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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE WELLSPRING ACADEMY FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP: A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS IN THE NORTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

by

R. Branson Sheets, III

The purpose of this project was to evaluate the impact of the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership in the ministries of the participating pastors. A researcher-designed pretest and posttest was given to the 2003-04 class of participants to measure changes in practical ministry skills, attitudes, and confidence. Supplemental research tools included narrative evaluations, a strategic long-range plan, a Life Ministry Plan (an autobiographical evaluation of leadership gifts), an extensive personality inventory instrument, and notes from my Field Worker's Journal.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled  
THE WELLSRING ACADEMY FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP:  
A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING TRANFORMATIONAL LEADERS  
IN THE NORTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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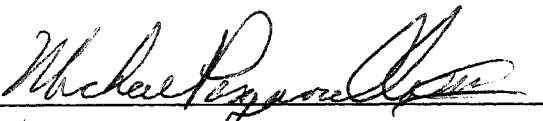
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THE WELLSPRING ACADEMY FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP:  
A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS  
IN THE NORTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
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by

R. Branson Sheets, III

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## CHAPTER 1

### UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

Loren B. Mead diagnoses that a shift has taken place in the nature and function of the Church of Jesus Christ. Mead writes that the first century Church understood its role as a community of people with a clear mission to “re-present” Jesus Christ to the world, continuing the work that Christ had begun when he was present in the flesh. Believers joined together for worship, fellowship, instruction, and spiritual nurture, always clear of the Church’s mission as expressed by Paul, “that I may gain Christ and be found in him” (Phil. 3:9, NIV). Mead outlines how Christians in the book of Acts demonstrated compassion to the poor and needy, courage of conviction to ruling authorities, and selflessness to both friend and enemy. Their lives were consumed with moral purity and integrity; thus, they were powerful witnesses to the radical change that Christ Jesus had made in their lives and stood in stark contrast to those who were not Christians. The result was amazing growth and vibrancy (43). Mead yearns for a return to that kind of Church.

David L. Smith shares Mead’s conclusions. He states that in the New Testament the term *ekklesia*, whether referring to a local body of believers or the universality of all believers, describes “the community of the redeemed,” those that had been called out of the sin and changed by the power of God, both inwardly and outwardly (578-79). Thus, the *ekklesia* was both the community of faith and the army of God, people striving to live in a relationship with Christ and introduce others to new life in Christ so their lives would be changed as well. Eternal life was not a futuristic hope but a present reality. The Christians of the first century lived out 1 John 5:12: “Whoever has God’s Son has life;

whoever does not have his Son does not have life” (NIV). The expectation was that every believer would display the fruit of the Spirit, full obedience to God, and maturity in Christ. Thomas C. Oden declares that first century Christians sought more than knowledge about God. They wanted more than anything to know Christ, be full of the Spirit, love like Christ loved, and move on toward perfection (John Wesley’s Scriptural Christianity 52-53).

Ben Campbell Johnson also sees a very different Church today. Bemoaning the plight of the mainline denominations in North America, Johnson sees the loss of focus and effectiveness in ministry and asks, “Can our kind of church change our kind of world?” (23). Instead of functioning as bastions of new life in Christ, many churches have become religious institutions that lack power and purpose. Instead of envisioning themselves as the hands and feet of Christ in a hurting and lost world, many mainline Christians see themselves as the guardians of church buildings and religious traditions. Instead of demonstrating compassion to their communities, courage of conviction, and love toward one another, many mainline Christians spend their lives within the walls of the church facility with little awareness of the lost world around them (34-42). Wade Clark Roof and William McKenney describe American mainline religion as bland and not very attractive to many people in today’s world (227). Their diagnosis may be too kind. In reality, the church that Johnson is describing is a dying organization rather than a living organism.

Prophets do exist calling for the need for mainline churches to wake up. Carlotta B. Cochran writes that in this new and rapidly changing world with little regard for political and religious authority, mainline churches such as her beloved St. John’s



Episcopal Church in Roanoke, Virginia, are losing their “market share” quite rapidly. Cochran makes the argument that people are looking for more than an established local church. What people are looking for is actually the one thing that the Church has to offer—a relationship with Christ. No matter what generation they represent, and regardless of whether they actually understand it or not, people are trying to fill their longing for a relationship with God. Mainline congregations must learn to articulate their faith in relevant and passionate ways that demonstrate a personal knowledge of and personal experience with Jesus Christ.

J. I. Packer laments what he calls “a stunted ecclesiology” in many mainline and evangelical congregations in North America. The central purpose of the corporate nature of the Church is to cultivate vibrant spiritual life. Unfortunately, local churches are often more “organizations for spiritual life support than organisms of perpetual praise.” The Church must again become a living representation of Christ, a dynamic body of ministry and mission of which each local congregation is an “outcrop, sample, and microcosm.” The Church must again embody the presence of Christ, pray with power, live with enthusiasm, give with reckless abandon, and love unconditionally.

In my own denomination, Bishop William H. Willimon has been venting his dissatisfaction with the state of the mainline church for years. Willimon insists that the local church does not exist for the purpose of forming a religious club nor is a local church a cafeteria line for picking and choosing religious needs (Calling and Character 24). The world is in need of a Church that is counter-cultural, whose leaders invite its members to live at odds with the predominate culture (2 Pet. 2:11):

We are no longer keeping house in an essentially hospitable and receptive culture, if we ever were. Today, even those of us pastors in mainline

Protestantism are beginning to feel like the leaders of an outpost, an enclave of an alien culture with a majority, non-Christian culture,... More of our efforts will need to be expended in giving our people the means to live by the gospel in a world where Christians are a cognitive minority. (Pastor 70)

J. E. Lesslie Newbigin also expresses the need for the Church to be dynamically counter-cultural. Much of the problem with the Church resides in the refusal to obey the commands of Christ. This sin and rebellion not only renders the Church powerless and ineffective, but no one will ever be saved or offended by a generic gospel where the lordship of Christ is ignored. The Church must begin to act like the redeemed people of God, establishing a mission to the world that is so radical in its obedience to Christ that the world takes notice of its message and is astounded by its transformational power and influence (7).

Mead calls for no less than a reinvention of the church (43). Johnson announces that living in a post-Christian, post-denominational era “demands a new way of being the church” (42). Roof and McKenney call for a revitalization of the American Christian landscape, a transformation that will enable congregations to engage a sinful and broken world with the good news of Jesus Christ (43-45, 55). This concern for the Church and its place in the world is the reason for my project. I, too, want to see the Church be the powerful life-giving force that God intends.

### **Where to Start**

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement, from his position as a priest in the Church of England decried what he termed “stagnant orthodoxy,” or Christianity without a personal experience of faith and the disciplines that bring about godly character (Harper 131-35). Wesley’s conviction was that renewal would begin as his leaders

became spiritually accountable and mature (Maddox 212). Thomas A. Langford maintains that Wesley's three keys to changing the landscape of England through the Methodist movement were a vital experience with God, insistence on holy living by example, and the clarity of the mission that "the world is our parish" (265-68). Wesley believed that equipping his pastoral leaders was the most important task of the movement, for they would, in turn, equip those under their authority for works of service and holy, spirit-filled lives. Willimon also notes Wesley's strategy of setting apart his pastoral leaders to serve as "exemplars" to the congregation (1 Tim. 3:2; Calling and Character 45).

James M. Mark Dyer agrees with Wesley that the Church is in need of leadership of another kind:

People are looking for holy leaders to help them learn how to live the mystery of life with God, and only holy leaders can do this. The best-intentioned ecclesiastical programs and paradigms will not answer the need of the human heart for God.

The fundamental task of pastoral leaders, then, is to hand off the faith correctly and passionately to the next generation.

Howard A. Snyder is right when he says that efforts at transformation should not center on attacking the entrenched institutional patterns. Instead, the Church must train leaders who will be instruments of change to "cut fresh paths around the dams of spiritual stagnation" in order to renew the Church (303). Snyder also shares this strategy for renewal: set the leaders on fire, give them the tools they need to lead others, and they will fan a renewal movement into flames (301-02). Transformation must begin with pastoral leaders.

## A Leadership Void

The central problem is that those in leadership in most mainline denominations have been trained using outdated therapeutic models of ministry that have proved inadequate in today's ever-changing global environment (Cochran). The United Methodist Church is a great example. The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church offers a three-page definition of the role of a pastor explained in terms of duties and responsibilities that the pastor is expected to fulfill to ensure a faithful and effective ministry. Unfortunately, this definition contains no understanding of the pastor as a leader whatsoever (244). This definition of pastoral duties is probably so limited because many Christians assume that the primary role of a pastor is that of a shepherd of a flock of believers or a caretaker of a congregation. Sometimes the pastor is even viewed as the Christian who is paid to do the work of the church (as is somewhat evident in the Book of Discipline): the pastor is the one that studies and teaches the Bible, helps assimilate the new members, and visits and cares for all the members on the roll. This model of ministry and church life is neither biblical nor theologically conducive to accomplishing the mission of the Church (244-46).

A change is needed. Eugene H. Peterson's analysis is correct. He says that what many American mainline pastors do with their time (under the guise of pastoral leadership) has almost no connection with the mission and purpose of the Church:

Pastors have metamorphosed into a company of shopkeepers, and the shops they keep are churches. They are preoccupied with shopkeeper's concerns—how to keep the customers happy, how to lure customers away from the competitors down the street, how to package the goods so that the customers will lay out more money. (Working the Angles 1)

The Church is in desperate need of more than shopkeepers. "Shopkeeping" is not the

calling of pastoral leaders, nor is it very fulfilling. Peterson states that the good news is that many pastors today are discovering the emptiness of their maintenance work in their congregations and are longing to fulfill their ordination birthright of being proclaimers of authentic life in Jesus Christ, leading congregations to again be the Church (2). God has called the Church to be a community of believers under the Lordship of Christ, redeemed from sin and commissioned to preach redemption through Christ to the world (Book of Discipline 19). The very nature of the Church will not allow pastors simply to bide their time in maintenance issues.

Futurist Ron Martoia is one of many innovative Christian leaders attempting to redefine pastoral leadership. Martoia identifies what he calls the four mental shifts—categories that must be overhauled if the Church is to transition into an effective organism for reaching the world (“From Gladiator to Irritator” 69-73).

First, leaders must change from the “ones with all the answers” to the “ones who ask the right questions.” Martoia describes the traditional role of most pastors as the theologian in residence, the only person who can understand the Bible, the one who has received theological training. He asserts that this mental image in the minds of pastors and their people alike leads to lazy Christians who expect pastors to spoon-feed them. The Church of the twenty-first century needs pastoral leaders who know how to answer questions with questions (as Jesus often did). True pastoral leadership is pointing others to discover the answers for themselves as they seek after God (“From Gladiator to Irritator” 69-70).

Second, leaders must change their methods of training. The new paradigm is more dynamic than simply teaching a list of duties and responsibilities in a classroom setting:

When I work to keep my life sharp before God, my creativity soaring, my sensitivity delicate, the ethos that results will engender the same thing in my team. Skill set acquisition happens in those greenhouses much more through osmosis and coaching on the fly than through a class taken or a training session attended. (Martoia, “From Gladitor to Innovator” 70)

Third, leaders must move from the mentality of individualistic self-improvement to a “changing of the corporate ethos” (Martoia, “From Gladitor to Innovator” 71-72). Leadership for Christians begins with a self-knowledge of one’s own depravity and the determination to live a life above sin. The corporate nature of the Church will never be the dynamic, life-giving force for which Jesus Christ gave his life until the body of Christ begins to express its true nature as the community of transformed sinners now intent on spreading scriptural holiness everywhere. People are drawn to congregations that are full of loving, compassionate people who embody the fruit of the spirit and demonstrate the power of the cross in their lives.

Fourth, leaders must learn to give permission for everyone to be involved in ministry. Martoia asks this probing question:

We put people through a whole bunch of training and then—and only then—do we deem them prepared to invest in someone else’s life. A probing question, though, is how much training did the disciples have before they were sent out into the villages to preach their first messages? (“From Gladitor to Innovator” 72)

He asserts that the minimums for ministry are far more extreme than Jesus ever intended. Simple on-the-job leadership training is the model in the gospels, and the New Testament reveals its effectiveness (72-73).

Unfortunately, most pastors have never been trained to lead nor have they seen this kind leadership modeled by their mentors in ministry (Wofford 9). George Barna, noted research expert on church growth, church health, and leadership, suggests that part

of the problem is that only about 5 percent of pastors are spiritually gifted in leadership. Many pastors have teaching and preaching gifts as well as gifts of evangelism, administration, and shepherding, but they lack the practical tools and skills necessary to lead their congregations (32). Linda de Charon makes the case that all leaders are probably only naturally gifted with half of the characteristics necessary to lead effectively (9), which means that pastors need supplemental training in leadership. Both Cochran and Dyer admit that existing models for pastoral leadership are limited because seminary training has not seemed to prepare pastors for the difficult vocation of being pastoral leaders. Congregations cannot afford to hire men and women who have only been trained to maintain the status quo of an ineffective structure and picture of ministry (Willimon, Pastor 63). The Church is dying for transformational pastoral leaders, something Oden calls “part incarnational” (living the life of Christ) and “part apostolic” (calling congregants to it; Pastoral Theology 61).

The problem is even more pronounced. Local churches need spiritual leaders to direct them toward growth and missional fulfillment, but many congregations continue to have more functional expectations of their pastors. When their pastoral leaders do attempt to lead, often their ideas are met with resistance or, at best, meager enthusiasm. Dan Reiland, noted leadership consultant, puts the pastoral leader’s role in perspective. He suggests that the job of a pastor is one of the most challenging and demanding positions a person could have. It is full of family and marital stress, often coupled with discouragement as well as inadequacy and loneliness. Pastors are expected to be both creative and dynamic at all times, even though often they may go through seasons of spiritual dryness themselves (8-16).

Since pastors are often in settings where they have little or no support, the casualty rate is very high. They either decide to leave the ministry profession or they stop attempting to lead, settling for a chaplain-styled ministry with little or no conflict. David Cannistraci suggests that the problem is exacerbated by the fact that Satan will do everything in his power to attack the leaders of churches. Jesus' words in Mark 14:27 regarding the scattering of the sheep if their shepherd is rendered powerless is certainly a factor that makes this whole business of leadership a dangerous proposition (91).

Simply put, without effective pastoral leadership, local congregations have little chance of developing into the kind of churches that will make a significant impact for Christ in the world. The church that lacks pastoral leadership will likely not develop spiritually mature Christians who serve, use their gifts and abilities to spread the gospel, or make a difference in the lost and dying communities in which they reside. Something must be done to develop a strategy for equipping more pastors who are also leaders (Wofford 77).

### **The Small Church in Crisis**

Certainly, all sizes of congregations find themselves in need of leadership from their pastors, but churches of smaller membership may be more in need of real leadership. The reasons cannot be overstated. Experts on the "small church" (e.g., Crandall; Dudley; R. Brown; Compton) paint the picture of the ministry in a small membership local church as more difficult than the ministry in a large congregation for several reasons:

1. Small congregations tend to have fewer resources (both money and people) than congregations of more size;



2. Small congregations tend to be family oriented with a major lay leader built into the system, one who often is called on to make the decisions in lieu of the pastor; and,

3. Small congregations are often more resistant to change than their larger counterparts. In fact, Carl S. Dudley writes that even when everything around them is changing, small congregations often will remain unaffected. He estimates that most smaller membership local churches will not change in the number of participants by more than 10 percent in a decade (23-25).

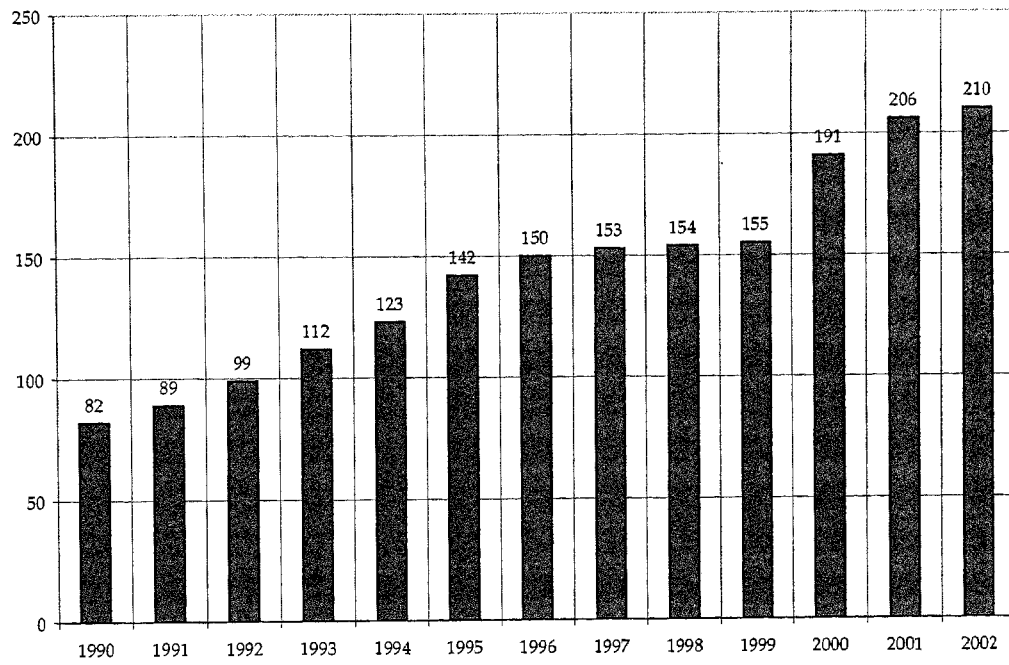
Dudley cites figures that reveal more than half of the congregations in North America qualify as small churches (less than one hundred average participants; 11). In the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church, the numbers are closer to two-thirds. Traditionally, pastors in smaller churches have moved every two to three years, leaving their appointments before any vital, lasting work could take place (Compton, Rekindling the Mainline 5). Church growth experts C. Peter Wagner and Richard W. Brown agree that the most significant years of ministry are at least years five through seven (Wagner 125; R. Brown 28-29). Since most smaller membership churches have never had a pastor stay for more than four years, transformational change rarely happens in many of them.

### **The Story of Wellspring**

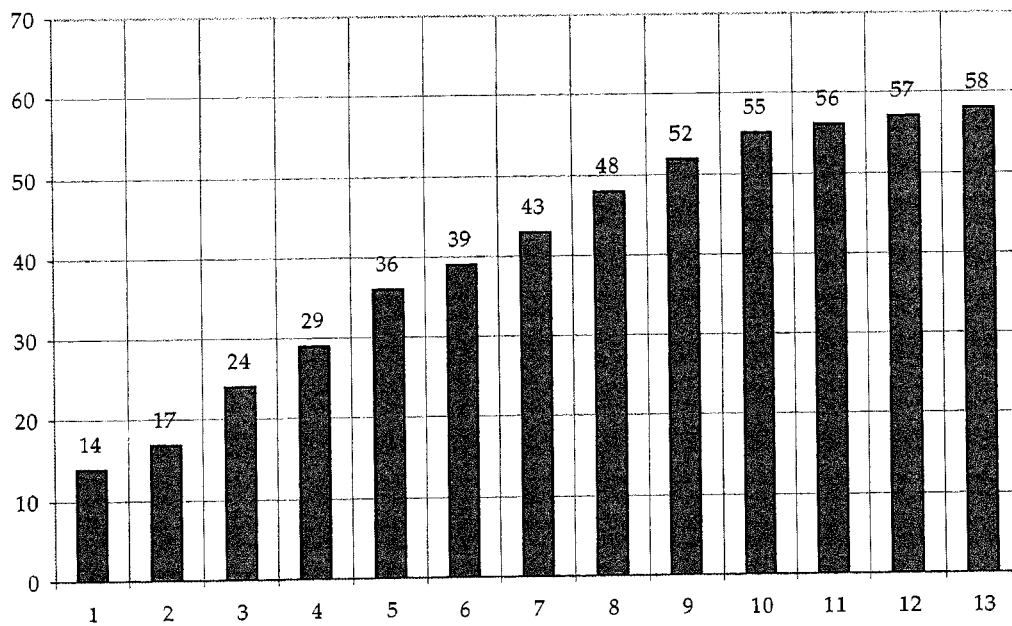
Recognizing the need for what he termed “transformational leadership,” Bishop Marion Edwards of the North Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church introduced a bold new initiative called Wellspring: A Source for Spiritual Leadership. Bishop Edwards identified two areas lacking in the pastors of the North

Carolina Annual Conference: spiritual formation that produces maturity and transformational leadership that produces dynamic churches. As bishop, Edwards acknowledged concern that pastors in the conference were not developing spiritually through personal spiritual study and corporate small groups of peers for encouragement. He saw repeatedly that many of the men and women he appointed were not accomplished in practical leadership skills. His solution was to appoint a pastor with twenty-five years of pastoral experience as the head of the Wellspring ministry.

When this original appointment was made in June 2001, the problem that Bishop Edwards cited and that I laid out earlier in the chapter was not my problem. Bishops have to worry about declining congregations and ineffective pastors, but I was content to keep doing what I had been doing for the eleven years in Bailey as the pastor in charge. I had been appointed to the Bailey Charge in June 1990, and slowly, over time, both churches grew numerically and spiritually (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2).



**Figure 1.1. Average attendance at Bailey UMC 1990-2002.**



**Figure 1.2. Average attendance at Pleasant Grove UMC 1990-2002.**

Bishop Edwards had traveled to our town several times to speak at or participate in a district meeting. Though I knew that the bishop was familiar with the work in our charge, I did not realize that he identified what had happened in Bailey as transformational. In January 2002, I met with Bishop Edwards to discuss my future in ministry. Now in the twelfth year of my appointment, I shared with him the need to know whether I would be allowed to return for another year before our church embarked on a new building project. His answer surprised me.

The bishop told me that he would be glad for me to stay, but that if I did, he needed for me to come up with a way to help pastors of smaller membership local churches in our conference lead their charges to do some of the things we had been able to do in Bailey. I told him that the idea sounded exciting and that I would go home and pray about it.<sup>1</sup> About a month later, I shared my plan for a leadership academy modeled after the Beeson Institute at Asbury Theological Seminary. We would select a dozen pastors a year for a yearlong continuing education event where the participants would receive training (in spiritual formation, leading through change, and other practical pastoral skills) once a month, receive individual coaching/encouragement from me, and be equipped to develop a long-range transformational plan for their church at the end of the process. Bishop Edwards thought that the concept was a good one, and his cabinet of superintendents agreed. In June 2002, I was appointed to this task on a half-time basis as the Director of the Wellspring Small Church Initiative. I was also appointed to continue my duties as the senior pastor of my charge.

Our conference's leadership crisis had now become my project. Because I had

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop Edwards asked me to consider experiences that had helped me develop into a transformational leader as well as ways to make transformational principles to other pastors in the conference. I developed a list of five formative experiences (see Appendix A).

had some success in helping to revive two declining, smaller congregations, I was now tapped as “the expert,” and our charge was now viewed as the example for how a two-point charge could flourish. The Leadership Academy would target pastors of smaller membership local churches and offer them practical ministry ideas that had worked in at least one context in rural eastern North Carolina. The academy would also provide a forum for mentoring, encouragement, inspiration, and spiritual formation. R. Paul Stevens has termed this teaching strategy “orthopraxy,” the application of what is known to be correct or right theology concerning the nature and purpose of the Church. Pastoral leaders are desperate for mentors who are living out transformational leadership successfully (247-48).

The reason this project must succeed cannot be overstated. Leading a church of small membership might be the most difficult ministry placement available for several reasons. First, members of smaller church have traditionally expected their pastors to do all the ministerial work. Overcoming this unbiblical notion often proves very difficult for pastors serving parishioners who have come to expect to be served (Patton, If It Could Happen Here 41-42).

Second, many of the appointments to smaller churches in the North Carolina conference also come with geographical isolation, a loss of amenities for one’s family, and a setting that is very rural and, therefore, unfamiliar to the experiences of most pastors coming out of seminary. Interestingly, most pastors in our conference have grown up in mid- to large-sized churches, have no experience in “family chapel churches,” and may even be offended at having to serve such a small placement.

Third, small membership assignments are often viewed as “early in my ministry”

placements or, at best, stepping stone appointments to get to bigger and better places.

Fourth, examples of pastors willing to stay and grow a small church are indeed rare in our appointive system. Therefore, the lack of mentors is a handicap to many small church pastors who could use a model as well as an advisor (Deir 1, 44; Crandall 35-36). Many times, the answer to these difficulties has been to move to another church and escape the small church as quickly as possible.

One of the strategies for the Wellspring Academy is expressed in these words by Bill Hybels:

This is the equation that we have committed our lives to.... [I]f you get a church leader filled up with faith and radically in love with God,... if you can get a church leader to understand the local church really is the hope of the world,... if you can equip, train, and fire up that church leader,... you will change that leader and in the long run you will change the church!  
("Building a Church")

The Wellspring Academy was formed to equip leaders so that local churches can be transformed into dynamic examples of the body of Christ.

The rationale for such an academy for smaller membership congregations can be expressed by these four ideas. First, a majority of continuing education events are held at large churches with large church senior pastors leading them, but no such events exist for pastors of smaller membership churches. Since a significant number of the churches in the North Carolina Conference average less than one hundred in attendance, the need for practical leadership skills in a small church teaching site is vital.

Second, a different kind of continuing education event emphasizing practical ministry skill training is needed (Stevens 47). Willimon admits that seminaries do little or nothing to train pastors for what they will experience when they actually arrive at their ministry placement and so most pastors learn through on-the-job training (Pastor 63).

When I surveyed members of the annual conference (April 2002), I found dozens of pastors in their eighth to fifteenth years of pastoral ministry who had seminary training and pastoral experience but still felt the need for a “next step” in their training as pastors. They were looking for ideas that had worked and could be transferable to their local settings. I also discovered many pastors who had never been to seminary—local pastors with some experience—who needed the practical skills to help their churches grow and prosper. Still other pastors had no formal training and no experience in pastoral ministry, second career ministers who needed some help in the practical aspects of how to be effective in ministry.

Third, spiritual enrichment is a great need among all the pastors of the conference, especially for those who are often isolated geographically and serve alone in ministry. The academy was developed to provide pastors of like ministry settings a forum to discuss the challenges of ministry in smaller churches. The academy provided one monthly module on spiritual formation, but it also provided individual encouragement and prayer sessions with the director, prayer support from the Bailey United Methodist Church prayer team, and the opportunity for many new relationships of support to be formed among the twelve. Steve Harper calls this kind of strategy for spiritual formation and development of leadership principles the secret to true renewal and the genius of Wesley’s movement (125).

Fourth, small churches tend to be slow to embrace needed changes in their congregational lives that could help them survive and even prosper. Since leadership seems to be more of a learned quality than an innate characteristic (Willimon, Pastor 279), the academy provided many examples of success in the small and rural context. Jeff

Patton's book If It Could Happen Here was a great tool in pointing to success that can happen in unlikely places.

### **Context of the Study**

The North Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church (UMC) consists of 850 churches, with between five and six hundred pastors serving those congregations. A vast majority of the churches are in rural and small town settings.

The Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership was limited to a dozen pastors in a conference year selected from applications submitted to a committee of overseeing pastors. The criteria for selection were three:

1. The pastor must be serving a congregation of one hundred or less in average worship attendance;
2. The pastor must be willing to commit to stay at the current appointment for at least five more years; and,
3. The pastor must be willing to develop his or her skills as a leader in ministry.

The Bailey United Methodist Charge is the largest two-point circuit in the North Carolina Conference. Bailey UMC is a small-town church that has grown to over two hundred in worship with two principle worship services. Pleasant Grove UMC has just completed its second building program in ten years and has quadrupled its worship attendance since 1990. The two churches now share three full-time pastors and several other part-time staff members, a thriving youth and children's ministry, and many other programs.

### **Description of the Project**

The project was a yearlong leadership academy called the Wellspring Academy



for Christian Leadership. The academy selected twelve pastors from smaller membership churches to participate in the program. The goal stated in the application (see Appendix B) and advertised throughout the Annual Conference was that the academy experience would train pastors to be transformational leaders, providing inspiration and practical ministry skills as a continuing education event offering five continuing education units. The nine teaching modules were held at Bailey UMC on a monthly basis. Each session met from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Other contact by the director with participants included two on-site visits (at the participants' churches), a one-hour interview interpreting the results of the personality profile, numerous online collaborations (module assignments, questions, and reflections on leadership issues), and telephone calls. I served as the director of the Wellspring Academy.

The first year of the academy (2002-03) served as the pilot year for the program. Several improvements were made in the schedule and instruction from year one to year two in hopes of fine-tuning the experience to be more transformational: modules emphasizing long-range planning and the change process were added, former Wellspring pastors were added to the faculty to provide even more practical instruction, and additional time with the instructor was built into the schedule. The academy's second class of participants provided the subjects for this study (class of 2003-04).

### **The Teaching Modules**

The Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership was designed to use the transformational leadership principle of equipping to equip other leaders who would, in turn, equip other leaders. The leadership training focused on a series of nine monthly modules (see Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1. Monthly Modules for the Wellspring Academy 2003-04**


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September 2003: A Leader's Call
October 2003: A Leader's Spiritual Foundation
November 2003: The Possibilities in a Small Church Setting
December 2003: The Change Process, Part 1
January 2004: The Change Process, Part 2
February 2004: Making an Impact with Your Preaching
March 2004: Helping Your Church Reach Non-Christians
April 2004: The Purpose-Driven Leader
May 2004: The Continuing Challenge of Leadership

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Each of the nine modules followed a similar agenda.

1. The morning began with gathering for coffee and fellowship (a significant part of the experience was the development of vital and lasting relationships as a part of participation in the academy together with other leaders).

2. I presented an extensive devotion with an emphasis on the theme of the day and how that theme was to impact ministry.

3. An experienced pastor led the morning session through interactive teaching using the required text for the month. Each module leader was asked to develop group interaction activities for the morning and afternoon sessions.

4. Each module included a generous time for lunch to debrief around the table and build significant relationships with other academy members.

5. The afternoon session featured the module leader sharing experiences of successes and failures in implementing ministry in the particular area of focus for that

day.

6. I concluded the day with an hour of practical skills, ideas, and ministry tools that could be transferred directly into any small church situation (see Appendix H for a list of all the module agendas).

### **Assignments**

Each module featured a pre-discussion question and/or a post-discussion question. Participants were linked by e-mail to a group called Wellspring Pastors 2 Group. All questions for discussion and answers posted to the site were automatically sent to every person in the group. Each module leader was also connected to the site for the month before and after their time at the academy so they could weigh in on the discussion as well and share from their personal ministry experiences. Some examples of assignments included an explanation of the participants' current spiritual habits, the exchange of a sermon on tape for review by another participant, and a change plan for one matter that the participants would like to see changed before they leave their current appointments. A complete list of assignments is listed in Appendix I.

### **Personal Time Spent with the Director**

The yearlong experience provided each pastor with an unlimited amount of time with the director. Some of the participants needed extra encouragement, and they sought me out by frequent telephone contacts and personal appointments. I also visited each of the participants on-site twice during the nine months to pray, discuss strategy, ministry, and life, and build a deeper relationship. Each visit was approximately two hours long. Wanting to maintain the highest integrity with the female colleagues and sensing that meetings at restaurants or even church offices with the female participants of the group

would present problems of propriety, each visit with such participants was supervised by a female church member from the participant's church. Hopefully, the fact that extreme caution was exercised added to the program's credibility in the eyes of the parishioners of those churches.

One factor not in the original planning for this academy was the need for healing of broken leaders. Approximately half of the participants had been through or were going through very difficult ministry circumstances. Each of these pastors demonstrated the gifts for leadership, but the damage left from encounters with unkind Christian people (people determined to keep needed changes from occurring) was obviously a hindrance to the releasing of transformational leadership. Part of the time in each visitation session was to speak the truth, minister healing, and encourage the participant to test the waters of leadership again.

### **The 16PF Test**

Each participant was asked to take an extensive personality test to examine God-given personality traits useful for ministry and leadership (Barkman, Barkman, and Barkman 3). Because each pastoral couple serves as a team, each spouse was also asked to take the test. The sixteen personality factor test developed by the Institute for Personality and Ability at the University of Illinois and now administered by Counselaid Psychological Corporation was given to each participant at the beginning of the nine-month experience. Once the test had been graded and the results sent to me, each couple then spent a one-hour interview on the phone with me discussing compatibility in ministry including strengths and weaknesses, helpful changes, and especially encouraging ways that God could use them in ministry at their local church. Afterwards,

the participant spent another half hour discussing scores on the tests and how they relate to leadership and the development of a life ministry plan. The test repeatedly revealed new insights and confirmed gifts for ministry already in use.

### **Requirements**

Each participant's graduation from the program was dependent upon the development of two documents: a life ministry plan and a five-year, long-range plan. The life ministry plan was an instrument intended to build confidence in God-given abilities, personality, and developed ministry skills. The kind of leadership that would be transformational was assumed to be a skill that could not be learned from a book. It must be developed, molded, shaped, and honed (Woods 97). The life ministry plan would be a culminating work where the participants would be able to identify the characteristics that make their leadership a powerful strength to future ministry (Callahan, Effective Church Leadership 91).

The five-year, long-range plan was an instrument intended to build longevity into the role of leader. The average tenure of a United Methodist pastor is still perceived by many long-time Methodists (and for that matter, by many of our pastors) as four years. Unfortunately, in the smaller membership churches of the North Carolina Conference, the average is 2 ½ years (Compton, "Nature of the Small Church"). Since many consultants today have identified the most effective years of a pastoral ministry as years number five through seven (e.g., R. Brown; Wagner; Compton, "Nature of the Small Church"), transformational leadership was assumed by this study to need more than four years in one place to be transformational. Developing a long-range plan was then akin to a "vow of stability" to help the congregation and the pastor commit to each other for a more

lengthy term together in ministry (Peterson, Under the Unpredictable Plant 29).

### **The Purpose Stated**

The purpose of this project was to evaluate the impact of the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership in the lives and ministries of the participating pastors. A researcher-designed pretest and posttest was given to the 2003-04 class of participants to measure changes in practical ministry skills, attitude, and confidence that took place by their participation in this nine-module, continuing education event. This research can be used to validate the necessity and relevance of the process of equipping leaders through mentoring, inspirational teaching, and spiritual formation (D. Brown 13).

### **Research Questions**

In order to fulfill the purposes of this study, three research questions have been identified:

1. How did the pastors of the Wellspring Academy change in their attitudes and ministry skills because of the specific training in transformational leadership they received from the yearlong experience?
2. What are the contextual factors apart from the pretest/posttest questions that revealed significant changes in the participants?
3. What elements of the program contributed most to its impact?

### **Definition of Terms**

In this study, the principle terms need defining.

*Transformational leadership* “empowers people to pursue a shared vision and act as if personal and corporate transformation is at the heart of its work” (Easum, Transformational Leadership 10-11). Factors that identify leadership as transformational

include charisma, inspiration, encouragement, and collaboration (Corrigan and Garman 22; Avolio and Bass 5; Duckett and Macfarlane 311). In its specific Christian context, transformational leadership moves other people toward ever-increasing godliness, faith, and adherence to the will of God for their lives. Those exhibiting the qualities of transformational leadership are naturally agents of change, challenging the status quo to bring about more dynamic Christian life (Kallestad, "How Is It Going"). The process of transformation is Spirit driven, an inside-out process of humility and vulnerability that allows for a growing obedience to Jesus Christ (Herrington, Creech, and Taylor 12-13). Thus, transformational leadership is incarnational in nature. As leaders are transformed by God and pour themselves into their mission, those around them also sense that the vision is worth following and change occurs (Richards and Hoeldtke 65).

*Wellspring* is the special initiative in the North Carolina Conference designed to stimulate growth in the areas of spiritual formation and transformational leadership. The academy discussed in this project was a component of Wellspring's small church initiative. The other two conference initiatives concentrate on larger church leadership issues and the spiritual formation of the body of pastors in the conference.

*Small membership local church* is defined as a church with one hundred or less in worship attendance on an average basis. The North Carolina Annual Conference has set this mark of one hundred as the minimum number of people necessary to sustain a congregation financially if they have a full-time pastor (Compton, "Nature of the Small Church"). Steve Compton's work *Rekindling the Mainline* gives more detail on how this number came to be the standard of measure.

*An elder* in the United Methodist Church is an ordained pastor who has a Master

of Divinity degree or the equivalent. Elders are full members of the annual conference with the privileges of guaranteed appointment and pension credit, and this status usually implies that the pastor has at least three years of ministry experience and has passed the Board of Ordained Ministry as being fit for ministry.

*A local pastor* in the United Methodist Church is a pastor who has yet to be ordained or has been trained through a non-seminary route such as the five-year course of study or the licensing school in the conference. Local pastors serve at the discretion of the bishop with no guaranteed appointment or pension credit. Many times local pastors are second-career clergy who opt not to invest the three to four years in a formal seminary education.

*The 16 Personality Factor Test (16PF)* is the psychological testing instrument used in conjunction with the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership. Employed for its ability to identify personality and leadership qualities, the 16PF was given to both the participants in the academy and to the spouses of the participants and then interpreted for them for the purpose of better self-knowledge in the roles of pastor and pastor's spouse (see Appendix C for certificate of training from Counselaid Psychological Corporation and Dr. Paul Barkman).

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership in the lives and ministries of the participating pastors. The project sought to evaluate the practical, attitudinal, and transformational changes in the participants as a result of their experience over a yearlong process of receiving teaching and mentoring. The project was an evaluative study in the quasi-experimental mode that



utilized a pre- and posttest design with no comparison group.

### **Population and Participants**

The participants of this study were the members of the second class of the Wellspring Academy, being in the program during the year 2003-04. For this study, the population and the sample were the same: the program had twelve participants—eight men and four women, eleven elders, and one local pastor. Each of these pastors was asked to complete both the pre- and posttest as part of the criteria for fulfilling the expectations for graduation. Each participant gave me permission to evaluate the results of the tests (see Appendix D).

### **Variables**

The independent variable of this research project was the instruction at the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership and personal interactions with the participants with me as the director.

Four possible intervening variables may have affected the outcome of the study:

1. The level of leadership skills perceived by the participants about themselves could have affected the integrity of the research. The pre- and posttests were designed to measure this subjective category;

2. The level of “woundedness” of the particular pastoral leader in the study could also have affected the data. If the pastor had had a bad experience, a failure, or a time of particularly difficult church conflict, the scores on the measuring instruments may be skewed;

3. The level of support between the local church and its pastor could have affected the study. The study was unable to control for the response of the

transformational leadership effect on the congregation itself. Sometimes even great leaders are not able to overcome opposition to change by church people; and,

4. Other factors such as age and experience levels of the participants, church politics, and demographics could also have affected the outcomes of the study.

The dependent variable is the change in transformational leadership as measured by the various instruments. The study also did not seek to measure all small local church pastors but only the ones who applied to the academy; thus, the incentive to grow and receive training from the experience was at a high level.

### **Instrumentation and Data Collection**

The researcher-designed pre- and posttest were the objective instruments used to measure the effects of the continuing education event in the lives of the pastors participating in the study (see Appendixes E and F). As stated above, I administered the pretest prior to our first meeting together in September, and it served as a first glimpse of the participants' understanding of their own leadership quotient. These instruments were not piloted but careful attention was given to the design of the test and to the choosing of the questions. Each of the questions on the pretest/posttest corresponded to the objectives of the teaching modules (see Table 1.2).

### **Table 1.2. Pre- and Posttest Questions and their Corresponding Modules**

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#### **September 2003: A Leader's Call**

- 01. I generally feel capable of articulating my call.
- 09. I understand my giftedness.
- 10. I view myself as a chaplain.
- 25. I am committed to the concept of long-term ministry (6-8 years).
- 31. I am a good match where I have been appointed.

**Table 1.2. Pre- and Posttest Questions and their Corresponding Modules, continued****October 2003: A Leader's Spiritual Foundation**

- 03. I spend at least thirty minutes a day in prayer.
- 11. I have regular periods of personal retreat.
- 19. I read the Scriptures daily.
- 27. I fast once a month.
- 34. I participate in an accountability group.

**November 2003: The Possibilities in a Small Church Setting**

- 08. I believe that small membership churches can grow.
- 16. Small Methodist churches can grow.
- 24. I can see clearly why my small membership church is small.
- 39. Church growth principles work in any size church.

**December 2003/January 2004: The Change Process, Parts 1 and 2**

- 02. I understand the personal cost of being an instrument of change.
- 18. I understand the change process.
- 23. I have a set of specific goals for my ministry.
- 26. I understand that change is difficult for most people.
- 32. I am called to be an instrument of change.
- 33. I know what I want my church to look like in five years.
- 38. My church has a five-year plan.
- 41. I understand the incremental steps to fulfill my five-year plan.

**February 2004: Making an Impact with Your Preaching**

- 04. The focus of my sermon each week is the practical application of the text.
- 12. I can give a one-sentence summary of each sermon before I preach it.
- 20. I listen to or read other people's sermons on a regular basis.
- 28. I have a friend evaluate my sermons.
- 35. I understand how to communicate to my total audience.
- 40. I have regular and predictable study habits.

**March 2004: Helping Your Church Reach Non-Christians**

- 06. I have led someone to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- 17. A number of people I serve in ministry are personal friends of mine.
- 22. I spend time with the unchurched/lost.
- 29. Our church is visitor friendly.
- 36. My church is effective at reaching the community.

**April 2004: The Purpose-Driven Leader**

- 05. Our church has a mission statement.
- 13. Our church is definitely driven by its mission statement.
- 14. I see evangelism as the central purpose of the Church.
- 21. I understand how to lead a purpose-driven church.

**May 2004: The Continuing Challenge of Leadership**

- 07. I read books on leadership regularly.
- 15. My church leaders support me in my personal growth.
- 29. I am spending money on self-improvement.
- 37. I am a leader of people.
- 42. I meet regularly with a mentor.

Following the experience of meeting together regularly, speaking with one another intermittently via e-mails and other conversations, and personal coaching time from the director, I gave the posttest as a part of the ninth module. This instrument served as the objective measure for the research.

Two other evaluation tools (both subjective) were used to glean insights about the transformational leadership abilities and changes in the participants. First, I prepared a series of notebooks to document conversations, interactions, and other personal contact with each participant:

1. I kept a *Field Worker's Journal* to document thoughts and feelings, conversations, and insights from numerous visits and interviews with the participants;
2. I asked each participant to take a comprehensive personality test called the *16 Personality Factor Test*. I gave them computer disks (which contained the test) after the October module and asked them to return them when they arrived for the November module. The results were then interpreted for them during a telephone interview in January. The results of the 16PF tests were also very revealing and seemed to be an accurate reading of potential leadership abilities and opportunities for self-improvement.
3. I asked each participant to submit a *Long-Range Plan* using the knowledge gained through time spent at the academy modules as well as the participant's own personal creativity in leadership. The plan, developed with the assistance of the participant's church council, was submitted by 1 September 2004; and,
4. I asked each participant to submit a *Life Ministry Plan*—an autobiographical, best assessment of leadership gifting and personality. Each of these plans was particularly revealing and helpful as an evaluation tool.

Second, I gave all participants a series of feedback forms throughout the process. One was after module five, one after module seven, and another final interview, evaluating the whole program after module nine (see Appendix G).

The objective measuring instrument was designed to measure changes in knowledge, attitude, and practical skills in the area of transformational leadership and to be supplemented by the subjective instruments for a triangulation effect to test for accurate results. The research was designed to have several measures for evaluation.

Confidentiality was ensured for each of the participants. No one was allowed to read any of the feedback forms or psychological test results about any other participant. A waiver was signed for the purpose of this research project to ensure the participants would be as straightforward as possible with me as I evaluated them. My evaluations and testing results were not shared with the participants' church councils or others in leadership unless the participant specifically asked for such information to be shared. No one on the bishop's cabinet (the bishop and superintendent that make the pastoral appointments) was privy to the information, either.

### **Delimitations and Generalizability**

This study focused on a very specific group of pastors—those pastors that were accepted as participants in the Wellspring Academy for the year 2003-04. The project was, therefore, limited in the sense that the findings were generalized to the twelve pastors in the program. Originally, the plan was to survey a similar group of pastors who did not participate in the academy, but the research for such a comparison might also be limited in scope since a comparison of “apples with apples” in the area of leadership across United Methodist annual conference lines or across denominational lines would be

a fairly subjective comparison. I hoped that I could generalize that similar outcomes would be the case if the academy experience was offered to a similar group of small church pastors.

The outcomes of the assessment tools were also limited by the criteria used in their construction. Since no one standard definition of the term “transformational leadership” exists, I designed four categories of the types of leadership that the academy hoped to produce based on my work in the doctor of ministry program. The study set out to prove that changes in attitude, behavior, and confidence would happen through a training event in leadership, and in view of the fact that changes were documented in the evaluation tools, the study was successful.

### **Biblical and Theological Reflection**

The shelves of the bookstores and libraries are filled with books on the subject of leadership. Almost every expert would agree with the adage, “As goes the head, so goes the body.” Business leaders such as Warren Bennis stress the power of a leader over that of a manager:

The manager administers, and the leader motivates. The manager is a copy; the leader is an original. The manager maintains; the leader develops. The manager accepts the status quo; the leader is always questioning and challenging the gospel. The manager focuses on the systems and structure; the leader focuses on people. The manager relies on control; the leader relies on trust. The manager has a short range view; the leader has a long range perspective. The manager imitates; the leader originates. (10)

If these words ring true for secular business, then they are doubly true for work of an eternal nature in the Church of Jesus Christ. Pastors are in positions of tremendous influence. They do not have time or energy to waste on maintaining an organization. Phillip V. Lewis, a distinguished professor of Christian management, echoes these

thoughts that spiritual leaders must never be content with things as they are. The business of such leaders is transformation and the product is changed lives (12). Without spiritual leadership, congregations will continue visionless year after year, with little or no power or potential. Consultants like Wagner and William M. Easum are right when they proclaim that churches will not be transformed unless they have transformed pastors (Wagner 125; Easum, Sacred Cows 142).

For this reason, the study will be of great value to the Church. Methods for equipping pastors to be transformational leaders simply must be developed. Denominational leaders and church treasurers are often more concerned about the purse strings than the value of equipping, but if a program can be proven successful, with practical results and a change in the climate of ministry, even the skeptics will believe and invest.

Peter and the other disciples certainly went through a process of transformation. When asked what had happened to these men, all the Sanhedrin could say was that these men had been with Jesus (Acts 4). The three years with him changed their way of life. Jesus' constant opportunities of teaching were moments that his disciples never forgot. One only has to think of the value of the post-resurrection experiences where Jesus clarified many things and opened the Scriptures to them to see the power of Spirit-led teaching from God's word in the change process. Jesus was a master in letting his disciples learn through "on-the-job training," with trial and error and even mistakes.

The Wellspring Academy was developed with these aspects of equipping in mind. The modules provided the small group of twelve with a safe environment in which to experience grace as well as hear the truth proclaimed about the mission and

responsibilities as pastoral leaders (Herrington, Creech, and Taylor 12). Since pastoral leadership is more of an art than a science, an encouraging pastoral teacher with experience provided each participant with a living pastoral example, creating courage and confidence—something that could not be learned from a book (Crandall 38, 160; Woods 94; Sashkin and Sashkin 89). Participants were asked to put into practice what they had learned as they were coached and encouraged to lead, so both the director and the participants were active practitioners in the leadership process (Earley 10-11). The academy's approach took into account that no one can do ministry alone. Even Moses, the great leader of the Exodus, needed support from other leaders (Num. 17:8-13). Reiland's notion that pastors, more than men and women in any other profession, need tremendous support (16-17) was an assumed value in the program.

Finally, everyone needs a model. Leaders need other leaders to challenge them to be great. This process is not one that pits other pastors against each other in competition but one that challenges them to be their best in the light of how God created them as leaders (Woods 97). Paul's words in 1 Timothy 4:12, "Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you teach, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity (NLT)," form a major leadership principle: An exemplary leader is the best person to emulate, and the crucible of personal experience from a proven leader is the best way to teach transformational leadership (Deir 35; Wofford 195).

### **Overview of the Study**

Chapter 2 reviews selected literature and presents a model for transformational leadership and the results of such leadership.



Chapter 3 presents a detailed explanation of the project's design and the research method used to formulate pertinent data for the study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study.

Chapter 5 reports major findings and attempts to correlate the data into transferable principles.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

This study sought to evaluate a program designed to produce and encourage transformational leadership in a group of pastors through a yearlong, continuing education event called the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership. The literature review focused on four major areas pertinent to the project: transformational leadership as defined in the broader field of leadership and organizational studies, the biblical concept of transformation, the biblical model for the development of consistent, mature Christian leaders, and the marks of transformational Christian leadership.

#### **Transformational Leadership**

Leaders lead all organizations. The field of leadership studies, though, is most interested in what constitutes effective leadership. Lee G. Bolman and Terrance E. Deal describe several models of ineffective leadership.

1. Leadership is ineffective when the leader is a petty tyrant. This kind of leader is dictatorial and a micromanager. People serving under this kind of leader will be discouraged (Bolman and Deal 349-51).

2. Leadership is ineffective when the leader is a weakling or a pushover. This kind of leader abdicates the role and leaves the organization with no vision, and it becomes a conglomeration of individuals with their own personal agendas. The organization is not driven by a stated mission or a set of core values, and people in the organization will flounder and become discouraged (Bolman and Deal 354-56).

3. Leadership is ineffective when the leader is a fanatic or a fool. This kind of leader seems to lack the emotional intelligence to build a team, making unwise decisions

and burning bridges of trust. No one wants to follow this kind of leader, either (Bolman and Deal 360-65).

4. Leadership is ineffective when the leader is a con artist. This kind of leader uses manipulation to achieve goals and strategies, setting up a system of rewards or punishments as a standard for success. The people in the organization soon recognize their leader is not genuine but intrinsically tied to the status quo. Other con artists respond to this style of leadership, but everyone else will be discouraged (Bolman and Deal 356-60).

Conversely, Bolman and Deal recognize the traits that make leaders effective.

1. Leadership is effective when the leader is an advocate for the organization and a model to be admired, trusted, and emulated by others. Organizations with this kind of leadership are extremely successful because their leaders value each team member and know how to move people by their example, courage, and trustworthiness (Bolman and Deal 349-51).

2. Leadership is effective when the leader is a prophet or visionary. People in the organization are inspired and believe that the stated goals and dreams are worthy of their extra efforts in productivity and loyalty (Bolman and Deal 354-56).

3. Leadership is effective when the leader is an architect. The mission is at the heart of everything that the organization does, believes, and plans. People in the organization do not have to wonder about the purpose for their existence. This kind of clarity of purpose leads to great satisfaction and the freedom to accomplish things together as a team is constructed and empowered (Bolman and Deal 360-65).

4. Leadership is effective when the leader is a catalyst and fellow servant. This

kind of leader models the high standards that are expected by all in the organization. The organization is dynamic and consumed with excellence. No longer is the status quo acceptable because the catalyst leader casts a vision in simple and definable terms that the organization can and should change for the better (Bolman and Deal 356-60). What Bolman and Deal are describing is the fundamental difference between transactional leadership and transformational leadership.

### **Transactional versus Transformational Leadership**

Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass have been pioneers in the ongoing research in the area of leadership. They propose that transformational leaders “motivate others to do more than they originally intended and often even more than they thought possible” (1). They have identified four characteristics that describe transformational leaders.

The first characteristic is idealized leadership (also called charisma). Transformational leaders are role models. They are admired and respected. They are people of integrity who are viewed by their followers as people who can be counted on consistently to do the right thing because they possess a set of core values. Charismatic leaders provide the organization with vision and a sense of mission (Avolio and Bass 1-2).

The second characteristic is inspirational motivation. Transformational leaders are inspirational and provide meaning and challenge to those around them. Their vision stimulates others to try harder, attempt great things, and buy into a great future for the organization. Transformational leaders are never satisfied with the status quo, and they encourage others to be innovative and creative in questioning assumptions. New and inventive solutions for accomplishing the prime mission of the organization are always welcomed even if they differ from the leader’s ideas because what matters is that the

mission be at the forefront of the organization. Risk is highly valued because of the payoff potential for organizations (Avolio and Bass 2).

The third characteristic is intellectual stimulation. Transformational leaders are team players. Since the mission is the overall objective, transformational leaders can give leadership away and encourage the potential of those around them. Talented people in the organization do not pose a threat to them. Just the opposite is true. Transformational leaders are so fueled with a desire for excellence in accomplishing their objectives that they tend to draw other leaders to join them in their stimulating work. Continual training and equipping are highly valued for their team building potential for the organization (Avolio and Bass 2-3).

The fourth characteristic is individualized consideration. Transformational leaders value individuals over the organization and more often serve as coaches than bosses. Instead of micromanaging other people, transformational leaders empower people to make decisions and become leaders in their own right. This kind of leadership is freeing and stimulates the productivity of everyone within the organization (Avolio and Bass 3).

Though Avolio and Bass are advocates of transformational leadership as the most effective style of leading, they readily admit that not all leaders are transformational. Many organizations operate quite effectively with a style of leadership known as transactional. While transforming leadership is relational, reciprocal, and process driven, transactional leadership focuses on actions, performance, and short-term goals. The reason that transactional leadership is limited in its power to bring long-lasting results can be traced to several underlying assumptions.

The first assumption is that acquiring information leads to success. Learning what

is expected to make a good a good grade, sell a particular product, or advance in an organizational system will win the day. Transactional leaders assume that the one who knows the most information will achieve the most success (Duckett and Macfarlane 310).

The second assumption is that adhering to an organizational structure is good for the individual. Transactional leaders assume that all people can thrive within the already-established way of operating. The development of creativity and deviation, even if it would offer life and freedom to the organization, is seen as difficult to manage in an organizational system. The assumption is that the system will run best when individuals are treated in similar ways (Duckett and Macfarlane 310).

The third assumption is that resources are scarce, and power is to be contested and allocated cautiously. Transactional leaders assume that leadership must be limited and hierarchical. Innovation and improvement must follow tried and traditional lines of authority (Duckett and Macfarlane 311).

Thus, Avolio and Bass have also identified four characteristics that describe transactional leaders. The first one is contingent reward. Transactional leaders provide followers with a set of performance standards that give clues to identify success or failure. They “arrange to exchange rewards in the form of praise, pay increases, bonuses and commendations” (Bass, “Personal Selling” 22). These clues may be overt or covert; they may be based on the organization’s mission or they may be based on other perceived important or relevant criteria. Contingent rewarding leaders assign or get agreement on what needs to be done by followers to satisfy their own needs; thus, rewards are given to followers in exchange for their assent. John R. Grubbs even goes so far as to say that transactional leaders tend to be expedient rather than principled and often are not able to

identify organizational problems or envision how the organization should be (22).

Transactional leaders often choose short-term results over the long-term success of the organization.

The second characteristic is active management by exception. Transactional leaders manage with a particular set of rules or standards. They are quick to reward followers that meet the stated (or unstated) criteria for success, but they are also actively searching for deviations to this set of criteria. Bernard M. Bass recognizes that active management-by-exception is practiced by salespeople, for example, when they set up monitoring points or inventory controls to recognize when deviations to organizational policies are occurring (“Personal Selling” 25). In other words, followers succeed as long as they do not change the system.

The third characteristic is passive management by exception. Transactional leaders are managers. They do not know how to provide the necessary strategies to cope with changing paradigms (Todd 6). Instead of focusing on a shared vision, constant communication of trust, and the value of creativity as a team, transactional leaders tend to be more passive, often showing their disapproval by not cooperating with those in the organization that deviate from the status quo (Ozaralli 335-36).

The fourth characteristic is *laissez-faire* leadership. *Laissez-faire* is leadership by default or leadership not attempted at all. Unfortunately, transactional leaders are so focused on details rather than on the overall health of the organization that they do not believe they have time for the individuals in their organizations. Leadership that is transformational is difficult and time consuming. It requires that leaders be learners who are being equipped continuously so that they can, in turn, pass their expertise and

knowledge on to others (Koonce 15; Senge 141). Many managers see coaching as a luxury rather than a necessity and, therefore, never get around to this important task. Their *laissez-faire* style comes across to followers as indecisiveness, reluctance to take a stand, and even as a lack of involvement (Bass, “Personal Selling” 22).

Hillary Duckett and Elspeth Macfarlane identify these two contrasting styles of leadership in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1. Transformational and Transactional Leadership**

Transformational Leadership	Transactional Leadership
Charisma: provides vision and sense of mission, instills pride, gains respect and trust	Contingent reward: contracts exchange of reward for efforts, promises reward for good performance, recognizes accomplishments
Inspiration: communicates high expectations, uses symbols to focus efforts, expresses important purpose in simple ways	Management by exception (active): watches and searches for deviations from rules and standards, takes corrective action
Intellectual stimulation: promotes intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving	Management by exception (passive): intervenes only if standards are not met
Individualized consideration: gives personal attention, treats each employee individually, coaches, and advises	<i>Laissez-faire</i> : abdicates responsibilities, avoids making decisions

Source: Duckett and Macfarlane 311.

Numerous studies have demonstrated transformational leadership to be more effective than transactional leadership in the arenas of education, the military, business, and even among United Methodist ministers. For example, a 1987 study showed how United Methodist pastors who demonstrated a more transformational style of leadership enjoyed greater attendance and membership gains (Avolio and Bass 5). Gerard Egan insists that transformational leadership is superior to transactional:



Transformational leaders are shapers of values, creators, interpreters of institutional purpose, exemplars, makers of meanings, pathfinders, and molders of organizational culture. They are persistent and consistent. Their vision is so compelling that they know what they want from every interaction. Their visions don't blind others, but empower them. Such leaders have a deep sense of the purpose for the system and a long-range strategic sense, and these provide a sense of overall direction. (204)

Terry D. Anderson adds that leadership that is transforming is unifying, inspirational and creative action that has an amazing effect on a group of people as a clear set of values and beliefs are set forth to accomplish a clear set of measurable goals (270).

Avolio and Bass site John McQuiddy, the president of MCQ Associates, as a prime example of transformational leadership. McQuiddy's philosophy is, "[Y]ou get good people and keep them happy by making it a fun place to work" (34). McQuiddy's employees have transitioned from secretaries to accountants, from entry level to management. He insists on paying the cost of any educational course an employee takes to benefit his or her career. McQuiddy allows for flexible work hours, even providing full compensation for one employee who was out with a chronic illness. He regularly shares the company's financial situation with employees at meetings and asks his employees for ideas that will help make things more effective. He builds his company into a team by stressing positives rather than negatives and looks out for everyone's best interests (34). McQuiddy is a role model, a risk taker, an innovator who will do whatever necessary to accomplish the mission, and a team builder—the four building blocks of transformational leadership (Bass and Avolio 3).

### **Role Model**

Richard Koonce suggests that winning organizations are built on the shoulders of transformational leaders who are accessible role models and coaches to others. Followers

are not impressed with top-down management. Instead, transformational leaders are willing to make difficult decisions, roll up their sleeves, and risk making mistakes in front of their teams. They demonstrate integrity and excellence, which becomes contagious to others (15).

Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee believe transformational leaders have something they call emotional intelligence—the ability to communicate and model leadership in ways that give others great confidence and a hunger to follow in their footsteps (6). Most people do not like to be managed; rather, they respond to leaders who have a positive impact on the organization and on them personally. Bass explains that “charismatic leaders” (leaders with idealized influence) tend to inspire “unquestioning loyalty and devotion” in those under their leadership (Leadership and Performance 35). Transformational leaders tend to change the atmosphere of the whole organization by the way they model leadership.

Joseph L. Badaracco, Jr. (10) and Patricia Sellers (74) both mention “tenacity” as a quality that people admire in transformational leaders and want for themselves. Leaders who model transformational qualities are not content to let their followers “play at a different level” (Sellers 73). Sellers mentions proven leaders such as General Electric’s Jack Welch or the Chicago Bulls’ Michael Jordan, admitting that their very presence and tenacious inner drive for excellence always motivated others around them to improve. Transformational leaders goad, challenge, prod, and poke in a way that demonstrates they intend to give 100 percent effort and expect others to follow their example (73-74).

A final aspect of role modeling in transformational leadership needs to be mentioned. Transformational leaders have learned the art of transferring their heart and

passion to other people. Heroic achievement in leadership is almost always attached to the heart (see Table 2.2):

Relationships are built by sharing yourself, by listening, and having significant moments together and being vulnerable—experiences that are too threatening to many transactional leaders. The quest for emotional openness requires emotional people to overcome their deepest fears, to go beyond the belief that emotions represent inferiority or weakness. Emotional energy connects people. (Daft and Lengel 125)

Duckett and Macfarlane insist that transformational leadership and emotional intelligence are almost synonymous (311-12). Technical skills and capabilities matter in leadership, but emotional intelligence, the sharing of one's heart and true self, is the "*sine qua non*" of leadership: Without it a person can have the best training in the world, an incisive analytical mind, and an endless supply of smart ideas, but still will not make a good leader (Goleman 92).

**Table 2.2. Heart**

<b>Transactional</b>	<b>Transformational</b>
Emotional distance from people and work	Emotional connectedness with people and work
Decisions based on career	Decisions based on heart
Hold that emotions block truth	Hold that emotions are truth
Be individualistic	Be interdependent

Source: Daft and Lengel 130.

### **Risk Taker**

Wilfred Drath maintains that one of the tasks of every transformational leader is facing adaptive challenge. Everyday problems or decisions do not qualify as in need of

adaptation. While they might require a high degree of creativity and resourcefulness and may be quite difficult to solve, they are approachable using means that are already available. The task of leadership is operative in the midst of confusion when the leadership, community, or organization cannot decide what is best or correct. Such challenges usually require the organization to change (21-22).

Bruce J. Avolio discovers that in today's world of rapid change, complexity, and technology, maintaining the status quo results in the death of most organizations without a leader who is entrepreneurial and able to embrace change. Transformational leaders "formulate an inspiring vision of something to be sought" (56-57) even if that vision seems unattainable. The leader's task is to encourage and inspire pursuit of the vision "by invoking the courage required to do so, even when short-term sacrifices might be required" (Ackoff 21).

Robert E. Quinn believes that leaders ultimately have two choices: slow death or deep change. Slow death begins when the leadership of an organization, when confronted with the dilemma of having to make some deep organizational change, decides not to change, accepting the status quo as the better option. They assume that death cannot be imminent and that maybe the dilemma will correct itself on its own. Unfortunately, at the point when leaders choose the status quo, they have already chosen slow death. Quinn says that many leaders choose the "peace and pay" strategy for leading their organization (do not rock the boat and collect a paycheck on Friday). Change will be painful and will involve putting the position of the leader at risk for failure (15-20).

Transformation always requires significant risks. John P. Kotter considers the kind of effective leadership needed in today's world as "entrepreneurial," involving

courage to leave the safety of the status quo and to risk taking the organization to levels of more effectiveness. Transformational leaders create a vision and then inspire others to join the journey toward a better future. Shopkeepers and managers will ultimately preside over the death of the organization (Leadership Factor 24-25).

### **Innovative Encourager**

Transformational leadership is more than charisma and inspiration alone. New and imaginative ways of focusing on the purpose and nature of the organization are needed. Leaders restate the mission in creative ways and encourage others to fulfill it. Bass again makes the case for effective transformational leadership. Transactional leaders often promise or provide incentives to followers in exchange for their assent. Transformational leaders make the case for a new kind of organization where the mission and philosophy drives every decision (“Personal Selling” 21) Thomas Faranda adds, “A turnaround is difficult, but it is not a transformation. A turnaround fixes something that is broken. A transformation, on the other hand recreates the organization.... [I]t doesn’t just fix problems, it creates an entire new entity” (14). Noel M. Tichy and Mary Anne Devanna describe transformational leadership as a process that analyzes the system and moves resources to the central mission to produce greater productivity. Transformational leaders encourage others to sign on to a new and more effective way of doing business (viii, 149-51).

Transformational leaders are excellent communicators of core values. They have a knack for promoting the true missional standards of the organization that causes others to aspire to achieve them. Not only do transformational leaders set the pace for everyone in their sphere of influence, but they also encourage those who catch their vision (Rogers

162).

### **Team Builder**

Kotter delineates between management and transformational leadership. The function of management is to minimize deviation from a plan so that predictable results will be produced. Managerial life includes activities such as reports, meetings, and other control mechanisms. On the other hand, the function of leadership is motivating and inspiring teamwork that offers belonging, self-esteem, and recognition to a large number of people in the organization (Force for Change 64). Kotter reveals that team building creates “an unusually high energy level” in the organization: “a group of people who exhibit a level of energy, intensity, and determination far above what is considered normal,... sustained over time” (73). Patrick W. Corrigan and Andrew N. Garman add that transactional leaders use goal setting and reinforcement strategies to build their teams while transformational leaders build teams where lofty goals suddenly seem attainable. Colleagues work together utilizing their individual skills for the collective good (6).

Team builders empower others to make key decisions and exercise their strengths. The authority and trust that results from being a part of a team system and making a measurable difference on the team is extremely fulfilling and motivating. Nurdan Ozaralli and Edgar H. Schein also agree that when a leader has transformed the culture of the organization into an empowered team, the members of the team are able to practice perpetual diagnosis and self-management (Ozaralli 337-38; Schein 363).

### **Why Choose Transformational Leadership**

Obviously, the world is full of examples of transactional leaders that are very effective. The Western educational system is basically a system of expectation and

reward. Many corporations operate efficiently over time where transactional leaders guide and shape a system that serves the company well. Transactional leadership, in and of itself, is not bad. The reason that transformational leadership is superior to transactional leadership is fourfold.

First, transformational leadership utilizes the personality, strengths, and gifts of the leader as teaching tools. While transactional leaders challenge others to achieve certain goals and standards, transformational leaders demonstrate that effective leadership is more than simply maintaining a system of performance. They invest themselves personally in the organization and their people. They inspire their people to achieve more than high performance records, encouraging them to become transformational in their own right.

Second, transformational leadership challenges others to make the organization better. Transactional leadership has difficulty with innovation, at least the kind of innovation that brings major changes. Transformational leadership encourages people to grow and contribute to the improvement of the organization, believing that the implementation of new ideas and the development of new leaders will always benefit everyone.

Third, transformational leadership sees the big picture. The overarching goal is the long-term success of the organization and achieving the most success with regards to its fundamental purposes. Transactional leaders sometime work against long-term success because their attention is focused on levels of achievement that have worked in the past and, therefore, are seen as the way to proceed in the future. They often are not comfortable with deviations to the proven system of operation. Round pegs are likely not

to flourish in a square hole system, nor are they encouraged to do so.

Fourth, transformational leadership promotes teamwork to make the organization great. The sum total of knowledge, talents, and experiences multiplies the potential of the team. Transactional leaders have a difficult time moving from functional leadership to team development and may feel uncomfortable with a lack of uniformity and threatened by other strong leaders.

### **Transformational Leadership and Christian Faith**

No matter how compelling the argument may be for transformational leadership as opposed to transactional leadership, these categories alone are not sufficient to define what is needed in the area of Christian leadership. Human charisma, inspiration, encouragement, and teamwork alone could never revitalize the Church. The lack of power in the Church today is clearly because many church leaders have relied far too much on human leadership, strategies, and programs to bring spiritual life to an organization rather than on the transforming power of Jesus Christ to build his Church.

Therefore, transformational leadership for the Church must be rooted in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Spirit rather than in human effort and good ideas. Anything less will result in the status quo—a Church lacking authority and influence in the world. Only when Christian leaders are transformed by the power of God through Christ can true transformation take place in their congregations. This pattern appears to be the blueprint for leadership in the New Testament. Jesus embodied truth. He lived a life of obedience and then challenged his disciples to follow him. As they trusted him and emulated him, they were changed and eventually changed the world.



Christian leadership must take into account that the Church is the body of Christ and Jesus is the Head. He was more than a charismatic leader of disciples who taught truths by which to live. Jesus came to offer life: “[W]hoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:14, NLT). Leadership apart from an ever-deepening relationship with Christ, coupled with radical obedience to him and denial of self, is not only not Christian but also not very helpful (Halley).

Thus, the vision for the Church comes from Jesus through his servant, the transformational leader. Inspiration is Spirit driven rather than personality driven since the transformed leader is emulating Christ. Risk taking becomes an act of obedience and an exercise of faith as the Spirit of Christ reveals direction. Team-based ministry changes from a collection of talented people working together to the body of Christ where the gifts of the leaders are used in tandem with the gifts of other members of Christ’s body.

Not surprisingly, the New Testament pattern of leadership development seen in the book of Acts and throughout the epistles of Paul looks most like transformational leadership. After all, Jesus did not come to manage an organization but to transform the world into his image.

### **Transformation**

One would assume the term transformation would be prevalent in the pages of the Bible, but interestingly enough, the Greek word *morphe* appears very rarely in the New Testament. The word is utilized most prominently in Paul’s classic statement in Romans 12:1-2:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual

act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (NIV)

John Ortberg makes the case that the act of transformation is a command, but it occurs in the passive voice. Therefore, transformation is something that God does, not an action a Christian makes happen (“True (and False) Transformation” 104). Spiritual change is a process that begins when people offer themselves to God freely and intentionally as an act of worship in order to please him. The transforming agent is the Holy Spirit who, when given the permission by the individual, begins a progression of renewal that changes the person from the inside out. The term “be transformed” is a command because the Christian life is not meant to be a static experience but one of constant and continual growth toward the image of Christ (Sanders, Spiritual Maturity 139).

Walter L. Liefeld describes the continuing process of transformation as being accomplished by two equal means. First, Christians are commanded not to conform (*morphe*) into a picture of the world's values but to *resist the influence of the world*. This statement, then, points back to the verb “offer.” When Christians offer themselves to God, the choice is made against what does not please God. Jesus warned his disciples that the way that leads to destruction is a wide path and that most people follow the easier of the two roads (Matt. 7:13). By choosing to please God, the transformation process is initiated.

Second, Christians are commanded to *yield to the renewal of their minds*, a process accomplished on their behalves along with surrendering to the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives (Liefeld 864). Lawrence O. Richards and Clyde Hoeldtke and Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr. indicate that the renewal of the mind means a change in attitudes and

reconfiguring of value systems. Again, the transformation process begins when people are open to the Spirit's ability to form and shape (*morphe*) them into the image of Christ (Richards and Hoeldtke 75; Neighbour, Arrival Kit 28-31). This change is not the mere adoption of a new outlook on life but the result of becoming a completely new person.

### **Training versus Trying**

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:25 that real change cannot take place by itself—transformation requires strict training. Ortberg suggests that most people settle for what he calls “pseudo-transformation” because trying hard seems easier than the discipline necessary for true spiritual maturity:

Too often in our churches, people hear us talk about what an amazing person Jesus is. They leave thinking “I’ve got to try hard to be like him.” We’re unwittingly setting them up for frustration. When the trying proves ineffective, they eventually quit or rely on external trivialities to pretend they’re transformed. (“True (and False) Transformation” 104)

Ortberg says that authentic transformation always begins with training in godliness.

Discipline and training in the Christian life bring freedom.

This transformation process is vital, for without constant training, contemporary culture would encroach on the Christian life and the tendency would be to adopt its values. Everett F. Harrison (128) and Rudolf Bultmann (211) are correct: Believers must keep going back to their original commitment to Christ and to the grace extended them by God, which is not mere “theoretical relearning” but a constant recommitting of the will.

### **Metamorphosis**

Transformation is the process of becoming a new person. Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:17 is emphatic that God actually creates a new person when a heart is yielded to Christ

as Savior and Lord. The old person passes out of existence and a new person comes to stay. J. Harris Murray suggests that Paul's emphasis on the discontinuity between the two orders and the newness of what remains is a true metamorphosis (353). Just as a caterpillar emerges from a chrysalis as a beautiful butterfly, the process of transformation produces a product just as beautiful to God, one that demonstrates change in attitude and behavior. The spiritual renewal that results from it brings a radiance that attracts other people who want to be transformed as well (Deir 44).

### **Transformational Leadership**

The definition of a transformational leader can be understood with much more clarity in light of the previous commentary on the biblical word *morphe*.

Transformational Christian leaders are persons shaped and gifted by the Holy Spirit to lead God's Church to be a biblically functioning dynamic spiritual body. Such leaders exhibit qualities that can be evidenced as spiritually mature— wisdom, discernment, passion—not that they have attained maturity; they are determined to practice active listening and obedience to the will of God (Sanders, Spiritual Maturity 180). No longer content with the status quo, many pastors transitioning into the role of leader realize that the heart to lead was always deep within them. As the Spirit gives rise to more courage and possibilities, an incredible process of change in boldness to lead takes place.

Transformational leaders yearn for the Church to be more than an institution.

The change begins with a humble and teachable spirit. Transformational leaders are open to a word from God, whether through the reading of the Bible, from the mouth of another believer, or by the whisper of the Holy Spirit. The ability to learn from others, learn from their own mistakes, and transfer principles of leadership to their own context

of ministry are the marks of leaders listening for God's direction in ministry (Maxwell, 21 Indispensable Qualities 144-47). The motto of the leadership team of the Willow Creek Association has always been, "The openness to hear truth changes minds and hearts and will inevitably develop great Christian leaders" (Ortberg, "Why Jesus").

Just as in Paul's description of spiritual transformation, a change in mind and attitude develops within leaders who begin to see themselves as transformational. Their leadership confidence builds, and they begin to develop the heart to take steps of risk and lead others to attempt greater challenges for God (Sashkin and Sashkin 89). True transformational leaders attempt change for the good of others not to gain power or prestige for themselves. In fact, such leaders want to share their leadership, enable others to lead and make decisions, and set other people free to use their gifts and abilities to further the cause (87-88).

Hybels is quick to point out that the process of transformation in leaders does not happen by chance, citing the need for definite intentionality:

I used to think all leaders kept an ear tuned to God, but I don't take that for granted anymore. Is there enough quietness integrated into your life so you can hear the Spirit when he whispers? Do you obey the Spirit when he informs your decision-making? ("Sharpening Your Sixth Sense" 84)

Reggie McNeal describes transformed Christian leaders as modern-day Pauls whose hearts are captured by God's design on their lives. Leaders choose to be obedient to the direction in which God leads (42). One taste of divine leadership and transformation has begun. Once pastors who have been "servants of the denomination" or the American religious structure are released to be obedient to an audience of God alone, the status quo is no longer satisfying. Managing the company store will no longer do and a restlessness to attempt great things for God is unleashed (Peterson, Working the Angles 1).

Paul's admonition to Timothy to "fan into flame the gift of God" (2 Tim. 1:6, NIV) is what many leaders need today. They have the gifts to lead. Maybe they are buried deep on the inside or sometimes intentionally put on the shelf because of fear, but when the transformation process begins with the transforming of the mind and a self-awareness of leadership abilities, transformational leaders can pursue and realize the vision God has given them (Lewis 15). The way people think about a situation will usually end up shaping what they do. Transformational leaders begin to think they can lead and sense that God is guiding them; thus, their renewed perspective usually allows them to achieve success (D. Brown 13).

Daniel A. Brown describes two models of church life, one where gifts of leadership are in place and being utilized by a transformational leader (transformed/dynamic church) and the other as something he terms a static "cul-de-sac" of religion (see Table 2.3). Parallels can be drawn quite easily to the earlier section on the contrast between transactional and transformational leadership.

**Table 2.3. Basic Elements of a Church**

<b>Cul-de-Sac Church</b>	<b>Transformed/Dynamic Church</b>
Static “Lake” Model	Process “River” Model
Building	Environment
Place for people to attend	Process to tend people
Series of unconnected events	Strategic systems
More people	Growing people
Individual attendance	Individual involvement
Performance	Training
Events to attract people	Events to shape people

Source: D. Brown 23.

The Church needs transformation to operate on an agenda based on the purposes that God instructs in the Scriptures. The key to this transformation is the transforming of leaders.

The process of shaping and transforming spiritual leaders is crucial. Leaders need to be coached in how to lead, disciplined in the ways of the Spirit, counseled back to health, and shown an example to build their courage. Once that happens, the process of transformation is without limits (Earley 10).

### **Equipping for Transformation**

Transformation does not happen by itself. As was stated in the previous section on transformation, the process includes shaping and forming into something new. Robert Banks and R. Paul Stevens suggest that the New Testament pattern for training Christian disciples (and leaders) can be found in the term *katartizo* (to equip, prepare, form, or

shape). Reiner Schippers points out that *katartizo* is a variant of *artizo* (complete or suitable); therefore, the biblical notion of equipping is preparation for becoming complete or perfect. He also states that a possible meaning of *katartizo* is “restore,” or helping restore to a fit state (349-50; Wood 58).

Equipping involves preparing God’s people for service, empowering them to use their gifts to their fullest potential, and setting them in a context where their ministry will thrive. Part of the act of shaping Christians is the development of their character and training in righteousness to produce maturity. Especially in the realm of leadership, Christians cannot serve effectively if they do not possess certain enduring qualities of spiritual maturity such as humility, courage, faithfulness, and a strict dependence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Towns and Porter 155-57).

Equipping is systematic rather programmatic (Banks and Stevens). Training that lasts often happens in small spheres of influence where significant impact can be made through modeling health and vibrancy. Phil Collins and R. Paul Stevens stress that equipping is not optional for the Church but the responsibility of every mature believer. Equipping draws out the best from others, encourages them to stretch to new heights both personally and corporately, and brings less mature disciples to a place where they can lead (5).

Part of the process of equipping is clearly that of sanctification, the making of holy people. Banks and Stevens state that while Wesley himself claimed that he feared “the almost Christian,” nothing worst could exist for the Church than Christians that are almost equipped. The practices of forgiveness, rebuke, and accountability are necessary for men and women to come to a place of maturity and godliness. One of the reasons why



Paul was an advocate of equipping in his ministry is that he understood that the goal of completeness would never happen without a systematic process for building up believers.

The word *katartizo* is used most prominently in Ephesians 4:11-12: “[God] gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (NIV). This passage, often referred to as Paul’s commission for leadership training in the Church, instructs the body of Christ on its true function—the equipping of believers, not for serving in an office but for using God-given gifts to build up the body (Ladd 533). D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones reminds his congregation that the “preparing of God’s people” (198) is for their completion or formation into useful tools for ministry with the ultimate benefit going to glorify God and build up other Christians. He confidently proclaims that perfecting and forming of Christian leaders cannot be learned in a classroom but must be “caught” corporately. Christian training must be modeled over and over (198-99).

Interestingly, Ephesus is the site where Paul actually put his strategy to its greatest test by spending two years doing regular equipping of new converts and future leaders. Paul began his ministry in Ephesus by spending his time debating Jews in the local synagogue, but he soon changed his strategy to one of equipping in what Acts 19:8 calls the “lecture hall of Tyrannus” (NIV). The Greek word *schole* was used to describe a lecture room used by a philosopher or orator (Stott 305-06). Scholars believe that the name of this building either refers to the school of a sophist by the name of Tyrannus or was named for someone famous with that name (Towns and Porter 147). William Ramsay reports that public life ended from the fifth hour of the day (11:00 a.m.) to

sometime later in the afternoon, similar to a siesta in Latin America today. The traditional thought is that Paul rented the facility daily and used it for his equipping ministry during this break in the workday (271).

Paul apparently trained Timothy and others in a manner that would be considered equipping:

Timothy, my dear son, be strong with the special favor God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach many things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Teach these great truths to trustworthy people who are able to pass them on to others. (2 Tim. 2:2, NLT)

Developing new leaders was necessary to carry the ministry to the next generation of churches. In a day when men frequently learned their trade by apprenticing, Paul gathered potential leaders around him to watch him do ministry, work on their personal character and mature their ministry skills. Towns and Porter explain that even after his apprentices were “mature enough to launch out into ministry on their own, Paul continued sharing the insights of his experience with them” (154). Paul understood that this successful leadership strategy would set in motion an unending chain of leaders equipping other leaders (155). Paul’s ministry team, with names recorded for eternity in his letters to the churches, was the result of his ongoing practice of “encouraging and building leaders up” (140).

### **A Biblical Model for Developing Transformational Leaders**

The most obvious biblical model is the mentor-coach relationship presented in the gospels telling how Jesus spent three years teaching, training, and equipping his disciples. The Lord identified twelve people with potential to extend his mission to a lost and dying world and then began to pour himself into them. The problem is that this model is

unrepeatable. With the end of Jesus's earthly ministry came an end to the possibility of face-to-face equipping by Jesus himself. Thus, the task of developing men and women to extend the values of the Christian life to others remained in the hands of those Jesus left behind when he ascended to heaven. Though the role of the Holy Spirit cannot be downplayed, an effective pattern of training, the kind of transforming leadership that could replicate and sustain itself without the physical presence of Jesus, is evident in the history of the early Church as presented in Acts and the epistles that follow this book.

The New Testament is full of great leaders who demonstrate diligence, perseverance, and wholehearted devotion to God. The writers of Scripture have used numerous phrases to describe the qualities of spiritual leaders: full of the Holy Spirit, full of God's grace and power, and courageous. The apostle Paul is often credited as the architect of the system of developing elders and leaders in the Church. Luke, for example, writing in Acts, notes a long list of servants of God that were direct products of Paul's ministry, such as Timothy, Priscilla and Aquila, Epaphras, Titus, and, one should probably even include, Luke himself. Nevertheless, the pattern that Paul uses is not his own. He employs a model that was used to develop him into a leader. Many have made the argument (e.g., Stott; Longenecker; Fenlon) that Barnabas's act of bravery in Acts 9:10-28 was a foundational moment in the history of the Church. Barnabas's courage and leadership introduced his young protégé Paul and led to the beginning of missionary journeys that would ultimately spread the Christian message all over the known world.

Barnabas's model of encouragement and mentoring seems to be as the standard for developing transformational leaders in the first century Church. Herbert Lockyear notes that Barnabas is one of the most significant characters in Luke's account of the

infancy and spread of Christianity, mentioned more in the book of Acts than anyone except Paul and Peter (185).

### **Barnabas, the Son of Encouragement**

Barnabas is introduced as Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus whom the apostles had nicknamed Bar-nebas, or the son of encouragement, consolation, or, as A. F. Walls suggests, “prophetic exhortation” (124). Barnabas is given this title undoubtedly because of his great generosity (Acts 4:37) but also because of his propensity to build up other believers. The book of Acts describes his ministry of exhortation as both a call to perseverance and a call to wholeheartedness. Barnabas exhibits what has been called a “me first” style of leadership, a leader boldly taking a first step of risk and then encouraging others to follow (Hybels, “Call for Decision”). Lockyear comments that Barnabas’s entire career is marked by his tremendous character and compassion for others. He is never mentioned for his amazing intellect but for his faith in the work and power of the Holy Spirit to transform the human heart (187). He demonstrates that his life had experienced a transformation by the power of the Spirit by his carefree yet strategic attitude of liberality with his possessions, his life, and his future. John F. Fenlon suggests that Barnabas is the greatest example the early Church has of a man who modeled a passionate heart for people, a life filled to the brim with integrity, a visionary call to a mission (he embraced the Holy Spirit’s work among Paul and the Gentiles almost immediately), and, most especially, a unique ability to recognize spiritual potential before it showed itself fully mature. Joel Comiskey identifies Barnabas’s role in the early Church as that of a coach (17).

### **Barnabas's Ministry to Paul**

Luke details two major events as transformational turning points in the life and ministry of Saul (soon to become Paul). Both involved the ministry of Barnabas.

Acts 9:19-30 is the story of the dramatic conversion of Saul and the subsequent events that marked his turnaround from the persecutor of Christians to the proclaimer of the gospel. The text even reveals that Saul's preaching was so convincing that no one could refute him (v. 22). Saul escaped the hands of his detractors and then came to Jerusalem to try to join the group of disciples. He had been testifying boldly to the life change that had taken place in him and to the truth of the Christian gospel to transform. Nevertheless, his attempts to see the apostles were greeted with a cool reception until Barnabas befriended him. This scene is turning point number one in the ministry of Saul. Barnabas recognized something in Saul that validated the authenticity of his conversion and subsequent ministry in Damascus (Longenecker 378). Barnabas became a bridge for Saul by believing in him, by giving his ministry credibility with those in greater authority, and by setting him free to continue to become the leader that God wanted him to be.

John R. W. Stott says that modern-day Barnabases are needed to come along beside young and inexperienced Christian leaders to enable them to become the leaders that God has called them to be (178). Boldness in leadership often begins with someone else demonstrating boldness first, like Barnabas, who literally bet his life and reputation on Saul's changed life. Such a demonstration of faith cannot be overlooked as casual. Barnabas validated Saul's ministry at a time when he was feeling the sting of rejection and confusion. Barnabas, a man the apostles greatly respected, staked his reputation and

friendship on a newcomer to the faith. This bold step must have had huge bolstering power in Saul's life. It gave him the desire not only to continue his ministry but also to be courageous like Barnabas, his new ally in the Lord. Finally, Barnabas's commendation was the encouragement that Saul needed to know that he was on the right track in his ministry: a well-respected believer had approved of his ministry, had brought him into fellowship with Peter and other apostles, and had helped save his life for future ministry in Jesus's name (Acts 9:29-30). Saul would never be the same again (177-80).

Observing what a tremendous effect Barnabas had on a young Saul, the Church cannot leave the future of its Christian leaders to chance. Hybels remarks that he used to assume that all leaders would succeed on their own but that he no longer takes leaders, and their care and training, for granted ("Sharpening Your Sixth Sense" 84). Christian leadership is just too important to risk. Most Christian leaders would benefit greatly from an experienced veteran stamping their ministries with approval. Besides the support, leaders need models of integrity and boldness set before them to challenge them to live by faith and not by sight (Reiland 17; Crandall 36).

The impact of encouragement is so powerful that the ministry of one leader (Barnabas) who demonstrated this gift changed history. Hybels asserts that the Willow Creek Association was founded for the very purpose of inspiring leaders to keep doing what God called them to do. The association leaders desire to start a chain effect: leaders inspiring other leaders and churches inspiring other churches ("Building a Church"). The other major turning point in the life and ministry of Saul is recorded in Acts 11: 22-26. Acts 11 is Barnabas's finest moment. After learning of the exciting things that the Holy Spirit was orchestrating even among the Gentiles, he again demonstrated his

generous nature by applauding what he saw and encouraging hearts to remain faithful. The text then repeats the description of Barnabas from chapter four, “a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith” (4:36, NIV), and then proceeds to tell that his ministry was extremely fruitful. In his excitement to share in and expand the good work of God, he remembers Saul and goes to Tarsus to bring him to Antioch where they share in the work of ministry together.

Their relationship in Acts 11 is that of mentor and apprentice. Barnabas “involves” Saul for two reasons: (1) Saul has had a continuing interest in the conversion of non-Jewish people for some time (see Paul’s preaching to the Grecian Jews in Acts 9 and his ministry in Tarsus to those outside the boundary of the nation of Israel), and (2) Barnabas needed help from this man he believed was a great “leader to be” (Longenecker 402). Lockyear notes that Barnabas’s name always appears first in order of prominence until Paul demonstrated that he had become a leader in his own right in Acts 14. Dr. Lockyear suggests that the relationship of Philip Melancthon and Martin Luther followed in similar pattern. Melancthon first understood the vision of the Reformation, but then his student embraced the vision and even surpassed him in leading it (188). Here in the book of Acts, Barnabas, the teacher, and Paul, the apprentice, eventually go off in separate directions but one in their passion for the gospel. Since Luke accompanies Paul on his missionary journeys, Acts 16 through 28 portray Paul as prominent, though the apostle is clear in 1 Corinthians 9:6 that even though a small disagreement about personnel had occurred early, the mission and partnership between Barnabas and Paul in ministry continues.

J. Oswald Sanders says that the New Testament speaks of three types of

Christians. One is the Christian who knows the truth but refuses to obey God. One is the Christian who knows the truth but is weak, fearful, or inexperienced. The third kind is the Christian who is mature, having had a transformation of heart and attitude (Spiritual Maturity 180). Christian leaders could be categorized similarly: leaders with no heart to obey, ones with the heart but no experience, encouragement, or training, and those who are leading, heeding the words of God. Many Christian leaders have the heart but need the leadership of a coach or mentor to model and teach them how to be faithful. Stott notes that Barnabas put his ego on hold in order to include his younger brother in the ministry (a very mature characteristic). Apparently Barnabas understood the payoff of multiplying the leadership on such an important task. Barnabas also saw the potential in his protégé and worked side by side with him for over a year in Antioch training and coaching him (205). Stott recognizes that the first missionary journey took place to Cyprus, Barnabas's home, and that Luke is careful with his wording, "Barnabas and Paul" (219-20). Interestingly, Paul is the one who exhibits boldness in rebuking Elymas the sorcerer (Acts 13:9-11) as he stood alongside Barnabas.

The pattern for apprenticing used by Barnabas employed the technique of on-the-job training, similar to the training techniques of many leaders in small group ministries, evangelism programs, and some denominational structures:

1. The intern watches the leader;
2. The leader explains what was done and why it was done;
3. The leader observes as the apprentice does the same thing;
4. The leader encourages and objectively explains strengths and weaknesses

observed in the intern's leadership;



5. The leader provides a remedial activity to strengthen the weaknesses;
6. The leader turns the task over to the intern;
7. The leader practices “benign neglect” as a leadership strategy;
8. The leader monitors as the apprentice disciples a new intern; and,
9. The leader remains a coworker, now treating the intern as an equal (Neighbour, Shepherd’s Guidebook 48; Earley 10-11; Kennedy 5-6).

Barnabas’s style was not that of a professor but of an active practitioner of ministry. Paul was, therefore, doing and learning at the same time, a strategy he would continue to employ the rest of his ministry as he trained young leaders.

A final insight is that Paul’s metamorphosis as a great Christian leader developed over time. With the care and nurturing of Barnabas, Paul became confident and accomplished. Paul had great raw abilities, but they were honed to razor sharpness through his relationship with Barnabas. The apostles could easily have excluded him because of his past or because they did not understand him, but Barnabas saw a potential in the newly converted Saul that was worth an investment of time, energy, and encouragement.

### **Barnabas’s Ministry to John Mark**

The Bible shares few details about Barnabas’s cousin, John Mark, but the book of Acts does identify that Barnabas employed the same pattern of coaching with John Mark as he used with Paul. In Acts 13, Barnabas and Paul take Mark along on the missionary trip. Barnabas validated the gifts he saw in this young man to lead, but the work was hard, and his cousin deserted the cause in the middle of the mission. Barnabas never abandoned Mark, though, trusting his instincts that his cousin possessed great potential.

He felt so strongly that he and Paul separated from each other over the matter of Mark's potential. Stott and Fenlon both recognize that Paul was wrong about Mark as he himself later admits in Colossians 4 and 2 Timothy 4 (Stott 253). Thankfully, Barnabas stuck by Mark until he was ready to stand with courage and boldness on his own.

### **Summary**

Paul duplicated Barnabas's method of mentoring and apprenticeship with many of his protégés. This leadership training style can be seen in the ministry of Priscilla and Aquila with Apollos and is referred to by Lockyear (98-99) and R. G. T. Tasker (602) in the ministry of John the apostle with scores of his apprentices. The model can be summarized as follows:

1. An older or more experienced Christian leader sees potential in another believer and begins to equip, train, and encourage that person by personal modeling of values and demonstrating ministry as the protégé watches;
2. The mentor speaks a prophetic word of encouragement about the apprentice's gifts for ministry and encourages the person to begin to practice using them;
3. As time goes on, the apprentice gains confidence and improves on abilities;
4. The two start to do ministry together with the mentor coaching and giving pointers yet being careful not to criticize or discourage. Confidence builds and the apprentice begins to step out in faith and lead more and more; and,
5. Eventually, the two are teammates, co-laborers for the gospel, and both are training a new intern with potential for great leadership.

### **A Portrait of a Transformational Christian Leader**

Michael Gemignani is convinced that faithful leadership in the Church must

emanate from a well-formed spirituality that reflects Jesus Christ. Pastoral leaders will never succeed in transforming anyone until they themselves are living witnesses of a changed life by the resurrection power of Christ (114). In the following section, I pinpoint four major headings that describe transformational Christian leadership.

### **Spiritual Role Models and Coaches**

People are yearning to follow leaders whom they view as authentic.

Transformational Christian leaders are able to demonstrate three things with great clarity: (1) a deeply spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ that is unmistakably obvious to those around them, (2) a passion to live out that relationship consistently in the context of normal everyday life (Hybels, “Building a Church”), and (3) the reality that they are still in the process of learning (Martoia, Morph! 74). This kind of authenticity is developed as leaders gain confidence and faith in the goodness of God as well as confidence and faith in their own God-given strengths and personality traits. Even though authenticity is a quality that is greatly admired in leaders, it seems to be one of the essential, but missing, characteristics in the style of many of pastoral leaders.

Authenticity brings with it the ability to be honest and upfront about strengths and weaknesses, victories and struggles. Credibility is earned by the humble acknowledgement of gifts and shortcomings. Peter exhibited this kind of earthy spirituality: bold one minute and then broken and vulnerable the next. The disciples followed Peter with tremendous admiration, even though he was a work in progress. Paul’s words in Romans 7:24, “What a wretched man that I am!” (NIV), also show that he is working toward perfection but has yet to arrive. In other words, authenticity is one of the marks of being transformed by Christ. Leaders who are able to model this

characteristic show that their lives are clearly not the same as they used to be. Their sermons bring life-giving practical help in living everyday life, and the people in their churches see an example of the abundant life about which Jesus spoke in John 10:10 and find it worth emulating.

Tom Paterson expresses this same hunch. Paterson proposes that spiritual leaders must identify certain foundational experiences that God used to develop them into the people they are now. His idea of “gentle probing into the past” is designed to help leaders discover how crucial experiences have shaped and fine tuned personality and giftedness into a package that God can use for the good of others (33-40). Paterson’s argument is that a growing knowledge of the ways of God coupled with a growing knowledge of how God creatively and uniquely shapes people will produce transformed Christ followers and Christian leaders in the long run (41, 46-48), and this kind of authenticity is very attractive to others.

McNeal makes this same point. He asserts that a lot of clergy tend to live at what he calls a “level of refuge” (89), insulating themselves from the culture around them. They live in a false church world that is neither satisfying for them nor salt to the world around them. In stark contrast, pastors with lives “captured by the heart of God” (90) develop relationships with others that, in turn, reshape and transform them. McNeal writes that “[t]he leader’s message of grace reflects [the leader’s] own sense of freedom.... [T]he leader becomes engaging.... [T]he people discover the help and hope their search for significance and meaning has been looking for.... [W]hat is created is a grace community” (91). Authenticity makes that much difference.

Mark Dever also boldly calls for a different kind of Christian leader. People are

looking for examples to follow in how to live the Christian life effectively. Healthy churches have leaders whose lives are consumed and led by the Holy Spirit and at the same time are inspiring others to live and serve with the attitude of Christ by their example (222-27). When people can trust their pastoral leaders to follow their own words, they gladly join in the adventure they propose. George Cladis asserts that able and effective pastoral leaders are viewed as genuine, and authority is imparted to them because followers respect their character as well as their abilities (21-22). As Os Guinness so rightly says, “Our people are not looking for another manager, but for leaders who are holy” (49).

Bob Russell, pastor of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, describes the traits that authentic transformational leaders should demonstrate as purity (the ability and determination to live above sin), integrity (the personal character necessary to maintain a good reputation), and humility (the understanding that without Christ, the first two could not be maintained; 76-79). Russell’s formula for leadership shows why he is so respected by other Christian leaders and has been an effective leader of the same congregation for over thirty years.

Finally, several characteristics help define the kind of authentic Christian leader people tend to want to emulate. Steve Sjogren describes authentic leadership in terms of *servanthood*. When Christians understand how much they are loved by God and are confident about the kind of spiritual gifting God has endowed to them, service to God and others is the natural overflow. Sjogren has seen firsthand that when people (Christians or pre-Christians) see selfless service that is full of grace, their hearts of stone melt (58). Oden calls servant leadership the paradox of pastoral authority, the one in charge leading

the way through service (Pastoral Theology 53).

Walt Kallstad, veteran pastor of Community Church of Joy in Glendale, Arizona, uses the leadership analogy of a *missionary*, a Christian modeling the Christian faith to another culture. He asserts that especially in today's culture, people are looking for spiritual help that is practical and able to be replicated. Therefore, if they see an example of a pastoral leader that seems "real," they are drawn to that person and to what they have to say. He refers to the task as "incarnational," the act of applying the truth of God by the use of an individual Christian life ("Think Like a Missionary" 68-69).

Jim Collins, though speaking more from a business model, has discovered another characteristic of leaders that is true for leadership in business or local congregations. Executives classified by Collins as *great* leaders had one thing that positioned them above other leaders who were merely *good*, something that he calls "a paradoxical blend of humility and professional will" (20-38). In other words, people respond to leaders they believe to be *authentic and visionary* at the same time. Great Christian leaders display a sacred rhythm that demonstrates a balance between the personal inner transformation they are experiencing and the call to lead others to a deeper spiritual life (J. Smith 8).

United Methodist Bishop Reuben P. Job states that this model of transformational leader is exactly what the Lord has in mind:

Jesus modeled a spiritual leadership that was centered, life giving, outward-focused and sustainable in a demanding time and place. The gospels make clear that Jesus faced enormous everyday demands on his time, energy and spiritual leadership. In the midst of those demands he lived calmly, confidently, faithfully and fruitfully. (4-5)

Christian leaders need authentic examples to lead the way for them and demonstrate a deep spirituality, a passion to make disciples, and a willingness to lead their churches

humbly to follow Christ.

I am convinced that transformational leadership has little to do with the size of the church, the style of worship, or the denominational affiliation. People can tell when the leader is “real.” Luke reports that the members of the Sanhedrin wanted to discredit the ministry of the apostles since they were common, unschooled men. Their only explanation was that Peter and his associates had been with Jesus, and they were obviously not the same afterwards (Acts 4:13). Leadership that can demonstrate life change will always transform others.

Transformational Christian leaders are more than just role models. They understand their role as developers of leaders, a responsibility not to be taken lightly. Hybels says, “When a leader not only develops his or her own leadership potential, but draws out the leadership potential of other leaders as well, the kingdom impact from that one leader is multiplied exponentially” (Courageous Leadership 122). The ultimate goal is not to coach a few leaders but to coach leaders who go on to find their own potential Christian leaders to coach.

Coaching is far from *laissez-faire* leadership. Hybels says that leadership development is never accidental (Courageous Leadership 122). Leaders are constantly looking for other potential leaders whom they can train, teach, mold, and encourage. They understand that God has created each person with unique gifts and qualities that can be honed and sharpened. Kennon L. Callahan sees one of the tasks of transformational leaders of Christian congregations as helping people discover the kind of eternal impact they can produce through leading others (Effective Church Leadership 90).

Numerous writers in the field of Christian leadership notice a consistent pattern

for coaching others. First, the experienced leader notices potential. Linus J. Morris says that leadership capability is first recognized at what he calls “the helper level” (182). Once evidence of leadership potential is spotted, transformational Christian leaders provide more and more responsibilities and the potential leaders become “apprentices.” Morris sees the two primary identifying qualities for leadership as faithfulness to God and likeability by others (182-83). If a potential leader is a man or woman of character and has a heart for people, the skills and practical tools of leadership can be taught.

Second, the experienced leader begins to invest in the apprentice. Cladis mentions several ways leaders pour themselves into potential leaders. He says that leaders are willing to show themselves vulnerable, demonstrate an uncommon amount of compassion, and speak the truth constructively—all qualities that create what he calls a “mystical geography” between the coach and the potential leader (22). J. Richard Chase believes that the investment of time, energy, and resources actually is the platform on which true servant leadership is built. The impact of one transformational Christian leader taking the time to encourage and develop one or more individuals in the art and skills of leadership has the potential to change an entire generation of leaders (28).

Third, the experienced leader gives responsibility. Hybels says that most leaders identify the moment that they saw themselves as leaders corresponding to the moment they were given the go ahead by their mentors to “do it themselves.” The baton of responsibility was passed, and with it came confidence, assurance of continuing support, and freedom to make decisions (Courageous Leadership 126).

Several dynamics are essential to the role of a Christian leader as coach. First, Tom Marshall identifies the closeness of the relationship between coaches and potential



leaders as the most important factor. The intimacy developed allows for growth that is just not possible from regular pupil/teacher relationships. The inspiration that is infused by the coaching relationship makes both parties yearn for excellence in the other. The confidence instilled by coaches in their potential leaders is a dynamic dimension that cannot be gleaned from a book or lecture in a classroom (136-37).

Second, Comiskey identifies encouragement as the “oxygen to the soul” to potential leaders. The proper amount of encouragement can spell the difference between success and failure and, more importantly, whether the potential leader ever passes on the leadership to others (16). Adam Hamilton believes that a coach’s encouragement is the most important leadership ingredient because of the hazardous nature of leadership. Naysayers and critics stand ready to stop a leader from bringing forth any changes to the status quo but with the encouragement (and courage) of a role model to lead alongside or support and teach from the sidelines, leadership becomes sustainable over time (Unleashing the Word 106). Peter M. Senge admits that no significant change ever happens in leadership without the emotional support to confront systemic forces of the status quo (356). Alan Nelson and Gene Appel, speaking from painful personal experience, insist that since the Church tends to be an institution that has difficulty with change, Christian leaders are in desperate need of role models who have led change campaigns as well as coaches willing to help potential change agents through the rough spots (73).

Third, coaching empowers the individual to accomplish greater results. Potential leaders are motivated to endure, persist, and keep their eyes on goals. The Greek word *spoude* (diligence) is used numerous times throughout the New Testament and has the

fundamental meaning of “not losing what has been invested in you” or “not failing to reach the goal set before you” (Bauder 1169). Comiskey communicates the point that coaches urge potential leaders to focus on the hard work of sowing, planting, and watering the abilities of others, the very process that was used to develop them (17). What is produced is a climate of healthy Christian leadership, one which Stevens says is applied theology: biblically sound theology of ministry from Ephesians 4 that is intensely practical because it brings renewal to the Church (4).

The ability to serve as an effective coach has little to do with the size of the congregation or the responsibilities of the pastor. Many of the resources available for my research come directly from writers that have had some form of outward success, pastoring large churches and developing “successful” ministries, but the data today indicates that megachurch success is not necessarily what inspires people to follow transformational leaders. What leaders are yearning to emulate are leaders that speak a language that touches the soul and live a life that truly backs up their words, displaying a humility and gentleness that cannot be anything but the work of the Holy Spirit. Martoia calls it “leadership leak” (Morph! 11). Most pastors are looking for authentic Christian leaders who have taken up their crosses and are attempting to give God their very best effort in guiding their congregations.

### **Spiritual Entrepreneurs**

The term “spiritual entrepreneur,” penned by Michael Slaughter of Ginghamburg UMC in Tipp City, Ohio, mixes two concepts normally not thought of as congruent, that of a spiritual person who is also a risk-taking builder. This kind of anomaly in leadership is desperately needed in the church culture today. God has a vision for his Church, and he

yearns for men and women who will listen for his direction and take up the challenge of leading the Church to meet this vision. Often, though, the risks of this kind of spiritual leadership are too frightening. Many pastors are content to exist in the status quo and manage their churches rather than be found on the dangerous edge of leading them toward innovation and change (Spiritual Entrepreneurs 17-18). Transformational leaders are men and women who are confident about God's leadership in their lives and ministry and who seek to trust God's direction.

The difference between an entrepreneur and a spiritual entrepreneur should be noted. Spiritual entrepreneurs are not opportunistic builders of "self-promoting" kingdoms. Their goal is spiritual leadership, which influences others because "it is irradiated, penetrated, and empowered by the Holy Spirit" (Sanders, Spiritual Leadership 28). While the natural entrepreneur is self-confident, ambitious, and independent, the spiritual entrepreneur is God confident, humble, and dependent on the leadership and direction given by God; thus, the prestige and privilege of leading comes in serving, putting more into life than is taken out, being used up for God's purposes (15). The selection by God to lead a congregation does not bring with it the perks of the corporate world, such as wealth or social status (in fact, it will most likely be riddled with suffering for the obedient spiritual leader) but simply the opportunity to be used by God to build something that will be truly eternal (Slaughter, Unlearning Church 40). When pastoral leaders see their participation as the key ingredient to God's incredible and dynamic plan, leadership becomes exciting and life giving.

Peterson agrees. He sees pastoral leadership as more than a well-intentioned vocation. Leadership must be spiritual, blazing with holiness and fueled by the Holy

Spirit: “All I am doing is trying to get straight what it means to be a pastor, and then develop a spirituality adequate to the work” (Under the Unpredictable Plant 5). Peterson asserts that spiritual leadership is rooted in biblical faith, connected intrinsically to Christ, and soaked in the Spirit. Ideas for change become an outworking of a vibrant relationship with God (6).

Kirbyjohn Caldwell and Walt Kallestad understand the key ingredient for spiritual leadership as discernment: “God is already at work around us. He has a plan. He is actively at work fulfilling that plan. The plan involves new things” (20) Spiritual entrepreneurs are excited about the discovering those “new things that God is doing” (21). They develop a strategy of “next” things, asking questions such as, “What is the next thing God wants to teach us as a congregation or teach me as a leader?” or “In what direction is God leading us next? I know that God does not plan for us to stay at a stagnant place for long” (20-21).

Hybels articulates the exhilaration of spiritual leadership. The infusion of God’s vision into the life of one of his gifted men or women produces a passion to accomplish greatness for God. First, the leader catches a glimpse of the future (through Scripture, through the witness of another leader, or by way of a prompting directly from God). Second, the leader thinks, “I could give my life for this!” (as opposed to a career of maintaining the status quo in a local congregation). The leader is emboldened and relishes the challenge. Third, the leader begins to dream, plan, and put energy into the work that is God ordained. He or she can grasp the vision. The benefits begin to outweigh the risks. Fourth, the leader’s passion becomes contagious. When people hear leaders communicating a passionate and God-honoring vision, they are energized (Courageous

Leadership 35).

This kind of vision and passion is an intangible trait of transformational leaders. Hybels says that the decision to start Willow Creek Community Church, focus on seekers, utilize the arts, and have a midweek believer service all defied conventional wisdom. They were Spirit-prompted directives (“Sharpening Your Sixth Sense” 84). Through the twenty-eight years of Willow Creek, many thousands of church leaders have been encouraged by the model of a spiritual entrepreneur such as Hybels leading his church to be obedient to the call of God and to be consumed with eternal matters of the spiritual life.

Spiritual entrepreneurs naturally challenge the status quo. Of course, many aspects of church life are exactly the kind of stable, fortifying forces needed in a world of flux and insecurity. People need pastoral leaders who will ensure that their churches continue to be places with strong values, deep and lasting relationships, and solid discipleship. At the same time, God is also looking for leaders who will confront those processes that are only achieving minimal success at producing eternal consequences. While being an entrepreneur in God’s economy is not about producing numbers of people or building campaigns, the Scripture is clear that God is always beckoning his people and his Church to grow. God is never content with the status quo of religion. God is looking for men and women to serve as catalysts for transformational change. A spiritual entrepreneur might look like Ezekiel, prophesying truth faithfully to a stubborn and obstinate Israel. Maybe the spiritual entrepreneur will appear more like Nehemiah, casting a vision of what the wall might resemble in fifty-two days, encouraging the workers to keep on building and dreaming. Sometimes the spiritual entrepreneur’s job is

to remind people that they are living an underwhelming Christian existence as the writer of Hebrews warns: “A person who is living on milk isn’t very far along in the Christian life and doesn’t know much about doing what is right” (Heb. 5:13, NLT). The truth is that God is always leading people to change. A spiritual entrepreneur’s impact on others will always be to lead them toward transformation.

Information by itself will not transform. A changed life happens when God’s truth is applied in the context of real life with the encouragement of others who are also forging their way in faith toward the prize of a dynamic relationship with Christ. Spiritual entrepreneurs, therefore, understand the difference between management and leadership. Management is maintaining order while leadership is the ability to take the organization to places it has never gone before. Spiritual leaders are not satisfied with maintenance but find a way to lead, in the words of James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, “adventures into new territory” (36). They begin initiatives that are new and fresh that, at the very least, help improve their “business as usual” environment of the Church significantly (Shawchuck and Heuser 20). Interestingly, Kouzes and Posner report that the leaders they interviewed shared that their most significant moments of leadership came during times of change and risk, the charting of new and unexplored territory (37). Several transformational pastors studied in this chapter (e.g., Russell; Hybels; McManus) maintain that their most significant moments as leaders were times they were particularly attentive to the Spirit’s leadings and acted boldly in faith. They remember the pivotal situations as the beginnings of great chapters in their lives and ministries.

So much of transformational leadership comes down to God-given vision, a passion to do eternal kingdom-building ministry, and the willingness to risk personal

failure. Spiritual entrepreneurs are willing to risk disapproval and rejection for the chance to see their vision of the Church come to fruition (Willimon, Pastor 279). Hamilton, pastor of Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City, is an example of a spiritual entrepreneur. Serving as an associate in a large church, he saw a segment of the population of his city that no church seemed to be reaching. He sensed great excitement about the possibilities for starting a new church that would indeed be able to reach “unchurched” people. Directed by God, he set out to create a spiritual community that would focus on some of the unmet needs of the people who seemed to slip through the cracks of the traditional church program (Rutledge 14-16). The other United Methodist churches in his area did not fully appreciate the style and manner in which Hamilton and his church conducted their ministry at first: their name was not traditional, they had greater standards for membership than most churches, and their worship service was intentionally a “different kind of experience” from what people who would attend had expected from a Methodist church (Hamilton, Leading beyond the Walls 52, 66). The result of Hamilton’s bold steps of faith has been a ministry resulting in thousands of changed lives.

At the same time, pastors such as Peterson and Patton have not seen phenomenal numerical growth but have experienced powerful changes in their congregations because of their obedience to follow God’s directions. Peterson speaks of his journey as a Christian and a pastor as “*askesis*,” being found in and leading others to places of brokenness where God is able to transform. He calls the journey a strange mix of life-deepening and reality-creating disaster. Embracing the cross means abandoning spirituality that is consumer driven, “a cafeteria through which we walk making

selections according to our tastes and appetites” (Under the Unpredictable Plant 89)

Instead, Peterson asserts that God calls people to *askesis*, “an environment in which our capacities are reduced to nothing or nearly nothing and we are at the mercy of God to shape his will in us” (89). Patton also makes the case for transformed lives. The Church of Jesus Christ was never meant to be a Rotary Club look alike or an organization for perpetual fund-raisers. If so, then Jesus died for nothing. The product of the living organism called the Church is changed lives, that all “may know Christ and be found in Him” (Phil. 3:8-9, RSV). Patton says that many people in his congregations have considered him a maverick, but he sees himself as a faithful Christian leader helping others experience and transmit the real claims of Christ to others (“Truly Leading the Church”).

Congregations are dying for lack of spiritual entrepreneurs. Bishop Job identifies several qualities of transformational leaders for which he looked when appointing pastors to United Methodist congregations. While he does not use the term spiritual entrepreneur, he recognizes both aspects of the metaphor in his description: A transformational pastor is spiritual (centered in Jesus Christ, rooted in the tradition of the Church, bound to God by love, and dedicated to a disciplined Christian life) and a risk-taking builder (incredibly free to live and practice faithful and fruitful ministry in an inspiring and innovative way) (4). Such leadership ability, the courage to be obedient to God regardless of the consequences, is in every single leader, but it must be undergirded by the support and encouragement of other spiritual mentors and colleagues who have also decided that they will never be content leading churches whose members do not appear to the world as transformed by the power of the Spirit.



## **Purpose-Driven Leaders**

Leadership expert Bill Perkins is convinced that courageous, transformational leaders focus their efforts on purpose. Goals, strategies, and initiatives are not designed around expedient or urgent matters but are clearly based on the mission of the organization (46). Callahan even places missional objectives as the first key to becoming an effective church (Twelve Keys xxi-xxiii). Transformational Christian leaders, then, are those who are confident about the tasks to which God has called the Church, and they dedicate their time to fulfilling those missional tasks.

The best-selling book by Rick Warren The Purpose Driven Life has revolutionized the ministries of thousands of churches by helping them clarify the business of the church. Warren lists five purposes (worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and evangelism) based on two Scripture passages from the book of Matthew (22:37-39 and 28:18-20) as the five things believers are to put into practice on this earth as they prepare for eternity (313-17). Unfortunately, both clergy and laity have traditionally struggled with what the church is supposed to be doing with its valuable time. Neighbour has essentially been saying the same thing for years. In his 1990 book Where Do We Go from Here?, Neighbour suggests that the problem with most Christian churches is something that he calls PBD, or “program based design disease,” a system of Christian living that is neither biblical nor efficient (39). Regardless of the particular theological stripe of the local church, style of its worship, or size of its congregation, this disease of wrong focus is the prevalent operating structure of many churches in the world today. For change in effectiveness to come, an unlearning process must take place, a change in the way leaders practice ministry to focus more on mission.

Erwin McManus also challenges Christian leaders to clarify their focus.

Proposing what he terms a “radical minimum standard,” McManus calls for the creation of an environment where Christian leaders establish ministry based on a life patterned in “obedience worthy of the movement for which Christ died” (202). McManus declares that the Church’s lack of missional focus is evident in the apathy, compromise, and rebellion seen in the people under its care. In haste to include as many people as possible, churches tend to sacrifice their Christian nature and their missional focus (204). Normal Christianity is dynamic and based on the purposes of God so the style of leadership needed in the church today must be purpose driven. Slaughter echoes this idea when he states that Christians are to concentrate on “one thing: pleasing God is the most important value we can model as leaders” (Unlearning Church 168).

Purpose-driven churches are contagious. Darrell L. Guder et al., commenting on what they call “the missional church,” say that when a church decides to focus on its God-given mission, it can become truly “apostolic,” the body of Christ sent out into the world (110). Mark Mittelberg trumpets that pre-Christian people are impressed with believers who are genuinely living out the mission that God gave them (92). George G. Hunter, III rightly expresses that many churches have missed the boat by trying to make people “religious like us” (36-38, 45-52) rather than making disciples who are living with the purposes and mission of God in mind. The church that best expresses a lifestyle based on a new identity in Christ and a new purpose for living as Christians will be a successful congregation in reaching new converts and growing the effectiveness of the congregation’s ministry (52). Leaders who are clear on their purpose know who they are called to be and what they are called to do (Shawchuck and Heuser 73).

Congregations are in desperate need of leadership that is purpose driven. Gary

Fenton describes the dilemma:

The longer you serve, the broader your ministry becomes.... [I was told] that you can't afford to be a specialist when you serve in the emergency room of the soul, so I determined then I was going to excel in everything. Ten years later, I found I had not excelled at anything. I had too much to do and too little time to do it. (108)

Transformation in ministry only happens when leaders decide to move from the arena of the generalist and focus on doing only certain things based on purpose. Congregations always drift in their clarity on mission unless spiritual leaders dedicate themselves to the all-important tasks of fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

Perkins suggests that leaders must overcome their fear and be determined to lead on purpose (46). Transformational change happens when the leader sets the agenda based on clear purposes. The redefining and restructuring process begins when the leader becomes the banner carrier for purpose. The transformational leader then communicates the purposes clearly and repeatedly, clarifying ideas and direction each time. Over time, the new changes or ideas become part of the culture (Nelson and Appel 53-59).

Deanne N. Den Hartog, Jaap J. Muijen, and Paul L. Koopman call purpose-driven leaders those with "charisma." They speak of the confidence and trust that is necessary in leaders for them to be able to move organizations toward innovation and change. A transformational leader does not use rewards to encourage change but continues to point to the purpose (22). Callahan expresses the same principle about effective churches. Transformation happens most quickly when Christian leaders who are trusted and seen as credible point their congregations toward ministry that is defined by missional objectives (Twelve Keys 6-7). With time at a premium, and eternal matters at stake, purpose-driven

leaders operate with a sense of urgency. Unfortunately for the Church, teaching about the mission of the church will never suffice to accomplish it. Transformation takes place when purpose-driven leaders incorporate the instruction about purpose into action and demonstrate its urgency personally.

The change in a church from trying to do everything to focusing on mission begins with the pastoral leader. Dee Hock states that the art of self-leadership is the first crucial step for any organization that hopes to be transformed. Leadership is not about getting others to follow but rather about identifying the core values and letting them marinate the whole organization and until they change its flavor. Only after a leader is convinced of and is demonstrating priorities can the organization be transformed as well (69). Pastoral leaders have to discover what God wants the Church to do and then begin to implement those things with reckless abandon. The slow drip of encouragement from other such transformed leaders will keep everyone focused and will produce eternal results.

### **Team Builders**

Transformational Christian leadership highlights team ministry. Wise leaders know that God has gifted his Church with the tools necessary for effectiveness and that all abilities do not reside with one person. Transformation in a local church begins to happen when congregations are led to discover that ministry belongs to everyone (Morris 169). Again, unfortunately, pastoral leaders are just as guilty as their people in promoting a wrong theology of ministry (believing that the minister does the ministry). The concept is unbiblical (see Eph. 4:11-12) and the major hindrance in producing effective and fruitful Christians. Patton, a United Methodist minister from north central Pennsylvania,

bemoans what he calls “pastor fetch” as one mentality that must change if a church is to succeed (If It Could Happen Here 41-42). He declares that pastors are released to lead more effectively when “pastor fetch” is dispelled, but a further bonus is that laypeople are freed to experience the joys of serving in ways that change the attitude and temperature of the entire church (49).

I left seminary believing that I would be successful if I could do all things well. Theological training, by necessity, tries to give as broad a perspective on the totality of ministry as possible, but such an educational process only reinforces the problem. Pastors are schooled in being generalists with the intention that graduates be as well rounded as possible. This type of training is inadequate in preparing future pastoral leaders for equipping ministry and development of teams and keeps alive the unbiblical myth of two classes of Christian people—clergy and laity. I always scored well on my evaluations from church authorities and pastoral supervisors as they referred back to The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church’s definition of the role of a pastor as the standard, but as time went on I found ministry to be an impossible box for me, one where I had no chance to be truly effective unless I was a superman.

Of course, the reason for my frustration is that I had a wrong understanding of ministry and my role as the “minister.” Ephesians 4:11-13 identifies the primary task of the pastor is to equip a team for ministry. The body of Christ is full of very capable people who are able to do many aspects of ministry better than I ever could as their pastor. This revelation was indeed transformational for me. Instead of trying to improve the weaknesses I had discovered in my own ministry, I needed to be more biblical in my leadership and develop my God-given strengths and help develop the strengths of other

leaders in my congregation. As Martoia says well, “Spend time developing the treasure God has invested in you, and you will soar as a crucial and high-impact player in God’s economy” (Morph! 41).

Though shared ministry is the biblical standard, this change in thinking is often a very difficult transition for many leaders to embrace and model. Peterson tells the frustrating story of trying to practice this new way of ministry. He admits that at first, when he depended on other gifted people in his congregation, especially men and women more capable in the area of administration than he, the result was that he felt unneeded, removed from the center of the decision-making process. Once he understood his role as the leader and the equipper of others and realized that more could be accomplished for God when he operated in this Ephesians 4 model, he admits that he never looked back (Under the Unpredictable Plant 39-40). The job of a transformational pastoral leader is to help others discover their unique roles and set them free to serve on the ministry team.

Slaughter reminds leaders that the ancient Church was a “lay-based movement” and that the institutional church of today has lost its momentum because of its emphasis on professional ministry. The future success of the twenty-first century Church lies solely in the hands of ordained pastors’ ability to release ministry to the unpaid servants (Unlearning Church 149-52). If Christian leaders continue to model ministry “by the paid professional” only, then their congregations will never believe that ministry is actually available to everyone.

Again, I fall back on the contrast between transactional and transformational leadership. A lecture featuring even the most inspiring teaching about building teams is not enough to change the thinking of most pastoral leaders and get them to release the

laity. The process must involve applied experience. Most pastors do not know how to offer ministry to others. Training and equipping other people to develop their gifts is difficult, time consuming, and full of risks. The easier option is always to do all the ministry oneself, yet teamwork is always more productive and more satisfying to everyone. Christian leaders need more models of leaders who are releasing ministry effectively. Maybe more important for many pastoral leaders is the simple permission not to not to do everything and begin to think in terms of effectiveness being team driven (Martoia, Morph! 74).

Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 12 on the nature of the body of Christ is proof enough that God's design is that ministry will be most effective as Christians use their gifts in tandem with each other. John C. Maxwell states that the success of potential leaders (in the hands of more experienced leaders) will depend upon the answers to two essential principles. First, shared ministry is worth the risk. Without the help of others, leaders will be forced to practice ministry alone, will certainly become fatigued, and will waste the potential of people around them. Second, the ministry of equipping is worth the investment. Though equipping is hard work and often involves disappointments and short-term inefficiencies, the long-term payoffs of an equipped ministry force are immeasurable (Developing the Leaders 87-88). Neighbour says that preparing God's people for works of service is the job description of a true spiritual leader (Shepherd's Guidebook 31). When a Christian leader becomes the equipping clearinghouse for ministry, the Church will not only grow, it will multiply.

One final word is necessary on the subject of the ministry of building a team. Transactional leadership tends to be hierarchical in nature, depending entirely on the

extraordinary talents of one leader. Other people in the organization who are gifted are seen as threats to power or position. The mission of the Church of Jesus Christ is too big and important to depend on the abilities of only one leader. Not only will ministry not be nearly as effective, but members of the congregation will be cheated out of their inheritance of service to Christ and for the kingdom of God. Transformational pastors move beyond the egotistical notion that they can do everything. They release ministry to others. They encourage other leaders to make decisions, to get training, and to study other churches that have a standard of excellence. The result is a team of leaders and a breadth of competency and proficiency of gifts accomplishing much more than any one person could do by themselves (Eph. 3:20).

### **Conclusion**

Transformed Christian leaders, touched and changed by the power of the Holy Spirit, will make or break a local congregation. Changed leaders, confidently utilizing their God-given gifts and talents can literally turn the world upside down (Acts 17:6). Transformational leadership changes the whole landscape of the vision and mission of a church. Today's mainline churches are just a leader or two away from transformational change that would bring vibrancy and life to them once again. Warren sees the potential:

I believe the church is a sleeping giant. Each Sunday, church pews are filled with members who are doing nothing with their faith except "keeping" it.... [I]f we ever awaken and unleash the massive talent, resources, creativity, and energy lying dormant in the typical church, Christianity will explode with growth at an unprecedented rate. (Purpose Driven Church 365)

Mark Gibbs and T. Ralph Morton echo Warren's sentiments. They assert that the treasure within God's Church is so vast that unleashing the power of combined ministry would change the world forever, like the discovery of a new element or a new continent. The



world is waiting for leaders to mine that treasure (158). For this reason, developing transformational leadership is the single most vitally important task for the Church today. The question then becomes how to create transformational leaders.

Most of the pastors in our conference—in fact, most of the pastors I know—have been seminary-trained, attending fine institutions where they have been schooled in the basics for ministry like biblical studies, theology, preaching, and pastoral care. While I am appreciative of such higher education and benefited greatly from my seminary training, I believe that such pastoral education is missing a vital component—passionate, transformed, dynamic leadership.

Most pastors can manage the churches to which they have been assigned, preaching, going to committee meetings, and visiting the members, but until a deep dissatisfaction arises in their spirits about the true nature and mission of the Church, nothing transformational will ever happen under their influence. Until pastors decide to lead their churches out of the spiritual malaise of organizational religion to be the body of Christ to each other and the world, the Church will continue to flounder and be ineffective. As long as pastors are content to allow their people to underutilize their gifts by either watching their seminary-trained pastors do all the ministry or by simply not investigating their own God-given abilities and strengths, the Church will not be able to change lives or accomplish its mission in today's world.

Transformation is needed where pastors determine that God has called them to lead their people to be a different kind of church. This kind of transformation in thinking cannot take place in a weekend class or a traditional continuing education setting. I believe that it must be developed over time through a unique experience combining both

education and inspiration. Patterns that are mostly transactional will never impact pastoral leaders like a more transformational model of leadership designed to be intensely practical and personal. This kind of learning experience known for “changing lives” is the model in the New Testament. Somewhere between then and now, the Church got lazy and abandoned its most effective form of leadership development.

I believe that an academy can be developed where men and women can come together under the direction of a proven transformational leader and be given the tools to change from being managers and chaplains to serving their congregation as transformational Christian leaders. Such an academy would offer practical ideas that worked in a local church, be highly motivational and inspirational, bring in excellent pastoral examples of integrity, leadership, and success to be the instructors, and create a culture of leadership that would be contagious to all the participants. The training would help the participants understand and utilize their God-given personalities and abilities, teach them how to lead their congregations to mirror the biblical image of the Church, and, most of all, provide the confidence and built-in accountable relationships necessary to change them for the rest of their lives and ministries.

The Church needs leaders—transformed by the Holy Spirit and empowered to lead others to be effective in winning the world and their communities for Christ. I believe that the model seen in Acts where Barnabas encourages and mentors leaders through a personal relationship and on-the-job training may well be the secret to unlocking effectiveness in the Church. My project will seek to demonstrate that pastors can be transformed into the kind of men and women who transform other men and women by their leadership.

## CHAPTER 3

### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of a program of the North Carolina Annual Conference to produce transformational leaders. Having been appointed by Bishop Edwards to the project as the director of the Wellspring's Small Church Initiative, the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership became a natural subject for my study. The original challenge to me from the bishop was to design a program that would help develop about a dozen pastors a year into transformational leaders. He gave no parameters for the method, structure, or strategy to use for the project, only that I begin the work with pastors of smaller membership local churches.

The study sought to evaluate the program for its value to the annual conference for creating dedicated, long-term, transformed leaders with an increasing hunger to learn and sharpen their ministry skills. The purpose was accomplished in several ways:

1. By the use of an objective tool to evaluate change in attitudes, practical leadership skills, and confidence,
2. By the use of numerous essay-type evaluations that gave the participants an opportunity to express their perceived value of spending one year or more in the academy, and,
3. By the use of the director's personal notes, journal entries, and other documented writings marking changes and growth in leadership of the participants.

The anticipated outcomes were the identification of repeatable methods that increased the leadership capacity, confidence, and skills of the participants, the discovery

of the effect and influence of a mentor and leader in the lives and ministries of a group of pastors, and the classification of certain principles that helped lead participants to transformational leadership. This study will also serve as the benchmark for our annual conference for whether transformational leadership can be developed through a creative continuing education experience to produce long-term effectiveness.

### **Research Questions**

Three primary research questions guided the extent of this study.

#### **Research Question 1**

How did the pastors of the Wellspring Academy change in their attitudes and ministry skills because of the specific training in transformational leadership they received from the yearlong experience?

A survey tool was created to measure the changes in the participants' attitudes and practical leadership skills during the nine-month teaching and mentoring period of the Wellspring Academy. The module themes are listed in Appendix H.

#### **Research Question 2**

What are the contextual factors apart from the pretest/posttest questions that revealed significant changes in the participants?

The project assumed that participants who spent a year in the program would be affected positively for transformational leadership. Therefore, I documented, by as many means as possible, factors that were helpful in developing leadership growth. Since the project also hoped to measure attitude and confidence, both subjective measures, I took individual notes for each participant to document statements and attitudes of growth noticed as the leadership development was occurring.

### **Research Question 3**

What elements of the program contributed most to its impact?

Since I believed that transformed leaders are the key to transforming congregations, I needed to measure the goals in the long-range plans as well as the changes that had been accomplished by the introduction of transformational leadership development into the local church culture. The study was somewhat limited by time. The kind of study that could track each of the Wellspring pastors for the entire five years would be more extensive than the purpose and ability of this study. That observation having been made, I discovered some very significant observations from the long-range plans as well as from the follow-up evaluations of the one former class in the academy.

#### **Population and Sample**

The population and sample for this study consisted of twelve pastors who served as participants in the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership during the 2003-04 class. The pastors were given the pretest and posttest as a part of their participation and evaluation process. They also filled out a series of essay-styled evaluations periodically through the year. These evaluations were invaluable in supplementing the objective testing method. Finally, I used the assignments, the interview conversations, and personality inventories to assist me in evaluating the effectiveness of the academy.

Each of the participants submitted applications for admission into the program complete with essay-styled answers. Criteria for consideration were as follows:

1. The applicant must be the pastor of a smaller membership local church (one hundred or less in average worship attendance);
2. The applicant must be willing (along with the congregation) to make a five-

year commitment to that local congregation;<sup>2</sup> and,

3. The applicant must be viewed by the selection committee of current instructors in the program and former participants in the program as possessing leadership potential and willingness to learn and grow in leadership (see Appendix J for the selection committee).<sup>3</sup>

### **Selection of Participants**

A brochure and application was mailed to a list of the 450 pastors serving churches with one hundred or less people in average worship attendance. Several methods of recruitment were implemented instead of leaving the process to chance applications from interest generated by the brochure alone.

Each first-year Wellspring participant was asked to recruit three colleagues that would possibly benefit from the process. I made a presentation from the floor of annual conference promoting the academy utilizing personal testimonies from former participants and a brief motivational address. Bishop Edwards encouraged participation in the academy through his address at the Executive Session (the gathering of the clergy) and through his State of the Church address (to the body of the annual conference). Many personal conversations and telephone calls (during annual conference and throughout June and July) helped interested pastors sort out whether the academy would be a good fit for them and their current appointment. Twenty applications were received for the

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<sup>2</sup> Since the United Methodist system is an appointive system, pastors in the program had no guarantee from the bishop or the cabinet that they would be able to stay for the five years, but a list of all Wellspring pastors was submitted each year to the Dean of the Cabinet to remind the superintendents that, if at all possible, those pastors should remain in their current charges for the process of change. In some cases, the changes in the pastor or the unwillingness of the congregation to grow or change made moves unavoidable. Both years two of the twelve pastors did transition to another congregational appointment.

<sup>3</sup> Both years more candidates applied than we could accept (2002-03, we selected twelve from eighteen applications received; 2003-04, we selected twelve from twenty applications received).

Academy's 2003-04 class by the deadline of 30 July 2003.

### **Selection Committee**

A team of nine pastors was asked to serve on the selection committee. The committee gathered on 8 August 2003 at Bailey United Methodist Church to read through the applications. The selection team included presenters from the first year of the academy (veteran pastors with small church experience) and several members of the 2002-03 class of the academy. After spending significant time in prayer, the applications were sorted by the following criteria: (1) the size of the church ministry (one pastor serving a medium-sized congregation was disqualified because his congregation was too large for the parameters set on the application), (2) a compelling argument on the essay section, and (3) recommendations from former academy participants.

A surprising statistic to the committee was the fact that all but one of the applications for the 2003-04 class were received from ordained elders (the first year's class had five local pastors). The one part-time local pastor that applied was unique in that she is seminary trained and has a proven track record in two previous appointments as a very gifted leader. The committee narrowed the list to twelve by the afternoon.

All the pastors that applied were Anglo-American. The North Carolina Conference does not have a large number of pastors of other races, but the committee was disappointed that no African-American, Native American, Spanish-American, or Korean-American pastors applied to the program. One of the members of the first Wellspring Academy class of participants was a Native American pastor.

Eight of the participants were male and four were female. The first year's class was split half and half.

The group also consisted of pastors of experience. Originally, I assumed that the kind of pastors that would be interested in a program such as this one would be “green” pastors with no experience. This assumption proved to be false. The group was rich in years as well as life and ministry experience. The type of pastor who applied for the academy had come to realize that effectiveness in ministry was a continuing education project. Fenton identifies the heart of these pastors:

In my twenties, I honed my preaching skills. My congregations wanted energy and vitality in the pulpit, and I wanted to deliver. In my thirties, I turned to pastoral care. I learned the hard way that genuine caring was required for effective communication. In my forties, I learned to lead. My church needed direction, and I discovered the difference between cheerleading and leadership. (108-09)

Each application was submitted with the expectation of paying tuition to be a part of this academy. This factor is significant because in at least five of the conversations with pastors concerning using this yearlong event for their continuing education training, their churches did not provide enough support for the full tuition. The North Carolina Conference did supply approximately half of the tuition for most of these smaller membership pastors.

### **Methodology**

The project was an evaluative study in the quasi-experimental mode that utilized a pre- and posttest design with no comparison group. The members of the second class of the Wellspring Academy, participating in the program during the year 2003-04, served as the test group. I administered the pretest prior to our first meeting together in September, and it served as a first glimpse of the participants’ understanding of their own leadership quotient. The posttest was designed to measure changes in knowledge, attitude, and practical skills in the area of transformational leadership and to be supplemented by



several subjective instruments for a triangulation effect to test for accurate results.

The study sought to test for elements of transformation in the ministry and leadership abilities of the participants due to their participation in the academy. These elements of change and growth corresponded to the same elements identified in the transformational Christian leadership section of the literature review.

### **Variables**

The independent variable of this research project was the teaching at the Wellspring Academy for Christians Leadership and the personal interactions that participants had with me as the director.

The dependent variable of this study was the change measured by the instruments.

Several intervening variables may have affected the outcome of the study. First, the perceived level of leadership skills by the participants was already at a high level. The pretest was given to a group of people who had the sense that they were somewhat gifted in their potential to lead congregations forward. These people were pastors who had expressed by their interest in the program the desire to learn and grow. The level of proficiency at which they viewed themselves was completely subjective. Their level of growth and expertise at the end of the process may actually be better informed than at the beginning. One cannot control for these variables.

A second intervening variable may have been the “wounded pastor” factor. This component coupled with the mix of personality and practical skill in leadership might tend to skew the results for pastors who had been hurt by church conflict.

A third intervening variable may have been the relationship between the pastoral leader and his or her congregation. The study was unable to control for the response of

the transformational leadership effect on the congregation itself. Even good leadership may not find success in leading a congregation to transformational change without first getting support from the key leaders (Patton, [If It Could Happen Here](#) 61).

Other factors such as age and experience level of the participants, personality factors identified in the 16PF study, church politics, and demographics could also affect the outcome of the study.

### **Instrumentation and Data Collection**

This project utilized a researcher-designed pretest and posttest to measure changes in attitudes, practical skills, and confidence in the area of leadership. The objective instrument employed a six-point Likert scale to demonstrate the dynamic nature of the changes in the participants. I also designed the pretest/posttest with forty-two questions corresponding to the nine monthly modules of the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership for the Class of 2003-04. I mailed the pretest electronically to each of the participants prior to the first module, and the participants completed them and turned them in to me at the first module prior to the first teaching session. I gave the posttest as a part of the final module at the last session of the day on 10 May 2004.

I also used several other subjective evaluation tools to glean insight about the transformational leadership abilities and changes in the participants.

I kept a Field Worker's Journal to document thoughts and feelings, conversations and insights from numerous visits and interviews with the participants.

I compiled a large file of reflections from participants following the work that we did together in modules. Some were pre-module insights and personal musing about their own particular gifts and pastoral circumstances.

I asked the participants to fill out several evaluations of modules during the year. One was after module five, one after seven, and another final evaluation of the whole program.

I utilized the results of the 16PF tests taken by the participants. The findings of the 16PF tests gave an accurate reading of potential leadership abilities and opportunities for self-improvement.

Participants submitted two documents as their final work for the academy: a long-range plan developed with the assistance of their local church council (submitted by September 2004) and a life ministry plan, a paper describing their best self-assessment of their own leadership gifting and personality.

Following the experience of meeting together regularly, speaking with one another intermittently via e-mails and other conversations, and personal coaching time from the director, I gave the posttest as a part of the ninth module. This instrument served as the objective measure for the research.

Two other evaluation tools (both subjective) were used to glean insights about the transformational leadership abilities and changes in the participants. First, I prepared a series of notebooks to document conversations, interactions, and other personal contact with each participant:

1. I kept a *Field Worker's Journal* to document thoughts and feelings, conversations, and insights from numerous visits and interviews with the participants.
2. I asked each participant to take a comprehensive personality test called the *16 Personality Factor Test*. I gave them computer disks (which contained the test) after the October module and asked them to return them when they arrived for the November

module. The results were then interpreted for them during a telephone interview in January. The results of the 16PF tests were also very revealing and seemed to be an accurate reading of potential leadership abilities and opportunities for self-improvement.

3. I asked each participant to submit a *Long-Range Plan* using the knowledge gained through time spent at the academy modules as well as the participant's own personal creativity in leadership. The plan, developed with the assistance of the participant's church council, was submitted by 1 September 2004.

4. I asked each participant to submit a *Life Ministry Plan*—an autobiographical, best assessment of leadership gifting and personality. Each of these plans was particularly revealing and helpful as an evaluation tool.

Second, I gave all participants a series of evaluations throughout the process. One was after module five, one after module seven, and another final evaluation of the whole program after module nine.

As stated in Chapter 1, confidentiality was ensured for each of the participants so that evaluations, psychological test results, and other observations would remain the property of the director and used only for research purposes. Participants signed a waiver granting me permission to use their material for the purpose of this researching the project. As a result, none of the individual results were shared with the participants' church councils or others in leadership unless the participant specifically asked for such information to be shared.

### **Generalizability**

This study was delimited to include only pastors in the North Carolina Conference currently serving smaller membership local churches. The purpose of this project was to

evaluate the impact of the Wellspring Academy in the lives and ministries of the twelve participating pastors to help them become more effective in leading transformational change. Presumably, the same program could be duplicated to include other conferences of the United Methodist Church, churches from other denominations, and even churches that have surpassed one hundred in average worship attendance. Results of this study are summarized in Chapter 4.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Measuring changes in subjective categories such as practical ministry skills, attitudes, and confidence in a group of pastors presented an *interesting challenge*. If factors such as increases in worship attendance, giving, or membership could serve as benchmarks for transformational leadership, statistical analysis could be done quite easily. While these indicators may provide some information about pastoral leaders, numbers alone could not possibly judge the effectiveness of a year of intentional training and equipping in the area of transformational leadership.

Since the purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership, I created several means of evaluation to discover whether this yearlong continuing education event made clear and definable differences in the twelve participants.

1. I administered a pre- and posttest to each of the twelve participants to determine, as objectively as possible, if changes occurred in their attitudes and practice because of the training and mentoring they received in the academy.

2. I gave a battery of essay-styled evaluations to the participants during the course of the academy year to give them an opportunity to describe the changes they sensed in themselves as a result of the training. The evaluations were given after module five, module seven, and module nine.

3. I also used several subjective means to determine changes in the participants: the strategic long-range plan that each one of them turned in as a final assignment, the life ministry plan (submitted as an assignment following the 16PF interview), and my

field worker's journal with notes and impressions of changes and areas of growth that I recognized in the participants over the yearlong process.

The research sought to explore whether a continuing education event such as the Wellspring Academy could make a difference in the long-term ministries and leadership capabilities of a group of pastors. Three research questions guided this study: How did the pastors of the Wellspring Academy change in their attitudes and ministry skills because of the specific training in transformational leadership they received from the yearlong experience? What are the contextual factors apart from the pretest/posttest questions that revealed significant changes in the participants? What elements of the program contributed most to its impact?

### **Profile of Participants**

The Wellspring Academy was designed for leadership training with twelve participants each year. Therefore, a sample size of twelve—one year's class of participants—seemed like a logical choice to study for the purposes of this project. I chose the second class of participants in the program, the class of 2003-04.

### **The Pre- and Posttest**

Before the first module began, each participant was asked to complete the pretest. The forty-two questions on the pretest were chosen to correspond to the subjects that would be covered in the nine teaching modules during the coming year (see Table 1.1, p. 20). The posttest was then administered at the conclusion of the final module in May 2004. The reasoning behind the use of this tool was to measure the amount of overall change in the participants. The results of the two tests are exhibited in Appendix K.

The changes recorded in the research ranged from incremental movements of 2.08

steps on the Likert scale in the positive direction to 0.75 steps in the negative direction. The answers to six of the forty-two questions demonstrated significant positive movement of more than one point on the scale. These questions corresponded to priorities of the academy that were identified in the advertising brochure.

Question 7 asked participants if they read books on the subject of leadership. The change of 2.08 demonstrated the most significant change of any of the questions on the test. Participants seemed to recognize the connection between continued study and continued effectiveness in their personal ministries by the end of the training.

Questions 33 and 41 both dealt with the long-range planning aspect of the academy, and the participants' answers seem to demonstrate a change in foresight and vision in leadership, especially because of the establishment of a five-year plan for their churches. Question 41 showed a 1.75 increment change from pretest to posttest and question 33 showed a 1.33 change.

Question 39 asked whether churches of any size could grow, and while the participants seemed to have their doubts at the beginning, they were much more confident that leadership could make a difference by the end of the academy (a move of 1.58). One of the establishing principles of the academy was that small churches need good leaders to have an opportunity for lasting effectiveness. By the end of the academy, participants seemed to agree that they could help make a definable difference for their churches in the future.

Question 42 asked about the regular habit of meeting with a mentor. At the beginning of the academy year, most of the participants checked that they did not practice this crucial aspect of ministry. By the end of the academy, the overall score of the group



had increased by 1.25 points, which seemed to imply that the value of mentoring relationships was being established in the ministries of the participants.

Question 21 asked about purpose-driven leadership. Again on this question, the move of over a point (1.08) seemed to indicate that the overall academy experience and the module on purpose had had an effect on the overall level of understanding of what churches and pastors were supposed to spend their time doing.

Three of the questions had negative results (that were statistically relevant). Interestingly, I found that each of these questions was worded in such a way that a numerical answer on the posttest less than the original answer on the pretest could have been seen as a positive response. Question 10, for instance, asked about the perception of ministry as chaplaincy. The results of the posttest actually saw a decrease of three-quarters of a point in the use of this terminology as a description of the participants' leadership. For the purposes of the study, this decrease would be viewed a positive step and a move away from the status quo. Question 20 asked participants if they listen to other pastors' sermons regularly. The perception that they did practice this discipline went down by the end of the experience together probably demonstrating that the participants realized that our exercise during the preaching module was much more intensive than they had been practicing before the academy. Again, the study would view this negative movement as a positive directional move for transformational leadership. The same goes for question 22, which asked the participants about spending time with unchurched or lost people. This question also showed a move in the negative direction. The perception may have been that after they received instruction about practical, relational evangelism and heard testimonies from other pastors who actually do build

relationships with people outside the walls of the church on a regular basis, their evaluation of their own effectiveness in evangelism was rated more conservatively. If this assumption is true, the negative score could be viewed as a positive for the project.

The overall change score, even with these several negative numbers, was extremely high at 0.49, about half of a point increase over the original taking of the test. The pretest average of 3.85 showed that most of the participants came into the program with a greater than average agreement on most of the questions. The 4.35 posttest average is extremely significant because by the conclusion of the last module, the attitudes, confidence levels, and practical skills of the participants had increased dramatically.

#### **Statistical Change<sup>4</sup>**

The standard deviation of the pretest demonstrates a range of answers between 3.68 and 4.02. The standard deviation of the posttest demonstrates a range of answers between 4.19 and 4.51. The fact that these ranges do not overlap is statistically significant. The number ranges demonstrate that most pastors would show an increase of somewhere between 0.17 and 0.83. A z-test hypothesis was conducted to test the claim that the posttest average would be equal to the pretest average. The z-test results show that the critical value,  $z = 2.18$ , was greater than the one-tail critical value ( $z_0$ ) of 1.96. Thus, the null hypothesis ( $\mu_2 - \mu_1 = 0$ , or the difference between the pretest and posttest averages is zero) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis ( $\mu_2 - \mu_1 > 0$ , or the posttest average is higher than the pretest) is accepted. The results of the z-test ( $\alpha = .05$ ) demonstrate a confidence level of greater than 95 percent but less than 97 percent certainty that a similar group of pastors would experience growth in transformational leadership if given the same kind of training or equipping through an academy similar to

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix L for a glossary of statistical terminology.

the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership. The statistics demonstrate that the findings were not simply a matter of chance but the result of the yearlong transformational experience; thus, the objective research seems to indicate that the project was a success.

### **Observations from the Evaluations**

Each participant filled out a series of evaluations. My goal in asking these evaluative questions was to attempt to understand the impact of the Wellspring experience from the point of view of the participants. The evaluations assumed that the participants would be free with their opinions, observations, and suggestions.

After reading the evaluations, several significant patterns emerged. First, all twelve participants summarized their experience in the academy as extremely positive, using descriptions such as “inspirational” and “encouraging.” Half of the group applauded the design of the experience for its practical nature saying that the academy was exactly the kind of continuing education they needed at their current juncture of ministry. All twelve made reference to things they had learned that they did not know before their time in the Wellspring Academy, and though each evaluation talked about different matters of significance, the group as a whole believed that their understanding of ministry and leadership had grown as a result. Three mentioned that they had not considered themselves “leaders” before this year of study, but now they understood that God had indeed gifted them for leadership. Four of them said that they were satisfied with their ministry as chaplains to their congregations until they understood the scriptural mandate for pastoral leaders to be equippers of their people. Three others mentioned that the equipping model was not new information to them, but the reminder of this standard

was the catalyst to a fresh outlook for doing ministry.

Second, the participants seemed to receive different value from the parts of the academy. I asked them which of the nine modules was the most helpful to them. Interestingly, the answers were as varied as the curriculum. Not one of the modules received more than two votes, with at least one participant choosing each of the nine modules as the one that was most helpful to them. The same was true for the least helpful module question. At least one participant evaluated each of the modules as the least helpful. I also asked them about the resource material used as the curricula for the modules. Again, no consensus could be found regarding the best monthly resource. At least one participant thought that each of the books (or sermon resources in the February module) resonated best for his/her ministry. This trend speaks to breadth and depth of the academy experience, that many different kinds of learning options offered a smorgasbord effect (something for everyone), confirming my hunch that all participants would come to the experience with a variety of needs that could only be met by the broad range of material.

Third, the evaluations demonstrated 100 percent agreement in the effectiveness of the coaching and mentoring styles of the experience. Without exception, each of the participants expressed appreciation for their personal relationship with the director. I was surprised at the impact of my visits to their churches, my conversations on the telephone with them, and, as five of them mentioned, my devotionals at the beginning of each module session. All twelve wrote of the encouragement they received from my words of affirmation to them, my vulnerability before them during the teaching on leadership, and my personal concern for each of them. One participant wrote the following:

I have appreciated Branson's leadership in my life this year. He was available to me whenever I needed him. He was personable and genuinely interested in me and my church. I felt that he always had my best interests in mind.

The recurring theme was affirmation. Participants thought that, at least in some way, their ministry gifts or their styles of leadership were affirmed as they spent personal time with me. Half of them mentioned that I was a role model to them, stressing that they admired my consistency, passion, leadership, and love for ministry.

One final finding from the evaluations was that many of the participants came into the program with a sense of loneliness and isolation but went away from the experience determined that they were no longer going to do ministry alone. The camaraderie aspect was mentioned by eleven out of the twelve participants as one of the most positive things they would take away from the Wellspring experience. As a whole, the participants enjoyed their time together. Lunches were not only times for eating food but also for enjoying fellowship and building relationships with other pastoral leaders (that they may never had gotten to know without being a part of this group of twelve). Half of the evaluations stated that the program could be improved with *more time together* as a group. All twelve seemed to understand how important this fellowship and relational nurture would be to the continued success of leadership in their lives; in fact, the belief that small church pastors need one another was mentioned by nine of the twelve. I noticed a difference at our annual conference when we met together as a group. Though we had just completed our final session less than a month before, the group acted as if the gathering were a reunion. I have also observed many of the participants spending time together at other conference events. I would say that the Wellspring experience continues.

### **The 16PF Profile**

Each of the participants was given a personality test called The 16 Personality Factors Test. This test was administered between the October and November modules. Each pastor then had a telephone visit with me in January to go over the results and analyze them with regard to their Christian leadership potential.

The 16PF is unique among diagnostic instruments because it assumes its subjects to be average or balanced. Scores between 4 and 7 show similarity to most other people. Only scores above 7 or below 4 prove to be useful to the designers of the test for analysis. Therefore, for the purposes of studying giftedness for Christian leadership, the assumption was that scores of 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, and 10 were areas of God-given uniqueness.

The total group analysis revealed that the twelve participants were actually quite dissimilar. Some of them were extraverts and some were introverts. Several tested conservative while others tested radical. Several pastors had strengths that made them appear to be leaders that loved to be in the forefront (bold and self-sufficient), while other participants seemed to prefer a more cognitive and methodical approach to leadership (detached and abstract intelligence). Interestingly, these personality factors, when averaged together to get a group score, display that the class of 2003-04 combined 16PF was absolutely average and balanced. My conclusion from these findings was that the personality scores made no difference in the ability of the participant to learn and develop as a leader. I saw no one single identifiable factor that could be classified as one that corresponds to a "leadership gene." About the only thing that could be gleaned from the group score was that the participants in this study were a little better than average in abstract intelligence, a little more bold than most, a little more self-sufficient, and a little

on the tense side (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1. Combined Results of the 16 PF Testing**

NAME	STEN ->	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A	Detached					X						Emotionally warm
B	Low abstract Intelligence							X				High abstract Intelligence
C	Easily hurt					X						Emotionally stable
E	Submissive					X						Dominant
F	Sober						X					Impulsive
G	Expedient						X					Principled
H	Threat sensitive							X				Bold
I	Tough-minded						X					Tender-minded
L	Trusting						X					Suspicious
M	Practical					X						Imaginative
N	Straightforward						X					Diplomatic (Shrewd)
O	Self-assured						X					Insecure (Guilt-prone)
Q1	Conservative					X						Radical
Q2	Group-dependent							X				Self-sufficient
Q3	Undisciplined					X						Self-disciplined
Q4	Unfrustrated							X				Tense
<b>PERCENTILE-&gt;</b>		<b>99%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>			<b>85%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>99%</b>		

The real impact of the 16PF testing could be seen in the influence the interpretation of the tests had on the individual pastors in this study. Without exception, participants were encouraged by what the results implied about their gifting. I conducted an hour interview with each participant over the phone as both of us looked at the scores on the 16PF. Many of the participants approached the interview with a bit of reluctance and intrepidation but finished it with a sense of empowerment. My main objective in interpreting the test for them was to demonstrate how God had gifted them for ministry and leadership. I was clear about my intentions from the outset that the purpose of the

interview was to encourage them. The comments from the evaluations and the work completed on the Life Ministry Plans will testify to the success of this objective.

Commentary ranged from self-discovery, "I have never considered myself a leader until now," to empowerment, "I have always known that I am a visionary leader, but Wellspring gave me permission to be myself. I now have the direction to use my gifts more effectively." The power of the personality test on the individual participants cannot be underestimated. One participant wrote this comment:

I have learned some valuable insights about myself as a leader. I am a leader who needs and expects a team to support and share the ministry with me. No wonder I thrived when I worked in a staff situation. If I am going to serve again in the position of senior pastor, I must equip people to shoulder the responsibility of ministry with me.

Another participant was totally surprised that the 16PF listed her leadership mix as "resembling that of a church planter." She had not recognized her entrepreneurial gifting, but after the interview, she reflected that her whole career in the business world prior to entering ordained ministry had been that of a creator and developer of new ideas. She now saw herself as a potential candidate for planting a new congregation in our conference.

The affirmation of leadership style was also a significant component of the process. One participant wrote this sentence:

Wellspring affirmed my style of leadership. I am a change agent, and now I see it as all right. I have always been almost guilty when I have proposed changes and new ideas. When any opposition arose or my ideas were not well received, I considered that the problem resided with me. My thinking was absolutely off base. I am an incurable entrepreneurial leader who cannot tolerate for the Church of Jesus Christ to settle for mediocrity. No longer will I feel bad for being me.

Another participant wrote these words:



I have been in leadership positions all of my life. Several rough experiences had caused me to doubt my abilities. Wellspring has given me a new outlook on the man God created me to be. I am a leader, and leaders will encounter opposition, especially when they are trying to live in obedience to the will of God and are encountering people whose god is "self." I am more than encouraged now to keep plowing in the field where I been assigned.

Yet another participant disclosed that he may have abandoned his previous appointment prematurely. Some of the leaders at this former appointment were slow to embrace some of the changes in the congregation's life under his leadership, and they had attacked him personally. He told me that he had since reflected on his time there and realized that he had led that congregation well, right along with his gifting as a no-nonsense, practical, and self-assured leader. The congregation was changing from a club to church, and they were reaching many new people. What was needed on his part was not a change in leadership style but more prayer, increased patience and wisdom, and "thicker skin."

### **Summary from the Long-Range Plans**

The greatest and most lasting impact of the project may well lie in the implementation of the long-range plans developed by the participants and their church councils. One of the graduation requirements of the academy, the long-range plans were submitted to me by 1 September 2004. I was pleased to discover that the details presented in the plans seemed to track with the teaching modules and the points of emphasis the participants had studied throughout the year.

First, eight out of the twelve established something they called a "dream team," a concept they had learned in the two modules on change. Each team was made up of key leaders interested in investing time brainstorming and praying about the future of the

church so that they could report back to their respective church councils for approval of plans and/or further discussion.

Second, half of the participants turned in plans that included initiating the “40 Days of Purpose,” a spiritual life program designed by Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, CA. Module eight, which focused on purpose, had featured Warren’s book, The Purpose Driven Life and had touted the benefits of a church-wide campaign where members of the congregation would read and study the same material for an intensive period. The idea of a spiritual life campaign was also shown to be transferable to any size congregation, so churches of small membership such as those associated with the Wellspring Academy could benefit as much as larger churches. The hopes and dreams of the churches planning to do the 40 Days event included starting and continuing small group ministries, developing the framework for gift-based ministry where the pastoral leader is recognized as “the equipper of the saints,” and becoming serious about the nature and mission of the church as the “body of Christ” sent out to “make disciples of all nations.”<sup>5</sup>

Third, all of the long-range plans had some form of evangelism strategy. Apparently most of their people already realized that the Church is supposed to make disciples, but the plan provided the opportunity to implement concrete steps toward action. Several participants shared that Hamilton’s book used in module seven had given them many good ideas to introduce to their people.

Fourth, seven of the twelve wrote something about preaching into the long-range plan. Five planned to preach at least one sermon series in the coming year in an attempt

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<sup>5</sup> As of 2 February 2005, all six of those churches have planned or completed the 40 Days of Purpose Campaign. Each pastor in the program brought a team of leaders to Bailey UMC for a training session on how to do a spiritual life campaign in a small membership local church.

to bring freshness and variety to their lectionary preaching. Two participants, for instance, planned a series from the book of Nehemiah on leadership principles. Another said that he had designed a series highlighting different characters from the Bible and that he planned to preach using a first person dramatic presentation (an idea that he had gotten from one of the sample sermons the academy had provided him in module six).

Fifth, every long-range plan listed some emphasis on the spiritual formation of the congregation. Several congregations listed their plans to form small accountability groups, start new Bible studies and Sunday school classes, or hold spiritual or leadership retreats. Several of the participants mentioned to me that their personal devotional lives had been strengthened because of the resource material and teaching on spiritual formation in module four; thus, they felt compelled to help their own congregations learn some of the things that had benefited them. One congregation even planned a study of Sanders' book Spiritual Leadership.

### **The Success of the Wellspring Academy as a Continuing Education Program**

The goal of the Wellspring Academy from the beginning was to develop a continuing education experience that would begin to make an eternal difference in the lives of pastoral leaders and their churches. I was gratified that each of the twelve participants gave evidence that the experience had benefited them. From the evaluations and my field worker's notes, I found four major reasons why the participants believed that the academy was worth the investment of time and money, both to them and to the annual conference.

First, the training was markedly different from other Christian education experiences. Instead of being modeled in the typical fashion of Christian education

(lecture style, sitting in a classroom, and taking notes from an “expert”), the academy featured experienced practitioners of ministry sharing practical resources and principles that had worked for them in their local churches. Most of the men and women in this group shared their appreciation for their seminary experience but also admitted the limitations of such education to prepare them for leading a congregation. More than one of the participants admitted that no professor had ever prepared them for the difficulties and dangers associated with being a pastor, especially the unique challenges of leading a small membership local church. Thus, the practical nature of the academy resonated with many of them. One participant remarked in the evaluation:

This model of learning seemed to me to be more biblical, more effective, and the way leadership should be taught. The format provides learning over time with the challenge to read, write, listen, and process the material. You pay attention because you are expected to go home and implement what you have been learning.

Second, each of the participants pointed to the modeling component of the academy as extremely significant for them. Participants explained to me that my vulnerability in front of them as a group of leaders and the care I demonstrated with them personally brought them great encouragement as they sought to improve their leadership skills. The fact that I was a pastor, in a small town, leading two churches, preaching every Sunday, and still encountering roadblocks and rebellious people after many years of serving in the same place were very important factors in the success of the academy.

More than a few echoed this one participant’s words:

If you [the director] are still dealing with difficult people and sinful attitudes in your Christian leadership after all of your years here in Bailey, then I should not be surprised that I am going through such things where I am appointed. I need to pray more, be clearer as I cast a vision for my church, and not be so naïve.

Most of the participants told me that they felt greatly encouraged every time they attended a module.

The participants also recognized my individual coaching as a significant part of the modeling of leadership. While I really pushed them individually to hone their leadership skills, I never encouraged them to mirror my leadership style but to develop their own God-given abilities and strengths. Knowing that a “cookie-cutter” approach to leadership had not been attractive to me personally, I spent time with each participant, focusing on their gifts, their local churches, and their opportunities to glorify God through their leadership where they had been appointed to serve.

A third significant component of the academy experience was the biblical teaching on the nature of the church and the role of pastor. Each of the participants had served as a pastor for a number of years, but the universal message from the group was that a disconnect existed between what the Bible taught about the body of Christ and what they experienced in their local churches. The academy presented a picture of what the church is supposed to be—not a club, not a religious organization, not political quagmire but the body of Christ where Christians, under the leadership of its head, Jesus Christ, function together to win the world. Christians are to be in the business of making disciples, not doing fund-raisers or taking care of buildings or worrying about the special interests of certain families in the congregation. As one of the participants wrote, “It’s not like I didn’t know this stuff. In fact, I did understand how the church was supposed to function, but I needed you [the director] to reinforce this biblical model and remind me again of the kind of church that all of us are striving to produce.” The biblical role of pastor was a harder sell. On the first set of evaluations, three of the participants spoke

openly of their disagreement with Patton on his insistence that Paul's model of ministry in Ephesians 4 was the model for pastoral leadership in the New Testament. Interestingly, by the end of the academy, all three of those participants had changed their minds, now agreeing with Patton, just not liking his bold and brash style. I believe that this change in mind-set can be seen in the score of question ten on the pretest/posttest, where participants seemed to register a significant value to shepherding style of ministry at first but saw their leadership role as more of an equipper by the end of the academy. Half of the participants mentioned modules one and two as formative in their new and improved understanding of church and pastor as leader/equiper. One pastor described his growth over the year:

The Peterson book got me thinking, but then Patton's session was outrageous enough to knock me out of my comfort zone. I began to see the possibilities for my small church if I would put my ego on hold and aim for God's vision for his Church. I must stop trying to be all things to all people and become a different kind of leader—an equipper.

A final significant component of the academy experience was collegiality. Many of the participants admitted at the beginning that they did not participate in an accountability group either because of time or distance concerns. Later, many of them confessed that the real reason had been a perceived sense of "discommonality" with other pastors. As participants spent time together during the year, visiting around tables, sharing sermons, e-mailing back and forth, and sharing personal stories of ministry in small places in eastern North Carolina, a wonderful change happened. The sense of isolation and disconnectedness faded away. Several of the participants said something similar to the words of this one pastor:

I have been so encouraged to be with other pastors of small membership churches who care about their churches and yearn to see them be more

than family chapels with a hired chaplain. I thought that I must be the only pastor like me out there, but through Wellspring, I realize that I am part of an army of pastoral leaders who are praying that God move in new and powerful ways in rural areas.

### **Summary of Significant Findings**

1. Significant, positive changes were observed in the group of Wellspring participants as a whole from the beginning of the academy to the program's conclusion. The transformation seemed to take place over time through a variety of learning experiences and styles of presentations with the central focus of understanding the role of pastor as leader in God's economy.

2. The participants responded very positively to the role of the director as a coach or mentor. The main reasons seemed to be (1) that I was viewed as a credible leadership resource because I am a practitioner who has served for more than a decade in the same place and am still the pastor of small membership local church and (2) that I am an excellent encourager, demonstrating compassion and understanding as well as wisdom.

3. The identification of God-given leadership abilities including personality factors and spiritual gifts and the subsequent self-knowledge that resulted from this identification was a significant turning point in the lives and ministries of the participants. Since no single personality factor or spiritual gift could be identified as a prerequisite for Christian leadership, participants were challenged to be themselves.

4. The long-range plan proved to be a vital tool for the leaders in the academy providing them a platform to reshape the nature and mission of their local churches. As a result, transformational changes were documented in writing and set in motion.

5. Participants in the academy demonstrated a dramatic shift in thinking about the role of a pastor. A mental and emotional metamorphosis took place over the year where

the value of “doing” ministry for people changed to the value of equipping people for ministry.

6. The components of the Wellspring Academy that seemed to bring the most transformation were four: the time spent with the director, the consistent focus in each module on the true biblical nature and mission of the Church and the role of pastoral leaders, the honing of individual leadership and gift mixes, and the role of community in developing leaders.

In the following chapter, observations, implications, applications, and limitations of these findings are explored in greater detail.



## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This project began as an attempt to answer the question posed to me by Bishop Edwards several years ago now: Are there leadership principles that are teachable and transferable that can help pastors be transformed in their pastoral leadership to help change the ineffectiveness of many local churches, especially those of smaller membership? The Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership answered this question with a resounding “yes.” The kind of experience, designed to bring about transformational change in a group of a dozen small membership pastors in eastern North Carolina United Methodists, may well present the principles needed to develop effective and practical training of pastoral leaders in every context.

The problem presented as unique to my corner of the world is really a problem in many of the churches of North America. If transformational principles could be discovered that could indeed be transferable to churches and pastors in other conferences within the United Methodist Church and even to other denominations, leadership training in seminaries, large group training sessions, and other “one-size-fits-all” methods might need to change for the good of the church. The conclusions that follow assert that leadership to help the Church move past the stagnant status quo to transformation that brings life was discovered in this educational experience.

#### **A Transformational Experience**

The positive changes observed in the group of Wellspring participants supported my original premise that transformational leadership is developed not taught. The project design of the academy as a continuing education experience took a variety of elements

thought to be important in my own transformational learning and applied them to the group: the model of a teaching church and its senior leader, the wisdom of leader practitioners, the identification of leadership gifts, the addition of “cutting edge” resources to study, an opportunity for role modeling and coaching, and the time to process leadership under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The academy brochure advertised the experience as intensely practical, featuring ideas and applications that any pastor could take home and use. The study demonstrated that considerable growth took place as this group of pastors spent the year learning together. Many of them recognized the uniqueness of the continuing education style, that the academy was not like a theological seminary or the typical Christian education class but more like a crucible where change in attitudes, thinking, and skills were tested and developed.

Since no single module, presenter, or resource could be identified as the determining factor for the leadership growth in the majority of group members, the increase in the overall score of the pretest/posttest results points to the importance of the overall experience of the training event. Transformation took place in the participants as they were treated to a climate for leadership development. The academy made room for individualized learning, on-the-job training with personal application, the encouragement of peers and mentors to craft a totally different kind of learning experience. What most pastors were used to—a “cookie-cutter,” “one-size-fits-all” class, where all participants are assumed to be the same—was scrapped for a model where participants were viewed as unique and valuable to God as leaders.

The literature review yielded solid advice toward this end. Avolio and Bass point out that transactional leadership cannot help but treat all members of an organization the

same. They agree that transformational leadership was superior in almost every discipline studied, for it appreciates teamwork with individual players giving their best.

Transformational leadership rewards creativity (5). Leadership development in the New Testament seemed to utilize the pattern of pairing passionate and gifted potential leaders with experienced Christian men and women who encouraged and offered practical training that could be applied as it was being learned (Ortberg, “Why Jesus”; Hybels, “Courageous Leadership”; Comiskey 16). Stott (178) and Longenecker (378) make the argument that the apostle Paul’s leadership developed in a similar fashion as he learned side by side with Barnabas. Martoia’s summation that leadership “leaks” describes what I believe happened through the experience of the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership. A leadership culture was manufactured, an ethos “which directly impacted the flavor, feel and health of other leaders” (Morph! 11).

The model of being transformed into the image of Christ does not happen overnight, nor does Christian leadership happen by way of a crisis event. For a change to take place in the thinking, attitudes, and practices of pastoral leaders, a leadership culture must be created—a place where principles can be taught and demonstrated at the same time. The statistics of the research seem to indicate that growth took place in several areas with considerable changes in leadership competence and confidence. The change experienced in the participants from the beginning to the conclusion of the yearlong event was striking, pointing to the fact that not only were practical skills and knowledge acquired but leadership courage and passion were developed, as well. Many of the participants transformed from managers to leaders.

The findings also demonstrate that leadership is an ongoing process.

Transformational leaders must receive a constant and healthy diet of inspiration and teaching so that they might continue to grow in their leadership development to become the most effective leaders possible for the furtherance of God's kingdom.

### **The Role of Mentor**

The results of the study reveal a positive response to the role of the director as a coach or mentor. The two reasons stated in the summary of the findings were important to the success of the academy. The participants trusted me as credible resource for their leadership development because I was a successful long-term pastor of a small membership local church. They also viewed me as skilled in the art of encouragement and able to share practical wisdom from personal experience. I must admit that I had thought that this factor would be important to the learning process, but the extent of the impact of this personal involvement far surpassed my expectations.

The importance of this factor cannot be understated. Pastors are supposed to be vision casters, preachers of God's Word, and spiritual directors to hundreds of people in their congregations, but most of the time, they have to navigate these difficult tasks by themselves, without the benefit of role models. Sometimes peer accountability can fill the void of having respected leaders to emulate, but finding another pastor who has experienced the battles of Christian leadership is more valuable than gold. In the literature review, Barnabas was lifted up as an example of mentor or coach to Paul. Barnabas's constant encouragement, coupled with his practical demonstration of leadership was certainly one of the components that helped to develop Paul into the great leader he became (see especially Acts 9:27 and 11:25-26).

McNeal emphasizes role that leaders play in the lives of other leaders. Their

authenticity inspires and motivates others to develop their own leadership style (90). Sanders (Spiritual Leadership 28) and Peterson (Under the Unpredictable Plant 5) both underscore the importance of leaders demonstrating the examples of faithfulness and holiness. Slaughter (Unlearning Church 40) and Hybels (“Sharpening Your Sixth Sense” 84) both endorse leadership that is obedient to the calling of Christ and relevant to the cultural context.

I believe that part of the genius of the academy was that I was not stationed in the conference office or viewed as a bureaucrat who was relying on past history. My ministry was current: I was leading my people, preaching every Sunday, and praying over a congregation just like all of the academy participants. I was also not the pastor of the typical teaching church with thousands of members. I was serving a two-point circuit with the struggles common to all other small membership local church pastors. When I shared a leadership story, positive or negative, these pastors could relate. The success of this role modeling aspect of the academy should be reason enough to guarantee that attempts at developing transformational leaders be centered in the context of a local congregation. This assumption would seem to be even more pertinent for the development of leaders of small membership churches.

The encouragement factor is also something that should not come as a surprise. Leadership in any forum is hard. Leading a congregation of people to be the body of Christ, love one another, reach out to the world, and make disciples is considerably more difficult. The idea of a coach, a personal cheerleader full of encouragement and good ideas, should be the standard for leadership training for all pastors. I suppose that the district superintendent in the United Methodist system is the person who should be filling

this role. Unfortunately, besides being responsible for fifty to seventy-five pastors, many superintendents seem very busy with other business besides leadership development in the pastors they supervise. This deficiency also contributes to the fact that many superintendents do not know their pastors very well and are not sure of their gifts for ministry or where these men and women could best serve.

### **Leadership Self-Knowledge**

Another major part of the transformational process was the identification of God-given leadership abilities, spiritual gifts, and personality factors. The subsequent self-knowledge that resulted from this identification proved invaluable for the participants. Since no single personality factor or spiritual gift could be identified as a prerequisite for Christian leadership, participants were challenged to develop their own God-given personality, gifts, and abilities to glorify God.

I originally assumed that the research would demonstrate that this group of pastors shared a commonality in personality factors and leadership gifting. My assumption proved to be false. In fact, no single personality factor could be identified as more crucial than another. What was surprising to me was the impact of the interpretation of the 16PF test in the lives and ministries of the participants. Most of them had some idea of how God had “wired them,” but when the interpretation revealed their personality matrix, the participants expressed a sense of validation. I later discovered that most of the participants had gone into the 16PF evaluation with great dread, but because I was gentle and affirming with my reporting of the results, only stating personality factors as fact (God made you this way) as opposed to judgment (Why do you act this way?), the interview was remembered as a turning point in the academy year for them. They wanted

to use this newfound information as a springboard for their leadership in the future.

This study bears out the fact that God creates people with all kinds of unique gifts and abilities. Similarly, no one should assume that a standard set of leadership gifts exists for pastors of churches. The key to unleashing leadership is the discovery of the unique mix of talents, abilities, and personality traits that make the person who God created them to be. Martoia expresses my point exactly:

Leadership and vision are mediated through a personality—through an individual—and God takes into consideration that individual's strengths, weaknesses, outlook, disposition and context. My point is that vision comes through a person.... [P]eople will follow a person before they follow a vision. (Morph! 117)

In Chapter 2, I presented two pieces of information that would seem to support this theory. First, transformational leaders are anxious to develop the people around them. Often they themselves were mentored as they developed their own style of leadership and their particular abilities and skills; thus, they are anxious to come alongside others and encourage potential leaders to use their strengths to add to the success of the organization. Duckett and Macfarlane highlight the customized nature of transformational leadership where leaders are encouraged to develop their personal style that accentuates their abilities (311).

Second, I presented a portrait of transformational Christian leadership. Before I even attempted any research, I tried to envision the kind of pastoral leader this project would seek to produce. Interestingly, the four models I discovered from my literature review all recognized the value of individualized leadership development and an entrepreneurial spirit. Paterson's assertion that a growing knowledge of the ways of God coupled with a growing knowledge of how God creatively and lovingly shapes people

produces transformation (37). These conclusions only serve to help 1 Corinthians 12:15 make more sense: “If the foot says, ‘I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,’ that does not make it any less a part of the body” (NLT).

The discovery of individual personality, spiritual gifts, and abilities is life changing, resulting in a sense of empowerment that has broad ramifications for pastoral leadership. First, when Christian leaders are sure of their God-given capabilities, they tend to lead more boldly and confidently. They are able to stand up to immature people in their congregations who are determined to force their self-interests on others. Clarity concerning the mission of the Church and the duty of the pastor, coupled with confidence about leadership gifting, allows the pastoral leader to guide the congregation toward kingdom values.

Second, an improved self-image about leadership gifting and style allows a pastoral leader to translate strengths and leadership abilities to superiors with clarity. Often superintendents and bishops have no idea of a pastor’s real gifting. All they know are matters of effectiveness based on numbers. Leadership self-knowledge gives a transformational leader the ability to interpret effectiveness based on giftedness and style.

Third, leadership self-knowledge is a first step toward true team ministry and eventual long-term effectiveness. Pastors who are using personality and abilities to lead, utilizing strengths and gifts, will not want to move to another church and start all over again. Likewise, pastors who are investing themselves fully in ministry, using their gifts and strengths, while at the same time helping others use their spiritual gifts, will enjoy considerable satisfaction and success. Ministry “generalists” become less and less necessary the longer a pastor remains in an appointment.



### **Long-Range Planning**

Another vital tool for the leaders in the academy was the long-range plan. The planning process provided them a platform to reshape the nature and mission of their local churches so that transformational changes could be accomplished. Though planning alone will never make a church effective by itself, the results of this study showed clearly that my assumption about leadership and long-range planning proved to be correct: churches that pray about and plan for the future are likely to accomplish considerably more than churches that do not.

I had used the long-range planning process for years in Bailey. Each time our church leaders met for a planning retreat, the eventual results were major initiatives. Those retreats gave our leaders an opportunity to focus on the scriptural mandates of the Church's mission to the world and to evaluate how we were doing in accomplishing them. The retreats proved to be periods set apart from the regular business of life and ministry where the leadership could take an objective look at the overall direction of the church. Our leaders began to get used to regular opportunities to dream and ask God about next steps.

Fueled with fresh teaching from the Wellspring Academy, a clear understanding of the Church's mission, and each member's role in fulfilling it, the participants experienced the same kind of transformational process as their church councils began to dream and plan for the future. The long-range plans submitted by the participants were outstanding documents that all centered on purpose, mission, outreach, and worship rather than on the maintenance issues. I was excited that the plans were so clearly missional because in my literature review, Callahan states that mission and success are

inextricably connected (Twelve Keys xxi). Guder et al. agree that a clear purpose transforms leadership plans from the status quo to the transformational (110-11).

I believe that the process gave the participants a chance to hold a forum on the nature and mission of the Church and how their local context was fulfilling the Great Commission. Since the academy teaching had focused so heavily on the purpose of the Church, participants helped their congregations write plans that were full of clear goals and achievable objectives. Since these leaders had an excellent background in what the Church was suppose to be doing: seeking more excellent worship, adding more effective means of meeting new people in the community so they might become disciples, and planning activities centering on fellowship to deepen the congregation's spiritual health, The plans demonstrated an excellent pattern for a future of effective ministry.

The findings point to the intrinsic connection between transformational leadership and the transforming of the local congregation. Simply put, without the encouragement of a transformational leader as pastor, most congregations will not be able to respond adequately to the commands of Jesus Christ in the New Testament to go into all the world and make disciples now or in the future. The monthly board meeting certainly does not afford most churches enough time to accomplish anything long lasting or dynamic. The encouragement to get away, be set apart, dream about the possibilities, and look beyond next Sunday can only come from the challenge of a confident transformational, spiritual leader.

The study also showed that ministry in teams of people is more effective at moving a congregation toward being the Church in their local context. A pastor can preach and teach the vision, but until the leadership invests the time and energy into a

process of visioning, dreaming and designing plans to accomplish what God has asked, no transformation will be possible. The best context for this planning occurs when mature leaders, who love Christ and their local churches, ask the hard questions about mission in designing new ministries or in evaluating old ones. The sheer creativity of the long-range plans presented at the conclusion of the academy gave me great hope for the possibilities of what could happen in those small churches.

### **The Pastor as Equipper**

One of the findings of the study was a noticeable shift in the thinking of the participants with regard to their role as pastor. Participants seemed to experience a kind of metamorphosis over the course of the year where the value of “doing” ministry was exchanged for the value of equipping people for ministry. Of the nine modules, at least six of them, in some limited fashion, challenged the participants toward an intuitive change in perception about ministry from “lone ranger” to “team facilitator” of ministry. Some participants redesigned their church councils so they could begin new ways of training and empowering leaders. Other participants were convinced more slowly, but the academy experience was quite convincing that effective, transformational ministry must be done differently—both for pastoral leaders trained in seminary to serve the needs of all the members and for the members of the congregation who usually expect ministry to be done for them by seminary-trained pastors.

Pointing back to the literature review, the book of Acts highlights team ministry in the New Testament Church (e.g., Acts 9; 11; 13). Very little ministry was attempted without the simultaneous training of future leaders. Even the decisions that were made on behalf of the Church were made with the help of groups of leaders lending their wisdom

to ensure that every angle was considered (Acts 15). When believers understand that the Holy Spirit has gifted many different kinds of people to govern and serve the Church, equipping the saints for ministry becomes a natural process.

My literature review discovered several authors (Banks and Stevens; Towns and Porter) promoting the idea that equipping was the New Testament pattern for training Christian leaders; therefore, I was pleased with the results of the project findings, for they seemed to indicate the participants benefited from the practice of being encouraged and built up as a part of the learning process (Towns and Porter 140).

First, many of the participants finished the year with a sense of empowerment. Several participants expressed that they entered the year feeling overwhelmed with the daunting task of winning the world for Jesus but finished it with a new feeling that their churches could indeed change the culture around them. Somehow the academy granted the participants the permission to share the ministry with the whole congregation. The module presenters did an excellent job of describing successes in team ministry in small membership churches in which they had served. The teaching began to embolden the participants to change the culture of ministry in their churches to a more biblical model of ministry.

Second, the equipping model of ministry offered these pastors a greater opportunity to unleash the Holy Spirit's gifts in their local churches. For too long, the language of the "priesthood of all believers" has been spoken but not really practiced in most churches. As a rule, laypeople are either afforded leadership positions based on exceptional ability, or they are utilized because of an absence of "real" clergy leadership. When pastors become equippers for ministry, they begin to use the language of mutual

responsibility, leadership abilities, and shared ministry. Equipping is a truly transformational concept, demonstrating that the pastor has been changed from the traditional role as minister to the congregation and has moved to a more biblical and powerful model of team ministry with the members of the congregation serving beside their pastor.

### **The Most Noteworthy Elements of the Academy**

The Wellspring Academy as a continuing education event was a success in bringing transformation in the lives and ministries of the participants. The findings of the study seem to demonstrate that four important elements helped in the process: the time spent with the director, the consistent focus in each module on the true biblical nature and mission of the Church, the honing of individual leadership and gift mixes, and the role of community in the development of leaders.

### **Personal Time Spent with the Director**

The yearlong experience provided each pastor with an unlimited amount of time with the director. Some of the participants needed extra encouragement, and they sought me out frequently by telephone and by personal appointments. I also visited each of the participants on-site twice during the nine months to pray, discuss strategy for ministry, and build deeper relationships. The result of the extended time with the participants was that I had an influence on each and every member of the group. Though the influence was individualized with each participant, it was no less important. My position as director afforded me several major roles in the lives of the participants: permission giver, encourager, advisor, and trailblazer.

One of the major roles I played in the leadership development process was that of

permission giver. I served as the catalyst, spurring the participants to try new things, explore different practices of ministry, and lead their people where they had never gone before. Interestingly, my authority as the leadership expert in the position of director provided me the opportunity to push the participants to speak boldly, challenge the status quo, and take ministry risks.

Another function already mentioned is the role of encourager. The power of encouragement in the lives of these pastoral leaders cannot be calculated. I spent many hours with each of the participants assuring and reassuring them that they were on the right track, that they were gifted for leadership, and that they were valuable to God, the annual conference, and the future of the Church. I want to be clear at this point. The participants were already inclined toward leadership, but through my position and experience as the director of the academy, I became the impetus to help them discover themselves as the leaders God created them to be. The constant diet of encouragement was effective, impacting each of them in a way that would not have been possible without the experience of the academy. Paul admonishes the church at Thessalonica to “encourage one another and build each other up” (1 Thes. 5:11, NIV). My conclusion is that the encouragement of a mentor is one of the missing links in equipping transformational leaders in the Church today.

Besides the role of encourager, I also served as a trusted advisor. The group of participants as a whole was quite poor in peer relationships with other pastors. In fact, most of them confessed that they had no one with whom to test ministry theories, ask practical advice, or share prayer concerns. As the academy year developed, I began to fill the role of ministry advisor, the experienced older brother who had their best interests in

mind. Each of the participants called me to ask my advice on at least one aspect of their leadership before they attempted it at their church. Apparently, they trusted me with their ideas (that I would not crush their creativity) and their careers (that I would help them sort out implications and strategies). I am quite sure that many of the participants would never have attempted to lead in new directions without my counsel to help them lead effectively.

A final role I filled as director of the academy was that of trailblazer, the one who goes first, tries something, reports on it, and evaluates it for others who seek to follow in the same path. During the opening days of the doctor of ministry orientation at Asbury Seminary, I discovered that I was a “developer” (according to one of the diagnostic testing instruments used by the program). This description was a revelation to me at first, but it began to make sense as I spent time as the director of the academy. I was the guinea pig, the innovator, and the entrepreneur. As I shared what I had tried in my churches, participants began to envision and dream exciting possibilities for their churches. This mysterious connection began to occur as we spent time in the teaching modules together but became transformational as our personal relationships together developed. Many of the participants simply needed somebody to go first. After all, pastors are human. They do not want to fail or lead their churches poorly. The tendency for many pastors is to be tentative in leadership, but as I shared my experiences with enthusiasm, these pastors received a shot of courage to be entrepreneurial themselves. My hope is that our conference leadership will see the impact of these leaders years into the future.

One further comment must be made concerning this personal mentoring process. What I did with the participants during our times together was not “ground-breaking” or

“earth-shattering” in the least. All I did was to meet with them in their context of ministry, listen to their stories and personal experiences, and express my continuing connectedness as their friend and colleague in ministry. During our individual meetings during the year, we worked on our relationships and prayed together. In other words, nothing I did was that unusual, but the results of my mentoring were still very meaningful. The time spent with me seemed to change the leadership direction of each participant, pointing to the fact that this time spent together by itself plays a more important role in transformation than I ever would have believed if I had not experienced it firsthand. Though the extent of this finding was somewhat surprising, the literature review actually predicted this development. Neighbour describes the process of developing leaders as involving two key elements: spending of time together and cultivating the relationship (Shepherd’s Guidebook 48-49). This process seemed to draw out leadership potential and encourage them greatly.

### **The Biblical Nature and Mission of the Church**

All nine of the modules in the academy sought to present the true biblical nature and mission of the Church. The presenters were encouraged by the director to point to what the Bible says the body of Christ *is supposed to be*. My original assumption, that most pastors (and church members for that point) were not satisfied with the status quo—the religious club mentality of most congregations, the lack of urgency toward making disciples, and the chaplaincy model of pastoral leadership—proved to be true. My original quotes in Chapter 1 from Mead, Johnson and Willimon concerning the true nature of the Church of Jesus Christ and my assertion that “shopkeeping” was not the calling of any of the Church’s pastoral leaders (Peterson, Working the Angles 1) were the



underlying principles of the instruction at each module. I believe that the hammering home of these principles proved to be effective as we met together over the course of the year. The dissatisfaction level with “church as usual” increased every month when a new component of transformational leadership was presented.

I believe that my leadership bias was absolutely Wesleyan as I designed and taught each module. Three major theological assumptions served as the foundational teaching over the year as a whole.

First, the academy continued to emphasize the desperate nature of sin and humanity’s need for divine grace. Pastoral leaders must be prepared to reeducate their congregations on the nature of the Church as an assembly of men and women redeemed by Christ from the disease of sin and self, set free to minister together using their God-given spiritual gifts. Without this constant reminding, churches will quite naturally resemble religious clubs and be unable to make an impact in the world. The instruction during the modules on call, the small church, change, evangelism, purpose and continuing leadership prepared the participants with practical ways to help them lead their congregations to behave as decidedly Christian and to produce fruit to impact their communities.

Second, the academy continued to emphasize the nature of discipleship as turning away from self toward full obedience to Jesus Christ. Again, this theological premise should be basic Christian teaching in all local churches, but apparently the truth has either been ignored or forgotten since most congregations are still full of selfish people promoting their own agendas over those dictated by the gospel. I instructed each of the presenters to share openly about their obedience as Christians and as Christian leaders,

and I believe that this aspect of the modules was both therapeutic and revelatory for the participants. Some were struck that they had not led their people very well to be disciples who “take up their crosses,” while others understood that opposition to change or the stagnation toward death was more than geographical or based on the size of the church. Congregations that are determined to be the hope of the world will first have to focus on obedience to the Lord of the universe.

Third, the academy also continued to emphasize that eternal life is more than a future promise. The author of I John declares, “This is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. So whoever has God’s Son has life; whoever does not have his Son does not have life” (1 John 5:11-12, NLT). The academy presentations declared that congregations who do not believe that life begins with conversion or is not really possible on this earth would not appear to have life in them. Therefore, the emphasis during the spiritual formation module was on developing the spiritual lives of leaders so that they can, in turn, have a personal demonstration of real life to share with the members of their congregations. The preaching module emphasized the necessity of application as central to every sermon because the Word of God will not only affect the lives of individual believers but, quite necessarily, the whole congregation. The evangelism module taught that the Church has an obligation to share the life that we have been given by Christ with others.

The instruction about this biblical view of the church was incredibly transformational, challenging the participants to lead their congregations in a way that was quite different than what most of their people expected. Each month the participants heard the same mantra from me:

If you are not satisfied with the results you are getting, why would you continue to lead your congregations the same way? That's insanity. Most of your people do not have a correct understanding of the nature of the Church or real life in Christ. You must reeducate them. The reason that you are here today is that often many of us have forgotten the true nature of the church and our role in leading it. I am here to jog your memory and so that God can change your ministry forever!

### **The Development of Individualized Leadership**

As was stated in chapter 2, the most common style of leadership development and Christian education is the "one-size-fits-all" method (Egan 204; Bass and Avolio 3). The Wellspring Academy demonstrated clearly that a more personalized tract is far better. God made all people unique, with individualized fingerprints and sets of DNA. Thus, instruction in the area of leadership must take into account individual gifts and abilities. The academy attempted to provide a smorgasbord of different training styles and methods to produce the transformational effect in the whole group of participants who were all quite different from each other.

The research clearly showed that the academy teaching method worked and was appreciated by the entire group. Many of the participants had felt limited in their ability to lead, teach, operate as pastors, and still be creative. The academy gave the participants the opportunity for individualized instruction, encouragement, and leadership development. The results of the 16PF testing demonstrated that the academy group was made up of twelve very different individuals all sharing the potential to be very effective as pastoral leaders if their individual strengths and styles could be honed. My job as director then became to assist the participants to own what they had discovered and develop their personal gifting to its maximum benefit.

The Life Ministry Plan written by the participants revealed that the year of

individualized preparation was truly transformational. All twelve participants were able to demonstrate a marked change in their confidence, ability, and skills as pastoral leaders. This fact is particularly outstanding considering that the participants represented four different theological institutions, a wide range of life and ministry experiences, and a great variety of gifts and personality traits.

That individualized instruction was a cornerstone of the academy should not be surprising. Transformational Christian leaders must be coached and mentored to lead through their own God-given abilities and personalities. The more the instruction can be centered on giftedness and uniqueness, the more dynamic and transformational the impact will be (Perkins 46).

### **The Role of a Community of Leaders**

Finally, one of the major reasons that the Wellspring Academy was successful was the encouragement received from being a part of a group of leaders. Leadership by nature is a lonely business. Pastoral ministry, especially in rural and small settings, does not provide the peer encouragement of other Christian leaders for accountability, encouragement, and relationship. The academy provided all three of these vital functions during the year of training. Relationships were developed and sharpened as the participants shared personal stories regularly over the Internet, as they partnered with other participants for assignments (such as the swapping of sermons for evaluation), as they sat together and fellowshiped during the module teaching times and meals, and as they began to pray together and for each other.

As I reviewed the year in my mind, several things happened that built a leadership culture in the group. First, over the course of the year, almost all of the participants

shared a discouraging story from their ministry in their current appointment. The self-disclosure of struggle began to create an environment for honesty and truth that was not present before the academy began (and hardly ever exists between pastors of churches, even pastors in a so called “connectional system” such as the United Methodist Church).

Second, I modeled that we are all leaders in process. I shared pleasant and painful experiences as a regular part of the monthly teaching times. My hope was to demonstrate that even as the director of the academy, I had not arrived and still had the same challenges of leadership in my church as they were experiencing. One of the leadership principles echoed by Martoia is that the development of Christian maturity as well as the development of competent and inspirational Christian leaders is a never-ending process where the Holy Spirit continually reshapes and sharpens (Morph! 41).

Third, I referred to them as leaders, men and women who signed up for this continuing education event because they wanted the church to be so much more than just a religious institution. I pushed the group to help one another achieve their goals. By the end of year, the group had become a team, determined to stick together, and continue the friendships that had begun. At annual conference, the participants chose one of the four days to dress alike in their Wellspring Academy polo shirts to advertise the academy to other pastoral colleagues and to show the impact that the academy had had on them.

Fourth, the value of these relationships left permanent marks on the lives of the participants. All of them continue to contact me for advice. I would also say that each of these men and women would consider me a personal friend now. Many of them also realized that their academy experience had given them a new set of friends not to be discarded at the end of a year of continuing education or when a pastoral move from a

particular geographic location is warranted. At the very least, I believe that the academy gave the participants the courage to seek out other pastors of like mind and heart for their own “leadership” good. Maxwell (Developing the Leaders 87) and Patton (If It Could Happen Here 49) both agree that the seeking of such leadership relationships is invaluable.

### **Practical Implications**

The positive results of this research project demonstrate the great need in the Church for a different kind of training in leadership. Pastors are hungry to be both transformed and transformational for their people. Ministries such as the Wellspring Academy must be developed to promote pastoral leadership in keeping with the demands of the gospel and the integrity of the traditions of the Church of Jesus Christ. The dollar value of such continuing education cannot be measured in a year or even five (as I tried to produce). If confidence, attitudes, and practical ministry skills could be impacted so dramatically in one year, the assumption can certainly be made that constant encouragement in transformational leadership will bring even greater and more long-lasting results. At the very least, this academy must be continued with an ever-growing base of participants given the opportunity to experience the transformation this project demonstrated.

I also believe that this study demonstrated that leadership is developed over time. Leadership capital is earned as a pastor stays and invests in a local church. The original commitment of each candidate who applied for this academy was the promise to stay in the current context of ministry for at least five years. Unfortunately, the class of participants I studied only had a two-thirds success rate in staying even beyond June

2004. Two of the participants realized through the long-range planning process that transformation was not possible in the local church where they were currently serving, and so they asked to move to a church where their leadership gifts (now fully discovered) could be utilized to the fullest extent. The cabinet moved the other two participants against their will because their leadership gifts were “needed at a larger church.” The bishop and the cabinet will need to decide whether small churches are as important as larger ones. If so, allowing long tenures of transformational leadership may change some of those small churches into larger churches.

### **Weaknesses of the Study**

This study could have been strengthened by a longer period for observing both the participants’ leadership development and the congregational changes that resulted from the Wellspring training. Our new bishop asked me recently if the long-range plans were making a difference. I told him that the academy’s job was to create an environment where the conditions were ripe for change, and to that end, each of the churches’ venture into the long-range planning process had set them up to be able to make a difference. A larger evaluation period would provide the opportunity to track the changes observed in the congregations over time and see if small churches really can experience the turnaround they need to survive into the twenty-first century and beyond as biblically functioning bodies of Christ followers.

This study could also have been strengthened by a more careful selection process of resources to study as the primary texts of the modules. I allowed my presenters, in most cases, to choose the book or other resource that the group would study in preparation for their particular module. For the most part, I was pleased with their choices

of “cutting edge” material, but now, having completed the project, I see how much the participants were guided in their thinking and leadership implementation by the material that was selected. If I were starting the project today, I would have a more direct role in choosing the material to be studied.

### **Further Studies**

Many follow-up studies can be imagined to measure the effectiveness of the Wellspring Academy in comparison to other such studies with a different director, in a different setting, with different denominations, or in different parts of the country or world. A similar study might be conducted with pastors of medium and large churches. My assumption is that the context for ministry would still be very important—a teaching church. Such a study might open the possibility for a new way to train pastors that would lead to transformational leadership becoming more of the norm rather than the exception.

One of the unexpected findings of this study was the degree to which isolation and loneliness was a contributing factor to the ineffectiveness of pastors, especially pastors in smaller, more rural contexts. Conference leaders and other in supervisory roles should not overlook this finding and give careful attention to ways to overcome its crippling effect on the lives of pastors and churches.



## APPENDIX A

### **A Model for Creating Transformation**

When I was asked by Bishop Edwards to develop a plan for transferring leadership to other pastors, I initially had no idea how to do it, so I tried to think about the kind of experiences and people that had helped me in my leadership development journey. I came up with five major seasons in my life where transformation seemed to take place in me and my leadership abilities were cultivated.

#### **Student Council**

Shirley Simmons was known all across the state of North Carolina for her leadership in high school student councils. I had served as a member of the student council in junior high school and had enjoyed it, so I ran for the council again when I got to high school. I had no idea that first year that my life would be transformed by Mrs. Simmons' leadership and inspiration.

The state association of student councils had awarded its highest honor to our school's council for fifteen years in a row. I soon saw firsthand why Mrs. Simmons' councils were so outstanding. She always expected excellence, modeling it in her classroom as a teacher and insisting on it from her students and council members. In every assembly we planned, every service project we attempted, every council meeting we conducted, we were challenged to make it exceptional, better than the last one. The end of the year scrapbooks (the projects for the state associate of student councils) were always magnificent, a portrait of a great year of student-led activities that truly made our school a superior educational experience. We gave our very best for Mrs. Simmons, not because we were afraid of not winning honor council but because we wanted to live up to

her standards and make them our own.

She always expected big dreams. We were able to “pull off” projects that none of us had thought possible. We hosted the state convention at our school, a three-day, two-night event held over an entire weekend. We developed and managed a multi-thousand dollar service project to beautify our school campus. Both projects were almost entirely student directed. Mrs. Simmons was present, but she entrusted the responsibilities to her student council members. Challenges were fun, and the bigger the challenge the more fun she seemed to have attempting it.

She also expected future leaders to develop. She insisted that all members of the council go to student council camp and develop their skills as leaders. I remember not wanting to go (the weeklong camp was over five hours away and I did want to take a week off work), but she talked me in to it. Amazingly, some of the things I learned at that week at Mars Hill College I have used right up to this day as a local pastor, youth director, and even a leadership academy director.

Mrs. Simmons recognized leadership potential in me—something that I did not know was there. She asked me to run for vice president of the student body and then eventually for student body president as a senior. My service in those two positions helped prepare me for many more experiences of leadership in the future, besides the practical experience in public speaking, administration of meetings, creative development of programs and events, and people management skills that I received.

### **InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF)**

My college career was greatly enhanced by my participation in IVCF at Wake Forest University. When I attended the introductory meeting my first week on campus, I

had no idea how my faith and ministry would be shaped by my association with this organization and some of its people. The first two influencers were my freshman small group leaders, two sophomore girls named Holly and Carol who basically became my pastors during my first year. They gave me my first taste of digging into the Scriptures and applying them personally to my life. These girls were genuine Christians who lived what they taught the group. They also demonstrated a real concern for me. If I ever missed a small group meeting, one or the other of them would come by to check on me.

Near the end of my freshman year, Holly and Carol asked if we could eat lunch together. They asked me to pray about becoming a small group leader. I did not believe that I was gifted or mature enough to come anywhere close to being leaders for others as they had been to me, but they seemed convinced that I was ready to lead a freshman small group the following year. Interestingly, almost every person in their small group that year eventually became a small group leader at some point in their college career, and fifteen of us are now in full-time ministry.

Serving as a small group leader afforded me the opportunity to attend the weekly training meetings for leaders in InterVarsity and be exposed to another key influencer in my life—Rick Downs, the chapter's staff worker. Over the next three years, Rick would serve as a mentor for me. I was so impressed by him. He was also someone who was earthy and real, demonstrating a Christian life lived out with passion and joy. He made himself available to me for advice, counsel, and equipping as a leader. He remains a mentor in my life to this day.

InterVarsity was the experience where I was first exposed to Christianity as more than a Sunday religion. I remember meeting Paul in front of his book table with its huge

sign that read "Get Lit." This guy scared me at first talking about personal evangelism, but he exposed me to authors such as Becky Pippert and Paul Little and helped me learn how to share my faith with other students. A friend named Jeff was so passionate about missions that I begin to consider full-time ministry for the first time. He introduced me to concerts of prayer and the writings of David Bryant, Ralph Winter, and other missiologists. With his encouragement, I traveled to IVCF's Urbana Conference on missions one Christmas break. Rick Downs introduced me to books by J. I. Packer and John R. W. Stott. By my senior year, I was the president of the chapter and a major influencer on the campus for Christ. I was even selected by the college chaplain to preach during a weekly chapel service, something that had never happened before to a leader in IVCF.

### **The Third Floor of Larabee-Morris Residence Hall**

My first day at Asbury Theological Seminary was the loneliest day of my life. I did not know anyone and had driven ten hours to attend school in Wilmore. That first night the seniors on the hall called a meeting where the elder statesman on our third floor stood and shared that the Asbury experience would not be complete without the camaraderie and connectedness of being in a small prayer group. His speech convinced all of the new students on the hall, and we joined a group. I do not know how I would have survived that first year without this group of fellow students and their support and inspiration. One of them was from Taiwan, and I was awestruck as he shared testimonies of being shunned by his family back home because he had become a Christian and how God continually met his financial needs. Another hallmate became an accountability partner for me. We spent many hours together praying, confessing sin, and enjoying

God's gift of friendship. A United Methodist from Georgia who lived across the hall from me gave me my first exposure to any sort of charismatic Christianity, and he was kind and considerate to me as I asked questions. I remember sitting in his room one night as he explained how he learned to listen for God's voice in his prayer time. The "third floor" was an amazing learning experience for me that first year.

By the beginning of my middler year, I had somehow become the most senior member of the floor. I stood on the first night of the first semester and gave the same speech I had heard the year before. I became a mentor to many of the first year men on the hall, both spiritually and academically. Sometime during that year, I got the nickname "the leader of the pack," based partially on the fact that many of us ate all our meals together and I was always in the group, but also partly because they saw me as their leader. I led a prayer group on the hall, led a ministry team to another city each week for basic training soldiers, and became the president of the Christian Service League.

Most of those men are still my dearest friends. As I graduated, I passed my responsibility off to a group of them, and on the first night of the first semester, several of my friends stood in the hallway as seniors and gave the same speech about the Asbury experience. I passed the soldier ministry to another friend. Three of them have been my accountability group since we left Wilmore eighteen years ago. We have met on a regular basis for fellowship, prayer, and recreation twice monthly for fifteen of those years.

### **Teaching Churches and the Beeson Institute**

Over the years, I found that the most helpful continuing education training for me were events hosted by local churches. I have attended many events, one at Duke Divinity School, one at a hotel with a nationally known leader, but I always received the most

practical training from leaders who were also practicing what they were teaching. No matter what the subject, when the training was coupled with leadership from the staff of a teaching church, the experience brought an almost unlimited amount of “aha” moments for me. I have become an expert at taking what I learned and bringing it back to my local church and finding a way to implement it in my context.

Eventually, I stumbled across a brochure for the Beeson Institute through Asbury Seminary. I now have attended eight of the nine modules and have gleaned an abundance of knowledge and skill from them. These continuing education events offer plenary sessions with pastors who are proven leaders and many authors that I have read and come to respect. They offer practical training and time to process the material apart from the hectic everyday schedule of ministry. I have found that I learn best in a setting where I can apply the information, and so these Beeson modules have proven to be invaluable to my ministry. Several friends have traveled with me to these sites and have been colleagues with which to process the information and discuss ideas. This process of learning has been transformational for me.

### **My Association with Bishop Marion Edwards**

As I already mentioned, I did not realize that Bishop Edwards considered me a leader worthy of training other leaders until he asked me to lead the Wellspring Academy. My prior experience with leaders in the annual conference had led me to believe that most pastoral leaders (district superintendents for example) were only interested in maintaining the system, collecting apportionments, and filling vacant church positions. I discovered that Bishop Edwards was different. He yearned for real transformation to spread across the conference so that churches of all sizes would be

dynamic, achieving great things for God in their communities. He was truly concerned about small membership churches and was not afraid to promote long tenure for pastors to provide the leadership they needed to be effective.

For these three years, I have benefited from Marion Edwards' support and encouragement. We have traveled together promoting transformational ministry and leadership among the districts of the conference. He has been undaunted in his pursuit of creating a different atmosphere of ministry in our annual conference, seemingly unaffected by the critics that have billed Wellspring as just another conference program that will go away. I am proud to say that our new bishop Al Gwinn has now embraced Wellspring as a transformational agent that over time will change the whole spiritual temperature of the annual conference.

### **Summary**

My hunch is that the pattern of development that has been transformational for me will also be transformational for other pastors. I see four principles, common through these five experiences, that have helped make me the pastoral leader I am today:

1. Leaders inspire others to become leaders. The inspiration and encouragement that comes from watching other Christian leaders is invaluable to becoming a successful leader. Having someone to emulate is a natural form of Christian development;

2. Leadership is best learned in real life. Learning to lead is a process of discovering gifts and abilities as well as confidence and competence. Ministry becomes the incubator of information, and God is able to develop leadership to fit each situation and personality;

3. Leadership requires constant support and encouragement. Successful leaders of

ministry gain courage and confidence to take steps of faith with the encouragement of peers and the help of those who are already practicing leadership in their ministry; and,

4. God is still in the business of shaping leaders. Transformation does not happen very often without men and women open to the reshaping by the Holy Spirit so they can be utilized effectively to accomplish God's will.



APPENDIX B

Brochure and Application for the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership

*the*  
***Wellspring***  
***Academy***  
*for Christian Leadership*  
2003-2004

*“I consider my life worth  
nothing to me, if only  
I may finish the race  
and complete the task the  
Lord Jesus has given me.”  
Acts 20:24*

*the*  
*Wellspring*  
*Academy*  
*for Christian Leadership*

P.O. Box 218  
Bailey, NC 27807  
Ph. (252) 235-4576  
Web site: [www.baileyumc.org](http://www.baileyumc.org)

## **Academy Year At-a-Glance**

*September 2003  
A Leader's Call*

*October 2003  
A Leader's Spiritual Foundation*

*November 2003  
The Possibilities in a  
Small Church Setting*

*December 2003  
The Change Process, Part 1*

*January 2004  
The Change Process, Part 2*

*February 2004  
Making an Impact  
with Your Preaching*

*March 2004  
Helping Your Church  
Reach Non-Christians*

*April 2004  
The Purpose Driven Leader*

*May 2004  
The Continuing Challenge  
of Leadership*

*the  
Wellspring  
Academy  
for Christian Leadership*

## What is the Academy?

*The Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership is a yearlong learning opportunity for pastors of smaller membership local churches designed to cultivate Spirit-inspired, transformational leaders for the Kingdom of God!*

*The nine monthly modules will feature gifted, experienced leadership who will encourage excellence, creativity, and vision for effectiveness in vital areas of pastoral ministry. Each module will consist of one day of learning on-site together at Bailey UMC, the reading of a corresponding book, and the use of an online forum for continued study on the monthly topic.*

*The director of the Academy is Branson Sheets, who is serving in his 14<sup>th</sup> year as the pastor of Bailey and Pleasant Grove UMCs. He will focus on development of practical leadership skills that will benefit pastors and their churches. He will also serve as a personal mentor to pastors in the academy.*

**"The experience so inspired my ministry that I may never know exactly how foundational this year has been!"**

**"After attending the Wellspring Academy, I am learning to embrace the fact that one of my areas of giftedness is leadership."**

## What will I receive from the Academy?

- Groundbreaking instruction that will be intensely practical for your personal growth as a Christian leader and for your local church setting.
- Personalized assistance in developing a Life Ministry Plan through the encouragement and experience of other pastor/leaders.
- A customized five-year plan for your local church setting to promote long-term effectiveness in its ministry.
- Fellowship with other men and women who have dedicated their lives and ministries to be used in the most effective way possible by God.
- Five Continuing Education Units for completing all nine monthly modules.

## How much will it cost me?

The tuition for the Academy is \$800. Texts, food, and instruction will be covered for the entire year by your tuition. Half of the tuition will be due at the first and fifth modules. Note that grants for continuing education are available from the Annual Conference and may provide each pastor up to \$400. Each applicant is responsible to apply for his/her own continuing education assistance.

The designers of the Academy view the time and effort invested as the real cost of the program.

## What are the criteria for selection?

The selection committee will choose twelve pastors each conference year. Each applicant should:

- Currently be serving a smaller membership local church (100 or less in worship attendance).

*The approval of the church/charge PPRC is required since the Academy demands several days away from the local church. In addition, the long-range plan will be developed in consultation with the local church, so their cooperation and willingness to participate will be required for ultimate effectiveness.*

- Express a willingness to develop the skills of a transformational Christian leader.

*The application essay should demonstrate an eagerness for practical instruction by more experienced pastoral leaders. It should also express the applicant's commitment of at least five years to his/her current ministry placement.*

- View him/herself as having a potential for transformational leadership and long-term effectiveness in ministry.

*All pastors serving a local church in the North Carolina Annual Conference should feel free to apply.*

## How do I apply?

The application should be postmarked by July 30, 2003. Selection of the twelve pastors will take place within one week, and all applicants will be contacted by letter. The date of the first instruction session is September 15, 2003. A complete schedule will be listed in the acceptance letter.

Please mail applications to  
Rev. Branson Sheets, Director  
PO Box 218, Bailey, NC 27807

**Application for the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership Class of 2003-04**

**This opportunity for leadership development is founded on the belief that the marks of excellence for pastors, regardless of the size of the churches are: a passion for service, a desire to learn, an insistence on relevance, a commitment to the long-term, an unusual competence, a depth of spiritual formation, and an eagerness for team ministry.**

**Name**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Charge**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Average Worship Attendance**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Numbers**  
Daytime \_\_\_\_\_  
Evening \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_

**Previous Appointments Served  
(please include names and dates)**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current District**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“The Pastor/Parish Relations Committee supports the application of our pastor for the Wellspring Academy. Our church leaders understand that if our pastor is selected to participate, it will require him/her to be away from the local church one day per month over the course of nine months. It will also involve the charge in the development of a long-range ministry plan.”**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of PPR Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Please attach an essay that includes the following (no more than two pages on answers one and two!):**

- 1) Explain what attracts you to the Academy for Christian Leadership.**
- 2) Relate how you foresee the Academy influencing your development as a church leader.**
- 3) Describe your work history, including a chronological list of positions and dates.**
- 4) Write a personal evaluation of your vocational strengths and weaknesses.**
- 5) Describe your educational history since high school (formal and informal).**

Please send your completed application and essay by **July 30, 2003** to  
**Rev. Branson Sheets**  
**Bailey United Methodist Church**  
**PO Box 218, Bailey, NC 27807**



APPENDIX C

Counselaid Psychological Corporation Certificate

Certificate Number 917

*This is to certify that*

**Rev. R. Branson Sheets, III**

*has met the requirements for education and training,  
and has made the pledge of professional ethical standards,  
and is hereby entitled to administer and use*

**COUNSEL AID<sup>®</sup>**

*test reports for individual and marriage counseling services  
appropriate to his profession.*

Counselaid Psychological Corporation

*Paul F. Barkman, Ph.D.*

Date: December 12, 2002 Paul F. Barkman, M.Div., Ph.D., President



APPENDIX D

Release Form for Research Participation

# WELLSPRING

*a source of spiritual leadership*

Post Office Box 218  
Bailey, NC 27807

I grant permission for Branson Sheets to use the results of my work in the 2003-04 Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership for research purposes. Materials include all evaluations, tests, and assignments that might measure my growth in leadership during my experience in the Academy.

I realize that I will be one of the subjects of the research to prove the viability of the academy but understand that my name will not be used in the study.

---

Participant

---

Date

APPENDIX E

2003-04 Wellspring Leadership Academy Pretest

# WELLSPRING

*a source of spiritual leadership*

## 2003-04 Wellspring Leadership Academy Pretest

We hope you are looking forward to a great year in the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership. You were chosen for this program because of your hunger to learn more practical skills for your pastoral leadership. This evaluative tool will help us measure the helpfulness and effectiveness of the modules. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and bring it to the first session on September 15th.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1.	I generally feel capable of articulating my call.	1	2	3	4	5 6
2.	I understand the personal cost of being an instrument of change.	1	2	3	4	5 6
3.	I spend at least thirty minutes a day in prayer.	1	2	3	4	5 6
4.	The focus of my sermon each week is the practical application of the text.	1	2	3	4	5 6

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
5.	Our church has a mission statement.	1	2	3	4	5 6
6.	I have led someone to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.	1	2	3	4	5 6
7.	I read books on leadership regularly.	1	2	3	4	5 6
8.	I believe that small membership churches can grow.	1	2	3	4	5 6
9.	I understand my giftedness.	1	2	3	4	5 6
10.	I view myself as a chaplain.	1	2	3	4	5 6
11.	I have regular periods of personal retreat.	1	2	3	4	5 6
12.	I can give a one-sentence summary of each sermon before I preach it.	1	2	3	4	5 6
13.	Our church is definitely driven by its mission statement.	1	2	3	4	5 6
14.	I see evangelism as the central purpose of the Church.	1	2	3	4	5 6
15.	My church leaders support me in my personal growth.	1	2	3	4	5 6
16.	Small Methodist churches can grow.	1	2	3	4	5 6
17.	A number of people I serve in ministry are personal friends of mine.	1	2	3	4	5 6
18.	I understand the change process.	1	2	3	4	5 6

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree		
19. I read the Scriptures daily.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. I listen to or read other people's sermons on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. I understand how to lead a purpose-driven church.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. I spend time with the unchurched/lost.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. I have a set of specific goals for my ministry.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. I can see clearly why my small membership church is small.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. I am committed to the concept of long-term ministry (6-8 years).	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. I understand that change is difficult for most people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. I fast once a month.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. I have a friend evaluate my sermons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Our church is visitor friendly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. I am spending money on self-improvement.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. I am a good match where I have been appointed.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. I am called to be an instrument of change.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. I know what I want my church to look like in 5 years.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
34. I participate in an accountability group.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. I understand how to communicate to my total audience.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. My church is effective at reaching the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. I am a leader of people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. My church has a 5-year plan.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. Church growth principles work in any size church.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. I have regular and predictable study habits.	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. I understand the incremental steps to fulfill my 5-year plan.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. I meet regularly with a mentor.	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDIX F

2003-04 Wellspring Leadership Academy Posttest

# WELLSPRING

*a source of spiritual leadership*

## 2003-04 Wellspring Leadership Academy Posttest

We have had a great year together in the Wellspring Academy for Christian Leadership. You were chosen for this program because of your hunger to learn more practical skills for your pastoral leadership. This evaluative tool will help us measure the helpfulness and effectiveness of the modules. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. I generally feel capable of articulating my call.	1	2	3	4	5 6
2. I understand the personal cost of being an instrument of change.	1	2	3	4	5 6
3. I spend at least thirty minutes a day in prayer.	1	2	3	4	5 6
4. The focus of my sermon each week is the practical application of the text.	1	2	3	4	5 6

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
5. Our church has a mission statement.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I have led someone to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I read books on leadership regularly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I believe that small membership churches can grow.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I understand my giftedness.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I view myself as a chaplain.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I have regular periods of personal retreat.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I can give a one-sentence summary of each sermon before I preach it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Our church is definitely driven by its mission statement.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I see evangelism as the central purpose of the Church.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. My church leaders support me in my personal growth.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Small Methodist churches can grow.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. A number of people I serve in ministry are personal friends of mine.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. I understand the change process.	1	2	3	4	5	6



	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree		
19. I read the Scriptures daily.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. I listen to or read other people's sermons on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. I understand how to lead a purpose-driven church.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. I spend time with the unchurched/lost.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. I have a set of specific goals for my ministry.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. I can see clearly why my small membership church is small.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. I am committed to the concept of long-term ministry (6-8 years).	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. I understand that change is difficult for most people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. I fast once a month.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. I have a friend evaluate my sermons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Our church is visitor friendly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. I am spending money on self-improvement.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. I am a good match where I have been appointed.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. I am called to be an instrument of change.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. I know what I want my church to look like in 5 years.	1	2	3	4	5	6



**APPENDIX G**

**Evaluation Forms for the Wellspring Academy 2003-04**

**Feedback Form #1 for Wellspring 2003-04**

What ideas have you learned during these classes that you plan on implementing at your church?

Please list 3 or 4 highlights/helpful ideas of these classes that should be continued in subsequent years.

Which speaker(s) was (were) most helpful to you? Why?

Module #1: Powell Osteen  
Module #2: Glenda Johnson  
Module #3: Jeff Patton  
Module #4: John Check

Which speaker(s) was (were) least helpful to you? Why?

Please list any suggestions to help us improve the Wellspring Academy.

Which of the books would you suggest we use again?

Under the Unpredictable Plant—Peterson  
Spiritual Leadership—Sanders  
If It Could Happen Here—Patton  
How to Change Your Church—Nelson/Appel

Which of the books do you feel neutral about?

Which of the books would you not use again?

## Feedback Form #2 for Wellspring 2003-04

What ideas have you learned during these classes that you plan on implementing at your church?

Please list 3 or 4 highlights/helpful ideas of these classes that should be continued in subsequent years.

Which speaker(s) was (were) most helpful to you? Why?

Module #6: Jon Strother  
Beth Hood  
Module #7: Marty Cauley  
Tim Reeves  
Module #8: Chris Aydlett  
Beth Hood

Which speaker(s) was (were) least helpful to you? Why?

Please list any suggestions to help us improve the Wellspring Academy.

Which of the books would you suggest we use again?

The Willow Creek Communication CDs

- Hybels
- Strobel/Bird
- Breaux
- Ortberg
- Bell

Beyond the Walls—Hamilton

Which of the books do you feel neutral about?

Which of the books would you not use again?

## **Wellspring Academy Exit Interview (2003-04)**

1. What was your overall impression of your Wellspring experience?
2. Has your understanding of ministry changed this year? Explain.
3. Write out a specific example of how you have implemented something you have learned this year.
4. What have you learned about yourself as a leader? Is this different than your perception before the Wellspring experience? Same? Modified? Explain.
5. Which module do you think was most helpful to you? Why?

6. Which module do you think was least helpful? Why?

7. What was your favorite book or resource this year? Tell what was significant to you.

8. Evaluate the leaders. What benefits did you gain from Branson's leadership? Which other leaders were very helpful to you? Explain.



9. What would you change or add to next year's Wellspring experience?

10. Is Wellspring a wise use of conference funds? Why or why not?

## APPENDIX H

### Module Schedule for 2003-04 Wellspring Academy

#### Agenda for Module One: A Leader's Call Powell Osteen and Branson Sheets

Text: Under the Unpredictable Plant by Eugene Peterson

- 9:00–9:30 am: Gathering Time
- 9:30–10:30 am: Extended Devotion and The Wellspring Story
- 10:30–12:00 pm: “Running From God”
- 12:00–1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00–2:00 pm: “Working with Ninevites”
- 2:00–3:00 pm: Practical Ministry Time: Are you cut out to lead a church?

#### Agenda for Module Two: A Leader's Spiritual Foundation Glenda Johnson and Branson Sheets

Text: Spiritual Leadership by Oswald Sanders

- 9:00–9:30 am: Gathering Time
- 9:30–10:30 am: Extended Devotion: The absolute necessity of your spiritual foundation as a pastoral leader
- 10:30–12:00 pm: “What is a spiritual leader?”
- 12:00–1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00–2:00 pm: “My struggle with spiritual fitness”
- 2:00–3:00 pm: Practical Ministry Time: How I feed myself as a leader

**Agenda for Module Three: The Possibilities in a Small Church Setting**  
**Jeff Patton and Branson Sheets**  
**Text: If It Could Happen Here by Jeff Patton**

- 4:30–5:00 pm: Gathering Time
- 5:00–5:30 pm: Extended Devotion: “People Ministry”
- 5:30–6:30 pm: “The Story of East Canton UMC”
- 6:30–7:15 pm: Supper
- 7:15–8:15 pm: “The Unique Struggle of Small Church Ministry”
- 8:15–9:00 pm: Question and Answer with Jeff Patton
- 9:00 pm on Extended time with Jeff for those that need particular help

**Agenda for Module Four: The Change Process, Part 1**  
**John Check and Branson Sheets**  
**Text: How to Change Your Church without Killing It**  
**by Alan Nelson and Gene Appel**

- 9:00–9:30 am: Gathering Time
- 9:30–10:30 am: Extended Devotion: Change or Die!
- 10:30–11:15am: Gene Appel Video: “How to Change Your Church without Killing YOU!”
- 11:15–12:00 pm: Group Discussion
- 12:00–1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00–2:00 pm: “My plan to reinvigorate St. Paul UMC”
- 2:00–3:00 pm: Practical Ministry Time: Leading Change

**Agenda for Module Five: The Change Process, Part 2**  
**John Check, Jan Hill and Branson Sheets**  
**Text: How to Change Your Church without Killing It**  
**by Alan Nelson and Gene Appel**

- 9:00–9:30 am: Gathering Time
- 9:30–10:30 am: Extended Devotion: Why It Is So Hard to Change
- 10:30–11:30 am: Developing a Long Range Plan
- 11:30–12:00 pm: The Rose Hill UMC Five Year Plan
- 12:00–1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00–2:00 pm: Discussion of the assignment on changing something in your church
- 2:00–3:00 pm: Practical Ministry Time: How to develop an effective change strategy

**Agenda for Module Six: Making an Impact with Your Preaching**  
**Jon Strother, Beth Hood, and Branson Sheets**  
**Text: The Willow Creek Communicating in Today's Reality Conference CDs**

- 9:00–9:30 am: Gathering Time
- 9:30–10:30 am: Extended Devotion using the sermon: His Words in Your Mouth
- 10:30–11:30 am: “Preaching in Today’s Culture”
- 11:30–12:00 pm: “How My Preaching Changed after the Wellspring Academy”
- 12:00–1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00–2:00 pm: “Practical Ideas in Calling People to a Decision”
- 2:00–3:00 pm: Practical Ministry Time: Being an Application Preacher

**Agenda for Module Seven: Helping Your Church Reach Non-Christians**  
**Marty Cauley, Tim Reeves and Branson Sheets**  
**Text: Beyond The Walls by Adam Hamilton**

- 9:00–9:30 am: Gathering Time
- 9:30–10:30 am: Extended Devotion: How Important Is Evangelism?
- 10:30–11:30 am: “Evangelism in Today’s Culture”
- 11:30–12:00 pm: “How We Reach the Lost in Rural Bladen County”
- 12:00–1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00–2:00 pm: “How to Share Your Faith Effectively”
- 2:00–3:00 pm: Practical Ministry Time: More than revivals

**Agenda for Module Eight: The Purpose Driven Leader**  
**Chris Aydlett, Beth Hood, and Branson Sheets**  
**Text: The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren**

- 9:00–9:30 am: Gathering Time
- 9:30–10:30 am: Extended Devotion using the sermon: What Is a Purpose-Driven Leader?
- 10:30–11:30 am: “The 40 Days of Purpose”
- 11:30–12:00 pm: “How we piggy-backed through the Wellspring Academy”
- 12:00–1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00–2:00 pm: “How Purpose Affects Everything Else”
- 2:00–3:00 pm: Practical Ministry Time: How to lead on purpose

**Agenda for Module Nine: The Continuing Challenge of Leadership**  
**Branson Sheets**  
**Text: A Work of Heart by Reggie McNeal**

- 9:00–9:30 am: Gathering Time
- 9:30–10:30 am: Extended Devotion: What’s Next?
- 10:30–12:00 pm: “A Leader’s Continuing Challenge”
- 12:00–1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00–2:00 pm: “What have we learned?”
- 2:00–3:00 pm: Evaluations

## APPENDIX I

### Pre- and Post-Module Questions

#### **Module #1, Pre-Question:**

This is our **pre-discussion question** for the September 15 module. I know that everyone is busy, but please try to respond with your answer and maybe at some point to *at least one other person's answer*.

In the introduction to Peterson's book, he makes this statement: "Basically, all I am doing is trying to get it straight, get straight what it means to be a pastor then develop a spirituality adequate to the work" (Under the Unpredictable Plant 5). In a paragraph or two, please describe what God has called YOU to do as a pastor and how much of what God has called you to do are you able to do in **your current** location.

#### **Module #1, Post-Question:**

In Under the Unpredictable Plant, Eugene Peterson speaks of his own vocational crisis when he actually resigned from his church. The elders told him to be the pastor, and they would run the church. How do you understand the difference between "running the church" and "providing leadership"? What would you let go? What should you not let go? Where is significant pastoral leadership most critical? Would the church run by itself if you didn't run it?

#### **Module #2, Post-Question:**

The question I wish to pose and have you give serious thought to is twofold: What are you doing to maintain contact with Jesus Christ so that you continue to be a spiritual leader, and how do you plan to teach and lead your congregation so that your members will become spiritual leaders?

#### **Module #3, Post Question:**

I was deeply affected by my time personally with Jeff Patton. I also got to hear him speak on Friday night with all of you and all day on Saturday. He spent time with our administrative council at Pleasant Grove on Saturday night. My question to each of you:

Which do you think is the biggest challenge for you as you lead your church or churches:

1. Eliminating "pastor fetch" and training them to go? or
2. Helping your people realize that the true mission of the church is that all may know Jesus and not "doing turkey dinners"?

Extra Q: A great deal of the pastoral care, teaching, and even some of the preaching came from someone besides the pastor at New Canton United Methodist Church (from the book). Do you consider Jeff's strategy positive or negative?

**Module #4, Post-Question:**

Pick one thing that you'd like to change at your current appointment and discuss the steps for accomplishing this task.

**Module #6, Post-Assignment:**

Exchange one sermon (on tape) with a partner in our group. In evaluating your partner's sermon, let's use this rule: For every negative critique, use three positive statements. The 3:1 ratio should uplift and encourage us in our continuing effort to become better preachers!

**Module #7, Post-Question:**

How are you actively involved with people outside the church? Also, how important is Adam Hamilton's church afternoon ministry of "mugging" to the evangelistic success of Resurrection UMC?

**Project due by April 5:**

Complete your 2-page Life Ministry Plan

**Module #8, Post-Question:**

Which area of purpose is most lacking at your church? What was your reaction to the 40 Days of Purpose?

**Module #9, Pre-Question:**

What is the one thing that benefited you most this year in the Wellspring Academy?



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## APPENDIX J

### The 2003 Selection Committee for the Wellspring Academy

**Rev. Jon Strother**, pastor of Windborne UMC in Raleigh (19 years of pastoral experience)

**Rev. Dr. John Check**, pastor of St. Paul UMC in Rocky Mount (22 years of pastoral experience)

**Rev. Glenda Johnson**, former district superintendent, now retired and serving as director of the Wellspring Covenant Group Initiative for the North Carolina Conference (25 years of pastoral experience)

**Rev. Branson Sheets**, pastor of the Bailey Charge UMC and director of the Wellspring Small Church Initiative for the North Carolina Annual Conference (17 years of pastoral experience)

**Rev. Leonard Rex**, pastor of Discipleship at Bailey UMC and participant in the 2002-03 Wellspring Academy (16 years of pastoral experience)

**Rev. Beth Hood**, pastor of Lemon Springs UMC in Sanford and participant in the 2002-03 Wellspring Academy (11 years of pastoral experience)

**Rev. Jan Hill**, pastor of Rose Hill UMC in Rose Hill and participant in the 2002-03 Wellspring Academy (5 years of pastoral experience)

**Rev. Paul Dunham**, pastor of St. Joseph UMC in Pikeville and participant in the 2002-03 Wellspring Academy (11 years of pastoral experience)

**Rev. Tim Reeves**, pastor of the Bladen Charge in rural Bladen County north of Wilmington and participant in the 2002-03 Wellspring Academy (9 years of pastoral experience)

## APPENDIX K

## Pretest and Posttest Results (n = 12)

Questions	Pretest Average	Posttest Average	Change
Q1. I generally feel capable of articulating my call.	5.08	5.50	0.42
Q2. I understand the personal cost of being an instrument of change.	4.92	5.25	0.33
Q3. I spend at least thirty minutes a day in prayer.	3.42	3.92	0.55
Q4. The focus of my sermon each week is the practical application of the text.	4.50	4.75	0.25
Q5. Our church has a mission statement.	3.75	3.92	0.17
Q6. I have led someone to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.	5.00	5.17	0.17
Q7. I read books on leadership regularly.	2.92	5.00	2.08
Q8. I believe that small membership churches can grow.	5.42	5.75	0.33
Q9. I understand my giftedness.	4.17	5.08	0.92
Q10. I view myself as a chaplain.	3.00	2.25	-0.75
Q11. I have regular periods of personal retreat.	2.50	2.92	0.42
Q12. I can give a one-sentence summary of each sermon before I preach it.	3.67	4.25	0.58
Q13. Our church is definitely driven by its mission statement.	2.25	2.17	-0.08
Q14. I see evangelism as the central purpose of the Church.	4.42	5.00	0.58
Q15. My church leaders support me in my personal growth.	4.67	5.00	0.33
Q16. Small Methodist churches can grow.	5.25	5.75	0.50
Q17. A number of people I serve in ministry are personal friends of mine.	3.25	4.42	1.17
Q18. I understand the change process.	4.00	4.75	0.75
Q19. I read the Scriptures daily.	4.83	4.92	0.08
Q20. I listen to or read other people's sermons on a regular basis.	3.75	3.50	-0.25
Q21. I understand how to lead a purpose-driven church.	3.25	4.33	1.08
Q22. I spend time with the unchurched and/or lost.	3.92	3.67	-0.25
Q23. I have a set of specific goals for my ministry.	3.50	3.92	0.42

Q24. I can see clearly why my small membership church is small.	4.42	5.08	0.67
Q25. I am committed to the concept of long-term ministry (6-8 years).	5.33	5.50	0.17
Q26. I understand that change is difficult for most people.	5.50	5.42	-0.08
Q27. I fast once a month.	1.83	2.42	0.58
Q28. I have a friend evaluate my sermons.	2.67	2.67	0.00
Q29. Our church is visitor friendly.	3.75	3.92	0.17
Q30. I am spending money on self-improvement.	4.08	4.67	0.58
Q31. I am a good match where I have been appointed.	5.08	5.42	0.33
Q32. I am called to be an instrument of change.	4.83	5.25	0.42
Q33. I know what I want my church to look like in 5 years.	3.83	5.17	1.33
Q34. I participate in an accountability group.	4.33	4.83	0.50
Q35. I understand how to communicate to my total audience.	4.25	4.92	0.67
Q36. My church is effective at reaching the community.	3.33	3.33	0.00
Q37. I am a leader of people.	4.75	4.67	-0.08
Q38. My church has a 5-year plan.	1.17	2.33	1.17
Q39. Church growth principles work in any size church.	3.25	4.83	1.58
Q40. I have regular and predictable study habits.	4.17	4.08	-0.08
Q41. I understand the incremental steps to fulfill my 5-year plan.	1.83	3.58	1.75
Q42. I meet regularly with a mentor.	2.00	3.25	1.25
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>4.35</b>	<b>0.49</b>

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**APPENDIX L****Glossary of Statistical Terminology**

The definitions presented in this glossary are from Dictionary of Statistics and Methodology: A Nontechnical Guide for the Social Sciences by W. Paul Vogt.

Alpha ( $\alpha$ ): “It is a measure of internal reliability of the items in an index. This (Cronbach’s) alpha ranges from 0 to 1.0 and indicates how much the items in an index are measuring the same thing” (4).

n: “Number. Number of subjects” (149).

Reliability: “The consistency or stability of a measure or test from one use to the next. When repeated measurements of the same thing give identical or very similar results, the measurement instrument is said to be reliable” (195).

Standard Deviation: “A statistic that shows the spread or dispersion of scores in a distribution of scores; in other words, a measure of dispersion. The more widely the scores are spread out, the larger the standard deviation” (217-18).

Statistical Significance: “Said of a value or measure of a variable when it is [“significantly”] larger or smaller than would be expected by chance alone” (221).

Z Score: “A measure of the distance in standard deviations of a sample from the mean” (243).

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