ This method was a distinct advantage for them since they received the teaching with the multitudes, then in private they were to get the personal touch.

Lane comments on this public/private teaching of Jesus to the disciples:

There was veiling (or very partial disclosure) before the multitude and disclosure (but only partial understanding) to the disciples. This is the pattern illustrated in Chapter 4 and assumed throughout the Gospel of Mark. In private instruction Jesus gives to his disciples, the mystery of the kingdom as present in his person as graciously unveiled.⁷

On the two occasions that Jesus fed the multitude, there is recorded the private conference in the midst of the crowd. In the feeding of the five thousand in Mark 6:35 it is reversed by the disciples coming to him. Already they had learned in private Jesus would do special instruction for them on the side. When Jesus fed the four thousand, Jesus called them to himself to express his concern for the crowd.

Private instruction was the way Jesus revealed one of the overriding themes of the gospel, his suffering and death. It begins in Mark 8:31. In this instance, when he revealed his destiny to the disciples, he expanded before the multitudes the times of self-denial, the cross, fulfillment. So here was the situation in reverse. He taught his disciples, then the crowd. Yet, it was for the benefit of the

⁶Mark 4:34.

⁷Martin, p. 173.

disciples he taught this way.

The continuation of Jesus' teaching to the disciples of his passion is found in chapters nine and ten. In these situations Jesus was alone on the road with his disciples. They were alone.

Situation Teaching

There were many situations that Jesus and his disciples were found that presented opportunities for training. Some of these were initiated by the disciples, and some by Jesus.

In chapter thirteen, Jesus and the disciples were leaving the temple. One of the disciples called to Jesus' attention all the wonderful stones and buildings. He responded by foretelling the destruction of the temple. While on the Mount of Olives, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him for a fuller explanation of this coming destruction. Jesus used this situation to tell them about the end of the age.

Chapter nine gives the account of the healing of the demoniac boy. The disciples knew their failure. In two ways this situation was used by Jesus to teach them. First, upon hearing of their inability, he chided them for their faithlessness. Then after the healing and inside the house, alone, his disciples sought the reason for their inability to cast out the demon. He took the occasion to tell them it could be accomplished by prayer.

Through a conflict with the Scribes and Pharisees, Jesus was able to teach his disciples about purity. Jesus was rebuked by the pharisees because the disciples failed to wash their hands before eating. In the privacy of a house he taught his disciples that what is

inside a man defiles a man rather than what goes into the man.

In two episodes the disciples were ministered to by Jesus on the sea. In each instance the disciples' lives were threatened because of a storm. In chapter four Jesus was with them. In chapter six Jesus came to them walking on the water. Both times the winds were stilled. The disciples were taught that Jesus has control of nature's elements.

Observation

The disciples were with Jesus practically all the time. The times of separation were few. No doubt the times when they were not together were greater than recorded. But, the recorded information in the gospel tells us that when they were together it was purposeful in training.

The disciples were afforded the opportunity to watch Jesus at His best in every kind of situation. They were able to observe His manner, His methods, and His spirit. This would reinforce in their minds not only the message and work they were to do, but how they were to conduct themselves.

Service and Accountability

In chapter three Jesus called His disciples to Himself. His purpose was two-fold: "to be with Him" and "to be sent out to preach".⁸ It inferred they went out to fulfill their preaching commissioned by the statement in verse nineteen, "then He went home." When Jesus and

⁸Mark 3:14

the twelve were reunited it is not given.

In chapter six once again the twelve were sent out. Here, they were sent out two by two. Specific instructions were given for the provisions of their journey. They went. They preached repentance. they cast out demons. They anointed the sick with oil and many were healed. In verse thirty the accountability of their ministry is recorded as "The apostles returned to Jesus, and told Him all that they had done and taught."

W. N. Clarke observes that Jesus would have seen defects in their mission, but because of training they would be encouraged.⁹ Cole says this time of reporting was for the purpose of unburdening themselves.¹⁰ Regardless of who is correct, both probably have elements of reality, accountability is built in here. Accountability is more than correction. It is a supportive mechanism, and both Clarke and Cole suggest this element.

Jesus taught His disciples through this important facet of service. Independence and unilateral activity in ministry is treacherous. He built in the accountability feature with more than the "reporting", but in the "two by two" sending. Each disciple had his companion to encourage, support, and labor with him.

⁹W. N. Clarke, An American Commentary on the New Testament: Commentary on the Gospel of Mark. (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publications Society, 1981), p. 91.

¹⁰Alan Cole, The Tyndale New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to St. Mark. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 112.

Summary

Jesus took time to train His twelve. The extension of His ministry depended upon it while He was here on earth as well as following His resurrection and ascension. Their training focused on content more than method. Yet, method was learned because they were able to observe Him. There was the close personal touch as part of the training since Jesus clarified and reinforced His teachings to the disciples apart from the multitudes. And at times even a small group within the disciples themselves.

What To Expect of A Trained Minister

A seminary dean speaking at a convocation declared:

A competent man without God is no minister. An incompetent man, in like circumstance, is even less so. But, a competent man under the authority of God and empowered by Him is a fit vessel of honor, a powerful executor of God's purpose.¹¹

One of the concerns of this paper is quality leadership and in an earlier chapter it was said that God makes the minister of the quality desired by Him. The dean's statement supports this position.

It has been observed from Mark that part of producing of the quality man of God is training. Ministers in training today do not walk as the disciples did with Jesus. That walk today is a spiritual venture.

But, training of ministers in colleges and seminaries is standard procedure of education today. The survey used for this research indicated many feel that some students leave their institutions unprepared.

¹¹Matthews, p. 39.

The questions might better be asked, "What should we expect of a seminary graduate?" and "what is the mark of an educated man?" Seven years of formal education can be successful, yet have some deficiencies because of personal talents and academic prowess.

Robert H. Maunce writing in Christianity Today offers three marks of an educated person. They are the habit of inquiry, power of discernment, and the habitual vision of greatness.¹² Of the habit of inquiry he says, "to help a student develop an inquiring mind is perhaps the major obligation of the teacher."¹³ The college is not a depository of knowledge to be dispensed, rather a place to seek it out. Discernment must ever be the character of the inquisitive mind to sift out truth from error.

Maunce believes that the exposure to greatness is where the educational institution has its greatest opportunity. Exposure to greatness leads to motivation. He quotes C. L. Rose, "When we walk with great men we seek almost unconsciously to match their stride."¹⁴ The vision of greatness sharpens the inquisitive and discerning mind.

The disciples were exposed to greatness during their training. Jesus was the greatest teacher of all times. They were afforded the privilege, also, of His discussions with the religious sects of the day. The leaders of the Scribes and Pharisees, as well as the Sadducees,

¹²Robert H. Maunce, "The Marks of An Educated Person", Christianity Today, 25 (November 2, 1979) : 24-25.

¹³Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 25.

often confronted Jesus. This kind of exposure had to enhance their training.

It is evident to the writer that if institutions vested with the task of training pastors accomplish these marks of an educated person, dynamic leadership will be realized. In relationship to the church, as these are blended with commitment and devotion to God, the kingdom faces its greatest hour in history.

Seminaries are training ministers-to-be. John R.W. Stott puts forth some concepts needed to be a part of seminary education. Faith, life, and missions are necessary ingredients. Seminaries should not indoctrinate students in the formation of their faith as much as providing the climate that faith can be developing under the leadership of Christ.¹⁵ Faith needs to be translated into a wholesome lifestyle.

In the development of faith and life Stott suggests a wholesome interaction of students and faculty. He describes the impressive schools as "those in which professors and students meet one another regularly for fellowship, worship, discussion, and counseling."¹⁶ This program is supported by Robert Maunce who said "where scholarship and devotion have been properly blended, theological greatness have been born."¹⁷ Stott says that faith and life need to be integrated into the modern world. Every pastoral training program needs to expect and guide students into avenues of mission on a regular basis and to some

¹⁵ John R. W. Stott, "Seminarians Are Not Tadpoles", Christianity Today 3 (February 6, 1981) : 54.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 55

¹⁷Maunce, p. 24.

extent in a concentrated time block. He emphasizes that all three areas of faith, life, and mission need to be developed under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. And, this is the task to which seminaries must devote themselves.

The remarks of respondents in the survey that many students are not prepared for ministry may have an exaggerated concept of what a seminary graduate is supposed to be. Three years in seminary combined with four years in college should not be expected to produce a fully developed pastor. Douglas Rumford in Christianity Today writes:

The purpose of the years in seminary is to plant and nurture the essential seeds of ministry. The student focuses on the learning of basic principles, precepts, and skills in such areas as biblical knowledge, theology, preaching, pastoral counseling, education, and administration. None of these areas will be thoroughly mastered, but the student should gain a general overview of them. He or she should also accumulate resources to develop later as God directs.¹⁸

Rumford sets down five priorities of a seminary education. They are compatible with Stott's three priorities, with a further emphasis in the development of the role of a servant of Jesus Christ, and a godly vision and imagination.¹⁹ The aspect of vision and imagination fits well with Maunce's idea of association with greatness.

The emphasis on practical training is an area to which Rumford speaks. He says most seminary graduates feel they have not been given as much opportunity to apply what they have learned as they would like. He feels students should be given more training in evangelism, discipleship, administration, and handling change and conflict.²⁰

¹⁸Douglas Rumford, "What to Expect of a Seminary Graduate", Christianity Today 3 (February 6, 1981): 24.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 25.

²⁰Ibid., p. 25.

The disciples were given this kind of practical training by Jesus. He sent them out. He received their reports, and gave them the necessary critiques to improve their ministry. Two examples are cited. The first is in Mark 6. After the disciples returned from their mission and reported, Jesus taught them the need for physical and spiritual replenishment. In chapter nine, after their failure to heal the demonic boy, Jesus stated the place of prayer for effective ministry.

Summary

The formal training ministers-to-be receive in college and seminary should share a balance in the academic and the practical. It should assist the student in developing a godly life, and vocational excitement as to how God can use him/her in the ministry. The graduate should face future ministry as the servant of God. The conclusion of training never arrives. During the years of ministry, the pastor must be alert to continuing educational opportunities that will develop and sharpen his/her skills.

Pastoral Internship

Ministerial training needs to maintain a healthy balance between the academic and the practical. The pastoral internship concept is one way to bring about this balance in the educational process. This kind of program blends theory with experience in assisting the minister-to-be in his development.

There is real biblical foundations for such a program. Martin observed that in Jesus' training of the twelve, the disciples were

"learner-apprentices". In the Old Testament there is the example of Samuel spending many years with Eli. A further New Testament illustration is the training of John Mark as he traveled with Paul and Barnabas in their missionary journey.

It is safe to assume that the seminary graduate is not ready to begin the duties of a parish minister until he has had directed experience in ministering to people in actual everyday life situations. The internship idea offers this kind of opportunity.

J. Christy Wilson edits a book of lectures on various aspects of field training education of ministers. In a lecture given by himself, he sets forth the purpose of pastoral internship.

The primary idea behind practical training, from the standpoint of education, is to give the student, through directed experience, and opportunity to learn the skills, techniques and instruments or tools of his calling in a vital situation where concepts and methods may be tested while adjustment and maturity are taking place and professional competency is being attained. This work must consider however, the personal as well as the professional growth of the student and emphasize, while in the learning process, the spiritual basis in prayer and devotional life. . . . The field work must be concerned also with what happens to the churches and the people who are served.²¹

This kind of program offers the student the opportunity to get into the real life situations he/she will face in the parish ministry. The minister-to-be should be able to discern from his experiences and the wisdom of the pastor supervisor his strength and weaknesses and how he relates to people.

²¹J. Christy Wilson, ed., Ministers In Training, (Princeton, NJ: The Theological Book Agency, 1957), p. 3.

A Pilot Internship Program

An "ad hoc" committee of pastoral internship in the Free Methodist Church was convened in March of 1980. At this meeting guidelines were established to assist in the development of an internship program for seminary students preparing for ministry in the Free Methodist Church. The internship program was launched in September 1981 with the placement of two interns who are students of Western Evangelical Seminary in Portland, Oregon.

Students Gary DeMain and Tom Bennett were placed in churches under the supervision of the seminary and the conferences in which they hold membership. DeMain was placed in the Salem, Oregon Free Methodist Church with Dr. Robert Crandall as the supervising pastor. Bennett was placed under the supervision of pastor, Kenneth Oliver, of the Caldwell, Idaho Free Methodist Church.

The writer interviewed Dr. Crandall, his associate, Gary Widrig, and intern DeMain to learn about the internship program. The writer, also, attended a presentation that was given at the Northwest Minister's Conference of the Free Methodist Church on the program. Participants in that presentation were Dr. Wayne McCown, Dean of Western Evangelical Seminary, Bishop Elmer E. Parsons, Bishop of the Free Methodist Church, Rev. Alvin Delamarter, Superintendent of the Oregon Conference of the Free Methodist Church, and each of the interns and the supervising pastors.

The following information is taken from the interview and comments made at the minister's conference presentation.

Selection

How were the intern, pastor, and church brought together?

Intern: The selection of the intern was made on the basis that the chosen student insured a high degree of success. The seminary and the denomination behind the first year of the project needed to be successful.

Pastor: In this case, the pastor volunteered for an intern to prepare for ministry under his direction. He foresaw the intern/supervising pastor relationship as a growth situation for both persons.

Church: The church was selected for its achievements in evangelism, discipleship, and a wide range of ministry opportunities. It was believed the quality of lay leadership was of the quality to assume a part in the development of the intern.

The Work of the Intern

A year's experience in the life of a local church is the prime objective of the internship program. The intern is expected to be a part of the pastoral staff, yet be recognized as a learner. He is to participate in every area of church life, and must be a "disciple" of the pastor. The work of the intern is to be under the direct supervision of the pastor, who is to evaluate all the work done, and to inform the intern of his progress.

The time the intern spends at the local church is from September through May, with the possibility of an extension through the month of August. During this time the intern matriculates through the

seminary, registering for eight hours of internship credit each term, and for four hours in a regular class. He is expected to pay the regular fees just as if he was on campus.

The year's experience is divided into four different areas of ministry: worship, administration, Christian Education, and evangelism/shepherding. Through out the year the intern is to be involved in each area, but there is an emphasis on one area each quarter. As an example, the first quarter, the intern was involved in each of the areas of experience, but the emphasis was on Christian Education. This area was the one in which he registered for a class. His instructor for this work was the supervising pastor.

Even though the seminary did not offer any definite structure for the material to be taught in Christian Education, a syllabus was prepared by the pastor to give a sense of direction and meaningful study. The content of this course reveals these activities.

Collateral readings: The intern was expected to read four books on Christian Education. Other readings in age level ministries were assigned to cover children, youth, and adults.

Papers: The intern was to evaluate the Sunday School with forms given in the collateral reading. From forms furnished by the pastor, he was to evaluate the entire Christian Education ministry of the church, then write a ten page paper giving his evaluation and making recommendations for the improvement of the program.

Seminars: Attendance at a leadership seminar in Christian Education was required. The International Center for Learning seminar sponsored by Gospel Light was recommended. The seminar attended was

to be approved by the pastor.

To fulfill his experience in Christian Education, the intern was given six assignments for the quarter.

1. To participate in one area of the Christian Education program for a quarter.
2. To meet regularly with the Board of Christian Education, and chair at least one of the meetings.
3. To participate in one session of the Pastor's Class in Membership Instruction.
4. To meet at least once with each of the educational ministries outside the Sunday School in mid-week activities.
5. To participate twice in pulpit teaching with the pastor in a Sunday evening class on "Basic Beliefs" doctrinal teaching session.
6. To fulfill additional assignments as necessary upon the review between the student and pastor.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the intern's activities is made on four levels: the conference; the seminary; the supervising pastor; and, the intern himself.

Conference: The intern has made one appearance with his wife before the MEG Board. At this meeting information of a general nature was shared. The MEG Board meets quarterly, and the intern will meet with them each time.

Local: This evaluation takes place daily as the intern fulfills his experience under the direction of the pastor and his associate.

As an assignment is completed, conversation is held to evaluate the performance and to offer suggestions for improvement. Presently there is no written evaluation given. Neither has the lay leadership of the church participated in this process.

Another important aspect of this evaluation is that the intern attends all staff meetings. In these meetings he is given direction for his daily work.

Seminary: The expectations of the seminary and the denomination were given in a training session for supervising pastors.

Intern: A daily log of all activities is kept by the intern. This log is for his personal evaluation and to insure that time is given not only to the practical experiences but his devotional life. From his experiences it is hoped that a knowledge of his strengths and weaknesses will be gained.

Remuneration

The intern receives remuneration from the Oregon Conference. In anticipation of the implementation of the internship program the conference budgeted \$3,000 for the first year. The local church contributes \$50.00 per month to the conference, to make the total remuneration \$3,600. For those activities that demand transportation, the local church has been reimbursing the intern for travel.

Benefits

Wilson stated that consideration should not only be given to the benefits that come to the intern, but, also, to the church and the

people being served. In response to this question no definite benefit could be cited at the time of the interview. They did not deny that such benefits had not occurred, but it was felt that the intern's impact of ministry would be realized in the future.

Bishop Parsons at the Northwest Minister's Conference expressed his hope that the internship would assist in directing future pastors to other areas of service if they did not feel, after the internship, this was where God was leading them. On the other hand, he felt that if the program helped future ministers to be more certain of their call, it could only serve to strengthen their ministry. The intern, in this case study, gives testimony that his call is being confirmed.

The Bishop expressed another goal of the internship program. He believes that the relationship between the intern and the pastor/supervisor should be a lifelong spiritual fellowship. The pastor and the intern expressed that their relationship would no doubt be this way because of the positive experiences they have had together.

Recommendations

There was no doubt in the mind of any of the participants of the interview about the potential of the internship program. There was concern that if some of the mechanics of the program were not ironed out in the early stages it might suffer setbacks. Some of their recommendations were:

1. Should the internship take place during the years of seminary training as part of the three year course, or should it be an additional year, taking place after all the academic work was completed?

Some thought was given that it should occur during the seminary years, but it still should be an additional year of training, not one of the three.

It was felt that the intern might be losing some valuable interaction between students and faculty because of being absent from the campus. The associate pastor felt this interaction is where the learning process takes the form of lifelong convictions and meaningful faith. All three felt that there is a need for the student to be back on campus a portion of the time, especially for special lecture series. This would support the stance of Maunce who says achievement comes through association with greatness. Usually the lecturers are recognized for their achievement in some area of ministry.

2. Direction needed to be given to assist the intern's spouse in the internship program.

3. More input from the seminary is sought, especially in the area of the academic portion of the program. The intern had concerns that he might not be receiving the content he needed to complete the comprehensive examinations for graduation.

4. Because the student registers and pays all the normal fees at the seminary for the internship program, expression was made that they might assume some financial responsibility. The supervising pastor does take the position of the seminary instructor.

Summary

Herman Morse of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church asked a probing question: "What is the central inte-

grating idea in professional education for the Christian ministry?"²²

Seminaries and colleges will no doubt come under fire perpetually for not preparing adequately those who enter pastoral ministry. Yet, the writer's research reveals questions are being asked, and answers are being sought, suggestions are being given, and programs are being modified to meet the challenge of more effectively training those entering the ministry.

Can we really expect to see a person entering the ministry immediately after seminary a mature servant? Probably not! Maturing is a lifelong process. Maturity is not realized uniformly among all persons, and not even in the same areas. Hence, continuing education beyond the formal training is needed. The opportunities for this kind of training is unlimited in our society. The Christian minister in America has no reason to fail in becoming a growing and developing servant of Jesus Christ.

Lest we forget Morse's question, and fail to answer it, he did offer an answer. "The test of effective education for the ministry is an effective ministry."²³ If this answer is correct, then we should never be offended by the complaints about the ministry. They should be welcomed, for the problem will lead us to the answers which will strengthen the training of God's chosen vessels.

²²Ibid., p. 31.

²³Ibid.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Research has a way of opening our eyes to unknown areas. It causes us to ask questions about things we never considered before. The writer has had a few "eye-openers". Not all of them have been expressed, and neither will they be given in the conclusion. In each chapter some recommendations were made. They will not be reiterated here.

An area of research in the recruiting of pastors would be beneficial. There are a number of pastors in the writer's acquaintance, who have been able to reproduce a number of successful pastors during their ministry. What is their genius for accomplishing this?

There are some churches that are recognized for the number of ministers and missionaries that have responded to the call of God from out of their membership. Some conferences for their size, seem to have a greater number of ministerial candidates than conferences much larger. What is the contributing factor(s) to this kind of success?

Research in these areas could no doubt reveal beneficial information to assist the denomination to provide the climate for young people to respond to the call of God.

The following recommendations are given:

1. To avoid role conflict, greater care should be given to determine the needs of a local congregation when assigning a pastor. These needs should be matched with pastors of compatible gifts to meet

these needs. Bringing congregations and pastors together from this perspective could enhance the effectiveness of the church's ministry. If needs were more aggressively satisfied from a person gifted to perform the specific needs of a church, peripheral expectations might be effectively reduced.

2. The church seems to be more adept in helping persons into the ministry than they do in helping them leave. The church does have an obligation to assist those persons who leave the ministry, to do so gracefully, and without reproach. The recruitment of ministers-to-be at the seminary level sometimes becomes amusing. Yet, when a person is demitting, he faces a lonely life, and becomes a forgotten person.

3. The attrition rate could be dropped substantially if better screening and counseling preceded a person's entrance into the ministry. But, it is often said we should not tamper with the call of God, who are we to judge?

Stott suggests that more questions should be asked of the ministerial candidate that are suggested in I Timothy chapter three and Titus chapter one. Inquiry should be made about the character, behavior, moral standards, and marriage and family relationships of the candidate.¹

Gordon Mac Donald proposes another area of screening. He says:

The evolution of seminaries from schools of pastoral training to graduate institutions of theology may have led to the frequent admission of the wrong sorts of persons, and in fact, inadvertently precluded the type of person who is most suited for ministry. Those most gifted with sensitivities of pastoral care and communications are not always the top-line students when measured against academic standards. A study of ministerial

¹ Stott, p. 54.

attrition and its correlation to academic achievement might be an interesting one--perhaps frightening.²

4. A. T. Robertson said, "It is in the home that, as a rule, preachers are made or unmade."³ The attitude of the parents to the church and their love and acceptance of the pastor, and their feelings about Christian service are factors in the mind of person answering the call to preach. If these attitudes are not positive, the child in that home will find it difficult to say "yes" to the call. The person will probably refuse to answer the call because he does not desire to enter a profession with such a low reputation.

The solution to this concern is difficult. But, one answer to it, is for pastors to develop a positive relationship with the children in his congregation. This kind of rapport often dispels the negative attitude of a parent.

God still calls persons to serve Him. He still uses committed people who will train for the job to do His work. He has used this method for two thousand year. He no doubt will continue to use it as long as He can find committed servants.

²MacDonald, p. 19.

³Robertson, p. 13.

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