

ABSTRACT

COMPOUND CHANGE IN EXISTING CONGREGATIONS

by

Lois E. Black

The purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate the leadership dynamics of successful compound change in medium to large local congregations. This study used semi-structured interviews of pastors who led existing medium to large-sized congregations through a period of complex change.

This study explored organizational dynamics, personal dynamics, and other related dynamics of the changes. Focusing on vision, devotional life, spiritual warfare, servant leadership, mentoring, risk-taking and gauging success, gathered wisdom from personal interviews of pastors who have led through compound change in a local church setting is explored.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
COMPOUND CHANGE IN EXISTING CONGREGATIONS

presented by

Lois E. Black

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for the
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY degree at
Asbury Theological Seminary

_____	_____
Mentor	May 1, 2006 Date
_____	_____
Internal Reader	May 1, 2006 Date
_____	_____
Representative, Doctor of Ministry Program	May 1, 2006 Date
_____	_____
Dean, Doctor of Ministry Program	May 1, 2006 Date

COMPOUND CHANGE IN EXISTING CONGREGATIONS

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by

Lois E. Black

May 2006

© 2006

Lois Elaine Black

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1. Problem	1
Understanding the Problem.....	1
Personal Experience.....	4
Purpose Statement	5
Research Questions	5
Definitions of Terms	5
Context.....	6
Methodology	6
Participants.....	6
Instrumentation	7
Data Collection	7
Delimitations and Generalizability	8
Theological Foundation	9
Overview of the Study	10
2. Literature	11
Vision and Change in the Church.....	11
Change Initiation.....	11
Visionary Leaders	12
Vision Source.....	13
Moving Forward	15
Holy Change	16

Change Requirement.....	18
Change Cost.....	19
Gathered Wisdom.....	22
Devotional Life and Spiritual Warfare.....	22
Spiritual Call.....	22
Dark Nights.....	24
Counting Cost.....	25
Paying the Cost.....	27
Jesus' Heart.....	28
Spiritual Warfare.....	28
Gathered Wisdom.....	29
Servant Leadership and Mentoring.....	29
Servant Leadership.....	29
Leadership Development.....	30
Strong Love.....	33
Tough Calls.....	34
Mentoring Relationships.....	35
Gathered Wisdom.....	37
Risk Taking and Gauging Success.....	37
Real Battle.....	37
Crucible Leadership.....	38
Learning Levels.....	41
Justified Risk.....	42

Eternal Reward.....	43
Great Success	45
Eternal Perspective.....	46
Gathered Wisdom	50
Research Design Literature	50
Summary of the Literature	51
3. Methodology	53
Problem and Purpose	53
Research and Operational Questions	53
Participants	54
Instrumentation	55
Validity	55
Data Collection	57
Variables	58
Controls	58
Data Analysis	59
Ethics.....	59
4. Findings of the Study	61
Compound Changes Experienced.....	61
Organizational Dynamics.....	62
Personal Dynamics.....	65
Other Dynamics	69
5. Summary and Conclusions	72

Summary of Additions to Current Literature.....	72
Insights on Organizational Dynamics.....	73
Insights on Personal Dynamics.....	75
Insights on Other Dynamics.....	82
Implications of the Data.....	89
Theological Insights.....	89
Key Insights	91
Total Commitment	91
Leaders Who Lead	92
Divine Discontent	92
The High Cost.....	93
Risk Taking Leaders	93
Storms	94
Forward Focus	94
Resistance	94
Forgiveness	95
Quick Decisions	95
Effective Mentors.....	96
Submission to Crucibles	97
Forward Movement.....	97
Nothing to Lose.....	97
Preparation for Risks.....	98
Constant Joy.....	98

Limitations and Next Steps.....99
Epilogue100

Appendixes

A E-mail Invitation with Response Form.....102
B Topic Guide104
C Agenda for Training Interviewers.....106
D Summary Data from Interviews.....109
E Executive Summary125
Works Cited128

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Understanding the Problem

The Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership claims to prepare people to “lead a church that grows from 100 to 500 to 1,000, to 5,000 and more” (3). The Institute encourages pastors to take risks and step out as leaders to reach God’s best for his kingdom and those who need Jesus. Lasting change that will have the desired effect in the kingdom of God must not only change the church but the leader. While the leader cannot bring the kingdom of God, the leader is responsible for standing for what the kingdom of God demands with integrity. The complex, compound, high-level challenges that attending leaders face trying to implement these change concepts need to be addressed in a “real world” proactive way, recognizing the context of implementation is not designed for these changes or they would already be in place.

Addressing and anticipating the cost of making changes could be a benefit to those pastors implementing the changes in a local church setting. Churches, in general, and mainline denominations, in particular, are designed to value and reward management over leadership, management being defined as maintenance of the status quo and leadership being defined as leading into new horizons. While the debate continues between what constitutes management and what constitutes leadership, this distinction has been and continues to be helpful in understanding the needs and cutting edge within the church. Alan Nelson and Gene Appel continue to see managers setting goals and leaders casting vision (150). Norman Shawchuck and Roger Heuser continue to see the church as overmanaged and under led (23). Adam Hamilton says, “Managers create

stability and leaders create chaos” (Personal interview). While Bill Hybels makes an argument for a managing leader, he sees managers as necessary organizers enabling the fulfillment of the visionary leader’s direction (Courageous Leadership 144-45).

If what a church was already doing worked to grow the Church most effectively, then the Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership would be superfluous. If churches and their leaders are not as effective as they can and must be, then changes must be needed to experience God’s best. Change is necessary, and leaders, by definition, lead change. As pastors implement the changes needed to alter the direction of a local church, they meet resistance to change not only from those in the church, but also from the hierarchy who are challenged by the changes as well. Paul Nixon suggests that United Methodist pastors specifically need to find ways to tell the bishop that the changes needed to transform dying churches may end up with unhappy personnel committees visiting the bishop asking to be “delivered” of the new pastor (20). In addition to these challenges, Christian leaders are charged to consider spiritual aspects as well. Pastors can proactively prepare only for anticipated costs, so properly identifying the cost of these changes will help existing congregations pursuing cutting-edge ministry to survive, thrive, and excel.

Not addressing this cost results in pastors (and congregations) beginning changes that are not brought to completion, hindering the work of the kingdom in that area for a longer period than if the changes had not been started. At a Roman Catholic Diocesan Synod meeting, Lutheran Bishop David G. Mullen commented that 40 percent of his churches are on the cusp of viability. If this assessment is correct, mainline denominations would be well served by supporting, planning for, and encouraging the

changes that the Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership teach and model and to put support systems in place to encourage these changes in their churches. The danger is that changes begun and not completed increase the resistance to future needed changes. A further complication in leading change in the church cross-denominationally results when pastors are seen by laity as transient. Therefore, changes led by them are also seen as transitory, at best, and something to be overcome by intense, short-term resistance, at worst.

Without change, churches will not grow, or they would have grown already. In visiting Hawaii, I believe God gave me a parable for the difference in the type of churches in the islands themselves. A man at a luau my husband and I attended taught us that islanders believe “if God has given you a coconut tree, you should take good care of your coconut tree.” Pastors are responsible to care for what God has entrusted. Unfortunately, Christians often think the best way to care for what God has entrusted is to hedge it in and protect it even from God. Garden islands are beautiful places to visit but are shrinking each day. Active lava islands look more like moonscapes but are the only ones growing, and only God can determine the direction. Visiting Kilauea, the lava flow edged up against a line of palm trees. A thought occurred to me that churches have done a better job of caring for church people’s feelings and preferred programs (coconuts), but church people are less willing to allow God to determine the path of creative lava when personal “coconut trees” are being threatened. Christians are called to follow the direction of the Holy Spirit in every creative flow and not just defend the gardens of comfort. Renewal requires a deep level commitment to making room for a force of God that is both destructive of some things to which the church has grown quite attached as

well as creating things Christian leaders are still just beginning to imagine. The Church is ill-prepared for the later reality of God's work. God's creative work can appear messy and even destructive, but as Rick Warren is so fond of reminding the church, God is more interested in character than comfort (173).

Those leading change in existing churches in the Beeson Institute have experienced a cost to that growth that is not currently addressed in the program. Because the church is ill-prepared, pastors have not addressed what Hybels calls "take quitting off the table" (When Your Church). The Church does possess this knowledge, as evidenced by Mike Breaux's presentation at the Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership where his notes from a meeting he experienced when he led Southland Christian Church were almost word-for-word quotes from a similar meeting I had experienced the month before. Anecdotally, every pastor to whom I spoke that has experienced leading major changes in an existing church has found these "costs" to be high and have not been able to point to any adequate preparation for the process.

Personal Experience

My personal experience in leading a congregation through compound change began with a church where I was serving on part-time staff and being mentored by the senior pastor. After years of that relationship, this church, which had declined from approximately eight hundred in their heyday to about 250, underwent the trauma of the senior pastor leaving the denomination and splitting the church. Within a very short period of time, I found myself the solo pastor of this congregation that had just lost about another 150 people.

Along with the expected obstacles of finances, attendance, staffing, ministry, and

morale, I found that as we stabilized the broad expectation now that we had survived the crisis, things could go back to normal. When I reminded them that normal was dying, the strong resistance to any further change took on unexpected proportions. Part of what fueled this study was an attempt both to understand and learn from that experience and others like it.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership dynamics of successful compound change in medium to large local congregations. This was an exploratory study using semi-structured interviews.

Research Questions

Research questions addressed in this study were (1) What are the common organizational dynamics of compound change? (2) What are the common personal dynamics of compound change? (3) What are other major factors in dealing with compound change in the local church setting?

Definitions of Terms

Compound, high-level, organizational change was defined as multiple changes with a major impact on the organization at the cultural level during the tenure of the same pastor (e.g., changing trends or activities such as stopping the decline after the split while also changing culture and values such as new vision/purpose/priorities). This is also known as second level change.

Medium to large-sized local churches were defined as churches with an average worship attendance of over two hundred but fewer than one thousand.

Beeson Pastors are Doctor of Ministry Students in the Beeson Pastor track, which

includes a one year on-site residency program at Asbury Theological Seminary. During this time they visit teaching churches as a group and provide ministry while having more direct access as a small group to many of the presenters of the Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership.

Context

The context of the study was existing churches with two hundred to a thousand in worship as the leader sensed a need for complex change in direction. The Doctor of Ministry Students used for this study are Beeson Pastors who completed at least one year of residency at Asbury Theological Seminary. The program includes 206 students to date, of which 188 had listed e-mail addresses. Most were from across the United States with a higher concentration from the Eastern states. Some were from foreign countries such as Canada, Ghana, Ecuador, China, Korea, and Germany. At least one was an army chaplain. Beeson Pastors were chosen as those with a diverse background, those with a high personal vested interest in seeing churches excel, and with the educational and experience background to have access to the best resources and minds in the larger Church.

Methodology

The methodology of this study used a semi-structured interview protocol involving a criterion-based selection process to allow gathering as much data as possible from the pastors studied and those they referred for further data gathering.

Participants

Beeson pastors selected for the purposes of this study were from graduates of the program as identified by the dean of that program, Dr. Ellsworth Kalas. Those with e-

mail addresses were approached, and the first twenty to respond positively to the request with affirmative answers to the criteria were selected as participants. This study used a criteria-based sample with four criteria. Selected pastors have (1) participated in the Beeson Pastor program, (2) been through compound, high-level, organizational changes that have resulted in cultural level changes in the congregation subsequent to their one year of Beeson residency, (3) survived those transitions and have knowledge from those struggles to share with the larger church, and (4) pastored through multiple transitions of that level during their tenure.

Instrumentation

Respondents were selected by answering an e-mail as presented in Appendix A, stating both their willingness to participate and their meeting of the criteria for inclusion.

Phone interviews were conducted with the interview grid as a guide for the discussion. The interview guide was researcher designed beginning with an invitation to share a change story they have been involved in leading followed by open-ended questions in the areas of organizational dynamics of change, personal dynamics of change, and other change dynamics experienced by the leader interviewed.

Interviewers were trained in the semi-structured interview protocol and the use of the response grid. The interview grid is presented in Appendix B and follows the suggestions of the United Nations for their interviews (Food and Agriculture). The data was then compiled (see Appendix C).

Data Collection

The e-mails were sent to each invited pastor (see Appendix A). An executive summary (see Appendix E) of the results of the study was offered in gratitude for

participation. Phone contact was made with the offices of each responder to set up forty-five minute phone interview appointments. Phone interviews were conducted with the interview grid as a guide for the discussion.

The interviews consisted of a semi-structured interview protocol using the topic guide in Appendix B. The interviewers greeted each interviewee in a culturally appropriate way, confirming the expectations of the hour and gaining informed consent. The first topic was not sensitive and was important to the respondent. Questions were open ended without being leading, but dialog followed the flow of the discussion asking probing questions. When possible, interviewers used interviewee phrases in follow-up questions. No judgments on the responses or opinions were offered during the interview. After the interview, I responded to questions and issues raised by the interviewees and thanked them for their time.

Collected data was gathered into a grid with all responses for the purpose of triangulating any consistencies as well as recording any great insights from a single individual. This data was then used for this dissertation, and an executive summary of the learning reported from this study sent to those participants who had asked for the information.

Delimitations and Generalizability

This project specifically addressed only congregations transitioning in established churches and not the separate question of new church plants.

The pastors studied have all begun the change process with at least two hundred in their congregation, so this study does not address the challenges of implementing changes in the context of much smaller rural churches.

This study only addressed churches with compound changes leading to a second level of major change and not churches addressing only the first level of change.

The selection of pastors was limited to Beeson pastors who, due to their common training, may have propensities not found in the larger population.

Theological Foundation

The theory of change is derived from many sources; however, the final foundation in Christian learning is always how it aligns with Truth as delineated in Scripture. Truth is a person (John 14:6), and all learning is to be measured alongside this Truth. While the sources may not all recognize the Truth of the learnings they share, Mark 10:18 (and the parallel passage in Luke 18:19) tells Christians Jesus said no one can be good except God. By extension, no such thing as good business practice exists versus good church practice. If a practice is good, it is good for business and for the church. If a practice is bad, it should not be used anywhere.

As all people are all created after a God of relationship, within the Trinity Christians see God's plan for fellowship within the Church. As Trinity has a leader that sets the direction, the Jesus says in John 5:19, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does" (NIV). It is understood that if the Head of the church does nothing without submitting to the authority of God, then Christians must learn to submit to Jesus' plan for the Church. Therefore, pastors are not trying to find the best ideas and apply them but to understand what God is doing and join in to see God's best for the Church.

Since God is the source of all truth and goodness, the foundation of this work is

that, by prayerfully discerning God, Christian leaders might discover God's truth for his church. Leaders are called to join Paul in this prayer from Philippians 1:9-11:

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Christian leaders must not only abound in knowledge and depth of insight, but they must also discern God's best for the congregations they are called to lead.

Overview of the Study

This study was designed to explore learning in the day-to-day reality of implementing the changes needed to experience God's best in the local church setting. The study centralized the wisdom gleaned from those who have walked the path of church transition. The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership dynamics of successful compound change in medium to large local congregations. This was an exploratory study using semi-structured interviews. This study looked for a way to centralize the wisdom of mentors that would not otherwise be available.

In Chapter 2, precedents in literature are explored including areas of leading through the challenge of change, servant leadership and mentoring, vision and change in the church, and gauging risk taking and success. This chapter finishes with a review of relevant research design literature. Chapter 3 covers the design of the study to include the problem and purpose, research and operational questions, population and sample, instrumentation, reliability and validity, data collection, variables, control, and data analysis. Chapter 4 summarizes the findings of the study. Chapter 5 presents the summary and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Vision and Change in the Church

Vision and change are inextricably linked. As vision happens it inspires and requires change to come to fulfillment. Each vision implies change to the status quo and thus leads to change.

Change Initiation

Vision leads and drives change. Change does not happen until leaders realize that the church is not living in God's preferred future for the church. "Visionaries are the kind of people the Bible refers to as wise" (Barna 106). Wisdom requires God-given, passionately pursued vision. Wise leaders must be constantly looking for God's direction. Hybels refers to this leadership characteristic of constant seeking for deeper things as being restless in the harbor (Leading). This relentless pursuit reveals the vision that then becomes a missional direction that changes the leader as well as the organization. "Mission gives your life purpose. Vision gives your life direction. Values give your life character" (Barna 91). This same vision engenders the tenacity requisite to achieve the vision. As Hybels says, "Vision is a picture of the future that produces passion" (Courageous Leadership 32).

Vision is not intrinsic in the leader and cannot be conjured up by virtue of being great leaders. Shawchuck and Heuser make the distinction: "The vision is God's; it cannot be planned. The mission is ours, and its accomplishment must be planned and executed. Both require that we give ourselves without reservation to each realization" (74) because "God gives us vision when we are desperate" (Southerland 30). No leader

can initiate a vision; it must be discerned. God alone is omniscient; His vision for leaders is the best possible vision, even if it conflicts with the leader's assumption, preferences and prayers. Pastors are to set their eyes on Jesus and his call on their lives regardless of the cost (Heb. 12:2). Good leaders need only to know God's vision comes with an eternal guarantee that if a leaders obey, "He will bless us beyond our wildest dreams, and in ways we might not perceive as significant or as blessings" (Barna 77). Hamilton adds the leaders' "driving mission should be to please Christ and to do the things he would have [them] do" (Leading Beyond the Walls 30). For Hamilton pleasing Christ means not seeking to determine what the laity or denominational leaders want done, or even what pastors want to do. Hamilton is correct in his insight: "Instead, you are called to seek Christ's will for his church. If you fail in this you will have missed the very purpose of the church" (30). Yet this vision does not come all at once; rather, "[v]ision is a lot like a jigsaw puzzle. You work it one piece at a time—and it takes a long time to get all the pieces in place" (Southerland 47).

Visionary Leaders

God calls and gifts visionary leaders to lead his church to accomplish his vision.

Vision and direction are entrusted to leaders as part of the call on their lives:

In the church, the senior pastor is the person who, as the lead shepherd, is called to be so inseparable from God that he or she is capable of discerning after much prayer, study and discipline, the vision of God for the people he or she is responsible to lead. (Barna 138)

Then, as a "servant of the Father of vision," the servant leader must decide, "what will you do to understand God's vision for your life and to invest yourself in the minirevolution He is calling you to shepherd" (33). If pastors have committed to leading toward God's vision, then what James C. Collins and Jerry I. Porras call Big Hairy

Audacious Goals (BHAGs) and Bob Russell calls Big Holy Audacious Goals look “more audacious to *outsiders* [original emphasis] than to insiders” (105), and like the companies studied, the thought will simply never occur that what God has created the leader to do might not be possible (105).

To connect the vision to the people requires leaders as opposed to managers. The leaders’ “most important task is articulating their vision and making it their followers’ own” (Bennis and Thomas 137). “Managers set goals. Leaders cast vision” (Nelson and Appel 150). Visionaries know having vision is not sufficient, but “the vision must constantly be retold and resold” (Barna 74). Gifted managers are needed to assist in implementing the vision as defined and led by leaders. In reflecting on the gap between leadership and management, Shawchuck and Heuser describe the church as being “overmanaged and underled” (23). They see this trend especially prevalent in congregations in decline. If congregations are going to increase, churches and church leaders must be willing to face the reality that while both gifts are needed, they are indeed different gifts.

Vision Source

God is the source of godly pastors’ vision. The pieces of the vision are not usually handed down to leaders in burning bushes or handwriting on the wall but in pieces as leaders prayerfully considers how to steward the congregation God has placed in their care faithfully. Spiritual leaders get those pieces, Henri J. M. Nouwen teaches, through “strenuous theological reflection” allowing one to “discern critically where we are being led” (65). Prayer is an indispensable part of discerning God’s specific plans for leaders. “Visionary believers are distinguished by their prayer lives. They pray with greater

frequency, greater focus, greater urgency and greater openness because of their humility as a result of the vision” (Barna 120). That prayer life must be tied to a life of spiritual integrity. Barna also believes visionaries are more likely than not to live lives fully consistent with their convictions (31). Often visionaries are the product of the trials through which they have lived that seem to provide an intensity not experienced by non-visionaries. Crucible thinking seems to be consistent with the life of Paul who learned what great things he would have to suffer but became the apostle to the Gentiles. Nelson and Appel are correct in saying, “Change can be slow and intentional with very positive results. Count the cost. Pay the price. And don’t look back” (263). The size of the dream is often connected to the cost. “The most impressive thing about ... [visionaries], however is not the size of the dream, but the intensity of their pursuit of that God-inspired dream” (Barna 85). This growing devotional experience leads to Dan Southerland’s understanding: “The biggest change of all is in the person through whom God works to bring about His vision” (171).

Visionaries are, by necessity, strategic. “Vision is a long-term approach to life. It is not something you will accomplish in the next quarter, the next year and probably not within the next decade” (Barna 155). Nelson and Appel’s work suggests throughout that strategic perspective requires one first visualize then inhabit this vision until it comes true. Constant striving for what can be in the future drives visionaries onward. Visionaries and change are requisite to the church’s health and even survival. “We will never amount to much if we are satisfied with who we are today. God places irritants in our midst—we call them visionaries—who drive us to become more Christlike and more devoted to His objectives rather than to our own” (Barna 70).

Cultural understandings in the United States have argued a maleness to the leadership required to lead in these powerful ways, and indeed most current models of church leadership are male. Nelson and Appel would argue against this assumption because women are natural multi-taskers and, therefore, more “challenge-capable” (84). That this ability makes women at least as capable of leading organizational change would have a huge impact if carried to the logical conclusion because a cursory look at most churches, especially those most in need of change to survive, consist of a high percentage women. The resource the church needs most, challenge-capable multi-taskers, is exactly what God has given in the most abundance. God often gives just what the church needs, and the church must be attuned to the work of the Holy Spirit so as not to miss the blessing.

Moving Forward

Visionaries leading God’s vision must move forward into the unknown. The vision is not an end in itself, nor is the change God works in the leaders to lead that vision an end in itself. Peter M. Senge teaches, “It is not what the vision is, it’s what the vision does” (154). Mistakes and even failures may mark the way. Failure is simply a shortfall, evidence of the gap between the vision and current reality, and a “mistake is an event, the full benefit of which has not yet been turned to your advantage” (154). Leaders have long known failure goes with the territory and have tried to use even the failures to God’s kingdom advantage. The biggest threat is not in failure but in attitude. If a pastor loses joy, Scripture teaches, that leader’s service will be of no advantage to the church that pastor is called to serve (Heb. 13:17), and, as part of the church, no advantage extends to that pastor, either.

To move forward, visionary leaders must be willing to meet God's demanding standards on their own lives. Collins and Porras understand visionary leadership this way: "‘Visionary,’ we learned, does not mean soft and undisciplined" and thus these visionary leaders lead churches that do not have "much room for people unwilling or unsuited to God's demanding standards" (121).

Vision is not a statement but a passion that moves visionaries, and those being led, forward. Vision should never be confused with a vision statement. "When there is a genuine vision (as opposed to the all-too-familiar 'vision statement'), people excel and learn, not because they are told to, but because they want to" (Senge 9). This lack of focusing on a statement only does not prevent good thinking about what the true vision is but requires the focus that the vision statements are meant to induce. "The reason churches don't make a dent in the postmodern culture is not that they have too many micro-visionaries. It is because they are weighed down with too many Christians—a majority—who have no vision whatsoever" (Barna 84). Leadership then requires a strong vision with focus so leadership flows from that preferred future. "Vision-based churches consist of vision-led people. These churches have visionary leaders who articulate, cast and champion the vision" (134). In this "world of messes," leaders move people from being bogged down in the messes to a "world of excitement and possibility" (Bolman and Deal 40).

Holy Change

Churches need visionary leaders committed to holy change. Erwin Raphael McManus understands change itself to be a holy concept:

The whole theological concept of sanctification is rooted in the reality that God changes people. Repentance is change, conversion is change,

regeneration is change, transformation is change, and sanctification is change. All of the deeply theological constructs that we have embraced and understood to be true cannot exist outside of a theology of change. (81)

Change is needed in the church because people are not being reached with the good news and the church is declining as congregations lose more people to death than those entering into new life. George G. Hunter, III echoes Soren Kierkegaard in his Attack Upon Christendom distinguishing between nominal Christians and “real” Christians “when everybody is a Christian, nobody is a Christian”:

[W]hen one understands oneself to be a Christian because one is born in a so-called Christian country, has been baptized and scripted with a few Christian values, one is only “playing Christianity ... like soldiers play war on the parade grounds,” and their “illusion” almost prohibits anyone from becoming a Christian in the New Testament sense of following Jesus Christ and conforming one’s life to God’s will. (Hunter, How to Reach Secular People 33-34)

Real Christians and, therefore, authentic spiritual leadership often call “God’s people to relinquish the past and move into what God’s already doing” (McManus 92). McManus is in line with the Spirit in saying, “The real tragedy is not that churches are dying but that churches have lost their reason to live!” (24). The Church exists to reach the lost and grow those convinced of the lordship of Jesus or it has no earthly reason for existence at all. The Church is ineffective because the body of Christ has not yet been willing to live what God calls all to believe:

We accuse them of not being willing to surrender to God; they accuse us of not knowing him. People are rejecting Christ *because* [original emphasis] of the church! Once we were called Christians by an unbelieving world, and now we call ourselves Christians and the world calls us hypocrites. (29)

McManus has touched an important truth: “The truth is, if churches wait too long to die to themselves, then they ensure that they will die by themselves” (19). The complexity

rises when compound changes are needed. Eric G. Flamholtz and Yvonne Randle discuss the complexity of compound transformations, which they define as undergoing more than one type of major change simultaneously (13), seen as the most difficult type of change.

Change Requirement

Change is a requirement of vision. Once leaders have heard God's call to something better, their soul cries out for God's best. Southerland states, "as long as we are content with the status quo, we will not discover God's vision" (29) because implementing vision would require change. Peter F. Drucker builds on this concept when he rightly acknowledges vision is not complete until a need and not just a want is inspired in the people who need to change (108). Hunter sees this phenomenon leading to "the emergence of entire congregations who are willing to be culturally flexible in order to reach people" (Church 58) until the church becomes "a refuge *for* [original emphasis] the world, not *from* [original emphasis] it" (McManus 65).

Through Nelson and Appel, leaders are warned "churches fall in love with their methods at the expense of their purpose" (xxi-xxii) leading to what they describe as "spiritual museums" (50). Existing churches struggling to change are often reminded of the common wisdom, "It is easier to give birth than to raise the dead." Nevertheless, a God of resurrection expects those who serve him and his bride to be a place of resurrection as well. If the Church is not doing what God called it to do, then perhaps leaders should heed the wisdom of Charles Kettering as understood by Nelson and Appel who believe, "If you have always done it that way, it is probably wrong" (29) because without change, "the pet projects of individuals become congregational responsibilities [and] we run the risk of straying from our core values" (220). Denomination leaders then

often resort to pastors gifted as managers instead of leadership in dying churches. “When pastors who are not wired to think and behave as leaders supervise congregations, they foster status-quo ministry or incremental changes, which rarely are sufficient for transformation” (45). This truth leads spiritual leaders to places where pastors accept the unacceptable because of unwillingness to face the cost of changes. The things that frustrate leaders and the work of God do not develop from change, but from the lack thereof:

Busy work. Dull worship services. No good plans for achieving the mission... Have these conditions come about because the church has changed? No, they have come about because the church has *not* [original emphasis] changed... [T]he church’s successes of yesterday are killing us today. (Shawchuck and Heuser 166)

Machiavelli’s words to the prince hold true: More kingdoms have collapsed through success than through failure. The challenge lies in the complacency inherent in times when things seem to be doing well. “In times of great success, leaders feel little need to be reflective. Rather, the impetus is to go, go, go. But to go, go, go when the congregation is headed in the wrong direction will only get it there faster” (Shawchuck and Heuser 78). Mainline denominational decline and an increasingly secular society tell astute leaders that the church has been going in the wrong direction for a long time. God has required the church to change to reach the seeking world while the church has continued to focus inward and the lost continue dying without Jesus.

Change Cost

Change, even God-inspired change, has a cost. Because the cost to those giving up the status quo is real, leaders must remember “transition starts with an ending—and ends with a beginning” (Nelson and Appel 63). God is a God of change. Jesus transforms

people, water, bread, and wine. The challenge is to help changed people become part of the transformation process and not just let them slide back into the monotony of the mundane existence from which God sent Jesus to save them. Warren G. Bennis and Robert J. Thomas say, “Leadership doesn’t have a systematic theology, but if it did, one article of faith would be: It’s a sin to put changed people back into an unchanged organization” (175). Pastors would be remiss to continue to put transformed people into untransformed churches. Because the church suffers from terminal niceness, church leaders often do not make the needed changes due to a fear of offending some. The church has bought the lie that if change was just communicated well, a way must exist where no one gets his or her feelings hurt; “comfort is not the objective in a visionary company [and should not be the objective of the Church]. Indeed, visionary companies install powerful mechanisms to create *discomfort* [original emphasis]—to obliterate complacency—and thereby stimulate change and improvement *before* [original emphasis] the external world demands it” (Collins and Porras 187). The church must create the discomfort that makes change possible. Nevertheless, the Church is usually several decades behind the change curve of the culture that surrounds the bride of Christ. The Church seldom, if ever, catches up with what the world demands for the unchurched to give a hearing to the good news of Jesus. Sometimes this challenge results from a timing issue: “When people are near capacity stresswise, they will avoid all new-change demands, regardless of how good, logical, and potentially beneficial they may be” (Nelson and Appel 82), but more often change resistance is due to a complacency because the pain of dying is not yet harsh enough to cause the people to avoid corporate death at all costs. Southerland believes “the reason 99 out of 100 churches that try to

make major transitions fail is that they go too fast” (41), but more often failure occurs when these churches are trying to stop the pain that change is engendering. Jack Welch, past CEO of General Electric, takes the opposite view in looking back over his tenure saying, ironically, he should not have been so cautious. “This so-called Toughest Boss in America honestly wasn’t tough-minded enough” (138). Welch laments, “I didn’t go far enough or move fast enough” (132). While Welch suggests getting rid of power brokers that believe they can outlast the visionary leader, Southerland counsels three basic choices: “[G]et them on board, fight them, or run them off” (71). Even Southerland does not leave the option of continuing to try making them happy. The lack of other options leaves the leader in “the most dangerous place,” seeking to transition a congregation “from institution to movement” (McManus 186) in a reality where many “would rather have Godless security than spirit-led change” (84).

Pursuing God-ordained change does not assure a lack of conflict; indeed, doing so may secure the very conflict churches spend entire lifetimes trying to avoid. People say they want to change but often refuse to accept that same change when they see the emotional cost (Nelson and Appel 263) or, if not aware of the cost, create a “zone of indifference” that “can expand or contract markedly” depending on how parishioners view the success of the church (Bolman and Deal 196). What the entire congregation believes is immaterial to the process but critical to implementation is what the opinion leaders believe (Nelson and Appel 110). Appropriate leadership response to the anticipated conflict is critical:

When leaders underrespond, they allow conflict to fester and grow, creating negative momentum that diminishes effectiveness and is difficult to stop. When leaders overrespond, they run the risk of damaging the improvement plan by offending resisters as well as alienating change allies

who become sympathetic to their resistant friends. The empathy factor in faith communities can be huge. (242)

I have personally found the greatest difficulty with opposition is not the actual damage of those opposing change but the discouragement that causes pastors to doubt the very call that sustains ministry. I was not the first to discover this truth. “The greatest concern with opposition is it will discourage you and cause you to doubt your vision” (Southerland 113). Visionary leaders must be willing to lead themselves through this self-doubt in preparation for leading others. Leaders must then surround themselves with a strong support team committed to the leaders’ and the church’s growth.

Gathered Wisdom

The gathered wisdom on vision and change lead to these truths. God implants godly vision in the heart of God’s visionaries who then are called to act on, as well as articulate, that vision. Implementing that vision incites change in visionaries and the people in the churches they lead. To be successful, leaders must commit to paying the price for the required changes, recognizing all vision requires change and all change has a cost.

Devotional Life and Spiritual Warfare

Churches that become fully devoted followers of Jesus do things that change the world and find themselves standing against the rulers of this world. By definition, spiritual leaders, especially those that follow into God-initiated change, find spiritual warfare a part of their lives.

Spiritual Call

Spiritual leaders follow the call. Leighton Ford is right in saying, “Jesus in us continues to lead through us” (32); therefore, leaders are accountable not only to count

the cost but to put the leadership hand to the plow and not look back (1 Kings 19:21; Luke 9:62). Reggie McNeal warns, “[T]he temptations, trials, and testings spiritual leaders face always challenge their call” (58). If McNeal is correct, “[n]o one can calculate how many would-be leaders go down in the wilderness” (58). Would-be Christian leaders find even more incumbent on them to determine up front that one’s own spiritual life is not compromised in an attempt to serve. The cost of service cannot be overrated if Nouwen is correct on Jesus’ vision of maturity as “the ability and willingness to be led where you would rather not go” (62). Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton are then in line with Scripture when they say, “*The power to lead and minister comes from the inner life* [original emphasis]” (217).

Shawchuck and Heuser describe the cost of leading change:

It is a painful thing to enter a ministry that is beyond our own capabilities; and many there be who will never “cast their nets into the deep waters,” preferring to fish in the pool, to navigate on their own, rather than to risk the deeps where all may be lost. Perhaps even more terrifying than risking the loss of those things dearest to us, we might discover the wonder of God—who is Almighty. (43)

Yet, Michael Slaughter understands, “believing that we have heard the voice of God changes ‘should do’ into ‘must do’” (73), and passion to follow inspires others to follow as “people can smell the passion of the Spirit” (150).

When Christians fail to live up to this call, Christ followers must beg God to forgive because the church becomes a stumbling block to the very people Christ’s body is called to lead. Some Christians have raised resisting God’s call to an art. Slaughter states, “The world isn’t interested in Christianity because we Christians aren’t known as people who live what we say” (109). McManus exhorts, when God has spoken, “praying sometimes becomes a way of resisting God’s will rather than a way of responding to it”

(150). Leaders in the change process must be aware of Collins and Porras' caveat:

“Where there is no discipline, there is no character” (188). Spiritual discipline calls Christ followers to see a leader's role as Dr. Richard Halverson, chaplain to the Senate, saw his role: “I am a garment which Jesus Christ wears every day to do what he wants to do” (qtd. in Ford 34). “I don't need power; my weakness is an asset. If Christ is in me, what more do I need?” (34). Servant leaders are humble enough to know that without God's intervention their best efforts are in vain, yet they trust in God's call on their lives to work miracles through the process of their faithful service. George Barna stated this truth: “Look at the leaders God chose for His people through Scripture. Overall, they were not the best or the brightest, but they were qualified because they were attuned to God” (137). Attuned to God's call and yet, still experiencing dark nights of the soul.

Dark Nights

Leading change is full of dark nights that often lead to scars. As one sits through the Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership conferences or sits and talks with one of the presenters, one can easily discern that the cost of leadership in times of change in existing churches has left scars. Like veterans returning from battle, these scars are seldom mentioned and often unseen. Like military veterans, seasoned leaders who bear these scars have much to offer to those entering the field, and a close listening to their wisdom can lower the casualty count in churches. In a personal interview I had with Dale Galloway about dealing with the cost of change, the timbre of his voice changed and his demeanor became very somber as he said, “You just live through this part.”

One finds the same in the literature of these presenters. Appel, in responding to how he was able to hang on through the dark times, reminds the beleaguered leader that

others have experienced that same darkness:

I remember the awful nights feeling all alone, feeling like I was a failure, and wondering if this dark season would ever end—much the way a leader feels when his church seems in unending conflict and change seems impossible. I often sang “Jesus Loves Me” quietly to myself to help me remember the love that I’d experienced. That’s the love I’m committed to communicating for the rest of my life to anyone who will listen. And when that kind of love is hanging in the balance for a lost world, what else can a leader do but lead through the tough times? (Nelson and Appel 319-20)

Just as Job, David, and John the Baptist, Southerland also experienced these dark times.

He recounts an experience in his church when he states, “We lost three hundred people—and gained two thousand. We have lost three hundred who were already committed to Christ—and gained two thousand, most of whom were unchurched” (127). While Southerland does not talk about the pain, one can easily glean the two thousand did not show up the same day the three hundred left, and losing any of the people for which a pastor is accountable is a painful process. Slaughter talks about a time when he had to let some staff go, lost a few hundred people, and even wondered if he should stay during the summer of 1999 (138). During this time, he used a baptismal theology to explain the need to live for Jesus over oneself. Each spiritual leader must count the cost and weigh it against the high honor of serving God’s beloved.

Counting Cost

Counting the cost is the first step in leading change. Before embarking on transformational change in any church, leaders should count the cost and make the decision to move forward, with neither quitting nor looking back seen as viable options. Scripture teaches in Luke 14:25-33 following Jesus is not for large crowds but for those willing to give up everything to follow even when following means dying to themselves. Baptism, according to Slaughter, requires Christians to be “dead, buried and out of the

way” (138), and Jesus says followers are to count the cost of obedience before ever beginning the work. Changes started without fulfilling the call to finish them do more harm to the kingdom of God than not initiating the work. As leaders make significant changes in churches, the premise must be clearly understood that deep change is not easy or the process would already be in place. Therefore, leaders must assume a cost if change is to be implemented through those servants of God. With Elisah, leaders must barbeque the oxen, burn the farm implements and stay close to their Elijahs. Leaders must say with Jeremiah, “Whether it is favorable or unfavorable, we will obey the Lord our God” (Jer. 42:6).

Just as all churches say they want to grow until they begin growing, most ministers say they want a powerful, life-altering ministry until they realize the cost. As Richard J. Foster comments, “If we expect to engage in the ministry of power, we must understand the hidden preparation through which God puts his ministers” (216-17). Leaders expecting to lead change must possess the necessary willingness to “let the challenges and negative circumstances in life break [the leader], so that [the leader’s] capacity for God can increase” (Nelson and Appel 90), because “Jesus saw the heart of the human problem as the problem of the human heart” (Ford 62).

Serving God, not just success, must be the motivation for a leader, a church, or a ministry. “Leaders who are gripped by a call from God do well to remember that they serve the call. The call is not given to serve them” (McNeal 27). Through this masterfully fulfilling call, pastors are called to bear the “exquisite pain of being betrayed by those closest to one’s heart” (28). Still, the pastors’ biggest challenges come from the struggle to follow Jesus as they recreate personal character into his likeness, remembering always

“those who follow the leader need for the leader to keep heart” (28). Before embarking on this journey, pastors must be certain of the call to survive in the long run. This adventure certainly comes with the attendant realization the call also assures a struggle. That struggle is not with the people of the church but with spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Eph. 6:12 ff.). Therefore, Christians move forward differently because God has taught the Church to understand where the real battle lies.

Paying the Cost

Leaders must commit to paying the cost before beginning the journey. Ford reminds leaders, referring to Mark 10:38, “*leadership involves suffering* [original emphasis]” (150). Yet, the good news is that leaders following God’s vision get to experience the holy presence more keenly. “C. S. Lewis gave us the fabulous insight that God whispers to us in our pleasure, but shouts to us in our pain” (McNeal 179). Through the pain, God grants understanding of the truths, “when a leader loses heart, he loses,” and conversely “leaders who do not lose heart become champions, not victims” (ix). Because the leader being changed is foundational, “spiritual formation in the life of the leader is not just a private matter” (xiv). Expecting both the challenges and the blessing, today’s pastors find themselves alongside the great company of saints who have gone before:

[These leaders] have found themselves in circumstances in which their leadership is both challenged and imperiled. They also have experienced situations in which they have no recourse but God.... Spiritual heroes learn that pain and conflict are part of the package. It just goes with the territory. (15)

One spiritual discipline that can help bear the burden of leaders is to put intercessors in place to pray with pastors without ceasing.

Jesus' Heart

Sharing the heart of Jesus has always meant sharing in his suffering. This great tradition of Christian heroes speaks from eternity to say, “The ultimate responsibility of the spiritual leader is to share the heart of God with the people of God” (McNeal 34). That burden of responsibility cannot be sustained without a clear sense of call. “The point is this: it is tough enough to serve as a Christian leader *with* [original emphasis] a call. Without it, the choice constitutes cruel and unusual self-punishment” (99). Lee G. Bolman and Terrance E. Deal support this understanding that spiritual leaders “have the responsibility of sustaining and encouraging faith in selves and in recalling others to the faith when they have lost it” (407).

Spiritual Warfare

Growth is not an option—the war is on. While much easier to let churches drift oblivious to the peril of not fulfilling their mission and just maintain the illusion of peace and calm, the Church must grow. Knowing the church that is not growing is, by definition, dying due to attrition, becomes a sobering reminder of the Augustinian quote, “There is no joy in Heaven over empty churches” (qtd. in Drucker 71). Joy can only be complete when the churches for which the leaders have God-given responsibility reach the lost in a winsome, compelling, and relevant way so the people of the churches live the abundant life. The reward of seeing people coming to new relationships with Jesus on a regular basis is realized. McManus says, “The idea that people without Jesus are going to hell... [goes] down far too easily for Christians who... [know] only Christians” (52). Christians have a need constantly to build relationships with pre-Christians. Christians need relentlessly to point people to Jesus and not the people of the Church, especially as

leaders. Charles Lamb, when talking to friends about Jesus, says, “If Alexander the Great or Charlemagne or Napoleon were to come into the room, we would all stand up out of respect. If Jesus Christ walked in, we would fall on our faces in adoration. That is the difference” (qtd. in Ford 11). The call requires leading people to Jesus in ways that cause them to fall on their faces in admiration of the One all Christ followers are called to serve at all costs.

Gathered Wisdom

The gathered wisdom on devotional life and spiritual warfare lead to these truths. A spiritual battle rages for the souls of humanity. Leaders, called by God, must commit first to following Jesus with passionate, radical obedience discerned through an active devotional life. Spiritual leaders must be committed to the cost of leading others and sharing in the sufferings of Christ. The scars of battle and the deep spiritual growth through the dark nights develop in leaders the character of Christ necessary to lead the church through change.

Servant Leadership and Mentoring

One of the strengths of the Church is Jesus’ teaching on servant leadership. Jesus also teaches servant leaders to encourage and mentor each other when new spiritual lessons are revealed.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is still leadership. In the past, servant leadership has often been seen as a wimpy excuse to hide from conflict and feed one’s ego in the process. If no conflict erupted and people felt loved, the church has commended leaders as servants without looking at the vision or the direction of the body of Christ they are leading. Yet

people-pleasing leadership is not the kind of leadership taught by today's leaders and mentors, nor is it the kind of leadership Jesus modeled. Today's leaders describe a passionate, challenging lifestyle requiring courage and integrity.

Servant leadership is a part of leaders at all times. Southerland says, "If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a living model is worth a million" (82). Bennis and Thomas describe effective leaders as encompassing the entirety of leaders' lives:

[M]en and women ... practiced leading every moment of every day. They recognized no distinction between work and life. They were the same people on the job and off. They used every situation they encountered as a practice field and they mined every experience for insight about themselves and the people and the world around them. Leading is not only what they did, it was who they were. (xv)

Robert Crandall, retired chair of the board of American Airlines, says, "[P]eople who worry about balance have no overriding passion to achieve leadership" (qtd. in Bennis and Thomas 45). Max DePree refers to this overriding passion as electiveness, calling leaders to a higher standard of deserving the people who work for the leader, claiming leaders are responsible for allocating their own lives (qtd. in Drucker 40, 222). Bolman and Deal see leadership as "an ethic, a gift of oneself" (400). That gift must be constantly enhanced.

Leadership Development

Servant leadership requires constant development. Servant leaders are relentlessly learning through the change God is bringing about in their lives. Drucker states, "It's that willingness to make yourself competent in the task that's needed that creates leaders" (22). Because only "[y]ou can only make *yourself* [original emphasis] effective—not anyone else" (191), concentrating on self-improvement is a good use of pastors' time. Acclaimed leadership expert Dee Hock suggests, "It is management of self that should

occupy 50 percent of our time and the best of our ability” (qtd. in Hybels, Courageous Leadership 183). Hock’s conclusion in considering this self-leadership is helpful: self-leadership, which he calls “emotional self-control,” is the key to great leadership. Hybels adds to this key a deeper understanding of emotional self-control:

According to Goleman, this form of self-control is exhibited by leaders when they persevere in leadership despite overwhelming opposition or discouragement; when they refuse to give up during times of crisis; when they manage to hold ego at bay; and when they stay focused on their mission rather than being distracted by other people’s agendas. (184)

The level of emotional maturity and emotional health required to lead compound change cannot be over-emphasized.

While all Christian leaders need accountability and mentoring, “[e]very leader has to do this work alone, and it isn’t easy” (Hybels, Courageous Leadership 184). Hybels’ wise advisors recognize the importance of leaders tending to self-care:

The best gift you can give the people you lead here at Willow is a healthy, energized, fully surrendered, and focused self. And no one can make that happen in your life except you. It’s up to you to make the right choices so you can be at your best” (185).

While the work is done alone, wise leaders gain insight and new tools from mentors who have walked that path before them realizing this discipline allows them to reach higher levels than they could reach alone. Mentor-learning is the learning one leader gleans from the shared experience of another leader.

Leaders learn both from study and experience. While the latter is the most painful, it is less painful than the alternative, as Southerland points out: “The only thing more painful than learning from experience is not learning from experience” (130). This requisite experience leaves the servant leader open to what Bennis and Thomas call crucible experiences. As God develops leaders for the most important enterprise on the

planet, he often allows these times of testing, or crucibles, in their lives. “Crucibles are inevitably places where people play for mortal stakes. The test is often grueling. There is always a prize, always a real chance of failure” (100). Nevertheless, the experiences are a necessary part of the development of strong servant leaders, and Bennis and Thomas find the “the love of learning seems to have anesthetized [leaders] against the fear of failure” (117). True servant leaders do not experience smooth sailing, but they are defined, according to Southerland, by what discourages them (123). Spiritual leaders are not anesthetized, they feel the pain vividly, but they do define failure differently than other people. Success, therefore, is not experienced by a problem-free run but reflected in the sentiments of a poem in Stanley and Clinton’s work. “‘To me, you won,’ his father said, ‘You rose each time you fell’” (229). To keep rising requires what Jesus referred to as becoming like a child to enter the kingdom (Mark 10:15). In addition to faith, success requires a passionate but cautious optimism, evidenced by resilience, curiosity, and tirelessness resulting in an “almost palpable hunger for experience and an incapacity for bored detachment” to which Bennis and Thomas refer as “*neoteny*” (163). For Bolman and Deal, “[t]he essence of high performance is spirit” (298) as evidenced in play. As leaders lead teams, clearly building the team is a requisite part of achieving any worthy goal. “Team building at its heart is a spiritual undertaking. Peak performance emerges as a team discovers its soul” (298-99). McManus views leadership as a “spiritual art form” (133) but warns one of the reasons leaders in the church are often misunderstood is the speed at which they move (75). In this blinding speed, leaders are often called to move forward with the eyes of faith when all they can see is God. Wise leaders, according to Bolman and Deal, understand “their own strengths, work to expand them, and build

teams which can offer an organization leadership in all four modes: structural, political, human resource, and symbolic” (366). Spiritual leaders must develop team-leading skills. Team building is referred to throughout the most recent literature as being a critical part of servant leaders’ experience, but it is seen as especially vital during times of transition and conflict. Drucker believes, especially with conflict, “teamwork between the chairperson and the chief executive officer becomes absolutely vital” (159). In this team and Christian community, Jesus-following leaders are called serve.

Strong Love

Servant leaders must then both serve from love and work from strength. For Bolman and Deal, “[t]he gift of the servant leader is love” (402), yet they warn “an open heart is vulnerable” (402). Hybels says, “Knowing [God] leads to loving [God]” (Courageous Leadership 88), and this love leads to loving the people for whom he died (Jas. 3:9-10). This love results in a team community: “[M]ore than just working with other people, it’s doing life *deeply* [original emphasis] with one another as we serve together” (74). The balance is leaders must also work from strength and speed that non-leaders do not understand. This leadership quality results in the gap McManus identifies when leaders “don’t stop long enough to check the wounded” (75). Senge calls this quality “a tough, challenging notion of love (sometimes characterized by the phrase ‘ruthless compassion’) which brooks no compromise in both sharing one’s feelings and views and being open to having those views change” (285). Yet Southerland would argue this ruthless compassion is not only loving but critical to effectiveness because “it is impossible to lead the team up the hill when you are constantly giving your time and attention to those who refuse to join the charge” (124). Southerland believes the reason

this tough love does not happen more often is because “many churches are led by insecure leaders who are more concerned about what people think than they need to be” (108). Nelson and Appel understand “[a] leader’s responsibility in the improvement process is to make sure there is adequate dissatisfaction regarding the present situation” (189) and some conflict naturally results. Maturity in leaders can then be measured by their response to complaints since “it is easy during times of change for people to feel that they are not loved” (138). Being misunderstood in this balance of love and strength leads to what McNeal sees as what “leaders ultimately fear—rejection by the people they are called to lead” (7). During times of discouragement, Nelson and Appel claim, “[I]t is the leader’s job to encourage the people while he is containing his own fears” (266).

Tough Calls

Servant leaders make the tough calls. To lead as a true servant leader requires good use of time by strategically working with other leaders who will multiply the servant leader’s efforts. Drucker, referring to Jesus spending so much time with the twelve, encourages leaders following his example to invest time in the leaders around them: “One works with the leaders because there is a rule in human affairs that the gap between the leaders and the average is a constant” (167). For Shawchuck and Heuser, “[t]oo much of the rhetoric and behavior of the senior pastor and board alike are still devoted to the caring of one individual, and not enough attention is given to caring for the congregation as a whole” (187). Southerland counsels, “Don’t let the whiners set the agenda of your church. Don’t let the complainers have the time that you need to be giving to the workers” (125). Southerland believes this discipline requires good self-care so the leader is healthy enough to make these tough decisions because “[a]nyone who gets down

tends to slow down—it is a fact of life. [T]here is always a potential storm brewing somewhere out there” (121). Drucker realizes this awareness leaves a tougher problem in the conflict between competence and compassion:

[The] need to ensure competence and the need for compassion. But the executives who agonize over this decision do worse than those who say, “We made a mistake. I cut. It’s going to hurt, but I cut.” It’s usually cleaner, faster, and less painful. (154)

Leaders make the cut because of the responsibility to the larger group and because leaders understand the old saying, “[E]very soldier has the right to competent command” (154).

Mentoring Relationships

Servant leaders participate in mentoring relationships as those receiving as well as those giving the mentoring. With the understanding of the importance of servant leaders leading other leaders, mentoring is a part of the experience for the transitional pastor, both in being mentored and mentoring others. Leaders need to be selective in the effectiveness of those that surround them, both as mentors and as fellow ministers. Evaluation of effectiveness, Max DePree suggests, may seem crass if one of the parties is a volunteer, “and it probably is—unless we’re serious about our mission, unless we truly believe members want to grow and reach their potential and serve society, unless we take our clients seriously, unless we respect our donors” (qtd. in Drucker 77). Drucker advises leader selection based on a link between loyalty and competence (17). Senge would say selection is based on alignment of both the people and the organization since “to empower people in an unaligned organization can be counterproductive” [emphasis deleted] (146). While DePree thinks “it’s better to err on the side of being more demanding of a person than of being less demanding” (qtd. in Drucker 41), Senge would

add the need for forgiveness in the mentoring relationship because for true leaders “making the mistake is punishment enough” (301). Stanley and Clinton argue “the more deliberate and intense the mentoring relationship, the more important these dynamics” of attraction, responsiveness, and accountability become (44). The Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership supports Southerland’s belief leaders learn best from other leaders: “[W]hen you want to learn how to do something, . . . learn from practitioners—not from theoreticians” (28). For Ford this concept is best expressed in the life of Jesus where “Jesus’ authority was not something *imposed* [original emphasis]” on others, but rather a force he *exposed* (124). My belief is the ministry of the gospel is not meant to be a safe place for people pleasers, but a risk-taking adventure for the called and set-apart.

Spiritual leaders follow a God who sent his Son to bear a cross, and the Son tells all followers in each of the synoptic gospels disciples are to pick up the cross and follow (Matt. 10:37-38; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). As leaders pick up this proverbial cross, Senge cautions the need to learn to mold and overcome other strong forces:

[S]uch “visionary crisis managers” often become tragic figures. Their tragedy stems from the depth and genuineness of their vision. They often are truly committed to noble aspirations. But noble aspirations are not enough to overcome systemic forces contrary to the vision. Ecologists say, “Nature bats last.” Systemic forces will win out over the most noble vision if we do not learn how to recognize, work with, and gently mold those forces. (355)

Senge fails to account for God’s omnipotence, even over nature. My belief is spiritual leaders are to offer their own lives to follow the example of Christ, willing to offer their own lives sacrificially for the God those leaders love: loving his Church, feeding and caring for it as one’s own body. Pastors are not called to do this work alone but to support each other in the ministries God entrusts, submitting to each other in love and with the

gifts and strength from God serving the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:21, 25-32).

Gathered Wisdom

The gathered wisdom on servant leadership leads to these conclusions. Servant leadership, like all leadership, requires constant development. Servant leadership is not limp and ineffective but strong, passionate, God-directed, powerful leadership. Servant leaders who understand tough love will be able to make the tough calls and not only lead, but mentor other leaders as well.

Risk Taking and Gauging Success

Spiritual success is often seen as numbers, but success is deeper than just how many people are in the seats on Sunday. True success will only be known in eternity, but the risks to be taken must be taken now.

Real Battle

The real battle is spiritual. To survive long-term, one must be certain of one's call. This certainty comes with the attendant realization being called assures pastors a struggle. The struggle is not with the people of the church but with spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Eph. 6:12-13). Therefore, how leaders arm themselves and move forward looks different because of the understanding of where the real battle lies. Challenges, risk taking, and the loneliness of command all contribute to the cost of leadership, especially in the critical realm of the eternal:

Conflict always takes an emotional toll... In the most crucial times of testing, Jesus had no one but his Father. Yet that was enough. His strategy was to face unconditional opposition with unconditional resistance and his weapons were prayer and the words of Scripture. (Ford 259)

Nevertheless, pastors understand the love they have for the people in their charge cannot be comprehended by those who do not share the responsibility:

The same people who make the church messy also make the church meaningful. After all, people are what God is about. We must never come to the place where there is not room for one more person. We must be willing to make a mess to save a life. (McManus 71)

With this commitment comes what McManus refers to as the “cost of leadership” (133), where pastors must be “warrior poets who lead both through courage and suffering” (149). A commitment to reaching out to the lost caused more pain in my local church than anything since a church split a few years ago. Spiritual leaders need to read the Bible for courage because pastors need to lead churches committed to the mission of God. Spiritual leaders must no longer view each church as “the one place where an unbelieving world could not get to us” (McManus 65), but each Christian must see the church as a safe place from which to rush out to those who need Jesus. Because pastors realize the stakes are eternal and souls hang in the balance, pastors measure success differently since God makes clear what to value and what to fear. These decisions, made well, enable spiritual leaders to be part of Wesley’s vision as “we fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God” (Telford 6: 272).

Crucible Leadership

Crucibles are a leadership reality. Because a true battle continues and God allows his servants to be tempered through trials, pastors can expect crucible experiences in church leadership. Ford sees “the most acute test of moral authority comes when facing testing and hardship” (131). Jesus confronted suffering; he never viewed it as an illusion to be exposed or as a misfortune to be accepted passively:

Neither did he look upon suffering as a friend to be welcomed, nor did he play the martyr who invited trouble. Rather, he saw suffering as a necessary part of putting right a broken and a fallen humanity, an experience neither to be denied nor to be sought.... If he were to fulfill his

mission, it could not be avoided. Some things, he knew, could only be accomplished through suffering. (131)

Since crucibles are a part of leadership, Southerland exhorts, “[T]he reality is that criticism and opposition will drive you somewhere. Let it drive you closer to God and you will become better; let it drive you away from God and you will become bitter” (120). Nevertheless, even a cursory reading of both Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King alongside Warren would align them with Collins and Porras in saying comfort is not the objective. Indeed visionary companies and a visionary God both require Christian leaders to respond more proactively than the world being served. The church, however, has a long tradition of not adapting to *anything*, from air conditioners to overhead projectors, until several decades after the world’s demands. This trend leads to a leadership climate in the Church where even transitions at the speed of the rest of the world are viewed as cutting edge and inherently risky. Church institutions are seen as secure but, in reality, are dying from attrition. McManus is right when he says, “This most dangerous place is where a leader is seeking to transition a congregation from institution to movement [where the] survival of the leader, in and of itself, is a miracle” (186).

Many pastors will say the problem is that they deal with broken people. Hurt people hurt people. Pastors being just people are often the target of those who have been hurt:

When you come to God, you discover that he is perfect. When you come to Christian community, you discover that God’s people are not. Loving God is the most natural thing in the world to do. It’s loving *people* [original emphasis] that’s a miracle. (McManus 170)

Yet, loving people is what God calls Jesus followers to do through this moral

compulsion, to love people to a God that loves them enough to die for them. That call compels spiritual leaders to risk the onslaught of the fortress mentality of Christians to lead others to Jesus.

Because this challenge requires leaders who are optimistic, the temptation in developing the other leaders around the pastor is to diminish the negative and overstate the positive. Max DePree cautions that leaders need to be “especially careful not to screen out things that may bring pain” to leadership but to remember good leaders do not inflict pain; they bear it (34). Congregations would be better served by spiritual leaders who model well bearing pain for the bride of Christ. Nouwen believes some of that pain comes from low self-esteem. He states, “Many priests and ministers today increasingly perceive themselves as having very little impact,” are “fruitless” and experiencing “little praise and much criticism” (18-19).

I am reminded of a common story involving a mother teaching her daughter about how to deal with these crucible times. The mother boils a carrot, an egg, and some coffee beans for an extended period of time, then without a word sets the boiled carrot, the egg and the coffee beans in separate bowls before her daughter. She explains to her daughter that the boiling water is like the challenges they experience. The carrot went in tough and hard but came out soft and mushy. The egg went in delicate and came out hardened. The coffee beans were the only ones that changed the water. If leaders are going to change the world, they must allow God to transform their own challenges into “coffee beans” that transform the storms and the people around the leaders. As Slaughter says, “All of us experience seasons of doubt and frustration; unlearning leaders step out of the boat anyway” (29).

Learning Levels

Leaders are well served when these risks are reframed into new levels of learning. Learning to differentiate the conflict type helps leaders discern the best response. Ford describes three kinds of conflict: fundamental, unavoidable, and essential. In each case he recommends different responses, from stand and fight, to facing it down, using it as a teaching opportunity. A proper response leads to more effective handling of the conflict simultaneously dealing with the inherent responsibility to the people being led while enhancing the spiritual life of the leaders. Inevitably times will come when leaders fail to discern or respond properly. Bennis and Thomas teach, “Everything our leaders learn, including the sting of failure, gets added to their tool kits” (176), and, likewise, the former CEO of Johnson and Johnson understands “failure is our most important product” (qtd. in Collins and Porras 140). True leaders can “create meaning out of events and relationships that devastate non-leaders. Even when battered by experience, leaders do not see themselves as helpless or find themselves paralyzed” (Bennis and Thomas 17). Persistence is a godly trait spiritual leaders recognize as part of the call. Only those who persevere receive what God has promised (Heb. 10:36). “The transformation that our leaders described when they talked about their crucibles was essentially a process of education” (117). While perseverance requires living through the cost of change, the very crucibles survived bring the transformation as leaders are conformed to the image of Christ. “The change that our leaders experienced—the thing that pushed them to the next plateau—*is* [original emphasis] learning and they all seem to appreciate its unique power... The love of learning seems to have anesthetized [them] against the fear of failure” (117). More importantly, leaders have learned to redefine failure as failing God

and that failure is simply unacceptable. Surviving perceived failures and close calls cause leaders to move faithfully forward and learn new ways to accomplish eternal goals.

A Hewlett Packard manager says, “I never want us to be satisfied with our success, for that’s when we’ll begin to decline” (qtd. in Collins and Porras 85). The lesson is leaders are never satisfied, so change is a constant and change brings conflict. To live in peace, as far as that peace depends upon the Christ follower, then requires Christians to find the “pivotal moment in most transitions where peace must be waged” (Southerland 139).

Justified Risk

The reward must be worthy to justify the cost of the risk. The Church serves the noblest of all causes. Theodore Roosevelt challenged those who would make a difference with these thoughts:

Far better to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much, because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory, nor defeat. (qtd. in Collins and Porras 91)

Of all people called to make a difference, Christian leaders have both more to lose and more to gain than any other leader. Pastors simply cannot settle for this middle ground of apathy.

The truth is “good people don’t want to be part of something that requires little of them” (DePree 19-20).

This risk reward assessment changes how leaders talk about events:

Bernard Bass in *Leadership and Performance beyond Expectations*, has contrasted the style of transactional and transformational leaders. The transactional leader talks about *payoffs* [original emphasis]; the transformation leader talks about *goals* [original emphasis]. The transactional leader bargains about *exchanges* [original emphasis]; the

transformation leader provides *symbols* [original emphasis]. The transactional leader consults about what *followers want* [original emphasis]; the transformational leader talks to them about *higher objectives* [original emphasis]. (Ford 267)

The risk reward assessment changes limited goals into BHAGs that engage people. As the Church, Jesus has charged his followers with a BHAG that “reaches out and grabs them in the gut. It is tangible, energizing, highly focused. People ‘get it’ right away; it takes little or no explanation” (Collins and Porras 94). Visionary goals are by definition bold:

[B]old, falling in the gray area where reason and prudence might say “This is unreasonable,” but the drive for progress [or in the case of the Church eternal significance] says, “We believe we can do it nonetheless. Again, these aren’t just ‘goals’; these are Big Hairy Audacious Goals.” (97).

Nevertheless, remember, “*a BHAG only helps an organization as long as it has not yet been achieved* [original emphasis]” (97). The Great Commission has yet to be achieved, but spiritual leaders must constantly refocus people on what God is doing to fulfill this part of the mission in a relevant time and place. Bolman and Deal say, “Above all, [people involved] must feel that the organization is doing something worth doing. (405)

Eternal Reward

All Christian leaders are called to march on into the battle expecting success but with no guarantees in this life. The reward must be worth the risk recognizing opposition is a reality. “The only person with no opposition is the person who is doing nothing worth opposing. The most blessed ministries in any area are also the most criticized” (Southerland 153). Wisdom dictates leaders expect the challenge, expect the success, but recognize the call comes with no guarantees. Pastors must “expect opposition: expect apathy, expect anger, expect ridicule, expect criticism, expect a fight” but never take

criticism personally (113-16). Motorola CEO Galvin reminds leaders “at times we must engage in an act of faith that key things are doable that are not provable” (qtd. in Collins and Porras 110). Applying that statement is especially critical in the Church. That thought resonates with the concept Blackaby and King cite in that the Church must always take on God-sized tasks if the people want to see God at work.

The reality is the Church has a great challenge in reaching people who need Jesus and in getting people already convinced to agree with Jesus on the importance of sharing that good news. McManus actually had people come to him and complain his church had become too evangelistic when he suggested, “In everything that is negotiable, we should not make it difficult for those who do not know God to come to him” (87). The sad commentary on the Church is this mistaken sense of priorities is not uncommon; McManus’ parishioners were just more honest than most. Pastors know all churches want to grow—until they do. Church leaders are faced with two fronts of conflict. On one front, church leaders are charged with reaching a world that needs Jesus. On the other front, these same Christian leaders are charged with leading churches to reach out while the people in the congregations believe the church is a sanctuary to protect Christians from the world, a fortress to be defended, not a mission station to send ministers out into a broken world.

In all of this turmoil, pastors are called to march on. Pastors must make every effort to “[c]ount the cost. Pay the price. And don’t look back” (Nelson and Appel 263). This commitment requires leaders to stay the course; “Don’t stop half-way home! You don’t get any credit for runners left on base” (Southerland 150). Like William Booth, the spiritual battle cry must be, “While there remains one dark soul without the light of God,

I'll fight. I'll fight to the very end" (qtd. in Hunter, Howto Reach Secular People 133).

Christian leaders must never start change looking for a guarantee of success, but committing to following the God that never quits on God's people, leaders who would follow Jesus must march on to the very end. Only there will leaders find any guarantees of success.

Great Success

Nevertheless, great risk opens our lives to great success. Teddy Roosevelt said, "[C]redit belongs to the one who is in the ring, whose face is marred by blood and sweat and knows the great passions and also knows the great failures" (qtd. in Bennis and Thomas 129). Pastors must realize the dream of a church with a painless transition is as elusive as a church with no problems. "There is always a price for transition. And there are always those who think the price is too high" (Southerland 132). To lead through these painful transitions, a call and passion to see the world changed for Jesus is imperative. "It is the pastors and church leaders who are willing to do what other pastors and church leaders are afraid or unwilling to do who will change the world" (Hamilton, Leading beyond the Walls 198). Jesus calls his followers to a boldness in order to experience his best.

The most important priority is "not that everything *goes* [original emphasis] right, but that what you're *doing* [original emphasis] is right" (McManus 190) because great leaders do "cause great problems" (192). Pastors have been taught along with people in the pews "failure is equivalent to sin" (197), so pastors must protect against not trying at all rather than to risk failing. This truth leads Hybels to plead, "Will you please either act decisively or step aside so someone else can? Do one or the other. But someone has to

lead this church with courage” (Courageous Leadership 206). McManus encourages, “To live outside of God’s will puts us in danger; to live in his will makes us dangerous” (33). Nevertheless, this courage does not come with a guarantee leaders will succeed in their eyes or the eyes of others:

Most often we read the Bible for comfort, assurance, and certainty, but not for courage—at least not in the truest sense. We’re willing to engage in battle if we believe that God has promised ultimate victory. We have somehow convinced ourselves that God has signed a contract with us, promising that we will never fail. Implied in that is that we will never suffer, go through disappointment, or even be inconvenienced in the journey. What Jonathan knew without any doubt was that nothing could stop God from saving, whether by many or by few. But he was honest when he looked at his young armor-bearer and said, “Perhaps the Lord will act in our behalf.” (149-50)

As leaders called to follow the Leader at all costs, charged to make the final call to risk it all, or risk losing it all, with hope ringing in the leaders’ ears of hearing the Master say, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matt. 25:14-29) pastors march forward with hope and conviction.

Eternal Perspective

Gauging success and problems must be done with an eternal perspective. Success is not best understood by tracking and charting the attendance numbers or offering amounts. Hamilton cautions pastors to examine the standards by which success is gauged carefully:

Never set numerical goals for your church or ministry. Numbers are the product of quality ministry, not the goal. Setting numerical goals is a function of pride or a desire for achievement.... [S]tudy to see what the likely outcome is numerically, but the aim is never about reaching a certain number, the focus is always on quality ministry. (Leading Beyond the Walls 187)

Quality ministry is always the priority, and the numbers may or may not emanate from that center.

If one watches the ministry of Jesus, one sees where he went from crowds of thousands when he was feeding the masses to a group of just 120 in the upper room waiting to be deployed after the Ascension. Leaders are cautioned in Scripture a time will come when numbers are not a good gauge of following Jesus' direction, and during that time Christians are told to "keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry" (2 Tim. 4:3-5).

One of the problems with using numbers as a measure of success is the temptation to lead by majority rule. Choices are made, not based on God's call to do so but because the people pastors are charged to lead want to be led in a particular direction. Frankly, casting lots has a better track record scripturally. God's people voted and by majority rule chose not to enter the Promised Land and were chastised by God with forty years in the wilderness. God's people cast lots for Judas' successor. While some argue it was the wrong choice because no more is heard about him, at least the church is not disciplined for the next forty years. The only relatively safe direction to follow is to follow the Head of the Church if Christian leaders are to lead well. This responsibility will require change:

[L]eadership involves change, and change precipitates crisis, a leader must expect that there will be those who resist as well as those who follow. "One could argue," writes John W. Gardner "that willingness to engage in battle when necessary is a sine qua non of leadership." (Ford 252)

The Church must grow past the idea that numbers and popularity are synonymous with godly leadership. That is simply not scriptural.

Before leaders come to the conclusion somehow the Church is exempt from this resistance, Drucker teaches the Church has a "greater propensity for internal conflict than

business [in nonprofits] precisely because everybody is committed to a good cause” (125). Southerland claims, “[T]he very nature of change means that it is going to feel unfair to some” (133), leading to Drucker’s conclusion: “The most important task of an organization’s leader is to anticipate crisis. Perhaps not to avert it, but to anticipate it” (9). Resistance often results in change. In dealing with the anticipated criticism, McNeal is right in saying to “weigh them, don’t count them” (158). George Cladis recommends sabotaging power controllers with the truth saying, “Only rarely have I come across people considerably more resistant and hardened, who, when it is obvious the church is moving toward an empowering model and they cannot fight it, leave the congregation” (138). Some people in a given congregation may leave. This loss is acceptable. When the local church loses members to another local congregation but reaches others for Jesus, the kingdom of God grows even at the expense of the reputation of the pastor involved. While true that those who leave are few, my experience finds equally true that these disgruntled members are often very entrenched. Therefore, leaders must have some plan to deal with this reality.

One would do well to remember McManus’ wisdom: “Great leaders create great problems” (192). One should also follow the counsel of Hamilton when he challenges pastors “not [to] be discouraged by opposition. Listen and learn, but if you have strong support for the vision from a large number of your leaders, charge ahead” (Leading beyond the Walls 143). In the midst of paying the cost for the changes as God calls leaders to charge ahead, leaders do well to remember “all moving objects encounter resistance” (Southerland 126). As pastors deal with the requisite conflict management, Drucker provides a more realistic gauge of success when he says, “You don’t resolve the

conflict, but you do make it irrelevant” (126).

Since, as I have argued, success is not measured by numbers and charts, the alternative is to measure success long-term and with an eternal perspective. McManus says, “The measure of an apostolic community is not in the legends created by heroic acts but in the quality and texture of what that community considers ordinary living” (212). For Slaughter, success is measured by leaders “more concerned with integrity of lifestyle than size of institution” (110). For McManus success is achieved “when evangelism is not reserved for the elite” (222), “kingdom relationship become everyone’s responsibility” (222), and this expectation becomes “the radical minimum standard” (222). Without this radical minimum standard, the Church declines and all hope of eternal perspective fades along with the decline.

Eternal significance must be gauged not just by reaching seekers because Southerland’s assessment is correct: “If all you do is reach seekers and you do not develop them, then by default you become a shallow church” (160). Nevertheless, eternal significance is reached when the church turns “an audience into an army” (Hunter, Church 10) with each believer leading others into the kingdom as they grow in ardor and obedience to Jesus.

Discipleship requires servant leadership even the pre-Christian understands as reflected in Collins and Porras who believe leading great enterprises requires understanding the importance of the CEO not fearing his or her own demise but instead being concerned for the company (38). Pastors are back to the importance of dying to self (Matt. 16:24). Ego problems often are at the center of church problems, both on the part of the leaders and on the part of the people. I remember a very wise pastor saying he

could only judge his ministry by how the church was doing five years after he had gone. Pastors must be sure the leadership goal is to build God's kingdom and not their own. When God's will is followed, "when a God thing starts happening in a church, even the enemies of the church know it is a God thing. It is that obvious" (Southerland 151).

Gathered Wisdom

The gathered wisdom on risk taking and success leads to these truths. The real battle for the leader is spiritual. God develops the character of Christ in godly leaders through crucibles. All people go through trials, but godly leaders learn as Christ did, through the trials. The reward of becoming the leader God called each pastor to be makes the journey worth the cost. Christian leaders march on with no guarantees of success, only reward. Only through great risk is great success ennobled. Success then is not measured by mere numbers but by a very long-term, even eternal, scale.

Research Design Literature

Semi-structured interview protocol is a recent extension of the structured interview protocol and allows for a less intrusive way to glean more specific data from exemplars. For gathering wisdom from specific examples, this method grants the flexibility needed to permit the greatest learning from those with the knowledge being sought. The National Health Service of Scotland credits the semi-structured interview method with allowing for comparisons while giving the freedom to explore general views or opinions in more detail. The World Health Organization credits this method with increasing the amount of information the interviewee is willing to share. H. Russell Bernard suggests semi-structured interview protocol, with a formal interview guide, is preferred when a single interview is used for gathering data suggesting this protocol is

“what most people write about” (191). Robert B. Burns recommends an interview guide without fixed wording or ordering of questions so the content can focus on the critical issues of the study (424). The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has used this protocol effectively and suggests the interview guide grid as the tool for gathering data (Food and Agriculture). Epistemics, a knowledge management service in the United Kingdom, suggests questions for semi-structured interviews ideally be constructed and provided to the respondents some time before the interview so the respondents can answer with the most relevant data. Epistemics also suggests asking no more than ten to fifteen questions per hour of interview.

Summary of the Literature

In the investigation of leadership dynamics of successful compound change in medium to large local congregations the literature has much written on the art of leading through change that covers the vision that leads and drives change, change dynamics and theories, the devotional life of the leader, servant leadership, mentoring, risk taking, and gauging success, both inside and outside the life of the church. The art of coordinating change is further complicated when a congregation faces changes in more than one area at the same time. The next step in the learning revolves around leading medium to large-sized congregations through compound, high-level, organizational change for the glory of God and the health of the church.

Therefore, the key issues to focus attention when dealing with compound change are the organizational dynamics, the personal dynamics, and other unique dynamics in a church environment. In the organizational dynamics, the challenges that lead to the need for compound change, how vision affects that change, and how to deal with

organizational realities provide insights. In personal dynamics, the change affecting the leader, self-care for the leader, the dynamics of servant leadership, and mentoring in the leader's life. Other unique dynamics include risk taking and gauging success and the role of spiritual warfare in a church committed to effecting compound, high-level, organizational changes.

Simple changes are done without much notice or cost. Changes such as how often the newsletter goes out or what color the new carpeting should be or changing the coffee service to include donuts rarely have a long-term effect on growth in a local congregation. Major changes that affect direction and vision usually are much more complex with compound implications that affect the very culture of the local congregation. These changes are seldom made without a strong leader willing to lead these changes at great personal and corporate cost. This second level of change was the focus of this research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Problem and Purpose

Changes are, by definition, required for churches to excel beyond their current state. Members of the body of Christ serve a God of resurrections, but Christians are a people who fear and resist change. Every resurrection is, by definition, a change. Wise, scriptural leaders will want to prepare proactively for these changes and gather as much information as possible from the larger body of Christ on how God has worked to prepare others in similar situations. The purpose of this study was to explore the leadership dynamics of successful compound change in medium to large local congregations. This was an exploratory study using semi-structured interviews.

Research and Operational Questions

The methodology of this study used a semi-structured interview protocol using a criterion-based selection process to allow gathering as much data as possible in forty-five minutes from the selected pastors. The interview guide created follows the example suggested by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (Food and Agriculture). The semi-structured interview protocol allowed for a less intrusive way to gather information. During interviews only brief notes were taken. Immediately following the interview, the matrix was completed for each interviewee's responses.

Research questions began with a grand tour of the compound change experienced by the interviewee to establish the setting and help the interviewer establish rapport and address the particular situation more relevantly. This area asked for information on the current setting where the compound change had been led, how long ago it had occurred,

how the leader recognized the need for change, and what key people were involved in that change. The second area addressed the organizational dynamics of the change. Questions in this area addressed the impact on ministry direction, staff, and budget. Interviewees were also asked to respond to how they dealt with any loss of attendance and/or finances when the change was implemented. The third area of questioning addressed the personal dynamics experienced during the change. In this area Beeson Pastors were asked what changes they had to make in themselves and in their skills to lead through these changes. They were also asked how they cared for themselves physically and spiritually and what mentoring they found helpful during these transitions. The final section of questioning was about other dynamics encountered during these changes. Pastors were asked how they viewed risk taking and gauging success in the church, how they discerned any spiritual warfare element in church change, and how their Beeson Pastor training had been helpful in leading through compound change. These pastors were also asked to respond to any other elements of the change they thought would be helpful to understanding the total story of the changes they helped lead. A complete listing of the prompt questions with the suggested wording is provided in Appendix B in the Topic Guide used by the interviewers. Appendix C deals with the specifics of how the interviewers were trained before making the calls.

Participants

Pastors interviewed by telephone have (1) been through compound, high-level, organizational changes that have resulted in cultural level changes in the congregation, (2) were senior pastors of a church they had not founded during the time of the changes, (3) the churches where the transitions occurred had over two hundred in average

attendance before the changes studied, and (4) the churches where they led the transitions existed for at least twenty-five years before the change began.

Beeson pastors selected for the purposes of this study were graduates of the program as identified by the interim dean, Dr. Ellsworth Kalas.

Instrumentation

Respondents were selected by responding to an e-mail as presented in Appendix A where they self-identified as qualifying for the study as well as requesting their willingness to participate. A second e-mail and follow-up phone calls were made in order to get the maximum number of interviews possible. The Research and Reflection Team was researcher trained in the semi-structured interview protocol and the use of the topic guide to do the phone interviews using the agenda presented in Appendix C. The interview grid presented in Appendix B follows the suggestions of the United Nations for their interviews (Food and Agriculture). Phone interviews were conducted by the Research and Reflection team with the interview topic guide in Appendix B as direction for the discussion. Consistent quality was assured through the training of the team by the researcher and by the review process holding each interviewer accountable for the information gleaned. The Research and Reflection Team then met together to interpret and analyze the data. Their findings were compiled into Appendix D.

Validity

Quota sampling relies on personal judgment, willingness of those asked to participate, and availability that may produce a bias of selection and/or participation. The United Nations notes, “This method relies on personal judgment, such as who is willing to talk and who is [available]” (Food and Agriculture). This study relied on self-selected

quota sampling that gave preference to those who responded and were willing to be interviewed. The possibility exists that some of those not willing to be interviewed might have had more negative change experiences and that data would not be included in this study.

This study specifically addressed only congregations transitioning in established churches and not the separate question of new church plants. The choice of pastors was the largest variable since the answers they gave are specific to their call and context, which limits generalizability of the data. Because only pastors were interviewed, this study made no attempt to contact others in the congregation who experienced these same changes, leaving the self-perceptions of the leaders only.

The study only addresses churches with compound changes leading to a second level of major change and not churches with first level change.

The pastors studied had all experienced the change process with at least two hundred in their congregation, so this project did not address the challenges of implementing changes in the context of much smaller, and admittedly more numerous, rural churches.

The semi-structured interview format allowed comparisons while giving the freedom to explore general views or opinions in more detail (National Health Service). The topic guide itself was reflective of my bias that such topics are relevant to the discussion. The purpose of using the semi-structured format was to allow for unexpected issues to emerge and to probe those issues as well. Semi-structured interviews allowed for the maximum breadth of information from each respondent. Nevertheless, it also compounded the complexity of collating the data gained. This format did allow for the

flow of questions to be the most natural for the respondents, hopefully increasing the amount of information they might be willing to share (MedNet 3). This format also allowed for the reasons and feelings behind the interviewees' views to be part of the data collected.

Data Collection

The e-mails were sent to each invited pastor as presented in Appendix A. An executive summary of the results of the study was offered in gratitude for participation. Phone contact was made with the offices of each responder to set up forty-five minute phone interview appointments. Phone interviews were conducted with the interview grid as a guide for the discussion.

The interviews consisted of a semi-structured interview protocol using the topic guide in Appendix B. The interviewee was greeted in a culturally appropriate way. The expectations of the interview time and informed consent were confirmed. The first topic was not sensitive and was important to the respondent. Questions were open-ended without being leading, but dialog followed the flow of the discussion, asking probing questions. When possible, phrases that the interviewee used were utilized in follow-up questions. No judgments on the responses or opinions were offered during the interview. After the interview, the interviewer responded to questions and issues raised by the interviewees and thanked them for their time. While the interviewer limited the questions to the forty-five minutes, the interviewee often pursued continued dialog after the official time had expired. When the conversation was extended by the person interviewed, data gained from this additional conversation is included in the results.

The data was collected into a grid with all responses for the purpose of

triangulating any consistencies as well as recording any great insights from a single individual. This data was then used for this dissertation and the creation of the executive summary of the learning reported from this study to those participants who had asked for the information.

Variables

The choice of pastors was the largest variable since the answers they gave were specific to their call and context, which limits generalizability. Pastors willing and available to respond to this project may also be statistically different in their responses than those who were not willing or unable to respond. The project assumes that pastoral memory is fresh, accurate, and objective while evaluating their own actions. Selective recall and “evangelistic” responses could skew the data.

Variables were inherent in the format itself since the purpose of using the semi-structured interview protocol was to allow for unexpected issues to emerge and to probe those issues as well. This format allowed for the maximum breadth of information from each respondent. Nevertheless, it also compounded the complexity of collating the data gained. This format also allowed for the flow of questions to be the most natural for the respondent hopefully increasing the amount of information they might have been willing to share (MedNet 3).

Controls

Controls were established by the selection of the respondents and the timing of the interviews. Each of the respondents were, at the time they were interviewed, or had been at the time of the learning discussed, lead pastors in churches that already existed before they became pastors. As a condition of participation, each of the respondents

agreed to the interview ahead of time, and the scheduled interview was set with their calendars in view. All of the pastors interviewed were identified as teaching pastors.

Data Analysis

The Research and Reflection Team consisted of four lay leaders in my church, one pastor in California who had led compound, cultural level changes while teaching others how to lead through those changes, and myself. I created the interview grid and did the team training. Other members of the Research and Reflection team did the actual interviews. The team as a whole reviewed the data from each respondent, asking for clarifying information from the interviewer on each pastor using the confirmatory theory approach. The Research and Reflection Team then discussed each interview in depth and looked for insights such as common themes, contrasting practices, contextual items, and what could be learned from each discussion. Information was triangulated from the responses of the persons interviewed with insights grouped by each relevant topic on the topic guide. A separate category was included for unexpected learnings gleaned from the semi-structured format. The Research and Reflection Team then reviewed the data, made comments and suggestions for the overall data, and reviewed the information presented in Chapter 4 for accuracy and anything that could be learned that had not been recorded.

An executive summary of the learning was collated from the data on the grid for dissemination to those participants who had requested this information and is detailed in the bullets at the end of Chapter 5.

Ethics

The data collected in this study was only shared within the Research and

Reflection Team for the purposes of evaluation. No specific church data was included in the information shared outside of the Research and Reflection Team. While the original interview data did include the names and locations, so data could be evaluated by geographical differences, compiled data is all that was preserved for the compilation in Appendix D and for the dissertation itself. No individual data is included.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Compound Changes Experienced

The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership dynamics of successful compound change in medium to large local congregations. This was an exploratory study using semi-structured interviews. Twenty-three pastors agreed to be interviewed after reviewing the criteria. Three were unavailable during the time of the study. Of those, two were eliminated during the interview because they disclosed that they were, in fact, the founding pastors of their local setting, leaving eighteen interviews used for this study.

Each of the interviewed pastors pre-identified themselves as having led a church through compound change defined as “multiple changes with a major impact on the organization at the cultural level during the tenure of the same pastor.” The interviews revealed that any change pastors led through is self-perceived as having a major impact on the church at a cultural level. Often one change the pastor experienced would have been considered very minor in isolation but, in combination with a major cultural change, took on added significance and seemed much more overwhelming.

Of those self-identifying leading through compound change, four identified changes that would not normally be objectively considered cultural level changes, giving examples such as a building program, additional program offerings, and preparation for change itself. Nevertheless, removing building from the mix had little effect except that those who listed building as one of the cultural level changes were slightly less prone to consider leaving and it was much more common for two lead pastors to have been involved in the change. These churches with building as one of the components were also

about 20 percent more likely to have experienced a negative impact financially.

One interviewed pastor could only identify having an existing congregation get along better as his change contribution; thus, the multiple, compound changes did not apply.

Organizational Dynamics

Interviews showed 33 percent of these pastors made major changes to the leadership structure either as part of what they identified as major changes or in preparation or response to other changes. The data revealed that 78 percent reported short-term negative impact of major decisions on attendance. That number jumps to 86 percent for those who lead through at least one major change and 100 percent for those who led through two major changes.

Only 50 percent reported short-term negative impact of major decisions on finances of the church; however, this number differs significantly by region. Churches in the South and West were much more prone to the financial effects of change with 67 percent reporting the issue. Those in the Midwest had even odds for this experience, while those in the North experienced little risk in this area with only 25 percent showing financial decline was a result.

Interviews revealed 72 percent found staff changes, defined as changing, reducing, or adding staff, were also necessary to lead through changes. Eleven of the eighteen led United Methodist churches with seven being from five other denominations. United Methodist pastors were almost 40 percent less likely to change the leadership structure of their congregations but were equally likely to make staff changes. Those in the United Methodist system noted that the district superintendent must be at least

supportive enough to allow pastors to stay through the inevitable conflict change requires. Also, United Methodist pastors were the only ones to continue the change direction begun by a previous senior pastor and all of these instances occurred only in the Midwest.

While traditional wisdom seems to be to ease into change, the pastors studied found that regardless of the time frame of the changes, resistance did not differ significantly. Interestingly, a propensity to change quickly and get past the pain swiftly was more common in those studied. In those settings where change initiation was delayed, no appreciable difference emerged in the congregational response. The only exception was in those pastors who continued with a change a predecessor began, in which case the cost to the incoming pastor was minimal. These pastors usually attributed this grace to the groundwork laid by the former senior pastor.

Visionary leaders found that at some point in the process they had to surround themselves with other leaders who shared the vision. This reality was true with both paid staff and unpaid leaders. In addition to removing those who were not on board with the vision, some of the leaders also proactively added staff and leadership positions to help move churches into the preferred future. Another learning from these leaders was the continuing need to encourage and recast the vision for the leaders in the congregation, even when things were on track. Several mentioned key additions to staff focused on targeted vision that needed to be hired proactively. Time was intentionally set aside by changing pastoral roles to investment in leaders as a priority. One pastor went so far as to meet with a group of his leaders for three hours a week to cast vision and pray. These vision champions were then expected to be influencing the congregation to help lead the

entire congregation forward into the vision. While God is the source of all godly vision, we heard repeatedly of the importance of getting distance from the current reality and for the pastors to surround themselves with people also dreaming visions beyond themselves. The strategy for local congregations then evolved from the discerned vision often was received or at least prompted during time away with other dreamers, yet this vision is unique to the setting, not simply imported. All of the respondents cited the vision coming through either the pastor or cabinet and implemented by the pastor. None reported a grassroots vision that the pastor then led.

While styles ranged from rapid-fire changes to slow introduction, the concept of communicating to the congregation was a major emphasis. Communicating did not mean simply getting consensus, but promoting the preferred future. One pastor even hired a part-time staff member with the sole purpose of selling the vision internally. Not an uncommon strategy was to flatter the congregation into acceptance, while others admitted that seeing the pain from not moving forward was also a motivator. Some wisdom in this area included using personal communication in lieu of other less personal forms and being humble in accepting both credit and blame. One pastor was able to get the older generation to fund movement forward for the younger generation, but this experience seemed to be a special blessing, not a strategy that worked broadly. One pastor found the tipping point for moving forward was to bring in an outside consultant, but most found that key to be in those God had gathered together in that local setting. Testimony, especially in “new stories” seemed always to bring a positive note to the process.

Data also indicated that outside of the West, especially in the United Methodist congregations, a great deal of cabinet or administrative-level decision making occurred in

these churches, and in those cases leadership in these changes were more likely to be highly directional and confrontational, leading often to swifter transitions, thus shortening the duration of the congregational conflict.

Part of leadership development in these churches was putting the right people into leadership. Development often took time and always took discernment because those in leadership needed to be totally committed to the vision. These pastors found for the vision to be realized, discernment was critical during implementation and the senior leader had to be able to trust those in leadership. Within this leadership structure, clear communication and definition of roles that allowed for delegation and discernment of what is working to move closer to the vision became key. Crucial to the vision to succeed is the development around the senior leader, but these pastors remind other Christians that those people may be either in officially elected positions or simply influencers in the congregation. While some of the pastors found hiring from the outside pragmatic, some also found to identify influencers within the current congregation limited some of the negative responses.

These pastors almost all mentioned not being able to over communicate or communicate in enough venues. That leadership mistakes would be used by already unhappy parishioners as validating reason to leave, even when the desire to leave as already present, was another insight from several interviews.

Personal Dynamics

The more changes made, the more likely the pastor's role in the congregation changed. Three-fourths of the interviewees with multiple major changes also reported

requisite changes in their expectations of ministry and of themselves in that role. The study had looked for changes in self-care and spiritual care in pastors but found many of these leaders had these skills in place before the changes studied. Data supports 78 percent had mentors either from their Beeson experience or from other sources, yet only 22 percent reported mentoring other leaders.

None of the pastors interviewed found change optional, but all found that to be faithful to their calling, change was a natural response to authentic Christian discipleship. None of the changes were overnight. In fact, one church took eighteen months to change when the perceived need was high in the congregation from the onset. No change was without cost, and yet each of these pastors believed the alternative was lack of faithful response to God and in the long run the failure of the bride of Christ to thrive. Almost all of the interviewed pastors were taken aback by the length and intensity of resistance from parishioners.

Any change of a true cultural magnitude requires leaders to address their own spiritual growth including their darkest fears. One of the interviewed pastors admitted how a previous failure not only caused this pastor to fear but also increased his ability to confront and remain committed to the vision. Many considered quitting. Many related crucible experiences. One pastor mentioned a church fire as a crucible that shaped his leadership. In discussing the loss of members, all admitted it was painful but noted the blessing of those God brings into the fellowship as a healing balm to their hearts. This consideration was not limited to a few weeks or months, but often lasted for years. Each of them would, in their more vulnerable and honest moments, admit the importance of hidden, midnight prayers and the reality of fear and worry. Most of these pastors

resonated with the fact that this burden must be carried while relying on the joy of the Lord or the pastor is destroyed in the process.

To survive spiritually through the tough times, these pastors remind that doubters and antagonists will always be among us. Almost always our pastors related being confronted with a controller in opposition. Any risk carries with it the very real possibility of failure. One interviewed pastor counsels other pastors not to be discouraged from past failures and to recognize that even if they personally fail, God can use even that for his glory. Even those pastors who faced minimal risk experienced significant levels of self-doubt.

Pastors interviewed often experienced high opposition and even public ridicule. Several interviewed pastors talked about vitriolic, personal attacks on them and even on their families, sometimes in public forums. One mentioned a former leadership couple creating a Web blog with destructive rhetoric. In addition to the personal battle, the congregation that pastor loves is at risk with people leaving and finances in peril. People often do not leave all at once, but in waves as minor changes, some even unrelated to the major directional changes, take on added significance. The spiritual aspect is an ever-present reality. Many of those who were able to lead through these changes referred to the audience of One and described faithfulness stemming from being more afraid of God than the people around them.

Many of the pastors indicated a need for increased prayer and surrounding themselves with intercessors. The data indicates that those praying were less apt to be part of the battle against change. One interviewed pastor set up prayer partners within the congregation for all of his leaders. One spoke of praying with other change-leading

pastors regularly. Most spoke of the importance of praying, especially for those who oppose him and God's vision for the church. Interviewed pastors encouraged other pastors to pray for those against God's vision for the church without being in denial that a true enemy exists. One even noted that spiritual warfare is actually a function of power and that the battles and power-plays in leading congregations are often just a reflection of that battle in the heavenlies.

The Research and Reflection Team noted conviction, passion, and determination given a leader to hear clearly from God a new direction that the leader realizes will come only at great personal and corporate cost often leads others to the belief that the leader suffers from hubris, boldness, and bravado in varying levels. Nevertheless, the research also noted in many cases this same conviction led to a deep humility within the pastor.

One finding showed that most pastors who lead through these changes found resources in area myriad of disciplines and applied them to a God-given situation. The source of the learning seemed less important than the relevance. Leadership was a focus for all who lead through major changes although one of those interviewed led more from the pulpit while the others took a more broad-based approach to leadership. Regardless of the gifts they used to do so, they all had an abundance of personal interaction with the congregation.

There was a strong need experienced by these pastors to move forward was balanced by the need to respect and add value to each person. The pastors noted the need to deal with antagonists head on. Sheep bite. All of the pastors discussed the vital need for supportive leadership. One of the interviewed pastors spoke of making those tough calls immediately upon arriving. One pastor even considered those changes to leadership his

major cultural change contribution.

Mentoring relationships were viewed as critical by all of the pastors, even those who claimed not to have a mentor at this time. Mentors could be from any discipline area, but accountability was important. In addition to physical mentors, other churches and literature were sources of mentoring that led these pastors forward. One pastor suggested learning from great books and great pastors, while another suggested only selecting learning from those in their immediate context. The need for mentoring often included the ability to see past the current reality giving the pastor the opportunity to experience that vision. Open, vulnerable, and accountable relationships with colleagues were viewed as very important. One pastor talked about how vision had helped him to preach vision and not just survival. In using mentor learning, these same pastors consistently identified the need to look for transferable learning principles, not just copy program. One of the greatest challenges seemed to be learning how to mentor others. United Methodists were more than 30 percent less likely to mentor others.

Just as Scripture counsels all Christians speak truth in love, many of these pastors found someone who will speak truth into their lives very important. Just as readily, they identified the need to speak truth in love to their congregations. Pastors who coddle and enable were seen as detriments to the health of the church.

Other Dynamics

Risk-taking ability had a direct correlation to those in the program interviewed and to any change implemented. Pastors included in this study demonstrated 89 percent viewed themselves as risk takers, although they would each be very intentional in defining the jeopardy was not risk for risk's sake but a calculated risk to participate with

God in moving the kingdom of God boldly forward. Interestingly, that number jumps to 100 percent for anyone who was identified as having made even one cultural level change. Fear, based on past perceived failures, makes risk taking less likely. One of the interviewed pastors specifically mentioned past failure making current risk taking harder for him to commit to pursuing.

Spiritual warfare was identified by 78 percent as a key component to leading cultural change. Pastors in the South and Midwest all identified spiritual warfare as a major component, while pastors in the West were least likely, with 33 percent identifying any spiritual warfare relevance. The level of change and the number of changes did not affect this determination.

All of the interviewed pastors were previously Doctor of Ministry students in the Beeson Pastor track, which includes a one year on-site residency program at Asbury Theological Seminary. When asked how that experience prepared them for the changes they led, 83 percent thought they received helpful training for implementing change; however, 39 percent found the training could have better prepared them in at least one area. In most cases, the challenge expressed by these pastors was that they had been taught to have great vision, but without a clear connection to the cost of implementing that vision. A common occurrence was to experience some ambiguity in how to discern transferable principles from the presentations. The pastors noted there is unaddressed short-term pain in the Beeson program and in most of the literature on church growth; however, some also noted that even tragedy can result in great blessing.

Pastors in both the South and the Midwest both considering leaving while those in the North and West did not report that as a part of the leadership experience.

The Research and Reflection Team also found that leading through any cultural change lowered the level of what these pastors considered major changes in their settings. After leading through one change, other seemingly minor changes took on major significance. A ripple effect of change is that it leads to a natural progression of sub-changes in addition to the change that was the primary focus. These changes are multifaceted, thus change leaders find preparation to manage change from many different levels over extended time intervals imperative. Even from pastors interviewed who had not experienced major changes and thus the accompanying pain from leading them, still counseled the need to “take risks and go out on the edge” as a prerequisite to experience God’s best for his people. Another who could not point to any risks he himself had taken recognized the need when he said, “If you are not taking risks, you aren’t following Jesus.” None of the risk-taking pastors, however, would condone risk for risk’s sake. None were in favor of careless risk, but all recognized that following Jesus could not be done faithfully from a point of safety.

The reward is often seen only in retrospect. One of the interviewed pastors looked back historically and recalled that the church’s history of taking in blacks in the 1930s made the current risks easier to lead. Many of the interviewed pastors were able to look back over the changes that had been implemented and see God’s blessing in their faithfulness.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Additions to Current Literature

The existing literature concedes the art of coordinating change is further complicated when a congregation faces changes in more than one area at the same time. Yet the literature does not address specifics of Beeson Pastors trained to lead through that change experiencing the next levels of learning as they apply the lessons taught in the Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership.

Simple changes often can be done by leaders with little or no extra training or experience in leading, much less leading change. Compound level changes require a higher level of risk and thus good stewardship requires leaders heading these changes to glean from all the learning of the larger Church possible. Having intense training in leading these changes can benefit wise leaders. Gaps in this learning can be filled. Pastors can become the strong leaders willing and able to lead these changes even when those changes come at great personal and corporate cost. The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership dynamics of successful compound change in medium to large local congregations.

Change is always difficult and the leader will always pay a price. Some people will leave. Often those who begin the change can not go the distance because they take some hits or because they can not see farther than their small piece of the vision. The pastor often must develop through this crucible an ability to love even through the pain; and that ability can be perceived as distance from the congregation at the very time they need to feel loved by their leader. Finances are often adversely affected, and the financial

situation gets worse before it gets better.

The pastor is often attacked, and often those attacks are personal. The adrenaline is high, and the work of leading cultural level change is arguably the toughest thing pastors do. Congregational acceptance of the need for change makes the changes somewhat easier, but when the really difficult times come, few congregations would willingly chose the harder road when social peace is the alternative. Without a unified budget, people will respond with redirecting God's tithes to their pet projects rather than to the mission and vision of the church. Evaluating to check the efficacy of changes made gives both an accountability and a safety net; however, following the Head of the Church regardless of short-term perceived efficacy must be the pastor's priority. If change is done poorly, the cost is even higher in loss of confidence in both the pastor and the congregation. Future change after a failed change becomes almost impossible for that local congregation. Nevertheless, in effective changes, the leadership that is able to see it through is often not in place when the pastor begins those changes; God brings them as part of rewarding the pastor's faithfulness.

Insights on Organizational Dynamics

Vision and change are inextricably linked within the church. Both the pastor and the surrounding leaders need to be committed to the well-being of the vision for it to materialize. Pastors learning to support staff and other leaders to become vision leaders themselves was imperative for multiple cultural level changes to occur. Only God's dreams are visions big enough to be worth pursuing. Those dreams then need to be dangled in front of the congregation to help them see what God has in store.

Godly vision must precede change, reorganization, or restructuring. Before a leader can move forward, a strong personal conviction that this change is God directed must exist, or it will not last past the inevitable reaction of the congregation. People in congregations for an extended period of time have expectations that are strongly held but not explicitly stated. Those are defined as a social contract. Interestingly, the strongest negative response is from parishioners who believe the social contract is being violated, not from people who believe where the pastor is leading is not scriptural or God directed. Notably, people usually do not react strongly to one change, but the strong reactions come as a consequence of the multiple levels of change required to move dying congregations to be water bearers of the Living Water.

Successful changes require visionary leaders sharing the vision with a core group of other leaders and influencers, paid or unpaid. Visionary leaders making cultural level changes must surround themselves with other leaders and influencers and displace those who are unable or unwilling to follow the leaders' vision. The visionary leader must be committed to seeing the vision through at whatever cost, and this vision must become the primary focus of their ministry to succeed. As the primary focus, this vision must not only be communicated well, but the opinion leaders who are helping lead into the future must become the visionary leader's priority through encouragement, prayer, and recasting the vision on a continual basis.

Servant leadership requires constant interaction with the congregation, but the role where that interaction happens may change significantly as part of the changes implemented. The style of leadership is often geographically or culturally determined, but the heart of the leader needs a balance of confidence and humility.

The senior leader must invest in the lives of other leaders who then pastorally care for those perceiving alienation during the process of living into the pastor's vision, or who can sell the vision beyond what the pastor, often viewed as an outsider, can do. If the vision takes root in someone else's mind, it no longer has to be carried by the pastor alone, but confirmation and communication are both enhanced by the support leader who sees the need for change. Regardless of where the leaders come from, pastors' time is well spent investing in other leaders as a means of moving godly vision forward.

After speaking truth in love, a time still comes when leaders must take action. Just as faith without works is dead, knowing the need for change without making the needed changes will not bring life or health to a church. Sometimes pastors must outlive and outlast congregants who do not want to change. It is critical for pastors to hire the right staff and quickly identify people in the wrong positions of leadership. When the pastor realizes a bad fit, a better choice is to change quickly to cut losses rather than try to improve the situation. Leading change is always a painful process, but making tough calls quickly can shorten the duration of the pain.

Insights on Personal Dynamics

Pastors must share in the strong love of Jesus, being willing to give their lives for the sheep, while not cheapening that love with codependency. As pastors stand for the vision for congregations and love of the people, pastors must stand just as firmly for the cost of discipleship. Because leaders only lead where they have already walked, they should expect to be stretched by God. Honoring previous senior pastors who are undermining current pastors' ministry, being invited by others to harm subversives, and

praying through the sheer terror of failure must all drive change leaders to their knees and not to their tennis shoes.

Hybels offers important insight into what leads to vision in the life of a leader. Specifically, using Moses as an example he talks about a leader reaching a “Popeye Moment” where an injustice or evil in the world reaches a point so the leader says with Popeye, “That’s all I can stand, I can’t stand no more” (“Leader’s State of Mind”). Hybels rightly discerns that when those moments happen, God is working in a leader’s life and when our “Popeye moment” and God’s “Popeye moment” meet, vision and call lead the leader to move forward into the preferred future with the power of God. During the writing of this dissertation, an episode of King of the Hill aired where the family decided to go church shopping and finally removes a new family and threatens their original church pastor to get their way in the church. As I watched it, I realized that was my “Popeye moment.” To see the church used as a battle ground for personal preference and not as a station to complete the mission and ministry of Jesus on this earth causes me no small degree of personal pain and frustration. Leading a church from the status quo to change requires a level of personal frustration and pain that goes to the very core of a leader’s being to the point where not leading change is more painful to them than the worst that others can do to thwart that change. For Moses, that pain meant enduring Pharaoh’s personal, corporate, and finally military attacks all while leading a people who did not want to leave the “comfort of slavery.” To lead a church through compound change likewise requires leaders to move forward through the attacks of those inside the church as well as those outside while battling the spiritual forces that never want the

church to move forward. None of this leadership can be accomplished well without that divine discontent driving leaders forward into the vision they know is shared by God.

Leading will be the most energy-intensive ministry a leader does, so being sure of God's call is imperative. To do this well, the pastor must learn from every source possible and then submit all the ideas and learnings to God's direction in the local setting. Only then is the pastor ready to share the vision and move others forward. The more personally and consistently this vision can be cast, the more likely that pastor is to see the desired results.

For change leadership to be effective, it must begin with a compelling call from God to lead that change. A dynamic balance between pastors' relationships with God and the love God has given those pastors for the people in the congregation being led is a must. This process must be followed by a discernment process by pastors, ideally in concert with other church leaders, into the spiritual realities of the local congregation that have kept this congregation locked in their current reality. Pastors need to consider the reputation in the community and perhaps in the denomination of their particular congregations as an aide in determining this spirit. Often the age of congregations are directly proportionate to their resistance to change. The age to resistance factor must also be understood as well as current comfort levels within congregations. Again, this resistance is directly proportional; namely, the more comfortable congregations are, the greater the resistance to change. Once pastors have discerned that call in their own lives and the spiritual challenges in their congregations, they are then able to lead others in the congregation into that godly direction for the future. Vision comes from leaders to the

people rather than from being discerned by the entire body and then being implemented by the leader.

Leaders never reach a level of learning that gives them everything they need to move forward, but leaders are constantly growing in grace and perfection. Constant learning is one of the requirements to judging calculated risks. Moving forward without all the answers is imperative for leading cultural level changes.

Often those standing most opposed to change were ingratiated to the congregation because of their unhealthy need for love. Pastors must share the strong love of Jesus without diminishing the true cost of discipleship

While our interviewed pastors point to the need for United Methodist district superintendents to be supportive enough for them to stay, a parallel truth exists that pastors needed to be willing to walk through the crucible of change and not use the United Methodist system as a safety net out of the pain. Only through God bringing each of his called through the crucible can his chosen become the pastors God created them to become.

Learning emerged showing that no matter how changes are done, waves of people who cannot go into God's preferred future with the leader still result. Learning a major, calculated risk taker was required to make even the smallest needed changes for the church to thrive was a new learning level for the team. Most of all the team learned that leaders must continually learn more as they lead the most important venture on earth.

This study found that vision is not a one-time, mountain-top experience but a constantly unfolding vision being continually revealed as leaders are faithful through each revealed step. Once God has shown pastors a preferred future, change is never

optional. Just as certainly, predictable costs in both attendance and finances become part of the pastor's reality. This learning reminds leaders to prepare for this cost, but it further reveals that this cost bearing, like cross bearing, is not an overnight process. Often the cost is more like a slow drain. The interviewed pastors revealed a large group might leave and then later, after things seem stable, another group might leave over an otherwise insignificant issue. Add to this slow drain the constant drip of the few who leave individually, and pastors cannot just bite the bullet once but must struggle to maintain vision and passion through a season of change. Wise pastors will have good spiritual and physical disciplines in place before beginning the process. In addition, any planning to overcome the financial impact caused by people leaving the congregation or using their tithe checks to manipulate pastors' policies, help with the very real impact of making change in local congregations. Pastors also need both accountability and a strong commitment to see the change through to keep the changes from becoming more of a hindrance to the local congregation than a blessing. Should leaders fail in this commitment when the cost becomes more clear, both pastors and congregations suffer, often irrecoverably.

This visioning process is expected to be a challenging process at the very apex of difficulty. Most consider quitting. Only strong commitment to the Lord of the Church keeps even the most visionary leaders true to course. Visionary pastors should expect soul-searching, gut-wrenching decisions to become the norm, anticipating not an escape from the storms of change but the presence of God during the dark nights of the soul.

Knowing the cost, however, does not negate the necessity of paying the cost. Loving those sheep who are biting in the church is a spiritual discipline. Pastors, as the

under-shepherds, must guard the sheep even against dens of vipers within the walls of local congregations. Taking the high road, and moving on to the place God has called and is still calling that congregation, even in the midst of the pain, leading them to focus out rather than in—these are the toughest and most noble calls leaders can direct their churches to grow through. Keeping the focus on the spiritual reality, while having to pay the very real temporal price, can hold abundant blessing for both pastors and congregations when seen through to the God-directed ends.

The heart of Jesus has never been to increase a believer's comfort but to confirm each Christian into the image of Jesus. Just as Jesus had to trust in the Garden of Gethsemane, pastors must trust that God loves their churches even more than pastors do. With this assurance that both pastors and congregations can see victory.

While the devotional life of a spiritual leader may be simply expected, the reality of spiritual warfare and the demands of the call often push that priority out of pastor's lives. These pastors would agree that the cost of change is so high that no one who can do otherwise should begin the process. The call of Jesus to lead a church faithfully forward often leads pastors to do things they would not otherwise attempt. Leading change requires pastors to find equilibrium between the dynamics of their relationship with God and with his people. One of the interviewed pastors described the challenge this way: "Pledge your head to God, just as John the Baptist did." With that line he captured both the spiritual call and the commitment to it required to see it succeed. In addition to that personal call, the pastor must help others in the congregation discern their own calls within the coming changes and must believe in them even more than they believe in themselves.

Just as Jesus taught to count the cost before beginning to build, this personal and corporate cost must be calculated ahead of time. This careful calculation of the cost is more difficult since those who have gone before and come through the costly change process are most apt to minimize the cost in retrospect because of the great blessing that makes the cost pale in comparison. Additionally, those pastors who experience the pain and the failure do not want to rehearse the cost because they do not want to relive the pain. Therefore, very few on the far side of the pain paint a viable picture of the cost for those who follow. Someone needs to share that the dark nights, the midnight prayers, and the fear of real failure are part of the cost so the experience of these things does not cause the visionary leader to suffer even more from self-doubt.

In determining when and whom to mentor, pastors would do well to consider two specific qualifications in those they mentor. First, the person being mentored should be exhibiting continuous growth. Second, the person pastors are mentoring should share the vision and “buy in” to the cost to see that vision happen. Conversely, mentoring is unproductive and should cease when a steady trend toward improvement or growth ceases and when the mentor senses low vision attachment.

The visionary leader must not only keep their own heart right and their own commitment high but must bring others serving in leadership around them to the place that these influencers can communicate the vision with passion and clarity as well. Leaders learning this lesson is not enough. Leaders must pass on this spiritual discipline of communicating vision well, while forgiving those actively resisting the vision, to the secondary leaders around them. This spiritual discipline requires the senior leader to

place properly and invest heavily into other congregational leaders. Investing in these leaders is not a distraction to the vision but a necessary step toward implementation.

To lead forward requires pastors to make many tough calls that others will not understand. These tough calls build into pastors a holy fear of judging others in situations they have yet to face. Traditional wisdom charges leaders, if you must eat a frog, do it first thing in the morning. If you must eat two frogs, eat the larger one first. A wise pastor learns that leading change is always a painful process, but making tough calls quickly can shorten the duration of the pain.

Just as not judging others in situations pastors have not yet faced brings humility, learning from those who have experienced God's leading in similar directions can give the benefit of experience without having to survive all the pain personally. Incumbent on those leaders who have benefited from mentoring is the responsibility to share godly learning with those who follow, even when the reality of that sharing causes an experience of some of the painful process again. Sharing the truth of why leaders are faithful to their own calling with others beginning that same journey also cements in mentors' thinking what that calling is in mentors' lives and offers refreshment to mentors' souls.

Even servant leadership can become internally focused if pastors do not partner this servant leadership with sharing their learning and experiences with other Christian leaders through mentoring.

Insights on Other Dynamics

Risk taking is vital even when clearly all growth sees some failure on the journey. The real battle is for spiritual significance and eternal reward. No one has ever

experienced these benefits without risk. The first real battle is in the life of pastors themselves being willing to take the incumbent risks.

Often this character-developing battle requires crucibles in the lives of the pastors that congregations never face. These crucibles can crush leaders who do not submit, but these same crucibles temper leaders God can use to lead the church forward. Just allowing God to use these crucible times can be indicative of pastors' readiness to lead cultural level changes in churches.

Leading compound change in a church requires a specific type of leader. Galloway states three kinds of leaders can be identified: undertakers, caretakers, and risk takers. ("Profile of a Successful Change Agent" 19). While true that the undertakers and caretakers may be called by God to lead where they are assigned, leading compound change requires risk takers. In the same periodical, William M. Easum relays this warning: "Turning a church around is a dangerous calling" encouraging, "with so much at stake, turn-around pastors do not dwell on conflict or allow it to get to them personally" (21). The obvious conclusion is that conflict and even personal cost are just part of the process of leading a church through compound change. A warning that is now placed on many television shows seems appropriate here, "don't try this at home, remember we are professionals." Only the Christian leader equivalent warning would be, "don't try this unless you are a called risk taker sure of God's vision and call in the life of your church. You can't do this alone."

All change generates resistance in the existing congregation, and the speed of the implementation does not significantly change the levels of resistance. Nevertheless, cultural level shifts take multiple direction changes to implement, and multiple changes

do significantly increase resistance. Therefore, leaders shepherding total directional change of a congregation should expect to encounter more resistance on later changes than on earlier changes.

Calculated risks are a normal part of discipleship and not the exception. Just as the parable of the talents tells Christ-followers God expects Christian stewards to take risks with what is placed in their stewardship, godly leaders are expected to take risks proportionate to the charge in their care.

The often-asked question of when to give up then becomes not a matter of percentages of loss of income or attendance but the laying down on the altar daily of the surety of the leader's call to lead to the God-given vision. The "success" is only measured in faithfulness, not in numbers. Of course, the hope is that all God's people will eventually reach the Promised Land, but if only two of the two plus million enter with each leader, the Promised Land is still God given. The goal of a godly leader is to take as many with them into God's promise as possible.

Just as Christ taught the poor would always be among us, those who want the church to remain the way it is, even if that way is sure to lead to the death of the local church, will always be among us as well. To make any change means pastors will be leading in a different direction than the sitting power brokers, and they will not give up that power quietly. Pastors need to prepare both themselves and the leaders that surround them for this reality. The leaders' willingness to get spiritually and politically beaten up is what gives God's vision a chance to take hold.

The importance of taking the high road and loving even the unlovable becomes critical. The pastor who takes a stand for change will bear the brunt of the pain. To

survive this time, self-care is critical. Outward focus of the pastor and the congregation becomes a survival skill as waves of people leave. Budget needs should to be minimalized during this time, and alternative funding is a proactive way to deal with some of the pain. Prayer and peer relationships with others who have walked this path allow pastors to keep the needed focus, maintain their own courage, and encourage other leaders around them.

Even if the pastors and leaders around them do everything right, nothing happens unless it is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Those who endure through to the other side of these changes remind Christians that God's heart is for reaching those far from God and that Jesus has experienced the same kind of pain doing the same work his followers are doing. Leaders must patiently endure the race confident in the knowledge that truth and integrity will win out in the end, even if the leader does not survive the process.

Risk taking assumes that there is a reward that can be gauged making the risk worth the reward. The unclear gauging of what success means often defeats what God is trying to do. In addition, many risky ventures stop just short of reaching the goal leaving those involved to bear the cost of the venture, but never reap the rewards.

A timeless standpoint requires a willingness to risk and fail, because souls are safe in God, so Christians really have nothing to lose. This perspective requires a long-term understanding that even if seven hundred fill a sanctuary now, each day brings each person in that sanctuary closer to death. Barring change, the church with seven hundred is also dying if there are not new souls being added, so again the church has nothing to lose. Risk avoidance is impossible, but carefully calculated which risks are worth taking leaving Christians nothing to lose. Those risks must be taken, and from an eternal

perspective, leave nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Vision often happens when others not called to lead that vision would find the viability impossible. One pastor interviewed started pastoring with a church thirty-nine payments in arrears on its building and yet the change was successful. Vision must come back to believing all Christians serve a God of resurrections.

Since much of the reward churches experience will only be seen by the eyes of faith in the present, courage comes in remembering that the reward is experienced forever while the cost is born only for a short period.

Success is not measured by personal favor with the congregation or by numbers on an attendance and offering board but by faithfully fulfilling the pastors' calling within the setting where they are charged to serve. When success is measured by souls whose lives are transformed and disciples more closely resembling the Christ whose name they bear, God can truly look each pastor and leader in the eye and commend the work they have done for His kingdom. The real battle is for spiritual significance and eternal reward. Risk taking is a necessary facet of this battle because the stakes are greater than any other venture. The real battle may be in the pastors themselves being willing to take risks and even lose the battle for the glory of God.

Only when those risks are matched to eternal rewards does the risk/return factor justify the major cost of making cultural level changes in the church. The risk and pain is high. The eternal reward is so much higher that all risk and pain dull by comparison.

Success cannot, then, be measured by a congregation's love for the pastor, nor by the transfer growth from other places of worship, but only by souls experiencing

transformation in their lives and becoming part of the family of God. Only in this context can affirmation from the Master be expected when he returns.

From an eternal perspective, Christians have nothing to lose. Those who are secure in the fellowship of Christ may choose to worship elsewhere and nothing is lost in eternity. The current reality across the Christian Church in America teaches the local church, however, if the church does not make major cultural changes, the cost of an entire generation will be cataclysmic for all of eternity. Pastors need to lead through cultural change because they have nothing to lose and eternity to gain.

Godly vision must precede change, reorganizing, or restructuring; however, godly vision does not lessen resistance but actually increases that resistance when parishioners feel the social contract of comfort in a church has been or is being violated. Often pastors are prepared for theological attacks or even interpretation disputes, but the strongest negative response most often comes from another area entirely when parishioners who feel the social contract is being violated resist. This often blindsides pastors who are not expecting a challenge from this front and often do not even know the issue exists.

The changes pastors are leading are not battles with congregations, even when congregations perceive the changes in that light, but a very real battle in the heavenlies exists for the souls of those the churches are called to reach. As godly, visionary leadership takes churches into more productive ministry, many come to Jesus who would not otherwise have been affected by those local congregations. The enemy would stop that process if at all possible. C. S. Lewis correctly states the importance of acknowledging the very real presence of spiritual warfare:

There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe,

and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors. (3)

The successful change leader must be able to walk somewhere between these two errors.

The change-leading pastors' battle is not with the congregation but with the spiritual powers of darkness. One deep insight was that the first spiritual battle is in the heart of the pastor leading through the requisite changes being tempted to resort to the same strategies power brokers use. Again, the prayer life of the pastor becomes critical, not only for the congregation to experience change but for the pastor to come to the other side of change richer spiritually for sharing in the plan of God through those changes.

Pastors who have been through the Beeson program are a self-selecting group who are probably more prone to be risk takers and respond with a sense of bravado. Having grown up near Edwards Air Force Base during the period of the "right stuff" and going to church with test pilots and flight surgeons most of my childhood, I had an opportunity to experience many people in a similarly self-selecting group. Often this bravado is seen as self-centered, egocentric, and overstated, and sometimes that perception is correct. More often, however, what others perceive in this bravado is simply the self-confidence needed to take these enormous risks on a recurring basis. One way of testing that difference may be to discuss vision. While all of the interviewed pastors found that vision to come from the top down, a distinction was noted between those who thought the vision was theirs and those who saw themselves as stewards of the vision. Interestingly, only one of the interviewed pastors fell in the former category with the rest all falling squarely in the later category. While none of them experienced a grassroots vision they then implemented, the majority saw themselves as stewards of a vision God had for the congregations they led.

Implications of the Data

This study provides new information from doctoral students in the Beeson track at Asbury Theological Seminary. Approximately 10 percent of those pastors who had attended the one-year residential program not only had led major changes in their local congregations but had found the learning from Beeson to be helpful. Nevertheless, more than one-third of those pastors found that the learning on leading change lacked a real connection to the risk and cost of that leadership, and no helpful training on how to pay the price required in making those changes. The program was seen to be a strong benefit but could be improved by including a reality section along with the vision casting.

A secondary addition to the field of study was also found in the correlation of those who had received mentoring and those who provided mentoring for others. A cultural level change that would strengthen both graduates of the Beeson program and those in ministry around them would be a built-in expectation that as pastors are mentored are called to pass on that learning to others. In working with other pastors in our area, I have found mentoring others to be one of the ways God feeds my soul. Sharing with others the passion of God calling the Church forward to a better future not only blesses the pastor who receives the mentoring but also strengthens and encourages the pastor who shares.

Theological Insights

The very real and even daunting cost of change does not free pastors from the spiritual obligation of doing what God calls leaders to do to see the Church survive and thrive. Revelation continually tells the Church that Christians will receive the blessing

only by overcoming, not with the avoidance of cost (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7). All Christians follow a God who went to the cross for each soul and calls his followers to pick up their own cross daily (Luke 9:23). That Jesus would expect those who lead the church to do difficult things should come as no surprise. Watching His life, when the greatest resistance comes from within the people of God, this also should not surprise pastors since that is where the resistance to Jesus ministry was most fierce.

This knowledge simply means that Christian leaders should expect the path to be difficult but not impossible (Luke 1:37). Pastors must start leading where they know they cannot go alone because they know Him who leads them. Once the leader begins that process, they must not be deterred or turned back (Luke 9:62) at the risk of not being fit for serving the kingdom of God. Pastors are called to lead as one who will give an account (Rom. 14:12; Heb. 13:17). The pastor is accountable for investing the gifts and graces of every soul in their care so that pastor may be seen as fit to receive more souls for which that leader is accountable (Matt. 25:29). Any pastors who expects the church they lead to grow must invest in what is already given.

Hebrews 13:17 also reminds us the greatest threat to pastors' effectiveness is not lack of knowledge or even wisdom. The greatest threat to pastors' effectiveness is not lack of attendance or even finances. The greatest threat to pastors' effectiveness is not lack of gifting or even spiritual discipline. The greatest threat to pastors' effectiveness is a lack of joy. Without that fruit of the Spirit, pastors' efforts are for nothing. The need for joy is the most important learning from this study. The joy of the Lord is our strength (Neh. 8:10), and without that joy, pastors will not have the strength or ability to lead through the deep changes God wants to use to shape his people. Pastors who quit and turn

back cite this lack of ability to rejoice as a key. Those who stay also cite this ability to rejoice as a key. Mentoring from Jesus is always the best, and he taught all Christians how to survive the most difficult challenges of ministry when he endured the cross for the joy set before him (Heb. 12:2).

Key Insights

A summary of the key insights uncovered in this study was promised as an executive summary to the participants. The executive summary is a shorter version of these key insights (see Appendix E).

Total Commitment

Commitment by the leader to paying the price for the vision before ever starting the first change is a necessity. This commitment is even more difficult because the total price is always unknown at that point. Should the leader fail in this commitment when the cost becomes more clear, both the pastor and the congregation suffer, often irrecoverably.

Surprising to almost all leaders is the level of venom and dysfunction that can come from the people of God for whom they love and care. A common saying holds that the love from the pulpit to the pew is much stronger than the love from the pew to the pulpit. Just as God gives parents a love for children who are not always very loveable to others, God has given this love to spiritual leaders to allow pastors to love people who are not always very loveable. Anticipating pain is one reason changes are often not started. Notwithstanding the pain is a reason leaders often turn back. Nevertheless, if the church is to thrive in a God-directed way, pastors must be willing to give their lives for the sheep.

Leaders Who Lead

The vision for a church comes from the leader down rather than being discerned by the entire body to be implemented by the leader.

While the leader may get confirmation from the larger body, this research showed no exceptions from the vision coming through a leader. Further, if the leader who had the vision did not lead others to realize it, no one else picked up that gauntlet. For compound change to thrive, leaders must not only be committed but must exercise their gifts in leadership to see that change through.

Divine Discontent

The leader's frustration with the status quo matching God's frustration with the status quo are prerequisites for leaders to move forward with vision.

"Popeye moments" not only fuel the vision for the leader but provide the motivation for continuing to lead in that direction when the pain is greatest. Without this divine discontent, leaders are tempted to slip back into the easier, but less productive, ways of pleasing those within the flock without looking to the future consequences to eternity. The irony is that many pastors are considered great leaders by their congregation because they are popular. This false read on successful pastoring happens when the pastor enables the programs the people want to do while watching the church die from attrition without reaching anyone with the gospel. These pastors truly are getting accolades from the crowd, but the judgment of God will weigh the loss to the kingdom of God when these pastors are not taking the risks of leading where God is calling so that others can be drawn to Jesus.

The High Cost

Someone needs to share that the dark nights, the midnight prayers, and the fear of real failure are part of the cost so the experience of these things does not cause the visionary leader to suffer even more from self-doubt. Knowing the cost, however, does not negate the necessity of paying the cost.

No one who has led through compound change has related doing so without paying a high cost personally as well as corporately. The levels of emotional, spiritual, and physical costs can add up substantially and cause leaders to doubt the veracity or the importance of fulfilling their calling. Even when leaders cling to both the veracity and importance of that calling, they may doubt their ability to see it through. Honest relationships with others who have led through similar changes are the best support for pastors facing this anguish.

Risk-Taking Leaders

Leading compound change requires a risk taking leader. Caretakers and undertakers should not attempt this ministry.

There exists a valid ministry for those called to be caretakers and undertakers in the kingdom of God. Compound change is not this place. To take pastors called to one of these other ministries and ask them to lead compound change is as much of a spiritual mistake as asking an intercessor with no musical gift to play the piano. This truth does not mean these leaders are not gifted, simply misplaced in churches needing to undergo compound cultural change.

Storms

A visionary pastor should expect soul-searching, gut-wrenching decisions to become the norm, anticipating not an escape for the storms of change but the presence of God during the dark nights of the soul.

Leading compound change requires many levels of decisions to keep the course firm toward a new direction. These changes are often emotionally draining because each small course correction is usually tied to someone's favorite "home port." Cutting each line would be easy if pastors had no connection to the flock. Pastors feel this pain because they truly grieve the pain of the people who must give up something to move forward. The grief of those who leave is not a one-time burden to pastors but gets revisited each time they run into that former parishioner in the community or miss that person in the congregation they lead. Pastors do not lead to get comfort from the people. The comfort pastors receive must come from the Lead Shepherd who loves the flock even more than the pastor leading the particular congregation.

Forward Focus

Successful change leaders must find the place of recognizing spiritual opposition without having their focus consumed by the battle.

In the midst of the battle, pastors can easily be distracted by the spiritual battle. Pastors remembering to focus on God's calling and vision find the battle pales by comparison to the glory of the presence of God. Spending time in the Light drives out the darkness. Spending time in the Light keeps pastors light-hearted.

Resistance

Even when the vision and implementation are both scriptural and God directed,

expect the strongest negative response from parishioners who feel the social contract is being violated.

Long before change-implementing pastors arrive, many in the congregation who have invested financially, emotionally and spiritually in the congregations pastors come to lead are already entrenched in positions of power and relationship. Any change of direction, even great ones, by definition, imply the prior direction was less than optimal. Pastors should not be surprised when people have strong reactions to that implication. The longer the church has been in existence and the longer the tenure of the parishioners, the longer and stronger this resistance is likely to be.

Forgiveness

Pastors must pass on the spiritual discipline of communicating vision well, while forgiving those actively resisting the vision, to the secondary leaders around them.

Leaders cannot adequately develop all the relationships necessary, nor can they implement vision well in isolation. By definition, leadership implies others must be led into the vision. Doing this leadership task earlier in the process allows pastors to multiply their influence. Nevertheless, within this process, secondary leaders often develop a sense of loyalty that causes a spirit of unforgiveness toward those who cannot move forward with the vision. This unforgiveness can be a spiritual malady that causes the vision to be sidelined until spiritual healing can occur.

Quick decisions

To lead forward requires pastors to make many tough calls that others will not understand. These tough calls build into pastors a holy fear of judging others in situations

they have yet to face adding a level of humility. The pain is lessened when pastors make the tough call quickly.

Making well-considered decisions quickly is a leadership skill that will be honed and tested in leading through compound cultural-level change. This need to make quick decisions on tough calls quickly tends to temper these leaders to be less judgmental of other leaders when those other leaders make difficult calls. Pastors who make these calls themselves recognize the difficulty of making these decisions combined with the amount of information that goes into these decisions that cannot be broadly shared. Often decisions are made based on confidential information, and others may never understand the need for the decision. Taking longer to make the decision seldom makes the decision easier and the extra time often extends the time of pain from the status quo.

Effective Mentors

Incumbent on those leaders who have benefited from mentoring is the responsibility to share godly learning with those who follow, even when the reality of that sharing causes mentoring pastors to experience some of the painful process again. Mentoring others strengthens the mentoring pastor.

Most pastors recognize the benefit of receiving mentoring and wise pastors seek it out. The personal level of sharing involved in mentoring is often avoided for the same reason it is most helpful. When a pastor being mentored is aware of the expected level of cost to make those changes, the mentored pastor has a better chance to prepare spiritually, emotionally and physically for the challenges to come. Mentoring pastors often avoid this ministry because of the time involved or because of the personal pain they must reprocess to evaluate and share. When the mentoring pastor takes the time and invests the

emotional capital to mentor, both pastors are strengthened, and both congregations benefit making it a wise investment.

Submission to Crucibles

The first real battle is in the life of the pastors themselves being willing to take the incumbent risks. Just allowing God to use these crucible times can be indicative of pastors' readiness to lead cultural level changes in the church.

Everyone goes through crucibles. Some are destroyed by the process. Others are tempered by the process and emerge stronger and better than before the crucible experience. How leaders have responded to crucibles in the past is a good indicator of their readiness to lead cultural level change.

Forward Movement

Moving forward without all the answers is imperative for leading cultural level changes.

A wise leader recognizes that two steps forward and one step back is still one step forward. One of the biggest obstacles to change is the feeling making the change is too overwhelming. Looking for trends toward improvement rather than perfection is important if the changes are substantial. Any forward movement is better than no movement when leading change.

Nothing to Lose

Churches need to lead through cultural change because, from an eternal perspective, they have nothing to lose and eternity to gain.

If churches do not change, experience in all of the major denominations in the country shows churches in decline that will eventually lead to death. Not reaching those

who do not yet know Jesus makes churches irrelevant, and perhaps death and extinction are the proper responses when new life has left. Nevertheless, Jesus said the very gates of hell would not prevail against his church, so changing to gain eternity becomes the best option. Should those who do not want to change go to another congregation, many churches exist that are designed to meet the needs of the already converted. Eternity for these sheep who chose to swap pens is not at risk. Nevertheless, one person reached by the changes God wants to bring to our churches causes the very angels in heaven to rejoice.

Preparation for Risks

More than one-third of those pastors found that the learning on leading change lacked a real connection to the risk and cost of that leadership and no helpful training on how to pay the price required in making those changes.

Mentoring pastors leading cultural level change needs to be more than motivational, mentoring needs to be pragmatic. To teach how to make changes without teaching the incumbent costs risks huge detriment to congregations, pastors, and other leaders. Any responsible teaching about change needs the accompanying training in dealing with the layers of cost associated with implementing that change.

Constant Joy

Joy is the most important spiritual fruit any Christian leader offers their people. It must be protected above all else.

Without joy, Scripture teaches that leaders labor among people without benefit to them (and presumably without benefit to the leader). For change leadership to be effective, joy must accompany the task in leaders' lives. Since joy is a fruit of the Spirit,

the relationship with God becomes the only reliable source for joy in the midst of the turmoil of change. Change leaders must keep this joy constantly under scrutiny and be vigilant of any dip in its presence as a major problem, not simply a minor inconvenience. Because cultural level changes, and even more so compound cultural level changes, require years to implement, leaders must have long-term coping mechanisms. Finding joy-stimulating disciplines allows leaders of compound, cultural-level change to persevere through the long tenure needed to see those changes implemented.

Limitations and Next Steps

Only a small portion of the Beeson participants could be interviewed in this depth, so the data may change significantly in a larger sampling. A larger sampling might also change the perception of some of the regional differences. Further, this study is limited by those who self-identify as having led change and does not include those who may have led change but had not yet seen the results or those who were just simply too busy to respond, perhaps because of the demands of change. Noteworthy also is that while pastors were not selected based on gender, all of the study participants were male, leaving open the question of the differences perceived by a congregation when a woman leads through these same changes. Further, some participants interviewed completed the change initiated by a predecessor but none of the interviewees were dealing with an active predecessor against the change. From the Research and Reflection Team's personal experience, we anticipate that resistance from a former pastor would significantly raise the cost of making changes; however, the interviews could not confirm or deny that hypothesis. Finally, while the team looked at self-care of pastors changing

during change, the research did not look at the possible correlation of pastoral health and church health.

One surprising outcome was the benefit in my local setting of those on the Research and Reflection team gaining the learning from other pastors which was then interpreted into passionate buy-in to the local church vision in our own setting. Additionally, one Research and Reflection Team member found his own change process, as a pastor leading cultural level change, encouraged by the interviews at just the time he needed encouragement most.

Looking toward future research, the layers of change would be an interesting area to explore. As pastors commit to an organizational change, for instance, the cost of that change requires a layer of emotional and spiritual change in the leader that then requires leaders around them to grow and change.

The next steps would be to apply this learning in a larger context, perhaps in an annual conference for the purpose of creating a system that would support local church revitalization. A secondary use would be to supplement the Beeson Modules to include both mentoring expectations and dealing with the cost of change in a local congregation.

Epilogue

Personally, transition has proven to be a continual work in progress. Nevertheless, the assurance that the choices are not only well grounded but also consistent with the wisdom of the larger church makes pursuing what I have learned are good choices easier in the context of the day-to-day workings in the church. Further, our local congregation has found miraculous acts of God as we faithfully pursue the changes he orchestrated. For the past six months, our first-time visitor retention has been 25

percent. Faithfulness is rewarded by God as Christian leaders put integrity to their responsibilities to the kingdom of God before personal comfort, and in the process leaders' character is further developed into the image of God.

APPENDIX A

E-mail Invitation with Response Form

Subject Line: Beeson Pastors Needed

As part of my Doctor of Ministry program with Asbury Theological Seminary, my dissertation project relates to *compound changes in an existing local congregation*. Most of the library research has been completed and the first portion of the dissertation has been approved by my faculty committee. The next step is to collect data from Church leaders who have experienced God at work through changes. As a Beeson pastor identified by Dr. Kalis, you have been recognized as a teaching pastor in the larger Church and your wisdom would be invaluable. The total commitment time after responding to this letter will be ***only forty-five minutes*** and will be scheduled ***at your convenience***.

How you can help:

1. Respond to this e-mail by hitting reply and responding to the questions at the bottom of the e-mail. Your office will then be contacted to set up a phone interview.
2. Complete a forty-five minute phone interview at your convenience between December 13, 2005 and January 8, 2006.

What you will receive:

1. The opportunity to share God's wisdom with the larger Church in a time-effective way.
2. You may receive an executive summary of the results if you would so desire.

Thank you for your time and your ministry. I look forward to being able to benefit from your godly wisdom.

May God richly bless you,

Rev. Lois E. Black
 pastorlois@fumcyubacity.com
 (530) 673-5858 or 301-0307

COMPOUND CHANGE IN EXISTING CONGREGATIONS DISSERTATION RESPONSE

To check a box, double click on the box and chose "checked"

Qualifying Questions:

- I have led a church that I did not found in major cultural change.
- Before leading that change, the church had 200-1,000 in worship.

- This change happened subsequent to my Beeson year.
- The church had been in existence at least 25 years before the change began.

Participation Questions:

- I am willing to respond in a forty-five minute phone interview. Please call in my office at () - to set up a convenient time for the interview.
- I would like a copy of the executive summary when the dissertation is complete.

This response is from name at church.

Thank you for your
willingness to share!

APPENDIX B

Topic Guide

Pastor Interviewed:

Church and Location of Ministry:

Date and Time of Interview:

Topic Guide	Experience	Learning
Definition:		
For the purposes of this research, we are defining compound change as multiple changes with a major impact on the organization at the cultural level during the tenure of the same pastor. This is also known as second level change.		
Grand Tour:		
Describe a change in your current setting where you led through compound change.		
How long ago did it occur?		
How did you recognize the need for change?		
Who were the key people involved in the change?		
Organizational Dynamics:		
What was the impact on the ministry direction?		
What was the impact on staff, budget, etc.?		
How did you deal with any loss of attendance and/or finances when change was implemented?		
Personal Dynamics:		
What changes did you have to make in yourself and your skills to lead through these changes?		
How did you care for yourself through this time both physically and spiritually?		
What helpful mentoring did you receive or do you now share about the change process?		

Other dynamics:		
How do you view risk taking and gauging success in a church?		
Did you discern a spiritual warfare element in implementing this change, and if so, how did you deal with it?		
Are there any other elements in this change event(s) that will help tell the story about this change?		
To what extent has Beeson pastor training been helpful to leading through compound change?		

APPENDIX C

Agenda for Training Interviewers

- Explanation of semi-structured interview protocol
 - This format is designed to allow for the flow of questions to be the most natural for the respondents, hopefully increasing the amount of information they might be willing to share.
 - The semi-structured interview format allows for comparisons while giving the freedom to explore general views or opinions. It relies on you, the interviewer, to make the best judgments on what will help us get that information.
 - This format also allows for unexpected issues to emerge. One of the advantages is you get to probe those issues as well.
 - This format allows for the reasons and feelings behind the interviewees' views to be part of the data collected. Please get as much of that data as you think is helpful.
- Before any contact, review the e-mails from your interviewee.
- Contact their office to set up a time for the interview.
 - Introduce yourself and the reason for the call.
 - Be sure to compensate for any time differences.
 - Overseas calls may have special software requirements; be sure to test the program before the scheduled time of the call.
- Making the interview call:
 - If you are planning on using Lois' cell phone, be sure to schedule the time with her calendar in mind. You will be responsible for picking up and returning the cell phone in the most timely way possible so others can also have it available. [Lois' cell phone will be on a first scheduled, first serve basis.]
 - Be sure to make the call from a quiet place with as few distractions as possible.
 - Forty-five minutes is a long time. You may want to consider using a headset or speaker phone to make note taking easier.
 - Introduce yourself and the reason for the call.
 - Honor the time:
 - All calls are to be made between December 13th and January 8th.
 - The time is divided between 1 grand tour probe with 3 other areas of probe questions at 10 minutes each.
 - If a question has been answered in previous dialog, you may skip the question.
 - The extra five minutes are for pleasantries at the beginning and the end to help the interviewee feel comfortable and to thank them (at the beginning and the end) for their time.
 - The interview:
 - Thank them for taking time to participate.

- Assure them you will honor their time. Tell them you have four major areas of interest and several questions in each area. There is time for roughly three minute answers for each question. They are free to take longer on any question if they feel it will help our understanding; we will just ask fewer questions.
- Tell them you will be recording their answers and how you will be recording them. (If tape recording, get their permission).
- Tell them you will be sharing their specific answers only with the Research and Reflection Team of six people. The dissertation will show only compiled data.
- Tell them we will be asking questions about compound change so we will begin with how we are defining that term.
- Ask questions in each major probe area (4 major probes at 10 minutes each).
- The minor probe questions are to assist in getting information that relates to the major probe area. If time is a factor, ask the minor questions that seem most relevant based on the interview to that point.
- If a question has already been answered in conversation, you do not need to ask it again.
- Remember to thank them again at the end of the interview for taking time to help with this study.
- Recording the findings:
 - The topic guide is to help you record information and to help the group evaluate what we have learned.
 - During the interview, record information:
 - If you have permission from the interviewee, you may record on tape recorder and later transcribe the information into the experience column of the interview topic guide.
 - If you do not have permission or prefer to record manually, you may directly enter the information in the experience column by hand or on a computer, whichever is most efficient for you.
 - Take brief notes during the interview, and immediately after the interview you will go back and fill in the topic guide.
 - After the interview:
 - If you have a tape, please give the original to Lois who will make it available for anyone on the team.
 - Complete the topic guide with all the experiences in the appropriate column and any learning you derived that you think are relevant in the learning column.

- Complete the topic guide immediately after the call so you can best remember any relevant information.
- Return the original interview topic guide to Lois who will make copies for all the RRT members.
- The topic guide will be the source of how we compile the learning, so please be as thorough as possible. All of the completed topic guides will be provided to everyone on the team.

APPENDIX D

Summary Data from Interviews

#	ST	Chg 1 #1 specific	Chg 2 #2 specific	Overall Data										No chg						
				Leadership Structure	Neg Impact Attendance	Neg Impact on Finances	Staff Chg	Pastoral Role Chg	Physical Self-Care Chg	Spiritual Self-Care Chg	Have Mentor	Mentor Others	Risk Taker		Spiritual Warfare Component	Beeson Helpful	Beeson Meets More	Prior Pastor Stated Chg	Considered Leaving	
1	Mississippi	followed pastor dismissed for cause	1 growth	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
2	New York	2 worship style	2 bldg	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
3	California	1 programming	2 outward focus	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
4	Kentucky	2 warning boards restructured increasing spiritual maturity	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
5	Ohio	1 in leaders	0 next name of church	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
6	Michigan	2 worship style and time stated outreach programs, daycare and upward	0 church	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
7	Arkansas	1 basketball	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
8	New York	1 added technology	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
9	Ohio	2 chg theology	2 worship	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
10	Colorado	2 cross cultural apt	2 outward focus	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
11	Ohio	2 worship chgs	0 prep to build	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
12	Ohio	2 building	2 chg worship	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
13	Pennsylvania	2 reorganized leadership added 2 new worship services	2 bldg	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
14	Maryland	2 bridged welfare, professional and retired	2 issue	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
15	Texas	0 congregation	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
16	W Virginia	2 outward focus	2 satellite	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
17	Ohio	1 worship switch	2 congregation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
18	Minnesota	2 outward focus	2 building	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
12	Major	12	10	6	9	9	9	9	13	9	7	6	14	4	16	14	15	7	2	5
Minor	Minor	5	1	33%	50%	50%	72%	50%	72%	39%	33%	78%	22%	89%	78%	83%	39%	11%	28%	28%
No chg	No chg	1	7	33%	78%	56%	6%	39%	6%	6%	39%	78%	22%	89%	78%	83%	39%	11%	28%	28%

2=major
1=minor
0=no change

#	ST	Two Major Changes		Chg 2	#2 specific	Chg 1	#1 specific	Leadership Structure	Neg Impact Attendance	Neg Impact on Finances	Staff Chng	Pastoral Role Chng	Physical Self-Care Chng	Spiritual Self-Care Chng	Have Mentor	Mentor Others	Risk Taker	Spiritual War Component	Beeson Helpful	Beeson Meets More	Prior Pastor Started Chng	Considered Leaving	
		Chg 1	#1 specific																				
2	New York	2	worship style	2	bldg			Y	Y		Y	Y			Y		Y	Y					
9	Ohio	2	chg theology		restructured						Y	Y					Y	Y			Y		
10	Colorado	2	cross cultural apt	2	outward focus			Y	Y		Y	Y					Y	Y			Y		
12	Ohio	2	building	2	chg worship			Y	Y		Y	Y					Y	Y			Y		
13	Pennsylvania	2	reorganized leadership added 2 new worship	2	bldg			Y	Y		Y	Y					Y	Y			Y		
14	Maryland	2	services	2	resolved controller 2 issue			Y	Y		Y	Y	Y				Y	Y			Y		
16	W Virginia	2	outward focus	2	satelite			Y	Y		Y	Y					Y	Y			Y		
18	Minnesota	2	outward focus	2	building			Y	Y		Y	Y					Y	Y			Y		
		2=major																					
		1=minor																					
		0=no change																					
8	Major	8	100%	8	100%	8	100%	3	100%	8	100%	6	75%	1	13%	2	25%	1	13%	6	75%	1	13%
0	Minor	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	50%	4	50%	6	75%	2	25%	2	25%	6	63%	5	63%	4	50%
0	No chng	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	8	100%	8	100%	6	75%	8	100%	1	13%	8	100%	5	63%	2	25%

#	ST	Chg 1	#1 specific	Chg 2	#2 specific	Leadership Structure	Neg Impact Attendance	Neg Impact on Finances	Staff Chg	Pastoral Role Chg	Physical Self-Care Chg	Spiritual Self-Care Chg	Have Mentor	Mentor Others	Risk Taker	Spiritual War Component	Besson Helpful	Besson Meets More	Prior Pastor Stated Chg	Considered Leaving	
1	Mississippi	2	followed pastor dismissed for cause	1	growth		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
2	New York	2	New worship style	2	bidg		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
3	California	1	programming	2	outward focus		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
4	Kentucky	2	warring boards restructured	0			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
6	Michigan	2	worship style and time	0	next name of church		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
9	Ohio	2	chg theology	2	restructured worship		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
10	Colorado	2	cross cultural apt	2	outward focus		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
11	Ohio	2	worship chgs	0	prep to build		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
12	Ohio	2	building	2	chg worship		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
13	Pennsylvania	2	reorganized leadership added 2 new worship services	2	bidg resolved controller		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
14	Maryland	2	services	2	issue		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
16	W Virginia	2	outward focus	2	satellite congregation		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
17	Ohio	1	worship switch	2	building		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
18	Minnesota	2	outward focus	2	building		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

#	Denomination	Chg 1	#1 specific	Chg 2	#2 specific	Leadership Structure	Neg Impact Attendance	Neg Impact on Finances	Staff Chg	Pastoral Role Chg	Physical Self-Care Chg	Spiritual Self-Care Chg	Have Mentor	Mentor Others	Risk Taker	Spiritual War Component	Beeson Helpful	Beeson Meets More	Prior Pastor Stated Chg	Considered Leaving
1	United Methodist		followed pastor				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
2	Wesleyan		2 dismissed for cause			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3	Baptist		2 worship style				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
4	CMA		1 programming warring boards				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
5	United Methodist		2 restructured		0	Y														
6	United Methodist		1 increasing spiritual maturity in leaders		0		Y													
7	Nazarene		2 worship style and time started outreach		0															
8	United Methodist		2 programs, daycare and upward basketball		0		Y													
9	United Methodist		1 added technology		0		Y													
10	United Methodist		2 chg theology		2 restructured		Y													
11	Nazarene		2 cross cultural apt		2 worship		Y													
12	United Methodist		2 worship chgs		2 outward focus	Y	Y													
13	Lutheran		2 building		0 prep to build	Y	Y													
14	United Methodist		2 reorganized leadership added 2 new worship services		2 chg worship	Y	Y													
15	United Methodist		2 added 2 new worship services bridged welfare, professional and retired		2 bldg resolved		Y													
16	United Methodist		0 congregation		2 controller issue		Y													
17	United Methodist		2 outward focus		0 satellite	Y	Y													
18	Lutheran		1 worship switch		2 building	Y	Y													
18	Major	12	67%	10	56%	6	14	9	13	9	7	6	14	4	16	14	15	7	2	5
Minor	5	28%	1	6%	6%	6	14	9	13	9	7	6	14	4	16	14	15	7	2	5
No chg	1	6%	7	39%	39%	6	14	9	13	9	7	6	14	4	16	14	15	7	2	5

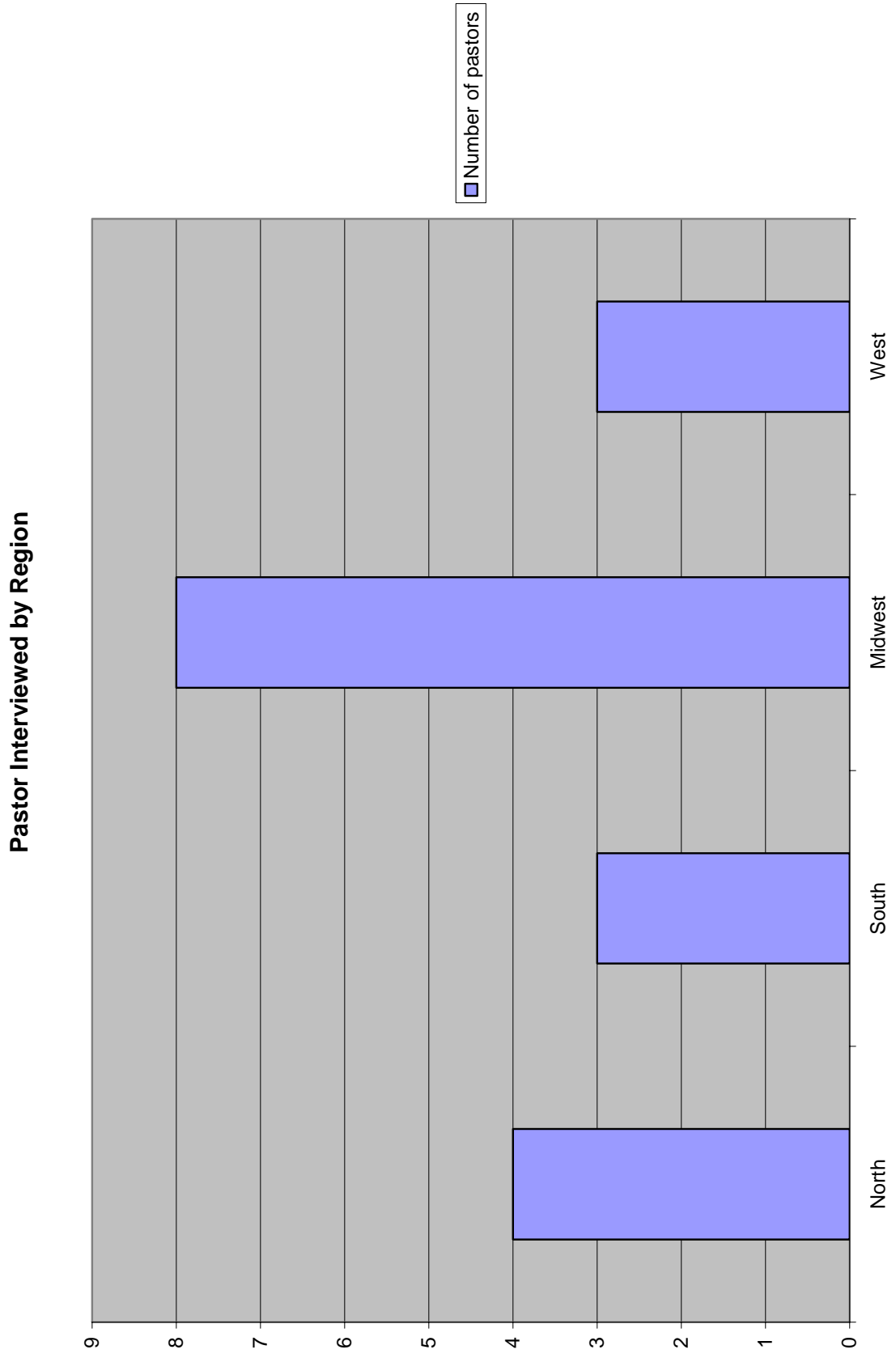
2=major
1=minor
0=no change

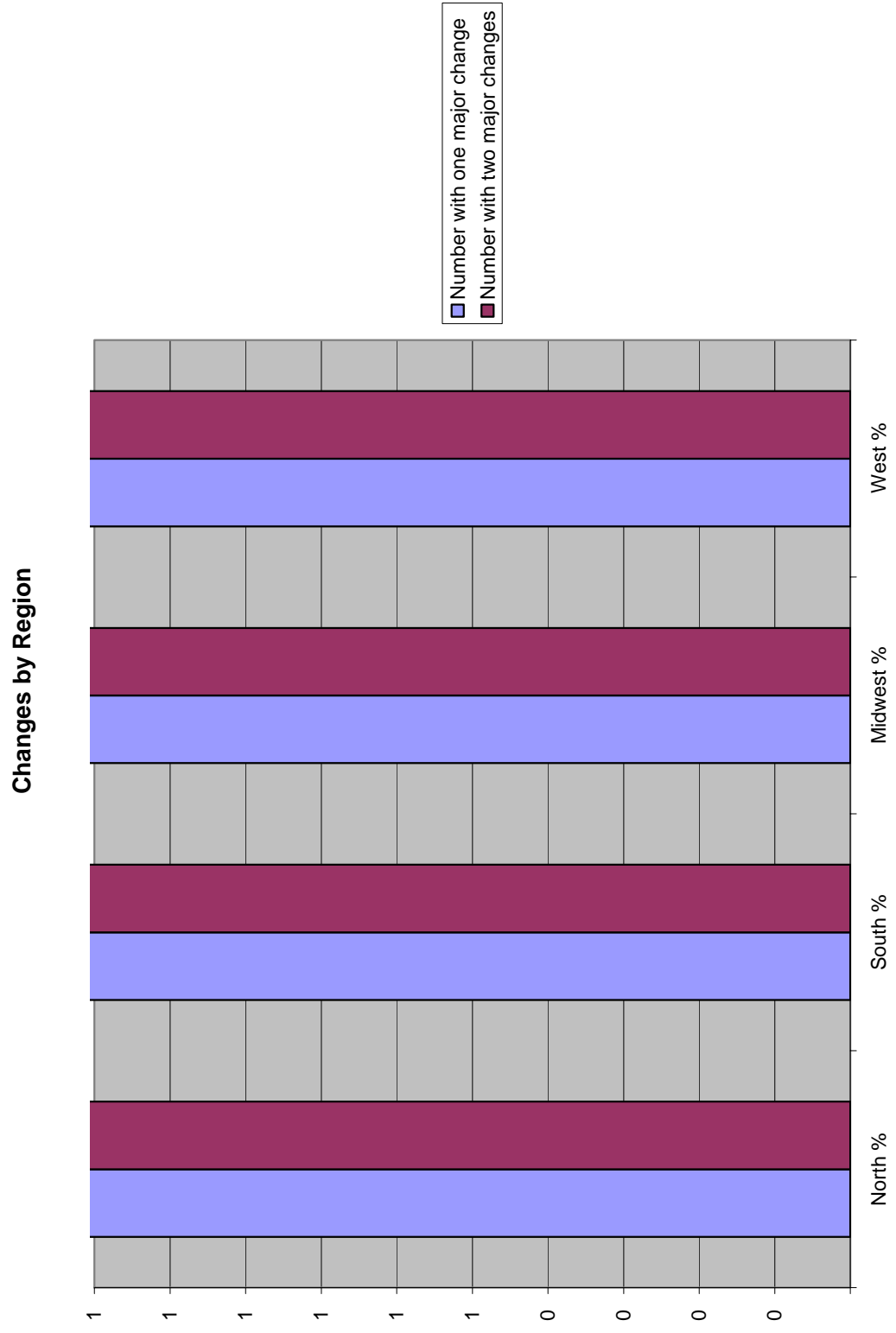
#	Denomination	Chg 1	#1 specific	Chg 2	#2 specific	Leadership Structure	Neg Impact Attendance	Neg Impact on Finances	Staff Chg	Pastoral Role Chg	Physical Self-Care Chg	Spiritual Self-Care Chg	Have Mentor	Mentor Others	Risk Taker	Spiritual War Component	Been Helpful	Been Meets More	Prior Pastor Stated Chg	Considered Leaving	
1	United Methodist	2	followed pastor 2 dismissed for cause	1	growth		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
5	United Methodist	1	increasing spiritual maturity in leaders	0	next name of 0 church		Y														
6	United Methodist	2	worship style and time	0																	
8	United Methodist	1	added technology	0					Y												
9	United Methodist	2	chg theology	2	restructured worship		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
10	United Methodist	2	cross cultural apt	2	outward focus		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
12	United Methodist	2	building	2	chg worship	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
14	United Methodist	2	added 2 new worship services	2	resolved controller issue	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
15	United Methodist	0	bridged welfare, professional and retired congregation	0						Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
16	United Methodist	2	outward focus	2	satellite congregation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
17	United Methodist	1	worship switch	2	building	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
11	Major	7	64%	6	55%	2	8	4	8	5	4	3	9	1	9	8	10	3	2	3	
	Minor	3	27%	1	9%		73%	36%	73%	45%	36%	27%	82%	9%	82%	73%	91%	27%	18%	27%	
	No chg	1	9%	4	36%																

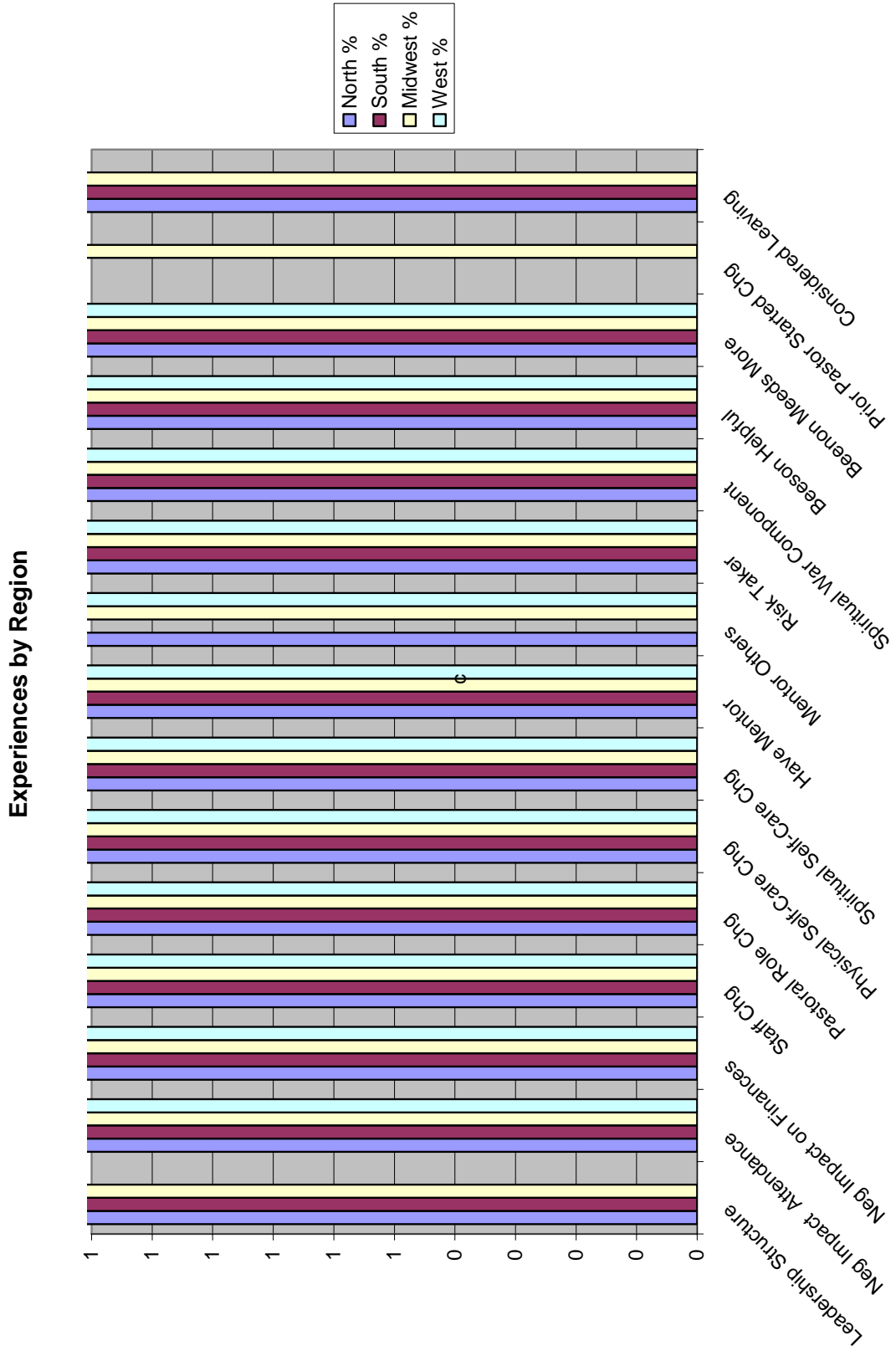
2=major
1=minor
0=no change

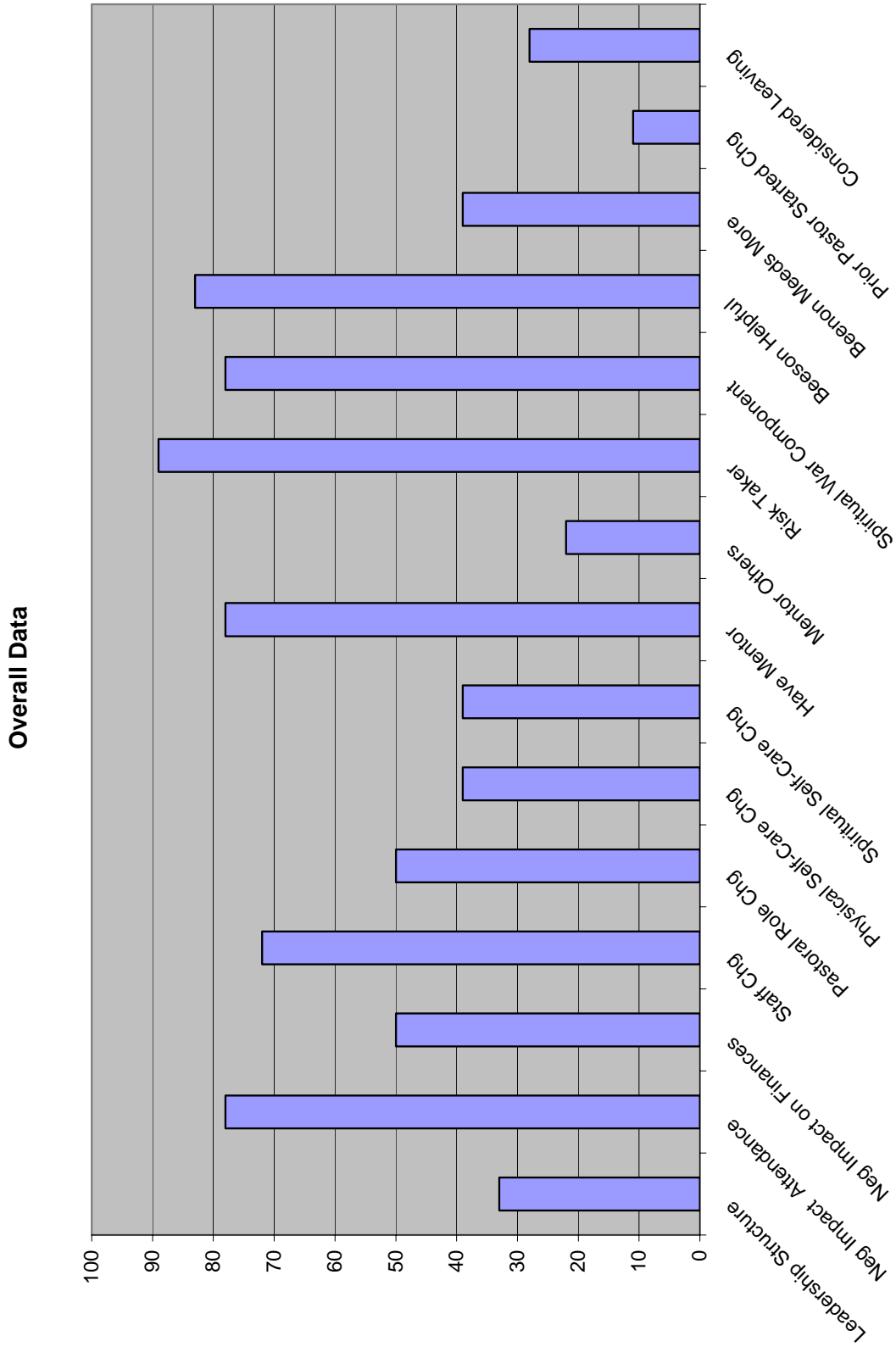
#	ST	Chg 1	#1 specific	Chg 2	#2 specific	Leadership Structure	Neg Impact Attendance	Neg Impact on Finances	Staff Chg	Pastoral Role Chg	Physical Self-Care Chg	Spiritual Self-Care Chg	Have Mentor	Mentor Others	Risk Taker	Spiritual War Component	Beeson Helpful	Beeson Meets More	Prior Pastor Started Chg	Considered Leaving	
5	Ohio	increasing spiritual maturity in leaders	1	0	next name of church	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
6	Michigan	worship style and time started outreach programs, daycare and upward basketball	2	0		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
7	Arkansas	2 chg theology	2	2	restructured worship	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
11	Ohio	2 worship chgs	2	0	prep to build	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
12	Ohio	2 building	2	2	chg worship	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
17	Ohio	1 worship switch	1	2	building	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
18	Minnesota	2 outward focus	2	2	building	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
8	Major	5	63%	4	50%	3	7	4	6	4	4	3	7	1	7	8	7	3	2	3	
	Minor	3	38%	0	0%	38%	88%	50%	75%	50%	38%	38%	88%	13%	88%	100%	88%	38%	25%	2	
	No chg	0	0%	4	50%	38%	88%	50%	75%	50%	38%	38%	88%	13%	88%	100%	88%	38%	25%	3	

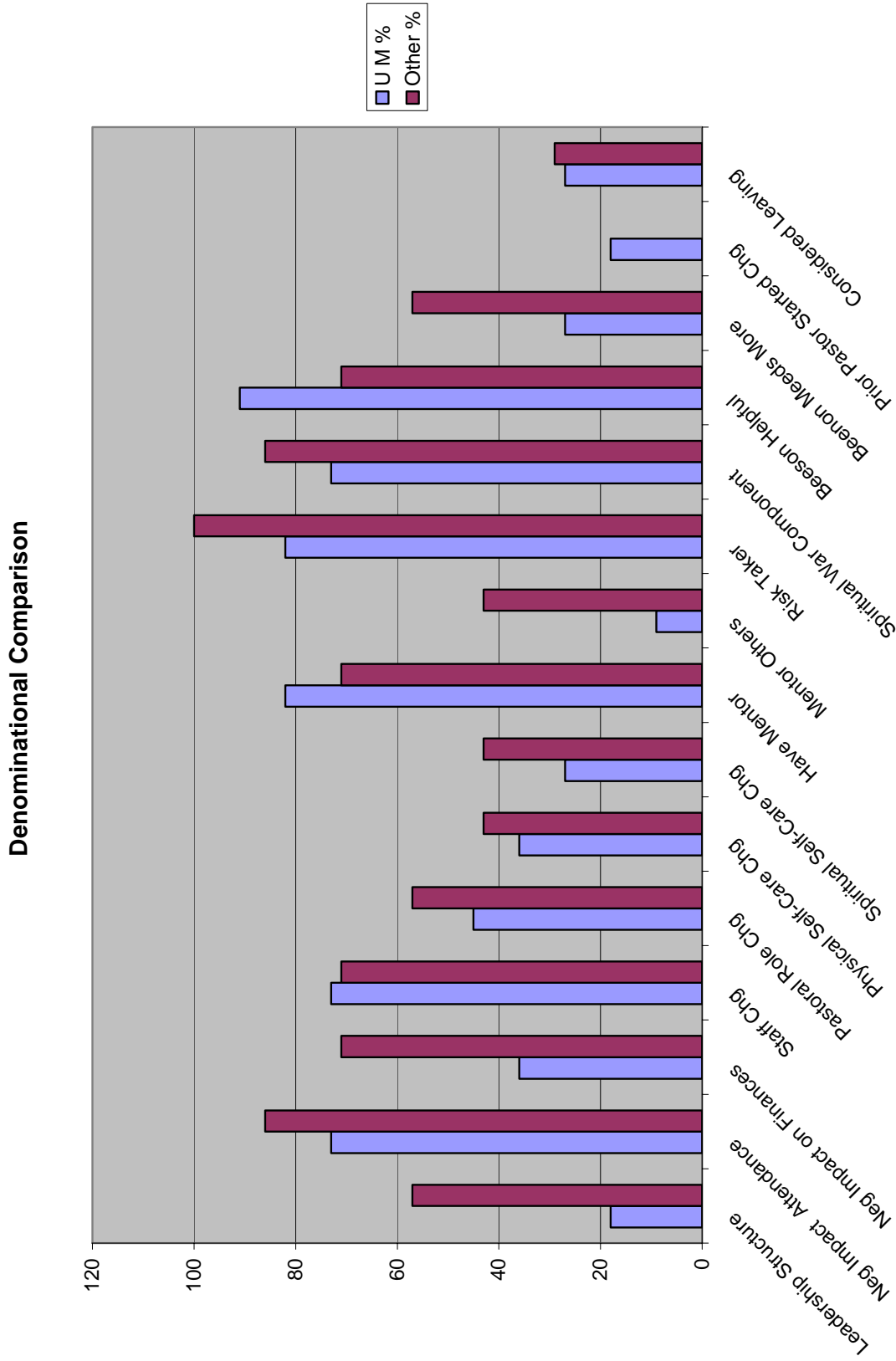
2=major
1=minor
0=no change











Comparisons By Region and Denomination Summary

	North	South	Midwest	West	Totals	U M	Other
Number of pastors	4	3	8	3	18	11	7
	North %	South %	Midwest %	West %	%	U M %	Other %
Number with one major change	75	100	63	67	67	64	71
Number with two major changes	75	33	50	33	56	55	57
	North %	South %	Midwest %	West %		U M %	Other %
Leadership Structure	50	33	38	0	33	18	57
Neg Impact Attendance	75	67	88	67	78	73	86
Neg Impact on Finances	25	67	50	67	50	36	71
Staff Chg	50	100	75	67	72	73	71
Pastoral Role Chg	50	67	50	33	50	45	57
Physical Self-Care Chg	25	33	38	67	39	36	43
Spiritual Self-Care Chg	25	33	38	33	39	27	43
Have Mentor	50	100	88	67	78	82	71
Mentor Others	50	0	13	33	22	9	43
Risk Taker	100	100	88	67	89	82	100
Spiritual War Component	50	100	100	33	78	73	86
Beeson Helpful	50	100	88	100	83	91	71
Been on Meeds More	50	33	38	33	39	27	57
Prior Pastor Started Chg	0	0	25	0	11	18	0
Considered Leaving	25	33	38	0	28	27	29

APPENDIX E

Executive Summary

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the dissertation on compound change in the local church. The executive summary you requested follows. Should you desire more information, the dissertation, titled COMPOUND CHANGE IN EXISTING CONGREGATIONS is on file at Asbury Theological Seminary in its entirety. Thank you again for being part of mentoring the larger church by sharing your experience.

- **Total commitment.** Commitment by the leader to paying the price for the vision before ever starting the first change is a necessity. This commitment is even more difficult because the total price is always unknown at that point. Should the leader fail in this commitment when the cost becomes more clear, both the pastor and the congregation suffer, often irrecoverably.

- **Leaders who lead.** The vision for a church comes from the leader down rather than being discerned by the entire body to be implemented by the leader.

- **Divine Discontent.** The leader's frustration with the status quo matching God's frustration with the status quo are prerequisites for leaders to move forward with vision.

- **The high cost.** Someone needs to share that the dark nights, the midnight prayers, and the fear of real failure are part of the cost so the experience of these things does not cause the visionary leader to suffer even more from self-doubt. Knowing the cost, however, does not negate the necessity of paying the cost.

- **Risk taking leaders.** Leading compound change requires a risk taking leader. Caretakers and undertakers should not attempt this ministry.

- **Storms.** A visionary pastor should expect soul-searching, gut-wrenching decisions to become the norm, anticipating not an escape for the storms of change but the presence of God during the dark nights of the soul.

- **Forward focus.** Successful change leaders must find the place of recognizing spiritual opposition without having their focus consumed by the battle.

- **Resistance.** Even when the vision and implementation are both scriptural and God directed, expect the strongest negative response from parishioners who feel the social contract is being violated.

- **Forgiveness.** Pastors must pass on the spiritual discipline of communicating vision well, while forgiving those actively resisting the vision, to the secondary leaders around them.

- **Quick decisions.** To lead forward requires pastors to make many tough calls that others will not understand. These tough calls build into pastors a holy fear of judging others in situations they have yet to face adding a level of humility. The pain is lessened when pastors make the tough call quickly.

- **Effective mentors.** Incumbent on those leaders who have benefited from mentoring is the responsibility to share godly learning with those who follow, even when the reality of that sharing causes mentoring pastors to experience some of the painful process again. Mentoring others strengthens the mentoring pastor.

- **Submission to crucibles.** The first real battle is in the life of the pastors themselves being willing to take the incumbent risks. Just allowing God to use these crucible times can be indicative of pastors' readiness to lead cultural level changes in the church.

- **Forward movement.** Moving forward without all the answers is imperative for leading cultural level changes.

- **Nothing to lose.** Churches need to lead through cultural change because, from an eternal perspective, they have nothing to lose and eternity to gain.

- **Preparation for risks.** More than one-third of those pastors found that the learning on leading change lacked a real connection to the risk and cost of that leadership and no helpful training on how to pay the price required in making those changes.

- **Constant joy.** Joy is the most important spiritual fruit any Christian leader offers their people. It must be protected above all else.

Thank you for your willingness to share!

WORKS CITED

- Barna, George. Turning Vision into Action: Defining and Putting into Practice the Unique Vision God Has for Your Ministry. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1996.
- Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership. Class brochure. Wilmore, KY: Asbury Theological Seminary, 2003.
- Bennis, Warren G., and Robert J. Thomas. Geeks and Geezers: How Era, Values, and Defining Moments Shape Leaders. Boston: Harvard BSP, 2002.
- Bernard, H. Russell. Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000.
- Blackaby, Henry T., and Claude V. King. Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God. Nashville: LifeWay, 1990.
- Bolman, Lee G., and Terrence E. Deal. Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership. 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997.
- Breaux, Mike. "Healthy Winning Staff Teams." Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership. Leawood, KS. 13 May 2004.
- Burns, Robert B. Introduction to Research Methods. 4th ed. London: Sage, 2000.
- Cladis, George. Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.
- Collins, James C., and Jerry I. Porras. Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies. New York: Harper, 1994.
- DePree, Max. Called to Serve. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

- Drucker, Peter F. Managing the Non-Profit Organization: Principles and Practices. New York: Harper, 1992.
- Easum, William M.. "Turning a Church Around Is a Dangerous Calling." Net Results Sept. 1999: 21.
- Epistemics. 3 Aug. 2005 <<http://www.epistemics.co.uk/Notes/174-0-0.htm>>.
- Flamholtz, Eric G., and Yvonne Randle. Changing the Game: Organizational Transformations of the First, Second, and Third Kinds. New York: Oxford, 1998.
- Food and Agriculture Organization. United Nations. 5 Mar. 2005 <<http://www.fao.org/docrep/x5307e/x5307e08.htm>>.
- Ford, Leighton. Transforming Leadership: Jesus' Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values & Empowering Change. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991.
- Foster, Richard J. Money, Sex & Power: The Challenge of the Disciplined Life. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985.
- Galloway, Dale. Personal interview. 5 Mar. 2004.
- . "Profile of a Successful Change Agent." Net Results. Sept. 1999: 19.
- Hamilton, Adam. Leading beyond the Walls: Developing Congregations with a Heart for the Unchurched. Nashville: Abingdon, 2002.
- . Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004.
- Hunter, George G., III. Church for the Unchurched. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.
- . How to Reach Secular People. Nashville: Abingdon, 1992.
- Hybels, Bill. Courageous Leadership. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.
- . "Leader's State of Mind." Willow Creek Leadership Summit. Barrington, IL. Aug. 2006.

---. Leading the Harbor: Leadership Fundamentals. CD. Defining Moments Series

DR0506. South Barrington, IL: Willow Creek Association, 2005.

---. When Your Church Splits. CD. Defining Moments Series DR0409. South Barrington,

IL: Willow Creek Association, 2004.

Kierkegaard, Soren. Attack upon Christendom. Trans. Walter Lowrie. Princeton, NJ:

Princeton U, 1944.

King of the Hill. Episode KH922. Fox Broadcasting. KTXL, Yuba City, CA. 8 Apr.

2006.

Lewis, C. S. The Screwtape Letters: How a Senior Devil Instructs a Junior Devil in the

Art of Temptation. New York: Macmillan, 1961.

McManus, Erwin Raphael. An Unstoppable Force: Daring to Become the Church GOD

Had in Mind. Loveland, CO: Group, 2001.

McNeal, Reggie. A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders.

San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

MedNet 3. World Health Organization. 5 Mar. 2005 <[http://www.mednet3.who.int/](http://www.mednet3.who.int/PRDUC/Materials/Visual_Aids/FINALFieldwork.ppt)

[PRDUC/Materials/Visual_Aids/FINALFieldwork.ppt](http://www.mednet3.who.int/PRDUC/Materials/Visual_Aids/FINALFieldwork.ppt)>.

Mullen, David G. Personal interview. 12 Oct. 2004.

National Health Service of Scotland. Scotland's Health on the Web. 5 March 2005

<<http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/involvingpeople/methodologies/>

[individualmethodologies/interview.htm](http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/involvingpeople/methodologies/individualmethodologies/interview.htm)>.

Nelson, Alan, and Gene Appel. How to Change Your Church (without Killing It).

Nashville: Nelson, 2000.

Nixon, Paul. "I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church. Period." Net Results: Effective Ideas for Pursuing Vital Ministry 26 (2005): 19-21.

Nouwen, Henri J. M. In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership. New York: Crossroad, 2001.

Russell, Bob. When God Builds a Church: 10 Principles for Growing a Dynamic Church. West Monroe, LA: Howard, 2000.

Senge, Peter M. The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization. New York: Doubleday, 1990.

Shawchuck, Norman, and Roger Heuser. Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving the People. Nashville: Abingdon, 1993.

Slaughter, Michael. Unlearning Church: Just When You Thought You Had Leadership All Figured Out. Loveland, CO: Group, 2002.

Southerland, Dan. Transitioning: Leading Your Church through Change. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

Stanley, Paul D., and J. Robert Clinton. Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1992.

Telford, John, ed. The Letters of John Wesley. London: Epworth, 1931. 8 vols.

Warren, Rick. The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For? Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.

Welch, Jack, with John A. Byrne. Jack: Straight from the Gut. New York: Warner, 2001.