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Exploring Leader Anxiety within the Family System when Implementing Organic Leadership Development

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EXPLORING LEADER ANXIETY WITHIN THE FAMILY SYSTEM

WHEN IMPLEMENTING ORGANIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

A THESIS PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

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BY

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GLOSSARY

Acquired Skills: Refers to those capacities, skills, talents or aptitudes, which have

been learned by a person in order to allow him/her to accomplish something.[1]

Convergence: A reference point in a believer's life when his or her ministry

experiences and spiritual maturity come together to enable the believer to minister in a

fulfilling way and provide ultimate contribution. The believer perceives that this is the

purpose that God has made him or her to do: for this the believer was born.[2]

Family System Theory: A theory that views any group of people who interact on a

regular basis as an emotional unit, relating as a family. The people interact emotionally

with each other using defined family roles.

Gift Mix: Refers to the threefold collection of giftedness elements: natural

abilities, acquired skills, and spiritual gifts.[3]

Leader: A man or woman equipped by God with a gift mix to guide or influence

people in their spiritual or emotional growth. A person using their God-given capacity

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[1] J. Robert Clinton and Richard W. Clinton, *Unlocking Your Giftedness: What Leaders Need to Know to Develop Themselves and Others* (Altadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers, 1993), 40.

[2] Terry Walling, course presentation to doctor of ministry cohort at Bethel Seminary, San Diego, 2011.

[3] Clinton and Clinton, 40.

and God-given responsibility to influence people toward God's purposes.[4]

Leadership Development Environment: An atmosphere where the God-given leadership influence of the laity is encouraged and nurtured in order to lead the church.

Major Role: One or two sentences describing the contribution or role an individual plays summarizing one's core functions or methods.[5]

Natural Abilities: Refers to "those capacities, skills, talents or attitudes which are innate in a person and allow him/her to accomplish things."[6]

Organic Leadership Development: An approach to leadership in which leaders view themselves as having been shaped by God over a lifetime, align in greater ways with the purposes of God in order to discover the unique and ultimate contribution for His Kingdom work.

Post-It-Note Time-Line: A personal time-line that reveals how God has been working in one's life.

Small Church: Churches that have an average Sunday worship attendance of fewer than 150 people.

Spiritual Gift: A spiritual gift is a God-given unique capacity imparted to each believer for the purpose of releasing a Holy Spirit empowered ministry via that believer.[7]

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[4] Terry Walling, course presentation to doctor of ministry cohort at Bethel Seminary, San Diego, 2011.

[5] Terry Walling, course presentation to doctor of ministry cohort at Bethel Seminary, San Diego, 2011.

[6] Clinton and Clinton, 40.

[7] Clinton and Clinton, 40.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to develop a theory regarding the level of anxiety in the church family system when implementing organic leadership development. The researcher analyzed three biblical leaders' developments while considering the effects on family system: Joseph's stages of leadership development, the methods Jesus used in developing his disciples into leaders, and the leadership gift mix demonstrated by Peter and Barnabas.

To further develop a theory, relevant literature of leadership development and family systems was explored. Focusing on the work of J. Robert Clinton, the researcher explored the development of leadership and gift mix. Then researcher considered the concepts of family systems theory from the writings of Edwin H. Freidman, Ronald W. Richardson and Peter Steinke, particularly related to heightened anxiety.

A qualitative and quantitative, grounded theory study was conducted using surveys and interviews of church leaders participating in a retreat to develop personal vision and major role statements.

The study resulted in a grounded theory for implementing organic leadership development in small churches: When leaders are being shaped by God, discovering their gift-mix and entering new stages of leadership development, the family system in which they exist will experience times of heightened anxiety. The developing leader's ability or inability to handle this anxiety, by remaining non-anxious and self-differentiated, will allow further development of the leader while encouraging a healthy family system. If the

leadership team is able to anticipate heightened anxiety, they can use methods such as a covenant of behavior to avoid conflict or sabotage and increase the possibility of effective change. In healthy leadership teams with low levels of anxiety, implementing Organic Leadership Development positively influences the family system.

     The principles of this study provide guidelines for implementing organic leadership development that promotes healthy family systems.

CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM AND RESEARCH OVERVIEW

The Problem and Its Context

Statement of the Problem

The problem this project addressed was the effect on the family system when implementing organic leadership development in small churches. In response to this problem the researcher (a) explored leadership development within family systems from a biblical-theological perspective, (b) explored the relationship of family systems theory and leadership development theory with special attention to small churches, (c) conducted field research in two small churches by implementing organic leadership development, considering the implications to the family system, and (d) developed guidelines for other churches implementing leadership development that considers family systems.

Delimitation of the Problem

The research was limited to churches within the reformed tradition.

The research was limited to churches within the Pacific Northwest.

The research was limited to middle to upper middle class congregations. The congregations were not experiencing crisis.

The research was limited to the researcher's role in guiding two small church's leadership teams in a small group retreat setting and included a follow-up evaluation.

The research was limited to initial reactions by the congregations as perceived by the workshop participants, the pastor and the researcher.

Assumptions

The first assumption is that the Bible is a resource for developing leaders within family systems.

The second assumption is that all people have a gift mix from God. These natural abilities, acquired skills and spiritual gifts may need to be discovered and developed for leaders to be influential within the church family.

The third assumption is that God uses the local church in the development of leaders, and that for the local church to be effective, it should develop leaders.

The fourth assumption is that with proper training leaders will be able to positively influence the ministry of the church in the local community.

The fifth assumption is that implementing a leadership development culture could bring change that may disrupt the family system.

Subproblems

The first subproblem was to examine the biblical record related to leadership development while considering family systems.

The second subproblem was to examine the relevant literature related to leadership development while considering family systems.

The third subproblem was to conduct field research in two small churches by implementing leadership development while using the lens of family systems to explore potential resistance or criticism.

The fourth subproblem was to develop guidelines for effective leadership development by anticipating the family system's reaction to change.

Setting of the Project

The setting for this research was among small churches in the Pacific Northwest. These churches are congregations within the reformed tradition that expressed a desire to implement leadership development of the laity. One church is located in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. Their average Sunday worship attendance is 125. The board consists of nine elected members and the pastor. The second church is located in rural Eastern Washington outside Spokane, Washington. Their average Sunday worship attendance is 60. The board consists of six elected members and the pastor.

The researcher provided leadership development training to two congregations desiring influential leaders empowered to use their gift mix effectively. A small group of six to ten lay leaders along with the pastor were be involved in a retreat. The leaders were invited by the pastor and may not necessarily be on the board or currently in a leadership role within the church. This was shared as an opportunity to explore their leadership ability by exploring their life through a personal time-line, developing a personal ultimate contribution statement and major role. Through administering a pre-retreat survey and post-retreat survey, the impact and acceptance by the family system was explored.

The Importance of the Project

The Importance of the Project to the Researcher

Over the course of twenty-three years of ministry, the researcher has studied family systems theory in the midst of congregational change. Reactions were not always based on the current changes, but sometimes patterned from previous events in the life of the congregation. As the researcher studied leadership development and began implementing it in his current ministry, the potential change threatened the family system.

By using the lens of family systems, the researcher hopes to foresee and avoid resistance to or criticism of leadership development.

Leading retreats as a consultant is an emerging gift the researcher wants to utilize in becoming the leader God has created. As an outside observer to a given family system, the researcher can remain a non-anxious presence and coach the pastor in both leadership development and family system theories.

The researcher hopes that exploring leadership development while exploring the implications for the family system will help him and others build leaders that can minister within a healthy family system.

The Importance of the Project to the Immediate Ministry Context

The two congregations the researcher studied are churches in the Pacific Northwest and are evangelical congregations within the Presbyterian Church (USA). As the denomination is changing, these congregations need to focus on effective leaders who are comfortable employing their known gift mix in a new setting.

Working with these congregations provided a framework for developing leaders, while addressing potential family system limitations that may prevent leaders from expressing their leadership. As churches develop effective leaders based on their gifts, the congregation should embrace positive changes.

The Importance of the Project to the Church at Large

Small evangelical churches need to develop lay leadership. As this leadership is developed, the leaders need to be able to express their leadership in the setting where they may have been already serving. This leadership development environment needs to be nurtured so the laity is encouraged and allowed to express leadership despite the potential

changes inherent in such growth and development. The research in this project can help all churches leaders realize the need to consider the family system as leaders develop. This will allow the church family to maintain a healthy attitude toward leadership change, as developing leaders are encouraged to grow into the leaders God has created.

Data and Methodology

Nature of the Research

This project was a qualitative study with some elements of a quantitative study. The main model employed was grounded theory. Primary tools are retreat training, personal interviews, surveys, documents and observational field notes.

The ultimate goal of this research was to address the ability to implement leadership development within a congregational family system. In order to acquire the data needed to accomplish this goal the researcher invited several pastor to participate in this research study with their leadership team. He developed a questionnaire asking individuals to measure the level of anxiety within the congregation. The questionnaire also asked questions about their leadership activity within the congregation. The questionnaire was administered before the leadership retreat and one month after the retreat to measure the change in perceived anxiety by the leadership team within the congregation. The questionnaire was followed-up with personal interviews of the pastors involved in the study. These were conducted by phone and recorded.

The researcher did an analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data that lead to suggestions for implementing leadership development within the congregational family system.

Project Overview

The first step of the project was to review the biblical record related to organic leadership development while considering family systems. The researcher explored the lives of Joseph, Jesus with his disciples, and Peter and Barnabas within the early church. The review of biblical leaders explored the leadership development of the leaders followed by exploring the family system of the leaders.

The second step was to review the relevant literature related to organic leadership development while considering family systems. This literature was reviewed in an effort to assist in understanding the implications of implementing leadership development within a family system. By gaining an understanding of leadership development theory along with family systems theory, the researcher was able to gain an understanding of the relationship between self-differentiation and individuals exploring their personal mission statement and major role.

The third step was to conduct field research in small churches by implementing organic leadership development while using the lens of family systems to explore potential resistance or criticism. Using Terry Walling's *Focused Living Retreat*, the researcher led leadership teams through developing their personal mission statement. Then using the lens of family systems, the researcher sought to understand the change of anxiety within the system to determine possible sabotage or conflict resulting from the retreat.

Once the data was analyzed, results were complied and analyzed by the researcher to develop guidelines for effective organic leadership development by anticipating the family system's reaction to change.

CHAPTER TWO: BIBLICAL REVIEW

Instead of leading the people Himself, God calls individuals to lead, using their gift mix to effectively guide the people. By looking at biblical examples, the researcher considered the development of the influence of a leader and the reaction of the family system to that newly called leader. Throughout Scripture, God called and equipped leaders to serve Him and lead His people. At times, the people did not accept God's leader. At other times, the leader did not accept being called. At still other times, the leader was called but had not yet had life experiences needed to lead the people.

As a person is developed into an influential leader, changes occur. Such changes, even if positive, can affect the family system. By studying the biblical examples of a changed leader in a family system, some of the potential effects of change caused by leadership development can be considered.

Leadership Development

The researcher conducted studies of the Old and New Testaments to examine what the Scriptures teach about the presence of God in a leader's life and leadership development. When God called people to lead, they may not have previously exhibited the abilities required for the situation. Josiah Derby stated, "At times when extraordinary leadership was required, God turned to men who, by all objective standards, were unqualified and unfit. … [It is too simplistic to think] God will transform the person to

enable him to perform the assigned task."[1] Instead, Derby wrote that there are leaders "who possess latent talents, innate gifts which become manifest under special circumstances, just as a piece of iron, when heated and hammered, could become a beautiful sword."[2] While these talents may be latent, and the gifts innate, they are developed by the circumstances that God has allowed.

While many people in Scripture were called by God to become leaders, the researcher reflected on three. The first biblical example explored is the development of Joseph as the leader who saved his family from famine and brought them into the land of Goshen. The researcher explored the different life events that God used to shape Joseph into a leader assigned difficult tasks. The second biblical example of leadership development focused on Jesus' methods for developing his disciples. The research explored the variety of teaching methods and settings used by Jesus to prepare the disciples to continue his ministry. The final example considered the gifts necessary for the leaders in the early church as found in the book of Acts. Focusing on Peter and Barnabas, the researcher explored the importance of applying their giftedness to the expanding ministry to the Gentile community.

Joseph's Leadership Development

Exploring the life of Joseph, one can observe the stages of leadership development as defined by J. Robert Clinton in his work on leadership emergence theory.[3]

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[1] Josiah Derby, "Three Unlikely Leaders," *Jewish Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (2003), 56.

[2] Derby.

[3] J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader,* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988), 43-55.

Sovereign Foundations

Following the pattern of his father and grandfather, Joseph's life began with intense rivalry within the family. In the two previous generations, only one son was chosen to carry on the promise given to Abraham as the chosen nation and light in world (Gen. 12:1-3). While both Ishmael and Isaac received a blessing and promise to be great nations, it was through Isaac that God's promise would be fulfilled (Gen. 21:12-13). Later, through deceitfulness, Isaac's son Jacob first stole the birthright (Gen. 25:29-34) and then received the blessing (Gen. 27:18-40). Also, Joseph and his brothers would have heard the stories of their father Jacob being deceived by their Uncle Laban to marry Leah as well as Rachel (Gen. 29: 15-30). Eventually, Joseph was the favorite son of Jacob (Gen. 37:3). Not only was Joseph the loved more than the others, the richly ornate robe suggested that Jacob had chosen him to be the heir. "By this regal apparel (see 2 Sam. 13:18) Jacob publicly designates Joseph as the ruler over the family."[4] The sovereign foundations were in place for Joseph to be a leader in the current generation.

Inner-Life Growth

Joseph entered the second stage of leadership development with his two dreams and the responses of his brothers (Gen. 37:1-10). In this stage, Joseph heard a message from God, grew in discernment, understanding and obedience, and was put to a test that prepared him for future leadership.

Joseph's message came in the way of a pair of dreams. In the first dream, his brothers bowed down to him. This would align with the vision his father had for him at this time. Yet, in the second dream, his father and mother and brothers all bowed down to

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[4] Bruce K. Waltke and Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: a Commentary*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), 500.

him. Differing from other dreams in the Bible, these dreams were not perceived prophetically; God did not appear in the dreams, and his family did not take them seriously.[5] Yet, Joseph had a sense that the dreams pointed to the future and were a message from God.

Russell Hendel points out, in the Bible people bow to others for four reasons: to give thanks, acknowledge power, worship, and greeting.[6] In the passage, the brothers and the father interpret the bowing in the dream as an act of acknowledging power, "while Joseph interpreted the dream as an expression of thanks for his helpful behavior towards the community. This explains why Joseph was so eager to share his dreams with his brothers, thinking that these dreams indicated that he would help them all succeed."[7] Joseph was beginning to understand his leadership as God's way of accomplishing his family's purpose through him. He did not know how the dream would be fulfilled; yet he perceived God's vision within the dreams.

Shortly after giving a bad report on his brothers and sharing his dreams with his family, Jacob sent Joseph to Shechem to check up on his brothers. When Joseph was told they had moved, he went to Dothan and found them. Joseph was faithful and trusted his father, and with the jacket, may have felt his father's protection upon him. Even so, the brothers fought over him, threatened to kill him, threw him in a pit and eventually sold him into slavery. Through these events, according to the biblical account, Joseph did not resist his father's request or his brothers' rough treatment of him (Gen. 37:23-28).

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[5] Russell Jay Hendel, Joseph: A Biblical Approach to Dream Interpretation, (*Jewish Bible Quarterly* Vol. 39, No.4, 10/01 2011), 232.

[6] Hendel, 234.

[7] Hendel.

Ministry And Life Maturing

When Joseph was sold into slavery and moved to Egypt, he entered a new phase in his leadership development. The change in sphere of influence, kinds of process items and a boundary event (such as crisis, promotions, geographical move) usually characterize a new phase.[8] For Joseph, moving to Egypt, becoming a slave, and having influence within Potiphar's house indicate that Joseph entered the phases of ministry and life maturing.

During Joseph's time as a servant to Potiphar and in prison, the next two phases of leadership development flowed together. As Joseph matured in life, his ministry matured. In this phase of development, Joseph experienced integrity checks, word checks and divine contacts. Further, Joseph was able to develop his gift mix.

Potiphar was a divine contact in the life of Joseph. Working for Potiphar gave Joseph training in areas of leadership. Perceiving that God was with Joseph, Potiphar made him "overseer of his house and put in charge of all he had" (Gen. 39:5).[9] The ability to manage the house of Potiphar was one skill that Joseph would use later in life when he managed the prison, and to a larger extent, when he was second in command under Pharaoh.

Another ability Joseph gained in Potiphar's household was the ability to associate with the Egyptian upper class. "God is going to use Joseph as ruler of all Egypt. He will need to be acculturated into Egyptian upper class thinking and ways. Potiphar, an upper

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[8] Clinton, *Making,* 47, 49.

[9] Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture citations are from *The Holy Bible, New International Version,* (Colorado Springs, CO: International Bible Society, 1984).

class man of rank, prestige and connections, serves this purpose."[10] As Joseph worked in the household, he noticed the way people interacted including how lower class and servants, cultural differences, and treatment of people of higher class. Later, when Joseph's family came to settle in Egypt, he was able to use this knowledge to the benefit of his family and have them settled into the land of Goshen to not offend Egyptians of powerful and upper class.

In the midst of working for Potiphar, Joseph faced an integrity check. Twice Potiphar's wife tried to lead Joseph into adultery. The second time, at the expense of being accused of a crime he did not commit, Joseph fled leaving his garment. "Integrity checks are major leadership tests. It should be noticed that Joseph recognized that the sin was more than just a sin against Potiphar; it was against God. Integrity checks in the ultimate are always between God and the individual."[11] Even with the consequences of imprisonment, Joseph did not plead his innocence to Potiphar. Since the wages of a servant committing adultery was death, maybe imprisonment was Potiphar's way of acknowledging Joseph's innocence while protecting his wife.[12]

In Joseph's leadership development, he experienced both divine contacts and word checks. Both the jailer and the wine steward were divine contacts in the next chapter of Joseph's life in prison. As with Potiphar, the jailer noticed that God was with Joseph and placed Joseph in a leadership role in the prison (Gen. 39:22). The jailer was a

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[10] J. Robert Clinton, *Joseph—Destined to Rule: A Study in Integrity and Divine Affirmation*, (Altadena, CA: Barnabas Resources, 1985), 52.

[11] Clinton, *Joseph,* 35.

[12] Claus Westermann, *Genesis: A Practical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1987), 274.

divine contact by positioning Joseph to hear and interpret the dreams of Pharaoh's wine steward and baker (Gen. 40:1-22)."The wine steward, not just any wine steward but Pharaoh's, is used as a divine contact to bring Joseph to the attention of Pharaoh."[13] Even though it would be two year later, the result of these contacts placed Joseph in front of Pharaoh when Joseph's gift of dream interpretation was needed.

Throughout his development, Joseph experienced word checks. "A *word check* is the process item that tests a leader's ability to understand or receive a word from God personally and then allow God to work it out in his or her life."[14] In the years that Joseph was in Potiphar's house and then imprisoned, Joseph experienced a word check. At the age of seventeen, God had given him a vision. Yet, through slavery and then imprisonment, this vision did not materialize. Even when he met someone from Pharaoh's court, and interpreted his dream, Joseph was forgotten for two years. Trusting that God's plan was at work, and continuing to be faithful during this dark time was a word check in Joseph's life.

Joseph's gift mix included interpretation of dreams, administration, and integrity. Joseph understood that dream interpretation was a spiritual gift from God. The baker and wine steward thought it was a learned skill. "In Egypt the interpretation of dreams was something that was learned; according to Joseph, it was God-given."[15] In Egyptian culture "the interpretation of dreams was a science. There were men who had learned the technique of interpreting dreams, and there was a considerable literature on the subject.

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[13] Clinton, *Joseph,* 52.

[14] Clinton, *Making*, 67.

[15] Charles T. Fritsch, "God Was with Him": A Theological Study of the Joseph Narrative," *Interpretation* 9, no. 1 (01/01, 1955), 26.

All of this is now inaccessible to them."[16] Since the wine steward and baker believed

their only hope for dream interpretation was from the learned men outside the prison,

they were upset when they approached Joseph. Yet, Joseph told them that dream

interpretation was a gift from God. Since God had gifted Joseph with dream

interpretation, the meaning of their dreams was available. Joseph was not a scientific

specialist, but a person who relied on God. This was a spiritual gift Joseph had received

from God to help others and have influence over them. Joseph had the integrity to not

worry about the consequences of the dreams, but interpreted them according to God's

will: the wine bearer would be restored to his position while the baker would receive the

death penalty. Joseph's willingness to interpret the dreams faithfully demonstrates that

Joseph was maturing in his ministry and life, trusting communion with God was more

important than consequences or ministry position.[17]

During these years, Joseph gained the leadership skill of administration that

would be necessary during the phase of convergence. Both Potiphar and the jailer

realized that God was with Joseph because he had success with everything he did. With

Potiphar, Joseph was given leadership influence over his entire household excluding food

(Gen. 39:6). Joseph brought a blessing on Potiphar's household through his

administration. Even in the prison environment, Joseph continued honing his

administration ability. "The jailer recognizes Joseph's leadership. He is a man who can

delegate and thus allows Joseph to administrate the jail affairs."[18] God was using this

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[16] Gerhard von Rad and John H. Marks. *Genesis: A Commentary*. *The Old Testament Library* Rev. ed. (Philadelphia : Westminster Press, 1972), 371.

[17] Clinton, *Making,* 46.

[18] Clinton, *Joseph,* 52.

time in life and ministry maturing to develop administrative skills that Joseph would use when Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of the land of Egypt (Gen. 41:41).[19]

Convergence

Joseph moved into the phase of convergence when he became second under Pharaoh. At this point his position matched his gift mix and life experiences enabling his ministry to be maximized.[20]

Through his humility, Joseph never became bitter toward others or toward God. "He simply used his God-given abilities to do the best job he could in the circumstances."[21] Even after two years of waiting, Joseph showed no bitterness toward the wine bearer. Only when Pharaoh had two dreams, which none of the dream scholars could interpret, did the wine bearer remember Joseph languishing in prison. While the call to Pharaoh's court changed the setting for Joseph, his practiced gifts had prepared him for this opportunity. "Pharaoh listens to the interpretation. He does not speak. He listens very carefully. Joseph proceeds immediately with human plans for implementation. Pharaoh is still a receptive listener. He initiates nothing."[22] Joseph stepped into the leadership role, not a place that Pharaoh has placed him, but where God was leading Joseph. God would provide for His people through Joseph's leadership over Pharaoh. In remaining faithful to God and trusting that God would fulfill the dreams and ministering in the place God had set him, Joseph role was converging with his gift mix and life experiences.

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[19] Hendel*, 235.*

[20] Clinton, *Making,* 46.

[21] Clinton, *Joseph*, 52.

[22] Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis,* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 332.

Joseph's leadership development reached convergence when Joseph became second in command under Pharaoh. The dreams that Joseph shared with his father and brothers are fulfilled in a way that not only saved the family, it saved Egypt from a seven-year famine. Using his acquired skill of administration, Joseph directed the building of storehouses, administered the gathering of grain during the plentiful years and selling it during the famine—including management with foreigners coming to buy grain.

> Joseph truly was remarkable man, one whose upright character enabled him to serve God, his people, and the society where he lived with an ever-increasing sense of God's claim on his life. God guided Joseph's moral integrity and recognizable leadership qualities so that he would be spiritually where God could use him. Not only did the better qualities of his forefathers, the patriarchs, find a balanced combination in Joseph, but also his own faithfulness and purity made him a productive servant for God. Joseph used his God-given abilities faithfully in his own home, in Potiphar's house, in prison, and in the palace.[23]

God molded Joseph's life in righteousness in order to influence and benefit others. "A clear recognition of God's rightful lordship over the believer's life . . . allows God's Word to mold them into a life of consistent purity and holiness (cf. Gen. 39:2-6, 8-9 with Ps. 119: 9-11, 65-68, 105, 111-112; John 15:7)."[24] As a result of Joseph faithfully lived under God's lordship, he administered Pharaoh's storehouse with integrity. When Joseph's brothers came before him needing grain (Gen. 42), Joseph was able to test their characters.

The testing of the brothers' character came the climax when Joseph required Simeon to remain in prison, the brothers to return and feed their family and Benjamin to be brought before him (Gen. 42:18-20). The brothers returned to their father and told the

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[23] Richard Patterson, "Joseph in Pharaoh's Court," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 164, no. 654 (04/01, 2007): 162.

[24] Patterson, 164.

requirement of Benjamin going to Egypt (Gen. 42:29-34). When Jacob lamented Joseph's

death and Simeon's imprisonment, and now Benjamin's safety, Reuben offered his own

sons as protection (Gen. 42:36-37). Yet, until they needed more grain, Jacob would not

allow the brothers to take Benjamin from him (Gen. 43:1-2). In order to appease Jacob,

Judah offered his own life as a promise that Benjamin would be safe (Gen. 43:9). After

getting grain from Joseph, while on the return home, Benjamin is found with Joseph's

cup in his grain sack (Gen. 44:12). When Benjamin was required become a slave, Judah

offered himself (Gen. 44:33). This act of Judah was for the welfare of their father (Gen.

44:34). In the role of priest Joseph provided "his brothers not only with an opportunity to

act out their repentance, but also with an opportunity for absolution. Joseph must bring

the brothers to forgive themselves, to absolve themselves of their deed and its

consequences."[25] Joseph's ministry convergence allowed the ultimate contribution of

bringing his family safely into Egypt together, as one family, reconciled and forgiven.

This was something that had not happened in the previous generations and could not have

been accomplished had not Joseph been faithful to God throughout his lifetime.

Even so, the brothers did not fully understand the integrity of Joseph's ministry. It

was only after Jacob's death, when the brothers came before Joseph worried about

consequences that Joseph told them, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for

good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be

afraid. I will provide for you and your children" (Gen. 50: 20-21). Joseph's leadership

influence came by seeing God's hand guiding all his life, from the depths of slavery and

imprisonment to the heights of serving in Pharaoh's courts. "His enduring faith and loyal

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[25] Moshe Soller, "Why no Message from Joseph to His Father," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (07/01, 1998), 163.

obedience win for him the highest office in the land of Egypt. God's holy purpose is at long last fulfilled in the life of Joseph for the salvation of his people."[26] Joseph's gift mix, past experiences and development as a leader of integrity converged as he guided the nation's resources and his family's understanding of God. Joseph's leadership was to influence for the good of the community, not just his family but also the entire region.

Afterglow:

After the death of Jacob, Joseph had completed his ministry and entered the phase of afterglow. The fact that Joseph made it to afterglow is the influence Joseph had over his family that lasted for generations. Upon his death, Joseph gave a message of hope (Gen. 50:24-25). As God had been with Joseph through the dark years of slavery and imprisonment, God would be with the nation of Israel through the 400 years of Egyptian slavery. As God had brought Joseph out of slavery, so would God bring Israel out of Egypt and into the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It would no longer be a promise to one person, but to a nation. "Life is comprised of much that is routine, unexciting, even tragic. A leader can see through and beyond this to the broader purposes of God."[27] Joseph's lifetime of leadership had gained the respect of his brothers, and Joseph died with the signs of afterglow as his influence and wisdom was passed onto future generation.

Proof that Joseph's leadership and influence had reached afterglow was confirmed over 400 years after his death. As a sign of Joseph's hope, he asked his brothers to carry his remains to the Promised Land to be buried with his ancestors. The influence of Joseph

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[26] Fritsch, 27.

[27] Clinton, *Joseph*, 61.

was upon the future generations until Moses fulfilled Joseph's request and took his bones in the Exodus (Exod. 13:19). Joseph had lived and died faithful to God with a storehouse of wisdom that he past onto future generations as a blessing and benefit. This is a sign of afterglow and a life well lived in service to God and others.

<center>*Jesus and His Disciples' Leadership Development*</center>

Stages Of Leadership Development

The disciples of Jesus went through three stages in their fellowship with Jesus. "In the first stage, they were simply believers in Him as the Christ, and his occasional companions at convenient, particularly festive, seasons."[28] During this stage, the disciples were "coming and seeing."[29] They accompanied Jesus to the wedding in Cana (John 2:1), to Capernaum (John 2:12), to the temple in Jerusalem (John 2:13), and to the Judean countryside (John 3:22). In this stage, the disciples are not named; they are followers, part of the crowd. "In the second stage, fellowship with Jesus assumed the form of an uninterrupted attendance on His person, involving entire, or at least habitual abandonment of secular occupations."[30] During this stage, the disciples were gaining knowledge by associating with Jesus. Greg Ogden described this stage as "I do, you watch."[31] "Then, the twelve entered the last and highest stage of discipleship when they were chosen by their Master from the mass of His followers, and formed into a select

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[28] Alexander Balmain Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve* (New Canaan, CT: Keats Publishing, 1979), 11.

[29] Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 80.

[30] Bruce, *Training,* 11.

[31] Ogden, 83.

band, to be trained for the great work of the apostleship."[32] As apprentices, the disciples were learning from Jesus. After watching Jesus, he instructed them "You do, I watch."[33]

During their three years with Jesus, the twelve disciples were "students of Christian doctrine, and occasional fellow-laborers in the work of the kingdom, and eventually Christ's chosen trained agents for propagating the faith after He Himself had left the earth."[34] In three short years, the disciples would go from simply coming and seeing to going and doing likewise. Jesus said, "As the father has sent me, now I send you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:21-22). By the end, Jesus had equipped them with the skills and gifts they would need to be his witness to the ends of the earth.

Leaders Chosen By Jesus

Jesus accomplished leadership development by choosing and training disciples. In the first century culture, the word Disciple" (mathetes) was the usual word for "apprentice."[35] Jesus differed from other rabbis at the time in several ways. One example is that Jesus did not us the qualification of being righteous when he called his disciples.[36] Another way Jesus differed is that Jesus invited the disciples to follow him while with other rabbis, the seeker asked to be a disciple.[37] Further, Kittel wrote that the relationship

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[32] Bruce, *Training,* 12.

[33] Ogden, 93.

[34] Bruce, *Training,* 30.

[35] Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. 4*,* (Grand Rapids, Mi: Eerdmans 1967), 417.

[36] Kittle, 444.

[37] Kittle, 444.

Jesus had with his disciples was "unique" since he was the one who invited, it was Jesus who gave "form and content to the relationship."[38] In other words, Jesus provided the training program and rather than the apprentice setting the agenda. Usually, a disciple could be with one rabbi for a while then find to another to further his development. Jesus and his disciples had the unique relationship, in that when Jesus called, they stayed with him until the crucifixion and resurrection. The only broken relationship came was by being unfaithful: Judas of Iscariot.

Group Leadership Development

In Jesus' leadership development, the disciples are developed together and not as individuals in isolation. Throughout the gospels, these leaders in training are referred to as "disciples," as a group. On two occasions, there was an inner circle of three. Peter, James and John went in the room with Jesus when he raised Jairus' daughter (Mark 5: 37; Luke 8: 51) and were the only ones on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36). Out of the three, Peter was designated as the one on whom Jesus would build his church (Matt. 16:18). Yet, Peter was with the other disciples when this happened, and John even felt that he was more loved than Peter (John 20:2). The story of the resurrection in John 20 is the only place in the gospels that any are individually referred to as "a disciple" by the writer. They are always seen as the group, the twelve, the called by Jesus.

Leadership Qualifications

In leadership development of the disciples, Jesus did not choose his leaders based on their background qualifications. Even as a group, they do not have the same

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[38] Kittle, 445.

qualifications. Some are fishermen: Peter, Andrew, James and John. They were probably uneducated, blue-collar workers who had never been travelled far from their hometown. Matthew was a tax collector and was probably more educated than the others, with the ability to read and write. As one who collected tax for Rome, he would have been unaccepted by other rabbis and possibly disliked initially by his fellow disciples. Simon the Zealot would have been on the opposite political persuasion from Matthew. The Zealots "arose among the Jews in attempted resistance to the census of Quirinius, in A.D. 6 or 7."[39] Philip was from Bethsaida, the same town as Peter and Andrew, and might have been a fisherman (John 1:44). He invited his friend Nathanael to come meet Jesus (John 1:45). Even so, little is known of their backgrounds. Despite these varied backgrounds, in these twelve, Jesus purposefully invested his life and teaching.

Leadership Learning Methods

Jesus taught his disciples through formal and informal teaching. The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 and the Sermon on the Plain in Luke 6 are the two most formal teaching lessons about the kingdom of God. On both occasions, Jesus was seated, the usual position for a rabbi while teaching. These teachings were not only for the twelve but also for the crowds.

At other times, Jesus taught the crowds informally in parables, and the disciples were able to ask questions. Following the parable of the sower, Jesus's disciples asked for the meaning (Luke 8:9). Jesus' response told them they were being given, "The secrets of the kingdom of God"(Luke 8:10). The crowds would only hear in parables, not the secrets, and thus not be able to understand. In Mark 4:33, the reader is told that Jesus

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[39] Edgar J. Goodspeed, *The Twelve: The Story of Christ's Apostles* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1957), *31*.

explained everything in private to his disciples.

During a time of formal teaching, Jesus told his disciples that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, be rejected, killed and after three days rise again. The passion and resurrection was a central teaching to his disciples (Mark 8:31; 9:30-32; 10:32-34). In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus foretold his rejection, crucifixion and resurrection three times. Jesus wanted to make sure that the disciples knew the cross was the center of the gospel. To be a disciple, they too must take up their cross daily and follow Jesus (Mark 8:34). When Peter did not understand, Jesus called him to keep his mind on the things of God and not the things of men (Mark 8:33). In regards to Peter, Jesus called him to have faith in God and follow his teachings.

Application of Training

In addition to informal and formal teaching, Jesus equipped the disciples with spiritual gifts and commissioned them as evangelists. On this first missionary journey, they were given specific gifts and instructions. They were given the gifts of power, healing, authority over evil spirits, and proclamation (Luke 9:1-2; Mark 6:7). They were to be in groups of two, take nothing with them, stay in the first house they entered and have faith that God would provide. The disciples were told only to take the message to the lost sheep of Israel that the kingdom of God was at hand (Matt. 10:6). Jesus had set specific parameters for the independent work the disciples would be doing. Through example, Jesus displayed for them the message to take, the gifts to use, and the acceptance of hospitality. Jesus had given them an example, now they were to act without Jesus present.

Teaching Need for Solitude

Upon their return, they told Jesus what they had done (Luke 9:10). The reader is not told Jesus' response; simply that Jesus withdrew with them privately to Bethsaida. After their work, Jesus had a debriefing session. Throughout Jesus' ministry, he withdrew to a quiet place usually for a time of prayer (Matt. 14:13; Luke 4:42; 5:16; Mark 1:35; 3:7; 6:32). Jesus was now teaching this practice to his disciples. The rhythm of ministry and solitude became a model for the disciples.

Continual Learning Mindset

The disciples had a learning posture. One example of this continual learning mindset is in the area of prayer. The importance of prayer was taught when the disciples could not accomplish something on their own. While Jesus was with Peter, James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration, the remaining disciples were unable to heal the epileptic child (Mark 9:14-29). After Jesus had healed the child, the disciples asked why they failed. On their missionary journey they could do healings, this one was different. Jesus responded, "This kind can come out only by prayer." The disciples were still learning. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus formally taught them to pray before this event (Matt. 6: 9-15). Prayer was taught to the entire crowd during the Sermon on the Mount. In Luke's gospel, learning prayer was more informal. The disciples saw Jesus praying and asked him, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). Prayer is an important skill in leadership that Jesus taught the disciples.

A second example of the learning posture was the willingness of the disciples to ask questions. "The disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?'" Jesus told them they needed to become humble like children and

welcome children to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 18:1-3). Their willingness to ask the question of greatness allowed Jesus to teach them lessons they may not have learned. The disciples would ask about Jesus' teachings on divorce when they were alone (Mark 10:10). They also displayed a learning posture when they told Jesus they needed the parables interpreted (Mark 4:10). On another occasion, the disciples asked Jesus about the need for Elijah to return before the Messiah could come (Matt. 17:10). The questions the disciples asked were to gain knowledge and wisdom from Jesus. This learning posture was part of the disciples' lifestyle.

Final Teachings and Gifts

After Jesus' resurrection, he gave the disciples his commission (Matt. 28:18-20), his peace (Luke 24:36), the final teachings on his death and resurrection (Luke 24: 26-27, 44-49), and the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 20:22). These were the final teachings and gifts the disciples needed from Jesus to proclaim the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Through the formal and informal lessons, equipping and sending out, training and adding to their understanding, Jesus prepared the disciples for the time when he would not physically be with them. Jesus developed the disciples into leaders. "The careful, painstaking education of the disciples secured that the Teacher's influence on the world should be permanent; that His kingdom should be founded on the rock of deep and indestructible convictions in the minds of the few, not on the shifting sands of superficial evanescent impressions on the minds of the many."[40] When the church is developing leaders, similar methods should be used, and the skills Jesus taught his disciples should be taught through leadership development.

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[40] Bruce, *Training,* 13

Leadership Development in the Early Church

In the Book of Acts, the disciples entered the world to further the Kingdom of God. After being prepared by Jesus for the last three years, they assumed the leadership role. Ogden describes this stage as "You do, I watch."[41] It might be better described as "You do, I will empower you with the Holy Spirit." For the disciples, who were now the sent apostles, have received the same power of the Holy Spirit that empowered Jesus.[42] Preaching on the Acts 2 Pentecost passage, Walter Brueggemann said, "Taken most simply, Holy Spirit refers to the intruding, invasive, energizing power from God that comes like the wind to blow us beyond ourselves, to take actions, to dare dreams, to run risks that in our accustomed powerlessness are well beyond us."[43] The giftedness of the apostles in the Book of Acts comes from the Holy Spirit enveloping the followers of Jesus at Pentecost and was exhibited afterward through their ministry that brought repentance and baptism by new followers of Jesus (Acts 2:38).

Before Pentecost, the early church needed to appoint an apostle to take the place of Judas. When they selected Mathias, they pointed out "leadership in this new community is based both on qualification (Acts 1:21-22), and on divine choice (Acts 1:24)."[44] An apostolic leader was a follower who had witnessed the ministry, death and

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[41] Ogden, 96.

[42] C. K. Robertson, The Limits of Leadership: Challenges to Apostolic Homeostasis in Luke-Acts, *Anglican Theological Review* 87, no. 2 (03/01, 2005), 277.

[43] Walter Brueggemann. *The Collected Sermons of Walter Brueggemann*, (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 35.

[44] William H. Willimon, *Acts,* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988), 24.

resurrection of Jesus.[45] The apostle needed to be an eyewitness to the training of Jesus. Again, occupation, political affiliation, socio-economical status was not a requirement. The second qualification was that God had chosen him. The prayer in Acts 1:24-25 sought God's choice, since God knew the heart of a person. To be an apostle, training by Jesus and heart for God were of utmost importance.

At Pentecost, spiritual gifts by the Holy Spirit upon the leaders of the early church. Some of gifts found in the Book of Acts are: kinds of tongues, working of miracles, kinds of healings, exhortation, discerning of spirits, word of knowledge, prophecy, word of wisdom, evangelism, and apostleship.[46] Exploring the giftedness of two early church leaders, Peter and Barnabas, will provide insight to how leaders are gifted by the Holy Spirit to direct the church to complete the mission Jesus gave.

Peter

Peter displayed many spiritual gifts in the book of Acts. His major gifts from the Holy Spirit include exhortation, word of wisdom, working of miracles, healings, discerning of spirits, and evangelism. Through the use of these gifts, Peter was an effective leader within the early church.

Peter's gift of exhortation was displayed in his sermons and conflict management. Clinton defined exhortation as "the capacity to urge people to action in terms of applying Biblical truths, to encourage people generally with Biblical truths, or to comfort people

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[45] Willimon, 24.

[46] J. Robert Clinton and Richard W. Clinton, *Unlocking Your Giftedness: What Leaders Need to Know to Develop Themselves and Others* (Altadena, CA : Barnabas Publishers, 1993), 108.

through the application of Biblical truth to their needs."[47] Through Peter's preaching, he convinced skeptics that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah worth following. Some characteristics of exhortation include: testifying about God's work in the person's life, communicating with an urgency God's plan, and giving advice to others.[48] His leadership in the conflict over the admission of Gentiles in Acts 15, these characteristics are also evident.

Peter also exhibited the gift of miracles. Clinton defines the gift of miracles was as "the releasing of God's supernatural power so that the miraculous intervention of God is perceived and God receives recognition for the supernatural intervention."[49] Whenever Peter performed miracles, the purpose of the miracle was not to draw attention to Peter, but to Jesus Christ and the power of the gospel. The purpose of miracles is to "give authenticity to the Gospel message and its messengers."[50] In Acts 5, Peter performed a miracle in the judgment of Ananias and his wife Sapphira. They had sold land and given some of the profit to the church, while others were giving all to the church. When they gave their gift, they told Peter they had given all. Peter, in his wisdom knew they had only given part and told them that their gift was of their choosing. Whatever they wanted to give was a choice. Yet, because they lied, both immediately died (Acts 5:11). This miracle, along with many others, benefitted the community by requiring honesty within the community. On another occasion, Peter asked for a miracle and immediately following the prayer, there was an earthquake and the followers were bold in proclaiming

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[47] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 143.

[48] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 143.

[49] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 161.

[50] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 161.

the word of God (Acts 4:31).

While the gift of miracles frequently overlaps with the gift of healings, each is a distinct gift.[51] Peter also displayed the gift of healing throughout his ministry. Clinton defines the gift of healing as "refer to the supernatural releasing of healing power for curing all types of illnesses."[52] In Acts 3:1-10, Peter healed the man at the gate of the temple who born lame. As with the woman healed simply by touching Jesus' robe (Mark 5:29; Luke 8:44), Peter also had the power to heal. Contact with Peter's cloak provided healing (Acts 5:15). When Peter went to Lydda, he healed Aeneas who had been paralyzed for eight years (Acts 9:32-35). These stories demonstrate that Peter had received a similar gift of healing that Jesus displayed through the gospels. In the story of Aeneas, Peter proclaims that healing, although done through him, was done by Jesus.

Peter's gift mix also included the discerning of spirits. Clinton defined the discerning of spirits as "the ability given by God to perceive issues in terms of spiritual truth, to know the fundamental source of the issues and to give judgment concerning those issues; this includes the recognition of the spiritual forces operating in the issue."[53] This is the gift of being able to tell truth from error, to protect the church from heretical teachings and to discern if the source of activities is from the Holy Spirit.[54] One of the primary examples Clinton sites of the discerning of spirits was the judgment Peter gave on Ananias and Sapphira. Simply from hearing their story, Peter was able to discern that Ananias and Sapphira were not telling the truth, and they were not filled with the Holy

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[51] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 176.

[52] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 159.

[53] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 163.

[54] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 163.

Spirit. What motivated this couple was false spirits. Peter needed to act upon these half-truths so that half-committed followers and teachings did not enter the early church. Peter may have had this ability as a spiritual gift or from natural abilities,[55] yet the discerning of spirits was an important quality in the early leadership of the church.

Finally, Peter displayed the gift of public evangelism in his sermons. Clinton defined evangelism as "the capacity to challenge people through various communicative methods (persuasion) to receive the Gospel of salvation in Christ so as to see them respond by taking initial steps in Christian discipleship."[56] It was through Peter's evangelism that many joined the early church by drawing people into a relationship with Jesus Christ. Peter's gift of evangelism was based on his understanding of Scripture. In his sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2), Peter quoted the prophet Joel (2: 17-21), Psalm 16 (2: 25-28,31), Psalm 132 (2:31) to persuade the Jews that Jesus was both Lord and Messiah (Acts 2:36). In his second sermon, Peter quoted Moses to convince the people to listen to the message of Jesus (Acts 2:22-24). While being questioned by the same council that had questioned Jesus, Peter quoted Jesus' teaching from Psalm 118 (Acts 4:11). Months before, Peter had fled and denied being a follower, now filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:8), Peter was able to proclaim Jesus with Scripture as his support. Leaders "study the written Word to feed their own souls, as well as to help those to whom they minister. They are quick to discern God's truth in everyday life."[57] Peter's understanding of Scripture allowed him to witness the gospel to nonbelievers and minister to them.

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[55] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 164.

[56] Clinton, *Giftedness,* 147.

[57] Clinton, *Making,* 142.

Barnabas

Barnabas displayed his leadership gifts throughout the book of Acts. He committed his life to following Jesus and sold his field and brought the money to the apostles in order to take care of the needs of other followers (Acts 4:34-37). Active, life-altering trust in Jesus by Barnabas gained the respect and trust of others. Barnabas used this respect to influence others through the gift of encouragement. As a witness to his ministry, the apostles gave him the name "Barnabas" meaning "son of encouragement."

The next time Barnabas appeared in the book of Acts, he was a divine contact[58] for Saul by confirming the conversion of Saul to the leaders in Jerusalem (Acts 9:27). Previously, Saul was on his way to Damascus to arrest followers of Jesus and sent him to Ananias. Jesus told Ananias to accept Saul was coming as a brother and to lay his hands on Saul. The scales fell from Saul's eyes, his sight returned and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Immediately, Saul began teaching the Jewish leaders in Damascus that Jesus was the Christ. When Saul was forced out of Damascus, he fled to Jerusalem and tried to join the Christians there. Saul's previous animosity towards the followers of Jesus made the church leaders wary. Barnabas told the leaders what he had witnessed in Damascus. Because of Barnabas' previous devotion and faithful commitment to the church, the leaders accepted Barnabas' discernment regarding Saul's conversion.

Barnabas used his gift of encouragement in Antioch when he witnessed the new believer's faith and exhorted them to remain true to the Lord (Acts 11:22). By his encouragement and his faith, many more came to follow Jesus through Barnabas. Knowing that people could use Saul's teaching, Barnabas travelled to Tarsus to find Saul

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[58] Clinton, *Making,* 129.

and bring him to Antioch for a year. Because he had encouraged Saul to teach, when Saul started his missionary journeys, he took Barnabas as a companion. On these missionary journeys, Barnabas was said to have the same gifts of exhortation, teaching, evangelism, signs and wonders as Saul now called Paul possessed (Acts 13:2, 43, 46; 14:1, 23; 15:12 and 15:35). While Barnabas and Paul did not always agree (Acts 15:39), they worked together as leaders.

Barnabas also exhibited the gift of exhortation in his speech to the leaders in Jerusalem regarding Saul and in his ministry in Antioch. Before Paul came to Antioch, it was Barnabas' gifts of exhortation and evangelism that inspired many joined the early church (Acts 11:24). Though the book of Acts does not give extensive examples of Barnabas' gifts of exhortation and evangelism, these leadership gifts were used in the growth of the early church.

Family Systems

In studying the leadership development of Joseph, the disciples and the leaders in the early church, God brought change upon the leaders lives to build them into effective leaders. This development not only brought change upon them, it brought change, raised anxiety and conflict the family, or community, system in which they were involved. In the next section of the study, the researcher explored the impact on the family systems of Joseph, the disciples and the leaders of the early church.

Joseph's Family System

The family system Joseph inherited extended back to his great-grandparents Abraham and Sarah. In Genesis 12, God called Abraham to leave his father and mother and go to the land God would show him. If Abraham followed, he would become a great

nation and be a blessing to the world. Ten years after leaving and trusting God, Abraham and Sarah did not have children. Sarah convinced Abraham to have a child through her servant Hagar, and Ishmael was born. Fourteen years later, Sarah gave birth to Isaac and had Hagar and Ishmael driven away. God promised that both Ishmael and Isaac would be great nations, but the covenant was with Isaac (Gen. 21:12-13). Isaac was the child chosen by God to fulfill the covenant.

In the following generation, Isaac and Rebekah each had a favorite child. Isaac loved Esau while Rebekah loved Jacob (Gen. 25:28). Though Esau was the oldest, he sold his birthright for some stew (Gen. 25:34). With the help of Rebekah, Jacob deceived his father and received the blessing that was meant for Esau (Gen. 27:5-29).

So when it came to Joseph's generation, the tradition of a favorite child was a common theme. Jacob was deceived by his father-in-law, into marrying Leah, the elder sister, even though he loved Rachel. In the end, Jacob worked for Laban fourteen years in order to have Rachel as his wife. The sibling rivalry between Leah and Rachel lasted throughout their lifetime. This contempt for each other was displayed in the giving of their maidservants to Jacob to bear children. In the end, Jacob had eleven sons by two wives and two maidservants. When Rachel died, her child, Joseph, became Jacob's favorite.

Using this family story, Peter Steinke wrote, "We also see what happens so often in relationship systems when people fail to maintain adequate balance between separateness and closeness. People resort to secrecy, intrigue and sabotage."[59] Sarah had Ishmael sent away. Rebekah and Jacob used deception to steal the blessing from Esau.

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[59] Peter L. Steinke, How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems, (Washington, DC: Alban Institute, 1993), 39.

Jacob was tricked to work for Laban seven extra years. As the favorite child, Joseph was

given a coat by his father and the brothers hated him. The inability to maintain adequate

balance between separateness and closeness would continue for another generation. The

brothers knew the secrecy, intrigue and sabotage from the previous generations, and

resorted to such behavior for another generation. This time, the brothers used

underhanded methods to remove Joseph from the favored position of receiving the

blessing and birthright.

The following abbreviated family tree and genogram by Steinke demonstrates the

"anxiety in the face of the tension between separateness and closeness"[60]:

Figure 2.1: Joseph's Family Structure

Generation 1   Abraham   Sarah

Generation 2   Isaac   Rebecca

Generation 3   Esau   Jacob   Leah   Rachel

Generation 4   Joseph   Benjamin

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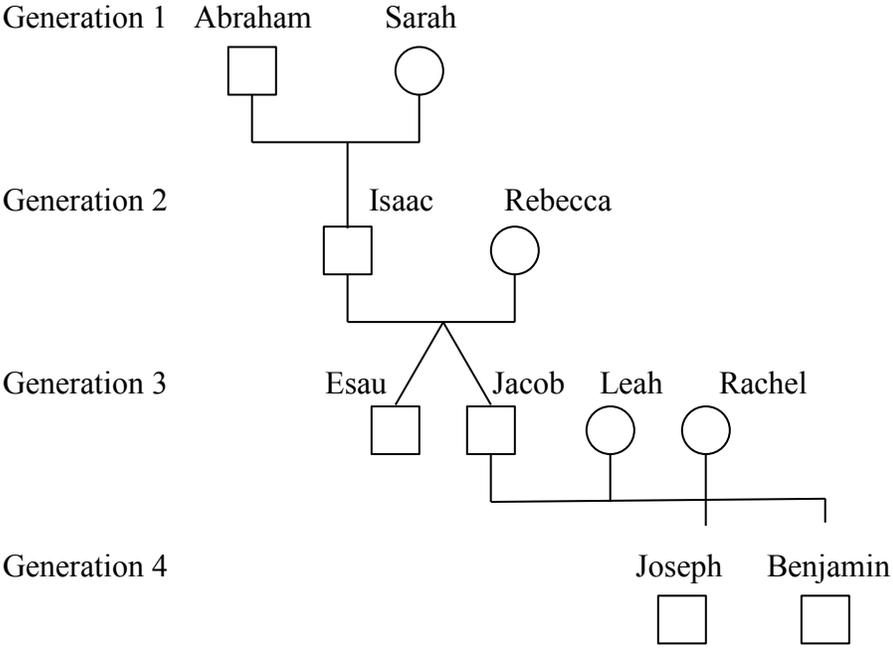
[60] Steinke, 37-38.

Figure 2.2: Joseph's Family Functioning

Abraham   Sarah

Isaac   Rebecca

Esau   Jacob Leah   Rachel

☐ = male

◯ = female

—————— = connection
══════ = emotional fusion
- - - - - - - = emotional cut-off
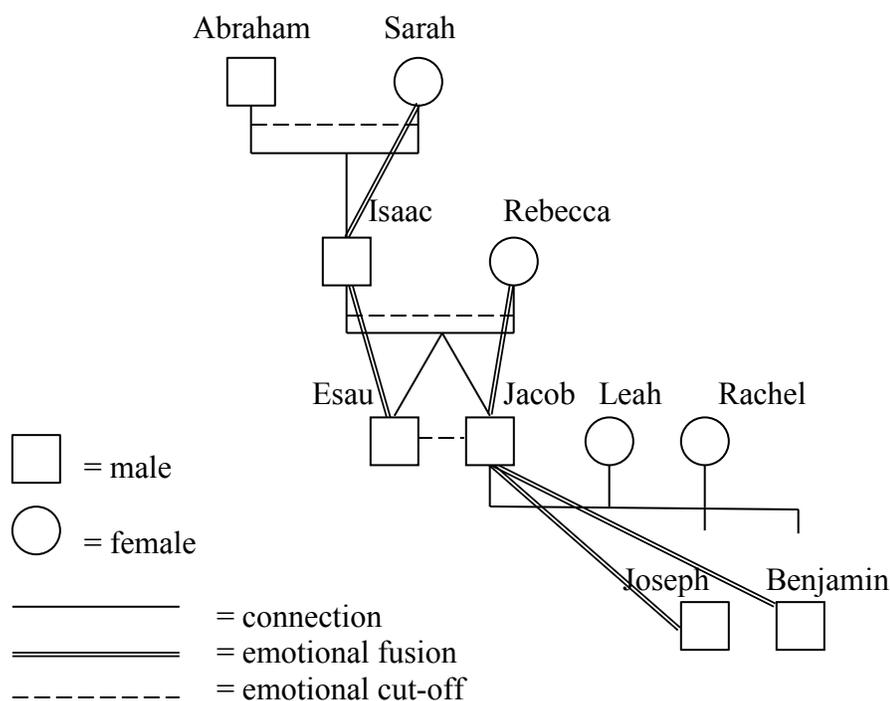
Joseph   Benjamin

The triangles in the relationships become very evident in this genogram. There was "emotional fusion"[61] between Sarah and Isaac, Isaac and Esau, Rebekah and Jacob, and amongst Jacob, Joseph and Benjamin. In each case, the two insiders create at least one outsider. By the time it gets to Joseph, his half-brothers are outsiders in the family.

When Joseph had his two dreams, the brothers saw this as a further indication of being outsiders. Moshe Soller pointed out that the hatred the brothers had toward Joseph "is not the resentment of a less favored to a more favored son. It is the fierce hatred for a usurper, by those who fear being completely disinherited, and despoiled of their birthright and blessing."[62]

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[61] Steinke, 39.

[62] Soller, 159.

So when opportunity arose, the brothers sold Joseph into slavery, and the brothers told Jacob that Joseph had been killed by wild animals. Jacob may have thought the special coat would have shown his favor on Joseph and kept him protected, but the brothers saw him as a threat to their relationship with Jacob. With Joseph gone, Jacob becomes more emotionally attached with Benjamin. When the brothers go to Egypt to get grain, Benjamin stayed with Jacob. When Joseph demanded Benjamin to come to Egypt, the brothers knew losing Benjamin would kill their father.

Throughout his life, Joseph was a non-anxious presence in the midst of anxiety. When he shared the dreams with his family, Joseph displayed no anxiety and did not seem to worry about the reaction of the brothers. The brothers' anxiety level rose as the dreams extended the family tradition of a single chosen son to carry on the family name. Jacob's anxiety increased, as he understood the dream to include Joseph being greater than him Yet, Joseph remained non-anxious. It was important to share the dream. At the time of the dreams, the family of Jacob was divided and quarrelsome. Joseph's brothers were described as the sons of Bilhah, Zilpah, and his father's wives, namely Leah and Rachel (Gen. 37: 2). Joseph had given bad reports about the brothers and was his father's favorite. Soller wrote that the dreams suggests "that the brothers form a single, peaceful, united family, standing together as if they were of one father and one mother (one moon)."[63] The power of these dreams allowed Joseph to remain a non-anxious presence until the dreams were fulfilled.

While a slave in Potiphar's household, Joseph was also a non-anxious presence. When the anxiety rose with Potiphar's wife, Joseph remained non-anxious and self-

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[63] Soller, 159.

differentiated. He knew his position was second in the house to Potiphar and the only thing he could not do was commit adultery and sin against God (Gen. 39:9). Instead, Potiphar was referred to as "his master," Potiphar's wife as simply "she," and Joseph as "that Hebrew slave" (Gen. 39: 17-19). The encounter with Potiphar and his wife was recorded in third person, pointing out the sense of being emotionally removed. In the midst of the anxiety, people are not referred to by name. Also, Joseph did not add to the anxiety by professing his innocence, and instead, accepted his punishment. The punishment for adultery was death or base slavery.[64] Being punished only by imprisonment, Claus Westermann implies that Potiphar was not convinced of Joseph's guilt.[65] Van Rad pointed out that if this was the case, "the narrator would have said so more clearly,"[66] yet did not give an explanation. Joseph's non-anxious presence, remaining self-differentiated and not entering the emotional triangle, may have saved his life.

While imprisoned, the warden put Joseph in charge because God was with him (Gen. 39: 22). When the wine bearer and baker came to Joseph with their dreams, Joseph remained a non-anxious presence and interpreted their dreams, even though the dreams led to anxious moments for the dreamers. When the wine bearer remembered Joseph still imprisoned two years later, Joseph was again non-anxious and self-differentiated when he came to Pharaoh's court. He knew his position, did not show hostility to the wine bearer, and interpreted Pharaoh's dreams. In his self-differentiation, Joseph did not take the

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[64] Westermann, 274.

[65] Westermann, 274.

[66] von Rad, 367.

credit for interpreting the dreams, instead giving the credit to God (Gen. 41:16).

Joseph's ability to remain a non-anxious presence, avoid triangles, and remain self-differentiated ultimately brought healing to his family. Joseph understood that by being sold into slavery and his father's belief that he was dead, "provided the opportunity for a new and essential pattern; one that could replace the previous pattern of election of a single son."[67] Jacob would build new relationships with his sons, and family unity could be restored. During the years of separation, Joseph could not let his father know he was still alive or else "the original pattern would re-establish itself with multiplied force."[68] Joseph was non-anxious, removed himself from the emotional triangles and waited until the family could be restored.

When the brothers came before Joseph needing grain, Joseph remained non-anxious and created a situation where the brothers would be forced to an analogous situation to their sin of selling Joseph into slavery.[69] Benjamin had replaced Joseph. He was the younger, favored son of the favorite wife of Jacob. Benjamin was now imprisoned.

While the brothers had sinned selling Joseph into slavery, Benjamin's imprisonment was not their fault. Yet, when the brothers return to Joseph, Judah said, "God has uncovered your servants' guilt" (Gen. 44:16). The guilt referred to the guilt of selling Joseph into slavery.[70] Judah, the leader of the brothers, then gave a speech of the

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[67] Soller, 162.

[68] Soller, 162.

[69] Sol Schimmel, Joseph and his Brothers: A Paradigm for Repentance, *Judaism* 37, no. 1 (12/01, 1988), 62.

[70] von Rad, 395.

family history. Not knowing that Joseph was the audience, Judah's speech displayed "how the brothers have changed in their relationship to each other and above all in their relationship to their father."[71] Joseph's non-anxious presence in this very anxious moment, allowed Judah to become self-differentiated and offer his own life to spare his brother and his father further pain.

Joseph used these encounters with his brothers in Egypt as a means to begin a new family relationship, where the entire family was part of the promise once given to Abraham. Soller wrote that Joseph did not immediately reveal himself to his brothers in order to not only receive repentance but also absolution. "Joseph must bring the brothers to forgive themselves, to absolve themselves of their deed and its consequences."[72] By allowing forgiveness and absolution, a new relationship could be formed with the brothers in the land of Egypt.

The limits of this new relationship were not fully known until after Jacob's death. Again, the brothers used deception and secrecy when they came to Joseph and lied about Jacob's final words. They did not go and see Joseph. From a distance, they sent word that Jacob had told Joseph to forgive his brothers (Gen. 50: 16-20). The physical distance displayed the emotional distance the brothers thought existed. When the brothers finally came to Joseph, they offered themselves as slaves. They were still struggling against the old family systems, with the triangles and lack of differentiation.

Instead, Joseph redirected their thinking, pointed to God, and stated that God had put Joseph in a place of leadership to save the family. Joseph spoke words of comfort and

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[71] von Rad, 395.

[72] Soller, 163.

kindness to his brothers. The once dysfunctional family was able to find healing and restoration through the forgiveness of Joseph.

At the end of Genesis, Joseph's dreams were fulfilled. "They were together. Not one was missing. … No longer the children of Bilhah and the children of Zilpah, but the children of Israel and the house of Jacob!"[73] Through the difficulties, as a result of Joseph's ability to handle his anxiety, the family system changed to include all family as part of God's chosen people.

<div align="center">Jesus and His Disciples' Family System</div>

Elements of Family Systems Theory observed in the community system of Jesus and his disciples include self-differentiation, and remaining a non-anxious presence within an anxious system. As a result of Jesus effectively handling his anxiety, he was able to demonstrate his leadership ability.

On many occasions, Jesus handled his level of anxiety and displayed a differentiation of self. "Many of the stories of Jesus' encounters with the disciples, the crowds, and the Pharisees show us a man who did not emotionally take over and derail his ability to stay focused and to think clearly."[74] Jesus was able to remain self-differentiated, dealing with the conflict or anxious moment with rational thinking. Many of the encounters of Jesus with the religious leaders contain anxious moments. For example, when the woman was caught in adultery (John 8:1-11), the accusers are ready to stone her. While the passage does not exist in the earliest Greek manuscripts, Bruce Metzger, John Calvin and Augustine all accepted the passage as inspired and historically

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[73] Soller, 167.

[74] Ronald W. Richardson, Becoming a Healthier Pastor: Family Systems Theory and the Pastor's Own Family, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 57.

accurate.[75] Instead of dealing with the content of the accusation with the emotions of the accusers, Jesus simply knelt down and drew in the sand. Even the act of not looking the accusers in the eye lowered the tension. Then, Jesus calmly said, "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." The tension was taken from the moment. The accusers left. On another occasion, when Jesus was rejected in his own town, he knew his place and said, "No prophet is accepted in his hometown" (Luke 4: 24). There was an anxious moment as Jesus claimed the title of prophet and stated that the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled through him. In wanting things to remain the way they were, the crowd wanted to kill him. This was in Nazareth, in the town where he was raised. Yet, even in the midst of their anger, Jesus was able to calmly walk away avoiding the conflict or compromise. Jesus knew his purpose and what the Father had sent him to do.

However, Jesus did get angry. When Jesus entered the temple he turned over the tables of the money collectors (Matt. 21: 12-17 and Mark 11: 15-17). Jesus knew what he was doing, and even quoted the Old Testament telling the crowds that the judgment of the current system was at hand. "Jesus is not only a *merciful and modest king* (20:29-21:9); he is also a *mighty judge.*"[76] Yet, even in the midst of his disgust, Jesus did not hurt the people, did not enter the worship place in the temple, and did not destroy property. In his act, Jesus demonstrated who he is, and what he came to do as the Messiah.[77] Notice, "Mark does not say that Jesus pronounces judgment on the Jews. The judgment was

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[75] Fredrick Dale Bruner, *The Gospel of John A Commentary,* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 507-508.

[76] Fredrick Dale Bruner, *Matthew*: *A Commentary*, Vol. 2, (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2004), 360, italics original.

[77] Bruner, *Matthew,* 360.

against the temple, and, as the following story indicates (11:27-33), against the religious authorities who superintended it."[78] Jesus came to reclaim the temple for all the nations to be able to come and worship the presence of God.[79] Jesus knew his purpose and used his emotions only as he saw necessary.

When Jesus' close friend Lazarus died (John 11), Jesus was able to remain self-differentiated, even when his followers were not. First, when Jesus was informed that Lazarus was sick, Jesus remained for two days. Jesus' timing was determined by the Father to give glory to Him, even thought he disciples, Mary and Martha were upset he had not acted sooner.[80] From the wedding in Cana (John 2) until his death and resurrection, Jesus continued to work at the Father's timing. When Jesus came to Mary and Martha, Jesus knew what was going to happen. Even so, Jesus paused and wept. He allowed his emotions to show. Fortunately, his disciples and followers allowed him this moment of grief. Then, even when the disciples were wondering if the death Lazarus foreshadowed their deaths and Mary and Martha wondered about the resurrection at the end of time, Jesus acted and created an even greater anxiety. John wrote, "The dead man came out." Lazarus was still referred to as "dead," and he was not mentioned by a familiar name. During Lazarus' death and being raised form the dead, Jesus displayed his leadership by remaining a non-anxious presence during a time of heighted anxiety.

Not only at Lazarus' tomb but also throughout his ministry, Jesus maintained self-differentiation and a non-anxious presence. However, the disciples were not able to

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[78] James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark.* The Pillar New Testament Commentary, (Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 2002), 344.

[79] Edwards, 343.

[80] Bruner, *John*, 660.

maintain this same level within the family system. When Jesus told the disciples that Lazarus was dead, Thomas answered, "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John 11: 16). Thomas is not able to remain self-differentiation during an anxious moment.

On another occasion, when Jesus asked the disciples "Who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:15, Mark 8: 29 and Luke 9:20). At that moment, Peter was bold, committing his life to following Jesus. In knowing who Jesus was, Peter knew who he was. Yet, the very next moment, Jesus predicted his own death. This raised the anxiety of the situation for Peter and the disciples. Peter rebuked Jesus, saying, "Never, Lord! This shall never happen to you" (Matt. 16:22) One moment Peter was calling Jesus "the Son of the living God," the next moment he was dissuading him. "A disciples place is *following* Jesus, not patronizing him; *obeying*, not correcting."[81] By failing to maintain a non-anxious presence, Peter became a potential barrier to Jesus' ministry.

Another moment when the disciples were not able to be non-anxious happened after the feeding of the five thousand (Matt. 14:22-33). Jesus sent the disciples across the lake by themselves while he dismissed the crowds and went onto the mountain to pray. Anxiety increased when a storm came up. Then, when Jesus came out to them, walking on the water, the disciples thought he was a ghost. "They were terrified." When Jesus remained a non-anxious presence, telling the disciples to not fear, Peter was able to become non-anxious enough to ask Jesus to allow him to walk on water. Yet, when Peter took his eyes off Jesus and focused on the wind and the waves, the fear and anxiety returned. Peter became anxious, lost faith, began to sink, and cried out to be saved.

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[81] Bruner, *Matthew,* 143, italics original.

On the night of Jesus' arrest, the anxiety in the family system was high (Matt. 26). In the upper room before dinner, when Jesus told the disciples that this was the night he would die, Peter vowed he would not desert nor deny Jesus. Yet, when Jesus was before the High Priest, Peter was not able to remain self-differentiated and non-anxious. Peter denied Jesus three times. Peter denied even being a disciple. When the rooster crowed, Peter went out alone and wept. In the midst of an anxious situation, Peter knew he had not been able to define himself in the anxious situation.

Despite struggles in effectively handling personal anxiety and maintaining self-differentiation as a disciple, Peter eventually exhibited positive qualities of a healthy family system. Tradition has it that Peter died on a cross upside down for his faith. This demonstrates that Peter knew who he was, what he believed and was willing to die for it. By the end of his life, Peter fully claimed the name "Rocky" on which Jesus built his church.

Family Systems and the Early Church

Early in the book of Acts, the followers of Jesus gathered together "were of one heart and mind" and shared everything in common (Acts 4:32-34). People were willing to sell their fields and give the money to the church. The poor and widows were taken care of. Yet, as the church grew, anxiety and conflict entered the family system. Part of this came from the variety of backgrounds, the need for leadership in the expanding congregation and the needed vision for a long-term ministry. As leaders were able to channel their anxiety in positive avenues, they were able to bring effective change to the system and develop as effective leaders.

By Acts 6, the Hellenistic Jews were complaining because some widows were

being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. A more diverse church was forming,

and some were anxious that they did not fit into the family system. Robert Clinton points

out "conflict is a powerful tool in the hand of God and can be used to teach a leader

lessons that he would not learn in any other way."[82] With the conflict of feeding the

widows, the leaders were able to learn how to responsibly deal with racial conflict before

it became a major issue in Acts 15.

To answer the complaints, the twelve apostles acknowledged the concern, realized

that it was not their primary responsibility, and dealt with the concern by establishing

leadership opportunities within the family system. The twelve knew their purpose was to

continue the ministry Jesus had set before them. They were to be witnesses of the life,

death and resurrection of Jesus in "Jerusalem, in all Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the

earth" (Acts 1:8). The work of serving as deacons was assigned to others. The twelve

kept their full attention to prayer and proclamation of the word (Acts 6:4). In this story,

they displayed self-differentiation. This helped deal with the anxiety within the family

system. Everyone was in agreement and accepted the new direction (Acts 6:5). As a

result of dealing with the conflict with a non-anxious presence, the word of their decision

actually caused the church to grow. Doing ministry they were not called to accomplish

might have caused future factions within the church. The twelve could have retained

power, but by sharing the ministry, others were able to become involved. This also added

some leadership and structure to the newly founded church.

One selected to serve was Stephen, described as a man full of faith and the Holy

Spirit, who did wonders and miracles. From a family systems perspective, Stephen was

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[82] Clinton, *Making,* 107.

self-differentiated, knew his purpose and vision and was a non-anxious presence in the midst of anxiety. Members of the Synagogue argued with Stephen and when they could not deter him, brought him before the Sanhedrin. When the false accusations were brought against him, Stephen replied not by defending himself, but by proclaiming the message of Jesus fulfilling the Jewish message. The only way for the writer to describe Stephen's demeanor was to say he had a face like an angel (Acts 6:15). Even as the anxiety rose with the Sanhedrin becoming furious, gnashing their teeth and holding their hands over their eyes to avoid Stephen's witness, Stephen remained a non-anxious presence. At the point of stoning, Stephen faithfully prayed that God would forgive their sins. One who witnessed this was a man named Saul, who would later be called to be an apostle. Stephen's non-anxious presence during martyrdom was not only a witness for Saul during his persecution; it was a witness for the entire church as they faced persecution for their faith in Jesus Christ.

These stories became an important building block for dealing with anxiety and differences when some followers wanted Gentiles to become circumcised in Acts 15. With the missionary work of Paul and Barnabas, as well as many others, the faith in Jesus was growing quickly outside of Israel and the Jewish faith. Starting in Acts 11, the ministry had gone beyond Jerusalem. As Gentiles were being converted, some leaders in Antioch required circumcision of these non-Jews as part of salvation. Immediately, Paul and Barnabas were involved in a dispute with the leaders and the anxiety level rose. Paul and Barnabas lowered anxiety when they turned to other authorities, the leaders in Jerusalem. Anxiety was lowered further by openly considering the circumcision issue.

When in Jerusalem, the facts were discussed. Some of the believers who were

Pharisees were also addressing the question of circumcision. The apostles and elders met

to consider the question. According the text, both sides were heard. Not only were the

concerns of Paul mentioned, the concerns of the Pharisees were heard. After much

discussion, Peter stated that God had already made this decision. God knew the hearts of

the Gentiles, and had already given them the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:8). Paul and Barnabas

gave witness to the wonders and signs of the Spirit that had already been displayed by the

Gentiles. Finally, James referred to the Scriptures for affirmation of accepting the

Gentiles (Acts 15: 13-20).

Bruce points out that the issue was not just circumcision, "the Jewish Christians

feared that the influx of so many Gentile believers would bring about a weakening of

Christian moral standards."[83] By requiring circumcision, Gentile believers would be "on

terms similar to those required of proselytes to Judaism."[84] Paul and Barnabas, along

with others, were concerned about maintaining the grace of the gospel. New believers did

not need to be weighed down by the heavy yoke of the Law. In response to both sides, it

was decided to not require circumcision while maintaining that the moral standards were

still valid. A letter was written to Antioch instructing them regarding newly converted

Gentile believers. The letter addressed their concerns regarding the moral issues, namely,

Gentile believers were to abstain "from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality,

from the meat of strangled animals and from blood" (Acts 15: 20).

The concerns that raised the level of anxiety were addressed; the leaders listened

and made a decision based on their faith in Jesus Christ. As a final step, after the decision

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[83] F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts,* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 301.

[84] Bruce, *Acts,* 301.

was made to accept Gentiles without circumcision, Paul and Barnabas took the answer back to Antioch. So that there would be no further dispute, a delegation went with them. This was not a decision by Paul and Barnabas, but by the apostles and elders based on the witness of God's work through the Spirit. What had started as conflict filled with anxiety and division turned into a moment of encouragement and proclamation of the grace of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Summary

During the biblical and theological segment of this study, the researcher examined the presence of God in the development of biblical leaders. First, the researcher explored the stages of leadership development to the life of Joseph (Gen. 37-50). Joseph's life was used as an example to demonstrate the stages Robert Clinton applied to Christian leaders. Further, by examining Joseph's family system, the researcher explored the implications of Joseph's leadership development upon his family system.

Next, the researcher explored the methods of developing leaders used by Jesus with his disciples. Jesus' methods of leadership development prepared his disciples for the time he would not be with them as a rabbi. Similar methods and skills Jesus used should be incorporated in current leadership development. In researching the family system of Jesus and the disciples, the researcher explored the ability of Jesus to remain self-differentiated and be a non-anxious presence, which provided a safe environment for the developing of leadership traits.

Finally, the researcher explored the development of the gift mix of Peter and Barnabas, two leaders in the early church in the book of Acts. Scripture was explored to discover the stories that demonstrated Peter and Barnabas' gift mix. This gift mix of

natural abilities, acquired skills and spiritual gifts provided the church the necessary leadership in the early church. At the same time, the development of new leaders brought changes to the family system, often accompanied by heightened anxiety. The leaders needed to learn how to lower anxiety in the system through self-differentiation and being a non-anxious presence.

As the leaders developed through the stages of leadership and used their gift mix for effective ministry, the changes affected the leader's family system. When leaders are aware of heightened anxiety and potential conflict, a leader's unique calling can be effectively implemented.

CHAPTER THREE: THE REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Becoming a Leader

Ministry Time-Line

After studying more than 900 different biblical, historical and contemporary leaders, J. Robert Clinton formed the basis of Leadership Emergence Theory. God develops leaders over a lifetime; therefore, having a lifelong perspective of this development is important.

Clinton defines a leader as "a person with God-given capacity and with God-given responsibility, who is influencing a specific group of God's people toward God's purposes for the group."[1] Leadership is influence not necessarily based on position, experience or relationship. Christian leadership adds the spiritual element as people sense that God's presence within a leader.

J. Robert Clinton devised a generalized ministry time-line as a tool to analyze the life of a Christian leader.[2] This time-line helps to understand and clarify what God has been doing at any given time in leader's life. With a life-long perspective, the events in a leader's life can be understood as lessons in development.

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[1] Clinton, *Making,* 245.

[2] Clinton, *Making,* 43.

Figure 3.1: Generalized Time-Line[3]

Phase 1 Sovereign Foundations	Phase 2 Inner-Life Growth	Phase 3 Ministry Maturing	Phase 4 Life Maturing	Phase 5 Convergence	Phase 6 Afterglow
0-20 years (Approximate age range)	18-24 years	22-35 years	30-55 years	50-70 years	65-90 years

In Phase 1 Sovereign Foundations, God is shaping a future leader through family, social and historical contexts.[4] The early shaping of personality and character will be building blocks for later leadership. Some events in these early years might display possible hints of the leader's destiny. Natural abilities and the development of basic skills may emerge for later leadership opportunities. Even if a person lives in an ungodly environment, God is providentially building the foundations of a leader.

In Phase 2 Inner-Life Growth, an emerging leader is growing in discernment, understanding and obedience to God. Seeking to know God more personally, a leader learns the importance of praying and hearing God.[5] An emerging leader is being developed and transformed to be more Christ-like in character. This is often a time of testing and reflection in preparation for future levels of leadership development. There may be some initial involvement in ministry to allow one's gift mix to be explored and developed.

In Phase 3, Ministry Maturing, the leader has leadership assignments with growing responsibility. Because of increased expectations and opportunities, the leader

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[3] Clinton, *Making*, 44.

[4] Clinton, *Making,* 44.

[5] Clinton, *Making,* 45.

gains a better understanding of the variety of relationships within the Christian community. The gift mix is increasingly developed and ministry opportunities are explored.[6]

During the first three phases, God is primarily focused on the developing the character of the leader, rather than the outcome of the ministry.[7] While emerging leaders might become frustrated with the lack of productivity, God's work is accomplished in the shaping of the leader for the future.

As a Christian leader moves into Phase 4 Life Maturing, the leader learns that ministry flows out of his/her being. Gaining a mature understanding of the gift mix, she/he realizes it is as important to know what one is created to do as what one is not created to do. In this phase, "communion with God becomes foundational; it is more important than ministry. Through this change, the ministry itself takes on an increased relevance and fruitfulness."[8] A leader will also develop a mature, biblical philosophy of ministry. Through both fruitful and difficult situations, he/she will lead obediently with spiritual authority. With this base, a leader will have an effective and lasting ministry.

In Phase 5 Convergence, past experiences and the gift mix of the Christian leader are matched in a way to maximize effectiveness in ministry.[9] A leader moves into an ideal role, fitting together calling, passion, giftedness, and methods. When a leader reaches this phase, a sense of "I was made for this" emerges. Many leaders in this phase become concerned with the multiplication and development of emerging leaders. While

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[6] Clinton, *Making,* 45.

[7] Clinton, *Making,* 45.

[8] Clinton, *Making,* 46.

[9] Clinton, *Making,* 46.

few leaders reach convergence, those that do have responded consistently to God's work in their lives.[10]

In Phase 6 Afterglow, a leader enjoys the fruits of ministry that has finished well and continues to influence others along the journey.[11] This phase is experienced rarely.[12] "The fruit of a lifetime of ministry and growth culminate in an era of recognition and indirect influence at broad levels."[13] He/she has a high level of influence from their vast wisdom and experience. Others look to them for significant blessing and benefit.

With the understanding of the generalized ministry phases as guidelines, leaders can build their personal time-lines. In each phase, God provides opportunities for leaders to grow in character, maturity and expansion of ministry.[14] When a leader cooperates with God, he/she grows in Christ-like character, maturity and effectiveness. Conversely, a leader could stagnate until responding positively to God's guidance.[15]

<p style="text-align:center">Characteristics of Finishing Well</p>

In order to reach afterglow, a leader needs to have a sovereign perspective. Instead of focusing on situations and daily events, leaders need to step back and view their life-story from God's perspective. Looking at the biblical leaders who finished well,

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[10] Clinton, *Making,* 47.

[11] Clinton, Making, 47.

[12] Clinton, *Making,* 47.

[13] Clinton, *Making,* 47.

[14] Clinton and Leavenworth, *Starting Well: Building a Strong Foundation for a Lifetime of Ministry*, (Altadena, Calif.: Barnabus Publ., 1998), 30.

[15] Clinton and Leavenworth, 31.

J. Robert Clinton recognized six common characteristics. Richard Clinton and Paul Leavenworth defined them:

1. Relationship with God: The leader maintains a personal vibrant relationship with God right up to the end of his/her life. The relationship is measured in terms of intimacy, obedience and faithfulness.

2. A Learning Posture: The leader maintains a learning posture and is taught through various sources such as life, other people and literature. The leader is a student of life and is able to learn lessons from life.

3. Christ-like Character: The leader evidences Christ-likeness in his/her character which is manifested in the fruit of the Spirit. The leader's life is characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

4. Maintain Convictions and Beliefs: The leader lives life based on his/her convictions and truth that God has revealed to him/her. The promises of God are received by faith and the leaders base decisions on convictions and beliefs.

5. Accomplish God's Purpose: The leader leaves behind an ultimate contribution or a legacy that is a testimony of his/her life honoring God. Lasting benefits result from the leader's character and how he/she lived his/her life.

6. Fulfilled their Sense of Destiny: The leader walked in a growing awareness of his/her sense of destiny and saw most of it or all of it fulfilled in his/her lifetime.[16]

While not all leaders exhibit all six characteristics, having them as guidelines will help leaders finish well as they are built into their lives. When a leader in early phases of the ministry time-line integrates these characteristics to his/her life, there is a better chance of successfully completely his/her mission.

While it is important to know these productive characteristics of leaders, it is equally important to know the major barriers that hinder success. J. Robert Clinton identified six major barriers to finishing well:

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[16] Clinton and Leavenworth, 15-16.

1. Finances—their Use and Abuse: Those who have power positions and make important decisions concerning finances tend to use practices which may encourage incorrect handling of finances, and eventually wrong use. This is illustrated in the New Testament account of Ananias and Sapphira.

2. Power—its Abuse: Leaders effective in ministry must use various power bases in order to accomplish their ministry. With power so readily available and used almost daily, there is a tendency to abuse it.

3. Pride—which Leads to Downfall: Pride that is inappropriate and self-centered can lead to the downfall of a leader. Leaders must have a healthy respect for themselves, yet must recognize that everything—including ministry—is a direct result of God's provision.

4. Sex—Illicit Relationships: Illicit sexual relationships have been a major downfall of both biblical and modern-day leaders.

5. Family—Critical Issues: Conflict between a leader and his or her spouse, between parents and children or between siblings can destroy a leader's ministry. Living out biblical values in families, husband-wife relationships, parent-children relationships, and sibling relationships are keys to the success of a leader.

6. Plateauing: Leaders who are competent tend to plateau. The leader's strength can become the weakness. The potential exists for leaders to continue to serve at the same level without being realistic about self or a Spirit-empowered renewing effect.[17]

These six barriers can block a leader from reaching his/her next growth phase of leadership development and can especially hinder the leader from finishing well.

Part of implementing leadership development is exploring the characteristics of leaders that finish well, along with the barriers, to help leaders incorporate activities that will help them to finish well while avoiding barriers. In the development of a leader, God acts sovereignly while the leader's primary role is to respond in a godly way.

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[17] J. Robert Clinton, "Three Articles about Finishing Well," *Clinton Leadership Commentary, Volume 1* (1999): 6.

While there is no guarantee that any leader will finish well, Clinton identified five

factors that enhance the chances. By learning to incorporate these factors into their lives,

leaders gain hope and encouragement to face the difficulties and challenges of ministry.

The five enhancements to finishing well are:

1. Perspective: Leaders need to have a lifetime perspective of ministry. An overall understanding of what is involved in leadership development must continue over a lifetime.

2. Times of Renewal: From time to time, leaders need to experience touches of renewal in their relationship with God.

3. Spiritual Disciplines: Leaders need discipline in many different areas of life and ministry. This is especially true in the area of spiritual disciplines…Practicing the spiritual disciplines will enable leaders to focus on Godly priorities and will help the leader eliminate behaviors and attitudes that could lead to his/her downfall.

4. Learning Posture: If a leader is continually learning from a multitude of sources, God has many opportunities to release new energy, vision, and ideas that will greatly help the leader continue in his/her development.

5. Mentoring: Mentoring is a relational process in which one person (the mentor) empowers another person (the mentoree) by sharing God-given resources (timely advice, wisdom, information, emotional support, protection, resources, opportunity) with him/her.[18]

The journey of a leader progresses through the six phases of leadership

development, as he/she integrates the six characteristics of leadership, avoids the six

barriers, and finds the five enhancements. While few leaders exhibit all the characteristics

and enhancements, knowing what those traits are and implementing those into one's life,

through time-line exploration, will benefit a developing leader.

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[18] Clinton and Leavenworth: 20-23.

Personal Time-Line

Terry Walling's *Focused Living Retreat*[19] provides a tool for building a personal time-line. Using a Post-It Note Time-Line, a leader creates a life map of significant events, people and circumstances that God has used to shape his/her life.

Both ordained clergy and non-ordained leaders within a congregation could benefit from building a personal time-line using Clinton's ministry time-line as a model. Through the exercise of building a personal time-line, leaders concentrate on their life journey and seriously think through each stage and chapter of their lives. Each significant event, person or circumstance is placed on a time-line identified as part of appropriate chapters that could include sovereign foundations, inner-life-growth, ministry and life maturing, convergence and afterglow. Personal time-lines are divided into the chapters the leader has already experienced. Joseph's story (Gen. 37-50) is used an example to demonstrate how to divide a leader's story into a time-line.

Benefits of building a personal time-line includes: identifying present leadership development; realizing the commonalities of transitions, crisis, blessings and struggles; noticing God's use of significant events, circumstances and people; understanding values, developing vision and biblical purpose; and building a personal purpose statement.

Interpreting Time-Line

By prayerfully examining the past, leaders can build a personal calling statement that includes biblical purpose, a definition of core values, and a vision for the future.[20]

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[19] Terry Walling, *Focused Living Renewal Kit*, (Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2001).

[20] Terry Walling, *Focused Living Retreat Workbook,* (Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2001), 15.

Through significant events, circumstances and people, God has shaped a leader, giving

him/her the gift mix to provide leadership in current and future ministry within the church,

the workplace and the home. Looking at a life-map gives a leader a sovereign viewpoint

instead of a situational approach. As the individual events, people and circumstances fit

together to tell the life story of a leader, God's providence is displayed.

Often the church has "reduced the Christian life to the eternal benefits we get

from Jesus rather than living as students of Jesus."[21] Exploring the chapters of a life-story,

a leader may comprehend God's activity in the world today through the events in his/her

life. Lessons learned from the time-line display God's training of the leader. The leader

can live as a disciple, learning how faithful responses have guided him/her to become

more Christ-like and negative responses have kept him/her from being the leader God

desires.

Understanding how God has provided and directed in the past gives both faith and

hope for the future. "Faith + hope = trust."[22] This trust allows the leader to move into the

future knowing that God is at work in their lives. Being able to live sovereignly into the

future gives a lens of interpreting events and situations with God's teaching in mind.

While painful events continue to happen, a leader can have faith that God is working

through them. Like Job, the leader may not understand the evil, suffering, or even death,

but the leader can live through it, trusting God's presence and healing.

As a first step, when a leader examines his/her life story, biblical passages may be

recalled. During a painful event, the leader may have focused on a particular biblical

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[21] Ogden, 46.

[22] Brennan Manning, *Ruthless Trust: the Ragamuffin's Path to God,* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Publishers, 2000), 86.

passage. Some passages of Scripture may have been used by God to give focus, purpose or direction during a particular chapter in life.[23] Along with these passages, reflection on passages that give biblical purpose can be explored for insights. (For example, Matt. 22: 37-40: 28:18-20; John 15: 1-11; Rom. 15:6-7; 2 Cor. 4:7-11; Phil. 3: 7-10; Col. 2: 6-7; 2 Pet. 1: 5-11; and Ps. 1; 23). After reflecting on Scripture and the life-map, a concise biblical purpose statement can be developed.

The second step to a personal calling statement is identifying a core set of values. "The values we hold today have been shaped by our past experiences and the environment in which we grew up."[24] Leaders need to be able to clearly identify and articulate their unique values.[25] A well-defined person strives to live out their discovered core values in their behaviors. By exploring the lessons from the personal time-line, values will be evident. A life lesson may have taught values relating to family, community and/or God: these may be positive or undesirable. Listing values learned allows the leader to build on the positive and change the undesirable. A leader can learn to make decisions based on life-long values instead of reacting instinctively to the situation.

After learning biblical purpose and values, a leader can establish a personal vision statement based on life goals. Realizing that discipleship is a lifelong journey, a leader sets life goals to give direction that is consistent with the biblical purpose and values. The goals enable a leader to live out values, live out one's biblical purpose, contribute to the

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[23] Walling, 17.

[24] Samuel D. Rima, *Leading from the Inside Out: The Art of Self-Leadership,* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 2000), 41.

[25] Rima, 41.

advancement of God's kingdom on earth, and facilitate the development in Christ-

likeness by moving the leader closer to all God desires him/her to be.[26] The vision, based

on what God has done in the past, points to a future directed by God and is often larger

than anything the leader could do without God's help and direction.

The biblical purpose statement, core values and personal vision provide a leader

with a personal calling statement. This holistic statement integrates what God has called

him/her to be and to do for God's glory.[27] This should give a leader a sense of direction:

"for this I was made."

> The more we get what we now call "ourselves" out of the way and let Him take us
> over, the more truly ourselves we become. There is so much of Him that millions
> and millions of "little Christs," all different, will still be too few to express Him
> fully. He made them all. He invented—as an author invents characters in a
> novel—all the different [people] that you and I were intended to be.[28]

If the leader is still in the early phases of Clinton's time-line, these insights could lead

toward ministry tasks leading toward convergence. Leaders that are in the convergence

phase will receive assurance that he/she is doing God's work. Those in the stage of

afterglow can reflect on what God has done and empower developing leaders with their

life lessons.

Using Strengths Finder

While written for the business environment, *Strengths Finder 2.0* by Tom Rath

could be an important tool for leaders understanding their gifts, talents and abilities.

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[26] Rima, 88.

[27] Walling, 30.

[28] C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity, A Revised and Amplified Edition, with a New Introduction, of the Three Books, Broadcast Talks, Christian Behaviour, and Beyond Personality*, (San Francisco, CA: Harper Publishers, 2001), 255.

Developed by Gallup, the *Strengths Finder* assessment helps leaders find the areas with

most potential for developing strengths from their natural talents.[29] Congregations often

put people into leadership positions to fill a vacancy or because someone is willing. By

offering an assessment to measure a person's natural abilities, leaders can be put into a

more positive and productive roles within the congregation.[30]

After a person has finished their personal time-line, the *Strengths Finder*

assessment can confirm or challenge what the leader has learned about their spiritual gifts,

natural talents, and acquired skills. Rath points out, "You cannot be anything you want to

be – but you can be a lot more of who you already are."[31] The significant events,

circumstances and people provide examples of learning, developing and implementing a

leader's gift mix. Learning exact talents can give an avenue for future development which

will give leaders improved "confidence, direction, hope and kindness toward others."[32]

Such an attitude improves the immediate participation and can provide goals for the

future.

Another benefit of a strengths assessment is to learn the areas where one has

weaknesses. A leader should use and build on unique strengths, while accounting for

unique weaknesses. When a leader realizes limitations, he/she has options. First, a leader

needs to decide if improvement is really necessary. If improvement is necessary for the

leader to accomplish these tasks, then build a system that allows the necessary tasks to be

done efficiently and effectively. "A second option is to partner with someone who has

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[29] Tom Rath, *Strengths Finder 2.0,* (New York: Gallup Press, 2007), 31.

[30] Rath, vi-vii.

[31] Rath, 9.

[32] Rath, 12.

more talent in the areas in which you are lacking."[33] Possibly, a leader is not supposed to be providing leadership in this area, but encouraging someone else. Part of leading, is recognizing the areas God has called a leader to influence others. An area of his/her weakness might be a place to influence others to take a leadership position so he/she can focus on personal strengths.

When a leader takes the *Strengths Finder* assessment shortly after finishing a personal time-line, he/she can develop his/her identified talents into leadership strengths. Building acquired skills along with natural abilities could help a leader influence followers in a godly direction. Part of that leadership could also help others build on their natural abilities.[34] This type of leadership is empowering the entire Body of Christ for current and future ministry.

Discovering a Leader's Major Role

Definition of Major Role

A leader discovering his/her major role is discovering God's core calling. "Calling is the truth that God calls us to himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is invested with a special devotion, dynamism, and direction lived out as a response to his summons and service."[35] As the personal calling statement identifies a leader's vision and direction, major role identifies methods of ministry. "Major Role is the function a leader carries out that is recognized by others which uniquely fits that leader and lets that leader effectively accomplish their personal

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[33] Rath, 23.

[34] Rath, 30.

[35] Os Guinness, The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life. (Nashville, Tenn.: Word, 1998), 29.

calling, performed from a certain base of ministry."[36] Major Role is a concise description of what a leader offers to the people of God the leader is influencing.

In order to discover one's major role, Walling and Sprague encourage leaders to identify their natural abilities, acquired skills, and spiritual gifts from a list (Figure 3.2).

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[36] Terry Walling and Brad Sprague, *Advancing Leaders: Discovering Your Ultimate Contribution,* (Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2002), 7.

Figure 3.2: Influence Elements

SPIRITUAL GIFTS	
Word Gifts	• teaching, exhortation, prophecy, apostleship, pastoring, shepherd, evangelism, wisdom, knowledge, faith, etc.
Power Gifts	• prophecy, discernment, tongues, interpretation, etc.
Love Gifts	• giving, mercy, service, administration, leadership, etc.
NATURAL ABILITIES	
Creative	• artistic, drama, design, musical, drawing, etc.
Cognitive	• problem solving, analytical intuitive, strategic thinking, system development, etc.
Relational	• inspire, visual-written-verbal communication, team building, sensitive, visioning, persuasive, social, event planning, etc.
Physical Dexterity	• athletics, physical, craftsman, etc.
Analytical Skills	• diagnostic, analyzing, synthesizing, etc.
Technical Skills	• computer, accounting, programming, etc.
ACQUIRED SKILLS	
Creative	• artistic, drama, musical, painting, graphics, design, etc.
Cognitive	• observation-analytical, training design, goal setting, Bible study skills, presenting, etc.
Relational	• leadership, mentoring, public communication, linguistic, marketing, conflict resolution, group dynamics, consensus building, vision casting, motivating, coaching, selecting-developing, training, consulting, design of systems and structure, counseling, etc.
Analytical Skills	• diagnostic, analyzing, synthesizing, etc.
Technical Skills	• computer, accounting, programming, etc.

(This list is to be used as a prompt) [37]

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[37] Walling and Sprague, 9.

Walling and Sprague use a Venn Diagram (a graphic organizer to illustrate comparisons) to illustrate the leader's gift mix with a leader's natural abilities, acquired skills and spiritual gifts.[38] Writing a statement that incorporates the learned insights learned becomes a leader's major role, or calling statement.

Major Role is based on a leader's values and vision. It is also related to the leader's time-line and lessons learned. For example, David's major role included modeling authenticity and passion as a shepherd of God's people. Joseph's major role could have been stated as giving life, freedom and family to those enslaved in natural and relational famine. One pastor defined his major role as: "I exhort and inspire people to discover what God has designed them to do. Then I mentor them until they have fulfilled God's purpose for their lives." Another leader's major role is: "I invest in leaders by analyzing their lives and moving them forward into God's purpose by modeling leadership and promoting growth through facilitating and coaching."

The brief major role statement gives clarity of focus so a leader can examine his/her methodology. Again, by examining the time-line, the leader can interpret events as God continually develops his/her major role. Looking forward, this statement empowers the leader to focus their attention and priorities to the unique contribution God has for him/her.

Leadership Context

While considering a leader's giftedness and major role, the focus needs to remain on God's work within the church of proclaiming the gospel. John Stott points out, "We must not define the church in terms of its leaders but rather define leaders in relation to

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[38] Walling and Sprague, 10.

the church."[39] God empowers leaders with a major role for the ministry within the congregation. God calls leaders to stewardship and service not selfishness. [40] The glory is for God alone and not to glorify the leader.

While all leaders have natural abilities and acquired skills, it is the Holy Spirit that provides spiritual gifts. Noticing the empowering by the Spirit in the Bible, Julianne Cenac states, "Persons of various statuses were called into their roles of leadership by virtue of God's spirit filling them and enduing them with a special grace, power, or ability."[41] Cenac provided a list of biblical leaders with reference to the working of the Spirit.

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[39] John Stott, Basic Christian Leadership: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel, and Ministry, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 93.

[40] Guinness, 45.

[41] Julianne R. Cenac, "Leader Emergence and the Phenomenological Work of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 3, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 132.

Table 3.1: Holy Spirit phenomena and select biblical leaders[42]

Leader	Scripture phenomenon	Holy Spirit
Bezalel	Exodus 31:3	I have filled him with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, intelligence, and skill in all kinds of crafts
The Seventy	Numbers 11:17	Portion of the Spirit taken from Moses and put upon the leaders
Joshua	Numbers 27:18	Who has the Spirit in him/Full of the Spirit of Wisdom All the Children of Israel listened to him, He led Israel
Saul	1 Samuel 11:6	The Spirit of God came upon him in power
	1 Samuel 16:4	Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul
David	1 Samuel 16:13	From that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power
Isaiah	Isaiah 61:1	The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor
Jesus	Matthew 3:16	He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.
	Luke 4:1	Full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert
	Luke 4:14	Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit
Peter	Acts 2:4	And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit
	Acts 4:8	Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit

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[42] Cenac, 131-132.

The Holy Spirit equips and empowers leaders for ministry. As in the story of Saul (1 Sam. 16:14), God can remove the gifts of the Spirit from a leader. Even when a leader defines his/her major role, it should not lead to boasting, but to applying the major role for the work of the Kingdom of God.

Leader as Effective Change Agent

In order to build a leadership development environment, work needs to be done at the foundation to give individual ownership, intentional self-awareness, genuine community and a safe environment of accountability. This deep change can come when a key leader, usually the pastor, is entrusted by the congregation to effect change in the congregation.

To prevent a congregation entering a stage of apathy, doubt, or fractions of complaining, the first foundational tool of individual ownership is necessary. Members need guidance and direction to take personal responsibility for their own development and sense of calling. Not only is the pastor called to ministry, the members are called to their particular ministry within the larger body. To accomplish this, they need a healthy view of self and their importance to the larger body. Change requires self-motivation and a willingness to be responsible for their own journey. The leaders who are taking responsibility are to be a model and empower others to follow individual paths.

The second tool needed is an intentional self-awareness. The more people are focusing on their own gifts, talents and abilities, the greater is their understanding of their calling to ministry. The congregational culture needs to allow people to explore who they are and what gifts God has given them for the betterment of the community. Instead of simply using people's gifts, talents and abilities to further the goals of the pastor or even

the organization, a leadership environment allows people to reach their own goals. Leaders come alongside and empower development of what God intends them to be. Part of this always includes ongoing assessment of gifts, calling, role in the community, and understanding of being a faithful child of God.

Genuine community is the third tool needed to move toward a leadership development culture. Genuine community comes about when people are gathering in discipling groups as a leadership team. Instead of meeting simply to accomplish tasks and goals, they gather in community to support, guide, and sharpen one another. Without authentic community, leadership can become individualistic and not building up the body of Christ. All leaders are part of the larger body of Christ supporting each other and the larger community.

The final tool needed in moving toward a leadership development culture is a safe environment of accountability. "Change requires some degree of feeling safe, of feeling OK with 'the new' that will emerge in the change. If people don't change even when they can see a way to do it, it may be because it feels too 'risky' for them."[43] The culture needs to allow people to grow not only by sharing their strengths and successes, but also have the freedom to fail and improve weaknesses. This will allow time and space to have honest evaluation and self-disclosure without the threat of being judged or dismissed. The environment needs to have a high level of trust and respect as the body reaches for the common goal of journeying on the path of following God. When people are free to honestly share their struggles and their doubts without judgment, growth not only for the individual but also for the body can thrive. "If we can hear their stories as being about

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[43] Richardson, 27.

their anxieties and how they try to maintain a sense of security or safety by having an other-focus, then we may be a resource to them in thinking through their issues."[44] In bringing change, the leader needs to focus on the person's thinking, feeling and behavior in a situation. It is not about assigning blame, or getting emotionally involved in story. Since all leaders are continually developing and growing as God guides them, accountability to themselves and others will encourage them to develop new gifts, talents and abilities for the wellbeing of the community.

Understanding Family Systems Theory

Anxiety

All congregational family systems deal with anxiety. "Put people together and inevitably anxiety will arise. Anxiety can be infectious. We can give it to others or catch it from them. What precisely triggers anxiety is unique to each system. Common activators are significant changes and losses. They upset the stable patterns and balance of the system."[45] Anxiety is a natural part of all relationships. How leaders respond to heightened anxiety affects the entire family system. By gaining an understanding of their personal response to anxiety, leaders will be able to effectively handle these heightened moments in a healthy way.

Effective congregational leaders are aware of anxiety and their reactions to the cause of the anxiety. Instead of focusing on the symptoms of anxiety, it is important for leaders to deal with the root cause. A symptom of anxiety "shows up in such things as members being consistently late for meetings or failing to show up at all; members being

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[44] Richardson, 23.

[45] Steinke, 15.

apathetic or frequently in conflict; patterns of illness or accidents; coalitions and cliques being formed; secrets being kept; patterns of functioning in which one person 'does it all' or no one does much of anything."[46] When a leader focuses on these symptoms instead of the cause, unhealthy patterns are developed within the congregation. Leaders may begin to diagnose others, complain about others, or focus on the problem people, instead of dealing with the deeper, underlying cause of anxiety.

Quantity and speed of change within the congregation may cause overwhelming anxiety.[47] If implementing organic leadership development brings rapid change to the leaders, the heightened anxiety within the system needs to be absorbed. "Eventually it drains off and settles somewhere."[48] Understanding how family systems absorb this anxiety is necessary to bring effective change within a family system. It is also important for congregational leaders to control the quantity and speed of changes. The insights for change which a leader gains from organic leadership development may need to be implemented slowly within the family system.

While leaders are exploring their personal life stories through time-line analysis and building their personal vision and major role statements, it is necessary for leaders to understand anxiety and its effect on the family system. If crisis arises in the congregation during this time, it is important for the leader to maintain healthy relationships. Friedman writes that when anxiety is heightened, "keep up your functioning… develop a support

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[46] Ronald W. Richardson, Creating a Healthier Church: Family Systems Theory, Leadership and Congregational Life, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2005), 131.

[47] Edwin H. Friedman, Margaret M. Treadwell and Edward W. Beal, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of Quick Fix* [New ed.], (New York: Seabury Books, 2007), 57.

[48] Steinke, 15.

system outside of the work system; stay focused on long-term goals; practice deep breathing, prayer, or mediation; listen to your body; watch the triangles; keep the system loose with humor; Accept the possibility that your own functioning brought it [crisis] on."[49] As a leader explores the events, people and circumstances of their personal time-line, unresolved episodes can also bring an increase to their personal anxiety.

As leaders, it is important to "focus primarily on maintaining a self-regulation of their own reactive mechanisms… [with the] primary emphasis on their own continual growth and maturity."[50] Within the family system, this happens when leaders focus on the anxiety and their own reaction to that anxiety. Gaining an understanding of the basic concepts of family systems theory can give leaders the ability to continue to grow and mature as leaders and guide their followers.

As a leader defines his/her goals, clarifies his/her values and develops his/her major role statement, he/she needs to realize the impact this will have on those around him/her. Personal change will affect those in contact with the leader, both in family and in church settings. Edwin Freidman writes, "When family theory is applied to religious work systems, six basic family concepts have particular relevance: homeostasis, process and content, the nonanxious (sic) presence, overfunctioning, triangles, and symptom-bearer (identified patient)."[51] By understanding these basic concepts, a developing leader may be able to effectively handle or avoid conflict and sabotage during times of heightened anxiety.

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[49] Friedman, Treadwell and Beal*, 245.

[50] Friedman, Treadwell and Beal*, 137-138.

[51] Edwin H. Friedman, Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue, (New York: Guilford Press, 1985), 202.

Homeostasis

Understanding homeostasis can be helpful whenever there is a change in leadership. As lay leaders are developed, the roles of ordained leadership, and previous lay leadership may create an imbalance to the family system. Freidman understands homeostasis as "self-corrective ways, to preserve the organizing principles of its existence … a system's problems in terms of an imbalance that must have occurred in the network of its various relationships, no matter what the nature of the individual personalities."[52] Especially if only a few families have been leading the congregation, change involving more leaders using their gift mix can cause conflict. The family system may react to new ideas or changes in philosophy of ministry. The family wants the system to remain the same.

Often the surface looks calm, and everything is moving smoothly. Exploring leadership development might even give a burst of energy to the congregation as people explore their ministry role. Yet, under the surface, issues may begin to emerge. These may be a result of issues in the families of members or issues within the church family that have not been explored in the past. Either way, the church family balance may be shifting and the understanding of role, continuity and identity may change. For example, new leadership could shift the direction to a new area of ministry for the church. From a leader's major role, the church might become more involved in mission, evangelism, or Christian education. Even if the programming of Christian education moves from one adult Sunday school class to multiple small group home discipleship training opportunities, the identity of the congregation may change. During this time of transition,

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[52] Friedman, 23.

some members of the church might get anxious and symptoms might lead the church to not utilize individual's calling and return to the former way of doing ministry.

Friedman reminds leaders to focus on the process instead of the content of the controversy. "The capacity of clergymen and clergywomen to keep their minds on homeostatic changes in the emotional process of their congregational families depends largely on their ability to identify the content issues such homeostasis promotes."[53] While the conflict calls the leaders to focus on the issues, it is important to focus on the process of change. If lay leaders are developed to utilize their giftedness, this may bring changes to they system. Maybe the old guard no longer has a role, as the focus is switched to those involved in leadership development. Or, as lay leaders are developed, the role of the clergy may change. Again, balance is compromised. Some within the system might concentrate on the pastor's performance. Others might focus on lack of energy being applied to a formerly important program. As the leadership team is able to step back and focus on the process, it is important to be non-anxious about the content of conflict and focus on the process of leadership development. Then, true systemic change can happen with the family system.

For example, as a church started developing leadership to reach the youth of the community, a youth director was hired with gifts of compassion, friendliness, inspiration, outreach and teaching. He started building a youth program with volunteer leaders sharing his vision for the program. The church started a second, contemporary worship service. The ministry began to grow. The identity of the church shifted from generational leaders and traditional worship. When an incident occurred involving a long time church

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[53] Freidman, 205.

family youth and a community youth, the family system focused on the context of the

conflict instead of the process of systemic change. Within months, the head pastor and

youth director were removed. The youth group returned to being a small part of the

church's ministry, no longer reaching community youth. Though now a smaller church,

the family system returned to the original balance and identity. When the church focused

on the content of criticism, the anxiety in the system caused the church to revert. If the

church had focused on the process, systemic change might have been achieved.

As medical doctors look at symptoms to find the pathology of disease, church

leaders need to look beyond the content of the visible issues to the systemic issues.

> To the extent that we are unable to think *process,* we mistake symptoms for the real issues. When that happens, churches simply recycle basic problems in the form of new symptoms. On the other hand, the ability to *think* systems offers the possibility that symptoms will be taken seriously, not as *the problem,* but as doorways into understanding the problem.[54]

As leaders are growing in their understanding of ministry giftedness, issues may arise that

are not the problem, but point out a previously unaddressed problem in the family system.

Differentiation of Self

It is important when implementing leadership development within a church family

system to maintain a self differentiated non-anxious presence. Friedman writes,

> Differentiation means the capacity of a family member to define his or her own life's goals and values apart from surrounding togetherness pressures, to say "I" when others are demanding "you" and "we." It includes the capacity to maintain a (relatively) nonanxious (sic) presence in the midst of anxious systems, to take maximum responsibility for one's own destiny and emotional being.[55]

> When a church begins implementing leadership development, leaders will be

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[54] Lawrence E. Matthews, "Bowen Family Systems Theory: a Resource for Pastoral Theologians," *Review & Expositor* 102, no. 3 (06/01, 2005): 435.

[55] Friedman, 27.

challenged to realize their giftedness, their major role including goals and values, and personal vision statement. This will require them to focus on the "I" within the family system. While God has used the life events to shape them into godly leaders, a side effect will be more self-differentiated leaders.

Exploring life stories and defining one's major role brings definition of self. "Defining a self means identifying the beliefs, values, commitments, and life principles on which we will base our lives. These determine how we will or won't behave in every circumstance of life, and particularly with our closest relationships."[56] Leaders are able to define their core being, what really matters. As the leader begins to implement their learning of self within the family system, there may be the temptation to conform to the needs of others or compromise one's beliefs, values and life principles to fit back into the system.

"Self-differentiation means 'being separate together' or 'being connected selves.' It is a life-long process, never attained, always tested."[57] In any relationship, there is a constant tug between being together and being alone. If one moves too far toward togetherness, one becomes enmeshed creating emotional fusion. Moving too far the other direction creates isolation and a breakdown of the system. Self-differentiation is being able to define individually while being in relationship with others. While anxiety is always present in systems, the ability of a leader to maintain integrity and well-being of self while relating to others can allow the anxiety to work for the benefit of the system.

It is important to remember that self-differentiation is not an end in itself. "Self-

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[56] Richardson, *Pastor,* 59.

[57] Steinke*,* 12.

differentiation serves the *God*-appointed end for all relationships: loving self-giving on

others' behalf, on the basis of decision and not compulsion or fear."[58] The ability to be

both separate and together is always working for the good of the community. It is not

simply knowing oneself better or placing oneself as more important or mature than

another. It is maintaining a healthy soul while maintaining healthy relationships. As a

leader is examining life development and gift mix, he/she will be exploring how life

events shaped his/her soul. It is equally important to explore the healing necessary to

some relationships in the past. If not, this can cause increased anxiety to the system.

A leader that is working on self-differentiation will be better equipped in dealing

with over-functioning. When anxiety within a system causes a leader to play the hero, or

take on the responsibility belonging to others, it creates more anxiety in the system.

"Overfunctioning in any system is an anxious response in both senses of the word,

'anxious' as in anticipatory and 'anxious' as in *fearful*."[59] While implementing leadership

development can help leaders understand their calling, if they over-function and take on

roles or responsibilities belonging to others, it could cause increased anxiety to the

system.

Part of differentiation is being a non-anxious presence within the family system.

"A 'self-differentiated' person can bring to such a system encumbered by anxiety exactly

what is needed for health and regeneration. As a non-anxious presence, such a leader can

reduce the threshold of the group's anxiety and make a space for creative action. In not

responding to others' reactivity, a leader who is self-differentiated can break the cycle of

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[58] Larry T. Howe, Self-Differentiation in Christian Perspective, *Pastoral Psychology (46, no. 5)*: 354, italics original.

[59] Friedman, 211, italics original.

blame and sabotage."[60] A self-differentiated leader has vision for his/her future and by remaining non-anxious can help provide a vision to the anxious system.

Leaders need to keep a level of self-differentiation. "In order to be nonanxious (sic), leaders have to learn to take responsibility for what belongs to them, and to not take responsibility for actions or results that do not belong to them or for which they are not responsible, even when the congregation wants to point the finger of blame and insist they take responsibility."[61] Even while being a part of the system, a leader needs to separate himself/herself from the system. One's goals and values need to remain separate from the goals and values of the system. Being able to realize what are appropriate and justifiable complaints, and react with well thought out and self-defined responsibility is part of being differentiated. At the times leaders make mistakes. Being able to admit the mistakes and take ownership while not incorporating the other's emotions and anxiety is essential.

Emotional Triangles

The concept of emotional triangles is important in understanding family systems within the congregation. Friedman describes, "The basic law of emotional triangles is that when any two parts of a system become uncomfortable with one another, they will 'triangle in' or focus upon a third person, or issue, as a way of stabilizing their own relationship."[62] Steinke interprets this as means of reducing the anxiety between two

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[60] Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, *Leadership From Inside Out: Spirituality and Organizational Change* (The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York, 2004), 48.

[61] Gilbert R. Rendle, Behavioral Covenants in Congregations: A Handbook for Honoring Differences, (Bethesda, Md.: Alban Institute, 1999), 6.

[62] Friedman, 35.

people. "When A is at odds with B, the most anxious of the pair introduces C (third

party) to reduce anxiety between A and B."[63] While this reduces the anxiety of the most

anxious person, introducing another person makes it more difficult to resolve the initial

conflict. Since emotional systems strive for homeostasis, and many participants are

involved in the system, emotional triangles are always developing and overlapping.

Friedman lists the "seven laws of an emotional triangle":[64]

1. The relationship of any two members of an emotional triangle is kept in balance by the way a third party relates to each of them or to their relationship.
2. If one is the third party in an emotional triangle it is generally impossible to bring change (for more than a week) to the relationship of the other two parts by trying to change their relationship directly.
3. Attempts to change the relationship of the other two sides of an emotional triangle not only are generally ineffective, but also, homeostatic forces often convert these efforts to their opposite intent.
4. To the extent a third party to an emotional triangle tries unsuccessfully to change the relationship of the other two, the more likely it is that the third party will wind up with the stress for the other two.
5. The various triangles in an emotional system interlock so that efforts to bring change to any one of them is often resisted by homeostatic forces in the others or in the system itself.
6. One side of an emotional triangle tends to be more conflictual than the others.
7. We can only change a relationship to which we belong. Therefore, the way to bring change to the relationship of two others (and no one said it is easy) is to try to maintain a well-defined relationship with one another. To the extent we can maintain a "nonanxious (sic) presence" in a triangle, such a stance has the potential to modify the anxiety in the others. The problem is to be both nonanxious (sic) and present.

When a leader begins working on differentiation, emotional triangles become

evident. "Organized around a family's emotional sensitivities, they are always present,

even when dormant. They become active as anxiety builds in the system."[65] These

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[63] Steinke, 52.

[64] Friedman, 36-39.

[65] Richardson, *Pastor,* 97.

triangles define the relationships and it is impossible to get close to one person when another is drawing closer while triangulating yet another person.

As a leader deals with differentiation and begins to define relationships based on beliefs and values, these triangles will create anxiety in the system. As lay leaders discover their gift mix and their unique contribution to the church family system, the relationships of triangles may be changed.

Ronald Richardson provides three indicators of triangles in relationships: pursuit and distance, side taking, overfunctioning/underfunctioning.[66] As anxiety between two people increase, people will distance themselves from one another. If these two draw closer to another person and attempt to enlist help, triangles can be formed. People who commonly draw away from others and enlist help are building triangles and not differentiating. This can lead to taking sides. When there is anxiety between two people, the third person enlisted to help takes sides in the relationship. This gives authenticity to the anxiety, and for the moment might calm the anxiety, yet it does not allow authentic relationships to be formed. Without dealing with this side taking in one relationship, especially in primary relationships, such as between parents, siblings or children, the side taking behavior will continue in other relationships. When one person over functions and worries about the needs of another, and thus allowing the second to under function, anxiety is subsided. The person who over functions or under functions can take this character trait and apply it to other relationships within the church environment.

Within the nuclear family, parents focus their anxiety on the children and build a triangle with a child between the parents' relationship. "The individuals in any system

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[66] Richardson, *Pastor,* 99-100.

who are most likely to be triangulated are those who are in the responsible or vulnerable position."[67] Steinke points out that in a college setting, the prime targets of triangles might be the college president (responsible position) and the professor seeking tenure (vulnerable position).[68] Within the church setting the leadership team is usually in the most responsible position and a target of triangles. If one of the team members deals with an illness or extreme loss, he might be in a very vulnerable position.

When a leadership team begins implementing leadership development, they might enter a vulnerable position. Instead of simply allowing the system to operate as it has in the past, new roles are being formed. As people are exploring their calling and experiment with new directions of leadership, the potential of failure or struggle exists. While adjusting to new models, the normal functioning of the system is impaired. The anxious members want the system to return to stability. People can begin to over focus on the role of the pastor or key leaders in this transition. This can lead to triangles being developed to attempt to ease the anxiety in the system. Instead of having the flexibility to accept new roles and a new vision, the system requires people to return to their former selves and hinders the growth.

<div align="center">Symptom-Bearer (Identified Patient)</div>

The final concept of family systems within the congregation is the symptom-bearer (identified patient). In contrast to focusing on just the individual acting out, family systems understand that the identified patient is often the weakest or most stressed member of the system. "The family member with the obvious symptoms is to be seen not

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[67] Steinke, 54.

[68] Steinke, 54.

as the 'sick one' but as one in whom the family's stress or pathology has surfaced…In a congregational family it could surface as the drinking, burnout, or sexual acting out of the 'family leader.'"[69] While it is important to deal with the sin or consequences of the identified patient, it is also important to understand the family system that led to the stress or conflict for that individual.

Measuring Stress

Understanding family systems theory concepts of homeostasis, process and content, non-anxious presence, triangles and symptom bearer helps a developing leader handle stress and anxiety within the church family system. During times of transition, levels of anxiety will increase. The family system strives to maintain homeostasis. All family systems experience anxiety. Anxiety is neither positive nor negative; it is an indicator to significant changes or losses that have upset the stable patterns and balance of the system.[70] Anxiety is an "alarm mechanism [to alert] potential danger."[71] The reaction to raised anxiety can cause a family system to enter conflict or sabotage to be a catalyst for lasting effective change.

While this anxiety might relate to the change itself, it may point to past, unaddressed problems. It is possible that anxiety may arise when leaders are focusing on their personal time-line or when utilizing different skills. Again, as leaders explore their past relationships, former triangles may become evident and lead to change and added anxiety to the family system. Being a non-anxious presence in the midst of this stress

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[69] Friedman, 19.

[70] Steinke, 15.

[71] Steinke, 15.

filled situation is important. "A church with serious problems will be more fused than differentiated, and there will be a high level of anxiety present."[72] Therefore, the measuring the level of anxiety after by implementing organic leadership development can indicate the ability of the family system to bring lasting change.

While it is difficult to measure homeostasis, self-differentiation, or triangles, the Perceived Stress Scale (Appendix A) is able to measure the change increase or decrease of stress within the church leadership team. As the level of stress is increased, the level of anxiety within the leader is increased. If the anxiety increases, there is a greater possibility of emotional triangles being developed, more fusion than self-differentiation, and potential symptom bearers. Any of which could lead to increased conflict or sabotage within the family system.

<div align="center">

Conflict in Family Systems

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Every congregation goes through a time of increased anxiety and conflict. Congregations may have conflicts over values, worship styles, theology, political positions, pastor's job performance, or building usage. When people are in relationship, differences will arise, and if not handled early, can become major issues. When implementing leadership development training, these issues may arise as leaders begin to explore their past and apply it to the current situations in the church. If the past issues in family of origin have not been dealt with, those issues may appear in their involvement within the church, or the anxiety from their past may affect their actions in present situations. Therefore, it is important to understand conflict from a family systems perspective while implementing leadership development training.

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[72] Steve M. Lyon, "Leading in Congregational Conflict: A Family Systems Model, *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 43, no. 3 (06/01, 2001): 52.

Conflict can be specific disputes or just a general increase in anxiety within the system. When a self-differentiated leader is aware of heightened anxiety, it is important for the leader to remain engaged without becoming fused to the conflict. Friedman describes three tasks for a leader in the midst of conflict. First, a leader will define his/her own goals and self, while staying connected. A leader must stay in touch with his/her call. Second, the leader will show a willingness to take nonreactive, clearly conceived, and clearly defined position. A leader will define his or her position while staying in relationship. The leader defines himself and does not require others to conform to him, yet allows them to follow into something new. Third, the leader will deal effectively with sabotage.[73] "One of the key principles in leadership based on family systems thinking is the principle of openness, integrity, and honesty. If sabotage is to occur, the leader will see to it that it does not occur in the darkness and out of sight."[74] Resisting sabotage means: working to understand, rather than evaluate; making sure there is open communication; depersonalizing reactions so they are seen as expressions of discomfort; being vulnerable; imparting humor and play that are healthy; and honoring the chaos.[75]

When conflict does erupt in a congregation, leaders need to distinguish the level of conflict. At the first level, people are able to stay focused on the problem at hand. Anxiety levels are fairly low. The people are solving the problem. In level two conflict, people begin to put self-protection ahead of the problem itself. Anxiety begins to rise and lack of communication and trust begins to build. By level three, people move from self-

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[73] Friedman, 228-229.

[74] Lyon, 52.

[75] David B. Lott, *Conflict Management in Congregations* (Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 2001), 93-94.

protection to winning. It is here that people can become less differentiated, and begin triangulating with others. People distance themselves from the other and bring a third party in to deal with them. Up to the third level of conflict, work can be done to re-establish the relationship and move the congregation forward if individuals are willing to accept outside help. In level four conflict, people are no longer interested in just winning, they try to get rid of people or programs. If they cannot win, they leave. Finally, level five conflict turns people into religious fanatics about their positions. Not only are the opponents gone, God no longer wants them involved in any congregation.[76]

The level of conflict can erupt at any level while implementing leadership development. If the gift mix and major role of a leader aligns with the overall vision and values of the congregation, any conflict could provide the energy that stimulates to new ministry when used appropriately.[77] Working through the conflict could also galvanize the organization. Even when the level of conflict moves above three, it is important to deal with the process as well as the content of the conflict. A deeper family issue might be the cause. People might be threatened by their position within the system if another has acquired skills equal to theirs.

Being aware that the pastor could be the focus of conflict in the midst of leadership development is also important. "The role of clergy often provides particular focal point for conflict. Clergy can help by working with the governing board to define the areas of responsibility the church will emphasize."[78] Especially if the pastor

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[76] Lott, 16.

[77] Lott, 53.

[78] Lott, 46.

participates in leadership development training, roles within the congregation might change. If part of the direction of the church is to move toward empowering the laity in ministry, some tasks traditionally provided by the pastor may be given to the laity. Equipped with his/her own major role and gift mix, the pastor should focus on his/her leadership strengths and delegate to the laity according to their strengths. As long as this fits within the vision of the congregation, lay leaders are equipped with leadership tasks, and the board approves, the pastor should pursue his/her calling.

Initially, this could lead to conflict. Members of the congregation might be ill prepared for the new role of the pastor. Keeping open channels of communication, being self-differentiated, and not triangulating will help the pastor handle the conflict. Further, the pastor must understand his/her role within the family system. "Pastors typically assume that they are parents, but often this is because they confuse their pastoral authority with their role in the family."[79] While the pastor might be in favor of the change in responsibility, the influence of the parents within the system is more important.

As change comes to the family system, anxieties will rise. "People who are feeling powerless, excluded, and unheard find ways of surfacing their complaints."[80] The complaints that are being raised may not be addressing the real issues within the family system. People need to feel safe and a valued part of the system. This is especially true when the leadership development brings changes to the structure of the family system. Clear guidelines about the revised roles and responsibilities of the clergy, staff, laity, and committees need to be reestablished.

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[79] Charles H. Cosgrove and Dennis Hatfield, *Church Conflict: The Hidden Systems Behind the Fights* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 114.

[80] Lott, 52.

In order to deal effectively with conflict within the congregation, understanding the family structure is paramount. The role of the parent is determined by the family. "The difference between congregational parents and children is solely a matter of authority: recognized power."[81] Those that the family acknowledges as authority are the parents within the family system. Clergy might fall into this role, but only if they are placed there by the congregation.[82] While handling conflict, the people with the recognized power in the family system need to be respected. When developing leaders have the blessing of the parents within the family system, change is less likely to affect conflict.

Implementing leadership development might draw awareness to a chronically anxious system within the congregation. According to Friedman, chronically anxious systems have five characteristics:

1. Reactivity: the vicious cycle of intense reactions of each member to events and to one another.

2. Herding: a process through which the forces for togetherness triumph over the forces for individuality and move everyone to adapt to the least mature members.

3. Blame displacement: an emotional state in which family members focus on forces that have victimized them rather than taking responsibility for their own being and destiny.

4. A quick-fix mentality: a low threshold for pain that constantly seeks symptom relief rather than fundamental change.

5. Lack of well-differentiated leadership: a failure of nerve that both stems from and contributes to the first four.[83]

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[81] Cosgrove and Hatfield, 47.

[82] Cosgrove and Hatfield, 48.

[83] Friedman, Treadwell and Beal, 53-54.

When dealing with conflict, these five characteristics need to be addressed. Part of leadership development training should help leaders become well-differentiated hopefully addressing the other four characteristics.

Creating Healthy Family Systems

Leaders Return to Family of Origin

Ronald Richardson encourages leader to return to their family of origin and deal with any "unresolved emotional attachment, which affect our level of differentiation."[84] The best way to deal with changing the crisis or working on relationship with others is to first focus on past relationships. If the issues of childhood are not reconciled, the emotions and ways people interact with others will be lived out again. To work better at defining one's self in current systems, a leader needs to go directly to the basis of his/her learned behavior.

By reconnecting with the family system, people are able to find themselves, become defined, and realize the emotional ties family continues to hold over them. When people return to their family of origin, they can work on truly being themselves, instead of the former, enmeshed person who left to find himself/herself. Their true self is found in working on the emotional relationships between parents, siblings and family history.

Richardson gives three warnings of what this time defining self with family is not. It is not about treating or changing the family, anti-feeling, nor anti-togetherness.[85] A person works on defining self and understanding how he/she reacts and relates to others within the system.

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[84] Richardson, *Pastor,* 61.

[85] Richardson, *Pastor,* 61-66.

Defining self is not about doing anything to the family. It is not treating or changing the family. Differentiation is about accepting family members without them changing in any way. Instead, a leader works on remaining true to himself/herself, his/her values and beliefs, while in the family system. The person remains calm and reacts within himself/herself instead of reacting to the emotions of the system. One is less anxious, clear thinking, and loving within the system. Over time, the family system may change, but that is not the purpose. The purpose is to be oneself within the system.

Defining self is not anti-feeling. While becoming self-differentiated, the person is dealing with the emotions and anxiety within the system and their response to it. All members of the system have feelings that have been hurt in the past and will be hurt in the future. In the midst of emotions and feelings, a person is able to be consciously aware of one's feelings while being able to emotionally control the response to the situation. Being aware of feelings, allows a person to deliberately choose to act either out of those emotions or out of the intellect. As was discerned in the Joseph story, being differentiated allows forgiveness and healing while feeling the sadness of lost relationship.

Finally, returning to one's family of origin is not anti-togetherness. When people understand themselves, they are able to engage with family members in a new relationship. As Richardson states, "It is just that our thinking, feeling, and behavior will be less determined by what others expect and more by what makes sense to us, based on our beliefs and values."[86] It is being fully oneself in the midst of relationship. It is maintaining a healthy tension of together and aloneness. As a result people are able to relate in a deeper way as their true selves.

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[86] Richardson, *Pastor,* 66.

Instead, after gaining understanding of the causes of anxiety and conflict in the

family of origin, returning home is working on being differentiated in the primary

emotional system of life. In this setting, a person works at letting go of expectations of

family members, lowering their reactivity, developing greater objectivity and continuing

to work on self-focus.[87] It is taking the lessons learned about family systems theory and

applying it to the relationships where a person first dealt with emotional systems. Once

the level of anxiety in this family system is lowered, a person can return to other family

systems, such as the church and deal with anxiety and conflict as a non-anxious presence.

Creating a Safe Environment

Even though a leader may be prepared for growth and change, others may find the

change too drastic or that they are not ready for change. "Change requires some degree of

feeling safe, of feeling OK with 'the new' that will emerge in the change. If people don't

change even when they can see a way to do it, it may be because it feels too 'risky' for

them. Safety is an issue to address in these situations."[88] Leaders need to have patience

that allows followers to accept the level of risk that is within their comfort zone.

Especially when the leader has worked individually on improving his/her functioning

within the system, the leader can become impatient to making things better. This

impatience creates a risk for others. Instead, only when people display a willingness for

change, a nudge at the right time is a safe environment to bring true change to the system.

Vision

Working as a team, congregational leaders should develop a vision for the

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[87] Richardson, *Pastor,* 68-77.

[88] Richardson, *Pastor,* 27

congregation that utilizes the ministry talents and abilities of its membership. "Healthy

congregations are purposeful organizations. They have a clear direction."[89] This direction

is constantly being refined and reshaped as leaders develop their abilities. Having a clear

vision statement that is known by the congregation gives a sense of safety while risking

new ministry directions. The vision gives people a map for the future of the congregation.

This vision needs to be meaningful, manageable and comprehensible.[90] When a

vision is meaningful, people can find a sense of purpose for their involvement in

accomplishing the vision. Each congregation will have a vision applied to their ministry

setting. Making a vision manageable gives the congregation a sense of ownership and the

sense of shaping their future. The resources that are within the congregation are the

foundation to build the vision. When sharing the vision, it needs to be comprehensible, so

the congregation can appreciate the goal. Understanding the purpose of changes can

stabilize the confusion and anxiety.

The vision also needs to have clarity, movement, alignment and focus.[91] The

leadership team provides clarity by presenting a vision that is easily communicated and

understood. Especially when change is involved, the congregation needs to understand

the vision before they can commit and embrace the vision. "Movement is the sequential

steps in the process that cause people to move to greater areas of commitment."[92] The

steps of moving from the current place to the new vision need to be made visible while

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[89] Steinke, *Healthy Congregations : A Systems Approach, (*Bethesda, Md.: Alban Institute, 1996), 28.

[90] Steinke, *Congregations,* 31.

[91] Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger, *Simple Church: Returning to God's Process for Making Disciples,* (Nashville, Tenn.: B & H Publishing Team), 68.

[92] Rainer and Geiger, 72.

providing opportunity to apply the leader's gift mix. A vision with alignment shows how

each person contributes to the overall direction of the church. When each leader has a

personal calling statement, the vision of the church displays how it fits into the overall

calling statement of the church. According to Rainer and Geiger, focus is "the

commitment to abandon everything that falls outside of the simple ministry process." As

the church realigns around the ministry talents and abilities of the leaders, any program

that has become an end in itself may put aside for the vision of the church. As members

feel their gifts mix are better utilized, difficult changes are validated.

Developing a Covenant of Behavior

Before conflict does arise within a congregation, behavioral ground rules need to

be established to allow for self-control by all. Common ground rules for self-control and

constructive communication could include:[93]

> • Speak for yourself, not for others.
> • Listen to understand, not to refute.
> • No labeling.
> • Be specific by citing bases or examples of your views.
> • Challenge others' behaviors and ideas, not their motives or their worth.
> • No blaming of self or others.
> • No "people are saying." Give facts or cite names.
> • Paraphrase what you hear another say before responding to it.
> • When you oppose, go on to say what you propose.
> • Address differences, not personal motives, intentions, or character.
> • No personalizing of issues.

After having behavioral ground rules, a behavioral covenant should be established.

"A behavioral covenant is a written document developed by leaders, agreed to and owned

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[93] Hugh Halverstadt, *Managing Church Conflict* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 158.

by its creators, and practice on a daily basis as a spiritual discipline."[94] It is a set of

behavioral promises the leaders will have toward God, the church family and one another.

By working on the promises together, the leaders will have a sense of ownership, value

and commitment. The promises are not rules with consequences when broken, but a

guiding standard that all within the group live by. Examples include:[95]

- Promise to pray, alone and together, to thank God for the church family.
- Promise to support our pastors, staff so that their efforts could be most
  productive.
- Promise to try to discover what is best for our Church as a whole.
- We promise to respect and care for each other.
- We promise to listen with open, nonjudgmental mind to the words and ideas of
  others.
- We promise to support the final decision of the Board.
- We promise to live by the Golden Rule.
- We promise to not gossip or be loose with our tongue.

Summary

The focus of the literature review in this chapter was to provide a theoretical

foundation of leadership development with the implications of family systems theory.

The goal of the review has been to consider the connections between implementing

leadership development and the effects on the church family system. In the next chapter,

the researcher will examine the initial effects upon the family system of implementing

leadership development training within the congregational setting in order to develop

guidelines for future churches implementing leadership development while maintaining

healthy family systems.

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[94] Rendle, 51.

[95] Rendle, 122-25.

CHAPTER FOUR: PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND METHODS

Research Methodology

The researcher employed a grounded theory approach, seeking to develop a theory addressing the importance of considering potential change in the family system when implementing organic leadership development (OLD) in small congregations. The researcher's personal experience suggested that congregations using OLD to empower the leadership team could cause heightened anxiety leading to conflict or sabotage in the family system. The researcher refined his theory through the biblical and literature research. When leaders begin re-aligning ministry based on their gift mix, the change in homeostasis could lead to this heightened anxiety. In order to explore this theory within the church setting, the researcher began implementing OLD with two leadership teams. This approach allowed the researcher to develop a theory in an area where previous research was not abundant.

The study explored the biblical leaders and the implications to their family systems as leadership development occurred. The researcher also investigated contemporary literature regarding OLD and the possible implications upon the family system. This led to the conclusion that implications upon the family system need to be considered for OLD implementation to be most effective. The researcher then explored the effects on the family system within the local congregation by providing an OLD retreat with two congregation's leadership teams while monitoring the anxiety level of the retreat participants.

Both quantitative and qualitative data of retreat participants was collected through surveys and interviews. This data was used to determine movement in the level of anxiety corresponding to the anticipated changes when implementing OLD. The qualitative data provided a measurable change in anxiety experienced by the leaders. The quantitative facet enhanced the researcher's understanding of anxiety changes in the participants and provided data on the validity of developing guidelines for other congregations implementing OLD.

The researcher chose the approach of grounded theory as the most advantageous to his research. The benefit of using grounded theory is that a researcher "generate(s) theory from data, rather than allowing his inquiry to be controlled, or guided, by received or derived theories."[1] This allowed the researcher to constantly reassess the data to discover a new, stronger theory. From the data and analysis of the data, a "grounded" theory was developed.

Karl Popper understood that "theories can only be tentative conjectures about the world, which are ultimately unverifiable by empirical evidence."[2] Theories are derived by imagination and discovery. Leaps are made when old theories are "falsified" and new theories are stronger than the earlier theory. As research is done, new information replaces older theories. For Popper, "You are active; you are constantly testing things out, constantly working with the method of trial and error."[3] The researcher constantly

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[1] Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine, 1967), 149.

[2] Ronnie Lessem and Alexander Schieffer, *Integral Research and Innovation Transforming Enterprise and Society*, (Farnham: Ashgate Pub, 2010), 91.

[3] Lessem and Schieffer.

reassesses data to discover new, stronger theories. A theory is held as the current best theory until it has been proven false and another theory replaces it.

Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss focused not on falsifying former theories. Instead, their work focused on continuing to develop and re-develop theories during the research project. Grounded theory methods unfolded from the work of Glaser and Strauss's pivotal work *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967). In this work, Glaser and Strauss first "advocated *developing* theories from research grounded in data rather than *deducing* testable hypotheses from existing theories."[4] Good questions help the researcher highlight uniformities between experiences. As the data was coded and analyzed, patterns emerged and new theories were established. Grounded Theory is always an inductive approach compared to deductive research.

Kathy Charmaz has continued reexamine the methodology of Grounded Theory, making it more accessible as a means of research. While Glaser and Strauss applied their research to the nursing profession, Charmaz has developed Grounded Theory to apply to other areas of sociology. Charmaz wrote, "Stated simply, grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves. The guidelines offer a set of general principles and heuristic devices rather than formulaic rules."[5] The method allowed the researcher to look with fresh eyes upon the data to develop theories grounded in the research itself.

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[4] Kathy Charmaz, Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis, (Thousand Oaks: CA, Sage Publications 2006), 4.

[5] Charmaz, 2.

Grounded theory was the appropriate method for this project because no existing theories could be found on the family systems implications when implementing OLD. "Grounded theory studies are especially helpful when current theories about a phenomenon are either inadequate or nonexistent."[6] The researcher's study of both theological and related literature was unable to identify any theories regarding implementing OLD in congregational family systems. Both OLD and Family Systems Theory had received significant research separately, but no literature considering the relationship of the two was discovered. This lack of research confirmed that a grounded theory approach was the most appropriate method.

Thus, the researcher deemed the grounded theory method appropriate as the best method for collecting and analyzing data, forming a formal theory, and then developing guidelines for implementing OLD.

Description of Data Sources

Selection of Churches to Study

To explore the implications on the family system when implementing OLD, the researcher invited ten pastors to participate in the study along with their leadership teams. Each pastor was chosen based upon his prior relationship with the researcher, located within the Pacific Northwest, the size of his congregation, and an evangelical affiliation within the Presbyterian Church (USA). Two pastors along with their leadership teams agreed to take part in the research. One church is located in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. The second church is located near Spokane, Washington. The

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[6] Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005), 140.

congregations were allowed to define their leadership teams. Along with the two pastors, all the participants were currently serving on the session.

Quantitative and Qualitative Research

Initial collection of data was gathered at the initiation of the retreat with each leadership team. Since level of stress is an indicator of increased anxiety within the family system that could lead to conflict or sabotage, the researcher used a modified Perceived Stress Scale (Appendix A) to measure the anxiety level participants had within the congregation. The survey was edited in four ways (Appendix B). First, the names and ages were not asked so anonymity would provide a greater reliability in the answers. Second, the researcher added the phrase "in the church" to each question. The questions in the original Perceived Stress Scale were purposefully written in a general nature. Since the researcher wanted to focus on the measure of anxiety within the congregation before and after the retreat, the phrase "within the church" was added to focus responses. Third, the Perceived Stress Scale was written for quantitative research, asking the responders to answer each question with a closed-answer from 0 = never to 5 = very often. To gain qualitative information, the researcher added open-ended questions to gain understanding of the reasons behind the stress. This gave some information as to possible agents of the stress that were related to implementing OLD as opposed to those from outside influences. Finally, the researcher asked questions addressing the implementation of OLD. The researcher wanted the participants to be exploring their leadership development and not focusing on any potential stresses within the congregation.

The same edited survey was then given at the next board meeting of each church, approximately one month later. Only surveys from the leaders who had attended the

retreat were submitted to the researcher. This second survey was used to determine any new levels of anxiety as the participants implemented the retreat's lessons.

From the responses collected in the two surveys, the researcher assembled the data in new ways in order to build hypotheses about the relationship between implementing leadership development and family systems. From these hypotheses, the researcher interviewed the pastors to gain data on the perceived stress and the symptoms of stress within the congregation. These interviews also allowed the researcher to examine possible rival explanations for elevated stress within the congregation.

Retreat Description

The Sunday before the leadership retreat, the participants were sent an email from the researcher requesting them to spend about thirty minutes writing a narrative of their life stories. They were also asked to reflect on one biblical leader by reading the leader's story and noticing the events, circumstances and people that influenced the leader. This personal reflection was to allow time to consider their own personal stories as well as the stories of biblical leaders.

The researcher led similar leadership retreats for each leadership team in October 2014. The retreat lasted for three hours on Friday evening and six hours on Saturday. Utilizing the work of Terry Walling, the researcher provided an edited retreat from *The Focused Living Retreat.*[7] Before the retreat, the researcher shared his planned outline with Walling and received suggestions on how to configure the material to fit the allotted time period. On Friday evening, the participants were led through development of personal time-lines. On Saturday, the participants discovered their gift set, and wrote

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[7] Walling.

their personal vision and major role statements (See Appendix C). Finally, the

implementing of OLD within the congregational setting was discussed.

<div align="center">**Data Analysis**</div>

The researcher conducted surveys and interviews, collected data, and built codes

to arrange that data to be looked at from a variety of angles. The researcher did not try to

prove or disprove a theory, but developed the theory from the data itself. A key step to

this was found in coding, or arranging the material in order, so that consistencies were

discovered. The data may have seemed unrelated or insignificant, yet as more data was

gathered and analyzed, patterns emerged and a hypothesis was developed and refined.

"Coding means that we attach labels to segments of data that depict what each segment is

about. Coding distills data, sorts them and gives us a handle for making comparisons with

other segments of data."[8] Through the survey responses, common words became parts of

the interview questions and research.

"A theory at such a conceptual level, however may have important general

implications and relevance, and become almost automatically a springboard of stepping

stone to the development of a grounded formal theory."[9] After the researcher refined the

hypothesis through research, a formal theory emerged. The quality of research begins and

ends with the quality of the data collected. The more extensive the interviews and data,

the stronger the final formal theory will be. The "two criteria for data are their suitability

and sufficiency for depicting empirical events."[10] The research presented here is limited

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[8] Charmaz, 3.

[9] Glaser and Strauss, 79.

[10] Charmaz, 18.

to thirteen leaders within two congregations. This limits the formal theory.

From reviewing the surveys, the researcher developed questions to ask the two pastors. The researcher asked each participate for the option to return with further questions, allowing the data to apply to their leadership development.

As issues of stress and anxiety emerged, the researcher explored how this might help or hinder the implementation of leadership development. The researcher did this through coding: looking for words that indicate anxious situations, stressful events, needing to make a stand, remaining committed. These words, and others like them, allowed the data to be compared. From the data collected, the researcher formulated a theory on the relationship between family systems and the leadership development theory.

In doing research, "we learn from our mistakes; and this means that when we arrive at inconsistencies we turn back, and reframe our assumptions."[11] If an assumption is all swans are white, when a black swan is observed, assumptions and theories must be reformed. When the data collected disagreed with assumptions, the data must be heeded, and not ignored or adjusted to fit prior assumptions.

Finally, the researcher remained a "friendly outsider." The researched did not come with the solutions or entered the situation to become that leader. He needed to remain an outsider while remaining friendly, and not criticizing or hindering the participants. The researcher listened and offered suggestions only after being accepted. At the end of the research, the researcher offered a copy of the research results to the two leadership teams with the opportunity to provide follow-up conversations.

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[11] Karl R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 108.

The researcher's conclusions from the results, shown in Chapter Five, became the core basis for developing guidelines for implementing OLD.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Findings from Biblical Review

Through the examination of three biblical leaders (Joseph, Jesus and the disciples, and Paul and Barnabas in Acts) the researcher found a correlation between the development of leaders with their gift mix and increased anxiety within the family system or leadership team.

In the life of Joseph, the researcher demonstrated that the generalized time-line developed by Robert Clinton could apply to Christian leaders. Joseph journeyed through the stages of sovereign foundations, inner-life growth, ministry and life maturing, convergence and afterglow. Within these phases, Joseph's family system experienced moments of heightened anxiety. With the family pattern of one child carrying on the promise given to Abraham, Joseph's dream of leadership led to sabotage by his brothers. As Joseph matured, his non-anxious presence and ability to remain self-differentiated allowed him to acquire the gift mix needed to lead the nation of Egypt through the famine. As a result of this leadership, Joseph was able to not only save his family from starvation, but also allow the blessing of Jacob (Israel) to be on all the family and the nation of Israel.

In Jesus' leadership development of his disciples, Jesus took people from a variety of backgrounds and equipped them with skills and gifts they would need to be his witness to the ends of the earth. Through formal and informal lessons, equipping and sending out, training and adding to their understanding, Jesus prepared them for a time when he would not be with them. Often, during times of heightened anxiety, Jesus was

able to remain non-anxious and self-defined while the disciples were not. Since Jesus was

able to maintain these traits during times of heightened anxiety, Jesus was able to

minister in a fulfilling way and provide his ultimate contribution. The ability of a leader

to remain non-anxious, self-differentiated and avoiding triangulation impacts a leader's

ability to reach convergence.

Finally, the researcher explored the gift mix of Peter and Barnabas in the book of

Acts, where the stories demonstrated their natural abilities, acquired skills and spiritual

gifts. As these gifts were developed, and Peter and Barnabas were placed in leadership

positions, the homeostasis of the family system was disturbed causing heightened anxiety.

Peter and Barnabas' ability to were able to lower the anxiety and fulfill their leadership

purpose when they were able to remain non-anxious and self-differentiated.

Preliminary Theory

When leaders are being shaped by God, discovering their gift-mix and entering

new stages of leadership development, the family system in which they exist will

experience times of heightened anxiety. The developing leader's ability or inability to

handle this anxiety, by remaining non-anxious and self-differentiated, will allow further

development of the leader while encouraging a healthy family system.

Findings from Literature Review

The researcher explored how leaders can use J. Robert Clinton's generalized

timeline to learn their biblical purpose and values, build a personal vision statement based

on life goals and core values, and utilize their gift mix to understand their major role in

leading God's people. Through the major events, unique circumstances and influential

people, Christian leaders can explore how God shaped and developed them to apply their

unique gift mix to their position in ministry. When the leader is in the ideal ministry where their ministry tasks and gift mix converge, the leader has the greatest influence to lead the people of God.

Using *Focused Living Retreat* by Terry Walling and *Strengths Finder* by Tom Rath as tools to help congregational leadership teams begin implementing organic leadership development, leaders can gain understanding of their gift mix, personal vision statement and major role. While building their personal time-line, it is important to highlight the six characteristics, the five enhancements and the six barriers of finishing well. When leaders are able to see these things in (or lacking from) their time-line, they can become a more effective leader in the future.

The purpose of a leader's gift mix, personal vision statement and major role needs to remain focused within the community God has placed him or her in as a leader. The equipping of leaders comes by the Holy Spirit with the spiritual gifts, natural abilities and acquired gifts to be utilized in leadership positions. Helping leaders focus on their God given gift mix to influence their ministry positions will necessitate leaders becoming effective change agents as the focus of their ministry shifts from positional leadership to influential leadership.

As leaders begin to implement the lessons from organic leadership development training in their ministry, changes to the homeostasis could bring heightened anxiety. The ability for a leader to understand the basic concepts of Family Systems theory could help the developing leader avoid conflict or sabotage. The concepts of homeostasis, differentiation of self, emotional triangles, and symptom-bearer as they relate to handling

anxiety in the family system should be beneficial in making lasting change through leadership development.

Understanding that anxiety is normal and churches go through times of heightened anxiety, especially during times of leadership changes or re-alignment to ministry positions, gives the leader the ability to handle the conflict as it arises. Part of the implementation of organic leadership development may require leaders to deal with unresolved issues in their family of origin. As the leaders begin living out of their personal vision and major role statements, having a safe environment that allows for growth and change and the ability to make small risks is necessary. When a leadership team goes through organic leadership development, they may need to build and interpret a new vision of ministry for the congregation. Developing common ground rules or a covenant of behavior to handle potential conflict is one method of creating a safe environment for effective change.

The literature review discovered that any changes brought about through organic leadership development might bring added anxiety on the family system. This heightened stress needs to be considered before implementing such training.

Tentative Theory

When leaders are being shaped by God, discovering their gift-mix and entering new stages of leadership development, the family system in which they exist will experience times of heightened anxiety. The developing leader's ability or inability to handle this anxiety, by remaining non-anxious and self-differentiated, will allow further development of the leader while encouraging a healthy family system. If the leadership

team is able to anticipate heightened anxiety, they can use methods such as a covenant of behavior to avoid conflict or sabotage and increase the possibility of effective change.

Pre-Retreat Data

The purpose of the pre-retreat data collection was to establish a baseline for measurement purposes. By gathering data before the retreat a point of reference can be compared when assessing the impact of the retreat on the project participants.

The Perceived Stress Scale was chosen for inclusion in this project to determine the amount of stress the participants' sensed within the church. The increase in the stress level is an indicator of potential conflict or sabotage or change in a family system. The researcher used this particular survey because it is "the most widely used psychological instrument for measuring the perception of stress."[1] In each question, the participants were asked how often they felt a certain way within the church setting in the past month. There were five possible responses to the questions: Never (0), Almost Never (1), Sometimes (2), Fairly Often (3), and Very Often (4).

The Perceived Stress Scale tabulates all the responses into a total score. To reach this score, the four positively stated items (questions 4, 5, 7 and 8) have responses reversed (0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1 and 4 = 0) and then the scores are added across all scale questions.[2]

Seven people took the pre-retreat survey at the Oak Hills Church. The individual scores were 10, 11, 11, 12, 12, 12, and 13 for a mean of 11.7. The high score of 13

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[1] Sheldon Cohen, "Perceived Stress Scale," www.mindgarden.com/docs/ PerceivedStressScale.pdf. [accessed October 8, 2014].

[2] Cohen.

explained the cause of stress being projects that need to be completed and reacting to others with narrow views on subjects.

Six people took the survey at the Reardan Presbyterian Church. The individual scores were 3, 5, 6, 8, 13, and 15 for a mean of 8.33. The score of 13 explained the cause of stress as due to fewer people in worship to contribute financially to the church. The score of 15 attributed the cause of stress on Sunday school teaching with rowdy kids. Both 11.7 and 8.33 fall below the normal scores of 12.1 for males and 13.7 for females. The scores of 3 and 5 fall below the standard deviation in scoring. Even so, these scores were used as a benchmark for the same people taking the survey a month after the retreat.

To gain understanding of faith, gifts and leadership, the pre-retreat survey asked five additional questions of the participants. In addition to gaining insights to the participants' level of faith, these questions balanced the focus of the survey to measure both organic leadership development and anxiety in the family system. These questions had the same scoring as the Perceived Stress Scale: Never (0), Almost Never (1), Sometimes (2), Fairly Often (3), and Very Often (4). Table 5.1 displays the results of those who completed the surveys.

Table 5.1 Pre-Retreat Questions on Faith and Leadership

	Never	Almost Never	Some-times	Fairly Often	Very Often
In the past month, how often have you used your gifts within the church?					
Oak Hills	—	—	3	2	2
Reardan	—	—	1	2	3
In the past month, how often have you shared your faith with someone?					
Oak Hills	—	—	6	1	—
Reardan	—	3	2	—	1
In the past month, how often have you read the Bible or spent time in prayer?					
Oak Hills	—	—	3	2	2
Reardan	—	—	1	—	5
In the past month, how often have you used your leadership skills within the church?					
Oak Hills	—	—	1	5	1
Reardan	—	—	3	1	2
In the past month, how often have you explored a new opportunity to develop your leadership abilities?					
Oak Hills	2	2	3	—	—
Reardan	1	1	2	—	—

Demographic information was also included in the pre-retreat survey. Table 5.1

outlines the information of the participants at each church who completed the pre and

post-retreat surveys.

Table 5.2 Demographic Information

	Oak Hills PC	Reardan PC
What is your gender?		
Male	5	1
Female	3	5
How long have you been a member of this church?		
0-1		
1-3	1	
3-5	1	
5-10		2
10 or more	5	4
What is your age?		
18-24		
25-34		
35-44	2	
45-54	1	1
55-64	2	3
65-74	1	2
75+	1	
What is your marital status?		
Single	1	
Single but living with someone as a couple		
Married	6	5
Separated		
Divorced		
Widowed		1
What is the highest level of education you have completed?		
Less than a high school graduate		
High school graduate		
Some college		2
Trade, technical or vocational training	1	
College graduate	2	3
Post-graduate work or degree	4	1
What is your total annual household income?		
$30,000 to less than $40,000		2
$40,000 to less than $60,000	2	2
$60,000 to less than $75,000	3	2
$75,000 to less than $100,000	2	
$100,000 or more		

The most notable variations in the demographics were found in length of membership and household income. Oak Hills had two members of its leadership team with five years or less in membership. All the members of the Reardan leadership team have been members of the church for five years or more. The household income for Oak Hills is higher than Reardan, but when taking into account the cost of living, the income would be similar.

The date revealed strong similarities among all thirteen participants in several demographic items. All but one participant are married or have been married. All have some education above a high school diploma, and a household annual income of $30,000 or more.

Post-Retreat Data Results

There was a two-fold purpose for the post-retreat data collection: to discover whether there was a change in the level of perceived stress amongst the participants and to determine if the participants gained personal leadership insights from the retreat. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected and compared to the pre-retreat benchmark results.

Quantitative Data

At total of thirteen participants (seven from Oak Hills and six from Reardan) took the post-retreat survey. The survey was given at the regularly scheduled session meeting approximately one month after the first survey.

On the Perceived Stress Scale, the individual scores from Oak Hills were 2, 4, 4, 8, 10, 11, and 11 for a mean of 7.14. The comments regarding cause for the numbers below

10 were: teamwork is good, others keep me on task, and have a good comfort level. Comments from the three surveys of 10 and 11, the comments were: multiple deaths in the church, mentally and emotionally upsetting situation, issue with people interaction at church, hearing about decisions significantly after they were made, communication, time consuming activities, loss of youth director.

On the Perceived Stress Scale, the individual scores from Reardan were 3, 4, 8, 10, 12, and 18 for a mean of 9.17. The comments regarding cause for the numbers below 10 were: going my way is relatively unimportant, good transparency, good help, because I feel congruent with our local congregation, have felt on top of things by staying involved. Comments from the scores of 10 and 12 were: not fully understanding all the "functions," I'm half afraid of failing at whatever I'm doing, I'm learning slowly where I fit in, and getting comfortable with learning other people's needs. The comments from the 18 score were: would like to shift duties, mismatched fit in position, not a good fit for teaching position, looking for other opportunities, too many irons in the fire, and have gotten some assistance from others.

To gain understanding of faith, gifts and leadership, the post-retreat survey asked the same five questions of the participants as the pre-retreat survey. Table 5.1 displays the results of those who completed the surveys.

Table 5.3 Post-Retreat Questions on Faith and Leadership

	Never	Almost Never	Some-times	Fairly Often	Very Often
In the past month, how often have you used your gifts within the church?					
Oak Hills	—	—	1	3	3
Reardan	—	—	1	3	2
In the past month, how often have you shared your faith with someone?					
Oak Hills	—	—	4	3	—
Reardan	—	3	2	—	1
In the past month, how often have you read the Bible or spent time in prayer?					
Oak Hills	—	—	1	4	2
Reardan	—	—	—	2	4
In the past month, how often have you used your leadership skills within the church?					
Oak Hills	—	1	2	3	1
Reardan	1	—	1	2	2
In the past month, how often have you explored a new opportunity to develop your leadership abilities?					
Oak Hills	3	—	4	—	—
Reardan	—	1	3	2	—

Overall, there was little change in the scores between the pre-retreat and post-retreat questions regarding faith and leadership. In the area of using their gifts, all the leaders answered at least "sometimes" both before and after the retreat. The Oak Hills had two individuals answer with more frequency regarding the use of their gifts. The Reardan numbers remained constant. In the area of sharing their faith, two Oak Hills individuals had an increase from "sometimes" to "fairly often." The Reardan individuals remained constant. The amount of time spent in Bible reading and prayer remained relatively constant in both churches. Reardan had one response move from "almost never"

to "fairly often," while one moved from "very often" to "fairly often." Oak Hills had one move from "almost never" to "sometimes." The greatest change in responses came with the question about using leadership skills within the church. In the pre-retreat survey, all responded at least "sometimes." In the post-retreat survey, one responded "never" and another responded "almost never." This could be attributed to a lack of opportunity to use leadership skills within the church or a better understanding of their leadership skills from the retreat. Further, one individual from Reardan increased from "sometimes" to "fairly often." In response to the question on exploring opportunities to develop leadership skills, Oak Hills had two respond "almost never" in the pre-survey. One of these responded "never" and the other responded "sometimes" in the post survey. Two individuals from Reardan did not respond to the pre-retreat survey. Even so, one moved from "never" to at least "sometimes."

Qualitative Data

To further understand the effectiveness of the retreat and the possible changes in stress within congregations, the pastors of both the Oak Hills Presbyterian Church and the Reardan Presbyterian Church were interviewed over the telephone one month after the second survey. After reviewing the surveys, five questions were asked.

1. Was the workshop helpful?

The pastor of Oak Hills stated that this is the first session retreat that people are still talking about even two months after the event. The leaders were challenged to know their personal vision and the vision of the church better to be effective leaders. One leader felt underutilized in their leadership and is willing to take on more. In the past, people were not willing to step up and volunteer, so he felt it is good to see people willing to step

into new roles. Another told the pastor that before he felt he was simply plugging a hole on session leadership. Now he feels called by God to do this work. In past years, people had been nominated to simply come on session. After the retreat the elders are talking about roles and committee assignments based on their giftedness. They want to do what God has called them to do based on their talents.

The pastor from Reardan stated that the leadership team enjoyed the retreat and felt a personal benefit, but not how it affects the vision in the church. Past retreats focused on specifically on the vision and ministry of the church. With this retreat focusing on the personal development of leaders, some wondered if the retreat accomplished the primary purpose of retreats. The material from this retreat challenges them to do things that they had not done before which takes energy. It is easier to simply do what they have always done. The workshop was helpful, but more focus needs to be spent on leadership development.

2. Did any leaders realize new things about themselves—gifts, talents, or abilities? Or were things affirmed?

The Oak Hills pastor answered that four elders on the session received noticeable affirmation of their calling on session. They want to step up and want to concentrate on the ministries that use their gifts. The elders in charge of children and youth, fellowship, personnel, and building and grounds were all affirmed in their giftedness.

The Reardan pastor stated that with the Christmas season, there has not been time for talkback. "The retreat can be checked off that it was completed and can be put on the backburner." He has not had time to talk with his leadership team.

3. Have you noticed a change in the leadership environment for better or worse?

The Oak Hills pastor has noticed that especially the four people who received affirmation have starting filling vacancies in their committees. Instead of simply putting the need in the bulletin or newsletter, they are reaching out to people to assist them in their work. There is an attitude of "I am going to take control and ask people one on one."

The Reardan pastor has not necessarily noticed a change in the leadership dynamics, but has experienced a more relaxed environment. One or two people have expressed that they are ready for something different in their role within the church. The exercise of exploring what they are doing and why they are doing it has challenged them to reevaluate these activities. At the next board meeting and during the Sunday adult education hour, a discussion of the meaning of worship and how to make worship more of an encounter with the living God was discussed. From the retreat, one leader has realized experiences where God has surprised her and has begun exploring possible changes to Sunday morning worship. On the negative side, there has been a greater frustration of putting together an effective program for children's ministry. While the retreat helped leaders to realize their giftedness, one leader has expressed a lack of giftedness in working with youth. The lack of consistent commitment of youth has brought further frustrations to this leader.

4. From reviewing the surveys, it appears the stress and anxiety has gone down in your church. Have you noticed this, and do you have a possible explanation for the change?

The Oak Hills pastor thought the stress might be decreased simply because the annual pledge drive came back with more pledges than the session expected. This

allowed the leadership team to discuss avenues of increasing ministry instead of restricting ministry.

The Reardan pastor shared a story about one leader being encouraged by others. She had felt she had no gifts to share with the church. When she shared this, other leaders encouraged her that her gift is visitation and praying with others. They affirmed that this is her role within the family. The pastor felt additionally positive about this exchange since this feedback came from the other leaders and not the minister. By hearing it from her peers, there was more validity.

5. Has the board discussed further work in the area of leadership development?

The Oak Hills pastor stated that he is trying to integrate further training in upcoming session meetings. The Reardan pastor wants to "close the loop." He wants to find tools to apply the lessons from leadership development to the ministry and planning within the church. Usually, session retreats are focused on what things within the church are going well and what areas need work. This retreat focused more on the individual, and so he wants to find ways to have the insights contribute to the trajectory of the church's life and ministry.

6. To the pastor of Reardan: It appears one leader is experiencing more stress in the life of the church. Have you been made aware of this?

Overall, the scores on the Perceived Stress Scale went down or remained constant. One score from the Reardan church went up from 14 to 18. One follow-up question was asked of the pastor. The pastor stated that the retreat re-affirmed that the leader is not gifted with teaching. This has caused her to experience more stress in the youth ministry, especially leading up to the children's Christmas program. He has met with this leader on

a couple occasions and another is scheduled to consider potential leaders to take her place in teaching, as well as find ministry opportunities that build on her giftedness.

Findings from the Data

Level of Stress

The overall level of stress in both churches was lower following the retreat. The individual scores at the Oak Hills church were all lower than the original scores. Five of the six scores at the Reardan church were lower. Overall, this should mean there is less conflict within each congregation when leaders spend time developing a personal time-line and learning their gift mix. This is contrary of what the researcher expected in the study.

At the same time, the one person saw a significant increase in her level of stress. If follow up did not happen, this could cause greater conflict for this individual, and if this person was in an influential leadership role, could cause greater conflict within the congregation.

Without surveying the entire congregation, the change in the level of stress and the potential for conflict is difficult to determine.

Leadership Development

From the training, four received affirmation of their gift mix and have increased their involvement in the leadership of the church. These leaders have also encouraged others to step forward in ministry opportunities in the church. Also, the training also had one leader realize that she is in an incompatible leadership position for her gift mix. Working with the pastor, she has felt affirmation for her gifts and is seeking a more appropriate role for her leadership in the church.

Overall, there is a slight increase in the frequency participants used their gifts within the church, read their Bible and used their leadership skills within the church. This suggests that the retreat encouraged their faith and empowered them to use their leadership gifts and skills. Sharing his or her faith with someone was not influenced by the training.

Finally, both pastors commented that their leadership teams are discussing the retreat two months afterwards, and are exploring the next steps in implanting organic leadership development. The Oak Hills leadership team has decided to schedule leadership training during their next several board meetings and will encourage leaders to explore their gift mix. The Reardan leadership team has invited the researcher to future board meetings to continue leadership training. This retreat appears to be an effective tool for introducing leadership development.

Evaluation of Data

The use of qualitative and quantitative data employed by the researcher was successful at producing ample data for the scope of the research project. The pre-retreat data established a baseline from which to measure the change of stress by the participants. Following the leadership development retreat, these same methods of collecting data produced a large quantity of data to address the goal of the research. The post-retreat data was significantly enhanced through interviewing the pastors of each church. Overall, the methods of collecting data—surveys and interviews—produced significant information to ground the researcher's theory in the participant data.

Formal Theory

When leaders are being shaped by God, discovering their gift-mix and entering new stages of leadership development, they may experience heightened anxiety in their ministry abilities. The developing leader's ability or inability to handle this anxiety, by remaining non-anxious and self-differentiated, will allow further development of the leader while encouraging a healthy family system. If the leadership team is able to anticipate heightened anxiety, they can use methods such as a covenant of behavior to avoid conflict or sabotage and increase the possibility of effective change. In healthy leadership teams with low levels of anxiety, implementing organic leadership development positively influences the family system.

CHAPTER SIX: DEVELOPING GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING
ORGANICLEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT THAT PROMOTES HEALTHY FAMILY
SYSTEMS

Introduction

Change, whether beneficial or harmful, reflects a time of instability and thus

triggers anxiety. Since one quality of leadership is exercising influence, when changes

happen in leadership the organization will most likely experience some kind of stress.

This project was designed to address the importance of considering the effect in the

family system when implementing organic leadership development in small churches.

The first objective was to research the relevant biblical record to understand the

development of leadership while considering family systems. From the experiences of

Joseph (Gen. 37-50), the researcher explored the stages of leadership development as

identified on the generalized time-line by J. Robert Clinton.[1] During Joseph's

development, Joseph gained the gift mix necessary to reach convergence in his position

in Egypt. While the biblical story demonstrated that Joseph went through the phases of

leadership development, the researcher also examined Joseph's life identifying elements

in the family systems model. Joseph's call to leadership caused anxiety and conflict

within his family system. The increased anxiety and conflict led to sabotage by his

brothers, trying to thwart his dream of leadership. Joseph's ability to remain a non-

anxious presence and self-differentiated member of the family allowed his dreams to be

fulfilled that included all the family as part of God's chosen nation.

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[1] Clinton, *Making,* 44.

Continuing the biblical study, the researcher examined the methods Jesus used in developing his disciples into leaders. The disciples matured in leadership skills and responsibilities as Jesus trained them using different styles, settings and methods. Examining family system elements within the family type unit of Jesus and his disciples, the researcher noticed Jesus' ability to remain a non-anxious presence and self-differentiated leader, thus modeling leadership qualities the disciples needed after Jesus' death and resurrection.

The final biblical example researched was of the leadership gift mix of Peter and Barnabas in the book of Acts. There were anxious moments in the family system when Gentiles joined the early church and took leadership positions. Through the review of the Bible, the researcher observed that as the leaders developed and used their gift mix, the family system was affected. When Peter and Barnabas were able to remain non-anxious and self-differentiated, their leadership was effective in successfully managing the anxiety created in this change.

After reviewing the biblical evidence, the second objective was to research the relevant literature of leadership development while considering family systems. The literature of leadership development began with the work of J. Robert Clinton. Phases of leadership development were explored to understand how leaders can effectively negotiate the path of leadership and finish well. By building and interpreting a personal time-line, leaders can understand their gift mix, develop their personal vision and major role statements. Being able to align their ministry leadership from these statements allows a leader to reach the convergence of ministry designed by God. Then, when a leader is

able to focus on God's work in the church family, the leader has the potential to be an effective change agent.

Next, the researcher explored the basic concepts of family systems, particularly for preparing a developing leader to effectively handle the anxiety in order to avoid conflict or sabotage. A leader's ability to deal with family of origin, to create a safe environment within the church, to build a vision for the church family, and to develop a covenant of behavior provides a method for remaining non-anxious. These skills should enhance the ability to implement leadership development while maintaining healthy family systems.

The third objective of this research was to conduct field research in two small churches by implementing organic leadership development while considering the implications to the family system. The churches chosen had stable leadership and healthy family systems. A retreat to begin implementing organic leadership was presented by the researcher. All retreat participants completed a pre-retreat and post-retreat survey to measure whether the level of perceived stress amongst the participants changed and to determine if the participants gained personal leadership insights from the retreat. After analyzing the data, the researcher interviewed the pastors of the two churches to gain further insights. With one exception, the participants from both churches had a reduction of stress following the retreat. The retreat was an effective tool for implementing leadership development with ongoing training needed in both congregations.

This study was designed to address the concern of considering the impact on the family system when implementing leadership development. The study has discovered that implementing leadership development has positively influenced the family systems

of these two churches. Based on the research of this study, the researcher makes the following recommendations.

Recommendations

1. Encourage training in family systems as part of Organic Leadership Development.

This research has demonstrated that there is a connection between family systems and organic leadership development. In the biblical review, the research found that a leader, able to apply the basic concepts of family systems, was able to bring lasting change through leadership development. The stages of leadership development in Joseph's story led to raised anxiety within the family system. Joseph's ability to remain a non-anxious presence while maintaining a good understanding of his purpose helped his family continue in God's promises to Abraham. Further, Jesus trained his disciples to become leaders during times of heightened anxiety. Jesus' ability to remain self-defined and non-anxious during times of heightened anxiety prepared the disciples for leadership positions when he would no longer be with them. Through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, Peter and Barnabas had the gift mix necessary to lead the early church through the stressful time of incorporating gentiles into the church family.

In the researcher's project, the research found that leadership teams with a low level of anxiety had an even lower level of anxiety after initial stages of implementing organic leadership development. Churches that have low levels of anxiety will benefit from this training. While the project did not explore congregations with higher anxiety before the training, the biblical and relevant literature research suggests that any change to the homeostasis will bring heighted anxiety. Especially in churches that are changing their model of leadership by implementing organic leadership development, anxiety can

rise amongst the leadership team and congregational members, so training and modeling of healthy family systems is important.

The first step of implementing organic leadership development is guiding the leadership team through mapping a personal time-line, affirming or discovering their gift mix, building their personal vision and major role statements. The two churches researched were healthy congregations. The perceived level of stress with the churches was reported lower than normal scores. Following the retreat, both churches reported even a lower level of stress. Among the leadership team, the training seemed to lower the level of stress.

Yet, Edwin Freidman reminds leaders, "Self-differentiation always triggers sabotage."[2] Developing leaders requires skills to deal with the sabotage when it arises. If a congregation has little experience in leadership training, this material might change the dynamics of leadership roles within the church family. The churches studied had had a low level of stress indicating the ability to handle change in the family system. In congregations with a higher level of anxiety, the results of leadership training might cause unforeseen issues of unresolved family systems to come to the forefront.

Some training in family systems, exploring self-differentiation, non-anxious presence, triangulation, symptom-bearer and anxiety could help congregations allow for the risks necessary for systemic change in the congregation. Ronald Richardson encourages leaders bringing change to "stay thoughtful, … to stay connected … and to keep clarifying for themselves what they were and were not responsible for."[3]

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[2] Freidman, Treadwell and Beal, 247.

[3] Richardson, *Church*, 139.

Developing leadership is not so leaders take on more responsibility, but so they use their gift mix to become the leaders God created. Their position of leadership needs to influence the followers to follow God. The gift mix the leader has developed over a lifetime should benefit the community. In becoming self-differentiated, the leader needs to stay connected to those who become anxious.

2. Encourage organic leadership development to be implemented in small churches.

A higher percentage of members within a small church are in leadership positions than in larger churches. These are often volunteer members ministering with one professionally trained pastor. Organic leadership development is an effective tool to help the lay leaders recognize and use their life lessons and gift mix within the church's ministry. Acquired skills from their professional work can be transferred to correlating leadership roles in the church. For example, professional teachers find leadership roles in the church education, while other skills from the secular fields could offer new areas of ministry and outreach for the local church.

While this study focused on the leadership team, current leaders with training in organic leadership development could provide opportunities to build the sovereign foundation experiences needed for the youth and young adults to start down the path of being spiritual leaders. Organic leadership development encourages developing acquired skills, exploring natural abilities and seeking spiritual gifts; using organic leadership development with youth could provide a solid foundation for their future leadership.

3. Train mentors to guide emerging leaders.

Scripture reveals mentoring during leadership development. Jesus was a mentor to the disciples; Paul was a mentor to Barnabas. Through an interview, one pastor shared

with the researcher that he was able to mentor a member dealing with her gift mix. As her anxiety level increased, the pastor was able to listen to her concerns and offer assurance. With the help of other members of the leadership team, they were able to encourage her to recognize gifts she had to offer the church family. Many of the life lessons participants shared from their time-line were stories of others mentoring them in their faith journey. Neither of the churches had a mentoring plan or program. Realizing that leaders are developed over a lifetime, current leaders could be encouraged to mentor others in their leadership development by providing structure and opportunity.

The mentor should have training in family system theory. In the biblical review, it was demonstrated that a leader's ability to remain non-anxious and self-differentiated during times of heightened anxiety allowed the family system to effectively handle the changes in leadership. Therefore, as a person is implementing OLD, the mentor could coach him or her to remain self-differentiated by defining self while staying connected. While constructing the personal time-line, patterns of triangulation and conflict may become evident. A mentor, trained in family systems theory, can guide the person through the anxiety revisited in these events, people and circumstances. Finally, a mentor can help the leader distinguish between process and content and have a sense of playfulness with the training.[4] The ability to be imaginative about the lessons of past life experiences can bring insights to God's gifts in that experience. If conflict or sabotage arises when a leader begins aligning their ministry with their personal vision statement and major role, the mentor can help keep the focus on the process.

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[4] Friedman, 230.

4. Fill leadership positions in small churches based on gift mix and major role.

In small churches, positions on the board are often filled with people willing to serve despite not having the gift mix necessary for the position. When churches have been trained in organic leadership development, people with the gift mix to fit the position would be sought. The leader who was put in a teaching position without the gift of teaching experienced heightened anxiety. This in turn could cause heightened anxiety to the family system and lead to conflict. Over time, the leader would be an ineffective teacher, step out of a leadership position, and may never realize the role God had equipped her to fulfill.

The lessons of organic leadership development could be taught as part of a sermon series, during an education hour or in a retreat setting. As people discover their leadership abilities, they can be commissioned to new areas of ministry. Having a safe environment within the family system would allow them to make mistakes while learning to use their gift mix.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The awareness that implementing leadership development does affect the family system is a strength of this study. Through the study of scripture and the related literature, it was found that when there is a change in the leadership model, conflict and sabotage could be present. The work of organic leadership development focuses on the development of the leader without considering the implications on the family system. When leaders gain a new insight on their gift mix or major role, without considering the change this brings on the system, it can be difficult for the leader to implement their new insights of themselves.

A second strength from this study is the importance of leaders understanding the basics of family systems theory and the importance of being a non-anxious presence and being self-differentiated. Jesus' ability to maintain a healthy system allowed the disciples to develop into the early church leaders needed when Jesus was gone. Jesus provided a safe environment for the disciples to be able to fail while gaining acquired skills in ministry.

Training in organic leadership development is an effective tool for empowering both the clergy and laity in their leadership positions. When leaders know their gift mix and their major role, they are able to find a more fulfilling position in leadership. While this might cause more anxiety early in the implementation, with mentors to guide, the leader can find new avenues of using their leadership gifts.

The weakness of this study is based primarily on the limitations set on the study. Both churches studied were middle class, small churches in the Pacific Northwest. Further, based on the data, both congregations were healthy family systems. The results of the study may also differ based on the size of the church, the relative health of the family system and the culture of the region.

A second weakness is the length of the study. The lowering of anxiety at the beginning of the implementation might not continue throughout later changes brought about by leadership development training. As leaders begin using the knowledge they gained about themselves and their major role, it might affect the family system to a greater degree. The leaders had a lower sense of anxiety in learning or affirming things they knew about themselves, but when acted upon in the larger family system, the anxiety level of the system might rise.

A third weakness of this study was leading only two church leadership teams through the leadership retreat. Both these churches were trained in OLD without any training in family systems. While surveying fifteen participants is a large sampling for this depth of a study, having participants from more churches would have provided a better theory. If some churches with differing levels of stress received training in family systems during the OLD training, while others did not, a closer correlation of the effects on the family system could be determined.

A final weakness of the study deals with measuring the health of the entire church family. The entire church family was not surveyed to gain insights on the level of anxiety in the family system. The leaders may have had their anxiety lowered through self-revelation. They gained insights to why some things worked for them and other things did not. As leaders, they may become more committed, or may switch their role within the church family. While their personal anxiety is lowered, the anxiety in the entire church family system is unknown.

CHAPTER SEVEN: PERSONAL REFLECTION

Personal Insights

Researching organic leadership development and Family Systems Theory brings together two different chapters of my personal faith journey. Nearly twenty-five years of pastoring small congregations has provided practical opportunities in helping guide people to find meaningful leadership positions and in coping with anxiety in family systems. Through this study, I have been able to gain insights on my personal leadership development and to explore my family systems as they affect my leadership. My future ministry has been positively shaped by this research.

Both leadership development and family systems display the work of God in people's lives. Seeing how God has worked through the leaders in scripture, historical leaders, and current leaders has given me insights into ways that God has been working in my life. Events that caused disappointment, or even outrage, are now viewed the lens of seeking the lesson God taught me through. Insight in turn, helps me forgive more freely. Though others may have meant situations for harm, God was able to use all things for good.

I have seen the impact of training both clergy and lay leaders in the development of their gift mix. When leaders are able to explore their life story and see how God has been shaping them, they have gained a greater sense of calling to specific areas of ministry. Leaders are able to apply their gifts to fill specific positions, serve on certain committees, and be involved in areas of ministry that their gift mix and passion fits into

God's calling. They are more engaged and can be effective leaders directing their ministry from a strength-based perspective.

As a pastor, I have gained a greater appreciation for providing a safe environment for others to explore their family upbringing and gifts. The church needs to be a place that easily forgives and strives to mentor disciples of Jesus Christ. Mistakes will happen, people will hurt other people, and people will fail; however, the grace of the gospel needs to become more evident in these times. There will be seasons of heightened anxiety and people within the church will use unhealthy family systems to absorb this anxiety. Keeping a focus on being a non-anxious presence, continuing to define self and my role in the ministry, and avoiding relational triangles will not only help me, but will also provide an example for the people I am leading. Working from a healthy family systems model, will display to others the grace of God that has been shown to me.

In the months ahead, I will be entering into a new pastoral ministry position and will apply the learning from this study. Using organic leadership development training while providing a safe environment for experimenting in new ministry avenues will be necessary. Adapting the retreat information to sermon series and small group settings will continue to shape how to implement this training in the local church. In addition, because I am moving into a rural area, with few Presbyterian churches, I will be able to provide this training to other congregations. From this research, I will include family systems concepts as part of the training.

While this research was limited to the initial implementation of organic leadership training, the future work I do with churches will incorporate additional aspects of the training. Helping leaders apply their personal vision and major role statements to their

local community will be ongoing work. Classes or retreats focusing on the impact of community, spiritual disciplines and spiritual formation would be part of the continuing implementation of organic leadership development.

Rather than just an individual retreat format, organic leadership development needs to be incorporated as part of the culture of the congregation. The purpose of leadership training is to build a culture that encourages unique gifts that influence the body Jesus. As the leadership matures, the family system anticipates this change and embraces emerging leaders.

In the research, I have learned the importance of minimizing drastic change. People need a sense of safety to implement new learning. For people to be able to grow as leaders through this retreat and further training, each step needs to be explained, understood and accepted. The congregation needs to understand the advantages of change to be willing to move toward change. The congregations in this study may not continue to implement organic leadership development. As I move into a new position I need to move slowly while applying the lessons from this study.

Finally, providing the retreats to other church's leadership teams has shown me the acquired skill God has given me for teaching and leading retreats. The participants' insights and questions encouraged me to continue exploring my gift to teach. The next chapter of my ministry will include more teaching and retreat leading than my past.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study looked at the first few months of implementing organic leadership development in small churches. One area of further study would be to complete a long-term study as the leadership team builds a new model of ministry based on their gift mix and major roles. This would allow time to explore the long-term effects on the family

system and if the anxiety level changes over time. This research did not examine if participants gained new insights on their gift mix or if their vision statement and major role statements were new insights in their leadership gifts. If the training brought about a major change in their ministry direction, a long-term study could examine the effect on the family system based on these changes.

Another approach could be a phenomenological study to how the individuals experienced the retreat. A phenomenological study from an inside perspective could bring insights to "understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon."[1] By analyzing data of the retreat, the researcher could explore significant statements about the anxiety experienced while creating a personal time-line, vision and major role statements. As participants deal with lessons learned from past experiences and apply them to the gift mix, these insights could heighten or lower their level of anxiety. This type of study would focus more on the effectiveness of the retreat than the affect on the family system.

The researcher conducted this study as an outside observer. During the literature review, the researcher found that measuring the level of self-differentiation, remaining a non-anxious presence, and conflict is very subjective and can only be measured through observation. A narrative approach of research would have allowed story telling to determine these levels within the family system. To understand the implications of leadership training on the family system would be a long-term study, listening to the narrative before the training and then listening to the narrative after the training. The researcher could examine how a leader reacts to times of heightened anxiety. By knowing

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[1] John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.), 60.

their vision and role in leadership, the ability of the leader to remain non-anxious, avoiding triangulation by focusing on their calling could be explored. This study could gain a more complete understanding of the leader's effect on the family system.

Another area of study could be to focus on congregations that have recently gone through major conflict or leadership change. A possible focus could be using organic leadership development to bring a new vision to a church in the midst of a dysfunctional family system. As the gifts, talents and abilities of leaders are discovered, the past struggles could provide lessons for future ministry and a perspective that promotes forgiveness. New vision and goals can help rebuild unity.

Finally, a more complete study could consider how small churches incorporate organic leadership development into the broader vision of the church. The lessons learned through an individual time-line can be applied to the life stories of the church to build its ministry role and vision statement.

APPENDIX A: PRECEIVED STRESS SCALE[1]

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PERCEIVED STRESS SCALE

Sheldon Cohen

The *Perceived Stress Scale* (PSS) is the most widely used psychological instrument for measuring the perception of stress. It is a measure of the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful. Items were designed to tap how unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded respondents find their lives. The scale also includes a number of direct queries about current levels of experienced stress. The PSS was designed for use in community samples with at least a junior high school education. The items are easy to understand, and the response alternatives are simple to grasp. Moreover, the questions are of a general nature and hence are relatively free of content specific to any subpopulation group. The questions in the PSS ask about feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, respondents are asked how often they felt a certain way.

Evidence for Validity: Higher PSS scores were associated with (for example):
- failure to quit smoking
- failure among diabetics to control blood sugar levels
- greater vulnerability to stressful life-event-elicited depressive symptoms
- more colds

Health status relationship to PSS: Cohen et al. (1988) show correlations with PSS and: Stress Measures, Self-Reported Health and Health Services Measures, Health Behavior Measures, Smoking Status, Help Seeking Behavior.

Temporal Nature: Because levels of appraised stress should be influenced by daily hassles, major events, and changes in coping resources, predictive validity of the PSS is expected to fall off rapidly after four to eight weeks.

Scoring: PSS scores are obtained by reversing responses (e.g., 0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1 & 4 = 0) to the four positively stated items (items 4, 5, 7, & 8) and then summing across all scale items. A short 4 item scale can be made from questions 2, 4, 5 and 10 of the PSS 10 item scale.

Norm Groups: L. Harris Poll gathered information on 2,387 respondents in the U.S.

Norm Table for the PSS 10 item inventory

Category	N	Mean	S.D.
Gender			
Male	926	12.1	5.9
Female	1406	13.7	6.6
Age			
18-29	645	14.2	6.2
30-44	750	13.0	6.2
45-54	285	12.6	6.1
55-64	282	11.9	6.9
65 & older	296	12.0	6.3
Race			
white	1924	12.8	6.2
Hispanic	98	14.0	6.9
black	176	14.7	7.2
other minority	50	14.1	5.0

Perceived Stress Scale

The questions in this scale ask you about your feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, you will be asked to indicate by circling how often you felt or thought a certain way.

Name _____ Date _____
Age _____ Gender (Circle): M F Other _____

0 = Never 1 = Almost Never 2 = Sometimes 3 = Fairly Often 4 = Very Often

1. In the last month, how often have you been upset
because of something that happened unexpectedly? 0 1 2 3 4

2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable
to control the important things in your life? 0 1 2 3 4

3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and "stressed"? 0 1 2 3 4

4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability
to handle your personal problems? 0 1 2 3 4

5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things
were going your way?... 0 1 2 3 4

6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope
with all the things that you had to do? 0 1 2 3 4

7. In the last month, how often have you been able
to control irritations in your life? 0 1 2 3 4

8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things? .. 0 1 2 3 4

9. In the last month, how often have you been angered
because of things that were outside of your control?............................. 0 1 2 3 4

10. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties
were piling up so high that you could not overcome them? 0 1 2 3 4

Please feel free to use the Perceived Stress Scale for your research.

References
The PSS Scale is reprinted with permission of the American Sociological Association, from Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., and Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior,* 24, 386-396.
Cohen, S. and Williamson, G. Perceived Stress in a Probability Sample of the United States. Spacapan, S. and Oskamp, S. (Eds.) *The Social Psychology of Health*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988

APPENDIX B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Retreat Survey

The questions in this scale ask about your feelings and thoughts **during the last month.** In each case, you will be asked to indicate by circling *how often* you felt or thought a certain way.

Please limit your respond based on your feelings or thoughts within the church setting.

0 = Never   1 = Almost Never   2 = Sometimes   3 = Fairly Often   4 = Very Often

1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because
   of something that happened unexpectedly in the church…………….   **0 1 2 3 4**

   What has been the cause:

2. In the last month, how often have you used your gifts within the   **0 1 2 3 4**
   church? ……………………………………………………………

   What has been the cause:

3. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to
   control the important things in the church? ……………………   **0 1 2 3 4**

   What has been the cause:

4. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and "stressed"
   about something in the church? ………………………………..   **0 1 2 3 4**

   What has been the cause:

5. In the last month, how often have you shared your faith with   **0 1 2 3 4**
   someone? ...…………………………………………………………

   What has been the cause:

6. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your
   ability to handle your personal problems within the church? ………...   **0 1 2 3 4**

   What has been the cause:

7. In the last month, how often have you felt that things
   were going your way in the church? ………………...…………   **0 1 2 3 4**

   What has been the cause:

0 = Never   1 = Almost Never   2 = Sometimes 3 = Fairly Often   4 = Very Often

8. In the last month, how often have you read the Bible or
    spent time in prayer? …………………………………………………   **0   1   2   3   4**

    What has been the cause:

9. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope
    with all the things that you had to do in the church? …………………   **0   1   2   3   4**

    What has been the cause:

10. In the last month, how often have you been able
    to control irritations in your life within the church? ………………..   **0   1   2   3   4**

    What has been the cause:

11. In the last month, how often have you used your leadership skills
    within the church? ………………..………………………………   **0   1   2   3   4**

    What has been the cause:

12. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were
    on top of things within the church? …………………………...………   **0   1   2   3   4**

    What has been the cause:

13. In the last month, how often have you been angered because
    of things that were outside of your control within the church? ………   **0   1   2   3   4**

    What has been the cause:

14. In the last month, how often have you explored a new opportunity
    to develop your leadership abilities? ………………….…………….   **0   1   2   3   4**

    What has been the cause:

15. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up
    so high within the church that you could not overcome them? ………   **0   1   2   3   4**

    What has been the cause:

APPENDIX C: PERSONAL VISION STATEMENT

Bruce Sexton
Personal Vision Statement

My Biblical Purpose –

- Live as a follower of Jesus Christ,

- Point to Jesus through my lifestyle, my actions, my words,

- Spend time daily in God's presence,

- Build my relationship with God and others.

My Vision –

- Build a community of believers that seek to follow Jesus Christ in their daily lives,

- Build one another up through spiritual disciplines and fellowship,

- Share the message of Jesus Christ with a world in need of a Savior,

- Bring healing for the separation and pain caused by sin.

My Values –

- Living true to myself and live as the person God created in me,

- Trust the guidance and faithfulness of God in my life,

- By the grace of God, through life, death and resurrection of Jesus, believers are accepted as brothers and sisters,

- God is faithful and calls me to be in my ministry and my life,

- Strive for Spiritual Direction and depth each day,

- In all my life, point people to Jesus through my words and actions.

Bruce Sexton
Ultimate Contribution

<u>MAJOR ROLE</u> … What I Do!

In my life, I proclaim the Word of God by:
Bringing understanding of various gifts and resources,
Providing opportunities to serve,
Inspiring people through encouragement and correction,
Especially through my preaching and writing.

<u>EFFECTIVE METHODS</u> … How I Do It.

I Provide a Save Environment –
> Opening my home to youth and church members with hospitality and learning.

Through Worship Services –
> In a variety of worship experiences tying the Scripture with all aspects of worship.

Mission Opportunities –
> I challenge and encourage people to share their faith through hands on application.

<u>ULTIMATE CONTRIBUTION TYPES</u> … What If I Did It.

Family— I would be a mentor to my children and a sojourner with my wife in a life lived by Jesus Christ through Scripture.

Public Rhetorician— My preaching and teaching would bring the different aspects of the Christian faith into a community living out the Christian Faith.

Writer— I would write church articles encouraging people to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, including a call to mission. I would write a devotional book on the life and teaching of John the Baptist.

<u>LEGACY STATEMENT</u> … What I Desire To Leave Behind.

A Family that Continued to Walk with Jesus.

A Congregation that fully lived as the Family of God.

A Life that followed Jesus wherever He led me.

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