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Character Formation and its Place in Leadership Development: An Examination of the Leadership Development Practices of Advent Christian Churches in North America

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CHARACTER FORMATION AND ITS PLACE IN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:

AN EXAMINATION OF THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES OF

ADVENT CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN NORTH AMERICA

A THESIS PROJECT REPORT

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ABSTRACT

This study addressed the lack of understanding of the core components of a character formation strategy that could be employed in a leadership development model by the Advent Christian churches in North America. This qualitative study employed a multiple case study approach examining four Advent Christian churches from within the United States. The Lead Pastors from the four churches were interviewed and members of each church's leadership team were surveyed in order to collect data regarding how character formation fits within their leadership development strategies. The research also included a review of the biblical book of 1 Timothy examining Paul's prioritization of character in his selection and development of leaders and a contemporary literature review which examined the issues of leadership development and character formation across multiple disciplines.

The information gleaned from these three data streams provided the necessary information to address the identified problem. Information was gleaned in the following relevant areas: valuable leadership character traits to focus on, leadership development strategies and practices, character formation strategies and practices, relevant resources and tools, and the use of Scripture in formulating strategies for leadership development and character formation.

CHAPTER ONE: PROBLEM AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Statement of the Problem

The issue of character is a significant one for the Christian leader. The importance of good character is modeled throughout the pages of Scripture and can be seen in a contemporary context as well. In the Advent Christian denomination, character has been under-prioritized in the preparation and placement of clergy and other senior ministry leaders. The problem this research has sought to address is the lack of understanding of core components of a character formation strategy that could be employed in a leadership development model by the Advent Christian churches in North America.

The researcher has taken four primary steps in response to this problem. First, he has explored the New Testament book of 1 Timothy to examine Paul's prioritization of character as part of identifying and developing church leaders. Second, he has reviewed relevant literature regarding best practices and strategies for character formation to be included in leadership development strategies. Third, he has conducted a qualitative study of four churches who prioritize character formation as part of their leadership development models. This involved a questionnaire completed by the church's leadership team members and interviews with their pastors designed to discern how character formation takes place within the leadership development models they employ. Fourth, the researcher has utilized data from the first three steps to craft an outline of the core

components of a character formation strategy that could be utilized within the context of leadership development in the Advent Christian denomination.

Delimitations

The scope of the field research was limited to Advent Christian churches and ministries within North America whose leadership development strategies include a character formation component. These churches were identified by the researcher based upon his own knowledge of the denomination and does not include churches with whom the researcher has direct affiliation. Additionally, data collected from these churches will be limited to what is provided by their pastors and members of their leadership teams.

The theological research component of this study has been limited to the New Testament book of 1 Timothy. Passages were selected from this epistle for one of three purposes: (1) their demonstration of Paul's leadership development practices, (2) their display of character traits prioritized by Paul among leaders within the churches being addressed or (3) their display of character traits being passed on from Paul to Timothy himself.

Assumptions

Entering into this study, the researcher made seven assumptions regarding character formation in both a biblical and contemporary context. The first assumption is that Christian character is a necessary component of healthy ministry leadership. The second assumption is that intentional character formation efforts will lead to healthier leadership practices within churches and ministries. The third assumption is that character formation is not a consistent component of the leadership development strategies

employed by Advent Christian churches and ministries in North America. The fourth assumption is that intentional character formation efforts will lead to fewer moral failures among pastors and ministry leaders. The fifth assumption is that there are churches and ministries that exist who consider intentional character formation to be a priority in their leadership development efforts. The sixth assumption is that the participants in the qualitative study will be honest and transparent about both the approach they are taking and the results of their character formation efforts. The seventh assumption is that the New Testament book of 1 Timothy provides strong evidence of Paul's prioritization of character in his identification and development of church leaders.

Subproblems

Within the context of the primary problem addressed in this research there were five subproblems which showed themselves to be relevant to the inquiry. The first subproblem related to the need for theological study on this topic. This was addressed through an examination 1 Timothy to identify how Paul prioritized character in his identification and development of church leaders in the in this setting.

The second subproblem involved the need for an understanding of what contemporary scholarship might have to offer on this subject. This was addressed through a literature review of best practices and strategies for character formation and its inclusion within leadership development strategies.

The third subproblem was the creation of research instruments. This was addressed through the creation of a questionnaire, which was used to collect information from the ministry leaders of the four selected churches on how the inclusion of character

formation in their leadership development strategies has affected the health of their ministries. Additionally, interviews were created and used to collect information from the pastors of the selected churches about how they have gone about including character formation within their leadership development strategies. The employment of these research instruments was used to address the fourth subproblem, which was to examine the practices of a minimum of four Advent Christian churches that prioritize character formation as part of their development of leaders.

Each of the data streams identified within these subproblems contributed to addressing the fifth subproblem, which was the identification of the core components of a character formation strategy to be utilized as a part of the leadership development approaches adopted by the Advent Christian denomination.

Setting of the Project

The Advent Christian denomination, known formally as the Advent Christian General Conference, first emerged out of the "Adventist movement" of the mid-nineteenth century. Significant figures in the early days of the organization include William Miller and Joshua Himes. These two men are seen, in many ways, as the fathers of the denomination with the latter serving as a significant figure in the formal organization of the denomination.[1] The denomination was formally organized in 1860 with articles of association first developed in 1920.[2] At present, the Advent Christian

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[1] "About Us," Advent Christian General Conference, accessed February 2, 2021, https://www.acgc.us/about.

[2] Advent Christian General Conference, *Articles of Association and By-Laws* (Charlotte: Advent Christian General Conference, 1920), 1.

denomination is comprised of 255 churches in the United States, with several additional North American ministries and a total of 602 distinct ministries outside of the United States, spread over twenty countries.[3]

The organizational structure within the United States includes a national office, located in Charlotte, North Carolina, and five regional associations which can be divided into twenty-five localized networks called conferences.[4] Each of these broader associations pre-dominantly exist to serve local churches and ministries rather than as governing bodies. Advent Christian churches value their autonomy and are free to operate within their own distinct organizational culture and ecclesial practice.

For much of the denomination's history, it was served by two educational institutions: Aurora College (now Aurora University) and Berkshire Christian College. The first of these is no longer a Christian institution and holds only a loose relational association with the denomination. The second of these institutions, Berkshire Christian College, ceased operations in 1987.[5] Since that time, the denomination has had very little unification in its leadership development efforts. This has resulted in a diminishing population of pastors and desperation on the part of many churches as they have sought new leadership, particularly pastoral leadership.[6]

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[3] Advent Christian General Conference, "About Us."

[4] Advent Christian General Conference, "About Us."

[5] Freeman Barton, *Mary Queen of Scots at Berkshire Christian College: Case Study in the Dissolution of a Christian College* (Lake Wales: Society for Advent Christian Thought, 1987), 37-38.

[6] Glenn M. Rice, "Approaching the Midnight Hour: The Impending Pastoral Leadership Crisis in the Advent Christian General Conference of America" (D.Min. Thesis, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, 2013), 2.

In response to this, upon the adoption of a new strategic plan for the Advent Christian denomination in 2018, a new department was formed through the national offices to seek to address what has been termed a leadership "crisis" within the denomination.[7] This represents not only a lack of emerging pastoral leadership but also significant deficiencies in the leadership development practices employed by the majority of the denomination's churches, which has resulted in leadership deficiencies among the denomination's established pastors and ministry leaders.[8]

Importance for the Researcher

It is this current leadership "crisis" that makes this problem important to the researcher. Since the adoption of the aforementioned strategic plan for the Advent Christian denomination, the researcher has been serving as the Coordinator of Leadership Development for the denomination's national offices and as the director of the denomination's new Ministry Training Institute. Among the researcher's key tasks is identifying key deficiencies in the leadership development approaches being utilized by churches and ministries around the denomination and seeking to employ new strategies that may help to correct some of these deficiencies. Since character formation has been identified as an area of weakness in the leadership development strategies being utilized in the denomination's churches, the results of this study will have direct impact on the researcher's efforts to correct these deficiencies.

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[7] Rice, 1.

[8] Advent Christian General Conference, *Way to Grow: ACGC Strategic Plan 2018-2020* (Charlotte, NC: Advent Christian General Conference, 2018), 8-15.

Importance for Immediate Ministry Context

As has already been alluded to, one of the most significant deficiencies that has been identified within the leadership development strategies being utilized by the majority of churches in the Advent Christian denomination is the absence of character formation as a component. This deficiency has contributed to a broader problem within the denomination, which can be seen in the significant character flaws that exist among many of the denomination's established pastors and ministry leaders. This is a problem that the denomination has been ineffective at addressing to this point.

While there are other efforts that are being made in the areas of pastoral health and church health to address this problem among established leaders, the researcher contends that part of the long-term solution for this problem can be found in the area of leadership development.[9] Tenelshof asserts that, "what is needed to serve Christ with moral excellence must be addressed in the training of our future Christian leaders."[10] Doing so as part of the process of leadership development, while not avoiding character issues altogether, is a way in which leaders can be given the necessary tools to develop their own character throughout their lives and ministries, causing character issues to become less frequent. This will aid the denomination greatly.

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[9] For information about the church and leadership health statistics and strategies being implemented by the Advent Christian General Conference Department of Church Health, see Advent Christian General Conference 2018, 16-21.

[10] Judy Tenelshof, "Encouraging the Character Formation of Future Christian Leaders," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42, no. 1 (March 1999), 77.

Importance to the Broader Church

Beyond the boundaries of the Advent Christian denomination, the researcher contends that the results of this study could also greatly benefit the church-at-large. It does not take much more than a quick internet search to uncover that there have been significant moral failings and leadership abuses on the part of pastors and ministry leaders in recent years, coming from a variety of faith traditions. One of the more recent and well-documented moral failures can be found in the case of the late Ravi Zacharias. According to a recent *Christianity Today* article by Daniel Silliman and Kate Shellnutt, Zacharias "leveraged his reputation as a world-famous Christian apologist to abuse massage therapists in the United States and abroad," a pattern that went on for "more than a decade" while the ministry he led failed to hold him accountable.[11] In similar fashion, former pastor and founder of Willow Creek Community Church, Bill Hybels, was forced to step down from his role of spiritual leadership in 2018 after "allegations of misconduct surfaced against him."[12] According to Emily McFarlan Miller, in a 2019 *Washington Post* article, Hybels' misconduct, which included sexual harassment, was verified by an independent investigation.[13] Finally, in 2021, *Christianity Today* produced a podcast

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[11] Daniel Silliman and Kate Shellnutt, "Ravi Zacharias Hid Hundreds of Pictures of Women, Abuse During Massages, and a Rape Allegation," *Christianity Today,* February 11, 2021, https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/february/ravi-zacharias-rzim-investigation-sexual-abuse-sexting-rape.html.

[12] Silliman and Shellnutt.

[13] Emily McFarlan Miller, "Misconduct Allegations Against Willow Creek Founder Billy Hybels are Credible, Independent Report Finds," *The Washington Post,* March 1, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost. com/religion/2019/03/01/independent-report-finds-allegations-against-willow-creek-founder-bill-hybels-are-credible.

series examining the many alleged leadership abuses of Pastor Mark Driscoll and how they contributed to the demise of Seattle's Mars Hill Church.[14]

These cases are just three prominent cases. However, there is no doubt that this issue is bigger than just these three men. It affects countless churches and is not limited to leaders with the type of prominence these men possess. While there are likely several causes for these kinds of failures, as has already been stated, the absence of character formation in the development of leaders is seen by the researcher to be a contributing factor. So, while the researcher has examined this issue primarily from the perspective of his denominational context, the results of this research have identified principles and practices that could be transferrable to other churches and church networks as well.

Importance to the Academic Community

Within the academic community, there is a good breadth of research available on the issue of character formation as part of leadership development. However, no such research has taken place from the perspective of this particular denominational context. With this being the case, this research has brought with it a unique perspective and offers the potential to build upon the research that has already been done on this subject. The Advent Christian denomination has its own unique: (1) theological perspective, (2) ecclesiological perspective, (3) denominational structure, (4) organizational culture and

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[14] For a brief synopsis of the podcast series and some of the events leading up to the demise of Mars Hill Church, see Morgan Lee, "The Story of Mark Driscoll and Mars Hill Matters in 2021," *Christianity Today,* June 25, 2021, https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/podcasts/quick-to-listen/rise-fall-mars-hill-mark-driscoll-podcast.html.

(5) demographic makeup. These variables provide opportunities for new data and a broader perspective on this issue to emerge.

Research Methodology

Nature of the Research

This field research served as the collection mechanism for primary data was qualitative in nature, employing a multiple case study approach. This field research focused on the leadership development practices of four Advent Christian churches who engage in character formation as part of their leadership development strategies. The primary sources of data came from: (1) a questionnaire that was filled out by members of the leadership team from each participating church, (2) interviews with the pastors of the participating churches, (3) a survey of relevant demographic information, and (d) observational data.

This data was compiled and evaluated alongside the secondary data collected from theological and literature reviews, as well as review of relevant denominational literature and relevant documents provided by the participating churches. These multiple data streams provided the foundation for achieving the primary goal of this project, which was the development of a character formation strategy that could be utilized within the context of leadership development in the Advent Christian denomination.

Project Overview

The research was conducted in nine steps, the first being a biblical and theological review. This review focused on the New Testament book of 1 Timothy and examined Paul's prioritization of character as part of identifying and developing church leaders.

The examination focused on Paul's leadership instructions for Timothy as the primary recipient of the epistle and included a thorough examination of the leadership qualifications outlined by Paul in 1 Timothy 3. This review provided the researcher with a biblical foundation from which to build the remainder of the research.

The second step was a review of scholarly literature on best practices for character formation and its inclusion in leadership development strategies. This step provided the researcher with an understanding of current theory and identified the common elements of successful strategy in this area. This, combined with the theological review, provided the researcher with a baseline of knowledge regarding both the importance of character in leadership and how to employ character formation in the development of Christian leaders.

Steps three and four included preparations for field research. This began with the identification of four Advent Christian churches in the United States who are practicing character formation as part of their strategies for leadership development and contacting them to request participation. Upon securing these four churches, the researcher prepared the primary instruments for field research. These tools included: (1) a questionnaire that was distributed to the members of the leadership teams from the participating churches and (2) an interview script to serve as a guide for the interviews that were conducted with the pastors of the participating churches.

Upon the completion of the necessary field research preparations, the researcher moved on to the fifth step, which was to distribute the questionnaires to the members of the leadership teams from the participating churches. An online questionnaire service

called Survey Monkey[15] was used for this process, which allowed for the data to be collected, stored and analyzed all within the Survey Monkey system.

Simultaneously with step five, the researcher was able to conduct the sixth step, which was to conduct interviews with the pastors of each participating church. These interviews were conducted were conducted through the use of a consistent interview script and utilized Zoom[16] video conferencing, which allowed for the researcher to record and store responses for later review of data.

Upon the completed collection of all data from the field research, the researcher began the seventh step, which was to review, analyze and synthesize the data from the questionnaires and interviews. The field research data was then examined alongside the data collected through the biblical and theological review and the review of scholarly literature. The researcher then sought to identify consistencies and outliers from these different data streams, seeking to formulate some solid conclusions from the research. Based upon these conclusions, the final step of the project was performed, which was the identification of core components of a character formation strategy to be utilized as part of leadership development in the Advent Christian denomination.

Definitions

Advent Christian Denomination: An association of congregationally governed churches, made up of approximately 300 churches that are organized by twenty-five

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[15] Survey Monkey is a trademarked online research platform which can be found at: https://www.surveymonkey.com.

[16] Zoom is a trademarked online video conferencing platform which can be found at: https://www.zoom.us.

conferences in five regions in the United States and Canada and approximately 600 ministries outside of the United States.[17]

Character: A deeply internalized pattern of moral assumptions, values and attitudes which influence an individual's thoughts and actions.[18]

Character Formation: The process by which a deeply internalized pattern of values and attitudes is instilled within an individual.[19]

Emerging Leaders: Those individuals who are at some point in the process of becoming leaders.[20]

Established Leaders: Those individuals who are actively serving in leadership roles, whether formally or informally.

Leadership Development: The process by which the necessary knowledge, skills and character traits are imparted to an emerging or established leader in an effort to aid their growth in their leadership role.

Ministry Leaders: Those individuals who serve in a role of leadership within a Christian ministry.

Pastoral Epistles: Three New Testament books, authored by the Apostle Paul, include 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus.

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[17] , "About Us," Advent Christian General Conference, accessed February 2, 2021, https://www.acgc.us/about.

[18] Donald B. Rogers, "Character Formation: The Neglected Mandate," *Religious Education* 86, no. 3 (Summer 1991): 427.

[19] Rogers, 427.

[20] Jack Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission: A Social Identity Perspective on Leadership Development in Corinth and Ephesus* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 2.

Spiritual Formation: The process by which an individual is led, as an act of discipleship, to re-orient their heart toward Christ, which results in a transformation of personal and corporate identity, purpose and character.[21]

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[21] David P. Setran and Chris A. Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood: A Prcatical Theology for College and Young Adult Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 53.

CHAPTER TWO: THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

Character in Christian Perspective

Judy Tenelshof places the issue of character within the broader context of Christian morality, identifying morality as concerned with three things: (1) "fairness and harmony between individuals," (2) "harmonizing the things inside each individual," and (3) "what man was created for or the purpose of life as a whole." She asserts that, "how a person responds throughout life to these three components forms his character."[22]

The examination of character from a Christian perspective is of great importance to this study. Tenelshof provides a strong baseline to this inquiry in relating Christian character to an individual's interaction with and understanding of others, self and God. Tenelshof contends that these components "cannot be separated" as "each one affects the other."[23] She argues that "being fair and honest in our relationship with others is imbedded in the foundation of the self and relationship with God."[24] Finally, she grounds morality and character in an understanding of self and how that understanding of self finds its roots in connection to the Creator. This, as Tenelshof asserts, moves an understanding of Christian morality and Christian character "beyond principles of social organization to its very roots."[25]

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[22] Tenelshof, 78.

[23] Tenelshof, 78.

[24] Tenelshof, 78.

[25] Tenelshof, 79.

While Tenelshof expresses the need to move beyond mere biblical knowledge as the primary means of understanding Christian character,[26] there should be little doubt that the Bible provides the strongest means for an understanding of both the nature of Christian character and its components. L. Gregory Jones points to Scripture as the "central text in the formation of Christian character and identity."[27] Jones asserts that viewing the Bible in this way is something that is lacking in both Christian community and Christian life, asserting that "we have lost a clear sense of the ways in which Scripture's words (and the Word) shape both our minds and bodies."[28] Given this deficiency, he calls for a rediscovery and re-engagement with Scripture in such a way that we learn to "live with Scripture throughout our lives," engaging with it in "catechesis," in "critical study" and in reflection on patterns of social engagement."[29] Such engagement, he contends, will aid the understanding of the Bible in forming both Christian character and Christian community.[30]

Introduction to 1 Timothy and the Pastoral Epistles

While there are several sources in Scripture which identify Christian character traits, this study is primarily focused on Christian character formation as part of the development of Christian ministry leaders. As such, the researcher has elected to focus

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[26] Tenelshof, 79.

[27] L. Gregory Jones, "The Word That Journeys with Us: Bible, Character Formation, and Christian Community," *Theology Today* 55, no. 1 (April 1998): 70.

[28] Jones, 70.

[29] Jones, 71.

[30] Jones, 75.

primary attention on the New Testament book of 1 Timothy, identifying this letter as a source regarding the Apostle Paul's prioritization of character in his identification and development of church leadership. This letter, pulled from the Pauline corpus, is most often categorized along with the New Testament books of 2 Timothy and Titus, and are collectively referred to as the "Pastoral Epistles."

Thorvald Madsen says of the Pastoral Epistles that they "dwell on the *basis* of Christian conduct, as opposed to merely drawing boundaries for action," telling the reader what "really matters and why." He goes on to discuss that Paul, in these letters, names various "virtues he would have" and "vices he would shun" as a minister of the gospel and Christian leader.[31] This makes the Pastoral Epistles, and 1 Timothy, specifically a good launching point for this research, as it fits well with the understanding of character being pursued within this study.

However, while there are several examples even within this letter which focus on various aspects of Christian character and conduct, this study will focus on those passages that specifically relate to leaders. This is something for which 1 Timothy offers a great deal as well. As it applies to leaders, as Madsen points out, in addition to the tasks of leadership prescribed to Timothy and Titus in the Pastoral Epistles as a whole, Paul also strongly emphasizes that leadership should be characterized by such traits as "love," "humility," "gentleness," "commitment" and "chastity," among others, throughout the

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[31] Thorvald B. Madsen II, "The Ethics of the Pastoral Epistles," in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul's Theology in the Pastoral Epistles,* eds. Andreas J. Kostenberger and Terry L. Wilder (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010), 219.

Pastoral Epistles.[32] These are elements of godly character whose inclusion further emphasizes the value of 1 Timothy to this research.

As I. Howard Marshall points out, these three letters are unique in the Pauline corpus, as they are "addressed by Paul to his co-workers rather than congregations."[33] The Pastoral Epistles are widely seen as a source of wisdom and guidance for church and ministry leadership, providing readers with insight into the pastoral office specifically. Robert Yarbrough presents the Pastoral Epistles as a source of "counsel to church leaders serving in a pastoral or pastoral oversight capacity."[34] Similarly, George Knight refers to these letters as a "special group" which "contain instructions for the conduct of the pastoral office."[35] While not primarily concerned, as Marshall discusses, with "articulating theology," it contains themes of "considerable theological importance."[36]

Authorship

The question of authorship, while not crucial to the inquiry of this study, is important to the perspective from which this study is being written. This is particularly important given that the study is written from the perspective that Paul as author is writing to Timothy, an apprentice and younger leader, as part of the recipient, Timothy's

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[32] Madsen, 228-232.

[33] I. Howard Marshall, "1 Timothy," in *Dictionary of Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 801.

[34] Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus,* The Pillar New Testament Commentary, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2018), 1.

[35] George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles,* The New International Greek New Testament Commentary, eds. I. Howard Marshall and Donald A. Hagner (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1992), 3.

[36] Marshall, 801.

development. Paul, then, is writing from the perspective of "mentor," as is discussed by

missiologist J. Robert Clinton, in his *Biblical Leadership Commentary Series.*[37] Clinton

highlights that, in the letter, Paul models "several mentoring styles," including:

"contemporary model," "counselor," teacher," and "spiritual guide."[38] The closeness of

their relationship and the investment of Paul can be seen throughout the book of 1

Timothy. In 1:2, Paul refers to Timothy as his "true child in the faith." In 1:18, he

similarly calls Timothy his "child."

The authorship of 1 Timothy, along with the whole of the Pastoral Epistles, is

something that has come into question since the nineteenth century. Myriam Klinker-De

Klerck asserts that mainstream theology "assumes the inauthenticity" of Pauline

authorship of the Pastoral Epistles.[39] Similarly, Philip H. Towner asserts that it is "not

possible to prove the authenticity of the letters to Timothy and Titus."[40] Still, many

modern scholars affirm its Pauline origins and, according to Towner, this position was

"relatively unchallenged" until the nineteenth century.[41]

On the other hand, the thesis of Paul as author of 1 Timothy, as well as the whole

of the Pastoral Epistles, is affirmed by George W. Knight, who states that the letters "all

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[37] J. Robert Clinton, *1 and 2 Timothy: Apostolic Leader Picking Up the Mantle,* Clinton's Biblical Leadership Series (Altadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers, 2006), xvi.

[38] Clinton, xvi.

[39] Myriam Klinker-De Klerck, "The Pastoral Epistles: Authentic Pauline Writings," *European Journal of Theology* 17, no. 2 (2008): 101.

[40] Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus,* The New International Commentary on the New Testament, ed. Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2006), 27.

[41] Towner, 9.

claim to be by Paul the apostle of Christ Jesus, and this assertion is made in salutations similar to those in other Pauline letters."[42] With this being the case, the question is not whether or not the there is an internal claim of authorship in the letters, as is pointed out by Ralph Earle, but instead whether or not the claim is genuine.[43] Earle does claim, however, that the objections to Pauline authorship are waged on "historical," "ecclesiastical," "doctrinal," and "linguistic" grounds.[44] However, citing Waler Lock and J.N.D. Kelly, his assessment is that here are "adequate answers to all the negative arguments."[45]

Robert Wall and Richard Steele discuss one such objection to Pauline authorship which comes in relation to 1 Timothy 3, a passage that will be discussed at length later in this study. They observe that it is in scrutinizing the leadership structures put forth in this passage that a potential problem emerges, as the leadership structures seem to be in "stark contrast to the more charismatic body of Christ also found in the Pauline Canon."[46] For this reason, they point out, biblical scholars put this text forward as "evidence of a post-Pauline development of a more complex ecclesiastical structure to accommodate Roman society and safeguard the social institutions of the Christian religion."[47] Wall and Steele

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[42] Knight, 4.

[43] Ralph Earle, *1 Timothy*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Vol. 11, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 341.

[44] Earle, 341-343.

[45] Earle, 343.

[46] Robert W. Wall and Richard B. Steele, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus,* The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary, eds. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2012), 99.

[47] Wall and Steele, 99.

object to this observation, stating that "regardless of the date and composition, no such structure is found in the Pastoral Epistles, and their household organization is rather simple by comparison with the church's episcopacy, which did not fully develop until the third century," raising question to the legitimacy of this objection.[48]

In addition to this objection discussed by Wall and Steele, they observe that it has become "axiomatic for modern criticism to deny Pauline authorship of 1 Timothy (in particular) on historical grounds," adding that "use of vocabulary," "routine appeals" to Paul as an exemplary person, "the imprecise description of Paul's opponents" and inconsistencies in the "teachings and practices" known from those perceived "genuine letters" as being among some of the most common objections.[49] To this, Wall and Steele comment "this body of evidence" is relatively unconvincing, pointing to the "diversity evident within the Pauline collection" as a whole. They assert that such diversity makes it "difficult to nail down any single letter as non-Pauline on the grounds that it is different from the rest."[50]

Myriam Klinker-De Klerck puts forth a similar set of common objections, which includes: perceived "historical" inconsistencies, issues of "language and style" when compared to other offerings from the Pauline corpus, theological inconsistencies when compared to perceived authentic Pauline writings and the argument that the letter

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[48] Wall and Steele, 99.

[49] Wall and Steele, 5.

[50] Wall and Steele, 5.

represents "a post-Pauline stage of church development."[51] To these objections, Klinker-De Klerck responds that "the four arguments do not provide a solid ground for the inauthenticity hypothesis."[52]

Bearing in mind some of these concerns, it is the author's contention that a reasonable case can be made for Pauline authorship of these letters as no irrefutable evidence seems to exist to the contrary. As such, Pauline authorship will be the perspective of this study and these passages will be examined from the perspective of Paul as mentor. writing to Timothy, a young leader and partner in ministry whom he views as his "true child in the faith." (1 Tim. 1:2) While such an understanding of the book may not be necessary to a proper understanding of all of the content of the letter, it is important to the broader perspective of the study which is that 1 Timothy offers an example of leadership development from a Pauline perspective.

The Purpose of 1 Timothy

Justin Irving and Mark Strauss identify Paul's leadership style as one of "modeling." They point out that the best way to lead is not to "tell people what to do" but to "show them by example."[53] Such leadership, they assert, is a "complete life-style that exemplifies what matters most in life." For Paul, they say, it meant modeling "integrity," "responsibility," "investment," and "equipping and empowerment."[54] Such leadership

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[51] These objections are summarized in Klinker-De Klerck, 102-103.

[52] Klinker-De Klerck, 105.

[53] Justin A. Irving and Mark L. Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Practices for Servant Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2019), 19.

[54] Irving and Strauss, 19.

can be applied to Paul's first letter to Timothy, a letter written, as was previously

asserted, from the perspective of Paul as mentor.

The letter's structure, as Jonathan Menn states, can most properly be seen as a

"tightly organized epistle directed to the heart of Christian belief and praxis."[55] This is

affirmed by Tim O'Donnell, who does, however, point out that the clarity of its structure

is not necessarily seen by all. He asserts that "interpreters of 1 Timothy have struggled to

uncover a clear structure in the letter."[56] Answering this, O'Donnell argues that 1

Timothy has been seen as either "a sustained argument or some series of sections that

connect to one another in a coherent way."[57] He further states that "this difficulty can

lead to the conclusion that the text we have is a composite document, but a more common

view holds that the letter proceeds in a loose, unsystematic way."[58] In response to this, O'

Donnell asserts that "the letter states its overriding concern clearly enough: a church

community identified as being in Ephesus needs to adhere to right doctrine, practice good

behavior, and achieve ordered community life in a crisis connected with the inroads of

some false teachers."[59]

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[55] Jonathan Menn, "The Thematic Structure of 1 Timothy 3:14-4:16," *Journal of Biblical Theology* 4, no. 1 (January 2021): 7-8.

[56] Tim O'Donnell, "The Rhetorical Strategy of 1 Timothy," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 79, no. 3 (July 2017): 455.

[57] O'Donnell, 455.

[58] O'Donnell, 455.

[59] O'Donnell, 455-456.

Discussion of Key Passages in 1 Timothy

Faith and a Good Conscience (1 Tim. 1:18-20)

Through much of chapter 1 of 1 Timothy, Paul had spent time building a case against the false teachers that Timothy was encountering in Ephesus. As William Mounce points out, Timothy was urged by Paul to "command his Ephesian opponents to stop teaching."[60] He had given Timothy a "theological reason why the opponents' theology was wrong" and "in so doing had said that God had adequately strengthened for the task."[61]

Following this up, in verse 18 Paul charges Timothy to "wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience."[62] Contrasting what Timothy must do against those who had "rejected this" (v. 19), Paul is, as Mounce asserts, offering caution to "preserve his faith and good conscience," and "not compromising himself as others had done."[63] John Stott, in his commentary on 1 Timothy, wrote that while Paul does not specify what is meant in waging this warfare, it is reasonable to assume that it is similar to his charge in 6:12 to "fight the good fight of the faith."[64] In doing so, Stott comments that Timothy possesses "two valuable things which he must guard." Stott identifies these two things as

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[60] William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles,* World Biblical Commentary: Vol. 46, eds. Ralph P. Martin and Lynn Allan Losie (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 64.

[61] Mounce, 64.

[62] Mounce, 64.

[63] Mounce, 64.

[64] John R. W. Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus,* The Bible Speaks Today Commentary Series, eds. J. A. Motyer and John R. W. Stott (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 56.

"the faith," which he sees as the "apostolic faith," and a good conscience." Moreover, he points out, these two "possessions" must be "preserved together."[65]

Paul contrasts what will be required of Timothy against two individuals: Hymenaeus and Alexander. According to Stott, Hymenaeus is "presumably the same heretic who taught that the resurrection had already taken place." Alexander, on the other hand, is one who is not as clearly identifiable. Stott asserts that it should not be assumed that he is referring to "Alexander the metalworker," whom Paul identifies in 2 Tim. 4:14 as having done him "great harm."[66] Robert Yarbrough, while not dismissing the possibility of this being the same Alexander as in 2 Tim. 4:14, does assert that if Paul is referring to a different Alexander, what Paul says here in verse 20 is "all that is known" about the individual.[67]

Regardless of their identity, Paul clearly uses them to contrast this charge to Timothy. What we are told about them is that by rejecting these things, "made shipwreck of their faith" (v. 19).[68] According to Stott, what these men had rejected was "singular, not plural."[69] He notes that the word used for their rejection of conscience (ἀπωθέω) means to "push something away" or "repudiate."[70] In essence, he asserts, this implies a

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[65] Stott, 57.

[66] Stott, 57.

[67] Yarbrough, 135.

[68] Unless otherwise noted, all biblical quotations are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version,* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001).

[69] Stott, 57.

[70] Stott, 57.

"violent and deliberate rejection." Having done this to their conscience, they have "shipwrecked their faith."[71] This serves as a stark contrast for what Timothy is being charged with here. According to Stott, it is "precisely by preserving a good conscience that Timothy will be able to keep the faith."[72]

What is meant by conscience, however, is significant to this inquiry. Samuel Hakh sees the New Testament conception of conscience as being pulled from Greco-Roman culture. In this context, conscience is a word focused on "the capacity or power of a person, particularly when looking back to the occurrences in the past, to assess or evaluate whether those occurrences were the good and bad."[73] In conducting this evaluation, according to Hakh, individuals would then be "affected personally by the assessment of whether past actions were good or bad," presumably affecting future action.[74] This understanding of conscience seems to be properly applied to this passage. Towner understands the term "good conscience" in this context to mean "the organ of decision" by which the Christian may "move from knowledge of the faith and sound teaching to appropriate conduct."[75] Similarly, George Knight simply asserts that conscience refers to an individual's "self-conscious moral evaluation."[76]

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[71] Stott, 57.

[72] Stott, 57.

[73] Samuel B. Hakh, "The Conscience According to Paul," *Journal of Biblical Theology* 3, no. 1 (January 2020): 237.

[74] Hakh, 237.

[75] Towner, 157-158.

[76] Knight, 109.

Building upon this, Knight notes that it is the "rejection of 'good conscience,'" and not rejection of faith, that ultimately "causes shipwreck regarding faith."[77] He notes that to "reject and repudiate a good conscience," in this context, is to be "willfully and self-consciously disobedient to God's requirements because a good conscience bespeaks a self-conscious obedience."[78] It is in this rejection and repudiation that, according to Knight, "led to and culminated in the shipwreck [of their faith]."[79] Similarly, Thorvald Madsen, speaking more broadly about Paul's admonitions in the Pastoral Epistles to protect the gospel message, points out that warnings such as these compare strongly to what Jesus says about false prophets, that they "do what they do because of who they are" and heresies "trace back to character defects, which soon become visible, as fruit reveals the tree."[80]

This offers a strong foundation for understanding Paul's perspective on the importance of character in the appointment and development of leaders. If issues of character were at the root of the fall of the heretical leaders, then identifying and instilling good and godly character in all emerging leaders would seem to be paramount. This leads to the obvious question: what types of character traits ought to be instilled in leaders, if the desire is gospel faithfulness?

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[77] Knight, 109.

[78] Knight, 109.

[79] Knight, 109.

[80] Madsen, 226.

William Mounce points to one key character trait that stems from this dual charge to hold "faith and good conscience."[81] He points out that this dual charge serves as the "first mention of an important theme" in the Pastoral Epistles, that being the theme of "personal integrity."[82] For Paul, says Mounce, "what a person believes (faith) and how a person behaves (conscience) are inseparable."[83] This is something Mounce sees as a "major theme" throughout the Pastoral Epistles, asserting that this is the primary reason why Paul spends time attacking the behavior of his opponents, noting that their "illicit behavior is a clear indication of the falseness of their teaching."[84]

This placement of integrity as a significant character trait and key marker of true gospel ministry is important. While Mounce's claim is one that the researcher will examine further as part of examining other relevant passages of Scripture, this nod to integrity serves as one key indicator of this passage's emphasis on personal character as being central to Paul's continued development of Timothy as a leader. In placing both a charge to maintain faith and good conscience alongside a cautionary tale in his discussion of the failures of faith and character demonstrated by Hymenaeus and Alexander, Paul places both a clear path to follow in front of Timothy, as well as the consequences if he fails in similar fashion. Additionally, he demonstrates for Timothy characteristics he will want to look for in leaders whom he brings alongside himself and a clear example of the

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[81] Mounce, 66.

[82] Mounce, 66.

[83] Mounce, 66.

[84] Mounce, 66.

types of leaders he may want to guard against, placing moral character at the very center of this selection process.

Qualifications for Overseers and Deacons (1 Tim. 3:1-13)

Purpose

With one core character trait for Christian leadership being identified in 1 Tim. 1:18-20, the researcher will now turn attention to a passage which focusing on a whole catalog. According to Yarborough, 1 Timothy 3 moves the reader from a focus on worship to "the character of those who qualify to be appointed to preside in that worship and oversee in that household."[85] Placing this emphasis within the broader task of leadership development, he asserts that the whole of 1 Timothy calls its recipient to "dig in at Ephesus for the long haul. The result of this is a call to leadership development."[86] This is a task, according to Yarborough, that Paul finds himself spending "much of his [own] time and energy" on, calling "leadership excellence and training" an "underrated link" between what "Jesus set in motion" and what "Paul toiled to expand to new lands and levels."[87]

Along those lines, Yarborough points out that to aspire to congregational leadership is a "noble thing."[88] However, aspiration alone is not something that should be

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[85] Yarborough, 189.

[86] Yarbrough, 190.

[87] Yarborough, 190.

[88] Yarbrough, 190.

considered "sufficient ground for appointment."[89] Accordingly, he suggests that in "about a dozen verses," Paul gives the reader a "composite sketch of traits and qualities" that must be evident in perspective congregational leaders.[90] This list should not be seen as comprehensive, as Yarbrough discusses, but as a reminder for Timothy of some of those core qualities that Timothy "should definitely not overlook."[91]

The primary leadership offices being identified in this chapter are those of overseer (ἐπίσκοπος) and deacon (διάκονος), which, as George Knight notes, are "self-defining" terms outlining roles of oversight and service respectively.[92] While these are particular roles being addressed by Paul, it is worth noting that the characteristics discussed within chapter 3 would seem to be desirable for those serving in any role of spiritual leadership. To this effect, Knight notes that some see this list as a "common stylized list that was used in the non-Christian world" describing all sorts of leaders.[93]

Knight also points out that chapter 3 provides the "pastoral reason for the instructions of the letter" and the "theological perspective that necessitates such instructions and permeates them."[94] This can be found, according to Knight, in verses 14-16, which discusses Paul's "delay and the need for such instruction now" and the

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[89] Yarbrough, 190.

[90] Yarbrough, 190.

[91] Yarbrough, 190.

[92] Knight, 151.

[93] Knight, 151.

[94] Knight, 150.

church's place as the "household and dwelling place of the living God," committed to "uphold and practice God's truth."[95]

David Mappes narrows the purpose of this chapter down further, stating that chapter 3 was offered to help Timothy "differentiate between true and false teachers" by emphasizing the need for teaching to be accompanied by "personal godliness." Mappes sees Paul's assertion to be that "true teachers adhere to (and thus model) sound doctrine that conforms to godliness."[96]

This attaches a significant emphasis on Christian character as a prerequisite to operate in one of these positions of leadership. As Towner points out, each leadership role is "regarded from the standpoint of qualifications, not duties, and form this it is clear that Paul's stress was on the quality of the leaders' character, through the presence of suitable gifts and abilities would be an assumed requirement."[97] So, while not existing as the only prerequisite for leadership in these roles, this emphasis on character should be seen as among Paul's primary qualifications.

Origins

According to David Mappes, commentators point to several possible sources from which Paul may have used in developing the list of elder and deacon qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3.[98] He cites the Essenes' "Manual of Discipline" and Platonic philosopher

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[95] Knight, 150.

[96] David A. Mappes, "Moral Virtues Associated with Eldership," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 160, no. 638 (April 2003): 212-213.

[97] Towner, 239.

[98] Mappes, 207.

Onasander's "Stratego" as those commonly listed as potential sources.[99] These possible

sources are also discussed by Benjamin Merkle, who himself highlights Onasander as a

potential source.[100] Merkle asserts that the qualifications given to Timothy and Titus are

"general in nature in the sense that they are basic characteristics that were valued in

society and expected of all Christians."[101]

Merkle does point out, however, that there are "several features" which Paul

speaks to that do not appear in Onasander's list, such as being "able to teach" (1 Tim.

3:2), "not addicted to wine" (v. 3) and "having children in subjection" (v. 4), "being able

to manage one's household (v. 5) and "not being a new convert" (v. 6), suggesting that

this list was not merely lifted from another source or sources.[102] This is affirmed by

Mappes, who suggests that these dissimilarities "discount the hypotheses" that Paul

simply "used a well-known list of virtues and vices to call the church to a conciliatory

position with society."[103]

The Qualifications

In examining the individual qualifications outlined by Paul in this chapter, it is

observable, first, that there is a good deal of overlap between the two lists. This is

discussed by Towner, who observes that in both cases, the description meets the same

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[99] Mappes, 208-209.

[100] Benjamin L. Merkle, "Are the Qualifications for Elders or Overseers Negotiable?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 171, no. 682 (April 2014): 173.

[101] Merkle, 175.

[102] Merkle, 175.

[103] Mappes, 210.

"general requirement of an irreproachable (blameless) reputation."[104] Building upon this, Towner also observes that the passage links character to credibility, pointing to a degree of leadership instability that existed within the church in which Timothy was serving and a greater concern for the reputation of those filling these offices as a means for increasing the credibility and stability of both the offices and the church as a whole.[105]

Jimmy Arthur Atkins similarly categorizes 1 Timothy 3 as a "basis for organizing and selecting leaders."[106] He sees Paul's charge to Timothy in this passage as: "to appoint leaders who shared certain core values believed to be necessary for the survival of the church in Roman society."[107] While not identical linguistically, Atkins' assessment of the purpose of this chapter places similar emphasis on the need for individuals of quality character if the church is to remain a credible witness to the gospel.

The qualifications themselves are relatively straightforward in nature. For the office of overseer, Paul asserts that an individual must be: "above reproach," "the husband of one wife," "sober-minded," "self-controlled," "respectable," "hospitable," "able to teach," "not a drunkard," "not violent," "gentle," "not quarrelsome," "not a lover of money," "must manage his own household well," "with all dignity keeping his children submissive," "not a recent convert," and "well thought of by outsiders."[108]

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[104] Towner, 239.

[105] Towner, 239-240.

[106] Jimmy Arthur Atkins, "Leader Value Alignment: A Social Rhetorical Reading of 1 Timothy," *Journal of Biblical Theology* 1, no. 4 (October 2018): 11.

[107] Atkins, 13.

[108] All wording of these qualifications for overseers is taken from the English Standard Version.

The qualifications for deacons are similar, though not identical. Paul asserts that Deacons must possess the following qualifications: they "must be dignified," "not double-tongued," "not addicted to much wine," "not greedy for dishonest gain," they must "hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience," proven to be "blameless," "the husband of one wife" and they must "manage their children and their own households well." In addition, Paul offers some additional qualifications for deacons' spouses. They are as follows: "dignified," "not slanderers," "sober-minded" and "faithful in all things."[109]

In examining this catalog of qualifications, it is observable that, as Yarborough points out, both offices are viewed as ministries that "require relatively advanced levels of doctrinal understanding, moral probity, personal discipline, marital integrity (if the person is married), parental skills (if blessed with children), respect in the broader community – and proven experience in all these matters."[110] In other words, the leaders appointed to these positions must be those who have proven to possess these qualities over time.

William Mounce similarly observes that the similarities among these lists, noting that the similarities are "remarkable." The overall concern, he asserts, is that church leaders be "above reproach in their daily lives."[111] The notable similarities, according to Mounce, include being: "above reproach," a "one-woman man," "dignified," "not

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[109] All wording of these qualifications for deacons and their wives is taken from the English Standard Version.

[110] Yarbrough, 190.

[111] Mounce, 155.

addicted to wine," "not greedy for money," and a "good manager of family."[112] These

qualities, according to Mounce, contrast with the "negative counterparts," which

"characterize the opponents" to gospel ministry whom Paul is speaking against in the

letter.[113]

It is notable that Mounce points to these lists as consisting of qualities and not

simply behaviors. This suggests that Paul is not simply seeking to provide a list of duties

to perform, but something deeper. Towner also uses this language adding that each list

stresses the "quality of the leaders' character" as being above all else.[114] This not only

places character at the center of the appointment of leaders as Paul sees it, but also

provides detail in regards to the kinds of character traits which Paul would have been

looking for. He not only provides the admonition that overseers and deacons must be

"above reproach," but unpacks what that looks like.

Godliness in Leadership (1 Tim. 4:6-16)

In pivoting to chapter 4, it is noteworthy to first discuss a shift in the tone of the

letter. As Yarbrough points out, to this point in the letter (4:6), Paul has "addressed

Timothy directly very sparingly, with only three second person verbs in total."[115] Chapter

4, verse 6 marks what Yarbrough calls a "spike" in Paul's "direct appeals to Timothy."[116]

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[112] Mounce, 155.

[113] Mounce, 155.

[114] Towner, 239.

[115] Yarbrough, 235.

[116] Yarbrough, 235.

Yarbrough notes eighteen direct appeals from this point forward in the letter, including eight in chapter four.[117] This suggests that the remainder of the letter is focused more directly on Timothy's own development as a leader which underscores the letter's importance to the broader thesis of this study.

Another shift that occurs at this point in the letter is discussed by George W. Knight. Knight points to verse 6 as the pivot point from the first third of the chapter, labeling it as a shift from Paul's emphasis on "false teaching" to "Timothy's responsibility to instruct church members about the truths just set forth."[118] That being said, before Paul pivots to the content of Timothy's teaching, Paul spends time exhorting Timothy regarding the needed godliness of the teacher.

In verse 6, Paul builds upon what Philip Towner refers to as the "creation theology just set out in response to the heresy" in verses 4 and 5.[119] Paul commends these truths to Timothy, telling him that if he is to "put these things before the brothers, [he] will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that [he has] followed." (1 Tim. 4:6) From there, Paul exhorts Timothy, saying: "have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness" (1 Tim. 4:7). It is the latter half of this exhortation that becomes the primary focus through verse 10. According to Yarbrough, Timothy is instructed to "transcend" the

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[117] Yarbrough, 235.

[118] Knight, 193.

[119] Towner, 302.

speculations of "silly myths" addressed in the first half of verse 7, with the term "rather, train yourself," which serves as a forceful summons to an about-face."[120]

According to Yarbrough, the imperative "train yourself" is the "first imperative in the epistle that is aimed at Timothy."[121] Coupling this imperative with verse 8, which references acts of "physical training," Yarbrough asserts that "Paul has in mind disciplines and pursuits that result in focus, stamina, and self-mastery in the face of competition." Yarbrough lists this competition as being embodied in "false doctrines," "fatigue," "distractions" and "other threats."[122] Towner says of the command to "train yourself" that it employs language "typical of Greco-Roman ethical teaching."[123] Towner asserts that it was "first applied to the effort and exercise involved in physical contexts," but is "transferred naturally to describe the work of progressing toward virtue in the moral and spiritual sphere."[124] It can be inferred then that the type of training Paul is pointing Timothy toward is one with significant emphasis on the development of good moral character.

It can also be discerned from this that Paul is aiming to produce in Timothy a faith that will last through the hardships he may encounter in his ministry service. There are many qualities that can lead to this type of endurance, all of which Paul ties up in his

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[120] Yarbrough, 239.

[121] Yarbrough, 239.

[122] Yarbrough, 239.

[123] Towner, 305.

[124] Towner, 305.

statement: "train yourself for godliness" (1 Tim. 4:7b). Of this statement, Yarbrough says

that the goal of Timothy's "self-conditioning regimen" is simply to "be godly."[125]

Godliness in biblical thinking, he notes, "is an inherent good."[126] Though, according to

Yarbrough, Paul has "specific reasons for the command to pursue it in a disciplined

fashion like an athlete in training."[127] These appear in verse 8.

In verse 8, Paul extends this metaphor of exercise, offering the statement: "while

bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise

for the present life and also for the life to come" (1 Tim. 4:8). Towner contends that this

provides "grounding" for the command to pursue godliness, again contrasting this pursuit

with the more limited value of "bodily training."[128] Towner defines godliness as that

"holistic life encompassing faith and visible behavior" and identifies it as something that

is to be Timothy's "first priority."[129] He notes that the "superiority" Paul assigns to it

stems from its "far-reaching value," noting that the "practice of godliness will lead the

believer into the experience of God's promise of eternal life in the present age that carries

on into the 'age to come.'"[130] Such godliness, according to Yarbrough, is "not just

something for Timothy to affirm and commend: it has to suffuse his own being, which

will not happen without rigorous self-discipline," noting that if physical training is of

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[125] Yarbrough, 239.

[126] Yarbrough, 239.

[127] Yarbrough, 239.

[128] Towner, 306.

[129] Towner, 307.

[130] Towner, 307-308.

value, how much more is a "life dignified and ennobled by the presence of divine attributes."[131] He continues, "Timothy should be willing to go to great lengths to attain this benefit."[132]

Verse 9, as Towner asserts, underlines the "need to pursue godliness" through an assertion of "apostolic authority."[133] This provides a valuable pivot point to verse 10, which Towner observes as connecting godliness more directly to the mission. Towner asserts that Paul adds a "conclusion that links his and Timothy's mission efforts backward to the value of 'godliness,' as well as to the salvation plan of God."[134] He states that the "connecting phrase 'for this reason' points backward, gathering up what has been said about 'godliness' and its promise of eternal life as a reason for Paul's missionary efforts" while also providing "further grounds for ministry effort" which is now "expanded into soteriological language."[135]

Yarbrough sees this connection as well, stating that while the "exact logical connection with or progression from the previous verses is difficult to nail down with certainty," it is possible that this verse "harks back to and confirms Paul's imperative (v 7) to 'train yourself to be godly.'"[136] Yarbrough notes that this connection serves as a reminder that the task requires "maximum effort," a fact highlighted by the call to "toil

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[131] Yarbrough, 240.

[132] Yarbrough, 240.

[133] Towner, 309.

[134] Towner, 309.

[135] Towner, 309.

[136] Yarbrough, 242.

and strive."[137] Such effort, he states, is "sustained by a firmly placed hope," one grounded

in the "living God."[138]

 As chapter 4 draws to a close, Yarbrough observes that the discourse is

"dominated by imperatives."[139] Yarbrough states that these imperatives, while not

"overly situation-specific," call for "attitudes and actions that are in order for whatever

tasks Timothy, or anyone in his pastoral position," may face over time.[140] Towner sees

these imperatives as being directly connected to the previous discussion of godly

character, asserting that at the "conclusion of this subsection" it becomes more apparent

that the "coworker's demonstration of godliness (in various personal and public ways) is

also to be linked with Paul's missionary concerns."[141]

This is most apparent in verse 16 in Paul's exhortation: "keep a close watch on

yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself

and your hearers." Towner states that this exhortation "brings together the concern for

Timothy's own welfare and that of those among whom he works."[142] The first of these

imperatives, "keep a close watch," is seen by Towner as applying to Timothy's "life and

doctrine."[143] The second "explicitly assembles these aspects of Timothy's life into a

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[137] Yarbrough, 242.

[138] Yarbrough, 242.

[139] Yarbrough, 243.

[140] Yarbrough, 244.

[141] Towner, 327.

[142] Towner, 327.

[143] Towner, 327.

unified whole" ("preserve in them").[144] Given that these imperatives point back to all that

has come in the previous verses, a direct link can be seen between Timothy's own

teaching and his moral character. Towner says of this that "it is the gathering together of

Timothy's faithfulness as a teacher and in moral conduct into a coherent pattern of life

that summarizes all of 4:6-16a."[145] It is this pattern of life and ministry, Towner asserts,

as what "holds so much promise for Timothy himself and for those to whom he

ministers."[146]

These observations point to godliness as being something that needs to be both

practiced and embodied and suggests that it is something that is represented by one's

character and action. The other major implication here can be found in Yarbrough's

statement that godliness is "not just something for Timothy to affirm and commend: it

has to suffuse his own being, which will not happen without rigorous self-discipline."[147]

This directs back to an earlier discussion regarding Mounce's assertion that integrity is a

central theme which permeates the whole of the Pastoral Epistles.[148] This is one such

example as it serves as an urging to Timothy, as a leader, to embody what he commends

to others. Such integrity is vital to the Christian leader. Additionally, as has been seen in

each of the passages discussed, such character and action serve as a direct contrast to the

false teachers whom Paul is speaking against. Mounce points out this contrast, stating

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[144] Towner, 327.

[145] Towner, 328.

[146] Towner, 328.

[147] Yarbrough, 240.

[148] Mounce, 66.

that while the "opponent's teaching is ungodly and silly," it is ultimately "godliness [that] has value for all things."[149]

Discipline and Appointment of Leaders (1 Tim. 5:19-22)

Chapter 5 of 1 Timothy focuses largely on, as Waldemar Kowalski asserts, the context of "community life and leadership."[150] In verse 19, that focuses shifts to the rebuke and discipline of elders, providing instruction for how to handle such discipline. Paul begins this section by warning Timothy not to "admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses" (1 Tim. 5:19). This warning, according to Kowalski, is not one that is meant to discourage judgement, but instead, to discourage the "accusations which precede judgement."[151] Kowalski adds that in the formula provided, care is taken "for the protection of the elder as well as for the community."[152] In making this shift, Paul's focus not only returns to the issue of character, but builds upon this emphasis by offering instruction regarding the Christian community's response when evidence of sin and poor moral character emerges. This is vital for the health of the Christian community as well as for their witness.

Kowalski acknowledges that within this passage, there is some question as to the type of behavior that would induce such discipline. The answer to this, according to

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[149] Mounce, 252.

[150] Waldemar Kowalski, "The Reward, Discipline, and Installation of Church Leaders: An Examination of 1 Timothy 5:17-22." (Ph.D. diss., University of Gloucestershire, Cheltenham, England, 2005), 111.

[151] Kowalski, 111.

[152] Kowalski, 111.

Kowalski, can be found in the Greek phrase τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας, translated "those sinning."[153] However, he asserts that even in this phrase there is some potential ambiguity, believing it could point to one of three things. Those three possibilities include: "sin constantly rather than occasionally," those who "continued sin after established accusations," or those whose "guilt has been established."[154]

Such ambiguity is similarly discussed by Mounce, who poses virtually the same questions. He asks: "what is the force of the linear aspect of ἁμαρτάνοντας" (sinning)? Is it referring to elders who "sin constantly as opposed to occasionally, or does it describe continuing sin after the initial confrontation described in verse 19."[155] The answers to these questions are important as they have possible impact on whether or not this passage is part of Paul's emphasis on character. If the emphasis is simply on elders whose sins have been identified, it is possible that Paul's emphasis here could simply be on behavior more so than character. However, Mounce goes on to point out that these options are not necessarily "mutually exclusive."[156] In fact, even if the emphasis is on those elders whose sins have been identified, Mounce asserts that the linear aspect of "guarantees" that Paul is discussing an elder "living a life of sin."[157] He points out that the linear aspect of ἔλεγχε (confront) parallels the linear aspect of ἁμαρτάνοντας, pointing to a more literal

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[153] Kowalski, 117.

[154] Kowalski, 117.

[155] Mounce, 312.

[156] Mounce, 312.

[157] Mounce, 312.

translation of: "be in the habit of confronting those in the habit of sinning."[158] Such a

pattern or habit would suggest more deeply held character flaws rather than a simple

lapse in judgement.

With this being the case, verse 20 is instructive regarding how to respond to

issues of character within the council of elders. In contrast to the warning offered in verse

19, Paul's admonition in verse 20 is to offer "rebuke." There are several potential

meanings for the Greek term used here. Mounce lists a "range of meanings," including:

"to confront," "to expose," "to rebuke," and "to discipline."[159] In either case, as is pointed

out by Kowalski, the elder who has not repented but "persists in his sin" is to be

reproved.[160]

John Stott suggests that in these cases the "sadness and the scandal of a public

showdown cannot be avoided."[161] Instead, the offenders are to be "rebuked publicly, so

that others may take warning."[162] Stott sees such public rebuke as a last resort, however,

asserting that the pattern of verses 19 and 20 is centered around the idea that "private sins

should be dealt with privately" and "public sins publicly."[163] It is neither "right nor

necessary" according to Stott, to "make what is private public" until all other possibilities

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[158] Mounce, 312-313.

[159] Mounce, 313.

[160] Kowalski, 117.

[161] Stott, 139.

[162] Stott, 139.

[163] Stott, 139.

have been "exhausted."[164] This pattern is similarly observed by Towner, adding that the idea of public rebuke refers to the "presence of the congregation."[165]

Verse 22 shifts attention once again, with the commands: "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure" (1 Tim. 5:22). Each of these commands, building on one another, carries the broad message to avoid appointing leaders who are not qualified. As to what Paul meant by this carries with it some potential for ambiguity. Ralph Earle states that Paul could be referring to either the idea of "laying hands on repentant fallen elders" too quickly or a prohibition on "hasty ordination" more broadly.[166] Yarbrough asserts that Paul could be cautioning against the temptation to "populate leadership ranks with yes-men," or those whom Timothy could "count on to see things his way."[167] Knight simply asserts that Paul's instruction here is centered on the idea that an "appropriate time span should be allowed before laying hands on individuals to set them apart as elders."[168]

Regardless of what, specifically, Paul is trying to communicate in verse 22, each of these potential options speaks to the character of the individuals being appointed. If the reference is to fallen elders, the implications regarding character are obvious. Fallen elders would be those who, presumably, had shown themselves to possess poor moral character which led to their removal. If the command relates to new converts, then the

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[164] Stott, 139.

[165] Towner, 371.

[166] Earle, 381.

[167] Yarbrough, 297.

[168] Knight, 239.

implication might be attached more to their moral and spiritual development. In either case, the command not to be hasty implies that the individuals in question may not be ready for the task.

The question of who Paul is referring to may be able to be unpacked in the statements that follow. These statements also shed light on how the first command may relate to character. Yarbrough points out that "to recognize leaders who are not really qualified would be to 'share in the sins of others.'" Yarbrough goes on to speculate that Paul could be referring to the sins of those "pressuring Timothy to appoint them" or could be thinking of "the wreckage caused when people are placed in service when they are not really fit."[169] Knight offers a similar assessment, connecting this passage to 1 Timothy 3:6,[170] and stating that "by placing a person in an office that has one of its qualifications that the person must be 'above reproach,' the one laying on hands will seem to be condoning the sins that person commits."[171] Such a statement not only has implications regarding the individual being appointed, but also on the individual doing the appointing. As such, this caution not only offers a dual warning for Timothy.

Final Warnings and Final Instructions (1 Tim. 6:3-14)

As Paul moves toward the close of the letter, he provides one more significant warning against the false teachers. The misdeed of these false teachers is simple, teaching

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[169] Yarbrough, 297.

[170] Presumably, Knight is referencing Paul's assertion in 1 Tim. 3:6 that an overseer, "must not be a recent convert."

[171] Knight, 239.

a "different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness" (1 Tim. 6:3). As Towner discusses, the problem of these teachings is not simply that of a "disseminating of factual errors," but is a "failure of the heart that involves willful rejection of God' pattern."[172] Again, this points Timothy to the root of the issue, which Paul sees as an issue of godly character more so than anything else.

This idea is built upon beginning in verse 4, as Paul begins to elaborate on the elements of poor character and displays of sin which have been evident in these false teachers. They include: being "puffed up with conceit" (v. 4), possessing an "unhealthy craving for controversy" (v. 4), "envy" (v. 4), "dissension" (v. 4), "slander" (v. 4), and "evil suspicions" (v. 4). This begins, as Towner highlights, an illustration of what a life "devoid of godliness" actually looks like. Towner points out that Paul begins with "rudimentary moral flaws," moves on to "controversy and other sins," and "ends with complete rejection of the truth and confusion about the real meaning of 'godliness.'"[173] Much like in 1:18-20 Paul appears to be placing issues of character at the root of the problems with these false teachers. Mounce provides similar commentary on this passage, stating that "having described the teaching of the opponents, Paul moves to the opponents themselves."[174] He describes their "attitudes" (vv. 4-5a) and concludes by

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[172] Towner, 393.

[173] Towner, 395.

[174] Mounce, 337.

identifying their "true motivation" (vv. 5b-10).[175] This "true motivation" is later identified by Mounce as a desire to "make money."[176]

The characteristics described by Paul offer a stark contrast of the desired qualities of the Christian leader which he describes in chapter 3. In chapter 3, Paul describes the overseer as one who is: "above reproach" (v. 2), "sober-minded" (v. 2), "self-controlled" (v.2), "respectable" (v.2), "hospitable" (v. 2), "able to teach," "not a drunkard" (v. 3), "not violent but gentle" (v. 3), "not quarrelsome" (v. 3) and "not a lover of money" (v. 3). In many ways, it appears that Paul could be channeling his previous words in chapter 3 as a reminder as he moves toward another imperative for Timothy in verse 11 of chapter 6.

In verse 11, Paul exhorts Timothy: "But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness" (1 Tim. 6:11). According to Towner, verse 11 serves as the beginning of a "restatement" of Timothy's commission.[177] He turns to the issue of Timothy's holiness and seeks to separate him "distinctively from the errorists," drawing an "emphatic line between behavior that has [just] been denounced" and "behavior that is to be embraced."[178] Yarbrough offers similar commentary, pointing out that verses 11 and 12 are "dominated by imperatives."[179] The imperative to "flee" refers to the "evils cited in the previous

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[175] Mounce, 337.

[176] Mounce, 340.

[177] Towner, 407

[178] Towner, 407-408.

[179] Yarbrough, 321.

section" and "perhaps in the whole epistle to this point."[180] Meanwhile, "pursue,"

following "flee," he asserts, displays what may be called "Paul's positive ethic."[181]

Yarbrough goes on to state that "avoiding or repudiating the bad may be necessary, but is

seldom an end in itself."[182] Instead, Yarbrough highlights that the gospel "empowers

pursuit of the excellent in personal communion with God."[183]

    The imperatives offered to Timothy in this passage are highlighted by Knight in

his commentary on 1 Timothy. In addition to the imperative to "flee," which has already

been discussed, Knight points to "pursuing Christian virtues" (v. 11b), "fighting the good

fight of faith" (v. 12), "laying hold of eternal life" (v. 12), and "keeping the

commandment" (v. 14) as being those key commands before turning his attention to

"Christ's coming" which leads into a "doxological statement about God" (vv. 15, 16).[184]

The balance of these imperatives provide what Yarbrough classifies as Paul's "positive

ethic," highlighting that while "avoiding or repudiating the bad may be necessary," it is

"seldom an end in itself." Instead, Yarbrough asserts, the gospel "empowers pursuit of

the excellent in personal communion with God."[185]

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[180] Yarbrough, 321-322.

[181] Yarbrough, 322.

[182] Yarbrough, 322.

[183] Yarbrough, 322.

[184] Knight, 260.

[185] Yarbrough, 322.

According to Andrew Cavins, the balance of verses 11 through 14 stand out as "Paul requiring Timothy to lead by example."[186] Cavins observes that Paul knew Timothy would need to provide a "living example of a virtuous character for the Ephesians to observe" if Timothy was to "hold the credibility required for effective leadership."[187] This charge to lead by example points once again toward the issue of personal integrity, a key element of godly character and an issue which Mounce points to as being a present theme throughout the letter.[188] This serves as one of multiple passages that represents Paul's continuous pointing to personal integrity and good moral character in response to the comparatively poor moral character of the false teachers. If the false teachers are those who consistently display poor moral character, Timothy's display of a more virtuous character would serve as a clear and visible difference for those both within the Christian community and outside. Such contrast would also provide a clear delineation between the effects of the true gospel and the gospel being preached by the false teachers.

Conclusions

There is no doubt that throughout 1 Timothy there is a high premium placed on the character of the Christian leader. Paul uses character as a marker to discern the identity of true Christian leaders from those who would teach false doctrine. He provides

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[186] Andrew L. Cavins, "Ethical Leadership Principles in 1 Timothy 6," *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 12, no. 2 (Fall 2018): 12.

[187] Cavins, 12.

[188] Mounce, 66.

Timothy with a clear catalog of character traits, both good and bad, which may aid in that identification. In both his identification of the poor character of the false teachers and his exhortations to Timothy toward virtue and godliness, Paul provides his protégé with a clear roadmap toward endurance in the faith and a clear picture of the effects of the true gospel in contrast to the gospel being preached by the false teachers.

There is a great deal that can be gained practically in observing Paul's instructions to Timothy relating to the character of the leader. These passages offer clear warning to anyone aspiring to Christian leadership in regards to guarding their own heart. Given the nature of this research and the problem identified in the introductory section of this study, the simple identification of the pitfalls of those who had fallen in Paul's day offers the reader a clear path to follow. At times, this type of simple warning and an identification of the kinds of pitfalls to avoid can be highly instructive. Paul provides both in this letter.

Paul also provides a clear catalog of qualities to look for in Christian leaders (1 Tim. 3:1-13). This list, while not exhaustive, provides for those working in leadership recruitment and development specifically, with a clear baseline for the kinds of character traits that represent a godly leader. Other qualities are identified at other points in the letter as well, as are contrasting examples of the character of the false teachers. This, coupled with instructions not to lay hands on "recent converts" (1 Tim. 3:6) or be "hasty in the laying on of hands" (1 Tim. 5:22) provides the reader with clear guidance to the reader to be cautious in the task of leadership appointment and development.

One clear point of caution as it relates to the passages that emphasize character is that such an emphasis can turn into legalism. In doing so, the danger is that leaders can themselves turn toward an internalization and eventual preaching of a false gospel; one

grounded in self-justification that is works based, rather than based upon the grace offered through Jesus. This would run counter to Paul's underlying message throughout the letter. This concern is addressed in Yarbrough's commentary on 1 Tim. 6:11 which reminds the reader that it is the gospel that "empowers pursuit of the excellent in personal communion with God."[189] This understanding removes the burden from the Christian leader, reminding them of the true source of godly character which originates with the gospel itself.

In examining the profitability of the study of 1 Timothy against the goals of the research, it is clear that the biblical and theological foundations present in the passages examined have provided a valuable foundation for the field research that has been undertaken. The underlying goal of this theological review was to gain great clarity in regards how the apostle Paul prioritized character in his identification and development of leaders in the churches for whom he was responsible. This goal has been met and will continue to be unpacked in the remainder of this report.

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[189] Yarbrough, 322.

CHAPTER THREE: REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

The Importance of Character in Leadership

With biblical foundations established, it is necessary to examine the importance of character in leadership from a contemporary perspective. As was established in Chapter One of this study, failure to make character a priority in leadership can have devastating consequences. Conversely, as will be demonstrated through much of this chapter, prioritizing character in leadership can have an overwhelmingly positive impact on followers and organizations. Character can have far reaching consequences and can impact everything from organizational health to the morale of individual followers.

The purpose of this phase of the research will be to examine the issue of character formation as a part of leadership development strategies through engagement with the available contemporary literature. This section will examine the issue through three lenses: (1) the impact of character on leadership; (2) character traits that are most important to leadership; and (3) core principles and practices for character formation as part of a broader leadership development strategy. The researcher will also spend time unpacking the value of transformational leadership in employing character formation as part of leadership development strategies.

Impact of Character on Leadership

Mary Crossan, Gerard Seijts, and Jeffrey Gandz see healthy leadership as being shaped by multiple different traits. They assert that leadership is "a function of competencies, character, and the commitment to doing the hard work of leadership."[190] They recognize observation of character as being among the most significant ways in which good and bad leaders can be identified.[191] Ultimately, they assert that "when it comes to leadership, character matters."[192]

Building on this, Peter Northouse speaks of character and integrity as being among the most important traits of a leader. Northouse states that integrity is the "quality of honesty and trustworthiness."[193] He asserts that individuals who adhere to a "strong set of principles" and "take responsibility for their actions are exhibiting integrity."[194] Further, he argues that those who demonstrate integrity are "believable and worthy of trust," which has positive effect on their leadership.[195]

The impact of both good and bad character on leadership can be seen across the spectrum of industries. Michael Leimbach, in his study of high-performing leadership development organizations, asserts that the most "striking difference" between highly

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[190] Mary Crossan, Gerard Seijts, and Jeffrey Gandz, *Developing Leadership Character* (New York: Routledge, 2016), ix.

[191] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 1.

[192] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 3.

[193] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice,* 8th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, 2018), 25.

[194] Northouse, 25.

[195] Northouse, 25.

effective organizations and those with lesser effectiveness is the importance they place on

character development.[196] He reports that 84 percent of high-performing organizations

indicated a focus on character development, while only 31 percent of low-performing

organizations reported such a focus.[197] These statistics offer a strong contrast and

illustrate the impact of character on leadership well. In the following section, this issue

will be examined from the perspective of three different organizational types,

highlighting examples of the impact that character has on leadership across disciplines.

A Healthcare Perspective

Beginning with the healthcare industry, Mary Connaughton and James Hassinger

completed a study of nurse leaders in which they examine the impact of character in

healthcare organizations. In it, they address some of the core issues facing healthcare

leaders, with a specific emphasis on nurses who serve in leadership roles. Noting that

leaders in healthcare organizations face "unrelenting pressure to achieve high levels of

success" in the face of "extreme challenges," they point out that nurses in leadership roles

are thrust into the middle of a healthcare system where the pressures of "patients, nursing

practice, clinical effectiveness, workforce issues, and business success" constantly

intersect.[198] Such pressures, they contend, can lead to organizational fatigue.[199]

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[196] Michael Leimbach, "Developing the Hearts and Minds of Leaders," *Training* 57, no. 3 (May 2020): 35.

[197] Leimbach, 35.

[198] Mary J. Connaughton and James Hassinger, "Leadership Character: Antidote to Organizational Fatigue," *Journal of Nursing Administration* 37, no. 10 (October 2007): 464.

[199] Connaughton and Hassinger, 464.

To remedy this, Connaughton and Hassinger assert that nurse leaders must develop a "select group of leadership capabilities and attitudes," which includes a "premium placed on self-responsibility, deep character, and the ability to see clearly."[200] They report that when nurse leaders are asked to reflect on leaders they admire, it is the "character traits of the leaders that are most often described."[201] The best leaders, they point out, recognize that "character is not assumed," but needs to be "continually developed during one's career."[202] With this in mind, they prescribe that "deep character" within an organization's leaders "anchors" the organization in the unshakable belief that: "there is no problem that cannot be solved;" "individuals can thrive and make a difference;" and the "common good can be achieved with respect and dignity."[203]

The presence of positive leadership character traits are seen by Connaughton and Hassinger as having a significant positive impact organizationally.[204] Conversely, however, they point out that when organizational or performance issues "chronically recur," it is often a function of the "absence of leadership character."[205] They highlight character traits such as "honesty" and "courage" as being essential for resolving controversial issues, while in "collegial interactions" the character traits of "respect" and "compassion" can help "debate and creativity to thrive" without being diminished by

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[200] Connaughton and Hassinger, 467.

[201] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

[202] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

[203] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

[204] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

[205] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

"criticism and fear of embarrassment."[206] The absence of these character traits, then, would presumably create a much less healthy environment.

These observations by Connaughton and Hassinger point to a recognition of the potential impact of the character on morale, in particular. However, their assertions regarding the effect of specific character traits on specific situations point to a much broader impact. One such example is their assertion that "honesty" and "courage" are essential for finding resolution when controversial issues emerge.[207] In this case, a particular set of character traits is seen as playing a very clear role in benefitting decision-making and, ultimately, productivity. Similarly, they see the characteristics of "respect" and "compassion" as those that can help "debate and creativity to thrive," which serves as another example of how particular character traits have positive organizational impact.[208]

A Business Leadership Perspective

The impact of character on leadership is also noted strongly by Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, who trace the global financial crisis that unfolded between 2007 and 2009 back to, in part, a failure of leadership character.[209] They share that in the wake of this collapse and as the "first fragile signs of economic recovery began to be seen," a small "interdisciplinary" group of faculty members began to ask about the "'why's of this

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[206] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

[207] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

[208] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

[209] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 1-2.

fiasco."[210] Their research uncovered a range of possible causes, including:

"organizational culture," "executive compensation" and what they call "other motivating

influences in the financial sector."[211] However, they note that many of those whom they

surveyed in the wake of this crisis named "leader character" as a primary culprit.[212]

Ultimately, Crossan, Seijts and Gandz name failures of character, alongside failures of

competence and commitment as central to the financial crisis which occurred from 2007

to 2009.[213]

Coming out of their research, they argue that character "influences the choices

people make about what to do," as well as "whether they will acquire the requisite

competencies and make the commitment to do so in any given situation."[214] Ultimately,

this boils down to the idea that character impacts every key decision made in life and

leadership.

This is both highly instructive and provides a cautionary tale for the leader. Much

like some of the examples of Christian leaders discussed in the first chapter of this study,

this provides a clear picture of what is possible if poor character manifests for too long

and good moral character is not seen as a priority.[215] This is significant, as such failures

exist in almost every sphere, though in many cases, on a smaller and less visible scale.

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[210] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 2.

[211] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 2.

[212] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 2.

[213] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 3.

[214] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 4.

[215] See discussion of Ravi Zacharias, Bill Hybels and Mark Driscoll on pp. 17-18 of this study.

Overall, however, they see character as "foundational" to effective decision-making and functioning.[216] They observe that it can shape any number of things, including: "what we notice about the context in which we operate;" "how we engage the world around us;" what we reinforce through our rewards and punishments;" "who we engage in conversation and how we conduct those conversations;" "what we value;" "how we interpret feedback;" "what we choose to act on;" "how we deal with conflict" and much more.[217] Providing the converse to what has already been observed about leaders with poor character, Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz observe that those leaders who display virtuous behaviors and character traits, such as "courage and accountability," are generally considered good leaders.[218]

Fred Kiel, in his book *Return on Character,* provides data supporting this from what he calls the "ROC character assessment scale."[219] According to Kiel, this tool provides a metric for assessing the "character-driven behaviors of leaders and their executive teams and for determining their impact on the specific financial results of the businesses they lead."[220] Based upon his findings, he asserts that leaders with "stronger morals and principles" who rank higher on his character-assessment scale achieve nearly

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[216] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 6.

[217] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 6.

[218] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 6.

[219] Fred Kiel, *Return on Character: The Real Reason Leaders and Their Companies Win* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2015), 3.

[220] Kiel, 3.

"five times the return on assets" of leaders who score toward the bottom of the scale.[221]

Kiel notes of this that "when it comes to running a business that achieves maximum

returns," "self-involved, bottom-line-driven leaders rarely deliver the goods."[222]

Christian Leadership Perspectives

As Christian leadership is of particular interest in this study, it is valuable to look

at the impact of character from a Christian perspective. Joseph Stowell states: "we need

to realize that if a leader has achieved great outcomes but has failed to have a positive

influence on the people, culture, organization, and town-or worse yet, has had a

debilitating effect on the lives of those they have led, the organization they have served,

or the community in which they have been placed-then from God's perspective there is

something seriously out of sync in their leadership, regardless of the outcomes."[223] He

builds upon this by asserting that Scripture consistently "calls us to choose character-

driven leadership."[224] Citing the parable of the talents, he notes that Scripture, while not

seeing outcomes as "unimportant," offers the "affirmation" that it is ultimately character

that produces outcomes.[225] With Scripture as the primary guide for the Christian leader, it

is difficult to get around the idea that character, both good and bad, makes an impact.

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[221] Kiel, 3.

[222] Kiel, 1.

[223] Joseph M. Stowell, *Redefining Leadership: Character-Driven Habits of Effective Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 27.

[224] Stowell, 27.

[225] Stowell, 27.

In support of this, Stowell cites the Old Testament kings Saul and David as further examples of this concept. Stowell sees Saul as having the "outward trappings of a successful leader."[226] He notes that Saul was "handsome" and "taller than any of his people" and sees him as the "poster boy for how leaders should look."[227] However, there was "something wrong with how Saul processed his leadership," according to Stowell, and he notes various ways in which Saul's character consistently fell short.[228]

By contrast, Stowell points to David as one who was an unlikely leader, noting that his father did not even invite him to the "'let's choose a leader' event" when Samuel visited the house of Jesse to anoint the next king.[229] The biggest difference, however, between Saul and David was that David learned to lead "confidently," given the "presence and power of God in his life."[230] While David, as Stowell points out, was not "always exemplary," he was a leader who "first and foremost had a heart after God's own heart."[231] It is leaders who demonstrate they have a heart after God's heart, according to Stowell, who "lead the way God would lead."[232] He notes that in the act of replacing Saul

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[226] Stowell, 29.

[227] Stowell, 29.

[228] Stowell, 29-30.

[229] Stowell, 30.

[230] Stowell, 30.

[231] Stowell, 30.

[232] Stowell, 30.

with David, God demonstrates that "great and trusted leaders are those who have chosen to lead from the heart-side out" and "lead with character as God leads with character."[233]

This reality can also be seen in section two of this study throughout the examination of Paul's prioritization of character in 1 Timothy. On numerous occasions, Paul directly ties character to outcomes, providing examples of how character can lead to both positive and negative ministry results. Placing what he desires for Timothy against the character displayed by the false teachers Timothy finds himself opposed to, he offers Timothy a clear view of what character-driven leadership looks like.[234]

Such biblical foundations provide a backdrop for Judy Tenelshof in her discussion of encouraging the character formation of emerging Christian leaders. In it, Tenelshof discusses the challenges faced by seminaries as they seek to form a pool of seminarians who enter with increasingly poor moral and character foundations. Tenelshof argues that it can "no longer be assumed" that incoming seminary students have a "working knowledge of the basics of the Christian faith."[235] What is needed to "serve Christ with moral excellence," she asserts, "must be addressed in the training of future Christian leaders."[236] Tenelshof sees moral formation as both severely lacking and highly necessary for those entering the Christian leadership landscape. She notes that many seminarians enter their ministry training having come from homes which modeled values that

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[233] Stowell, 31.

[234] See Chapter Two of this study for specific examples.

[235] Tenelshof, 77.

[236] Tenelshof, 77.

"contradict the Bible," making the development of "proper values' of significant

importance to seminaries.[237]

Tenelshof argues that among the negative consequences of these poor moral and

character foundations is that professors find teaching "getting more difficult each

successive year."[238] She notes that societal changes, knowledge increasing, and "families

experiencing heartache and separations" are challenges that leave professors feeling the

need to "not only teach the basics," but to "meet growing life needs that their students

bring through the classroom doors."[239] While it can be observed that such challenges

should not be surprising given that even those training for ministry live within a broken

world, it is worth noting that, if not addressed, the weight of these shaky moral

foundations is something that emerging Christian leaders would be likely to carry with

them as they themselves try to bring healing and, as Tenelshof observes, the "beliefs and

values" that makeup a truly Christian worldview, into the broken communities they are

called to serve.[240] As these leaders progress and become established in church and

ministry leadership, Tenelshof notes that failure in ministry is rarely driven by an

"inability to study, think, teach or preach the skills and content we focus on in

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[237] Tenelshof, 77.

[238] Tenelshof, 77.

[239] Tenelshof, 77.

[240] Tenelshof, 77.

seminary."[241] Instead, failure in ministry is linked generally to "difficulties in character, relationships, emotions, spiritual maturity, and other character problems."[242]

This points to the supreme importance of prioritizing the moral and character formation of emerging Christian leaders on the front end. If these problems exist at the beginning of a leader's journey, such problems are likely to continue to fester and even grow if left unaddressed. Again, this points back to the individual cases of Christian leadership failures addressed in Chapter One of this research.[243] While one cannot presume to know definitively when the root causes of such failures began, in each case there is ample evidence that these problems grew over an extended period of time. This necessitates a strategy for leadership development that prioritizes character formation from the very beginning of the leadership journey. Such a strategy will be picked up later in this chapter.

Identifying Core Leadership Character Traits
Character Traits Exhibited by Effective Leaders

In order to identify a leadership development strategy that prioritizes character formation as a key component, it is important to identify many of the character traits that would be desirable for leaders to possess. There is much wisdom that can be gleaned from across multiple disciplines on this topic, as good character among leaders is something that is seen as desirable in multiple different disciplines.

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[241] Tenelshof, 83.

[242] Tenelshof, 83.

[243] See discussion of Ravi Zacharias, Bill Hybels and Mark Driscoll on pp. 8-9 of this study.

In the cross-cultural business industry, for instance, Daniela Sotitrova describes the "moral personality" (or character) of a leader as being a significant dimension of ethical leadership. She defines good moral character in leaders as being made up by the following: "honesty," "integrity," "inspiration driven by trust," "attentiveness and interest in people," "demonstration of personal morality," and "value-based and fair decision-making."[244]

This focus on character can also be seen in military leadership training. Matthews, Eid, Kelly, Bailey and Peterson identify "wisdom and knowledge," "courage," "humanity," "justice," "temperance," and "transcendence," as key character traits among both Norwegian and United States military leadership training programs.[245] Cassie Barlow, Mark Jordan and William Hendrix offer a similar list of twelve character traits seen as important by the United States Air Force in their leadership development efforts. They point to "integrity," "honesty," loyalty," "selflessness," "compassion," "competency," "respectfulness," "fairness," "responsibility and self-discipline," "decisiveness," "spiritual appreciation" and "cooperativeness" as character attributes important within Air Force leadership training.[246] Additionally, they argue that "different levels of character attributes" become increasingly important as one rises to different

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[244] Daniela Sotirova, "Ethical Leadership in Cross-Cultural Business Communication," *Acta Prosperitatis* 2018, no. 9 (2018): 55-56.

[245] Michael D. Matthews, Jarle Eid, Dennis Kelly, Jennifer K. S. Bailey, and Christopher Peterson, "Character Strengths and Virtues of Developing Ministry Leaders: An International Comparison," *Military Psychology* 2006, 18 (July 2006): 61-62.

[246] Cassie B. Barlow, Mark Jordan and William H. Hendrix, "Character Assessment: An Examination of Leadership Levels," *Journal of Business and Psychology* 17, no. 4 (Summer 2003): 568.

levels of leadership within an organization.[247] Finally, John Sosik, Fil Arenas, Jae Chun and Ziya Ete, in their examination of character strengths among military officers, highlight "bravery," "social intelligence," "integrity" and "self-control" as those that are seen as "core military values."[248] They highlight these traits as those that represent the "absolute best in humanity and reflect the virtues, or moral excellence, that both Eastern and Western philosophers and theologians first advocated centuries ago."[249]

From a healthcare perspective, Connaughton and Hassinger identify five core character traits that they see as being "universal" for leadership. These five include: "honesty," "respect," "courage," "patience" and "compassion."[250] The impact of a few of these has already been discussed. But as a whole, they assert that leaders who have taken time to develop these traits are "unfazed by any seemingly insurmountable challenge or controversy" and "highly respected in the organization."[251] Further, they identify these character traits as being necessary for effective problem solving and catalysts to the creation of a workplace driven by respect and dignity.[252] Overall, they see these traits as making leaders "anchors" within an organization.[253]

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[247] Barlow, Jordan, and Hendrix, 577.

[248] John J. Sosik, Fil J. Arenas, Jae Uk Chun, and Ziya Ete, "Character into Action: How Officers Demonstrate Strengths with Transformational Leadership," *Air & Space Power Journal* 32, no. 3 (Fall 2018): 6.

[249] Sosik et al., 6.

[250] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

[251] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468.

[252] Connaughton and Hassinger, 468-469.

[253] Connaughton and Hassinger, 469.

Leadership Character in Christian Perspective

Looking at this issue from a Christian perspective, Christopher J.H. Wright asserts

that many leadership training programs focus on "packaged knowledge, techniques and

skills to the neglect of godly character."[254] He challenges this focus, instead stating that

Christian leadership in particular should be marked by a "servant heart, humility,

integrity, purity, lack of greed, prayerfulness, dependence on God's Spirit, and a deep

love for people."[255]

Janet Jones, Samantha Murray and Kelly Warren similarly note that part of being

"Christ-led" is to be a person of good character and assert that character is ultimately the

"most crucial element of leadership," though also the "most elusive."[256] They point out

that Christian leaders should value the "virtues taught by Christ that lead to good

character" and that leaders should find themselves "above reproach" in accordance with

the scriptures.[257] Among the qualities that they see as central are: "humility," "admitting

mistakes," "leading with wisdom," "honesty" and "avoiding the pitfalls of ego and the

influence of power."[258]

In both the case of Wright, as well as Jones, Murray, and Warren, it is fair to say

that both lists find their roots in Scripture and most of the traits they list were discussed in

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[254] Christopher J. H. Wright, "Humility, Integrity and Simplicity," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 39, no. 4 (October 2015): 218.

[255] Wright, 218.

[256] Janet Jones, Samantha Murray, and Kelly Warren, "Christian Leadership in a Secular World," *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 12, no. 2 (2018): 95.

[257] Jones, Murray, and Warren, 95.

[258] Jones, Murray, and Warren, 95.

Chapter Two of this study, which highlighted Paul's admonitions regarding leadership

character in 1 Timothy. It is also worth noting that there is a fair amount of overlap

between these lists. This would likely be the case if additional perspectives were added to

this portion of the inquiry as well, perhaps because of the consistency of how this issue is

handled in Scripture.

It is also worth noting that many, if not all of these traits would be desirable for

leaders whether coming from a Christian background or not. The difference for the

Christian leader is the motivation behind the display of good character. As noted by

Jones, Murray and Warren, "our view of life is defined by what we choose to value" and

character is determined by "how we actively live out that which we value."[259] For the

Christian leader, one's life is defined by their status as sons and daughters of God and

their role as ambassadors of the Kingdom of God. This becomes the motivation for their

character.

Humility as Central to the Christian Leader

Appearing on both Wright's list and the list found in the Jones, Murray and

Warren article, is a character trait that while valued by Christians, is not necessarily

valued across the board outside of a Christian context. This is the character trait of

humility. Jones, Murray and Warren say of humility that because of emphasis on

"individual achievements," "power" and "authority," it is often a "missing virtue" among

leaders.[260] They note that despite these "selfish reasons," theories of leadership and

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[259] Jones, Murray, and Warren, 95.

[260] Jones, Murray, and Warren, 96.

organizational management continue to recognize the "necessity" for humility in leadership.[261] They describe humility in leadership as an "interpersonal characteristic" which is comprised of a "willingness to see oneself accurately" and acknowledge the "strengths and contributions of others," while being open to "new ideas and feedback."[262] They note that organizational leaders who are characterized as humble tend to "collaborate, share information, jointly make decisions, and possess a shared vision."[263] Additionally, they assert that humble leaders are associated with "stronger and firm performance, increased organizational commitment, and increased leader-follower relationship."[264] This points to humility as being essential for leaders if they desire healthy and thriving organizations.

Irving and Strauss similarly stress that humility is a core character trait of the Christian leader, noting the Christian leader should be both "humble and confident."[265] They define humility as the "recognition that we are inadequate and incompetent apart from Christ."[266] Assuming this posture, confidence comes from the "recognition of His (Christ's) power at work within us."[267] They make the case that leaders can be "both

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[261] Jones, Murray, and Warren, 96.

[262] Jones, Murray, and Warren, 96.

[263] Jones, Murray, and Warren, 96.

[264] Jones, Murray, and Warren, 96.

[265] Irving and Strauss, 39.

[266] Irving and Strauss, 39.

[267] Irving and Strauss, 39.

humble and highly competent" when they acknowledge that "God is the true source of their competency."[268]

Within the servant-leadership model, a model commonly championed in Christian leadership circles, humility is seen as a highly valued characteristic. Clare D'Netto describes servant leadership as a model that is "characterized by humility," along with empathy and a sense of community.[269] Similarly, Elizabeth Krumrei-Mancuso refers to humility as one of the unique attributes of servant leadership and describes it as a key to "counteracting the tendency for relationships with a power differential to become unhealthy and abusive."[270] Krumrei-Mancuso sees humility within servant leadership as "understanding one's strong and weak points, keeping one's accomplishments and talents in perspective, and admitting one's fallibility and mistakes."[271] She sees these characteristics that make up humility as those that aid the leader in avoiding the unhealthy and abusive relationships she cautions against.[272]

Humility is also a character trait that has broader application across several leadership models, as is discussed by Jerry Breedlove. He speaks of humility as essential in any leadership model, whether Christian or secular. He asserts that humility is an "essential virtue" in the life of a leader and is one that is gaining traction even in secular

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[268] Irving and Strauss, 39.

[269] Clare D'Netto, "Servant-Leadership and Characteristics of Leaders," *The Pastoral Review* 14, no. 4 (March 2000): 27.

[270] Elizabeth J. Krumrei-Mancuso, "Humility in Servant Leadership Among Christian Student Leaders: A Longitudinal Pilot Study," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 46, no. 4 (Winter 2018): 254.

[271] Krumrei-Mancuso, 254.

[272] Krumrei-Mancuso, 254.

leadership.[273] He argues that this is because of clear examples of greater follower engagement when a leader demonstrates this virtue.[274] Further, he notes that there is an increase in follower willingness to "place themselves in a position of vulnerability" and openness to "sacrifice their personal identity and wellbeing for organizational goals" when leaders display higher levels of humility.[275] Given the importance of humility, specifically, and its tendency to be overlooked, when developing a leadership development strategy that prioritizes character formation, humility is something that clearly ought not be overlooked. This is particularly the case when operating within a Christian leadership context.

Principles for Leadership Development and Character Formation

Given that the specific interest of this study is that of attempting to center character formation as a key element of leadership development, it is important now to turn to strategies and best-practices for character formation as part of a leadership development framework. This portion of the inquiry will focus, first, on understanding how leaders develop by unpacking a few key elements of J. Robert Clinton's leadership emergence theory. It will then turn toward developing an understanding of some of the core components of the practice of developing leaders and conclude with an examination of how to situate character formation within leadership development strategies.

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[273] Jerry D. Breedlove, "The Essential Nature of Humility for Today's Leaders," *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 40.

[274] Breedlove, 41.

[275] Breedlove, 41.

How Leaders Develop: Clinton's Leadership Emergence

J. Robert Clinton sees the development of leaders through the lens of what he calls "leadership emergence theory."[276] This theory views the "expansion of a Christian leader's capacity" as something that occurs "over a lifetime."[277] He notes that rather than being a set of "do-it-yourself correspondence courses that can be worked through in a few months or years" leadership is a "lifetime of lessons."[278] Further, he asserts that this development occurs through the superintendence of God and happens through both "spiritual incidents which most leaders remember well" and "less direct" interventions that are seen primarily through "retrospective reflection."[279] In his book "The Making of a Leader," he breaks down this theory into six phases in what he refers to as a "generalized timeline."[280] Within this timeline, Clinton notes six "development phases" that makeup the lifetime growth and development of a leader.[281]

These phases, in order, include: "sovereign foundations," "inner-life growth," "ministry maturing," "life maturing," "convergence," and "afterglow."[282] These development phases represent different units of time in the life of an individual and are

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[276] J. Robert Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory: A Self-Study Manual for Analyzing the Development of a Christian Leader* (Altadena, CA: Barnabas Resources, 1989), 27.

[277] J. Robert Clinton, 27.

[278] J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership Development,* 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2012), 33-34.

[279] Clinton 1989, 27.

[280] Clinton 2012, 37.

[281] Clinton 2012, 37.

[282] Clinton 2012, 37.

identified, according to Clinton, by the "nature of the development or the means for development in a leader's life."[283] He notes that development phases are "not absolute" but are helpful in forcing an individual to "analyze what God was doing" during a given time in their life.[284] In order to ensure a fuller understanding of Clinton's work, this section will focus on unpacking Clinton's timeline.

Sovereign Foundations

His timeline begins with a phase he refers to as "sovereign foundations."[285] He identifies this as the period where God "providentially works through family, environment, and historical events."[286] He sees this period as beginning at birth and serves as the period where God is "developing the leader by laying foundations in his life" through sovereign operation.[287] Through this, the leader comes into a "deeper appreciation" of God's power.[288]

Inner-life Growth

Clinton's second phase, "inner-life growth," is marked by a leader seeking to "know God in a more personal, intimate way."[289] During this time, leaders will learn the

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[283] Clinton 2012, 37.

[284] Clinton 2012, 37.

[285] Clinton 2012, 37.

[286] Clinton 2012, 37.

[287] Clinton 2012, 37.

[288] Clinton 2012, 37.

[289] Clinton 2012, 38.

importance of "praying" and "hearing God" as the leader "grows in discernment, understanding, and obedience."[290] During this phase, "leadership potential is identified" and God uses "testing and experiences to develop character."[291] Through what Clinton calls "proper response" to this testing, the leader will both "learn the fundamental lessons God wants to teach" and be granted an "expanding ministry and greater responsibility."[292]

Ministry Maturing

Phase three in Clinton's model is what he calls the "ministry maturing" phase.[293] In it, the emerging leader begins to reach out to others and begins to "experiment with spiritual gifts" even without knowing "what this doctrine is."[294] Leaders, during this phase, will often pursue training to increase effectiveness, but the phase is primarily marked by ministry being the "focus of the rising leader."[295] Clinton notes that God is developing the leader in two ways during this period. Through ministry, he notes that the leader can "identify his gifts and skills and use them with increasing effectiveness."[296] He also observes that the leader will also gain a "better understanding of the body of Christ"

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[290] Clinton 2012, 38.

[291] Clinton 2012, 38.

[292] Clinton 2012, 38.

[293] Clinton 2012, 38.

[294] Clinton 2012, 38.

[295] Clinton 2012, 38.

[296] Clinton 2012, 38.

as he experiences the "many kinds of relationships it offers."[297] These relationships, he points out, are those that will teach both "negative and positive lessons."[298]

Life Maturing

By phase four, the "life maturing" phase of Clinton's timeline, he contends that the leader has "identified and is using his spiritual gifts in a ministry that is satisfying."[299] This phase is marked by a "sense of priorities concerning the best use of gifts" and a "mature fruitfulness being the result."[300] During this phase, it is also noteworthy that a leader's "experiential understanding of God" is being developed and "communion with God" is something that becomes foundational.[301] A "positive response" to the experiences ordained by God during this phase will "deepen communion with God" and become a "base for lasting and effective ministry."[302]

Convergence

In the "convergence" phase of Clinton's model, the leader is moved by God into a "role that matches his gift-mix and experience so that ministry is maximized."[303] According to Clinton, it is during this phase that "life maturing and ministry maturing

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[297] Clinton 2012, 38.

[298] Clinton 2012, 38.

[299] Clinton 2012, 39.

[300] Clinton 2012, 39.

[301] Clinton 2012, 39.

[302] Clinton 2012, 39.

[303] Clinton 2012, 39.

peak together" as the leader is guided into a "role and place where he can have maximum effectiveness."[304] Clinton notes that not all leaders experience convergence, which is the case for "various reasons."[305] Convergence will manifest itself as the leader "responds consistently to God's work in his life."[306]

Afterglow

Clinton's final development phase, "afterglow," represents the culmination of the "fruit of a lifetime of ministry and growth."[307] He notes that leaders in this phase have "built up a lifetime of contacts" and "continue to exert influence" in their relationships.[308] Like the "convergence" phase, this phase is one that many will not reach. But for those who do reach it, the "storehouse of wisdom" they have gathered over a lifetime of leadership will "continue to bless and benefit many."[309] While Clinton asserts that "No recognizable developmental task" exists in this phase, this phase allows for the leader's lifetime of ministry to "reflect the glory of God and to honor His faithfulness over a lifetime of emergence."[310]

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[304] Clinton 2012, 39.

[305] Clinton 2012, 39.

[306] Clinton 2012, 40.

[307] Clinton 2012, 40.

[308] Clinton 2012, 40.

[309] Clinton 2012, 40.

[310] Clinton 2012, 40.

Reflections on Clinton's Model

Clinton's understanding is discussed and utilized by Justin Irving and Mark Strauss in their book "Leadership in Christian Perspective." Affirming Clinton's model, they note that for the self-aware leader, "inner-life growth becomes the occasion on which leaders begin to understand that "effective leadership is much more about one's being than one's doing."[311] They add that it is "only those [leaders] willing to engage in sustained self-reflection and self-leadership who will be able to lead well over the long-term."[312] They argue that much of leadership is learned "along the way in the journey of life together in organizations," and that "personal growth" must be the priority of every leader.[313] In light of Clinton's timeline, a statement such as this would suggest that one of the reasons some leaders fail to reach the latter stages may be a lack of such prioritization. If a leader fails to recognize their need for personal growth and development, they would be much less likely to achieve it. While the sovereign hand of God can work in the life of a leader despite, and even through, their lack of awareness and effort, there are also many times where a leader's lack of faithfulness stands in the way of the blessing of the Lord.[314]

Building upon this, Charles Sattgast, in his analysis of Clinton's timeline, notes that the first three phases of Clinton's model focus largely on God's development of the

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[311] Irving and Strauss, 49.

[312] Irving and Strauss, 49.

[313] Irving and Strauss, 48-49.

[314] See above discussion on David and Saul under "Impact of Character on Leadership: A Christian Leadership Perspective."

leader toward "his or her ultimate potential."[315] Meanwhile, in the latter phases, leaders

build upon these existing foundations.[316] Within Sattgast's assessment of Clinton's

theory, he is largely focused on the "doing to being boundary," seeing it as a "critical

juncture" in a leader's development.[317] He sees this line as the point that will determine

whether a leader moves on to "focused, kingdom-impacting ministry that leaves a

legacy" or "succumbs to the myriad ways leaders stall and fail to finish well."[318] He notes

that other spiritual development models describe a similar boundary, identifying it as a

"critical transition where many people fail to progress."[319]

While several factors could impact a leader's failure to make such a transition, it

seems that the assertions of Irving and Strauss that personal growth must be the priority

of every leader and that "only those [leaders] willing to engage in sustained self-

reflection and self-leadership who will be able to lead well over the long-term" may serve

as an important insight.[320]

In looking for a reason (or reasons) many leaders may not prioritize these things,

it seems that among them would be that these practices and priorities may not have been

modeled for them. Irving and Strauss also discuss the need for established leaders to

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[315] Charles W. Sattgast, "Negotiating the Doing to Being Boundary in J. Robert Clinton's Leadership Emergence Theory" (D.Min. Thesis, Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, MN, 2015), 69.

[316] Sattgast, 69.

[317] Sattgast, 76.

[318] Sattgast, 76.

[319] Sattgast, 76.

[320] Irving and Strauss, 49.

"model what matters" to their followers.[321] They assert that modeling what matters

provides a pathway for "engaging followers in their developmental journey."[322] Building

upon this, they prescribe a pathway for development which includes both equipping and

empowerment, stating that "a commitment to developing followers requires leaders to

both equip and empower."[323] To this end, Irving and Strauss prescribe a

"transformational approach" to leadership as one that can accommodate such focus.[324]

Such an approach will be discussed later in this chapter.

For the purposes of understanding the development of leaders, the remarks of

Irving and Strauss, coupled with Clinton's assertion that many leaders do not reach

maturity in their leadership, provides insight into the importance intentional leadership

development strategy. As it relates to some of the problems being addressed specifically

in this research, a lack of intentionality when it comes to leadership development has

contributed to the creation of the problems the researcher is seeking to address within the

Advent Christian network of churches.

Components of a Leadership Development Strategy

Given this need for intentionality, it will be important to identify some of the core

components necessary to a healthy leadership development strategy. To that end, Scott

Douglas notes that there are several biblical examples of leadership development and

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[321] Irving and Strauss, 24.

[322] Irving and Strauss, 24.

[323] Irving and Strauss, 25.

[324] Irving and Strauss, 26.

points to Paul's development of Timothy and Titus and Jesus' ministry to the twelve being among the foremost.[325] Keith Krispin adds to this list, citing Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha and Barnabas' support of Paul as additional examples.[326] Douglas also notes some historical examples, such as Polycarp and Ignatius learning from the Apostle John and Melanchton learning from Luther as some of the more notable historical examples of leadership development.[327] There is no doubt that the church has moved forward through the generations, in part, because of such relationships. It is also fair to say that much the same thing could be said regarding any long-standing institution.

A Systematic Approach

Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck assert that leadership development, with "God's global mission in mind," requires the church to have an "intentional plan" to develop leaders.[328] This is because, as they point out, "God's mission demands leadership multiplication."[329] With this in mind, they prescribe what they call a "systematic approach" to leadership development.[330]

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[325] Scott M. Douglas, "Developing Leaders for Pastoral Ministry," *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2014): 84.

[326] Keith R. Krispin Jr., "Christian Leader Development: An Outcomes Framework," *Christian Education Journal* 17, no. 1 (April 2020): 19.

[327] Douglas, 84.

[328] Eric Geier and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2016), 179.

[329] Geiger and Peck, 179.

[330] Geiger and Peck, 179.

The constructs you need for a systematic approach, according to Geiger and Peck, are a "leadership pipeline" and a "leadership pathway."[331] A leadership pipeline, as they describe it, is a "helpful construct that aids in systematically and intentionally developing leaders" and provides a way for leaders to "systematically and intentionally" be developed.[332] Within a local church setting, Geiger and Peck prescribe a pipeline made up of four key phases: "lead yourself," "lead others," "lead leaders" and "lead ministries."[333] In such a pipeline, when an individual has "proven faithful" in one phase, they will be able to move forward to the next.[334]

They suggest that building such a pipeline requires two primary disciplines: "intentionality" and "intensity."[335] Churches and organizations must intentionally think about how they will develop leaders and continue down that path "with intensity."[336] In developing such a pipeline, Geiger and Peck prescribe a four-step approach, which includes what they call: "surveying the area," "drawing the plans," "implementing" the strategy, and "evaluating" progress.[337]

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[331] Geiger and Peck, 186.

[332] Geiger and Peck, 186.

[333] Geiger and Peck, 187.

[334] Geiger and Peck, 187-188.

[335] Geiger and Peck, 190.

[336] Geiger and Peck, 190.

[337] Geiger and Peck, 190.

As was noted earlier, in addition to developing appropriate pipelines for the organization, Geiger and Peck prescribe developing what they call "pathways" as well.[338] In identifying the difference, they remark that while a pipeline is for the "whole organization," a pathway is an "individual development plan."[339] As such, they describe pathways as simply being "a view of the pipeline that is tailored for the individual" and may be as simple as "showing a person his place in the pipeline and the training plans desired for him."[340]

The need for a systematic approach is similarly argued for by Keith Krispin, who argues for an outcomes-centric framework. He states that efforts to develop Christian leaders would "benefit from a more clearly articulated, comprehensive, research-grounded theory" underlying the practice of Christian leadership development.[341] He notes also that the identification of "intended outcomes" is a "key to the design, implementation, and evaluation of efforts to foster leader development."[342]

Krispin asserts that when integrating both Christian and secular literature, it is possible to suggest a "composite framework outlining the intended outcomes of Christian leader development efforts."[343] He argues that Christian leader development begins in "spiritual and personal formation," which provides an "essential foundation for other

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[338] Geiger and Peck, 200.

[339] Geiger and Peck, 200.

[340] Geiger and Peck, 200.

[341] Krispin, 19.

[342] Krispin, 21.

[343] Krispin, 26.

development outcomes."[344] This foundation is then furthered by the "cultivation of

leadership specific skills and competencies."[345] He notes that the development of

Christian leaders is not merely the "acquisition of skills or competencies," but is "built on

a foundation of discipleship which continues to be nurtured throughout life."[346]

Building up on this, Krispin conveys an outcomes-driven framework for

leadership development, with outcomes broken down into five different categories. These

include: "Christian formation," "personal formation," "relational skills," "intellectual

skills," and "management skills."[347] Within each of these categories are multiple different

competencies and Krispin notes that each of these categories is "interrelated" and has

influence on the others.[348] While there is a great deal more that can certainly be identified

regarding both Geiger and Peck's model and Krispin's model, for the purposes of this

portion of the research, it is simply worth concluding that for the advancement of any

successful leadership development strategy, intentionality and a clearly developed

process are vital components.

Mentoring

Returning to the earlier examples provided by Scott Douglas, it is valuable to

observe that each of the relationships he highlighted centered on mentoring. Douglas

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[344] Krispin, 26.

[345] Krispin, 26.

[346] Krispin, 26.

[347] Krispin, 27-34.

[348] Krispin, 27.

notes that in the case of Paul with Timothy, Paul assumed the role of "spiritual father."[349]

In the case of Jesus and his disciples, Douglas observes that Jesus "teaches them and

closely supervises them as they grow" and are empowered to "carry on the mission."[350]

While in both cases, a highly relational process of development is clearly in place, David

Bartlett sees the Apostle Paul as mentor being far more clearly identifiable in Scripture

than Jesus as mentor.[351]

That notwithstanding, there are clearly biblical roots for the practice of mentoring,

and more broadly, a relational approach to developing leaders being central in Scripture.

It is also discernable that such approaches can be seen in Scripture as useful for the

process of leadership development. Bartlett notes that, in Paul's case, there is

"considerable evidence" that he both "traveled with his companions" and "included them

in his ministry."[352] Among the ways he included them, according to Bartlett, include:

"writing down the words" of his letters; "performing tasks assigned by Paul;" and being

sent as "ambassadors" on his behalf.[353] As is observable in section two of this study,

through Paul's mentorship, Timothy, in particular, was able to grow and develop as a

leader and was entrusted with increasing responsibility as he grew and developed.

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[349] Douglas, 84.

[350] Douglas, 85.

[351] David L. Bartlett, *Mentoring in the New Testament,* in Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives, eds. Dean K. Thompson and D. Cameron Murchison (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2018), 23.

[352] Bartlett, 24.

[353] Bartlett, 24-25.

Placing the importance of mentoring as a leadership development tool within a contemporary context, Lindsay Hastings and Hannah Sunderman point to the validation of higher education scholars that mentoring is widely accepted as an "important tool" in leadership development.[354] They observe that mentoring is "recognized as one of the most promising practices for both leader and leadership development" because of its "effectiveness at facilitating development."[355] They point out that mentoring embeds leadership development within the "ongoing experiences of a developing leader" and with each individual mentoring opportunity a unique leadership development experience or outcome is generated.[356]

Hastings and Sunderman make several recommendations for effective mentoring, which include: effective screening of mentors; shaping "day-to-day programmatic operations" toward "providing structure to mentoring relationships;" providing opportunities for "reflection;" and providing "mentor training."[357] These recommendations point to the importance of intentionality and a clearly developed mentoring process, much like the recommendations made by Geiger and Peck regarding leadership development more broadly. While, as Scott Douglas observes, non-formal

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[354] Lindsay J. Hastings and Hannah M. Sunderman, "Evidence-Based Practices in Mentoring for Leadership Development," *New Directions for Student Leadership* 2020, no. 168 (Winter 2020): 75.

[355] Hastings and Sunderman, 75.

[356] Hastings and Sunderman, 75.

[357] Hastings and Sunderman, 78-79.

patterns can produce healthy leadership development through mentoring, some measure of intentionality and a clear view of expected outcomes is desirable.[358]

Character Formation as a Key Component

Prioritization

Just as J. Robert Clinton views leadership development as a lifetime journey, Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz view character development as something that occurs over a lifetime as well. Similar to Clinton, they note that character development is a "journey," rather than a "destination" and various situations present different "experiences and opportunities to exercise, apply, and develop character."[359] Nonetheless, like leadership development more broadly, intentionality when it comes to the development or formation of one's character is vital. Returning to Irving and Strauss in their discussion of "modeling what matters," they point out that modeling what matters begins with "identifying what matters most for you and your organization."[360] They continue by stating that "once what matters most is identified, then the work of prioritizing can begin."[361] If character formation is identified as among those things that matter most to organizational health and thriving, then character formation must be prioritized.

Within the context of the United States military, Cassie Barlow, Mark Jordan and William Hendrix observe that character is prioritized as "important to effective

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[358] Douglas, 87.

[359] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 30.

[360] Irving and Strauss, 30.

[361] Irving and Strauss, 30.

leadership."[362] As such, they note that all branches have written character and integrity into their "service core values" and those core values are "indoctrinated into new recruits and are continually reinforced and stressed throughout a career."[363] This represents both front-end prioritization of those new to the institution, as well as a continual prioritization throughout, something that is highly instructive to other organizations seeking to prioritize character within their leadership ranks.

Assessment

Again, returning to Irving and Strauss, they note that it is leaders who are willing to engage in "self-reflection" and "self-leadership" who will be able to lead well over the long term."[364] As such, they prescribe that leaders must engage in "honest self-evaluation."[365] They note that "honesty" and "increased self-awareness" serve as the "foundation for leaders wishing to engage in effective leadership practice."[366] Similarly, as it relates to character formation, Crossan, Seijts and Gandz note that "reflection plays a critical role" in the learning process.[367] They note that reflection, however, is something that requires data and point out that that data often comes in the form of feedback.[368] They contend that in "formal and informal appraisals," we gain feedback that is often

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[362] Barlow, Jordan, and Hendrix, 565.

[363] Barlow, Jordan, and Hendrix, 565.

[364] Irving and Strauss, 49.

[365] Irving and Strauss, 49.

[366] Irving and Strauss, 49.

[367] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 184.

[368] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 185.

"fragmented," "frequently contradictory," and sometimes given in ways that are not

conducive to development."[369] As such, they prescribe a more formalized process of

assessment take place, designed around desirable leadership character traits.[370] It is worth

noting that they themselves have developed a tool called the "LCIA" around character

traits they deem valuable. They see this tool as having been "very well received by

executives" who have found it to be "very useful in promoting the reflection that is

central to the developmental process."[371] Barlow, Jordan and Hendrix also note the

military's use of a model for "developing and assessing character" that was created by

Thomas Lickona.[372]

A Holistic Approach

Kenman Wong, Bruce Baker and Randal Franz, in their article on reimagining

business education as character formation, note that one of the key shortcomings of moral

and character education is a focus on "cognitive faculties at the expense of recognizing

what they call "inner qualities."[373] They argue that attention to the "inner qualities" or

"virtues" of the person, those qualities that affect "moral sensitivity," "imagination" and

"identity," are often an afterthought.[374] By contrast, they prescribe a movement toward a

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[369] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 185.

[370] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 185.

[371] Crossan, Seijts, and Gandz, 185.

[372] Barlow, Jordan, and Hendrix, 566.

[373] Kenman L. Wong, Bruce D. Baker, and Randal Franz, "Reimagining Business Education as Character Formation," *Christian Scholar's Review* 45, no. 1 (Fall 2015): 9.

[374] Wong, Baker, and Franz, 9.

more "holistic focus on intentionality" which combines the "cognitive and affective dimensions of the moral agent as a person of faith," noting its necessity for "true formation to occur."[375]

Similarly, in her discussion of character formation and emerging Christian leaders, Judy Tenelshof notes that seminaries need to "move beyond the basic understanding of morality as principles of social organization to discovering where moral behavior has its roots."[376] She encourages an understanding of morality and character as elements that find themselves deep within the "individual human psyche."[377] By contrast, she observes a similar focus solely on the cognitive in seminary settings, noting that seminaries tend to focus exclusively on "learning and understanding our guide, the written Word of God," as the source for providing the "motivation to keep the parts within oneself in good working order."[378] In contrast to this, she argues that seminarians will become effective Christian leaders when they "understand themselves, when their mind, will and emotions are working congruently, and when they understand their unique purpose in ministry."[379] As such, she calls for a more holistic approach.[380]

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[375] Wong, Baker, and Franz, 10.

[376] Tenelshof, 79.

[377] Tenelshof, 79.

[378] Tenelshof, 79.

[379] Tenelshof, 78.

[380] Tenelshof, 79.

An Outcomes Framework

For effective character formation to take place as part of any leadership development strategy, it is important to understand the desired outcomes. As noted earlier, Krispin identifies Christian leadership development as beginning with "spiritual and personal formation," which provides an "essential foundation" for other development outcomes.[381] As such, the foundational elements of his framework include the categories of "Christian formation" and "personal formation," categories that include multiple individual outcomes related to character.[382]

Krispin notes that, ultimately, Christian formation is a "prerequisite for Christian leader development" and that Christian leader development "first builds a person's foundational relationship with Christ, fostering ongoing growth towards Christian maturity."[383] "As faith and character grow," he states, so does the "capacity for Christian leadership."[384] As such, he grounds the foundational level of his framework in Christian formation outcomes, such as: "Christ-like character," "spiritual practices," and "biblical and theological foundations."[385]

Similarly, as it relates to the "personal formation," which Krispin situates as the next most foundational category, Krispin identifies "self-awareness," "vocational calling," "learning orientation," "self-management," "leader self-views," and "leader

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[381] Krispin, 26.

[382] Krispin, 27-31.

[383] Krispin, 28.

[384] Krispin, 29.

[385] Krispin, 29.

attitudes" as his key areas of focus.[386] Within each of these areas, outcomes such as "personal values," "intentional growth," "responsibility," "leader humility," and other aspects of personal character emerge.[387]

Overall, Krispin's framework and his prioritization within it provide a strong list of suggested outcomes. The bigger takeaway, however, is the need for such a framework to begin with. This builds upon the themes introduced from the Geiger and Peck literature earlier, which related to leadership development more broadly. A systematic approach with clearly identifiable outcomes is essential for situating character formation successfully as a key priority of any leadership development strategy. Additionally, Krispin's model provides a strong argument for the natural placement of character formation at the foundational levels of a Christian leader's development.

The Case for Transformational Leadership

Given the principles and practices outlined to this point and the relational nature of prioritizing character formation as part of leadership development, it is necessary to identify a leadership model that will accommodate these considerations well. As such, the researcher will now take time to explore transformational leadership as a model that can accommodate character formation as part of a broader leadership development strategy. As will be seen, transformational leadership allows for the kind of relational connectivity necessary for character formation to take place and lends itself well to the broader task of leadership development.

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[386] Krispin, 29.

[387] Krispin, 31.

In their examination of the effects of both character and transformational leadership within the military, John Sosik, Fil Arenas, Jae Uk Chun and Ziya Ete seek to demonstrate the importance of transformational leadership in the development of military leaders and personnel. Their study concludes that the "full development of military members in ethical ways" requires officers to "display transformational leadership."[388] They assert that doing so is essential to developing "relevant aspects of character to others" while "inspiring, modeling ethics, sparking innovation, and developing the talents and strengths of subordinates."[389] In essence, they see transformational leadership as necessary for effective character development to take place and an ideal model for the development of military leaders and personnel more broadly.[390] Their findings come as a result of focus group discussions with 120 officers serving with the "USAF (United States Air Force), other services, DOD (Department of Defense) civilians and international allied forces attending a leadership course at Maxwell AFB (Air Force Base), Alabama in 2017."[391] The officers were asked to provide accounts of "how they infuse aspects of their character into their leadership in military functions."[392]

As has already been discussed, Sosik, Arenas, Chun and Ete identify character as key for effective leadership to exist.[393] However, they also point out that "simply

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[388] Sosik et al., 5.

[389] Sosik et al., 5.

[390] Sosik et al., 5.

[391] Sosik et al., 5.

[392] Sosik et al., 5.

[393] Sosik et al., 6.

possessing one or more of these character strengths does not ensure an officer will display character-based leadership."[394] Instead, their findings point to the idea that good leadership is about "influencing subordinates and others in a positive way."[395] As such, their argument for transformational leadership makes sense, as they see it as the most effective approach for "influencing the performance and development of subordinates in corporate, military, educational and religious organizations all over the world."[396]

Similarly, Mark McCloskey and Jim Louwsma describe transformational leadership as among the best models for providing "ethical foundations" and "personal and spiritual motivation" for meeting challenges.[397] Among its strengths, they point out that it is a model that "builds up followers" and is grounded in relationship.[398] Additionally, they observe the foundation of transformational leadership as being a "mutual commitment to a set of values, a mission, or a vision of a better future."[399] The result is that it "binds leaders and followers together in a mutually uplifting partnership" in which they "inspire and motivate one another."[400] These commitments, as well as the capacity for personal impact described, point to a leadership model that has the potential to transform the whole person.

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[394] Sosik et al., 7.

[395] Sosik et al., 7.

[396] Sosik et al., 7.

[397] Mark McCloskey and Jim Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership: Building Strong Businesses, Organizations and Families* (Bloomington, MN: The Wordsmith, 2014), 11.

[398] McCloskey and Louwsma, 10-11.

[399] McCloskey and Louwsma, 10.

[400] McCloskey and Louwsma, 10.

Bernard Bass describes transformational leadership as being made up of four

primary behaviors: "inspirational motivation," "idealized influence," "intellectual

stimulation" and "individualized consideration."[401] Irving and Strauss identify these

behaviors as the four "I's" of transformational leadership.[402] They connect the trait of

"idealized influence," in particular, to their previously discussed concept of "modeling

what matters."[403] They note that when modeling what matters takes place within this

transformational framework, two outcomes may occur: "transforming follower focus"

and "transforming followers into leaders."[404]When it comes to "transforming follower

focus," Irving and Strauss note that leaders who model what matters aid followers in

shifting their focus based upon the "idealized influence they provide as leaders."[405] As a

result, followers are shifted "away from self-interest," becoming "more motivated and

inspired intrinsically to pursue interests that move beyond self."[406]

In regards to the transformation of followers into leaders, which has direct

implications for this study, Irving and Strauss point to transformational leadership as a

model that often moves followers "beyond their role as followers."[407] They note that

under empowering leadership models such as transformational leadership, "the desired

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[401] Bernard M. Bass, "Does the Transactional-Transformational Leadership Paradigm Transcend Organizational and National Boundaries?" *American Psychologist* 52, no. 2 (February 1997): 133.

[402] Irving and Strauss, 26.

[403] Irving and Strauss, 26.

[404] Irving and Strauss, 26-27.

[405] Irving and Strauss, 26.

[406] Irving and Strauss, 26-27.

[407] Irving and Strauss, 27.

transformation is not simply about accomplishing organizational goals."[408] Instead, it is

about a change in people as well. The change is about "moving followers to a place of

compliance through extrinsic motivation to a place of mutual commitment through

intrinsic motivation."[409] As followers engage, they contend that "leadership capacity and

skills are developed."[410] Again, as leaders "model what matters" through idealized

influence," they serve as examples that "inspire followers in their personal and

professional development."[411]

McCloskey and Louwsma affirm this, identifying transformational leaders as

"change agents."[412] They state that transformational leaders are those who "articulate

agendas for moral, ethical and spiritual change" in a way that "lifts people out of their

everyday affairs and ordinary selves."[413] They state that the transformational leader

"forges consensus among followers" in pursuit of a "future worthy of everyone's best

efforts."[414] They act as "catalysts for empowering personal change in their followers

lives" and for "holding them accountable to operate at their best."[415] One final mark

identified by McCloskey and Louwsma is that transformational leaders grow followers

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[408] Irving and Strauss, 27.

[409] Irving and Strauss, 28.

[410] Irving and Strauss, 28.

[411] Irving and Strauss, 28.

[412] McCloskey and Louwsma, 19.

[413] McCloskey and Louwsma, 19.

[414] McCloskey and Louwsma, 20.

[415] McCloskey and Louwsma, 20.

from "renters" to "owners" and from "spectators" into "voluntarily and sacrificially engaged participants."[416] As was similarly noted by Irving and Strauss, this means followers are no longer people "locked in self-interest," but are people "willing to sacrifice for the interests of others."[417] This type of potential for personal change is one characteristic of transformational leadership that makes it an ideal model to serve as a vehicle for both leadership development and character formation.

McCloskey and Louwsma also provide a biblical rationale for transformational leadership, as well as its relational nature. Making the Old Testament figure Nehemiah their prime example of a transformational leader in a biblical context, they assert that transformational leaders must enter into a "diverse array of healthy and transforming relationships" to be successful.[418] They identify transforming relationships as "mutual partnerships," stating that transformational leaders must have the capacity to "initiate and sustain relationships with partners" who possess "voluntary and wholehearted involvement in the vision" if they are to have success.[419] The value of such relational depth has already been discussed as essential to a leadership development approach that prioritizes character formation.

Building upon these concepts further, Jean East identifies transformational leadership as a model that can have a holistic impact on individuals, labeling it the

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[416] McCloskey and Louwsma, 20.

[417] McCloskey and Louwsma, 20.

[418] McCloskey and Louwsma, 22.

[419] McCloskey and Louwsma, 22.

process of "engaging with, influencing, and being influenced by others in accomplishing a purpose or process."[420] She asserts that a transformational leader integrates the "head, heart, and soul work of leadership, as embodied in three transformational leadership roles."[421] She identifies these roles as "learner," "steward," and "meaning-maker."[422]

East points out that these three roles can be carried out by transformational leaders through "six key practices."[423] These include: "knowing oneself;" leading with "heart, soul and meaning;" "cultural responsiveness and ethics;" "enabling change;" "vision and strategic thinking;" and "promoting a learning culture and teamwork."[424] These practices, according to East, serve as key ingredients in the work of leadership.[425] They are not the only practices of transformational leadership, she notes, but those that are significant to the "helping and human services professions, which is the context in which she writes from.[426]

As already noted, in her assessment of transformational leadership is a continual pointing to the potential impact of transformational leadership on the whole person. This, coupled with its situation as a model that is both highly relational and one that promotes

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[420] Jean F. East, *Transformational Leadership for the Helping Professions: Engaging Head, Heart and Soul* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 3.

[421] East, 3.

[422] East, 3.

[423] East, 4.

[424] East, 4.

[425] East, 5.

[426] East, 5.

leadership development, makes it an ideal model for the assembly of a leadership development strategy which prioritizes character formation. With its focus on developing persons rather than just systems, coupled with the emphasis of Irving and Strauss on its capacity for modeling what matters, there are clearly plenty of built-in elements within a transformational leadership framework that would aid in the type of leadership development system being sought after through this research.

Final Reflections

This examination of the relevant contemporary literature has proved highly significant to the inquiry of this study. In this section, the research has uncovered a great deal of data demonstrating the impact of character on leadership and has gleaned a variety of perspectives on character traits which most significantly impact the effectiveness of a leader. Additionally, a catalog of core principles and strategies for leadership development and character formation have been uncovered. This has provided foundations for the field research portion of this study and will influence continued development of a leadership development strategy which prioritizes character formation within the Advent Christian network of churches.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHOD

Project Overview

This project sought to address the lack of a character formation strategy that could be employed in a leadership development model by Advent Christian churches in North America. This problem was addressed by the researcher in a threefold manner. The researcher began with a review of Paul's prioritization of character in his identification and development of leaders in 1 Timothy. This was followed by a review of relevant literature regarding best practices for character formation to be included in leadership development strategies. The final element of this threefold approach included a qualitative study targeting four Advent Christian churches within the United States who prioritize character formation as part of their leadership development models. This was done in an effort to better understand the strategies and principles already in use within the Advent Christian network of churches.

Field Research Method

The field research was qualitative in nature and utilized a multiple case study approach which examined the leadership development practices of four Advent Christian churches. The primary research instruments included: (1) interviews with the Lead Pastor of each participating church, and (2) a survey to be completed by members of each

participating church's leadership team. The researcher also collected basic background and demographic information about each participating church

Qualitative Research

John Creswell and Cheryl Poth see qualitative research as beginning with assumptions and the use of "interpretive/theoretical frameworks" that "inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem."[427] Paul Leedy and Jeanne Ormrod similarly note that qualitative research encompasses "a number of methodologies" with two things in common.[428] First, they typically focus on "phenomena that are occurring or have previously occurred in natural settings."[429] Second, they involve capturing and studying the "complexity of those phenomena."[430] The use of qualitative research to explore complex themes is affirmed by John Creswell and J. David Creswell, who assert that qualitative study looks at research in a way that honors: "an inductive style," a "focus on individual meaning," and "the importance of reporting the complexity of a situation."[431] Given the problem being addressed by this study, it is the ability to examine and capture complexity that made a qualitative approach desirable. The goal as identified by the researcher was not simply to

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[427] John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches,* 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc., 2018), 8.

[428] Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design,* 12th ed. (New York: Pearson, 2019), 228.

[429] Leedy and Ormrod, 228.

[430] Leedy and Ormrod, 228.

[431] John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches,* 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc., 2018), 4.

answer a question but to seek solutions for a broad and complex problem. In addition, the researcher desired to collect information regarding practices and principles already in place within the network of churches he sought to address with this study, something a qualitative approach also makes room for.

<center>*Multiple Case Study Approach*</center>

Within the vein of qualitative research, several methodologies exist for the collection and analysis of data. The researcher chose to collect data using a multiple case study approach. Leedy and Ormrod note that a multiple case study approach is often used when the researcher desires to survey cases that are either "similar or different in certain key ways" in order to "make comparisons, build theory, or propose generalizations."[432] The researcher's use of a multiple case study approach came from a desire to compare multiple leadership development strategies coming from diverse churches within the Advent Christian network. This enabled the researcher to gain a sampling of leadership development strategies and practices already at work within the Advent Christian denomination and to identify how character formation may already be present within those efforts. Given the similarities of church culture and polity within the Advent Christian network, the researcher was able to compare and contrast the efforts of these churches in order to find commonalities that may be beneficial within the network more broadly.

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[432] Leedy and Ormrod, 231.

Research Instruments

The primary data collected for this study came from the use of two primary sources. First, the researcher conducted interviews with the Lead Pastors of four participating churches. Second, the researcher developed and distributed an online survey from members of the leadership teams from those four participating churches. In all, the survey generated twenty individual responses. These data sources provided a sampling of information regarding leadership development strategies and practices already in place within Advent Christian churches in North America, as well as insight into how the impact of those strategies and practices is perceived by church leaders.

Interviews

The interviews were conducted using Zoom video conferencing and were guided by an interview script.[433] The interviews consisted of fifteen core questions with additional follow-up questions built in that were dependent on the responses to those core questions. Questions fell into five categories, which included: (1) character traits valued by the participating churches in their development of leaders, (2) the leadership development strategies and practices of the participating churches, (3) the perceived impact of the leadership development strategies and practices described, (4) the character formation strategies and practices of the participating churches, and (5) the perceived impact of the character formation strategies and practices described.

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[433] See Appendix 1 for full interview script.

Surveys

The surveys were conducted online using the Survey Monkey online research platform.[434] They were distributed to members of each participating church leadership team by each church's Lead Pastor. The survey included seven core questions with follow-up questions built in that were dependent on the responses to those core questions. The questions were designed to collect information regarding the understanding of church leadership team members in the following areas: (1) the leadership development and character formation strategies and practices of their churches, (2) the perceived impact of those strategies and practices, (3) perceptions regarding the impact of character on leadership, and (4) how much they value particular character traits.

Research Participants

Participating Churches

Based upon the goals of this study, the researcher selected four churches from within the Advent Christian denomination who met two primary criteria. The first criterion was that the churches selected should be actively engaged in intentional leadership development efforts. The second criterion was that the churches selected should prioritize character formation as part of their identification and development of leaders.

Given the small size of the Advent Christian denomination and the even smaller number of Advent Christian churches that engage in intentional leadership development

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[434] See Appendix 2 for full survey.

efforts, the researcher chose to select churches from across the United States rather than

focusing on a particular geographic area. The researcher set out to identify between four

and six participating churches for the study and was able to secure four. The geographic

breakdown of the four churches includes: two from the Northeast, one from the Southeast

and one from the Midwest.[435] The churches participating have not been identified by

name within this report, but pertinent demographic information for each church has been

included. Demographic information was secured for each church through materials

provided by the four participating churches and information available through

denominational publications and reports.

Interview Participants

As has already been discussed, the researcher has selected two research

instruments through which data was collected for the field research portion of this study.

The first of these was an interview. Those participating in the interview were those

individuals identified as the Lead Pastors of the four participating churches. This resulted

in four separate interviews guided by the interview script included in Appendix 1. The

four individuals who were interviewed varied widely in regards to tenure, age,

educational background, and pastoral experience.

Survey Participants

The second source of data for the field research portion of this study was a survey.

The survey was sent to those who serve as part of the leadership team for each

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[435] All participating churches are located within in the United States.

participating church and be found in Appendix 2. Given that the polity of each local

church within the Advent Christian denomination is unique, the term leadership team

could represent a broad range of titles and responsibilities within the participating

churches. As such, the group selected to take the survey from each participating church

was identified by each church's Lead Pastor who were each asked to provide the survey

to their leadership team as their individual church defines that term. This resulted in

twenty individual responses to the survey which included respondents from all four

participating churches.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected using the research instruments already discussed within this

section. The interviews were conducted and recorded using Zoom video conferencing.

The surveys were conducted and collected using the Survey Monkey online research

platform. Web links for both the Zoom interviews and Survey Monkey surveys were

provided to each participating church's Lead Pastor for participation or distribution

respectively.

Data from the interviews and surveys was then summarized, analyzed, and

reported utilizing the steps recommended by John Creswell and Cheryl Poth in their

description of the "data analysis spiral," which include: (1) "managing and organizing the

data," (2) "reading and memoing emergent ideas," (3) "describing and classifying codes

and themes," (4) "developing and assessing interpretations," and (5) "representing and visualizing the data."[436]

Summary

As was discussed earlier in this section, the field research was designed to aid the researcher in gaining a better understanding of the leadership development and character formation strategies and principles already in use within the Advent Christian network of churches. This was done in service of the broader goal of this research, which was to address the lack of a character formation strategy that could be employed in a leadership development model by Advent Christian churches in North America. The steps described in this section have aided the researcher in identifying strategies that could be employed to address this problem.

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[436] Creswell and Poth, 185-198.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

As discussed in section four of this study, the field research conducted was

qualitative in nature and the researcher employed a multiple case study approach. All data

represented in this section of the study was collected from interviews with the Lead

Pastors from four participating Advent Christian churches and survey data was collected

from the leadership teams from those same four churches. In total, the study included

four interview participants and twenty survey participants. This chapter provides a

summary presentation of the data collected from those interviews and surveys.

Demographic Information

Demographic information for the four participating churches was collected

through the use of materials provided by those churches and information available

through denominational publications and reports. No participating churches will be

identified by name. Instead, from this point forward the researcher will identify the

participating churches as Church A, Church B, Church C, and Church D.

Church A

Church A is located within the Northeastern United States. The church was

established nearly 175 years ago. They report eighty-three members and approximately

forty-five in attendance for Sunday worship.[437] Their Lead Pastor has served in his role since 2019 after seven years of pastoral ministry elsewhere. Educationally, he holds a Bachelor of Arts in ministry and a Master of Arts in Religion. The Lead Pastor serves as the only member of the church staff. The church is led by a team of elders. Their pastor serves as part of the team of elders. According to the Lead Pastor of the church, they serve a small rural community with approximately 2,200 residents.

Church B

Church B is also located within the Northeastern United States. The church has been established for a little more than 100 years. They report 140 members and approximately 100 in attendance for Sunday worship.[438] Their Lead Pastor is a homegrown leader and has served in his role since 2015. Educationally, he does not hold a formal degree, but has received some formal theological education. They have a church staff of four and are led by a team of elders. Their two pastors make up a part of the team of elders. According to the Lead Pastor of the church, they serve a rural community of approximately 6,000 residents, which grows exponentially as a vacation and tourist destination in the summer.

Church C

Church C is located within the Southeastern United States. The church is twenty years old. They report 197 members and approximately 260 in attendance for Sunday

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[437] Advent Christian General Conference, *The 2022 Advent Christian Manual* (Charlotte: Advent Christian General Conference, 2022), 58.

[438] Advent Christian General Conference 2022, 58.

worship.[439] Their Lead Pastor was also the founding pastor of the church, having served there for the full twenty years of the church's existence. He has also served for nearly twenty years as a hospital chaplain, making him the only co-vocational pastor interviewed. Educationally, he holds three theological degrees: a Bachelor of Arts, a Master of Divinity, and a Doctor of Ministry. They have a church staff of nine intentionally co-vocational pastors and leaders. Their leadership team includes a combination of their staff and a team of elders. According to the Lead Pastor of the church, they serve a growing suburb of approximately 20,000 residents situated just outside a major city.

Church D

Church D is located within the Midwestern United States. The church is a little more than 100 years old. They report 129 members and approximately ninety in attendance for Sunday worship.[440] The Lead Pastor has served in his role since 2015 and holds forty years of experience in pastoral ministry overall. Educationally, he holds a bachelor's degree in theology. The church's leadership team, which is known as their executive team, is made up of the pastors, elders, financial leaders, and administrative leaders. According to the church's Lead Pastor, they serve a small rural community of approximately 1,100 residents.

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[439] Advent Christian General Conference 2022, 59.

[440] Advent Christian General Conference 2022, 55.

Table 1: Church Demographics

	Location	Church Age (Approx.)	Members hip	Avg. Worship Attendance (Approx.)	Lead Pastor Exp.	Lead Pastor Tenure	Population of Community (Approx.)
Church A	Northeast	175 yrs.	83	45	10 yrs.	3 yrs.	2,200
Church B	Northeast	100 yrs.	140	100	7 yrs.	7 yrs.	6,000
Church C	Southeast	20 yrs.	197	260	20 yrs.	20 yrs.	20,000
Church D	Midwest	100 yrs.	129	90	40 yrs.	7 yrs.	1,100

Assessment of Church Demographic Information

As can be seen by these demographic summaries, the churches vary in regards to size, leadership structure and geographic location. The Lead Pastors of each church also vary in regards to overall experience, time in their current ministry site, and education. It should be noted that there is a great deal of similarity between the majority of the churches in regards to the demographics of the communities they serve in. With the exception of Church C, they all serve rural communities.

With these things in mind, it is the opinion of the researcher that the demographics of the churches selected for this study provide a good representation of the makeup of Advent Christian churches in the United States more broadly.[441] While these churches are unique within the Advent Christian denomination in that they are intentional in their leadership development and character formation efforts, in most other ways these churches appear to represent the overall culture and makeup of the denomination as a whole. This increases the likelihood that the data collected from these churches will be

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[441] For demographic information about Advent Christian churches in the United States, see Advent Christian General Conference 2022, 53-63.

useful in identifying core principles, strategies, and practices that can be applicable across the Advent Christian network of churches more broadly.

Survey Participants

The survey participants were selected by the Lead Pastors of each of the four participating churches. The researcher has minimal demographic information about these participants other than that they serve in some role of leadership in one of the participating churches. Given the varied polity and organizational structure of Advent Christian churches, the researcher set no specific parameters for the Lead Pastors other than that they would define the targeted participant as a member of their church's leadership team. There were twenty survey respondents in all. These twenty were asked if they had participated in their church's present approach to leadership development. Of the twenty, seventeen answered yes, two answered no, and one did not answer. Of the seventeen who answered yes, three respondents led one or more individual through their church's leadership development process, ten were led as an emerging leader through their church's leadership development process, three led others and were led through their church's leadership development process, and one did not clarify their involvement.

Table 2: Survey Participants' Involvement in Leadership Development Process

Participated in Leading Others	Participated as Emerging Leader	Participated as Both	Participated (did not clarify)	Has Not Participated
3	10	3	1	3

From the data collected, eighty-five percent of the survey respondents have participated in some way in their church's current leadership development process. This indicates that the overwhelming majority of responses came from individuals who have

some level of engagement with the processes being discussed. Given that the responses came largely from those with firsthand knowledge of the subject matter being discussed, the data collected should be more reliable.

Research Tools

The first of the research tools used in collecting data was an interview with each of the Lead Pastors from the four participating churches. As was discussed in Chapter Four of this report, the interviews were guided using an interview script which divides the questions up into five primary categories: (1) character traits valued by the participating churches in their development of leaders, (2) the leadership development strategies and practices of the participating churches, (3) the impact of Scripture and external tools on the leadership development strategies and practices described, (4) the character formation strategies and practices of the participating churches, and (5) the impact of Scripture and external tools on the character formation strategies and practices described.[442]

The second of the research tools used in collecting data was a survey that was distributed by the Lead Pastors of each church to members of their respective leadership teams. The survey was designed to build upon the data gleaned from some of the key categories discussed in the Lead Pastor interviews and to collect data regarding the perceptions of leadership team members regarding the success of the leadership development and character formation strategies of the four participating churches.

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[442] The interview script can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

Research Results

Utilizing the research tools discussed above, the researcher was able to collect

data from a total of four interview participants and twenty survey participants. This data

has been summarized and discussed in the following sections. It was summarized using

the following categories: (1) impact of character on leadership, (2) character traits valued

by the participating churches in their development of leaders, (3) the leadership

development strategies and practices of the participating churches, (4) the perceived

impact of the leadership development strategies and practices described, (5) the character

formation strategies and practices of the participating churches, and (6) the perceived

impact of the character formation strategies and practices described.

Impact of Character on Leadership

The first area summarized from the field research relates to the perceived impact

of character on leadership. This is a theme that only appeared in the survey portion of the

field research. Respondents were asked three questions centered on this theme. The first

question was a simple yes or no, asking: Do you believe that a leader's character impacts

their success as a leader? All twenty respondents answered this question and answered

yes.

The second question asked respondents to rate, on a one to five scale, how

important character is to success as a leader. Answering one indicated that character is

not important. Answering two indicated that character is somewhat important. Answering

three indicated that character is important. Answering four indicated that character is very

important. Answering five indicated that character is the most important aspect of

leadership. All twenty respondents rated character as either important or higher. Nineteen out of twenty respondents rated character as either very important or the most important aspect of leadership.

Table 3: Rating the Importance of Character in Leadership

	(1) Not Important	(2) Somewhat Important	(3) Important	(4) Very Important	(5) Most Important
Number of Responses	0	0	1	8	11
Percentage of Whole	0%	0%	5%	40%	55%

When asked to explain their answers, respondents pointed most frequently to the impact of leadership character on others. Several respondents noted that both good and bad character have the ability to impact people in either a positive or negative way. One respondent stated: "people do not want to follow someone who does not have good character." Another stated that they believe "a leader's character and development of strong character strengthens the fidelity and trust in the communities they lead." Without strong character, another noted, "a leader may cause significant spiritual pain and trauma along with crises of faith."

Another common theme was that character reflects belief. Multiple respondents pointed to character as being the "fruit" of belief. One respondent stated: "what you truly believe will always produce like-kind fruit or in some cases like-kind poison." Another stated: "we want leaders who exemplify Christian beliefs and principles in their lives, not simply leaders who verbalize those beliefs and principles."

Character Traits Valued by the Participating Churches

The second summarized from the field research was meant to determine the kinds of character traits most valued by the participating churches in their development of leaders. This theme was part of both the interview and the survey. Data from both sources has been represented in this section.

In the context of the interview, this began with the simple question: What character traits do you value most in your selection and development of leaders for your church or ministry? In response to this question, the Lead Pastors from Church A and Church B immediately stated that they look primarily to the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-13. These character traits were explored in Chapter Two of this study and have been included in the discussion about question two of the interview script. The Lead Pastor from Church C listed: fidelity, commitment to biblical truth and prayer, authenticity, and compassion. These four traits also serve as core values for his church as a whole. The Lead Pastor from Church D listed personal integrity and a good reputation in the community, sharing that 1 Timothy 3 serves as a "biblical foundation for their importance." It should be noted that three of the four Lead Pastors derived the traits they valued most from the same passage of Scripture. While the Lead Pastor from Church C did not list 1 Timothy 3 explicitly, the character traits listed can find roots in that same passage as well.

In regards to the reason why these four pastors focused on these particular character traits, the Lead Pastors of Church A and Church B both noted that the priority of 1 Timothy 3 came from their predecessors. The Lead Pastor of Church C noted that the reason these traits are among their highest priorities is because they are the core values of

the church. The Lead Pastor of Church D noted both the importance of the church

maintaining a good reputation in the community and the biblical roots of those traits as

the reasons for their value.

Table 4: Character Traits Valued Most by Lead Pastors

	Valued Traits	Reason
Church A	1 Timothy 3:1-13	Established by predecessor, biblical roots
Church B	1 Timothy 3:1-13	Established by predecessor, biblical roots
Church C	Fidelity, commitment to biblical truth and prayer, authenticity, compassion	Core values of church
Church D	Personal integrity, good reputation in the community	Reputation/witness of church in community, biblical roots

The interviewees were also provided a list of twenty-six traits identified by the

researcher in the study of 1 Timothy. These traits were identified and discussed in

Chapter Two of this report. They were asked to rate these character traits as a high

priority, moderate priority, or not a priority in their church's identification and

development of leaders. The character traits included the following: godliness,

faithfulness, faith, a good conscience, personal integrity, being above reproach, sober

mindedness, being self-controlled, being respectable or dignified, personal discipline,

possessing marital and familial integrity, gentleness (or peacefulness), humility, not being

greedy, fidelity of teaching, commitment to truth, self-discipline, perseverance, courage,

teachability, demonstrable maturity, discernment, righteousness, love, steadfastness, and

gentleness.

All twenty-six traits were identified by all four Lead Pastors as either a high

priority or moderate priority. The vast majority of the character traits were rated as high

by all four pastors, and all but one of these character traits was rated as high by at least

two of the four pastors. The one outlier in this regard was perseverance, which was rated as moderate by the Lead Pastors from Church B, Church C, and Church D. There were no traits on this list that were labeled as not a priority by any of the four Lead Pastors.

Table 5: Character Traits from Chapter 2

	Pastor A	Pastor B	Pastor C	Pastor D
Godliness	High	High	High	High
Faithfulness	High	High	High	High
Faith	High	High	High	High
A Good Conscience	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
Personal Integrity	High	High	High	High
Above Reproach	High	High	High	High
Sober Minded	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
Self-Controlled	High	High	High	Moderate
Respectable or Dignified	High	High	High	High
Personally Disciplined	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
Possessing Marital and Familial Integrity	High	High	High	High
Gentle/Peaceful	High	Moderate	High	High
Humble	High	High	High	Moderate
Not Greedy	High	High	High	High
Fidelity of Teaching	High	High	High	Moderate
Committed to Truth (Truthful)	High	High	High	High
Self-Disciplined	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
Perseverance	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Courage	High	Moderate	High	High
Teachability	High	High	High	High
Demonstrable Maturity	High	High	High	Moderate
Discernment	High	High	High	Moderate
Righteousness	High	High	High	High
Love	High	High	High	High
Steadfastness	High	Moderate	High	High
Gentleness	High	Moderate	High	Moderate

After providing this rating, the interviewees were asked to rate the top two or three traits they value most from this list. The Lead Pastor from Church A listed:

godliness, faith, and teachability. The Lead Pastor from Church B listed: above reproach, godliness, and humility. The Lead Pastor from Church C listed: faithfulness, committed to truth, and personal integrity. The Lead Pastor from Church D listed: godliness, personal integrity, and respectable or dignified. Some common themes that appeared in examining the top three of each Lead Pastor included: three who chose godliness and three who chose either personal integrity or being above reproach.

Each of the four pastors noted that it was difficult to prioritize any of these traits above the others because they all come from the Bible. The Lead Pastor from Church A noted that he sought to identify those he saw as "overarching" as his priorities, because of the difficulties of prioritizing what he saw to be "equally important" biblical truths. He noted that he "tends to be an idealist" and that if these traits are found in Scripture, "we ought to be striving as much as we can for all of these." Similar sentiment appeared to be present among the other interviewees as well. When asked what their reasoning was for choosing these particular traits, they all identified them as those they saw to be most central, being careful not to dismiss the importance of many of the others that appeared on the list.

The interviewees were then provided with a list of twenty-eight traits uncovered in the contemporary literature review found in Chapter Three. They were asked to rate these character traits as a high priority, moderate priority, or not a priority in their church's identification and development of leaders. The character traits included: honesty, integrity, inspiration driven by trust, attentiveness and interest in people, demonstration of personal morality, value-based and fair decision making, wisdom, knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, transcendence, loyalty, selflessness,

compassion, competency, respectfulness, fairness, responsibility, self-discipline, decisiveness, spiritual appreciation, cooperativeness, bravery, social intelligence, self-control, and patience.

All twenty-eight traits listed were rated as either a high or moderate priority by the Lead Pastors of all four participating churches. Seventeen of the twenty-eight traits listed were rated as a high priority by at least three of the four Lead Pastors. All but one trait was rated as high by at least two of the four Lead Pastors. The one outlier from this list was transcendence, which was rated moderate by the Lead Pastors from Church A, Church B, and Church C. Like the list generated from the theological review in Chapter Two, there were no traits that were labeled as not a priority by any of the four Lead Pastors.

Table 6: Character Traits from Chapter 3

	Pastor A	Pastor B	Pastor C	Pastor D
Honesty	High	High	High	High
Integrity	High	High	High	High
Inspiration Driven by Trust	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
Attentiveness and Interest in People	Moderate	High	High	Moderate
Demonstration of Personal Morality	High	High	High	High
Value-based and Fair Decision Making	High	High	High	Moderate
Wisdom	High	High	High	High
Knowledge	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
Courage	Moderate	High	High	High
Humanity	High	High	High	High
Justice	High	High	High	High
Temperance	High	Moderate	High	Moderate
Transcendence	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High
Loyalty	High	High	High	High
Selflessness	High	High	High	Moderate
Compassion	High	High	High	Moderate

Competency	High	High	High	High
Respectfulness	High	High	High	High
Fairness	High	High	High	High
Responsibility	High	High	High	Moderate
Self-discipline	High	High	High	High
Decisiveness	High	High	High	Moderate
Spiritual Appreciation	High	High	High	High
Cooperativeness	High	High	High	Moderate
Bravery	Moderate	High	High	High
Social Intelligence	Moderate	High	High	High
Self-control	High	High	High	Moderate
Patience	High	High	High	Moderate

After providing this rating, the interviewees were asked to rate the top two or three traits they value most from this list. The Lead Pastor from Church A listed: wisdom, knowledge, and compassion. The Lead Pastor from Church B listed: honesty, wisdom, and attentiveness and interest in people. The Lead Pastor from Church C listed: integrity, patience, and attentiveness and interest in people. The Lead Pastor from Church D listed: integrity, honesty, and demonstration of personal morality. Some common themes that appeared in examining the top three of each Lead Pastor included: three who chose either honesty or integrity, two who identified wisdom, and two who identified attentiveness and interest in people.

Each of the four Lead Pastors noted that they found it easier to prioritize two to three traits from this list than from the list generated from the survey of 1 Timothy. The Lead Pastors from Church A and Church D both noted that they had an easier time prioritizing and rating these traits because the Bible was not directly attached to this list. The Lead Pastors did all note biblical reasoning for the traits they selected. The Lead Pastor from Church B noted that he looks at Jesus as "the perfect leader" and selected

traits "in accordance with His character." He noted that those Christlike characteristics are things we should all strive for, stating: "we should have his same heart, honesty, and take a genuine interest in people." In contrast to this, however, the Lead Pastor from Church C noted that he thought his selections were likely rooted in his own leadership style and that as leaders we "sometimes have the tendency to project our own tendencies and values on to others in leadership."

The final question in this section of the interviews asked whether or not there was anything else they would like to share specifically about the character traits they value most in their selection and development of leaders. The Lead Pastors from Church A and Church C declined to share anything further. The Lead Pastor from Church B spoke about selecting demonstration of personal morality. He noted that this is important because "every secret will come to light eventually anyway" and can "discredit you with the public." So, he continued, "if you are not personally walking in the light and walking in the truth, the morality of God's word, you will be disqualified in the end anyway." The Lead Pastor from Church D spoke about how many of his selections to the previous questions were overlapping. He noted that when someone has those qualities (integrity, a good reputation in the community, respectability, godliness, honesty, and a demonstration of personal morality), you can "teach or train a lot of the others." He noted that he tried to fixate on those that were "at the core or a person," stating that it is a "waste of time to try to develop people that don't know how to have integrity and be honest."

The survey participants were asked one question which combined the two lists presented to the Lead Pastors. This produced a list of forty traits that represented both Chapter Two and Chapter Three of this study. From that list, the respondents were asked

to identify the four traits they value most. The character traits included: godliness, honesty, faithfulness, faith, a good conscience, personal integrity, being above reproach, sober mindedness, being self-controlled, respectability, possessing marital and familial integrity, being gentle or peaceful, humility, not being greedy, fidelity of teaching, commitment to truth, self-discipline, perseverance, courage, teachability, demonstrable maturity, discernment, righteousness, love, steadfastness, gentleness, inspiration driven by trust, attentiveness and interest in people, value-based and fair decision making, wisdom, knowledge, justice, loyalty, selflessness, compassion, respectfulness, responsibility, decisiveness, cooperativeness, and patience.

All twenty of the survey respondents answered this question. Twenty-six of the forty traits listed were chosen by at least one respondent. Seven of the forty were chosen by at least five respondents, representing twenty-five percent of the total number of respondents. Those chosen by at least five respondents included: attentiveness and interest in people (5), humility (5), wisdom (6), personal integrity (6), honesty (6), commitment to truth or truthful (9), and godliness (11).

Table 7: Character Traits from Survey (traits chosen by at least one respondent)

Character Trait	Number of Responses	Percent of Total
Godliness	11	55%
Committed to Truth (Truthful)	9	45%
Honesty	6	30%
Personal Integrity	6	30%
Wisdom	6	30%
Humble	5	25%
Attentiveness and Interest in People	5	25%

Compassion	4	20%
Faithfulness	3	15%
Self-controlled	3	15%
Faith	2	10%
Fidelity of Teaching	2	10%
Discernment	2	10%
Love	2	10%
Selflessness	2	10%
Responsibility	2	10%
Above Reproach	1	5%
Sober Minded	1	5%
Possesses Marital and Familial Integrity	1	5%
Gentle/Peaceful	1	5%
Courage	1	5%
Teachability	1	5%
Righteousness	1	5%
Loyalty	1	5%
Cooperativeness	1	5%
Patience	1	5%

Among those receiving five or more responses from the survey participants, four could also be identified as top priorities for the majority of the Lead Pastors as well. Those traits include: godliness, honesty, personal integrity, and wisdom. It is also worth noting that each of the top ten identified by survey participants, which represents those receiving at least three responses, were also selected by at least one of the Lead Pastors.

Leadership Development Strategies and Practices

The third area to be summarized from the field research was designed to gain a better understanding of the leadership development practices of the participating churches. The Lead Pastors interviewed were asked two core questions with follow-up questions that were dependent on their responses to the two core questions. The questions were designed to unpack the core elements of the leadership development approach of each of the participating churches and the goals and benchmarks associated with those strategies. Participants were then asked how their approach was impacted by Scripture and other sources. Survey participants were only asked one question around this theme. They were asked to describe their church's approach to developing leaders in two or three sentences.

The Lead Pastors were first asked if they and their church have a consistent approach for developing leaders. This was a simple yes or no question. Of the four Lead Pastors from the participating churches, the Lead Pastors of Church B, Church C, and. Church D answered yes. The Lead Pastor of Church A answered no. In response to this, the researcher asked the three Lead Pastors who answered yes to describe the essential elements of their process.

The Lead Pastor from Church B described their process as being guided by the "First Principles" series from BILD International.[443] This series, according to the BILD International website is designed to "mature all believers through reading and

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[443] "Training System," BILD International, accessed December 3, 2022, https://www.bild.org/traing-system.

understanding scripture."[444] They believe that by engaging in this series through churches

or small groups "believers will learn to identify core biblical ideas and how to apply what

they have learned to their mind, heart, and life."[445] According to the Lead Pastor of

Church B, they use this series of training booklets to provide a systematic approach for

training both disciples and eventually leaders within their church in order to have a

"structured process to go from point A to point B." They see consistency as vital to their

process. In addition to this, he notes that they walk potential leaders through the Bible

and seek to model what it looks like to walk as a leader with personal morality and

integrity, using instruction from Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus to demonstrate "what

a leader actually is and what it looks like." The Lead Pastor also described their process

as highly relational and something that is done in the context of community.

The Lead Pastor from Church C shared that their process begins with some

"shoulder tapping." They seek out those who their leadership team members have

identified as having leadership potential and begin with a conversation about their

leadership potential and gifts. They seek to discern the types of roles where they may best

fit. From there, they seek to place them in relationship with a member of the leadership

team who either serves or has oversight over the particular roles they identify. The Lead

Pastor noted that "everyone needs a Barnabas and every leader needs a Timothy."

Relationship is central to the approach for Church C. The Lead Pastor said of this that

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[444] BILD International, "Training System."

[445] BILD International, "Training System."

their approach centers around "having those relationships speak into people's lives." He clarified that they don't always do this perfectly, but the approach is generally adhered to.

The Lead Pastor from Church D also stated that their approach begins with relationship. He pointed to his own personality and noted that he feels "very comfortable in an organic situation where things begin to move naturally, not necessarily through a step-by-step process." As a result, time and relationship are the keys to their approach. He also noted that gift analysis plays a central role in the process as well. He sees this as essential so that they are effectively developing people who "know how to participate in the church."

Finally, since the Lead Pastor from Church A did not claim a consistent approach to developing leaders in their church, the researcher asked if there are any common or consistent elements to how they develop leaders. He cited consistent relational involvement with the individual and encouragement for the individual to be involved with some sort of small group or teaching ministry outside of the Sunday morning worship service. Additionally, he noted that they seek to give individuals aspiring to lead opportunities for "increasing responsibility" so that they may grow in their leadership gifts in a controlled way.

After this, the researcher asked the interviewees if their approach to leadership development included a common set of goals or benchmarks to help them assess an emerging leader's progress. The Lead Pastors from Church B and Church D answered yes. The Lead Pastors from Church A and Church C answered no. In response to this, the researcher asked the two Lead Pastors who answered yes to describe the common goals or benchmarks they use and if they use any formal assessment tools.

The Lead Pastor of Church B stated that their ultimate goal is to develop humble and servant-minded leaders. He noted that they walk people through what he called "similar patterns." He noted that they have a good handle on where they want people to be at certain stages of their leadership development process, though everyone moves at their own pace. They use completion of the various books that are part of BILD International's "First Principles" series as one of their benchmarks. This tells them that they are processing material that the church deems important. They also seek to observe an individual's personal development in the context of relationship to determine that the material is not just being processed cognitively, but is producing life change. As an emerging leader develops to a certain point, they provide them opportunities to sit in on things likes elder meetings or elder prayer times so they can begin to see them in the "flow of leadership." When asked about particular assessment tools, the Lead Pastor stated that they do not "formally do assessments on paper." Instead, they have a consistent set of benchmarks that they move emerging leaders through "organically." It is more of an informal process.

The Lead Pastor of Church D noted that their primary goal is "servitude." He noted that their benchmarks along the way are "saved, settled, and serving." This means they seek to assess whether emerging leaders are: "in right relationship with Christ," being "built as disciples," and "are good stewards of their resources." They define stewardship of resources as including things like time and personal investment, not just money or possessions. They walk emerging leaders through the basic elements of the Christian faith and church practice. This includes covering subjects like salvation, the sacraments, holiness, the Church, and what discipleship really means. Then they work

with them on issues of stewardship, meaning how they are using their resources and how they are serving already. He noted that they must be actively serving if they aspire to leadership. When asked about particular assessment tools, he stated that the church uses a "spiritual analysis test" and resources provided by "Natural Church Development."[446]

Since the Lead Pastors from Church A and Church C did not profess to have a common set of goals or benchmarks that they use in assessing the progress of developing leaders, they were asked if they could describe how they generally assess the progress of a developing leader. They were also asked if they used any particular assessment tools.

The Lead Pastor from Church A first noted that assessment is something he is still learning about and he believes they need more "specificity" in that area. He noted that they are heavily reliant on 1 Timothy in their development of leaders. He stated that their development of leaders is heavily focused on the traits found in 1 Timothy 3 in particular and that if they had any benchmarks, they would largely be found there. When asked about the use of assessment tools, he said that they do not use any particular assessment tools in their process.

The Lead Pastor from Church C noted that they do have regular "check-ins" with their developing leaders, particularly as they are immersing them in leadership tasks. He pointed out that this gives them the opportunity to discuss the "good, bad, and ugly," as well as "offer affirmation for where they are really strong" and "point out areas where there could be opportunities for growth." According to the Lead Pastor, these

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[446] "Uniquely You Products," Uniquely You, accessed December 5, 2022, https://uniquelyyou.org/catalog/online-profiles/spiritual-gifts; "Clifton Strengths," Gallup, accessed December 5, 2022, https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/252137/home.aspx.

conversations generally happen in a one-on-one or two-on-one setting. When asked about

particular assessment tools, he shared that they often use spiritual gifts inventories, as

well as some other personality assessment tools provided through the denomination's

leadership development program. These tools include an assessment called Uniquely You

and an assessment called Strengths Finder.[447]

Table 8: Key Elements of Leadership Development Strategy

	Church A	Church B	Church C	Church D
Consistent Approach? (Y/N)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Essential Elements	Relational connection, involvement with small groups, increasing responsibility	Led through ordered teaching series, guided through books of the Bible (Pastoral Epistles), consistency, modeling, highly relational	"Shoulder tapping" (initial conversation), finding gift-based fit, mentoring relationships	Begins with relationship, organic (not step-by-step), gifts analysis, participation in church ministry
Common Goals or Benchmarks? (Y/N)	No	Yes	No	Yes
Goals/Benchmarks	No clear benchmarks	Completion of BILD International booklets, data from relational observation, experiential opportunities,	Informal check-in points to discuss development	Immersion in church values, step-by-step instruction through theological concepts, understanding of stewardship and service
Assessment Tools	None	None	Spiritual gifts inventories, Uniquely You and Strengths Finder assessments	Spiritual analysis test, assessment provided by Natural Church Development

447 "NCD Books and Tools," Natural Church Development, accessed December 3, 2022, http://www.ncd-international.org/public/ncd-tools.html.

After this, participants were asked a series of four core questions with answer dependent follow-up questions regarding the impact the Bible and other sources have on their leadership development strategies practices. Participants were asked how their approach to leadership development and associated goals and benchmarks have been impacted by Scripture. They were then asked how their approach to leadership development and associated goals and benchmarks have been impacted by sources other than Scripture.

The first question asked was a simple yes or no: Has your approach to leadership development been impacted by Scripture in a direct way? All four Lead Pastors responded yes to this question. They were then asked if they could list specific biblical passages, sections of Scripture, or biblical characters that have impacted their approach. Finally, they were asked to discuss how those biblical passages, sections of Scripture, or biblical characters have impacted their approach to leadership development.

The Lead Pastor from Church A listed the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus) as those sections of Scripture that most impact the church's approach to leadership development. He noted that these letters have helped them to see what is required from Christian leaders. He shared that he sees those three books as demonstrating the importance of "what we know, what we believe, and the fruit that is in our lives."

The Lead Pastor from Church B listed the Pauline Epistles as a whole being those that impact their approach to leadership development the most. He noted that he sees Paul as a master at leadership development and church planting. He stated that Paul serves as

one of the more significant models we see in Scripture. As such, he sees the Pauline Epistles as providing a standard for what Christian leadership should look like.

The Lead Pastor from Church C noted three biblical characters that have most impacted their leadership development approach: Paul, Barnabas, and Timothy. He noted that these men provide a "visible example" of intentional mentoring and encouragement. He looks at these men as those who invested into others and notes that in their example, the reader can see the potential impact of leadership development.

The Lead Pastor from Church D listed 1 Timothy as a book that has been highly influential in their approach to leadership development. He sees this book providing an "end goal" for them in their leadership development approach. He noted that as he begins to develop people, this book provides him a "picture of what he is aiming for." He also listed 1 Corinthians 13 as highly influential in their leadership development approach. Of this passage, he stated that it "re-focuses the reader on love as a central point."

Next, the participants were asked how Scripture had impacted the goals and benchmarks they have set for their development of leaders. They were then asked if any specific passages of Scripture have impacted their goals and benchmarks and, if so, how those passages had impacted their goals and benchmarks. Three of the four pastors indicated that their goals and benchmarks have been impacted by particular Scripture passages. The Lead Pastor of Church A cited his earlier response indicating that they do not have any clear goals or benchmarks set.

The Lead Pastor of Church B indicated that Paul had significant influence on the goals and benchmarks they have set as a church. He noted that Paul laid out clear growth areas throughout his letters that his leaders ought to be following. They look to many of

those growth areas as they walk people through a process for leadership development.

Growth in particular areas become the goals and benchmarks that they strive for along the

way.

The Lead Pastor of Church C indicated that Scripture serves as a reminder to

"focus on the person rather than the task." Their belief is that the "task" of leadership

development is secondary to investment in people. They see that as something modeled

in the Bible. When asked about particular passages that have led to any established goals

and benchmarks, the Lead Pastor of Church C noted that they pull more "broad concepts"

from Scripture than particular passages.

Table 9: Impact of Scripture on Leadership Development Approach

	Church A	Church B	Church C	Church D
Impacted by Scripture? (Y/N)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Key passages, biblical characters, etc.	Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus)	Pauline Epistles	Characters: Paul, Barnabas, and Timothy	1 Timothy, 1 Corinthians 13
Ways Scripture has impacted approach to leadership development	Demonstrating requirements for Christian leaders, importance of knowledge, belief and fruit	Provides a standard for what Christian leadership should look like	Provide a model of intentional mentoring and encouragement	Provide an end goal for their leadership development efforts (1 Tim.), re-focusing on love (1 Cor. 13)
How have these passages impacted the church's goals and benchmarks?	N/A	Paul and his epistles have provided growth points which the church sees as goals for emerging leaders	Reminder to see leadership development as an investment rather than a task	Provided clear goals for their leadership development efforts
Key passages, biblical characters that have impacted goals and benchmarks	N/A	Paul, Pauline Epistles	None	1 Timothy

The interview then shifted to discussion regarding the impact of sources other than Scripture on the leadership development efforts of the participating churches. Participants were first asked if their approach to leadership development had been impacted by any sources other than Scripture in a direct way. All four Lead Pastors answered yes to that question. They were then asked if they would list any specific resources that had impacted their leadership development approach and were asked how those specific resources had impacted their leadership development approach.

The Lead Pastor from Church A shared that the book *Designed to Lead* by Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck is a resource that has been very helpful.[448] He noted that it has helped him in rethinking leadership development and has inspired him to approach leadership development more intentionally. He also listed *The Practices of a Healthy Church* by Donald MacNair and Esther Lightcap Meek and *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* by Mark Dever.[449] He noted that these resources have been helpful in instilling healthy church principles in their developing leaders.

The Lead Pastor of Church B pointed to the *First Principles* workbook series published by BILD International as the resource that has most impacted their leadership development approach. He shared that this resource provides an ordered approach to their

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[448] This resource referenced by the interview participant was also referenced in Chapter Three of this research report and all publication information can be found in the bibliography.

[449] The resources referenced by the interview participant are, Donald MacNair and Esther L. Meek, *The Practices of a Healthy Church: Biblical Strategies for Vibrant Church Life and Ministry* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1999); Mark Dever and H. B. Charles, *9 Marks of a Healthy Church,* 4th ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2021).

development of leaders rather than the "shotgun approach" the church had previously taken. He also believes that the use of these study guides as their primary tool provides a "light at the end of the tunnel" for emerging leaders, so they can see clear end goals. He noted that these study guides have aided them in laying out clear qualifications, all of which are grounded in Scripture.

The Lead Pastor of Church C shared that the book *Jesus on Leadership* by C. Gene Wilkes is a resource they have found particularly impactful on their leadership development approach.[450] He pointed to the book's emphasis on authenticity in leadership as being among the most impactful pieces. He noted openness, honesty, willingness to admit mistakes, and transparency as key emphases of the book. He sees this as a resource that emphasizes leadership character above all else, which is something that had significant on him and his leadership team.

The Lead Pastor of Church D noted that he has attended several seminars and courses through the years that have impacted his approach to leadership development. He shared that participation in those seminars has exposed him to countless "high-level" leaders. He also noted that he has read several books by John Maxwell which have been very helpful. He shared that all of these resources have contributed to building out his approach to leadership development. He also noted that he learned quite a bit about intentionality in leadership development from John Maxwell in particular, noting that

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[450] The resource referenced by the interview participant is C. Gene Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998).

leadership development does not happen by accident but must be an intentional effort of any senior leader.

Finally, the researcher asked each of the Lead Pastors whether or not any sources other than Scripture have informed the goals or benchmarks they have set for developing leaders and how those resources have informed the goals or benchmarks they have set. The Lead Pastors of Church A, Church C, and Church D did not share any resources other than Scripture that have informed the goals or benchmarks they have set as part of their leadership development approach.

The Lead Pastor from Church B noted that they use a variety of resources other than Scripture that inform the goals and benchmarks they have set. He noted that they use resources from Ligonier Ministries, Desiring God, and Nine Marks to inform the goals and benchmarks they have set.[451] He sees these resources, alongside the *First Principles* series he had already discussed, as resources that help them creating more "well-rounded" leaders. He noted that these resources provide good sources for wisdom and good perspective on biblical leadership.

Table 10: Impact of Other Sources on Leadership Development Approach

	Church A	Church B	Church C	Church D
Impacted by sources other than Scripture? (Y/N)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
List of resources other than Scripture	*Designed to Lead* (Geiger & Peck), *The Practices of a Healthy Church*	*First Principles* Series (BILD International)	*Jesus on Leadership* (Wilkes)	Seminars, John Maxwell books

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[451] Ligonier Ministries is a parachurch organization that provides resources for biblical and theological study and can be found at https://www.ligonier.org. Desiring God is a parachurch organization that provides resources for biblical and theological study and can be found at https://www.desiringgod.org. Nine Marks is a parachurch organization that aids pastors and church members in church health and can be found at https://www.9marks.org.

	(MacNair and Meek), *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* (Dever)			
Ways these resources have impacted approach	Rethinking leadership development, inspiring greater intentionality, identifying healthy church practices to emerging leaders	Provides an ordered approach for leadership development, provides emerging leaders with clear end goals, identifies clear qualifications for leaders	Emphasis on authenticity, character, identifies important leadership character traits	Intentionality, general help in designing leadership development approach
Ways these resources have impacted goals or benchmarks?	N/A	Providing a vision for well-rounded biblical leadership, biblical wisdom	N/A	N/A
List of resources that have informed goals or benchmarks	N/A	Ligonier Ministries, Desiring God, Nine Marks	N/A	N/A

In addition to the interviews with the Lead Pastors, the researcher asked survey participants to identify, in two to three sentences, their church's approach to developing leaders. The question was designed to discern those elements seen by leadership team members to be most crucial to their church's approach. Fifteen of the twenty survey participants responded to this question and their responses fit cleanly into four key areas: relationship, identification of spiritual gifts and skills, participation in classes, and opportunities to lead. Seven respondents listed relationships as a key part of their church's leadership development approach. Seven respondents listed the church providing opportunities for them to lead as a key part of their church's leadership development approach. Five respondents listed assessment of spiritual gifts and skills as a key part of their church's leadership development approach. Two respondents listed

participation in leadership classes as a key part of their church's leadership development approach. There were no other key areas discussed in the descriptions provided.

Table 11: Survey Participant Description of Leadership Development Approach

Relationship	Opportunities to Lead	Assessment of Spiritual Gifts and Skills	Leadership Classes
7	7	5	2

All four of the areas identified by the survey participants were also identified by at least one of the Lead Pastors. Relationship and opportunities to lead were also listed as high priorities among the Lead Pastors. All four Lead Pastors shared in some way that their approach is highly relational. Opportunities to lead or participate in the church's ministry in some way appeared in three of the four Lead Pastor interviews in some form. Spiritual gifts or personality tests appeared in two of the four Lead Pastor interviews. This represents a high level of consistency between the understanding of the leadership team members' understanding of the leadership development strategies employed by their churches and those strategies as discussed by the Lead Pastors.

The Perceived Impact of Practices Described

The fourth area covered by the researcher in the field research portion of this study relates to the perceived impact of the leadership development approaches employed by the participating churches. This area was only part of the surveys taken by the members of the leadership teams from the four participating churches and not the Lead Pastor interviews. The researcher asked survey participants two questions, one was a simple yes or no question and the other asked participants to provide a rating.

Survey participants were first asked if they believe that their church's current approach to leadership development has positively impacted leadership and congregational health. Nineteen of the twenty surveyed answered the question. Eighteen answered yes. One respondent answered no. Respondents were then asked, on a scale of one to five, to rate the level of impact their church's approach to leadership development has had on leadership and congregational health. Again, nineteen of those surveyed responded. Of the nineteen, zero participants answered (1) very negative, zero participants answered (2) somewhat negative, one participant answered (3) no impact, five participants answered (4) somewhat positive, and thirteen participants answered (5) very positive. This appears to represent a reasonably high level of satisfaction regarding the leadership development strategies employed by the four participating churches among their leadership team members. There were zero survey respondents who saw any negative impact and only one respondent noted no impact.

Table 12: Perceived Impact of Leadership Development Approach

	(1) Very Negative	(2) Somewhat Negative	(3) No Impact	(4) Somewhat Positive	(5) Very Positive
Number of Responses	0	0	1	5	13
Percent of Total	0%	0%	5.26%	26.32%	68.42%

Character Formation Strategies and Practices

The next area covered as part of the field research relates to the character formation practices being employed by the participating churches as part of their leadership development approach. The researcher asked three core questions of the interview participants, followed by answer dependent follow-up questions. The

researcher also asked the survey participants two questions on this subject. The questions asked were each designed to gain better clarity on how character formation is employed as part of the leadership development strategies employed by each of the participating churches.

First, the interview participants were asked if their church's leadership development approach includes a consistent and intentional plan for character formation. The Lead Pastors from Church A, Church B, and Church C each answered no to that question. The Lead Pastor from Church D answered yes.

The Lead Pastor from Church D was then asked what strategies or practices his church employs in their character formation efforts. He shared that the church uses personal counseling as part of their approach and feels that honest feedback has to be at the heart of character formation. He noted that they seek to point people to Scripture as an aid to identifying what Christian character should look like, and to aid them in self-examination as well.

Given that they did not indicate the presence of an intentional plan for character formation, the Lead Pastors from Church A, Church B, and Church C were all asked if they could identify particular ways in which character formation happens as part of their approach to leadership development. The Lead Pastor from Church A noted that he sees character formation as happening naturally and in relationship. He pointed to the need for trust and openness among all involved.

The Lead Pastor from Church B shared that they generally start by "diving into a person's history." They seek to understand where their emerging leaders have come from and how they see the world. He noted that they do this informally and in the context of

relationship. In that context, he believes that any character issues that need to be addressed will come to light.

The Lead Pastor from Church C shared that he sees character formation as an "entry point" for leadership development. He shared that they seek to "hire for attitude and train for aptitude." As such, they seek to bring leaders on board who are already showing a developed Christian character. They look for signs of integrity and whether or not an individual is teachable as their primary indicators of Christian character. That said, they expect that there will still be growth edges and are committed to relationally working with leaders as they grow.

The Lead Pastors were then asked if they utilized any resources or tools that have informed their approach to character formation. All four Lead Pastors indicated that there are no particular resources that have informed their approach other than Scripture. The Lead Pastor from Church A did note that an outside resource might get used on a case-by-case basis depending on the character issue being examined. However, they do not use anything consistently that informs their approach.

The Lead Pastors were then asked how they go about character assessment as part of their leadership development approach. They were also asked if they utilize any particular assessment tools. The Lead Pastor from Church A shared that, like their approach to character formation more broadly, it is done naturally and relationally. He shared that they examine the character traits found in Scripture, particularly emphasizing 1 Timothy. They work with them to identify how they line up with those character traits and work with them on areas of needed growth. They do not use any formal assessment tools as part of their approach.

The Lead Pastor from Church B noted that character assessment happens in a highly relational way. He said that an assigned mentor will have one-on-one meetings with leadership candidates. Occasionally, another leader will be brought into the process to aid the assigned mentor with identifying character issues. This provides another perspective. Their overall desire is that emerging leaders would have multiple people speaking into their lives. They do not use any formal assessment tools as part of their approach.

The Lead Pastor from Church C noted that their approach to assessment starts with "not rushing people into leadership." They seek to observe potential leaders in different situations and observe their character in informal environments. This is connected to his earlier assertion that character formation is an "entry point" in relation to their development of leaders. They do not use any formal assessment tools as part of their approach.

The Lead Pastor of Church D indicated that their assessment approach begins with scriptural compliance. They seek to identify how a leadership candidate's character lines up with what is found in Scripture through observation and relationship. They seek to observe how a potential leader interacts in a variety of settings through counseling and regular interaction. They want to know that a leadership candidate's character at church is the same as it is at home and out in the community. They do not use any formal assessment tools as part of their approach.

Table 13: Character Formation Strategies and Practices

	Church A	Church B	Church C	Church D
Plan for Character Formation? (Y/N)	No	No	No	Yes

Strategies or Practices Employed	Relationship, happens naturally, requires trust and openness	Survey of personal history, informal, in relationship, identify issues as they come up	Seek leaders with already developed Christian character, integrity and teachability as markers, continued formation in relationship	Personal counseling, honest feedback, use of Scripture, self-examination
Resources and Tools Used	Scripture, case sensitive resources	Scripture	Scripture	Scripture
Character Assessment Approach	Relational, happens naturally, driven by 1 Timothy, self-assessment, identify growth areas	Relational, assigned mentor, multiple voices and perspectives	Not rushing people into leadership, informal observation	Observation in multiple environments, identify how character lines up with Scripture
Assessment Tools Used	None	None	None	None

In addition to the interviews with the Lead Pastors, the survey participants were asked two questions regarding how character formation fits into the leadership development approaches of their churches. First, they were asked a yes or no question: Does your church's approach to leadership development include prioritization of character formation? Eighteen of the twenty survey participants answered this question. Seventeen answered yes. One answered no.

The survey participants were then invited to describe, in two to three sentences, how character formation is prioritized as part of their church's leadership development approach. Eighteen of the twenty leadership team members surveyed responded to this question. Their responses can be divided into six clear components represented in their responses: teaching about character, assessment, demonstration of Christian character by established leaders, happens naturally or relationally, identification of clear standards, and observation of emerging leaders. There were also six respondents that either

indicated they did not understand the question or answered in a way that had nothing to do with the issue of character. Three respondents indicated their approach involves teaching about character. Four Respondents indicated that assessment is part of their approach. Two respondents indicated that their approach involves demonstration of Christian character by established leaders. Four respondents indicated that they approach character formation naturally or relationally. Three respondents indicated that their church seeks to identify clear standards when it comes to character. Three respondents indicated that their approach includes observation of leadership candidates.

Table 14: Survey Participant Description of Character Formation Approach

Teaching About Character	Assessment	Demonstrating Christian Character	Natural or Relational	Identification of Clear Standards	Observation of Candidates	Did not Understand Question
3	4	2	4	3	3	6

All six of the components discussed by survey respondents appeared in the interviews with Lead Pastors either in relation to these questions about character formation or about their leadership development practices more broadly. As was true of the Lead Pastor interviews, the responses of leadership team members were a little more scattered than the responses related to leadership development practice more broadly. It is difficult to analyze if this is because of the nature of the questions asked or if it is because less of the churches have identified a consistent approach for character formation than those who have identified a consistent approach to leadership development more broadly. It is noteworthy that approximately one-third of the survey participants who responded to the question about character formation did not understand the question. This may point to

the need for more intentionality in the area of character formation, which is something that has been explored further in Chapter Six of this research report.

Perceived Impact of Character Formation Strategies and Practices

The final area covered related to the perceptions of the Lead Pastors interviewed and leadership team members surveyed regarding the impact of their character formation practices on leadership and congregational health. Interview participants were asked one core question with an answer dependent follow-up question about this. Survey participants were asked a yes or no question followed by an opportunity to provide a rating.

The Lead Pastors were first asked if they believe that prioritizing character formation has had a positive impact on the church's leadership and congregational health. All four Lead Pastors answered yes to this question. They were then invited to list specific ways in which they have seen a positive impact.

The Lead Pastor from Church A shared that their prioritization of character has opened the door for sin to be addressed in the church more broadly. He also noted that it has allowed the church to have a leadership environment where leaders can challenge each other in healthy ways.

The Lead Pastor from Church B shared that prior to setting some of the character standards they have in place now, he discovered that some of the key leaders were not even Christians. Beginning to set standards for development and assessment of Christian character has helped them to safeguard against that. He sees this as having increased unity on their leadership team and having built a greater sense of trust among the leaders

and members of the congregation. He noted that the impact on congregational health has been immeasurable.

The Lead Pastor of Church C noted that he believes their emphasis on character has actually strengthened their leadership pipeline. He shared that more people are ready when leadership positions become open because they have clarity on what the standards are. In addition, he believes that the emphasis on character has ensured the church a strong reputation in the community which can be seen in members being asked to serve on community boards and committees.

The Lead Pastor from Church D shared simply that their emphasis on character in leadership has strengthened the unity of the church.

Table 15: Lead Pastor Perceptions Regarding Impact of Character Formation

	Church A	Church B	Church C	Church D
Has Leadership and Congregational Health been Impacted? (Y/N)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ways Impact has been Seen	Opened door for sin to be addressed in congregation, helped create environment where leaders can challenge one another	Better safeguarding of leadership positions, increased trust, increased unity	Strengthened leadership pipeline, strong reputation in community	Increased unity in the church

The survey participants were asked two questions on this subject. The first was a simple yes or no question asking them if they believe their church's inclusion of character formation as part of its development of leaders is something that has had a positive impact on leadership and congregational health. Eighteen of the twenty survey

respondents answered this question. Of the eighteen, seventeen answered yes. One respondent answered no.

The survey respondents were then asked, on a scale of one to five, if they could rate the level of impact their church's inclusion of character formation as part of its development of leaders has had on leadership and congregational health. Nineteen of the twenty survey respondents answered this question. Zero respondents answered (1) very negative. Zero respondents answered (2) somewhat negative. One respondent answered (3) no impact. Eight respondents answered (4) somewhat positive. Ten respondents answered (5) very positive.

Table 16: Leadership Team Perceptions Regarding Impact of Character Formation

	(1) Very Negative	(2) Somewhat Negative	(3) No Impact	(4) Somewhat Positive	(5) Very Positive
Number of Responses	0	0	1	8	10
Percent of Total	0%	0%	5.26%	42.11%	52.63%

The data collected on this issue from both the Lead Pastors and leadership team members appears to represent a reasonably high level of satisfaction with the character formation strategies being employed by the four participating churches. There were zero survey respondents who saw any negative in the strategy and only one respondent who has not seen any positive impact. Additionally, all four Lead Pastors emphatically expressed that an emphasis on character has positively impacted the leadership and congregational health of their churches.

Lead Pastor Concluding Thoughts

In addition to the questions asked in the preceding six categories, the Lead Pastors were given the opportunity to share any final thoughts regarding their church's leadership development strategies or their prioritization of character formation as a part. All four Lead Pastors noted the crucial nature and reiterated how important emphasis on character has been for their churches. The Lead Pastors of Church C and Church D both indicated that they believe they need to be more intentional in identifying formal character assessment tools for use in their churches. The Lead Pastor of Church C noted: "having something to put in front of potential leaders would help me in assessing their seriousness and help them in understanding what it takes to become a leader." The Lead Pastor of Church D shared: "instead of leaving it up to personal observation, maybe there are some things out there that I could tap into that would help with that."

Summary

As previously stated, the field research conducted was qualitative in nature and the researcher employed a multiple case study approach. Four churches were involved, all selected from the Advent Christian denomination. The four Lead Pastors were interviewed and twenty individuals from the church leadership teams were surveyed to collect the data summarized in this chapter. Additionally, the researcher collected basic demographic information on each participating church to weigh the demographics of each church against the demographics of typical Advent Christian churches in the United States. It is the opinion of the researcher that the churches who participated in the study effectively represent the demographic makeup of the denomination more broadly.

Several key themes have appeared through the field research findings which are discussed and analyzed further in Chapter Six of this research report. Additionally, the data presented in this chapter is discussed in light of the data gleaned from the theological review of 1 Timothy in Chapter Two and the review of contemporary literature in Chapter Three. All three data streams have consistently demonstrated that character formation is seen as an essential aspect of emerging leader development and several common themes for implementation have emerged. These common themes are discussed further in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation of Project Design and Implementation

Overview

As discussed in the previous chapters, this study collected data from three primary streams: (1) a theological review of 1 Timothy, (2) a review of contemporary literature representing multiple disciplines, and (3) a qualitative study of four Advent Christian churches in the United States. The qualitative study was done using a multiple case study approach and included an interview of the Lead Pastors of the four participating churches and a survey that was completed by twenty leadership team members from the four participating churches. This was accompanied by a collection of relevant demographic information about the four participating churches which the researcher assessed in relation to the demographic makeup of Advent Christian churches in the United States more broadly.

Modifications to Approach

Only one significant modification was made to the research approach. This modification was made to theological review. The original intent of the researcher was to perform a theological review of all three biblical books that are part of the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus) in an effort to examine Paul's prioritization of character in his selection and development of leaders. The researcher ultimately

determined that, given the goals of the research and the breadth of data available on the subject throughout the Pastoral Epistles, this focus was too broad and needed to be narrowed. The researcher determined it necessary to limit the biblical scope to 1 Timothy, which provided more than enough data to support the goals of the research. No other significant adjustments were made to the research methods employed.

Research Strengths

The first strength of the research was the demographic makeup of the participating churches in relation to the broader Advent Christian network. It was determined by the researcher that the four participating churches represented the overall culture and makeup of Advent Christian churches in the United States well. This increases the likelihood that the data collected from these churches will be useful in identifying core principles, strategies, and practices that will be applicable across the network.

The second strength of the research was that the overwhelming majority of the pastors and leaders who were part of the study had participated in the leadership development strategies they were discussing. All four Lead Pastors had participated in leading people through their church's leadership development approach. Additionally, seventeen of the twenty leadership team members surveyed had participated in their church's leadership development approach. This represents a high level of engagement in the strategies and practices that were discussed which appears noticeable in the data collected.

The third strength of the research was the ability to collect data from both the Lead Pastors of the participating churches and members of each church's leadership team. As has already been discussed, the researcher was not only able to collect meaningful data through interviews with each Lead Pastor, but was also able to collect a great deal of supporting data through the survey that was distributed to members of each church's leadership team. This allowed for a broader base of perspectives to be heard, which increased the reliability of the data being collected as a whole.

The fourth strength of the research can be found in the research instruments themselves. The interview script and the survey questions emphasize similar themes throughout, which aided in identifying common ideas, as well as where the opinions of the Lead Pastors and leadership team members may diverge.

A final strength of the research was in the data it produced. All three streams produced consistent and compatible themes that were relevant to the researcher's inquiry, as well as to the researcher's professional ministry responsibilities. This should prove beneficial to any additional research that may follow this study, and to the ministry endeavors that are intended to come as a result of this study.

Research Weaknesses

One potential weakness of the research is the minimal demographic information collected by the researcher about the individual survey participants. The researcher has operated with no knowledge of key demographic information, including data such as: age, church each participant attends, role in the church, or tenure in current role. This

information could have been used to further analyze some of the data, particularly in comparing it to the data collected from each Lead Pastor interview.

A second potential weakness of the research is the minimal number of Advent Christian churches the researcher had to choose from. Given the particular parameters set by the researcher for participating churches, there were very few churches within the Advent Christian network that were a fit for the research. While the researcher does feel that the demographics of the participating churches generally match the demographics of Advent Christian churches in the United States more broadly, this did force the researcher to make some minor concessions in selecting churches to participate. For instance, half of the participating churches were from the Northeastern United States, which means that geographic balance could not be achieved. Additionally, the average age and years of pastoral experience possessed by the participating Lead Pastors was significantly younger than the average age and years of pastoral experience of Advent Christian pastors more broadly.

A third potential weakness is in the average age and years of experience possessed by the Lead Pastors of the four participating churches. The average age and years of experience possessed by Advent Christian pastors is significantly higher than the age and years of experienced possessed by the participating Lead Pastors. Three of the four Lead Pastors are forty-five years old or younger and possess twenty or less years of experience. As has been referenced in this study already, approximately seventy percent of pastors in the Advent Christian denomination are within a decade of retirement age, which would place them at fifty-five years of age or older and, given the number of career pastors presently serving in the Advent Christian network, possessing much more

experience in pastoral ministry.[452] It is worth noting that while this is a potential weakness of the study, these demographics are likely to shift dramatically in the coming years. Given the current demographics of pastors that are presently serving Advent Christian churches, pastoral attrition through retirement is likely to lower the average age and experience level of Advent Christian pastors quite rapidly.

Discussion of Findings

This research was designed to address the lack of understanding of core components of a character formation strategy that could be employed in a leadership development model by the Advent Christian churches in the United States and the under-prioritization of character in the preparation and placement of clergy and other senior ministry leaders. The researcher began this study with the assumptions that Christian character is a necessary component of healthy ministry leadership and that intentional character formation efforts will lead to healthier leadership practices within the denomination's churches and ministries. The information gleaned from the three data streams associated with this research is organized into the following categories: (1) prioritization of character formation in developing leaders, (2) character traits perceived as valuable in Christian leadership, (3) strategies and practices for leadership development, and (4) strategies and practices for the inclusion of character formation.

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[452] Advent Christian General Conference 2018, 8.

Prioritization of Character Formation in Developing Leaders

The theological review undertaken as part of this research examined Paul's leadership development practices and associated prioritization of character in 1 Timothy. Thorvald Madsen notes that the Pastoral Epistles as a whole "dwell on the *basis* of Christian conduct,as opposed to merely drawing boundaries for action," which tells the reader "what really matters and why."[453] This emphasis on the character of Christian leaders, in particular, is what led to the researcher's interest in this particular area of the biblical canon. This emphasis on 1 Timothy proved to be consistent with the leadership development and character formation emphases of the four churches who participated in the field research, which was demonstrated throughout the data reported in the previous chapter.

Similar emphasis was found in the contemporary literature examined in Chapter Three. Across multiple industries and disciplines, leadership character was seen to be paramount to organizational health. Leadership character is seen as central across the literature surveyed to things like morale and leadership function. Crossan, Seijts and Gandz indicate that character "influences the choices people make about what to do," as well as "whether they will acquire the requisite competencies, and make the commitment to do so in any given situation."[454] The indication here is that character impacts all aspects of a leader's effectiveness and even their preparation for their role.

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[453] Madsen, 219.

[454] Crossan, Seijts and Gandz, 4.

This was consistent with the data yielded in the field research portion of the study. The results were overwhelming as a significant majority of participants in the study saw their church's emphasis on character as positively impacting leadership and congregational health. This included eighteen of nineteen survey participants and all four Lead Pastors. In addition, all twenty survey participants and all four Lead Pastors saw character as something that impacts a leader's success.

Given the biblical precedent that exists and the recognition across disciplines of the impact of character on leadership, the question of why character is not emphasized consistently within the churches and ministries of the Advent Christian denomination must be asked. The answer to this question may ultimately be a key to better solving the problem posed in this research and addressing the leadership concerns posed by the researcher. The following is a discussion of a few possible answers to that question.

The Biblical Precedent is not Widely Understood

One possibility is that the biblical precedent identified by the researcher is not widely accepted or understood by Advent Christian pastors and churches. The researcher's review of 1 Timothy examined one of multiple places in Scripture where leadership character is emphasized. However, is it possible that such a recognition does not exist among the majority of churches and ministries within the Advent Christian network? This seems unlikely given the results of the field research.

Each of the four Lead Pastors surveyed saw leadership character as a biblical issue. In fact, 1 Timothy was referenced by all four Lead Pastors as informing their thoughts on character and leadership development in different ways. Two of the four noted that 1 Timothy 3:1-13 provided the biblical roots for the character traits they value

most and three of the four pastors mentioned this passage at least once during the interview. With that in mind, the possibility of a lack of understanding or acceptance of this biblical precedent seems highly unlikely unless the four participating churches find themselves completely out of step with Advent Christian churches more broadly.

Little Emphasis is Placed on Selecting and Developing Qualified Leaders

A second possibility is that the majority of Advent Christian churches place little priority on the task of selecting and developing qualified leaders. This seems like a much more likely possibility given the denominational statistics already presented, indicating that, as of 2018, approximately seventy percent of Advent Christian pastors were within ten years of retirement age with no internal plan to replace them.[455] Adding to this, only one percent of Advent Christian pastors at that time were between twenty and twenty-nine years old and only eleven percent were under forty years old.[456]

In the same report where those statistics can be found, the assessment of denominational leadership was that since the closure of the denomination's colleges there has been a struggle to "consistently identify, cultivate and develop new pastors, church planters and missionaries."[457] Additionally, they note, "when potential pastors, church planters and missionaries have emerged, we have struggled to consistently offer them direction in regards to how they can enter into service in the Advent Christian church."[458]

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[455] Advent Christian General Conference 2018, 8.

[456] Advent Christian General Conference 2018, 8.

[457] Advent Christian General Conference 2018, 12.

[458] Advent Christian General Conference 2018, 12.

This is the problem that the researcher was commissioned by the Advent Christian

General Conference administration to address. There is recognition within the

organization that there is a leadership development problem. As such, the character issue

is likely attached to this broader leadership development problem.

A Lack of Knowledge of Tools and Resources

A third possibility is that many Advent Christian churches lack in knowledge

about resources that could aid in character formation. This possibility showed up in both

the interviews with the Lead Pastors of the four participating churches and in the survey

responses from leadership team members. While the Lead Pastors all listed resources

other than Scripture that had informed their leadership development approach, none of

them were able to name a resource other than Scripture that had informed their approach

to character formation. Additionally, none of them listed the use of any character

assessment tools. Finally, only one of the four Lead Pastors interviewed reported having

a consistent plan for character formation.

These dynamics may be what account for the one-third of respondents who did

not understand the question when asked to describe how their church prioritizes character

formation as part of their leadership development approach. This may also point to a lack

of knowledge of relevant resources on character formation practices as being a deficiency

among even those Advent Christian churches who prioritize leadership development and

leadership character. This does not even take into consideration those churches who

prioritize neither. Ways to address these possibilities are discussed later in the chapter.

Character Traits Perceived as Valuable in Christian Leadership

The theological review and review of contemporary literature also provided the researcher with a catalog of core character traits to present to the field research participants. The review of 1 Timothy produced a list of twenty-six traits which interview participants were asked to rate as a high priority, moderate priority, or not a priority. They were also presented a list of twenty-eight traits that were gleaned from various sources as part of the contemporary literature review. These lists were consolidated into one list of forty traits that were presented to survey participants.

As was discussed in Chapter Five, the vast majority of character traits appearing on both lists were rated a high priority by at least three of the four pastors. In addition, not a single character trait from either list was rated as not a priority by any of the Lead Pastors. This alone provides very little information for the researcher as to how these four churches prioritize various character traits. However, when the participants were asked to share the traits from each list they see as their highest priorities, some common themes began to form. From the Chapter Two list, three of the Lead Pastors chose godliness and three chose either personal integrity or being above reproach. From the Chapter Three list, three Lead Pastors chose either honesty or integrity, two identified wisdom, and two identified attentiveness and interest in people. The top five identified by leadership team members in their survey, included: godliness, commitment to truth, honesty, personal integrity and wisdom. Humility and attentiveness and interest in people were close behind as each were seen as one of the highest priorities by twenty-five percent of survey participants.

There are certainly some common themes that emerge when looking at these lists side-by-side. First, the highest priorities on all three lists are all character traits that can be traced back to Scripture in some way. The second theme stems from the question of why these particular character traits were chosen. As was noted in Chapter Five, when asked about their reasoning for choosing particular traits as their top priorities, they all identified them as those they saw to be most central.

There are at least a couple of conclusions that the researcher can glean from how these character traits were prioritized and why those priorities were given. First, there is an indication that Scripture presents as the highest authority in identifying character among the participants. This is a theme that can be seen running throughout the Lead Pastor interviews as, in response to many questions, some subset of the Lead Pastors professed that they utilize Scripture as their only source as it relates to leadership development and character formation. Again, as it relates to character formation strategies and practices, all four Lead Pastors listed Scripture as their only consistent source that informs their approach, noting also that they do not use any assessment tools. This is not a surprising conclusion to come to given that the organizations being researched are Christian churches who profess to be bible-believing. The question to consider for the researcher in his position of leadership is whether or not this is a dynamic that should be embraced, or if effort needs to be made to broaden the source material being utilized by Advent Christian churches. This is discussed further at a later point in this chapter.

The second conclusion that can be drawn stems from the desire of the Lead Pastors to focus on those character traits seen to be most central. The contention of at

least one respondent was that many of the character traits on both lists "branch" from those few that are most central. This is something that could be highly instructive for the researcher in setting out to develop character formation strategies to be utilized within the denomination more broadly. There may be significant value in ensuring that any tools and resources that are developed as a result of this research be focused on those "bigger picture" characteristics primarily. Focus on those more central themes may aid in the creation of more accessible tools and make the task of character formation seem less daunting to churches. This may increase alignment and follow-through with any strategies put forward.

Strategies and Practices for Leadership Development

A key goal of the field research conducted as part of this study was to better understand some of the strategies and practices for leadership development already in place in Advent Christian churches. The researcher sought to identify some common themes that may be transferrable to churches across the denomination more broadly. As such, as part of the Lead Pastor interviews, the researcher asked questions about the essential elements of each church's approach to leadership development and the influence of Scripture and other sources on their approach. In addition, the researcher asked survey participants, in two or three sentences, to describe their church's leadership development approach.

Elements of Leadership Development Approach

The most common identifiable theme across all four churches was that their approaches are highly relational in nature. The relationships described by both Lead

Pastors and leadership team members varied. They included both one-on-one mentoring and small group interaction. In addition to this, three of the four churches identified that they have a consistent process or approach that they lead candidates through. The formality of the process seemed to vary from church-to-church. This seems to come through, in particular, in relation to how the churches define goals or benchmarks for leadership candidates. Two of the churches had clear and objective goals and benchmarks centered around the completion of particular steps and written material. One church operated with a more informal approach to assessing leadership progress. One church identified no clear goals or benchmarks. In addition, two of the four utilized assessment tools provided through denominational relationship while two used no assessment tools.

The data gleaned through the Lead Pastor interviews proved consistent with the data gleaned from survey participants. The responses of survey participants were broken down by the researcher into four core elements: relationship, opportunities to lead, assessment of spiritual gifts and skills, and leadership classes. The two most common responses were relationship and opportunities to lead, with spiritual gifts and skills assessment close behind. Only two respondents pointed to leadership classes as being part of the approach their church takes.

Relationship being a key part of the approaches of all four churches finds itself consistent with the discussions found in both the theological review and literature review portions of this study as well. Throughout the researcher's review of 1 Timothy, Paul's approach to leadership development can be seen as highly relational, with Paul clearly serving in a mentoring role with Timothy. As was discussed in Chapter Two, Paul writes 1 Timothy from the perspective of mentor. The closeness of their relationship and the

investment of Paul can be seen throughout the book of 1 Timothy. In 1 Timothy 1:2, Paul

refers to Timothy as his "true child in the faith. In 1 Timothy 1:18, he similarly calls

Timothy his "child."

Mentoring also showed up as a key component of successful leadership

development strategies in the literature review. As was noted in Chapter Three, Lindsay

Hastings and Hannah Sunderman point to mentoring as being widely accepted among

higher educational professionals as an "important tool" in leadership development.[459]

They assert that mentoring embeds leadership development within the "ongoing

experiences of a developing leader," and with each individual mentoring opportunity a

unique leadership development experience or outcome is generated.[460] Given the

identification of mentoring across all three data streams as being a highly desirable tool in

both leadership development and character formation, it seems likely that mentoring

should be part of any approach employed as a result of this study.

In addition to relationship and mentoring, the importance of an organized and

systematic approach is also highlighted in Chapter Three of this report. As was discussed

in Chapter Three, Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck argue that "God's global mission" requires

the church to have an intentional plan to develop leaders.[461] While the makings of an

intentional plan were present with three of the four churches, only two churches could

identify common goals or benchmarks and only two utilized clearly defined tools for

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[459] Hastings and Sunderman, 75.

[460] Hastings and Sunderman, 75.

[461] Geiger and Peck, 179.

assessing a leadership candidate's progress. This is a potential area for growth even among Advent Christian churches who are active in leadership development and is certainly an area for growth among churches who have not been active in leadership development.

Influence of Scripture and Other Sources on Approach

In addition to the goal of better understanding the leadership development strategies and practices of Advent Christian churches, the researcher sought to better understand where those strategies and practices were derived from. The researcher asked the Lead Pastors of each participating church about the impact of Scripture and other sources on their approach to leadership development. To begin, all four Lead Pastors indicated that their approach had been impacted by both Scripture and other sources.

In examining the scriptural influences, one common figure emerged. All four Lead Pastors either identified Paul by name, or listed one or more of his letters as being influential to their church's leadership development approach. This included one reference to Paul by name, one reference to the Pauline Epistles as a whole, and two references to one or more of the Pastoral Epistles. In addition, it became clear throughout the interviews that the Pastoral Epistles, specifically, serve as a significant influence on each of the Lead Pastors who were interviewed, with references to either the Pastoral Epistles as a whole or 1 Timothy, specifically, occurring repeatedly across all four interviews.

Paul's influence on the leadership development practices of all four churches is unsurprising. As has been noted, Paul is widely seen as a model for leadership within Christian literature and his mentoring and development of Timothy as a leader is

foundational to this study. The Pastoral Epistles, in particular, will surely impact the leadership development strategies that come out of this research. As was noted by the Lead Pastors, Paul's letters provide: clear standards for what Christian leadership should look like, models for intentional mentoring and development, and clear goals and focus.

In addition to Scripture, all four pastors did note specific sources that had impacted the approach their churches had taken. These resources varied in regards to focus and varied in regards to the type of impact they had on each church's leadership development approach. The "First Principles" series discussed by the Lead Pastor of Church B is more of a guided study through Scripture. The resources listed by the Lead Pastors from Church A and Church C were books about Christian leadership principles and practice. The resources discussed by the Lead Pastor of Church D included books and seminars that drive toward more general leadership principles and were not specifically for Christian leaders. The impact these resources are having on each church's leadership development approach appears to fall into two categories: (1) providing assistance with design or ordering of the church's leadership development approach, and (2) providing clear objectives for the church's development of leaders.

While there was no consistency in regards to the resources, or even types of resources being utilized by the four participating churches, it is helpful to see what is already in use among the Advent Christian churches that are engaged in leadership development. While these may or may not all get utilized as part of a broader denominational strategy, those listed may prove useful in determining the types of resources that may be most useful to churches across the network more broadly.

Strategies and Practices for the Inclusion of Character Formation

The final goal of the field research portion of this study was to identify how character formation is already taking place in Advent Christian churches as part of their development of leaders. The researcher set out to identify common themes present in the character formation strategies being employed by the participating churches in an effort to identify how some of the practices and strategies employed could be utilized to impact the strategies of the denomination more broadly. The researcher asked the four interview participants questions regarding the strategies and practices being employed by their churches and how those strategies and practices have been impacted by Scripture and other sources. In addition, the researcher asked survey participants, in two or three sentences, to describe how character formation is being prioritized as part of their church's leadership development approach.

Consistency of Approach

One of the biggest identifiable differences between the approach the participating churches take to character formation and how they approach leadership development more broadly is the absence of a consistent plan or process in the area of character formation. While three of the four Lead Pastors professed to have a consistent approach to leadership development, only one of the four professed to have a consistent plan or approach to character formation. While this is a potential weakness, all four Lead Pastors strongly believe that their emphasis on character formation has had a positive impact on both leadership and congregational health. The four Lead Pastors all listed specific ways in which their church had seen a boost in leadership and congregational health, including: increased unity, a strengthened leadership pipeline, a strong reputation in the community,

the ability to better safeguard leadership positions, and greater willingness to address sin among leadership and congregation members. This sentiment was similarly expressed by leadership team members, as seventeen of the eighteen who answered the question believed that the church's emphasis on character formation as part of developing leaders had positively impacted leadership and congregational health.

However, there is one potential weakness that emerged that could be connected to the lack of a consistent strategy or approach. As previously discussed, as part of the survey, leadership team members were asked to describe how character formation is prioritized as part of their church's leadership development approach. One-third of the respondents either admitted to not understanding the question or demonstrated through their response that they did not understand the question. It is possible that this is simply an issue of terminology. However, the possibility does exist that a lack of a consistent plan may have led to confusion in one or more of the church settings.

The importance of a consistent and systematic approach has already been discussed as it relates to leadership development more broadly. A consistent approach allows for all involved to be focused in the same direction and the common goals associated with a consistent approach allow everyone to understand the desired conclusions. This was discussed by the Lead Pastors as it relates to leadership development more broadly. The Lead Pastor of Church B shared in relation to the material they use that it has been helpful to have an ordered approach to developing leaders rather than the "shotgun approach" the church had previously taken. Additionally, the use of consistent material to walk leadership candidates through has provided those candidates a "light at the end of the tunnel," allowing them to see clear end goals.

It is logical that such consistency would also be beneficial in relation to character formation. While there is an element of reliance upon God that must be central to developing Christian character through sanctification, this does not mean that a similarly ordered or consistent approach cannot exist on the part of local churches in ministries to aid in such development. Such an approach might aid in clearing up any possibility of confusion and would aid leadership candidates in better understanding this aspect of the leadership development process.

Elements of a Character Formation Approach

Despite the lack of a consistent approach on the part of three of the four churches, all four Lead Pastors were able to share particular strategies or practices they have employed. Much like with leadership development, relationship is a theme that appeared repeatedly as part of the Lead Pastor interviews. In addition, four of the survey respondents noted that the approach their church takes is either natural or relational in nature. Besides this, the Lead Pastors listed a variety of different approaches they take. This included: surveys of personal history, personal counseling, honest feedback, and intentional self-examination. One of the four Lead Pastors stated that they seek leaders with already developed Christian character. The survey participants listed a similar variety of approaches. Their responses included: teaching about character, assessment, demonstration of Christian character, a natural or relational approach, identification of clear standards, and observation of candidates. While some of the language used was slightly different in some cases, their responses largely mirrored those of the Lead Pastors.

As was observed in the previous discussion of leadership development, similar themes appeared in the theological review portion of this study as well. Paul's relational approach with Timothy has already been discussed in this chapter. In addition, the survey of 1 Timothy in Chapter Two identifies several different places within the letter where character is directly taught to Timothy.

As it relates to demonstration of character, Justin Irving and Mark Strauss categorize Paul's approach to leadership in general as "modeling."[462] Citing Paul, they point out that the best way to lead is not to "tell people what to do" but to "show them by example."[463] Such leadership, they assert, is a "complete life-style that exemplifies what matters most in life."[464] For Paul, they assert that this meant modeling "integrity," "responsibility," "investment," and "equipping and empowerment."[465] One example of this can be seen in 1 Timothy 1, as Paul puts himself forth as an example of the grace of God. In doing so, he demonstrates character traits such as humility and integrity in his statement: "I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief." (1 Tim. 1:12-13)

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[462] Irving and Strauss, 19.

[463] Irving and Strauss, 19.

[464] Irving and Strauss, 19.

[465] Irving and Strauss, 19.

Finally, assessment appears as an informal part of all four church's plans. None of the four churches use any formal assessment tools, but do prioritize assessment through informal observation, generally in the context of relationship. This does not dismiss the importance of character assessment, nor does it mean there is a lack of openness to the use of formal assessment tools. As was noted in Chapter Five, the Lead Pastors from Church C and Church D both indicated the need to identify formal assessment tools for use in their contexts.

Whether formal or informal, the importance of assessment when it comes to character formation has been clearly outlined throughout this study. As discussed in Chapter Three, Irving and Strauss note that it is leaders who are willing to engage in "self-reflection" and "self-leadership" who will be able to lead well over the long term."[466] As such, they prescribe that leaders must engage in "honest self-evaluation."[467] They note that "honesty" and "increased self-awareness" serve as the "foundation for leaders wishing to engage in effective leadership practice."[468] Similarly, Crossan, Seijts and Gandz note that "reflection plays a critical role" in the learning process when it comes to the formation of character.[469] They note that reflection, however, is something that requires data and point out that such data often comes in the form of feedback.[470] This points to the need for both self-assessment and external-assessment. Both are

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[466] Irving and Strauss, 49.

[467] Irving and Strauss, 49.

[468] Irving and Strauss, 49.

[469] Crossan, Seijts and Gandz, 184.

[470] Crossan, Seijts and Gadnz, 185.

present in one or more of the assessment approaches identified by the Lead Pastors of the participating churches. As will be discussed later in this chapter, assessment will be an important element to identify as part of any character formation strategies that emerge from this research.

Influence of Scripture and Other Sources on Approach

In addition to the goal of better understanding the character formation strategies and practices being employed by Advent Christian churches as part of their approach to developing leaders, the researcher also sought to better understand where those strategies and practices were derived from. This proved to be a relatively easy task, as all four Lead Pastors pointed to Scripture as their only source. While the researcher did not ask participants to narrow down their use of Scripture, throughout the interviews, the Pastoral Epistles and 1 Timothy were repeatedly discussed in relation to character. Given the emphasis on 1 Timothy by the researcher as a centerpiece to this study, it appears that this letter may serve as a good starting point for any character formation strategies that emerge from this research.

While no other sources were listed as being impactful by any of the participating churches, it may be useful to spend a moment discussing the absence of any other resources among the research participants. As was already noted in relation to character assessment tools, the lack of their presence does not necessarily mean there is an unwillingness to seek out external tools. This may demonstrate that a key element of any strategies employed by the researcher will have to include exposing churches throughout the denomination to an array of helpful resources beyond Scripture. Several potential sources can be pulled from chapters two and three of this study, as a wide range of

resources were surveyed which could offer a variety of perspectives on character formation. Those resources are also likely to assist the researcher in developing various aspects of the strategies that may be employed as a result of this study.

Character Formation Proposals

The underlying problem being addressed by this research is a lack of understanding of the core components of a character formation strategy that could be employed in a leadership development model by Advent Christian churches in North America. It is necessary, in response to the data collected, to identify some of the core learnings that can be applied to addressing this problem. The researcher has collected and analyzed information from three distinct data streams that have produced a series of conclusions that have the potential to address this problem. Those conclusions have been discussed through much of this chapter. In this section, the researcher has proposed a series of potential steps to take to address this issue and will list some areas that may require further study on the part of denominational leadership.

Proposed Steps

Development of a Resource Catalog

When it comes to the central issue of prioritizing character formation as part of leadership development, the researcher identified three potential reasons why prioritization does not exist widely within the Advent Christian network. Those reasons include the following possibilities: (1) the biblical precedent is not widely understood, (2) little emphasis is placed by churches on selecting and developing qualified leaders, and (3) there is a lack of knowledge of available resources and tools. The reality is that all

three of these issues could be addressed, in part, by the development of a resource catalog to be made available to Advent Christian churches. This would aid in developing a better understanding of both why character formation must be prioritized and how churches can make character formation a priority. This is a tangible step the researcher can take which may both help churches in the short-term and provide a greater knowledge base to aid in the development of some of the other steps proposed.

Provision of Biblically-centered Assessment Tools

The absence of character assessment tools is something that showed up as a potential area for growth among even the churches who participated in this study. Even though all four churches are actively involved in leadership development and prioritize character formation as part of that process, none of them utilize assessment tools as part of their character formation efforts. Additionally, two of the four Lead Pastors noted this as a weakness in their process that they would like to look into further. While informal assessment can take place, the use of formal assessment tools may serve as an aid to churches who do not have processes already in place. In addition, it may help even churches who are established in their leadership development and character formation practices provide more clarity to candidates, as well as those established leaders who are involved in the process.

Given the data collected from the four participating churches, it would be beneficial for the tools to be centered on biblically identified character traits and for the tools to be focused on those areas of character seen to be most central. This would be in congruence with the desires expressed by the Lead Pastors who were interviewed, and it is the assessment of the researcher, given his knowledge of the denomination more

broadly, that their desires represent the leanings of Advent Christian pastors more broadly. Again, this is a tangible step the researcher can take that will aid churches in the short-term while introducing good practices that could aid in building good will and momentum for the development of some of the other steps proposed.

Develop a Clear Character Formation Process for Existing Program

The researcher serves as the Coordinator of Leadership Development for the Advent Christian denomination. In that role, he has led the development of a new leadership development program that is sponsored by the national offices of the Advent Christian Church.[471] A lacking component of this program is a clear and consistent approach to the formation of character. Given some of the principles and practices gleaned by the researcher from all three data streams, the next step would be to utilize those principles and practices to establish such an approach.

The program is already setup to be highly relational in nature, with a significant focus on mentoring. There has also been room left in the program for the inclusion of a clear and consistent process for character formation as one is identified. Given the data gleaned from the field research, the approach taken would need to be relational in nature and significant guidance would need to be provided by program leaders for the churches who might utilize this program. The approach would also have to be well-grounded in Scripture and it would be beneficial to have a resource catalog in place and being accessed ahead of the establishment of the prescribed approach. All of this is consistent

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[471] This program, known as the Ministry Training Institute, was launched in 2020, shortly before the researcher began this study.

with the program's existing makeup, which should make this a tangible step along the way.

Work with Ministerial Committees for Support

Ministerial committees are connected to local Advent Christian associations and are the entity primarily responsible for the ordination of clergy within the Advent Christian denomination. As such, the support of these committees will be necessary if the prescribed prioritization of character is to take hold. While character clauses exist for credentialed ministers in some Advent Christian associations, clear guidelines for assessing character and clear processes for character formation do not exist. With this being the case, if these committees are not supportive of the approach being taken, the impact of any character formation processes put in place would likely be diminished. This makes gaining the support and partnership of local ministerial committees an important step in any process.

Emphasis Among Established Leaders

While this study has focused largely on emerging leaders, this study has also helped to underscore the importance of a continued emphasis on character formation among established leaders within the denomination. In the early stages of this study, the researcher reflected upon some prominent cases of moral failing and leadership abuse that have been brought to light in recent years. Additionally, given the problem being addressed by this study and the presence of similar issues that have emerged within the Advent Christian denomination, it is evident that a broader emphasis on character among established leaders is necessary as well.

The formation of character is a lifelong process and one that cannot be ignored at any stage of life or ministry. While the Advent Christian denomination is setup in such a way that such an emphasis cannot be forced, best practices can be promoted and requirements can be put in place by the local ministerial committees responsible for credentialing Advent Christian ministers. With this in mind, a list of best practices will need to be developed and the researcher will seek to establish greater partnership in this area with local ministerial committees so that the practices and standards identified can be required for maintaining ministerial credentials. Taking these steps will not only benefit established leaders immediately, but will provide long-term support and accountability for those emerging leaders who will have presumably put some of these practices in place as part of their early development in Christian leadership.

An Area for Further Study

While it is the desire of the researcher to produce a consistent process that can be utilized across the Advent Christian network of churches, it is likely that some churches within the network will prefer a more informal process. This may be why a consistent approach does not exist even within the character formation approaches taken by the majority of the churches involved with this study. This may not be a problem which needs solving. It may be a healthy reality that needs to be supported if possible. The researcher intends to examine this possibility further and look for additional ways to be supportive of more informal approaches. This will be particularly important if it is determined that a large percentage of churches would prefer a more flexible and casual

approach. Even so, some of the steps already proposed will be beneficial to churches either way.

Conclusion

Overall, it appears that the data gleaned through this study has produced the desired results. The research was able to be conducted as planned with minimal adjustment. The project design appears to have been appropriate in collecting valuable information that is pertinent to the problem identified. The researcher did identify three potential weaknesses associated with the implementation of the project, as well as multiple strengths. The data collected from the field research has been summarized and discussed in relation to the other two data streams. There is a great deal of consistency found in much of the information collected from all three streams. The researcher has been able to identify some actionable steps and now possesses much of the necessary information needed to take those steps. Final reflections will come in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN: REFLECTIONS

Personal and Professional Growth

In 2018, the year the researcher began the Doctor of Ministry program associated with this research, he also accepted a new ministry role as Coordinator of Leadership Development for the Advent Christian denomination. In accepting this role, the researcher was given the opportunity to promote a renewed vision for leadership development within the Advent Christian network of churches and do so in a way that highlights healthy leadership principles. One of the key needs perceived by the researcher early on in this role was the need to emphasize character as a central part of the identification and development of leaders. This was the motivation for entering into this particular area of research. What the researcher did not anticipate was how this project would grow him as a disciple and leader, impacting him personally, ministerially, and academically in significant ways.

When researching a subject like character, multiple growth points emerge. This is because Christian character is directly connected to the issue of sanctification, or the progressive work of God in making a believer more like Jesus. As such, throughout this study, the researcher was confronted with multiple ways in which he needs to grow as both a disciple and a leader and multiple ways in which the grace of God has kept him from folly. In the early stages of this project, the researcher surveyed a few prominent cases of significant moral failings and leadership abuses on the part of pastors and

ministry leaders which have been brought to light in the past few years. This, in addition to reflecting on some less prominent leadership failures in his own denomination, brought the researcher to a place of increased humility. When examining each of these failures of character, the researcher has been reminded of how easy it can be to allow one's weaknesses to overcome them. When confronted with this, an individual can respond in one of two ways: (1) look on in judgement, or (2) realize that it is only by God's grace that he or she has not found themselves in a similar position. This study has driven the researcher toward the latter of these responses, recognizing how easily his own deficiencies could overcome him. This recognition has led the researcher to examine his own life and ministry in an effort to identify areas where better safeguards could be put in place and where growth may be needed. In essence, this has led the researcher to join the Psalmist in saying: "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!" (Psalm 139:23-24)

In addition to this, the researcher has been forced to examine his own ministry practices more closely as well. Leadership development has long been a central part of the researcher's ministry life, which was only magnified when being appointed to this present role. Upon entering into his present ministry role, the researcher was confronted with a difficult problem to solve. In 2018, the year the researcher began serving in this role, he was confronted with the reality that nearly seventy percent of the pastors in the Advent Christian denomination were within a decade or less of retirement age and it

would be his job to examine ways to address this emerging problem.[472] Given the urgency of the problem the researcher was tasked with solving, the researcher was driven toward high-volume solutions in an effort to fill the leadership gap that was emerging quickly and efficiently. However, as the researcher progressed through this doctoral program, and as this project developed, the researcher has become increasingly aware that there is a larger problem than not having enough leaders to fill positions. That larger problem is having leaders whose character makes them and their ministries vulnerable. As such, the researcher has been compelled to slow down the leadership development processes he has put in place in an effort to ensure that character can be properly assessed and processes for formation can be put in place.

Finally, this project has grown the researcher academically as well. While the researcher has, as part of this program, completed five other major research projects, none have matched the scope of this one. This was overwhelming to the researcher and something that was difficult to juggle with ministry, family, and personal spiritual responsibilities. In addition, the researcher began with serious questions about his own academic ability to complete a project on this level. However, with each step, the researcher grew in confidence and learned a great deal about all that goes into a project of this magnitude. In addition, the researcher improved in the area of time management. One cannot add a project of this significance into an already busy schedule without improving in this area. In the two years since embarking on this study, the researcher finds himself better for it and will enter into future research with greater confidence and skill.

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[472] Advent Christian General Conference 2018, 8.

Ministry Recommendations Beyond the Advent Christian Church

As has been previously discussed, the problem being addressed is not unique to the Advent Christian network of churches. This problem is one that has shown up across multiple denominations and within several non-denominational churches and ministries. The simple conclusion to be drawn is that this problem exists throughout Christendom. As such, it would be valuable for those who lead influential churches and those who serve within roles of denominational leadership to perform a thorough examination of their own leadership development practices to ensure that the formation of character is being appropriately prioritized. It is likely that some organizations have already begun such an examination, but it is clear that more work is needed in this area.

While such efforts will not necessarily completely eliminate all leadership failures, an emphasis on leadership character is seen across multiple disciplines as something that positively impacts both leadership and organizational health. This has been seen throughout this study. In addition, within the context of a Christian church or ministry, there is a higher calling to hold one another accountable for the sake of Christlikeness. While some Christian churches and ministries excel in this area, there is ample evidence to discern that growth is needed in many Christian organizations.

Of course, the prioritization of character may need to be addressed differently in different ministry contexts. Organizational culture, organizational structures, demographic differences, and other variables may impact how other organizations are able to address this issue. The researcher has developed this study in a way that might give direction for his particular ministry context. This does not mean that all of the proposals which have been drawn out of this research will be applicable in other contexts.

It is the hope of the researcher that this study may serve as a foundation for other Christian organizations to build from in order to address this issue in a way that meets their unique organizational needs.

Recommendations for Future Research

In addition to the ministry possibilities associated with this study, this is certainly a rich vein of research which could be built upon in countless ways. The researcher has elected to highlight three recommendations for future research that could be beneficial both to the academic community and to the broader Christian church. These three recommendations include: (1) parallel studies done within other denominational contexts; (2) studies into the character assessment practices of other Christian denominations; and (3) studies into how character deficiencies can be identified and addressed before leadership failures occur.

Parallel Studies within Other Denominational Contexts

This study was completed within a particular organizational context with its own unique organizational culture, structures, and demographic makeup. As was discussed in the ministry recommendations section of this chapter, many of the conclusions drawn from this study may not be the same as those that would be drawn from a study of another organization. As such, given the significance and widespread nature of the problem being addressed, it would seem valuable to have similar studies done within other organizational contexts as well. Those variables already mentioned, as well as others, may produce a broader range of data that could help a greater number of churches and ministries address similar or related issues.

Character Assessment Practices

Character assessment emerged as a significant theme in Chapter Three of this study. This led to some of the questions asked as part of the field research undertaken by the researcher. The desire of the researcher was to gain a better understanding of the assessment processes and the resources used for character assessment in the churches involved with the study. Very little data was gleaned on this subject, as the churches surveyed did not assess leadership candidates by any means other than informal observation. In addition, none of the churches surveyed used any formal assessment tools. As such, it would be of interest to see if this is unique to the Advent Christian churches involved with this study, or if the data gleaned from the churches involved with this study is representative of most churches. It would also be of interest to learn more about how character assessment is done as part of leadership development more broadly in the Advent Christian network and beyond.

Identifying Deficiencies in Established Leaders

Since this study was largely focused on the development of emerging leaders, the next logical question relates to what can be done to aid already established leaders. As was discussed in Chapter One of this study, a great number of pastors and ministry leaders, and their ministries, have already suffered through failures related to character. Just as has been discussed throughout this study, it would be optimal to address weaknesses of character prior to such failings happening. For already established leaders, this may not have been part of their initial training for ministry. However, further study into how churches have been successful in identifying and addressing character issues

before they pass the point where a leader's ministry may not be able to be redeemed would seem highly beneficial in a number of contexts.

Conclusion

The researcher began this study with the goal of identifying some of the core components of a character formation strategy that could be employed as part of a leadership development model by Advent Christian churches in North America. After two years of research, exploring this issue through a review of 1 Timothy, a review of relevant contemporary literature, and an examination of the character formation and leadership development practices of four Advent Christian churches, the necessary data has been collected and analyzed in order to identify those core components. In this, the intended goals of this research have been met successfully.

However, the impact of this study has and will continue to stretch beyond simply meeting its intended goals. As has already been mentioned, the researcher has been impacted personally and professionally in some significant ways. In addition, some impact is yet to be seen. The hope is that a renewed and focused emphasis on character formation as part of the development of leaders within the Advent Christian network of churches will have significant positive impact on leadership and congregational health. Such impact has been seen within the churches who participated in this research, so the researcher enters this next phase of ministry planning and development with some measure of optimism that similar impact will be seen. In either case, God will be glorified as we seek to be faithful to Him. It is only by His hand that any of this can be accomplished, and as it is, it will be a testament to His glory and His faithfulness. As Paul

wrote in his letter to the Ephesians: "to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." (Eph. 3:21)

APPENDIX 1: PASTORAL INTERVIEW SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. The purpose of this research is to explore the issue of character formation and its place within the task of emerging leader development. The participation of you and your church is in the field research portion of the study. This portion of the study is designed to: (1) gain a better understanding of how character formation takes place within the leadership development strategies of Advent Christian churches in North America and (2) reflect upon the impact of those strategies, so that core components of a character formation strategy that could be utilized within the context of leadership development in the Advent Christian denomination can be identified. Before we begin, do you have any questions or concerns relating to what I have just laid out?

(If yes, pause to answer those questions.)
(If no, move to next section of questions.)

CORE CHARACTER TRAITS

We will begin this interview with a series of questions relating to the core character traits you and your church value and seek to prioritize in your development of leaders.

Question 1:
   a. What, if any, character traits do you value most in your selection and development of leaders for your church or ministry?
(If the interviewee identifies particular character traits, move to question 1b.)
(If the interviewee does not identify particular character traits, move to question 2.)

   b. How did you come to settling on this particular catalog of character traits as being of highest value?
(If the interviewee identifies the Bible as a source, ask the interviewee to identify any key passages they might cite.)
(If the interviewee identifies extra-biblical resources, ask the interviewee to identify any sources they have found most valuable.)
(If the interviewee does not identify any sources, move to question 2.)

Question 2:

This study has included an examination of Paul's prioritization of character in 1 Timothy which identified several character traits which Paul identified to Timothy as important in his (Timothy) ministry context. I am going to identify those traits that I uncovered in my examination one at a time and ask you to respond in one of three ways: HIGH, indicating that the trait is a high priority for you and your church in your identification and development of leaders; MODERATE, indicating that the trait is a moderate priority for you and your church in your identification and development of leaders; or NOT, indicating that the trait is not a priority for your church in your identification and development of leaders. Again, HIGH, MODERATE or NOT.

It is worth noting that, again, some of these character traits may overlap in regards to meaning and some may overlap with traits you have already identified for me. Let's begin.

(1)   Godliness
(2)   Faithfulness
(3)   Faith
(4)   A Good Conscience
(5)   Personal Integrity
(6)   Above Reproach
(7)   Sober Minded
(8)   Self-Controlled
(9)   Respectable or Dignified
(10)   Personally Disciplined
(11)   Possesses Marital and Familial Integrity
(12)   Gentle/Peaceful
(13)   Humble
(14)   Not Greedy
(15)   Fidelity of Teaching
(16)   Committed to Truth (Truthful)
(17)   Self-Disciplined
(18)   Perseverance
(19)   Courage
(20)   Teachability
(21)   Demonstrable Maturity
(22)   Discernment
(23)   Righteousness
(24)   Love
(25)   Steadfastness
(26)   Gentleness

(Move to question 3.)

Question 3:

This study has also included an examination of contemporary literature which identified a catalog of character traits seen as valuable for leaders in a variety of disciplines. I am going to identify those traits that I uncovered in that examination one at a time and ask you to respond in one of three ways: HIGH, indicating that the trait is a high priority for you and your church in your identification and development of leaders; MODERATE, indicating that the trait is a moderate priority for you and your church in your identification and development of leaders; or NOT, indicating that the trait is not a priority for your church in your identification and development of leaders. Again, HIGH, MODERATE or NOT.

It is worth noting that, again, some of these character traits may overlap in regards to meaning and some may overlap with traits you have already identified for me. Let's begin.

(1)   Honesty
(2)   Integrity
(3)   Inspiration Driven by Trust
(4)   Attentiveness and Interest in People
(5)   Demonstration of Personal Morality
(6)   Value-based and Fair Decision-Making
(7)   Wisdom
(8)   Knowledge
(9)   Courage
(10)   Humanity
(11)   Justice
(12)   Temperance
(13)   Transcendence
(14)   Loyalty
(15)   Selflessness
(16)   Compassion
(17)   Competency
(18)   Respectfulness
(19)   Fairness
(20)   Responsibility
(21)   Self-discipline
(22)   Decisiveness
(23)   Spiritual Appreciation
(24)   Cooperativeness
(25)   Bravery or Courage
(26)   Social Intelligence
(27)   Self-control
(28)   Patience

(Move to question 4.)

Question 4:

In light of the character traits we have just surveyed, is there anything else you would like to share specifically about the character traits you value most in your selection and development of leaders for your church or ministry?

(If YES, give interviewee the opportunity to share additional information.)
(*If NO, move onto next question.)*

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

I want to move into a series of questions designed to better understand how you and your church go about developing leaders. The goal is to develop an understanding of your core leadership development practices and processes.

Question 5:
   a. Do you have a consistent approach for developing leaders in your church?
(If YES, move to question 5b.)
(If NO, move to question 5c.)
   b. What would you define as the essential elements of your approach to developing leaders? *(Move to question 6.)*
   c. I recognize that some churches develop leaders without a formal process. Given that this appears to represent your church, are there any elements of how you develop leaders that you would identify as common or consistent? *(Move to question 6.)*

Question 6:
   a. Does your approach to leadership development include a common set of goals or benchmarks that help you assess a developing leader's progress?
   (If YES, move to question 5b.)
   (If NO, move to question 5c.)
   b. Would you list and describe those goals or benchmarks? *(Move to question 6d.)*
   c. I recognize that some churches assess developing leaders in a more informal way. Given that his appears to represent your church, could you describe how you generally assess a developing leader's progress? *(Move to question 6d.)*
   d. Do you use any assessment tools in assessing a developing leader's progression through the goals or benchmarks you have identified?
      - *If YES, move to question 6e.*
      - *If NO, move to question 7.*
   e. What are those tools and where did they come from?

THE IMPACT OF SCRIPTURE AND OTHER SOURCES ON LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

We will now move to a series of questions designed to gain a better understanding of the sources that have impacted or informed your leadership development practice. This will include a discussion regarding Scripture and a discussion of other sources.

Question 7:
   a. Has your approach to leadership development been impacted by Scripture in any direct way?

(If YES, move to question 7b.)
(If NO, move to question 8.)
   b. Would you list specific passages, sections of Scripture, or biblical characters that have impacted your approach to leadership development? *(Move to question 7c.)*
   c. In what ways have these passages, sections of Scripture, or biblical characters impacted your approach to leadership development? *(Move to question 8.)*

Question 8:
   a. In what ways (if any) has Scripture informed the goals or benchmarks you have set for developing leaders?
   b. Are there any specific passages of Scripture that have informed the goals or benchmarks you have set for developing leaders?

(If YES, move to question 8c.)
(If NO, move to question 9.)
   c. How have the passages you discussed informed the goals or benchmarks you have set for developing leaders?

Question 9:
   a. Has your approach to leadership development been impacted by any sources other than Scripture in a direct way?

(If YES, move to question 9b.)
(If NO, move to question 10.)
   b. Would you list any specific resources that have impacted your approach to leadership development? *(Move to question 9c.)*
   c. In what ways have these resources impacted your approach to leadership development? *(Move to question 10.)*

Question 10:
   a. In what ways (if any) have sources other than Scripture impacted the goals or benchmarks you have set for developing leaders?
   b. Are there any specific resources that have informed the goals or benchmarks you have set for developing leaders?

(If YES, move to question 10c.)
(If NO, move to question 11.)

    c. How have the passages you discussed informed the goals or benchmarks you have set for developing leaders? *(Move to question 11)*

CHARACTER FORMATION PRACTICES

       As this study relates specifically to linking character formation to the development of emerging leaders, the next series of questions will pertain to how you handle character assessment and formation with developing leaders in your church.

Question 11:
    a. Does your church's leadership development approach include a consistent and intentional plan for character formation?

(If YES, move to question 11b.)
(If NO, move to question 11c.)
    b. What strategies or practices do you employ in your character formation efforts? *(Move to question 12.)*
    c. Recognizing that character formation can be present without an consistent and intentional plan, in what ways do you see character formation existing as part of your leadership development approach? *(Move to question 12.)*

Question 12:
    a. Does your approach to character formation include the use of any resources or tools?

(If YES, move to question 12b.)
(If NO, move to question 13.)
    b. What resources or tools have you found most helpful in guiding your character formation efforts?

Question 13:
    a. How do you go about assessing the character formation of your developing leaders?
    b. Does your assessment approach include the use of any formal assessment tools?

(If YES, move to question 13c.)
(If NO, move to question 14.)
    c. What tools do you utilize?

(If tools were secured from an outside source, move to question 14.)
(If tools were internally generated, move to question 13d.)
    d. How were these tools generated? *(Move to question 14.)*

PERCEIVED IMPACT

       These next questions relate to how you believe the inclusion of character formation as part of your leadership development approach as impacting your leadership and congregational health.

Question 14:
   a. Do you see your efforts in prioritizing character formation as having a positive impact on your church's leadership and congregational health?
(If YES, move to question 14b.)
(If NO, move to question 14c.)
   b. Would you list some specific ways in which you have seen that positive impact? *(Move to question 15.)*
   c. If not positive, how would you describe the impact of including character formation on your church's leadership and congregational health? *(Move to question 15.)*

FINAL REMARKS

Question 15:
Are there any other thoughts you would like to share regarding your church's leadership development strategies or your prioritization of character formation as a part?

THANK YOU AND NEXT STEPS

Thank you so much for your participation in this study. The input received from you and your leadership team has aided my understanding regarding how leadership development is happening in Advent Christian churches and how character is being prioritized as part of those efforts. Once I have received processed this interview and have received responses from the surveys provided to your leadership team, would you be willing to meet again to answer any clarifying or follow-up questions?
(Make note of interviewee's answer.)

Thank you again for your time. Again, I am so thankful for your participation in this study.

APPENDIX 2: LEADERSHIP TEAM SURVEY

Introduction:

Thank you for your participation in this study. Its purpose is to explore how character formation is prioritized as part of leadership development. The goal is, ultimately, to produce some cohesive strategies and best practices that will aid leadership development efforts within the Advent Christian network of churches. Your participation is part of an effort to discern strategies and approaches that are already in use by churches within the Advent Christian network. This questionnaire will be eight questions in length and will include a combination of short answer questions, yes or no questions, questions which will ask you to provide a rating on a 1 to 5 scale, and a question asking you to provide a ranking..

Question 1:
In 2-3 sentences, please describe your church's approach to developing leaders.

Question 2:
  a.   Is your church's present approach to leadership development something you have participated in? (YES or NO)
  b. If YES, in what capacity were you a participant?

Question 3:
  a. Do you believe that your church's current approach to leadership development has positively impacted your church's leadership and congregational health? (YES or NO)
  b. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the level of impact your church's current approach to leadership development has had on your church's leadership and congregational health.

1 = Very Negative; 2 = Somewhat Negative; 3 = No Impact; 4 = Somewhat Positive; 5 = Very Positive

Question 4:
Does your church's approach to leadership development include prioritization of character formation? (YES or NO)

Question 5:

In 2-3 sentences, please describe how character formation is prioritized as part of your leadership development approach.

Question 6:
a. Do you believe that your church's inclusion of character formation as part of its development of leaders has had a positive impact on your church's leadership and congregational health? (YES or NO)
b. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the level of impact your church's inclusion of character formation as part of its development of leaders has had on your church's leadership and congregational health.

1 = Very Negative; 2 = Somewhat Negative; 3 = No Impact; 4 = Somewhat Positive; 5 = Very Positive

Question 7:
(a) Do you believe that a leader's character impacts their success as a leader? (YES or NO)
(b) On a 1-5 scale, rate how important character is to the success of a leader.

1 = Not Important; 2 = Somewhat Important; 3 = Important; 4 = Very Important; 5 = Most Important

(c) In 2-3 sentences, please explain your rating.

Question 8:
What follows is a list of 40 character traits that were represented as important in the theological and literature review portion of this study. By checking the associated boxes, please identify the 4 character traits you value most.

(1) Godliness
(2) Honesty
(3) Faithfulness
(4) Faith
(5) A Good Conscience
(6) Personal Integrity
(7) Above Reproach
(8) Sober Minded
(9) Self-Controlled
(10) Respectable or Dignified
(11) Possesses Marital and Familial Integrity
(12) Gentle/Peaceful
(13) Humble
(14) Not Greedy
(15) Fidelity of Teaching
(16) Committed to Truth (Truthful)
(17) Self-Disciplined
(18) Perseverance
(19) Courage
(20) Teachability
(21) Demonstrable Maturity
(22) Discernment
(23) Righteousness
(24) Love
(25) Steadfastness
(26) Gentleness
(27) Inspiration Driven by Trust
(28) Attentiveness and Interest in People

(29) Value-based and Fair Decision-Making
(30) Wisdom
(31) Knowledge
(32) Justice
(33) Loyalty
(34) Selflessness
(35) Compassion
(36) Respectfulness
(37) Responsibility
(38) Decisive
(39) Cooperativeness
(40) Patience

APPENDIX 3: INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

For study titled: Character Formation and its Place in Leadership Development:
An Examination of the Leadership Development Practices of Advent Christian Churches
in North America

You are invited to participate in a study of the leadership development practices of Advent Christian churches in North America. I hope to learn about the leadership development practices of select Advent Christian churches and identify how character formation plays a role in their approaches. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your church's intentionality in the area of leadership development. This research is being undertaken as part of the fulfillment of the thesis requirements for the Doctor of Ministry in Transformational Leadership at Bethel Seminary.

If you decide to participate, I will be interviewing you because of your role as the Lead Pastor of your church. The interview will consist of approximately fifteen questions and should last no more than one hour. The questions will be about your church's leadership development strategies and practices and will include specific questions regarding the place of character formation within your leadership development approach. I do not project any personal risk or risk to your church as part of this research. Your involvement will not only benefit the researcher in completion of the aforementioned Doctor of Ministry, but also has the potential of having broad impact on the leadership development strategies of the Advent Christian network of churches.

Any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable.

This research project has been reviewed and approved in accordance with Bethel's Levels of Review for Research with Humans. If you have any questions about the research and/or research participants' rights or wish to report a research related injury, please call Matthew Larkin (704-975-0647) or Dr. Justin Irving (612-889-1593).

You will be offered a copy of this form to keep.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice after signing this form should you choose to discontinue participation in this study.

_____   _____
Signature   Date

APPENDIX 4: INFORMED CONSENT FOR SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

For study titled: Character Formation and its Place in Leadership Development:
An Examination of the Leadership Development Practices of Advent Christian Churches
in North America

You are invited to participate in a study of the leadership development practices of Advent Christian churches in North America. I hope to learn about the leadership development practices of select Advent Christian churches and identify how character formation plays a role in their approaches. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your church's intentionality in the area of leadership development. This research is being undertaken as part of the fulfillment of the thesis requirements for the Doctor of Ministry in Transformational Leadership at Bethel Seminary.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete an online survey. This survey includes seven questions and is made up of a combination of short answer questions, yes or no questions, and questions which will ask you to provide a rating on a 1 to 5 scale. It should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. The questions will be primarily about your understanding of your church's leadership development strategies and practices and your perceptions regarding the effectiveness of those approaches. I do not project any personal risk or risk to your church as part of this research. Your involvement will not only benefit the researcher in completion of the aforementioned Doctor of Ministry, but also has the potential of having broad impact on the leadership development strategies of the Advent Christian network of churches.

Any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable and only aggregate data will be presented.

This research project has been reviewed and approved in accordance with Bethel's Levels of Review for Research with Humans. If you have any questions about the research and/or research participants' rights or wish to report a research related injury, please call Matthew Larkin (704-975-0647) or Dr. Justin Irving (612-889-1593).

By completing this online survey, you are granting consent to participate in this research.

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