### ABSTRACT

### SPIRITUAL AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

by

Pedro P. Magalhães

To serve Christ and his Church constitutes not only a great privilege, but also a big responsibility. The faithful accomplishment of the sacred pastoral calling will honor God, bring health to the church, and capacitate the church in its missionary task as well.

Since pastoral ministry deals with the people of God, the purpose of this study was to provide a practical help to pastors in the spiritual and strategic leadership field in the local church where they are serving.

The literature review focuses on the biblical function of leaders appointed by Christ for the building up of his Church. Leaders are responsible for the growth of God's people, guiding them in the service of ministry. In addition, the literature review examines the theological foundations for the retreat seminars that provided tools for the accomplishment of the spiritual and strategic leadership tasks.

The findings of this study demonstrate that a rigorous observation and practice of spiritual and strategic leadership make Christian leaders more efficient in their pastoral ministry.

# DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled

# SPIRITUAL AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

presented by

Pedro P. Magalhães

has been accepted towards fulfillment

of the requirements for the

# DOCTOR OF MINISTRY degree at

Asbury Theological Seminary

	May 12, 2011
Mentor	Dat
	May 12, 2011
Internal Reader	Dat
	May 12, 2011
Representative, Doctor of Ministry Program	Dat
	May 12, 2011
Dean of the Beeson Program	Dat

# SPIRITUAL AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of

Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

by

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May 2011

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### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My heart is abundant in gratitude to the Holy and Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, for the immense mercy and grace showed to me during these doctoral studies. Glory be to God!

My deepest gratitude goes to my wife Carla and my children Pedrito and Daniel, for their patience in my absence, and for the support given all the time during my studies.

I wish to thank the Beeson International Program staff for the wonderful ministry they have developed with international students, specifically the 2007 cohort. They have done a great job!

In addition, I am so thankful to my mentor Dr. Brian Russell for the support, guidance, and insights during the dissertation writing process.

To the Methodists pastors in Paraguay that participated in the project, my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to learn from you. At the same time, I am glad to contribute to your ministry through the leadership retreats we had.

### CHAPTER 1

#### PROBLEM

#### Introduction

One of the greatest challenges in pastoral ministry is related to leadership. Spiritual and strategic leadership must be taken into account if a minister is to succeed in ministry. I was approached once by a pastor friend who shared with me his difficulty organizing himself so that his ministry would flow as smoothly as he wanted. The most difficult part, he shared, was working strategically and getting people committed to a pre established plan. He even found himself struggling to follow his own projected agenda.

As I have been ministering among the local pastors of the Methodist Church in Paraguay, I have noticed that spiritual and strategic leadership is a topic needing to be studied and developed in order to elicit better outcomes in their leadership tasks. In fact, many of these local pastors have not been able to develop their ministry well and this deficiency has affected their spiritual life and leadership. They have not had significant outcomes that could contribute to the growth of their local churches. Many of the pastors have stagnated and have not been able to strategize in a new way, incurring the error of keeping the same methods and repeating the same programs and church activities.

A renewing and innovative ministry is characterized by the style of leadership one chooses to develop, which contributes to the minister staying focused on their calling and achievement in ministry. Spiritual and strategic leadership are important tools by which a leader can stay new and fresh in their ministry—for a leader avoid stagnation in ministry is indispensable. When ministers lose their inspiration and excitement, they will easily

lose their aspiration of doing something extraordinary, and as a result they will lose their quality and efficiency in ministry.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to measure the changes in the understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church who attended the three leadership retreats.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study.

### **Research Question #1**

What were the levels of understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church before attending the three leadership retreats?

### **Research Question #2**

What were the levels of understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church after attending the three leadership retreats?

#### **Research Question #3**

What aspects of the three retreat seminars had the greatest impact on the observed changes?

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined in this study.

### Strategic Leadership

Firstly, the term *strategic leadership* is related to the task of planning strategies, wisely choosing right paths, and making changes whenever is necessary. Secondly, in strategic leadership, the relationship with others, training, trusting, and empowering are important areas to develop. A leader is a person that must have the ability to encourage and guide followers in the accomplishment of the team goals without the loss of one's individuality. Thirdly, strategic leadership deals with vision. Leaders that do not have a clear vision of what is expected and do not plan strategically the operation of their ministry, so easily will lose their focus. Planning is the key to putting a leader in motion and to giving direction to achieve significant outcomes.

#### **Spiritual Leadership**

The term *spiritual leadership* is used in regards to the pastoral task of leading others to reach their potential and use it for God's kingdom extension. In applying this term to the pastoral ministry, I emphasize the importance of (1) keeping the health of spiritual and inner life that will always draw them closer to God in sane conscience; (2) dealing with spiritual and moral integrity, their life related to others; and, (3) overcoming the fears, frustrations, and stresses in the pastoral leadership ministry.

#### **Ministry Intervention**

The purpose of this study was to complete a ministry-intervention project in which I would be working with thirteen pastors in three retreat seminars. I conducted a series of seminars featuring spiritual and strategic leadership in ministry. During the seminars I applied a pretest and posttest. The pretest was used in the first retreat seminar and the posttest was employed in the last retreat.

#### Context

This research project was conducted in the largest context of Paraguay, my mission field. Paraguay, for many years, was governed by a dictatorship regime. The regime was overturned twenty-one years ago. Since then, the entire nation and culture have undergone a deep transformation. The actual party government is completely new. For more than forty years, only one party governed the country. The elections that took place in 2009 brought several changes in the political administration. Needless to say, Paraguay is in a process of changes and adaptations that will affect its culture and the ministry of the church as well.

I chose to study pastors from the Methodist Church where I have served since 1990. The Methodist Church in Paraguay was started in 1988 by a lay leader, a lawyer from Londrina, Brazil. He invited a native Paraguayan pastor ministering in Brazil to move back to Paraguay to help in the starting process of planting that church. The church was soon established, and in 1996 was accepted as part of the Methodist World Council, eight years after its inception.

My study was done among local pastors that belong to two out of the five Districts of the Methodist Church in Paraguay (M. C. P.). Eleven of these pastors are graduates of the Methodist Bible Institute (M. B. I.), a three year program of study. The M. B. I. classes are held once a month for one intensive week. Four of the pastors have had more than ten years in ministry; the other nine have served between three to eight years. Four of the pastors are presently studying to earn their degree in theology from the Evangelical University of Paraguay.

#### Methodology

This project was a mixed-method explanatory research design tool. I applied preand post-auto-evaluative questionnaires, and two reflective personal interviews. The questionnaire's content I used for the pretest and posttest were related to spiritual and strategic leadership in the practice of ministry. After the third seminar, the results of this inquiry were used for building a planning strategy to keep the quality and efficiency in ministry.

#### **Participants**

The selected participants for this study were the thirteen pastors from two out of five districts, the Central and Chaco Districts, of the M. P. C. Three out of these thirteen pastors that have finished the Methodist Bible Institute and another one that came from another church denomination, are in the process of attaining a college degree in theology. Of the remainder, eight have been students in the Bible Institute and have a certificate of theology, and another pastor came from an independent church to be part of the Methodist pastoral staff. The reason I chose to work only with pastors of two districts was due to the economical and logistical circumstances of traveling and the high expenses of receiving a large number of participants in the retreat seminars. The two mentioned districts are geographically close to each other and are what facilitated the communication and travelling to the gathering place where the retreat seminars were held.

#### Instrumentation

I used the same questionnaire twice, as a pretest and posttest, to gain information. The pretest was used in the first retreat seminar before starting the lectures. The posttest was used in the last retreat seminar. The questionnaire had thirty questions to answer on a four-point scale as follows: 4—strongly agree, 3—agree, 2—disagree, and 1—strongly disagree. I kept the data in individualized folders. The questions related to the practice of strategic and spiritual leadership ministry and were divided according to the following areas of Christian life and ministry: inner and spiritual life and ministry life. For the follow-up, the participants were challenged to apply the instruction and insights gained during the three retreat seminars.

### Variables

The independent variable of this project was the seminars' teachings about spiritual and strategic leadership during the three retreats. The dependent variable was the changes in understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church who attended the three leadership retreats.

### **Data Collection**

The data was collected through the pretest, posttest, and two reflective personal field interviews. The follow-up was comprised of the learning experiences and insights gained during the leadership retreats combined with the practice of the contents in their ministry life after the retreats. All the data, including the pretest and posttest completed during the retreats, and the two interviews, was kept in individualized folders. In addition, I used an extra form in the follow-up process on which I classified the different areas tested where the pastors would need to focus in order to attain better results and efficiency in their ministries.

### **Data Analysis**

The quantitative data collected in the pretest informed me about the spiritual and strategic leadership of the pastors prior to the retreat seminars. The analysis familiarized me with how they had been developing their ministry in their churches—how they planned activities, made decisions, shared responsibilities, empowered others, cast vision, and how evaluation was done. In addition, the data revealed the depth of their spiritual lives—how they developed their devotional time related to prayer, fasting, and Bible study. The collected data from the posttest provided information about those areas where improvements were made. I was able to analyze the outcomes and see the reasons for achievement or failure in the practice of what was taught in the first seminar.

#### Generalizability

This study specifically related to training pastors and leaders for the church. While the goal was to help pastors be more effective in the leadership tasks of ministry, the main focus was not on church growth. Regarding discipleship, the theories and practices of this study may become an important equipping tool of a spiritual and strategic leadership program. Although this study was limited to the pastors of only two districts of the M. C. P., it may be developed and used among the pastors from the other districts. In addition, this study may be helpful to other churches and denominations with the same need of strategic and spiritual leadership training for their pastors.

#### **Theological Foundation**

The study of spiritual leadership is closely related to the ministry and life of the church. In fact, the effectiveness and health of church growth bends forward to the characteristics and capacities of its leaders. The church as a divine institution is formed

by human beings bought not by perishable things but by the blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-19). According to Paul, the Church is the temple of God indwelt by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16), the pillar and foundation of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). Therefore, the Church is not a matter of human affairs, but God's.

According to Matthew 16:18, Jesus is the builder of the Church. He started his ministry by calling disciples to follow him, and through them he would establish a plan to take his message to all the nations (Matt. 4:18-22; 9:35-11:1; 28:16-20). During his lifetime he proclaimed the kingdom of God as "a present realm of blessing" (Ladd 68), and the signs of God's presence were manifested in his teaching, healing, feeding the hungry, casting out demons, and proclaiming the good news (Mark 1:32-34). After dying on the cross, offering himself as the sacrifice for the sin of the whole world, he was raised again from the grave and crowned with power and authority, "far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come; he sits at the "right hand of God in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 1:21-22 NVI). However, the missional aspect of this passage is in the following verses that state, "And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way" (Eph. 2:22-23). Therefore, Christ is present and active in this world today and his visible manifestation is through the Church, which is his body, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was sent after Jesus' ascension and glorification in accordance with what he announced before dying on the cross (John 14:14-31). The purpose of the Holy Spirit is to fill and empower the church for its mission in the world. He first works

on the church and then through the church (Cantalamessa 282). The arrival of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Day, as Gunter Krallmann states, "was a revolutionizing experience for those gathered, because it furnished them with the multifaceted and inexhaustible divine adequacy which they needed to pursue their calling according to the will of God" (200). In addition, the Holy Spirit will inspire and guide Christian leaders into an effective ministry. As part of his ascension and glorification, Jesus gave some to be apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers to prepare God's people for works of service (Eph. 4:11-12). Thus, leadership over the church is established by Jesus himself and the purpose of these leaders is to prepare and build up the people of God for mission. In fact, leaders and churches are invited to be part of the mission of God. Stephen Seamands says, mission "is not essentially a human activity undertaken by the church and its leaders out of obligation to the Great Commission, gratitude for what God has done for us, and the desperate plight of the world, it is God's own mission in which we are invited to participate" (161). Therefore, the Christian community is a "priestly community" (Stevens 174).

The health and effectiveness of the church in its mission is directly related to the health and effectiveness of its leaders. The pastor is responsible for guiding the church strategically to reach God's purpose and vision. In addition, Christian leadership requires the leader to inspire, train, and take others to the service of the kingdom enthusiastically. In fact, good leaders are "capable of getting followers to go above and beyond 'the call of duty'" (Hughes, Ginnet, and Curphy 368).

Spiritual and strategic leadership enable the leader to deal with change when necessary to achieve better outcomes: "The definition of neurotic management is to continue to do the same thing but expect a different result" (Hughes, Ginnet, and Curphy 164). In other words, pastors must change their attitudes and actions if they want to change their outcomes. Thus, leadership, in order to be effective, must develop the ability to create and execute changes. Interestingly, Lee Roy Beach presents the idea of evolutionary and revolutionary vision as the two modes of cultural change. He says that, "evolutionary vision sees the future as a natural evolution of the present" (56). The organization is moving ahead, making changes only to improve what has been set in the vision. Beach says that revolutionary vision "sees the future as a profound departure from the present, usually as a result of existing or looming crises" (57). In conclusion, this revolutionary vision will prevent the stagnation of leaders in their leadership, which certainly will undermine their ministry.

#### Overview

Chapter 2 reviews literature associated with strategic and spiritual leadership, its development, theology of ministry in leadership, and strategic abilities for effectiveness in ministry. Chapter 3 presents the methodology. Chapter 4 details the outcomes of the study. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the conclusions derived from the interpretation of the data and applications of the conclusions.

### **CHAPTER 2**

### LITERATURE

#### **Biblical Foundation for Spiritual and Strategic Leadership Training**

Jesus is God's agent of reconciliation through his sacrifice on the cross (Col. 1:20). In the resurrection, God invested power in Christ by raising him from the dead and exalting him in a privileged position over all rule, power, and dominion, and every title in the present and future (Eph. 1:19-21). In fact, "after he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty in heaven" (Heb. 1:3). However, the important good news after Jesus' exaltation is that God appointed him as the head of the Church, which is his body (Eph. 1:22). Now, the plan of redemption is shared with the church as the body of Christ.

Before rising up to heaven, he promised the resource for the church's missionary tasks—the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The geography of the mission was also determined, "in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Now, through the efforts of Jews and Gentiles after the Pentecost, the gospel would spread from Jerusalem to the circumference, around the world (Neill 20).

In the book of Acts, the ministry of the church in Jerusalem, and Paul's missionary trips, the delimitation of Acts 1:8 is reached: chapters 1 to 8:3, witness in Jerusalem; chapters 8:4 to 9:43, witness to Judea and Samaria; and chapters 10 to 28, witness to the end of earth.

The success of Paul's ministry was related to his network team, and to constantly striving to reach additional places (Rom. 15:20). He concentrated his missionary work in towns and cities, reaching the secular civilization and Jewish communities through their

synagogues. In order to spread the message through a prepared team, he established centers for teaching and communication with an incredible result: "This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Acts 19:10).

The effectiveness of the church as a representative of Christ in this world depends on the efficiency of those that have been assigned by Christ as its leaders. The purpose of leaders in the church as the body of Christ is very well specified in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, chapter 4:

> It was he who 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 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Eph. 4:11-16)

The church's health and success in its mission relates directly to the health of its leaders.

The mission of a leader in the individual aspect is to inspire, train, and take others into

the service of the kingdom enthusiastically, leading them to fulfill their calling.

Simultaneously, in the corporative aspect, leaders are responsible to guide their followers

to accomplish the established goals of the group.

The following are areas in which leaders of the church must work in order to

bring the church, as the body of Christ, into the service of ministry, making Christ present

and acting in the world today.

### Spiritual and Strategic Leadership and the Work of Serving

According to the Ephesians letter, the function of the leaders appointed by Christ is for building up his body, the church: "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Eph. 4:12). Observing the commas, pastors can recognize three important functional elements of leadership ministries in the church: (1) the equipping of the saints, (2) a servant work ministry, and, (3) the construction of Christ's body (Barth 478).

The word *katartismon*, which appears only here, comes from the verb *katartizein*, and is a term that implies healing. The fundamental idea is *to equip* or *to furnish*, setting convenient conditions in what, whether something, or someone, should be (Barclay 156; Henry 1682).

Therefore, Christian leaders should work with God's people enabling them to do the ministry and mission of the church. In other words, the key function of leaders in the church is to work with people regarding their development and efficiency in ministry.

#### Spiritual and Strategic Leadership and the Maturing of the Church

Another important aspect of training and equipping the saint for ministry is related to building up the body (Eph. 4:12). This verse is connected with verse 16, which emphasizes that the church is a growing body—it needs to grow. The major emphasis and goal of church leadership (leaders are mentioned in verse 11—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers) is for the building up of church members, which will result in the expansion of the body of Christ, the church. Each member is necessary for effective growth.

The focus of church growth is stated in verse 13: "until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." The expression, "until we all reach," denotes the idea of *not yet*. The main concept is about movement. "[E]tymologically the verb *katantao* denotes downhill movement," implying that the church is moving toward a place or specific goals (Barth 484-85). Leaders must focus on specific goals of church growth in their leadership tasks.

First is growing into the unity of faith and the knowledge of Jesus. The unity of faith is expressed in Ephesians 4:3-6: "one body, and one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." The first goal, growing in unity of the faith and knowledge of Jesus, denotes a doctrinal and experimental knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God (Henry 1682). That knowledge (from the Greek *epignosis*) is not superficial but is a deep, complete, correct, and exact knowledge (MacArthur, *New Testament Commentaries* 198; Vaughan 113).

Second is growing into maturity, articulated by the expressions "full-grown man" and "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." The figure and model by which the church would measure its growth is Christ.

A collective growth. "Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, that is, Christ" (Eph. 4:15). The process of growing is communal. A collective growth is stressed by the expression *we*, using the article *oi pantes* which denotes corporative thinking, "not all of us individually, but all of us, in the fellowship of our common life" (Buttrick 692).

The basis of that collective growth appears in the phrases "Instead, speaking the truth in love"—the Greek verb is *aletheuo*, which means, "to behave toward somebody truthfully or faithfully" (Vine 947). The truth spoken nicely contrasts the false teachings and wind of doctrines from the false masters who intend to deceive the believers with their egotistical interests, separating them from Christ (Henry 1682). Paul is preparing for the next section where he advises about those that will fragment the Christian community with false teachings (Eph. 4:14). Truth and love will bind together the church and protect its unity in faith.

The direction of collective church growth is toward the head, Christ. That development is in "all things unto him" which means that Christ has all resources for the Church's growth. In fact, "our union with Christ is not a mechanical attachment which remains static, but participation in a dynamic, growing life" (Buttrick 694).

The needed individual growth. Ephesians 4:16 says, "From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." The collective growth of the church as the body of Christ is closely connected with the individual maturation of each one of its members. Then, the condition for the church's increase depends on the working measure of each individual part.

In verse 7 the word *but* clearly announces the work of the body, and verses 1-6 speak about the unity. However, from verses 7 to 16 we observe an emphatic shift from unity to diversity. The diversity is related to the functional services that every believer, as part of the body, carries its responsibilities. The essence is that each member has its individuality that God is pleased to recognize and use in his service (Vaughan 116-17). In

the midst of many members, each element's function is necessary. In fact, the increasing of the body and its healthy growth depends on "the effectual working in the measure of every part" (v. 16, KJV).

Therefore, the building of the body depends on the healthy functioning of each member. The Greek word properly— *en metro*, refers to each member's work, connecting with the same word in verse 7, *kata to metron* ("according to the measure of Christ's gift"), and may be paraphrased as "through the working of every several part in its appointed measure" (Buttrick 695-96). Christ has gifted each member of the body in order to work properly for building up the church, his body. Actually, each member receives from the head, Christ, the spiritual provision for its functioning (Henry 1683). Even though the leaders mentioned in verse 11 may work properly in their function and mission, here we see the importance that each member has in the church as the body of Christ. For leaders to deal with people individually is *sine qua non* so that everyone may contribute to the increase of the body of Christ. In other words, leaders do not work alone for the increase of the church; they must work with others, developing and equipping them to do the ministry.

There are two important Greek words to observe. The first is *Sunarmologoumenon*, which means that all the members are put together and are very well connected in order to produce harmony. The second is *Sumbibazomenon*, which means *raise up*. Both words can be understood as if the members are connected in a vertical position with the head. The first verb emphasizes the *articulation*, in harmony; the second, the mutual receptivity, reconciliation (Henry 1683). Christian leadership must take care of members, working for their improvement in the body. At the same time, leaders must keep unity and harmony in the midst of that diversity. Harmony in Christian service happens when each part works properly in its function without losing the unity of the body. Therefore, the challenge of leaders is the same of an orchestra director. He must guide each musician in their function in the correct time in order to achieve a better concert and applause from the audience. Synchronization is fundamental. If a musician plays a wrong note with his or her instrument, or even a correct one in a wrong tempo, all of the orchestra will be put at risk and the music played will be unpleasant.

The result of an effective communal and individual work is the increase of the body: in love (Eph. 4:16b.), "grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." The final goal of church growth is *love*. In fact, fellowship is living in love and showing the truth in love, numerical increase will follow (Foulkes 125).

The expression *in love*, apart from this passage, is repeated in the book of Ephesians four more times:

1. "Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love" (1:4, ASV);

2. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love" (3:17);

3. "[W]ith all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" (4:2);

4. "[A]nd walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell" (5:2).

For sure, the Pauline letters emphasize that the growth of the church, as the body of Christ, completely depends on the way each member relates to each other and works properly in their function without losing the unity of the body.

# Spiritual and Strategic Leadership as a Means of Doctrinal Protection for the Church

Since the function of leaders is to lead, they will serve as protectors against threats that undermine the Christian faith. In Ephesians 4:14 Paul says, "that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error." The vulnerability of the church is clear as well as the importance of a solid and experienced leadership that is prepared to protect the fellowship. The following are dangers from which the church must be protected.

• Sleight of men—Gr. *kubia*, literally *play of dices*, which means the manipulation of the numbers so that the desired number may appear; the idea of manipulation (MacArthur, MacArthur, *New Testament Commentaries* 199-200). The use of that metaphor is "generally taken to mean the cheating which commonly accompanies gambling; but it is perhaps better to understand it to the fickleness of the dice" (Buttrick 693). Some will try to manipulate the church with egoistic intentions. In another place Paul mentions by the Spirit "in the last days some people will leave the faith. They will follow spirits that will fool them. They will believe things that demons will teach them" (1 Tim. 4:1, NIV). He then advises Timothy to take heed unto the doctrine for in doing that he would both save himself and those who would hear him (v. 16). Therefore,

spiritual and strategic leadership will protect the church from being manipulated by any wind of doctrine.

• In craftiness—Gr. *panourgia* (*pan*, all; *ergon*, work; i.e., doing all the work), but in this verse it carries a negative sense, an astute behavior (Vine 96). This term is used here to emphasize the idea of an astute manipulation in order to make an error be equal or similar to a truth (MacArthur, MacArthur, *New Testament Commentaries* 200).

• Wiles of error—Gr. *methodia* (*meta*, after; *odos*, way)—also denotes the idea of trickery, deceit, perverse plan, premeditated plan (Vine 90; Henry 1682). The advertence here is about avoiding following the ways and ideas of error that deviate Christians from the right way.

These items the threats against the church that can undermine its growth in the knowledge of Christ and consequently its effectiveness in ministry. Different from the analogy of a full-grown man, Paul uses the figure of a child to express the need to avoid superficiality in the Christian faith, or spiritual immaturity. The Greek word is *nepios* that means *with no power to speak*, denoting a little child or a newborn baby (Matt. 21:16), which applied to the spiritual life of believers denotes "immature conditions, impressionable and susceptible to the credulity, instead of having a state of spiritual maturity" (Vine 586). The problem of being a child in the spiritual sense is that deep roots in the Christian doctrine are lacking, which make them vulnerable to be "tossed to and from and carried about on every wind of doctrine." Therefore, a spiritual and strategic leadership can articulate ways that will protect their followers and keep them on a right path of faith, service, and ministry.

#### **Theological Foundations for the Spiritual Retreats Seminars**

The task of leadership basically consists of motivating and engaging followers in accomplishing the team goals. An outstanding definition of Christian leadership can be credited to John R. Mott who states that a Christian leader's task does not only exist "to lead men to become disciples of Christ as their Divine Savior and Lord," but also "to enlist, to train, and energize [them] to organize and administer the varied activities of the Church" (17). Therefore, a Christian leader not only leads people to Christ as their savior, but also into service for Christ as their Lord through a faithful ministry in the church.

In general, the performance dimension of leadership is related to the ability of the leader to think strategically, set direction, manage changes and innovation, develop others, self-awareness, emotional control, attentiveness to others, and significant relationships with others outside of the team (Wasylyshyn 317).

Christian leadership deals with people of God in two different ways: individually and as a team (the church), both for the service of God's kingdom. When dealing with people personally, the goal is to avoid the loss of one's individuality (Barna 214). Individuality is crucial in the sense that a leader must not ignore the personal cooperation of each member's team. In fact, good leaders are effective in their tasks when they are "capable of getting followers to go above and beyond 'the call of duty'" (Hughes, Ginnet, and Curphy 368). Certainly, leaders must trust their followers individually and empower them for the ministry.

R. Paul Stevens says that when dealing with the team, Christian leadership must see the church as a "priestly community," which consists of three dimensions of ministry: "the priestly ministry of access to God through worship and intercession, priestly ministry through service to the world, [and] priestly ministry in daily life" (174). In fact, the church is a called people, royal priests, a holy nation, a people who belong to God (1 Pet. 2:9). Leaders must believe and trust the community of believers, since they are servants of the kingdom, a people with a mission, an agency sent by God. Stevens explains, "[T]here is church because there is mission, not vice versa. The church is not the sending agency; it is the sent agency" (197). This sent agency is formed by clerics and laypeople, both equally important and necessary for the service of the kingdom. This sent agency becomes a servant community that "has been transformed by a deep personal experience in the redemptive love of God and passionately desires that others share that experience" (Clark 45).

Spiritual and strategic leadership deals with the mission of the church, recognizing and challenging its members to live out their calling. Leaders must recognize and be aware of the impact and change that the church can bring to the world, confronting the negative impact of sin through a message of grace that is able to affect cultures with its values and practices:

[J]ust as the sin had a negative impact on culture, so the new creation in Christ that the gospel proclaims will affect culture, with its values and practices. Ultimately, that will mean the renewal of the whole of creation (Rom. 8:19-23). In the meantime, however, God's reconciling purpose focuses on the church as the transformed and transforming community. (Flemming 142)

Therefore, leaders have to be aware of the purpose and mission of the church and the positive impact it can bring to the world.

Stevens shows Christians the manners of living that, as a people with a mission, will be able to accomplish the goal in three ways: the *orthodoxy*, the *orthopraxy*, and the *orthopathy* (245-55). The first pertains to worshipful living in spontaneous love; it is a

life for God's glory. The second is related to our way of serving God, not "measured by excellence, by efficiency or by its religious character, but by faith, hope and love." Finally, the third way, which is related to a passion and "caring for what concerns God, caring for God's concern in daily life, and caring for God above all" (252, 254). These are indeed the characteristics of a Christ-centered church that will impact the world in any generation.

The church as a changing agent, having the same mission of Christ, must be challenged to live out its theology—the knowledge of God and his redemption plan—and practice its theology in its daily life within the world. Leaders must awaken, train, and lead God's people to get involved with God's plan. A very close relationship with God, living for his glory and purpose, centering their lives in him, is the basis and sustenance of God's people's existence. Christian leaders need to draw God's people closer to God (*orthodoxy*). Therefore, I would say that this task is our first and most important. The more God's people live a God-centered life, the more they will be able to change the world, starting with their inner lives. The consequence will be a high quality of service (*orthopraxy*) and a sincere passion for what God cares about.

The mission of the church in the world relies on the ministry of its leaders and does not depend only on professional education and training, but also on their willingness to learn from their leadership journey (McKenna, Yost, and Boyd). Leaders play a serious role in the accomplishment of the church's mission when strategic and spiritual leadership take place and leaders are oriented to the execution of their task.

#### **Healthy Leaders and Healthy Churches**

First of all, spiritual and strategic leadership deals with the health of leaders when regarding the achievement of the health of the church. Often, too much emphasis is given to the growth of the church. Nevertheless, a healthy maturation of the church depends heavily upon the health of its leaders. The idea of drawing multitudes to their flocks seduces many leaders, as if they were building the church. Crucial to understand is that the church must grow in quality before growing in quantity. The roar of the crowd measures success can intoxicate leaders, especially those that look for human approval instead of God's (Blanchard and Hodges 157).

When the leadership of the church is weak and sick, resulting from the lack of grounded vision and deep clarification of their leadership purpose, they will spend more time solving problems than planning strategically. Leaders may fail in their leadership task, at this point, when trying to get people to do something efficiently. In order to keep a balance, leadership in the church must imitate the leadership of Jesus as found in the Holy Scriptures.

#### Christike Ministry as the Main Model for Spiritual and Strategic Leadership

The strength of Christian leadership is founded in a Christlike ministry. A Christlike ministry has many different faces. For instance, a Christlike ministry avoids the abuse of power. One of the great issues in leadership ministry is about the use and misuse of power. Keeping a balance in the task of leading others and acting correctly without being corrupted by the sense of power is difficult. As stated by J. Robert Clinton, when power is "so available and being used almost daily, there is a tendency to abuse it" (Leadership Perspectives 93). However, pastors must understand that power by itself is

not bad. Power is a resource for the leadership task.

Richard L. Hughes, Robert C. Ginnet, and Gordon J. Curphy mention that the need for power has been identified in two different ways—personalized power and socialized power:

Individuals who have a high need for personalized power are relatively selfish, impulsive, uninhibited, and lacking in self-control. These individuals exercise power for their own self-centered needs, not for the good of the group or the organization. Socialized power, on the other hand, implies a more emotionally mature expression of the motive. Socialized power is exercised in the service of higher goals to others or organizations and often involves self-sacrifice toward those ends. It often involves an empowering, rather than an autocratic style of management and leadership. (152)

Certainly, a Christlike ministry will lean more toward the socialized characteristics of leading.

According to Robert Terry, "power is the ability of making and keeping decisions

over time" (184). The main reason for power is for service to others; believers "empower

ourselves and direct our commitments and passion toward service to others" (184, 187).

Since leadership is about guiding and influencing others, leaders automatically

gain power over followers. Nevertheless, Christian leaders must be careful with the

tyranny of a spiritual dictatorship, as stated by Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby:

Spiritual dictatorship can be the most oppressive form of tyranny. It is one thing to dominate people because you have an organizational chart on your side, but it is quite another to manipulate people because you claim to have God on your side. Some Christian leaders believe that God delegates His authority to leaders and that followers are obligated to submit to them unquestioningly as if they were obeying God. (90)

This style of leadership will fragment the fellowship and respect between followers and leaders. As a result, leaders may lose their team's trust and cooperation and cease to

receive their continued support. In addition, followers may respond to a coercive power and/or threaten their leaders by sabotaging their leadership plans and tasks (Hughes, Ginnet, and Curphy 150).

Jesus presented an example of a correct use of power when he said, "[E]ven as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28, ASV). In fact, the purpose of power in Christian leadership is expressed by the capacity to serve others, which is the best way to avoid coercion and the abuse of power.

A servanthood ministry. Therefore, Christlike ministry, to avoid the abuse of power and coercion, must be servanthood ministry. According to Henry J. M. Nouwen, a Christian leader must deal with the temptation "to be powerful." He also mentions different types of power that can undermine their leadership: the temptation of "political power, military power, economic power, or moral and spiritual power" (28, 53, 76). When the disciples were discussing positions of privilege and honor, Jesus took advantage of the opportunity to teach them how honor and privilege in the kingdom works:

> [A]nd he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves." (Luke 22:25-26)

Christian leaders are invited by Jesus to serve not only faithfully but also humbly. As Krallmann states, "The concept of spiritual leadership is diametrically opposed to the preoccupation with position and dominance so typical of certain secular leadership perspectives" (83). Essentially, a Christlike ministry that is characterized by servanthood will look for ways to overcome the pride of a position of privilege that for many leaders is so important in the secular world. The best way of doing that is to take the position of service. In fact, a Christian leader must be careful to never lose the sense of Christlike servanthood by looking for a position of leadership, falling, therefore, into *the director syndrome* (152). For many leaders this fault signifies the need of being a director of something; if not, they will believe that their ministry is not important. Leaders lead by their position of authority and therefore have the privilege of exercising power (Grenz and Bell); nevertheless, leaders should follow the example of Christ, who in rank was God, but in order to fulfill his mission and bring transformation to the whole world lived as a servant (Phil. 2:5-11).

Although manipulation may have a negative connotation, leaders can use this tool as meaning of guiding their followers. Karl E. Weick mentions an interesting idea regarding power and manipulation:

> [M]anipulation involves acting in ways that create an environment that people can then comprehend and manage ... manipulation is about making things happen, so that a person can then pounce on those created things and try to explain them as a way to get a better sense of what is happening. (165, 168)

The context of this quote is about creating a community that works together in order to keep stability and generate positive outcomes. In this case, the use of power and manipulation might be better seen positively rather than negatively, since it focuses on the well being and increase of the peoples' work and not on the leaders' alone.

The best way to be a real Christian leader is through servant ministry, appointed and exemplified by Jesus himself—the model that any leader should imitate. The more leaders behave like Jesus, the more effective they will be in their ministry.

An exemplary ministry worthy of imitation. A worthy leadership ministry is characterized by the ability, the commitment, and the character of its leader (Thompson, Grahek, and Philips). The best way to inspire others is to be a model or good example. A very important principle to apply at this point is, "I would never ask anyone to do anything that I am unwilling to do first" (Kouses and Posner 14). Christian leaders must be an example of behavior in the talk and in the walk (Kotter 95), if not they will be counted as the Pharisees that were disapproved by Jesus because they did not practice what they preached (Matt. 23:2). In fact, they were approved in their teachings, but were rejected by their way of living. Christian leadership does not depend alone on abilities, good education, common sense, or human wisdom, even though these are important characteristics. A solid ministry is built on the knowledge and understanding of Scripture and complete submission to and practice of the Word of God in daily life (MacArthur, *Power of Integrity* 37). This kind of ministry, with a deep commitment to the Holy Scripture (Jas. 1:22), is the key to an effective leadership ministry.

Christian leaders are people with open doors and windows, inviting others to know them. They allow their followers to get to know them and to be part of their lives because "people first follow the person, then the plan" (Kouses and Posner 15).

An interesting Bible narrative that exemplifies this point is John 1:37-42, when the disciples of John came to Jesus and asked where he was living. Jesus invited them to go and see (v. 39). Through this invitation, he not only shared with them that afternoon, but also opened the doors of relationship. The text says that one of those disciples was Andrew. As soon as Andrew left Jesus, he found his brother, Peter, and brought him to Jesus as well. Needless to say, Andrew's life was significantly impacted through getting

to know Jesus in the place where he was living. He was eager to share what he experienced with others. In fact, Andrew and Peter, at that moment, began a deep relationship with Jesus that would transform their lives. Jesus' invitation was crucial for Andrew to know him without reserve.

Being an effective leader does not mean being a perfect person. Leaders should never try to demonstrate that they are a sort of *superman*, or any other mythological super hero. They can allow their followers to know that they also have weaknesses and needs. They should not accommodate themselves on their failures, however. On the contrary, they should treat their weaknesses naturally and correct them with discipline. They should never accommodate with something that hinders their efficiencies in the ministry. Leaders must face their weaknesses seriously, looking for ways to overcome them. On the path of excellence, their main goal is to be the best model to their people in two ways: first, to build on their strengths, and second, to improve their weaknesses (Clinton, *Having a Ministry* 29). As stated by the Apostle Paul, Christian leaders are those who "set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and purity" (1 Tim. 4:12, NIV).

## Spiritual and Strategic Leadership and the Work of the Holy Spirit

A close and deep relationship with the Holy Spirit is fundamental for the effectiveness of spiritual and strategic leadership. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to fill and empower the church for the sacred mission. As Seamands states, "On the day of Pentecost his mission is launched, and throughout Acts it remains central. The Holy Spirit is the One in charge, not the apostles. They are not leading but following the leader!" (166). This thought is the parameter for an effective ministry in the kingdom. The problem with trying to minister independent of the Holy Spirit is that pastors surely will be exhausted too easily. If even Jesus needed the empowering of the Holy Spirit for his redemptive mission, leaders need it much more for maintaining and completing their ministry:

> [L]ong-term effectiveness in ministry is a result of a life characterized by the fullness of the Spirit. [A] major reason for the high incidence of burnout in the ministry today could be that we are ministering in our own strength rather than in the Spirit's inexhaustible resources. (Fernando 36)

Although God can use leaders' abilities and skills, the major resource for an effective ministry remains in the power of the third person of the Trinity.

Intimacy with the Holy Spirit is the foundation for success in Christian ministry.

Nevertheless, the tyranny of the urgent may destroy that foundation, which will

undermine the effectiveness of ministry. Therefore, in order to keep that intimacy,

Christian leaders must keep their ministry centered in a very close relationship with God.

Writing about how to avoid burnout in ministry, Ajith Fernando's suggestions are very

helpful:

[S]pending a good time with God each day is a nonnegotiable factor in our daily calendar, then this time could really help slow us down; (2) an hour or more spent each day in the presence of the almighty and sovereign Lord of the universe does wonders to our sense of security (Ps. 46:1-11); (3) when we spend time with God, we are able to "cast all our anxiety on him because he cares for us" (1 Pet. 5:7); (3) when we pray, we open up our hearts to God's healing comfort; and (4) if, during our time with God, we do a lot of intercession, we have become conduits of love. (240-41)

Thus, prayer is not an alternative choice, but a necessity, not only for the sake of a

Christian leader's personal spiritual life, but also for the success of their ministry.

The quiet time of prayer is a time of renewing and strengthening as is stated by

the prophet, "in quietness and confidence shall be your strength" (Isa. 30:15, ASV). God

is the owner of the church and the one responsible for its success. Leaders are only helpers. The strength for a successful ministry comes from a quiet time spent in prayer and devotion to God. The biggest reason that many leaders fail in ministry is because they do not have a good connection with God through an authentic and rich devotional life (Springle 2).

Through a prayer life in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, one can experience what Raniero Cantalamessa called *pneuma-therapy*. Like heliotherapy consists of going to the beach and exposing our bodies to the sunlight, in *pneuma-therapy*, the whole person is exposed, "our body, our mind, and our will to the invisible but powerful rays of the Paraclete" (283). Therefore, as the sun leaves its marks on a body after being exposed to its light, the time in the presence of God will leave his marks in the whole being of those that spent time with him.

An excellent example that is helpful in understanding this allegory is Moses' experience after forty days and nights spent with God on the top of Mount Sinai. His face shone as a result of spending those days in the presence of God (Exod. 34:28-29). He did not notice it, but his people did. In writing about that experience, Paul mentions that the reader can enjoy the same, to a higher degree, because that glory in the Moses instance was a transitory glory, as seen in 2 Corinthians 3:7-9:

But if the ministration of death, written, and engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face; which glory was passing away: how shall not rather the ministration of the spirit be with glory? For if the ministration of condemnation hath glory, much rather doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

In the presence and liberty of the Spirit, with its unveiled face contemplating as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, Christians are transformed into the same image from glory

to glory, as seen in verse 18: "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." In fact, spiritual contemplation leads to spiritual transformation, which certainly affects pastors' ministry lives and experience.

Therefore, the most important transformation is what believers experience, which will make them able to reflect the light of God to the world. During this process of contemplation, the Holy Spirit will refresh the soul, renew the strength, and capacitate the Christian leader for the leadership task. In fact, the time spent with God in prayer and fellowship with the Holy Spirit not only will enable leaders for their ministry, but also will perform a deep transformation that will be visible to those around them, just as the sun leaves its marks in a body when it is exposed to the light rays. Regular practice of the spiritual disciplines of prayer and meditation in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, produce spiritual resiliency, which is the elasticity to endure without breaking, in times of struggle and difficulties (Carroll 206).

Another important effect of fellowship with the Holy Spirit is that the Spirit will enable the Christian leader to be a real *loving worker* instead of a *working lover*. According to Seamands, working lovers are those people that want to *do* something in order to *be* someone (65). This focus causes leaders to fall into a sort of vice *workaholism*— which is an excess of activities that undermine the intimacy and fellowship with God. As a result, the ministry to others is less effective and unable to serve and bless them even though they have the best intentions. The temptation of doing things for the kingdom without cultivating a close relationship with God is always present (Seamands 25; Kinlaw 22). For many pastors, the week's agenda is so full of activities that not enough time is allowed to accomplish all the tasks that need to be done. Pastors must fight against being *workaholics* and preserve their intimacy with God (Scheaffer 135).

When Christian leaders allow an excess of activities to drive their lives, their intimacy and fellowship with God will be threatened. Thus, leaders must keep their ministry centered in a very close relationship with God who is the foundation for a successful ministry.

## Spiritual and Strategic Leadership within the Christian Community

Spiritual and strategic leadership works effectively within the Christian community by leading the people as if they were a team. One of the most important functions of effective leadership is to develop and maintain a teamwork environment. In an era of broken connections, where separatism, exploitation, vengeance, individualism, and independence are normal, the big challenge for leaders is to overcome these barriers by bringing together people that are different in skills, experiences, and personalities (Bechtle 36).

James G. Clawson defines a team as, "a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goal, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable" (292). In other words, a team is a group of people that work together in order to accomplish a determined goal or goals. The leader, then, is the one who plays the most important role in order to help the team reach its goal. Leaders must be team players; winning the loyalty of the others, believing in, trusting, and affirming them in order to meet their goals through those that are under their leadership (Verwer 42-43).

Indeed, the leader is the main person responsible for the effectiveness of teamwork. Following, are listed some skills that are crucial in strategic and spiritual leadership that will contribute to the success of the team.

**Casting the vision.** Firstly, leaders must have a vision. Christian leaders' vision is born in God. The vision that comes from God is revealed by God himself. Proverbs 29:18 says, "Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint" (NIV), stating that clear vision comes through God's revelation. Talking about vision and revelation, Blackaby and Blackaby mention that "vision is something people produce; revelation is something people receive. Leaders can dream up a vision, but they cannot discover God's will. God must reveal it" (69). Spiritual and secular leadership are decidedly different. Christian leaders are not guided by their own vision; instead, they are guided by God's revelation, which becomes the pathway of their vision.

Team members will follow leaders that are confident in their ideas and planning. Therefore, the first task of a leader is to know very well and surely what they want to transmit. Clear information is indispensable.

Without vision the leadership task is undermined and typically most of the time is spent in problem solving rather than strategic planning (Quinn 144). Therefore, leaders must have a clear vision of where to guide their followers. The trust of the followers arises according to the security of the leaders in the vision that they are trying to transmit.

Secondly, leaders must be able to communicate the vision to the entire team. This conveyance can be done individually or publicly, but both demand an act of courage (Hybels 40-42) since people may respond negatively or refuse to transmit the vision.

Leaders essentially must learn how to communicate to their followers the vision they have from God.

Three components of communication (source, message, and the receptor) are necessary so that the communication can be successful (Nida 37-39). Leaders must understand that when communication takes place between sources and receptors different cultural backgrounds come into play. For instance, educational, spiritual, or economical backgrounds might require a high degree of restructuring within the meaning of the message because of the different presuppositions. When casting the vision, leaders must be sure that they are understood and that their receptors are able to assimilate the message. Thus, different methods have to be used; time and money might be necessary, and every opportunity to share the vision must be taken in order to win the attention of their followers (Kotter 94-95).

The communication process. Clear and understandable information is helpful in order to achieve the established purposes. Regarding the communicators, some important remarks to be observed:

• They must know the message (the content) that they are trying to transmit thoroughly.

• They have to know the best method or technique to use and how these methods or techniques match the type of message that they are trying to transmit

• They need to know both the message they want to transmit and the receptor of the message they want to reach.

Regarding the message, the following are topics that must to observe:

• The message must be expressed clearly, so that the content transmitted is understood.

• The message content must help followers in the execution of the tasks.

Regarding the receptors, the following are areas that need special attention:

• Communicators must know very well the receptors' level of understanding

and ability to grasp the message transmitted.

• Communicators need to be familiar with what methods they should use in

order to make the message as understandable as possible to the receptors, and which methods match the receptors they are trying to reach. In addition, during the communicative process sensation, perception, and interpretation take place ... and methods such as conferences, bulletins, reports, newsletters, tracts, and personal letters can be very useful (Calderón 45).

• Communicators have to be aware that when the receptor is confused and unable to understand the message, accomplishment of the task is undermined.



Message (plan) ✓ Is the communication's contents and product. ✓ Must be understandable.

Receptor The person that receives analyzes and executes the message.

Figure 2.1. Flow of communication.

Thirdly, leaders must accommodate each member according to the tasks they are able to do. During the process of communicating the vision and accommodating each

member to their task, leaders benefit from creating an atmosphere of trust and confidence. This atmosphere cannot happen unless leaders know their followers. Therefore, they must know their followers individually; for instance, what are their dreams, their frustrations, their likes and dislikes, their potentials and weaknesses. They have to participate in their triumphs and failures. By knowing their followers, leaders will be able to improve not only their own leadership skills and competencies, but also be able to hold the group together, maintain relationships, and accomplish their tasks (Jonhson 221).

A helpful suggestion is to have a card for each individual, specifying their gifts, talents, and skills, their temperaments, and their experiences with the Lord, helping them keep track of their spiritual journey. In addition, leaders might help their followers find their potential regarding their Christian ministry and how to live an exemplary Christian life in the secular world. Leaders must remember that their main function is to help the group accomplish its task and to keep the group well maintained and functioning productively (Northouse 205).

Therefore, having a vision, communicating it to the entire team, and accommodating each member according to the tasks, are three important steps when casting the vision, which constitute the starting point of effective teamwork.

Maintaining an organized agenda. Planning is one of the most important parts of the leadership task. One of the biggest obstructions in leadership making many leaders stumble is related to the problem of procrastination. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, to *procrastinate* means "to keep delaying something that must be done, often because it is unpleasant or boring" ("Procratinte"). To many people an agenda is a boring thing to follow. As a result, much time is wasted in things that are trivial and the essential item is left undone.

Leadership relates strongly to the future. Planning strategically what needs to be accomplished becomes an important and determinant key to success. In fact, after having a clear vision of where to go, the plan will tell when and how to get there and what resources will be needed. Planning deals with the perspectives of what to do, when, and how to do it. The plan is related to the present because of its relation to what is decided right now regarding the desired future. The concept of "future perfect time paradigm" was mentioned by Clinton:

> [It] refers to a way of viewing a future reality as if it were already present which in turn, inspires one's leadership, challenges followers to the vision, affects decision making, and causes one to persevere in faith, and results in the future reality coming into being. (*Leadership Perspectives* 132)

This notion is useful in order to guide leaders to act with confidence in the present.

Departing from that perspective, leaders must note that in terms of vision, they should work in the present according to the future. Accordingly, they will set their agenda with certainty knowing that what they are trying to do is already in God's agenda.

At this point, leaders take steps in the present according to the future they want to reach. The leader's agenda must be well organized and carefully maintained in the present according to their perspectives of the future. In fact, the fulfillment of the expected future will strongly depend on the strategic plan that is developed in the present. Thus, future and present are tightly connected.

The advantage of having a planned agenda is that it helps leaders order their activities. The ministry's daily affairs can be overloaded with tasks that are not necessary.

Therefore, the wise will distinguish which activities are essential and cannot be postponed, from those that can wait.

Leaders must try to plan a destiny map: on the map they will set hours, days, weeks, and months for activities. Some helpful questions that can guide leaders on building their agenda are, "where do I want to go," "how do I get there," and "what I do want to achieve." Doing this, leaders will avoid wasting time and the frustration and disappointment of having an unfinished task. Another advantage is that leaders will have control over their activities and not their activities over them.

Planning is the projected image of the future that leaders want, which will guide in decisions and actions. An invitation is extended to produce the future in the present time—an opportunity to shape the future (Terry 223).

When planning their road map, activities, and programs, leaders might ask themselves about the needed resources, both human and material. If leaders do not have an organized agenda, they will be hard pressed to execute their tasks. As a result, their leadership will be undermined and their followers will pursue them in their disorganization.

**Empowering others.** Leaders must learn how to trust and empower others in order to get the tasks done. Once the clear vision from God is received, then comes the time to deal with the followers. Clinton defines the function of a leader:

[T]o affirm followers, to provide an atmosphere congenial to accomplish the task or vision, to give emotional and spiritual support so that they can mature, in short, to act relationally with followers in order to enable them to develop and be effective in their contribution to the organization. (*Leadership Perspectives* 27).

Matching people and tasks is the key to empowering others. Helping followers find the areas in which they can best serve is necessary. Leaders must observe those that are eager to serve and their readiness to serve (Smither 310). This observation is fundamental to the leader in the moment of delegating responsibilities.

A fundamental need is for leaders to demonstrate confidence when delegating responsibilities. Empowering others might be done through clear and specific talks, giving the follower the correct information about what has to be accomplished. Here lies the importance of using a *script*, which is the clear information of the tasks to be done. In other words, the script is the activity that "pre-exists any given enactment" (Pine and Gilmore 109), and followers have to understand and identify them inside the context of the vision of ministry.

A typical example regarding the necessity of empowering others is seen in the leadership ministry of Moses. In the moment when he was overtaxed, his father-in-law wisely advised him to share his responsibilities with others among the people of Israel:

It came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from the morning until the evening. Now when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, 'What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?' Moses said to his father-in-law, 'Because the people come to me to inquire of God. When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor and make known the statutes of God and His laws.' Moses' father-in-law said to him, 'The thing that you are doing is not good. You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. (Exod. 18:13-18, NASV)

Three emphases are worthy of note here: (1) Moses was judging alone from morning to evening; (2) although his intentions were good and the cause he was engaged in was

correct, his father-in-law disapproved; and (3) as mentioned in the text, he was damaging the people.

Moses did not hesitate regarding his father-in-law's suggestion: "So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said" (Exod. 18:24). Leaders must trust others and empower them. Not only will they spare their own lives and the people's too, but they will also receive more benefits in the task to be done.

A modern leadership principle that illustrates what Moses found is the Pareto Principle 80/20, which means that 80 percent of the results in an organization are produced by 20 percent of its workers (Blanchard and Hodges 97; Blackaby and Blackaby 218). Comparing this theory with Moses' experience, the conclusion is that leaders must spend more time, not with a larger group, but with a small one. Leaders must spend more time with those that are eager to learn, training and empowering them for the development of their ministry. The principle does not mean that leaders should abandon the other 80 percent. The secret here is that leaders will produce more by reaching the majority (80 percent) through the minority (20 percent).

When leaders work to raise, train, and empower others, they will multiply efforts and effectiveness in ministry. This *explosive growth* happens when leaders spend time and effort developing leaders, not followers (Maxwell 208). That was the strategy that saved Moses from burnout and helped him lead his people to the Promised Land.

**Working cohesively.** When team members are empowered to fulfill their functions, they have to be guided and they must work cohesively. Even as individuality is preserved, it must not undermine the interdependence among the members. Therefore, the leader's function is to keep the team working together without losing its unity, building

coalition efforts among the members, and drawing them together until the goals are accomplished. In an environment in which relationships between leaders and followers are cultivated, team performance and effectiveness will be evident (Vugt 54).

Leaders are responsible for creating cooperative environments, where every part works properly and all the parts work cohesively. The tasks are accomplished more easily and the whole team can then take advantage of it.

Illustrating this point is the outstanding function of synchronized swimming—a sport in which the movements of one or more swimmers are synchronized with a musical accompaniment. Figures are performed in front of a panel of five judges who score swimmers from 1 to 10 (10 being the best). Any imperfection or disharmony will cause them to have a lower score. Swimmers have to carefully work together, connected to each other's movements in accordance with the music. Independence and individualism must be avoided, and a sense of cohesion must exist if the team wants to win the competition.

Leaders must work on unifying the team, keeping each member connected to the other by creating partnership and interdependence among them. Leaders must work on building a collaborative climate, where characteristics like honesty, openness, consistency, and respect will avoid failing the team. They are responsible for the synchronization of the team, helping each member work properly and cohesively with other members (Northouse 213). Therefore, leaders must learn to develop cognitive and emotional bonding through an excellent working relationship with their followers. They must also foster harmony amongst the followers if they want to succeed in their leadership tasks (Graen 53).

Developing an accountable environment through evaluations. Another important area that leaders must deal with is creating an environment of accountability. In order to improve the team's outcomes, leaders have to establish schemes of evaluation and feedback, where the team members, both individually and as a body, can be evaluated. The purpose of evaluation is to develop an environment in which each member and the entire team will have the opportunity to increase its performance for better results. A good approach to evaluation is promoting initiatives; this approach will develop a sense of responsibility, and will intensify efforts to reach the organizational objective (Kilinski and Wofford 158-61). Evaluation will strongly help the team in the development of a good and effective program. Ethical considerations such as sincerity, trustworthiness, integrity, and transparency are important keys in the process of evaluation, which involves a simultaneous convergence of rational, emotional, and spiritual interests (Primeaux and Hartman 2). In developing a lasting and dynamic leadership, the aspects of character and personal integrity are vital components (Quick and Nelson 296) to a healthy and accountable environment.

Leaders must discover which methods of evaluation they will use and how the rewards will be carried out. The evaluation is so important for learning and developing an excellent spirit. The procedure can be a positive experience as it guides and corrects the next planning process.

The reward comes after the evaluation. Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan speak according to the secular world of business:

[T]he foundation of changing behavior is linking rewards to performance and making the linkages transparent. [I]t tells the people in the organization what is valued and recognized, and in the interest of trying to make their own careers more successful, that's how they will concentrate. If a company rewards people and promotes for execution, its culture will change. (92)

Christian leaders should never forget to be thankful and must find ways to reward their followers.

Here are some suggestions for the followers' evaluation:

1. Thank each of them personally;

2. Track their contributions so that gratitude and recognition can be specific.

3. Do not address them in generally in the group, but individually.

4. Hand write or print a personalized note of gratitude.

5. Celebrate their accomplishment with a banquet, a party, or social event (Little 72-76).

Wise leaders will not avoid recognizing the accomplished tasks because encouragement will stimulate followers for the execution of the next tasks.

The most important step in the evaluation process is to learn the quality of the results; both positive and negative. The evaluation can follow two streams: self-evaluation, where members of the team have the opportunity to evaluate themselves individually; and the team evaluation, where the whole team is evaluated as a group/organization. Through a process of self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-assertiveness, both leaders and followers have the opportunity to enhance integrity and accelerate their ministry development (Avolio and Hannah 338, Bergin 72). Identifying and correcting mistakes makes it possible to find solutions and avoid repeating the errors in the future. Mistakes are not the problem; the problem is not correcting them. Care must be taken with "maladaptive self reflection, which generates negative emotions such as anxiety, self-doubt, and fear-based actions" (Avolio and Hannah 338). On one occasion,

two of Thomas Edison's discouraged helpers came to tell him, "We just finished the number seven hundred experiment and still do not have the answer. We have been defeated" (Ziglar 310). Nevertheless, Edison, not one to be discouraged, answered them in a positive tone:

No my friends, you have not been defeated. Just think that now we acquired more knowledge about this experiment than any other person over the earth. We are closer to the answer because now we know seven hundred things related to that experiment that we must not have to do. Do not call it mistake, call it teaching. (310)

In the process of developing a positive accountable environment through evaluation, leaders must increase their proximity to their followers. A leader-follower relationship needs to be built. Followers can collaborate for that proximity by receptiveness and responsiveness, or by willingness to listen and respond appropriately to feedback (Frye, Kesselburgh and Butts). When that proximity increases, a meaningful communication between leaders and followers will take place, resulting in organizational success.

Developing an environment of accountability and evaluation will help leaders avoid unfruitful plans and repeating mistakes. In addition, not only will each team member be challenged to be more responsible regarding the accomplishment of the tasks, but the team's perfection will also be cultivated.

**Projecting a rigorous maintenance.** Team maintenance is another important task in leadership that will keep the team on track. Leaders must regularly and carefully maintenance the team. To reread the directions, to review the boundaries, to recast the vision, and to be aware of what has been attained so far, are all ways by which a team is supported until the final goal is accomplished. Maintenance will seek to keep the team on course without losing its path to the established objective. Once leaders give responsibilities to followers, they have to monitor them closely. Monitoring the group must be both internal and external, continually gathering information, reducing mistakes, providing structure, and overcoming barriers (Northouse 208). When the leaders delegate responsibility, lead team members into action, and improve the team's development and maintenance, not only each member but the entire group is enabled to become a team of winners.

## **Strategic and Spiritual Leadership and Changes**

Throughout leadership, moments occur when a leader must be able to deal with effective change when transitions are necessary to get better and more effective outcomes. In fact, sometimes changes really are necessary. "The definition of neurotic management is to continue to do the same thing but expect a different result" (Hughes, Ginnet, and Curphy 164). In other words, a change in attitude and actions is necessary when different outcomes are needed. Thus, leadership, in order to be effective, must develop the ability to create and execute changes.

Leaders must lead their team through a process of learning and assimilating "new knowledge or technologies into the organization. Alternatively, the team can consolidate what has already been learned" (Waldman, Berson, and Keller 1). This process of learning will demand energy and time, and will require sensibility and cognitive competency from the leaders. Leaders need to awaken the desire for change in organization structure and among followers (Boyatzis 307).

Changes are not always easy because they sometimes deal with the actual identity of an institution. Change may affect structures, strategies, programs, and policies causing conflict and disharmony (Nauta 48). The function of leaders is to study, analyze, and understand the people, the strategies, and the organization where changes will take place.

**Evolutionary and revolutionary changes.** Beach's idea of evolutionary and revolutionary vision as the two modes of cultural change is very interesting. He says, "[E]volutionary vision sees the future as a natural evolution of the present" (56). It means that the organization is moving ahead, making changes only to improve what has been set in the vision. Beach says that revolutionary vision "sees the future as a profound departure from the present, usually as a result of existing or looming crises" (57). Certainly, both ways of change, evolutionary and revolutionary, will prevent the stagnation of leaders in their leadership task, which would undermine their efficiency in ministry.

A leader may have to deal with change in order to achieve better outcomes. They must be prepared to execute change, becoming, indeed, an agent of change. At that point, a leader might work with revolutionary vision and changes.

Many times changes are necessary so that new and innovative things may happen. When new ideas, new points of views, and new systems of getting the job done are established and executed, certainly changes will take place. Then, a leader must be well prepared and equipped to overcome barriers and resistance that surely will show up during the changing process.

A revolutionary change is necessary when the organization is in trouble and consequently needs radical changes, "and the trick, of course, is recognizing and understanding the threat or opportunity and having the creativity to guild a vision that can deal with it adequately" (Beach 57). Therefore, leaders have to be able to understand

when revolutionary changes are needed and how to lead successfully their organization into those changes.

In an organizational structure in which position plays an important part in stability and uniformity, bureaucracy may become a stumbling block to new ideas and needed changes (Pollard 87-90). The execution of change is necessary though not easy. In revolutionary change, organizational and administrative systems might be confronted. As stated by Debra E. Meyerson, leaders have to have the "capacity to push people to confront the conflicts and adaptive challenges facing the system" which "is one of the most crucial and difficult aspects of real leadership" (169). The best way to do that is "by creating supportive local context and nurturing relationships" (168). Indeed, the most important task will be inspiring others "not through daring acts of courage, but through their ability to keep going, to tough it out, and to rise above their own frustration, humiliation, and anger to act on behalf of their larger ideal" (170). Therefore, the leader's function is to observe and evaluate activities and outcomes in order to clarify what is necessary to keep doing, and in what areas an urgent change is needed in order to accomplish the organization's vision.

After understanding that change is necessary, perhaps requiring both evolutionary and revolutionary methods, one must understand the segments that will take place during the change process. Craig van Gelder mentions that *improvement*, *adjustment*, *revision*, and *re-creation*, are a "useful framework for designing a given intervention as well as for helping to guide the [changing] process once it is set in motion" (169-70). Needless to say, leaders become the main responsible for the development and execution of changes within their organization. During a process of change, observing the different roles that a leader may occupy

are important:

[A] change leader is the one who initiates a change process. [A] change agent is the one who causes the change to begin in a person or an organization. [A] change manager is the person who has the day-to-day responsibilities of implementing and overseeing the change effort, and a change model, a person who exemplifies the change effort. (Clawson 348)

Thus, a leader is the main protagonist of change in any institution.

In order to provoke a change, a leader is the one who knows the complexities of

stimulating transformations:

[H]how to create a feeling of dissonance so that change will work ... [how to] create something outside of common and comfortable that keeps unsetting people, persistently communicating information designed to move people toward positive change ... invariably find positive, funloving ways to stimulate people's thoughts and actions by building creative tension while challenging them to realize that what has been can be no longer. (Barna 203)

Definitely, a change process must start with the leader. However, in Christian leadership ministry, leaders should never use their positional authority in order to obligate or coerce their followers to do any task. When dealing with God's people, leaders must be aware that they are servants of God. Change will be difficult if they create an atmosphere of animosity between them and their followers. Any effort to keep unity and fellowship will be excellent for the accomplishment of these tasks.

**Resistance to change.** Many times a refusal to accept change occurs particularly when dependent on those that have to change (Hughes, Ginnet and Curphy 622). Since changes are not easy, leaders must be prepared to handle conflicts. Trouble can come from traditional bureaucratic structures characterized by centralization, standardization, and formalization (Fry, Vitucci, and Cedillo 837).

If a leader could create an atmosphere of learning through communal participation in the changes, the result would be helpful. In this atmosphere of communal learning, members are understood and appreciated; and their vision, altruist love, hope, and faith are cultivated (Fry, Vitucci, and Cedillo 837-838). Understanding the Christian community as an organism rather than an organizational community is desired.

In a secular organization, productivity is emphasized; punishing and even firing a worker is normal and acceptable. The idea of a Christian community means that everyone is valued and has a sense of membership, feels understood, and receives genuine care and attention (Fry, Vitucci, and Cedillo 838). In this environment, change will be easier and less complicated.

**Important outcomes of change.** One of the most important advantages of change within an organization is innovation (Towns, Stetzer, and Bird 337). An organization loses its potential when people are not responding efficiently, when the tasks are unproductive, and the goals have not been reached. These experiences signify a good time for change within that organization. Change will be the way to renew the organization and make the establishment more relevant.

An extraordinary way to bring innovation is by answering the right question. The following are helpful inquiries that can serve as a guide to lead a team to change:

- Which programs worked especially well, and why?
- Which programs failed, and why?

• What activities resulted in a pleasant surprise for the service constituencies of the staff members?

• What outcomes would the staff rather not see or repeat in coming years? (Jeavons and Basinger 139)

These evaluative questions will allow the leader and the team to evaluate their weaknesses and strengths, and identify those fields that need urgent innovations. Through evaluative questions, leaders will discover things that require change, i.e. who (people), where (areas), what (things), and how (methods).

At this point, a new outcome surfaces—the renovation of the entire organization and its people. Renovation works by helping the organization avoid getting stuck doing the same thing over and over when the association should be changing to get better results. We live in a world that is constantly changing; consequently, in order to avoid becoming obsolete and outdated, leaders and organizations must be prepared to undergo renovation as well. An appropriate Scripture to illustrate the need of change and renovation is found in Jesus' words in Matthew 9:16-17:

> No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved. (NIV)

When renovation is absent, leadership can be boring and the organizations obsolete. What happens is a sort of organizational *entropy*, which means "the degradation of the matter and energy in the universe to an ultimate state of inert uniformity ... a process of degradation or running down or a trend to disorder" ("Entropy"). In another words it means slow death (Quinn 18, 144). Many organizations need change at this point. In the process of change, *psycho-adaptation* will be helpful in overcoming not only the pain and barriers of change, but also the organizational entropy. Psycho-adaptation is similar to

resilience and refers to the mindset of adapting to a psycho-society change (Cury 120). Psycho-adaptation will help an organization avoid entropy, adapt to new changes, and renovate the entire organization.

Positive changes guided by the Holy Spirit enrich us with new experiences without rejecting the old ones. Changes are a progression to perfection; not perfection without pain or troubles, but a perfection that makes our leadership ministry fruitful for the glory of God and for the expansion of his kingdom over the earth, starting in the place where we are ministering.

## **Research Design**

I used a mixed-method design in my project. The result of my intervention came through the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods via the pre- and postquestionnaires and the field interviews.

Research design is the technique of studies that enable researchers to collect data and "offer some level of control over the research situation" (Bieger and Gerlach 49). In the process of interviewing through conversation, the researcher is able to get informants' perception of their environment and experiences (Burns 425).

While qualitative analysis moves from specific situations to a general conclusion, and has its origin in descriptive analysis and inductive process, quantitative analysis is more related to deduction and reaches its conclusion moving from general principles to specific situations (Wiersma and Jurs 13; Creswell, *Educational Research* 37).

Quantitative research is more related to explanation and control, inquiring the facts. On the other hand, qualitative research promotes "understanding the complex interrelationships among all that exists" (Stake 37). Both, quantitative and qualitative

researches provide a better understanding of the data by collecting the results and adding contextual information.

## **Summary**

Leaders are needed for building up the church. They were appointed by Christ himself with the mission of building his body the church, and for capacitating its members for an effective work of service.

The main task of leadership consists of working spiritually and strategically for the church's growth. That growth is seen in both collective and individual ways. The collective growth is communal in the sense that all the church grows together, unseparated. The unity of faith is emphasized. The growth is also individual in the sense that each part must work, developing its function for increasing the body. Christian leadership will focus their work on the development of both collective and individual growth.

Leaders are also responsible for the doctrinal protection of the church. An effective leadership will deal with the problems that try to fragment Christian faith. In the process of leadership, they will work so that the church may grow in maturity, which is growth in the knowledge of Christ, until the stature of a full-grown man.

The health of the church depends on the health of its leader. A healthy leadership is founded in a Christlike ministry. Following the example of Jesus, leaders must avoid the abuse of power and coercion. Christlike ministry is distinguished by servanthood ministry. The power in this ministry is characterized by service to others, not being served by others. Serving other makes the difference and contrast between the Christian style of leadership ministry and the world's style. Leadership ministry is an active service, not passive. According to secular values, leaders strive to be served by others and depending on the position a leader reaches, the higher the position, the more they will have power over others.

Another important aspect of Christian leadership is related to the ability to make changes when better and more effective outcomes are needed. By the guidance of the Holy Spirit, leaders will work out the changes that are needed for the growth of the church and its members in particular. Although changes are not easy, they are essential for avoiding stagnation, and for the renewal of the church.

The dependence on the Holy Spirit is crucial in leadership. Christian leaders must act out their daily fellowship with the Holy Spirit if they want to succeed in ministry. A person in Christian ministry can easily get involved in a lot of activities and become a *workaholic*, a *working lover* instead of a *loving worker*. As a result, the ministry to God's people will be ineffective, disqualifying the minister to the work of the ministry. The intimacy with the Holy Spirit is the secret of refreshment and for a powerful ministry in the world. If any leaders lay down their lives in the presence of God and develop an intimacy with the Holy Spirit, not only their lives, but also their followers' lives, the church, and the entire world will be transformed.

Finally, strategic and spiritual leadership works effectively within the Christian community by leading workers as a team. Spiritual and strategic leaders develop and maintain a teamwork environment. They work with the people as a team and with each one individually, in order to reach the established goals. Leaders must work with their followers, trusting and empowering them for the work of ministry.

#### **CHAPTER 3**

# METHODOLOGY

#### **Problem and Purpose**

Mature spiritual life and organizational skills in ministry tasks are two important characteristics that pastors and church leaders must observe and develop in their ministries if they want to succeed as Christian leaders. Pastors and leaders must be prepared spiritually and strategically for ministry.

Spiritual life and strategic leadership are two useful tools that surely will improve pastoral life, ministry efficiency, and ministry experience. As studied in Chapter 2, the health of the church strongly depends on the health of its pastors. Basically, the spiritual life of pastors must be an extension of the life of Christ, which is lived through the power of, and a close relationship with, the Holy Spirit. Most of the problems in pastoral ministry result from being busy carrying out ministry duties, consequently losing connection with God, burning out, and a fostering an unfruitful ministry. The more pastors grow in their spiritual life, the more they will develop their spiritual leadership. As they grow in a deeper relationship with God, they will be able to develop their ministry strategically as well. In fact, spiritual and strategic ministry helps pastors and leaders work within the Christian community, developing and helping God's people in the accomplishment of an effective ministry.

Paraguayan leaders have had difficulty in their pastoral ministries, and as a result, have not been able to develop their ministry efficiently. Most of the churches are not experiencing desirable growth as a result of inefficient ministry. The purpose of this study was to measure the changes in then understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church who attended the three leadership retreats.

## **Research Questions**

Three research questions guided the data collection for this study. The research questions address data collected from both quantitative and qualitative sources.

## **Research Question #1**

What were the levels of understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church before attending the three leadership retreats?

The goal of these research questions was not only a set platform for the retreat seminars in the sense that the questions were about spiritual and strategic leadership but also to provide the participants with the opportunity to auto-evaluate themselves in terms of spiritual and strategic leadership in their churches.

I administered a pre-auto-evaluative questionnaire on the first day of the retreat seminar in order to collect information about how the participants were developing their spiritual lives daily and how they were developing their ministry in the context of their local church as well. The purpose of this pre-auto-evaluative questionnaire was to make the participants conscious about their spiritual life and ministry. In fact, the pre-autoevaluative questionnaire was useful for measuring their efficiency and, at the same time, to learn areas where they needed to develop in order to succeed in their ministry.

# **Research Question #2**

What were the levels of understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church after attending the three leadership retreats?

The leadership retreats were designed to offer the participants a biblical foundation of a spiritual and strategic leadership within the community of faith, which is the church. The starting point of the seminar retreats focused on two leadership characteristics: spiritual life and organizational skills. Leadership in the church is not only spiritual but also organizational. Christian leaders not only work with people, taking them to the place where God wants them to be by training and empowering them, they also work in a functional structure within the church as a normal organization that needs to be governed wisely by setting plans, organizing agendas, distributing and controlling activities, solving conflicts, evaluating results, and all the other characteristics explained Chapter 2. Hence, the goal of the research question was to bring awareness and understanding to the participants about their leadership task, challenging them to reach their potential and increase their effectiveness and satisfaction in their ministries.

### **Research Question #3**

What aspects of the three retreat seminars had the greatest impact on the observed changes?

Although satisfaction and effectiveness in ministry does not happen automatically, at the end of the third retreat seminar I applied the auto-evaluative questionnaire so that the participants could evaluate themselves on how the retreat seminar helped them improve their spiritual and strategic leadership skills. The post-auto-

evaluative questionnaire measured how the participants responded to the retreat seminars' teachings in terms of spiritual life and ministry strategy at the local church. The second interview took place in a period of one to five months after the third leadership retreat.

## **Population and Participants**

The thirteen participants for this study came from two of five districts in the Methodist Church in Paraguay. The two districts were the Central District, composed of ten pastors, and the Bajo Chaco District, composed of four pastors. One pastor from the Central District did not attend the leadership retreats. All of the thirteen participants were male pastors designated by the Methodist Church in Paraguay to serve in local churches. The ages of these pastors ranged from twenty-seven to fifty years. Their ministry experience varied from two to fifteen years. All of these pastors, except two, have completed their pastoral training in the Methodist Bible Institute. Four of the thirteen pastors were getting their college theology level degree in the Evangelical University of Paraguay. Two of them were already developing some kind of pastoral tasks as lay leaders before receiving their ordination to ministry. In addition, most of these local pastors had part-time jobs aside from their pastoral ministry because the local churches where they were currently serving did not have the funds to pay them as full-time pastors.

The reason I selected only pastors of two districts was due to the economical and logistical circumstances for traveling. These two districts are close to each other and to the location where we held the seminar retreats. Therefore, the communication, traveling, and any other contact were easier and less expensive.

# **Design of the Study**

This study followed an explanatory, mixed-method design based on two autoevaluation surveys, two reflective personal field interviews, and the three leadership retreats.

### Instrumentation

The survey was through the pre and post questionnaires that was applied on the first day of the retreat, and through the post open-ended auto-evaluative questionnaire that was applied on the last day of the retreat. Through the questionnaire I was able to know and evaluate the participant's spiritual life and pastoral leadership experience in their local church. The questions for the questionnaire were based on the literature contents from Chapter 2.

The two reflective personal field interviews helped me to see how the seminars' teachings were impacting the participants' lives. The reflective personal interview was different from the two other questionnaires, dealing more with insights and observations gained by the participants during retreats. The first reflective personal field interview took place after the second leadership retreat, and the second interview took place between one to five months after the third retreat. I visited each one of the participants and applied the reflective field interview.

The retreats took place at the Methodist Bible Institute facilities, and each retreat seminar lasted two days. Three leadership retreats were held in the space of two 2 1/2 months, having six weeks space between the second and third retreat. Those six weeks I used for the first personal field interview. During the first day of the first retreat, seminar participants gathered together during the afternoon hours and applied the pre-auto-

evaluative questionnaire. The first conference section was held after dinner. The second day was the second and third conference sections. The second leadership retreat held the same format and was two days long. The first personal field interview took place after the second retreat. The third leadership retreat also had the same format. The post-autoevaluative questionnaire was utilized on the last day of this leadership retreat.

I used content for the leadership retreat that was related to spiritual and strategic leadership according to the topics studied in Chapter 2. Basically, the conference teachings were related to Christlike leadership and leader's character, the identity of a leader, spiritual power for leadership, the importance of vision and developing a team work environment, dealing with changes, and finishing well. The teaching was delivered through power point presentations. Three seminar conference sections were held during the first and second retreats. The last retreat had only two sections totaling eight conferences for the entire retreat program (see Appendix A).

## Variables

The independent variable of this project was the seminars' teachings about spiritual and strategic leadership during the three retreats.

The dependent variable was the change in understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church who attended the three leadership retreats.

## **Reliability and Validity**

Each participant answered the same test twice in the same lapse of time as a testretest. For each test, only one version (i.e., same content) at the same level of difficulty and with the same types of scales was used (Creswell, *Research Design* 170).

I sent the pre- and posttest questionnaires to four people for review and to give feedback about the test structure and the questions' content. These people have experience on spiritual formation and leadership training.

## **Data Collection**

For this research project, I administered two auto-evaluative questionnaires and two reflective personal field interviews.

From the two auto-evaluative questionnaires, I not only collected the participants' opinions and perceptions about spiritual and strategic leadership, but also how spiritual and strategic leadership had been practiced by them in their life and ministry experience. Participants answered a questionnaire of thirty questions that were divided into two different topics related to spiritual and strategic leadership. The topical divisions were not shown on the test paper sheet. The scale processes were according to the following scale: 4—strongly disagree, 3—disagree, 3—agree, and 1—strongly agree (see Appendix B). Fifteen questions related to leader's spiritual health and the other fifteen related to the role of a Christian leader within the Christian community. All of the questions were mixed together. The two auto-evaluative questionnaires were conducted with the participants gathered together in the same location. The time allotted for the questionnaires was forty-five minutes each.

By using the two reflective personal interviews (see Appendix C), I was able to know how the retreat seminars had been useful for improving knowledge and competency in strategic and spiritual leadership. I visited the pastors and applied the reflective interview personally. I interviewed the pastors in a conversational style according to each question and took notes according to their answers. The evaluative

process was through their answer by taking notes on their answers and analyzing how their Spiritual and Strategic Leadership skills were improved.

The collected data was organized in separate files according to each individual pastor. Each file had the following order or section: first, the pre-auto-evaluative questionnaire; second, the first reflective personal interview; third, the post-auto-evaluative questionnaire; and, fourth, the second reflective personal interview.

### **Data Analysis**

The analyzed data included the two auto-evaluative questionnaires and the two reflective personal interviews. The first instruments were the two auto-evaluative questionnaires used during the retreat seminars. The range was from 1 to 4 according to the answers for each question. The measured average was based upon the questions in each block. For each block I had only one average. Through the average's results I was able to analyze and identify how spiritual and strategic leadership was understood (first questionnaire), and how it shaped their lives and ministry (second questionnaire). I expected that the averages would change in the second questionnaire. Therefore, through these two auto-evaluative questionnaires I had the average related to spiritual and strategic leadership for each pastor before and after the seminar retreats.

For the two reflective personal interviews I used six questions based on how the seminar retreats helped them in their devotional and ministerial lives, what were some of the most problems they were facing in ministry and how they were handling it, and what areas in their ministry were improved by applying the principles taught in the seminar retreats (see Appendix C). Through the answer for each question, I was able to analyze

and identify how their spirituality and leadership skills had increased after participating in the second and the third seminar retreat.

#### **Ethical Procedures**

To protect the privacy of those who participated in the retreat seminars, I was the only person that had access to the data. I had a personal file for each participant. A copy of the contents in each file was given to each participant. Both the questionnaires and the reflective interviews were not anonymous.

The results from the first and second tests, and from the interviews were copied and given only to the participants. All participants had a copy of all the contents in their files. None of the participants had access to the files of the other participants; no other person that is not related to the project had access to the data results.

Furthermore, the participants were assured that the information in the questionnaires would be kept confidential and that they would have free access at any time to the information in their files (see Appendix F). Afterwards, all the data collected during the retreat seminars and the field interviews were saved in files for further studies. The names of the participants were kept anonymous.

The participants were informed that the two auto-evaluative questionnaires would investigate areas in their spiritual lives and ministry experiences. The results of these questionnaires would be used in the evaluating process about how the retreat seminars were useful to their spiritual lives and ministry experience (see Appendix F).

#### **CHAPTER 4**

#### FINDINGS

The growth of the church is closely related to how the pastoral ministry is developed. The progress and efficiency of ministry depends on the spiritual life and leadership of the pastor. In fact, the health and growth of the church is completely interwoven with the health and growth of the leader. In my ministry among the local pastors of the Methodist Church in Paraguay, I have observed that many of them have been limited in their ministerial efficiency due to a lack in their spiritual and strategic leadership. Some pastors are actually stagnated and deficient in the development of their ministry, and their churches are not experiencing a normal growth rate. Both achievement in pastoral ministry and the growth of the church depend on how the pastors develop their spiritual life and strategies of leadership.

The purpose of this study was to measure how the understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church has changed after attending three leadership retreats.

Three research questions guided this study: (1) What were the levels of understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church before attending the three leadership retreats? (2) What were the levels of understanding and practice of strategic and spiritual leadership among the pastors of the Paraguayan Methodist Church after attending the three leadership retreats? (3) What aspects of the three leadership retreats had the greatest impact on the observed changes?

#### **Participants**

The participants for this study were selected from two of the five districts comprising the Methodist Church in Paraguay. The two districts were the Central District, composed of ten pastors, and the Bajo Chaco District, composed of four pastors. Not all the invited pastors fully participated in the three retreat seminars. Out of the ten pastors from the Central District, six participated in all three retreats, two attended two of the retreats, one attended just one of the retreats, and another one was unable to participate. From the Bajo Chaco District, three pastors participated in all of the retreats, and one just attended the first leadership retreat.

All of the participants were male pastors designated by the Methodist Church in Paraguay to serve in local churches. Their ages ranged from 27 to 50 years. The majority of the pastors hold part-time jobs in addition to their pastoral ministry due to the inability of the local churches where they are currently serving to support them full-time.

Of the thirteen participants, eleven graduated from the Methodist Bible Institute, which offers a three year program of theological training. After finishing the program, three of them are presently studying to earn a college degree from the Evangelical University of Paraguay.

The ministry experience among the pastors varied from two to twenty years. Some of them were lay leaders in their local church before and while studying in the Methodist Bible Institute. After finishing their studies, they were appointed as local pastors among the Methodist Churches in the Central and Bajo Chaco Districts. Those that are in the Evangelical University are already nominated pastors in a local church.

#### **Research Question 1 Measurements**

Research Question 1 examined how the practice of strategic and spiritual leadership was understood among the Pastors that participated in the leadership retreat. A pre-questionnaire (see Appendix B) was given during the first day of the first retreat. The questionnaire was divided into two blocks. Fifteen questions related to the leader's spiritual health and the other fifteen related to the role of a Christian leader within the Christian community. All of the questions were mixed together.

In the questionnaires, the measurement average ranged from 0 to 4 for each question throughout the fifteen questions. The range used was based on four possible answers to each question: 4—strongly agree, 3—agree, 2—disagree, and 1—strongly disagree. Therefore, the results were based in the score ranking of 4—strongly agree to 1—strongly disagree.

#### **Results of the Pretest on Spiritual Leadership**

In the field of spiritual leadership, the block was divided into three specific areas: spiritual disciplines such as prayer and fasting (five questions), spiritual disciplines related to the Scriptures (five questions), and spiritual disciplines related to pastoral behavior (five questions). The questions were mixed. I used the participants' answers on the pre-questionnaire to find out how spiritual leadership was understood prior to participation in the leadership retreats.

**Prayer discipline (questions 7, 9, 15, 17, and 23).** I found how prayer life was developed in the pastors' lives. Question 7, "I have a consistent prayer time daily no matter what happens," had an average of 3.3. Question 9 average only 2.6: "I fast no less than once a week." On question 15, "I have a specific place and time for praying" the

average response was 3.0. Question 17, "I believe my prayer time is effective to accomplish my ministry in the local church," averaged 2.9. Finally, question 23, "I have a prayer list that I use in prayer time," has an average of 2.5. In this group of questions, the lowest average was on question 23 (2.5) and the highest was on question 7 (3.3; see Table 4.1).

**Discipline related to the Scriptures (questions 13, 19, 21, 25, and 29).** In this group of questions, I found how the spiritual life of the pastors related to study and meditation on the Scripture. Questions 13, "I frequently take notes from my readings in the Bible and devotional time," and question 25, "I spend sufficient time to develop my fellowship with Jesus," had the same average of 3.0. Question 19, "I am an example in my personal study and meditation on the Word of God," averaged 3.3. Question 21, "I keep a journal of my spiritual life and ministry," scored the lowest average in this group of questions, 1.9. Finally, the highest average was on question 29, "When I preach or teach I feel the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit," which was 3.4 (see Table 4.1)

**Spiritual discipline related to pastoral behavior (questions 1, 3, 5, 11, and 27).** In the spiritual discipline related to the practice of the pastoral ministry, the responses averaged 3.6 on question 1: "My spiritual health is adequate for nurturing those around me and the church that I am leading." Question 3, "My pastoral ministry reflects Jesus to my members in the local church," had an average of 3.4. On questions 5, "All under my leadership will succeed in their spiritual lives and work for the church," and 27, "My time for praying and development of my spiritual life is adequate for my ministry," had the same average of 3.0. Question 11, "I pray daily for those that are under my leadership," averaged 3.3. For this group of questions, the lowest average was 3.0 on questions 5 and

27. The highest average (3.6) was on question 1 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1.	<b>Pretest</b>	Average	<b>Results</b> o	on Spiritua	l Leadership

Questions	Pretest
1. My spiritual health is adequate for nurturing those around me and the church that I am leading.	3.6
3. My pastoral ministry reflects Jesus to my members in the local church.	3.4
5. All under my leadership will succeed in their spiritual lives and work for the church.	3.0
7. I have a consistent prayer time daily no matter what happen:	3.3
9. I fast no less than once a week.	2.6
11. I pray daily for those that are under my leadership.	3.3
13. I frequently take note from my readings in the Bible and devotional time.	3.2
15. I have a specific place and time for praying.	3.0
17. I believe my prayer time is effective to accomplish my ministry in the local church.	2.9
19. I am an example in the personal study and meditation on the Word of God.	3.3
21. I keep a journal of my spiritual life and ministry.	1.9
23. I have a prayer list that I use in prayer time.	2.5
25. I spend sufficient time to develop my fellowship with Jesus.	3.2
27. My time for praying and development of my spiritual life is adequate for my ministry.	3.0
29. When I preach or teach I feel the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.	3.4

The average number is based on the scale of **4=strongly agree**, **3=agree**, **2=disagree**, and **1=strongly disagree** as appeared in the **pre test**.

## **Observations on the Pretest Results concerning Spiritual Leadership**

In the pretest results on spiritual leadership, I observed the following areas in the

field of spiritual leadership among the participants.

**Areas of risk.** From the three groups of questions, the following are the risk areas I observed, having the lowest average: question 21, "I keep a journal of my spiritual life and ministry" (1.9); question 23, "I have a prayer list that I use in prayer time" (2.5); question 9, "I fast no less than once a week" (2.6); and, question 17, "I believe my prayer time is effective to accomplish my ministry in the local church" (2.9).

**Results that showed higher scores in each group of questions.** The highest average on the disciplines of prayer and fasting was on question 7: "I have a consistent prayer time daily no matter what happens" (3.3). On the disciplines related to Scripture, the highest average was on question 29: "When I preach or teach I feel the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit" (3.4). Finally, on the disciplines related to pastoral behavior, the highest average was on question 1: "My spiritual health is adequate for nurturing those around me and the church that I am leading" (3.6).

## **Results from the Pretest on Strategic Leadership**

In the field of strategic leadership, the block was divided into three specific areas: delegating authority and giving responsibilities (five questions);,relationships and team work (five questions), and vision in leadership (five questions). All of the questions were mixed together. I used the participants' answers on the pre-questionnaire to find out how strategic leadership was understood prior to participation in the leadership retreats.

**Empowering by delegating authority and giving responsibilities (questions 4, 6, 18, 22, and 26).** I learned how delegating authority and giving responsibility were understood by the participants. On question 4, "I trust, empower, and evaluate those that work with me," the average was 3.4. Question 18, "I communicate clearly when delegating responsibility to my members," averaged 3.2. On question 22, "I am able to

inspire, guide, and correct those under my leadership," the average was 3.1. Finally, on question 26, "If a person is not contributing in his/her function, I move him/her," the average responses 1.8. In this group of questions, the lowest score was on question 26 (1.8), and the highest was on question 4 (3.4; see Table 4.2).

**Relationships and team work (questions 2, 8, 14, 24, and 28).** In this area, I found out how relationship and team work were understood by the pastor participants in the leadership retreats. On question 2, "My leadership team works cohesively and reach our goals," the average was 3.4. Question 8, "It is easy for me to listen to those under my authority," we had the average of 3.7. The same average (3.1) occurred on question 14, "The leaders under me have confidence in my leadership," and question 28, "I know the strength and weakness, the gifts, and potential of my leaders under me." The average on question 24, "I can work with those who disagree with me in some points" was 2.9. In this group of questions, the lowest average was on question 24 (2.9) and the highest on question 8 (3.7; see Table 4.2)

**Vision in leadership (Questions 10, 12, 16, 20, and 30).** Finally, I found out the extent of the participants' understanding of vision in leadership. On question 10, "I lead my church with a clear vision," the average was 3.4. An average of 2.3 occurred for questions 12, "All under my leadership know what and how to do ministry." For question 16, "I am well organized in all my activities," the average was 2.7. The average on question 20, "Those under my leadership know my vision, aspirations, and purpose of ministry," was 3.0. Finally, question 30, "I make changes in my ministry whenever they are necessary," had on average of 3.2. The lowest average for this group was on question 12 (2.3), and the highest was on question 10 (3.4; see Table 4.2).

Questions	Pretest
2. My leadership team works cohesively and reach our goals.	3.4
4. I trust, empower, and evaluate those that work with me.	3.4
6. It is easy for me to delegate responsibility.	3.0
8. It is easy for me to listen to those under my authority.	3.7
10. I lead my church with a clear vision.	3.4
12. All under my leadership know what and how to do ministry.	2.3
14. The leaders under me have confidence in my leadership.	3.1
16. I am well organized in all my activities.	2.7
18. I communicate clearly when delegating responsibility to my members	3.2
20. Those under my leadership know my vision, aspirations, and purpose of ministry.	3.0
22. I am able to inspire, guide, and correct those under my leadership.	3.1
24. I can work with those who disagree with me in some points.	2.9
26. If a person is not contributing in his/her function, I move him/her.	1.8
28. I know the strength and weakness, the gifts, and potential of my leaders under me.	3.1
30. I make changes in my ministry whenever they are necessary.	3.2

#### Table 4.2. Pretest Average Results on Strategic Leadership

The average number is based on the scale of **4=strongly agree**, **3=agree**, **2=disagree**, and **1=strongly disagree** as appeared in the **pre test**.

## **Observations on the Pretest Results Concerning Strategic Leadership**

In Strategic Leadership, I observed the following areas:

Areas of risk. From the three groups of questions, the following are the risk areas

I observed, having the lowest average: question 26, "If a person is not contributing in

his/her function, I move him/her" (1.8); question 24, "I can work with those who disagree

with me in some points" (2.9); and, question 12, "All under my leadership know what

and how to do ministry" (2.3).

**Results that showed higher scores in each group of questions.** The highest average on empowering by delegating authority and giving responsibilities area was on question 4, "I trust, empower, and evaluate those that work with me" (3.4). In the area of relationships and team work, the highest average was on question 8, "It is easy for me to listen to those under my authority" (3.7). Finally, the highest average on vision in leadership was on question 10, "I lead my church with a clear vision" (3.4).

#### **Research Question 2 Measurements**

In Research Question 2, I examined the level of understanding and practice of strategic leadership after attending the leadership retreats. I used the post-questionnaire (see Appendix B) that was given in the last day as the last activity in the third retreat. The questionnaire was the same used in the pretest, divided into two blocks consisting of fifteen questions related to spiritual leadership and fifteen related to strategic leadership. All of the questions were mixed together.

All of the procedures used to measure the posttest were the same as those used in the pretest. Through the average results, I was able to analyze and identify how spiritual and strategic leadership was understood after attending the three leadership retreats.

#### **Results of the Posttest on Spiritual Leadership**

In the posttest, I was able to see how the leadership retreats shaped the lives of the participants. The average used in the questionnaire was the same in the pretest, a range of 0 to 4. As expected, the average changed in the second questionnaire.

**Progressive changes.** In the *prayer discipline* field, a progressive result was shown on question 23, "I have a prayer list that I use in prayer time." The average was 2.5 in the pretest, but in the posttest it averaged 2.8. Slight changes occurred in question

15, "I have a specific place and time for praying," from average of 3.0 to 3.1 average. On question 17, "I believe my prayer time is effective to accomplish my ministry in the local church," the change was more noticeable, rising from 2.9 to an average of 3.4 (see Table 4.3).

In the *discipline related to the pastoral behavior* field, some progressive changes between the pretest and posttest occurred. A slight change was shown in question 3, "My pastoral ministry reflects Jesus to my members in the local church," from an average of 3.4 to 3.5. In addition, question 5 indicates a change also, "All under my leadership will succeed in their spiritual lives and work for the church," from 3.0 to 3.5.

In the *discipline related to the Scriptures*, question 29 had a progressive average change, "When I preach or teach I feel the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit," from on average of 3.4 to 3.6 (see Table 4.3).

**Regressive changes.** A few regressive changes were also discovered. These showed areas in the pastors' lives where the score range decreased. In question 1, "My spiritual health is adequate for nurturing those around me and the church that I am leading," the pretest had an average of 3.6. However, the posttest score fell to an average of 3.1. Other questions that showed regression of the average were question 13, "I frequently take note from my readings in the Bible and devotional time," from 3.2 to 2.9. Questions that showed a slight change from the pretest to the posttest were numbers 25, "I spend sufficient time to develop my fellowship with Jesus," which fell from 3.2 to 3.1, and question 19, "I am an example in the personal study and meditation on the Word of God," which fell from 3.3 to 3.2 (see Table 4.3).

**No changes.** I did not find any changes on questions 7, "I have a consistent prayer time daily no matter what happen," and question 27, "My time for praying and development of my spiritual life is adequate for my ministry." Both questions kept the same score in the posttest as in the pretest (see Table 4.3).

Questions	Pre-Test	Posttest
1. My spiritual health is adequate for nurturing those around me and the church that I am leading.	3.6	3.1
3. My pastoral ministry reflects Jesus to my members in the local church.	3.4	3.5
5. All under my leadership will succeed in their spiritual lives and work for the church.	3.0	3.3
7. I have a consistent prayer time daily no matter what happen.	3.3	3.3
9. I fast no less than once a week.	2.6	2.8
11. I pray daily for those that are under my leadership.	3.3	3.1
13. I frequently take note from my readings in the Bible and devotional time.	3.2	2.9
15. I have a specific place and time for praying.	3.0	3.1
17. I believe my prayer time is effective to accomplish my ministry in the local church.	2.9	3.4
19. I am an example in the personal study and meditation on the Word of God.	3.3	3.2
21. I keep a journal of my spiritual life and ministry.	1.9	2.2
23. I have a prayer list that I use in prayer time.	2.5	2.8
25. I spend sufficient time to develop my fellowship with Jesus.	3.2	3.1
27. My time for praying and development of my spiritual life is adequate for my ministry.	3.0	3.0
29. When I preach or teach I feel the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.	3.4	3.6

Table 4.3. Pre- and Posttests Average Results on Spiritual Leadership

The average number is based on the scale of **4=strongly agree**, **3=agree**, **2=disagree**, **and 1=strongly disagree** as appeared in the **pre** and **posttest**.

## **Results of the Posttest on Strategic Leadership**

In the posttest on strategic leadership, I was able to see how the leadership retreats shaped the participants' understanding of strategic leadership. The average used in the questionnaire was the same in the pretest a range of 0 to 4.

As expected, the average changed in the second questionnaire.

**Progressive changes.** In the leadership tasks such as *delegating authority and giving responsibilities* a significant change occurred on question 26, "If a person is not contributing in his/her function, I move him/her," from an average of 1.8 to 2.4. In addition, a slight average change on question 22, "I am able to inspire, guide, and correct those under my leadership," occurred from 3.1 to 3.2.

In the field of *relationship and teamwork* the average changed slightly on question 14 "The leaders under me have confidence in my leadership," from 3.1 to 3.2. In addition, a significant change occurred on question 24, "I can work with those who disagree with me in some points," from 2.9 to 3.5 (see Table 4.4).

In the area of *vision in leadership*, a change occurred in question 12, "All under my leadership know what and how to do ministry" from an average of 2.3 to 2.8. A slight change is showed in question 16, "I am well organized in all my activities," from 2.7 to 2.8 (see Table 4.4).

**Regressive changes.** The posttest showed several questions that suffered score regression in the participants' answers. In the task of *delegating authority and giving responsibility*, question 18, "I communicate clearly when delegating responsibility to my members," changed from on average of 3.2 to 3.1 (see Table 4.4).

Changes related to *relationship and teamwork* were observed on questions 8, "It is easy for me to listen to those under my authority," from 3.7 to 3.4, and question 28, "I know the strength and weakness, the gifts, and potential of my leaders under me," fell from 3.1 to 3.0. On question 2, "My leadership team works cohesively and reach our goals," the average went from 3.4 to 3.1 (see Table 4.4).

In addition, regressive changes related to importance of *vision in the leadership task* were noted in question 10, "I lead my church with a clear vision," with a severe drop from 3.4 to 2.9. Question 30, "I make changes in my ministry whenever they are necessary," descending from 3.2 to 3.0.

**No changes.** Finally, questions 4, "I trust, empower, and evaluate those that work with me," 6, "It is easy for me to delegate responsibility," and 20, "Those under my leadership know my vision, aspirations, and purpose of ministry," did not have any changes between the pretest and posttest. Questions 4 and 6 are related to the leadership task of *delegating authority and giving responsibility*. Question 20 is related to the importance of *vision in the leadership task*.

Questions	Pre-Test	Posttest	
2. My leadership team works cohesively and reach our goals.	3.4	3.1	
4. I trust, empower, and evaluate those that work with me.	3.4	3.4	
6. It is easy for me to delegate responsibility.	3.0	3.0	
8. It is easy for me to listen to those under my authority.	3.7	3.4	
10. I lead my church with a clear vision.	3.4	2.9	
12. All under my leadership know what and how to do ministry.	2.3	2.8	
14. The leaders under me have confidence in my leadership.	3.1	3.2	
16. I am well organized in all my activities.	2.7	2.8	
18. I communicate clearly when delegating responsibility to my members.	3.2	3.1	
20. Those under my leadership know my vision, aspirations, and purpose of ministry.	3.0	3.0	
22. I am able to inspire, guide, and correct those under my leadership.	3.1	3.2	
24. I can work with those who disagree with me in some points.	2.9	3.5	
26. If a person is not contributing in his/her function, I move him/her.	1.8	2.4	
28. I know the strength and weakness, the gifts, and potential of my leaders under me.	3.1	3.0	
30. I make changes in my ministry whenever they are necessary.	3.2	3.0	

Table 4.4. Pre- and Posttests Average Results on Strategic Leadership

The average number is based on the scale of **4=strongly agree**, **3=agree**, **2=disagree**, **and 1=strongly disagree** as appeared in the **pre** and **posttest** 

## **Research Question 3 Measurements**

In Research Question 3, I examined the aspects of the three retreat seminars that

had the greatest impact on the observed changes in the lives and ministry of the pastor

participants.

In order to answer this question, I used the personal reflection interviews that I

had with twelve pastors during and after the leadership retreats (see Appendix C).

The following are the most important aspects of the three leadership retreats that, according to the pastors' answers, had the most impact on their spiritual lives and strategic leadership ministry practice.

## The Awakening of Disciplines in Spiritual Life and Ministry

According to the answers of eleven pastors (91.3 percent), the leadership retreats were very useful in reviving the importance of devotional life and spiritual disciplines that had been forgotten. The seminar contents helped to arouse the need of spending more time in their devotional lives in order to be effective in ministry (see Table 4.5).

Most of them assumed that the spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, fasting, and devotional and personal fellowship with God were left behind during ministry time. They said that the leadership retreats were useful to refresh their memory about the importance of those disciplines in their spiritual lives and ministry. Frequent phrases observed in the personal interviews are as follows: "something was missing;" "have more time with God;" "go back to my first love;" "go back to what I had left, devotion life, prayer, wake up earlier;" "revive my ministry again;" "to have an specific time for praying;" and, "to have more spiritual sensibility."

The conclusion is that spiritual discipline and ministry practice can diminish as time goes by. The leadership retreats helped the pastors to be more conscious about their spiritual lives and ministry practice.

## Fellowship Time with the Pastor Participants

Out of twelve, ten pastors' answers (83 percent) stressed that the time they spent with the other pastors during the retreats was very significant. Since they had to leave their homes and churches on Friday to participate in the retreats and then stayed until Saturday after lunch, they had a lot of time to spend with other pastors (see Table 4.5).

During the interviews, I noticed repeated phrases, such as "the fellowship with other pastors was very important," and "share with other pastors." Therefore, I deducted that pastors needed each other to shape themselves by sharing experiences, troubles in ministry, and the joys as well. Some pastors shared that during the fellowship time with other pastors in prayer, "it was possible to see the desire of being together," and that "the prayer time shared in praying for one another" was very important. Others emphasized the fellowship through the opportunity of asking questions, participating in the answers, and listening to other pastors' views and ministry experiences.

#### **Teaching about Teamwork**

In the retreats, the teaching about *teamwork* was useful in impacting the ministries of the pastor participants. Out of the twelve, nine pastors (74.7 percent) answered that the teaching was helpful in guiding them in the relationship with the team members by being an example to follow (see Table 4.5).

In addition, the teachings were helpful in the sense of giving them guidelines on how to lead a team. They learned how to work as a team, how to elect, train, and reward team members, how to solve conflicts, the need of listening to others and how to deal with other leaders and team members. These were the phrases that were used by the pastors in the personal interviews: "set an example to;" "avoid to be authoritative;" "to be more simple in the communication, not very technical;" "be careful when dealing with others;" "give more responsibility;" "to solve conflicts wisely;" "capacitate better our members team;" "be more alert in the pastoral care;" "listening more;" and, "recognize and reward team members."

Therefore, I deduced that the teaching about teamwork had a positive impact in the ministry life of the pastors. They understood the need of how to deal with their team members and how to work cohesively as a team in order to succeed in their lives and ministry.

# Teaching about Vision and Planning, Making Changes, and Pastoral Ministry Endeavors

Other teachings during the seminars that had a great impact in the lives of the participants were the importance of leading with vision, planning, how to execute changes, and how to be more organized in the pastoral ministry. Out the twelve pastors interviewed, nine (74.7 percent) used phrases such as "how to develop pastoral task;" "how to execute changes, set goals;" "the need of vision and planning, having an agenda and be more organized;" and, "how to confront and solve problems in ministry" (see Table 4.5).

Thus, I observed that strategic leadership teachings were very useful in the ministry practice of the pastors, helping them to improve their leadership skills and be more successful in their pastoral ministry.

Aspects of the three retreat seminars had the greatest impact	n (interviewed)	n (answered)	%
The awakening of disciplines in spiritual life and ministry	12	11	91.3
Fellowship time with the pastors' participants	12	10	83.0
Teaching about Teamwork	12	9	74.7
Teaching about vision, planning, changes, and pastoral ministry	12	9	74.7

Table 4.5. Results on the Two Personal Field Interviews (N=12)

## **Summary of Major Findings**

The following are the major findings produced by the study.

1. A healthy pastoral ministry is characterized by a passionate relationship with

God.

2. Pastors work on their ministry in order to keep it fresh and to avoid stagnation.

3. Successful ministries build an environment for teamwork.

4. Strategic leadership is helpful and needed in order to succeed in pastoral

ministry.

#### CHAPTER 5

## DISCUSSION

This project was developed in the conviction that pastoral ministry is closely related to spiritual and strategic leadership and that, in order to be successful, pastors must care about their understanding and practice of these two areas in their ministry life. In my ministry in Paraguay, I have observed that most of our pastors have not been successful in the execution of their ministry. If in pastoral ministry, awareness of what leadership means and how it is executed is lacking, ministry can be jeopardized and become unfruitful and stagnated, reaping no more than frustration and even provoking a fall.

The three leadership retreats were an attempt to inform and bring awareness about spiritual and strategic leadership, helping that group of participating pastors to improve their leadership skills in their ministry along with their local churches. If pastors and all the churches' leaders are well trained and equipped to execute ministry, certainly the church will not fail in the mission of reaching the lost for Christ and transforming the entire world with the gospel message.

#### **Major Findings**

The major findings outlined in Chapter 4 demonstrated that the understanding and practice of spiritual and strategic leadership in pastoral ministry of that group of pastors has changed after attending the leadership retreats. As expected, the retreats brought awareness about the necessity keeping and practicing spiritual and strategic disciplines, so that ministry may become fresh and renewed.

## A Healthy Pastoral Ministry Characterized by the Kind of Relationship with God

Analyzing the pretest results on Spiritual Leadership, I observed the following areas in the field of Spiritual Leadership among the participants.

**Areas of risk.** I observed the following risk areas. For question 21, "I keep a journal of my spiritual life and ministry," the average was 1.9. On question 23, "I have a prayer list that I use in prayer time," the average response was 2.5. Question 9, "I fast no less than once a week," has an average of 2.6. Question 17, "I believe my prayer time is effective to accomplish my ministry in the local church," averaged 2.9. The lowest score (1.9) was on question 21. Therefore, I deduced that the spiritual disciplines of prayer and fasting are significant areas that need to be developed in their spiritual lives (see Table 4.1, p. 67).

**Remaining areas.** These remaining areas that I observed show equality: question 7, which is related to the spiritual disciplines and question 19, which is in regard to spiritual disciplines related to Scriptures (see Table 4.1, p. 67).

**Positive results that showed more score.** The positive area that showed a higher average on the test was question 1, "My spiritual health is adequate for nurturing those around me and the church that I am leading," which was in regard to spiritual disciplines related to pastoral behavior (see Table 4.1, p. 67).

Spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting, and Scripture are the hallmark and indispensable resources for Christian life and ministry. A fruitful pastoral ministry will deal with these disciplines seriously so that pastors can thrive and be prosperous in their ministry. The logic is that pastors cannot minister and feed their people if they are not feeding themselves. In fact, before leading other, pastors must be led by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, spiritual disciplines will help the leaders follow what is in God's heart for his people. When leaders neglect their relationship with God, they will easily burn themselves out, and instead of ministering in the inexhaustible resources provided by the Holy Spirit, they will finish frustrated and incapable to serve God and his people (Fernando 36). The deeper pastors go in their relationship with God, the healthier and fruitful they will be in ministry.

When involved in ministry, the relationship with God can be jeopardized by being too busy. As a result, ministry may become s repetitive and boring. Usually, it happens when pastors become *workaholic*, falling into the temptation of doing things for God without cultivating a close relationship with God (Seamands 25; Kinlaw 22).

The heart of ministry is based on the relationship with the one who is the *caller*. The constant awareness of who is the one who calls and capacitates for the ministry is crucial for the identity and work in the pastoral ministry. Pastoral ministry does not depend exclusively on professional training but in a Christ-centered life that is developed in a closely relationship with God.

The posttest on spiritual leadership showed clear changes from the pretest that are worthy of attention. Even though they were slight, I assume that the progressive changes in the questions related to prayer and fasting are positive in the sense that the group of pastors felt the need to increase prayer in their lives and ministry. In the personal interview with participants in the leadership retreat, most of them used phrases such as

- intimacy with God,
- time with God,
- the need of devotional and prayer life, and

• relationship with God.

They used these phrases to express the areas that they need to develop in their spiritual lives in order to succeed in their ministry. In the pretest and posttest the question 17, "I believe my prayer time is effective to accomplish my ministry in the local church," was the question that showed the most average improvement from 2.9 on the pretest to 3.4 in the posttest (see Table 4.3, p. 74). In addition, question 29, "When I preach or teach I feel the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit," also showed average improvement from 3.4 on the pretest to 3.6 in the posttest (see Table 4.3, p. 73). Therefore, pastors indeed were aware of the importance of their relationship with God and cared more about spiritual lives after the leadership retreats. As a result, they started to feel more comfortable and strengthened when preaching or teaching the Word of God. In Chapter 2, I mentioned what Moses experienced when leading Israel to the Promised Land. After spending days in fellowship with God his face was shinning and God's glory was manifested through him (Exod. 34:28-29). Cantalamessa coined this experience as pneuma-therapy (283), exemplifying this outstanding process of transformation. When exposed to the invisible sunlight, body is burned and changes its color. The same happens with leaders who avail themselves of the invisible presence of God in the power of the Holy Spirit. The changes will be noticeable as they were in Moses' life.

Another positive aspect I found was the pastors' sense of responsibility for those under their leadership. For instance, regarding question 23, "I have a prayer list that I use in prayer time," the answers increased from the pretest to the posttest from 2.5 to 2.8 (see Table 4.3, p.73). I concluded that the leadership retreats helped the majority of those pastors see the importance of praying for others as a vital part of their ministry.

# Pastors Working on Their Ministry in Order to Keep It Fresh and to Avoid Stagnation

Pastoral ministry may become obsolete and pastors may lose their enthusiasm as time goes on. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the growth of the church is an important aspect of God's purpose in spiritual and strategic leadership. Therefore, growth and renewal of the church is needed for its revitalization and survival in the world, and Christian leaders play an important role. Nevertheless, if pastors do not continually grow they may become obsolete and stagnant in their lives and ministries, incurring the error of continuing the same methods, and repeating the same programs and church activities.

Most of the participants in the leadership retreat recognized that they were losing their enthusiasm and passion in ministry as time passed. When asked about the importance of the leadership retreats, several pastors used phrases such as

- "It awakened things that I knew but had forgotten;"
- "It helped to revive me again for the ministry;"
- "It took me back to my first love;" and,
- "I learned to avoid the routine."

As time passes, ministers lose their fervor and dedication.

Therefore, pastors must frequently update their knowledge and continuously renew their passion in order to keep ministry efficient and enduring in times of struggle (Carroll 206). The danger is when pastors do not notice when renovation is absent, and their ministry loses power and suffers a slow death (Quinn 18, 144). Sometimes sudden death can occur when spiritual defense or strength to fight against the troubles in ministry is lacking. As mentioned in Chapter 2, pastors must develop mechanisms of resilience in order to avoid spiritual and ministerial entropy (Cury 120).

Recycling retreats helps pastors keep themselves fresh in ministry. As mentioned in Chapter 4, 91.3 percent of the pastors felt that the leadership retreats helped to bring them back to a stronger devotional life and spiritual discipline that had been forgotten (see Table 4.5, p. 80).

Routine can make ministry boring, which may result in a loss of enthusiasm and passion. As in a Christian's spiritual life, the ministry life needs constant renewing through personal relationship, intimacy with God, and the power of the Holy Spirit. God is the one in charge of the kingdom's work and from him pastors receive renewal and strength (Isa. 30:15; Seamands 166) to keep their ministry lives fruitful.

A ministry that keeps renewing and innovating depends on how leaders behave in their leadership responsibilities. The disciplines of spiritual and strategic leadership are helpful in enabling leaders to keep the newness in their ministries and to help avoid becoming stagnated in their ministry. If leaders lose their expectation that something new is about to happen, they will not have the ambition to doing something extraordinary. In fact, their ministry will become inefficient and poor in quality.

#### Successful Ministries Building an Environment for Teamwork

Chapter 2 states that Christian leadership deals with the people of God leading a priestly community in the service of God's kingdom (Stevens 174). The effectiveness of the church in its mission is connected with the efficiency of its leader. In leadership of the church, pastors have the responsibility to equip the saints for the work of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up (Eph. 4:12; Barth 478). Therefore, leaders must trust,

capacitate, and empower others to ministry. The process of training occurs in two different ways: individually and corporately, and the main leadership task in teamwork is to keep the team members united and mutually accountable (Clawson 292). However, leadership only happens when leaders gain the loyalty of their followers (Verwer 42-43). Hence, leaders have to work out the process of gaining truthfulness among their followers, and this task is possible only through friendly relationships without oppression and tyranny. In fact, genuine trust is built on an open and free relationship. When followers feel that their leaders trust them and sincerely love them, they will support their authority. In fact, leaders must develop a sense of *belonging* in the group and in each team member. In addition, followers will follow leaders that are sure about their destiny. Set goals and the established plans to reach those goals will bring a feeling of order and security in the team, both individually and corporately.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, for the development of this project, the research used two interviews. The first interview was before the last retreat and the second, months after the last retreat, covering a lapse of time of about six months in total. In addition, we had two tests as an auto evaluative questionnaire. A pretest was given in the first retreat and a posttest was given at the end of the third retreat. One question caught my attention in the pretest and posttest. In the pretest, question 10, "I lead my church with a clear vision," the average was 3.4. However, in the posttest, we had some change in the answers. The average fell back to 2.9 (see Table 4.4, p. 76).

However, in the interview I discovered the possible reason for the shift in the pastors' responses. Most of the pastors expressed the importance of leading with a clear vision and planning. The possible conclusion is that in the pretest, that group of pastors

had a misunderstanding about vision in leadership, but it was corrected after attending the leadership retreats.

In the interviews, the questions relating to strategic leadership, I observed that most of the pastors' answers revealed that the retreats help them to deal better with their followers. Some of them expressed the importance of electing, training, and rewarding others. Others expressed the importance of team work, how to influence others to follow the leader not by pressing or being authoritarian, but by a personal and friendly relationship. Several other pastors mentioned the importance of working with a clear vision and planning, equipping others, solving conflicts, listening and treating others as people and not as things or as objects. Others mentioned the importance of how to confront and make changes without damaging relationships.

The same shift appeared in question 2, "My leadership team works cohesively to reach our goals," where participants' answers showed accentuated regression. Pretest question 2 had the average of 3.4. However, in the posttest that average fell back to 3.1 (see Table 4.4, p.76). Nevertheless, as observed, in the personal field interviews they expressed how the leadership retreat helped them to deal and work with team members, stressing the necessity and importance of giving more attention to the development of their followers and team work in order to reach the established goals. The following are some participants' expressions during the field interviews:

• "I have to correct my communication, using more simplistic instead of technical language;"

- "The need of knowing the people;"
- "I need to demonstrate sometimes and not be a dictator;"

- "To give more responsibilities to others;"
- "Need to deal with peoples and guide them better," and,
- "Need to focus on the followers' qualities."

Therefore, the leadership retreats corrected or even enriched their understanding on teamwork leadership.

In an era where individualism and independence are so normal, a leader has a big challenge to overcome the barriers that undermine the unity of the team by bringing together people with different abilities, holding them mutually accountable and committed to the team goals and tasks. As mentioned in Chapter 2, leaders must pay special attention not only to the individual growth of each member of their team/church, but also to the collective growth of the team/church for the service of ministry (Eph. 4:11-12). When team members are cared for properly, growing in their ministry life, and in harmony with each other member, then an intentional and expected growth will happen (Eph. 4:15-16, Buttrick 692).

## Strategic Leadership Helpful and Needed in Order to Succeed in Pastoral Ministry

One of the most dangerous threats against ministry is to solve problems as would a fireman trying to stop a fire. The best method is not spending time solving problems, rather spend the time avoiding them (Quinn 144). Only a pastoral ministry that works with a vision, planning before acting, is able to succeed in ministry. In fact, pastoral ministry must be grounded in a vision given by God (Prov. 29:18). Therefore, leaders are God's men and women with a vision for God's people (Blackaby and Blackaby 69). When leaders are confident in their vision, team members will easily follow them.

After having a vision from God for ministries then comes the process of casting that vision to followers. Leaders must be assured that their followers understand the goals and how to reach them. Hence, planning and execution are skills needed in pastoral ministry in order to reach the goals and accomplish ministry tasks.

In the pretest and posttest, two questions were related to vision and planning, the questions 12, "All under my leadership know what and how to do ministry," and 16, "I am well organized in all my activities." The average on those questions caught my attention in the sense that they did not change very much (see Table 4.4, p.76). Seemingly, the teachings did not have a great impact in the ministry lives of that group of pastors during the leadership retreats. However, in the field interviews, a noticeable shift occurs. As I compared this occurrence in the tests with the field interviews, I learned that the pastors were more aware of the importance of working with vision and planning. For instance, the following are expressions highlighted by them in the field interviews:

- To establish goals, the need to have better project organization;
- To be able to implement something that will really work;
- Vision and planning;
- How to be more focused and do something with wide vision; and,
- The need of having a more clear vision, expectations, and purposes.

All of these phrases were observed during the field personal interviews, which clearly expressed a shift that was progressive and positive to their ministry practice. Therefore, vision and planning are needed tools in strategic leadership in pastoral ministry.

Another aspect in strategic leadership that is necessary in pastoral ministry is dealing with changes wisely. Usually, when implementing or executing the vision,

changes show up and require leaders' attention and prudence. In addition, leaders must be prepared to deal with the people involved in the changes.

I observed regressive scores in the questions related to changes in the pretest and posttest. In the pretest, question 30, "I make changes in my ministry whenever they are necessary," had on average of 3.2. However, in the posttest that average fell back to 3.0 (see Table 4.4, p. 76). Again, the shift is very clear. In comparing the result with the field interviews, I see how the pastors' awareness in dealing with changes was improved or enriched after participating in the leadership retreats. For instance, I noticed phrases such as:

- When in conflict, I learned how to confront them without damaging people;
- I learned how to execute changes;
- I learned how to confront changes and troubles in ministry; and
- I learned how to solve conflicts.

In fact, pastors must be prepared to execute changes strategically that will help reach the vision, and at the same time keep the team working cohesively without damaging the harmony among the members.

## **Implications of the Findings**

In expanding the knowledge of the body of pastoral ministry, this study provides some good groundwork related to the practice of spiritual life and strategic leadership in ministry. The leadership retreats format and the conference contents have specific applications to pastoral ministry, which may serve as information and recycling tools for the understanding and practice of pastoral ministry. In addition, since the conference's contents are not bound to any specific denomination, the application could cross denominational boundaries. Thus, this study may be helpful in different denominational settings.

The greatest contribution of this study was the correlation that exists between the spiritual Christian life and the practice of Christian ministry, specifically strategic ministry (i.e., the ministry along with the Church, the body of Christ). The health of pastors has an effect on the health of the church. This study showed that the awareness, the understanding, and the practice of spiritual disciplines and strategic leadership are necessary for the balance and strengthening of pastoral ministry, and, consequently, for the growing of the church.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study could have been strengthened if we had more time between the three leadership retreats. In the pre and posttest, the changes observed in the answers were limited because of the short period of time between pre and posttest. I assume that if the participants would have had more time to reflect on the contents taught in the seminars, they probably would have different answers in the posttest. In addition, I would have had more time between the leadership retreats and would have given them homework related to the topics taught in the retreats in order to keep them in contact with the material. The homework not only would bind them to the material taught but also would help me to see how their understanding of spiritual and strategic leadership were improving during the leadership retreats. Therefore, I think that we would have benefitted by more time between each one of the three leadership retreats in order to allow the participants to be more familiarized with the material taught in the retreats.

#### **Unexpected Observations**

The most remarkable surprise during the course of my study was related to the pastors' opinions about the time spent with other pastors in the three leadership retreats. As mentioned in Chapter 4, during the personal field interviews, 83 percent of the pastors mentioned that the fellowship with other pastors was very significant during the leadership retreats (see Table 4.5, p. 80). Although fellowship among pastors was not specifically the main purpose, the leadership retreats were useful in bringing the pastors closer to each other and having an important time to share about their lives and pastoral ministry. In fact, as divine wisdom affirms, "as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (Prov. 27:17, NIV), the friendship and fellowship gained by sharing experiences with other pastors helps the retreat participants to renew and strengthen their pastoral ministry. I believe that pastors need other pastors in order to share their brokenness and ministry burdens, something that would be impossible to do with church members. As pastors share their experiences in ministry life, they can learn from each other, from their successes and failures, happiness and sadness and all kinds of ministry experiences. The positive aspect is that the leadership retreats provided an atmosphere in which that could happen.

Another unexpected surprise that I observed in my study was related to the regression in the tests. I strongly expected that all the questions in the posttest would show progression. Even though several progressive changes were observed, the regressive changes—mainly in strategic leadership—surprised me. A possible reason for this particularity is that assisting the leadership retreats was useful in increasing the participants' awareness about leadership tasks. The participants' ideas and

understandings of leadership were probably reshaped and/or changed in some way when confronted with the retreat's content about that topic. Therefore, the pastors became more conscious about those areas in their ministry life.

#### Recommendations

In my study, I tried to focus on the disciplines of spiritual and strategic leadership in pastoral ministry. I believe that these two fields are extremely important for the health of pastors and churches. Church leaders and Christian organizations that want to improve their leaders' and pastors' effectiveness in ministry would benefit from this study. I would encourage them to extend the leadership retreats, having more time for the conferences and follow-ups through homework and specific tasks relating to the subjects taught in the conferences. The follow-ups and practice would be useful in increasing the participants' spiritual lives and their awareness in the practice of spiritual and strategic leadership.

Another study that would help pastors in their ministry is a study on emotional health. The study should be based on psychological areas and would focus on how to deal with emotions, inner healing, stress, deception, or failures. The study would be beneficial for pastoral health and strength for their ministry, especially since emotion tends to be contradictory to faith. If emotions are not well treated, they can undermine pastoral ministry. In addition, a study based on emotional health in pastoral ministry will be helpful, not only for pastors to keep their spiritual lives and ministry healthy, but also when dealing with the people in their churches, helping them emotionally in time of trouble in their lives. As the study of spiritual leadership would deal with spiritual behaviors, the study of psychological and emotional traits would deal with emotional

behaviors, and would be helpful to reinforce the growth in the spiritual lives of pastors, leaders, and followers as well.

#### Postscript

The practice of leadership in the church is a big challenge for all pastors. As a year has its four seasons, so also has pastoral ministry. Pastors must be prepared to survive each season and to take advantage of each one of them. As the weather changes, ministers must be prepared. I have learned that ministry can become obsolete as it loses its strength and enthusiasm throughout time. In addition, a pastoral ministry can become focused on putting out fires, spending time and strength in solving problems, rather than avoiding them. In order to survive in all seasons of ministry, these inconveniences can be avoided through maintaining intimacy with God, keeping a personal connection with the Holy Spirit, and staying all the time abiding in the wine, Jesus Christ (John 15). I am constantly evaluating and renewing my ministry practice in order to avoid it becoming obsolete. Spiritual and ministerial entropy must be confronted in order for ministry to thrive and stay alive as time goes on.

Finally, as a pastor and leader, I must spend more time with those that are under my leadership in order to equip and empower them to ministry. Applying the Pareto Principle 80/20 and Moses experience, I need to delegate responsibilities to those under my leadership and focus my efforts on the potential of those who are on the team. As explained in Chapter 2, the Pareto principle refers to the fact that 80 percent of the results in an organization are produced by 20 percent of its workers (Blanchard and Hodges 97; Blackaby and Blackaby 218). Therefore, the reality expressed is that as a leader and pastor, I need to spend more time and work more closely with the minority (20 percent) than the majority (80 percent) in order to train and empower them for ministry.

## **APPENDIX A**

## LEADERSHIP RETREATS PROGRAM

## *First Retreat:* April 16-17

## Day One (evening hours):

**1.** Pre-open-ended auto-evaluative **questionnaire** 

**2. First Seminar Section**: "CHRISTLIKE LEADERSHIP – THE IDENTITY OF A LEADER AND THE DNA OF MINISTRY" – Spiritual Leadership

## Day Two (morning hours):

**3. Second Seminar Section**: "THE CHARACTER OF A LEADER" - Strategic Leadership

**4. Third Seminar Section**: "THE FIVE DIMENSIONS/STYLES OF LEADERSHIP" – Strategic Leadership

## Second Retreat: May 21-22

Day One (evening hours):

1. Fourth Seminar Section: "SPIRITUAL POWER FOR LEADERSHIP – RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR EFFICIENCY IN MINISTRY" - Spiritual Leadership.

## Day two (morning hours):

- 2. Fifth Seminar Section: "VISION: WHERE I AM GOING TO?" Strategic Leadership
- **3.** Sixth Seminar Section: "DEVELOPING A TEAM WORK ENVIROMENT" Strategic Leadership

## Third Retreat: July 2-3

Day One (evening hours):

**1.** Seventh Seminar Section: "DEALING WITH CHANGES" – Strategic Leadership.

## Day Two (morning hours):

- **2. Eighth Seminar Section**: "FINISHING WELL: KEEPING THE FLOW OF AN EFFECTIVE MINISTRY" Spiritual Leadership.
- **3.** Post-open-ended auto-evaluative questionnaire

**Reflective Personal Field Interview** (**R.P.F.I**): Starts four weeks after the third retreat the second R.P.F.I. will take place.

### **APPENDIX B**

### AUTO-EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

#### **ON SPIRITUAL AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP**

I appreciate your coming to these Seminar Retreats. Thank you for taking time to answer this questionnaire. The time you are going to take to answer these questions will be no longer than 45 minutes. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me for clarification. All of your answers will be strictly confidential. I will code your questionnaire so that I can be the only person to know your answers. Your answers will help me to know you better in the Spiritual and Strategic leadership field.

Sincerely:

Pastor Pedro P. Magalhães – Vice President of the Comunidad Evangelica Metodista del Paraguay and Central District Superintendent.

Directions for completing the questionnaire: Please read the following and circle the number that best represents your view according to the following scale: 4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

1. My spiritual health is adequate for nurturing those around me and the church that I am

leading.

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

2. My leadership team works cohesively and reach our goals:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

3. My pastoral ministry reflects Jesus to my members in the local church:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

4. I trust, empower, and evaluate those that work with me:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

5. All under my leadership will succeed in their spiritual lives and work for the church.

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

6. It is easy for me to delegate responsibility:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

7. I have a consistent prayer time daily no matter what happen:
4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

8. It is easy for me to listen to those under my authority:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

9. I fast no less than once a week.

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

10. I lead my church with a clear vision:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

11. I pray daily for those that are under my leadership:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

12. All under my leadership know what and how to do ministry:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

13 My ministry shows evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

14. The leaders under me have confidence in my leadership:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

15. I have a specific place and time for praying:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

16. I am well organized in all my activities:4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

17. I believe my prayer time is effective to accomplish my ministry in the local church.4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

18. I communicate clearly when delegating responsibility to my members:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

19. I am setting life examples for my members to follow and serve God fervently.

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

20. Those under my leadership know my vision, aspirations and purpose of ministry:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

21. I keep a journal of my spiritual life and ministry:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

22. I am able to inspire, guide, and correct those under my leadership:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

23. I have a prayer list that I use in prayer time:4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

24. I can work with those who disagree with me in some points:4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

25. I spend sufficient time to develop my fellowship with Jesus:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

26. If a person is not contributing in his/her function, I move him/her:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

27. My time for praying and development of my spiritual life is adequate for my ministry:4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

28. I know the strength and weakness, the gifts, and potential of my leaders under me:4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

29. When I preach or teach I feel the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

30. I make changes in my ministry whenever they are necessary:

4-Strongly agree () 3-Agree () 2-Disagree () 1-Strongly disagree ()

After finishing this questionnaire, please return it to me and if you want you can leave the room until we start the next activity.

## **APPENDIX C**

## **REFLECTIVE PERSONAL FIELD INTERVIEWS ON SPIRITUAL**

# AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Name:	 	 
Date for the interview:	 	

### () First interview () Second Interview

- 1. How have the seminar retreats helped you in your devotional life? Give some examples.
- 2. How have the seminar retreats helped you in your ministerial life? Give some examples.
- 3. What are some difficult problems you face in ministry? What are some areas you need to improve to handle these problems better?
- 4. What difference in your ministry have you observed after applying the principles taught in the seminars?
- 5. What aspects of the retreats were the most helpful? (which parts)
- 6. What aspects of the retreats were least helpful? (which parts)

## **APPENDIX D**

## **INFORMED CONSENT**

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ Dear

I am a Doctor of Ministry student at Asbury Theological Seminary and I am conducting three Seminar Retreats on the practices Spiritual and Strategic leadership field. I would like to conduct two surveys and two individual interviews with the Central and Bajo Chaco Districts of the Methodist Church in Paraguay, and you as part of the Pastoral staff on these Districts have been invited to assist in the study.

Since the answers are related to your personal practices on leadership, I want to assure you that your responses will be kept confidential. I do not want to jeopardize your leadership or ministry in the life of the Church, so your name will be coded in such way that I will be only person to know it. The data collected in personal interviews will not be divulged. It will be used exclusively for the purposes of this study.

I believe that the practices of Spiritual and Strategic Leadership play a crucial role in the durability and effectiveness leaders in ministry. I believe the findings of this research will assist me in providing better approaches for training and sustaining effective ministry leaders. My hope is that your current and future ministry abilities will improve and the Methodist Church in Paraguay will be helped because you have taken the time to participate in these Seminar Retreats. Once the Seminar Retreats are completed in approximately three and a half months, I personally will achieve the individual surveys and keep it anonymous according the codes given to each participant for an indefinite period, at least until my dissertation is written and approved. I may return to these surveys just in case when developing any program about Spiritual and Strategic Leadership, but without mentioning your name.

Please know that you can refuse to respond to any or all of the questions on the survey. I realize that your participation is entirely voluntary and I appreciate your willingness to consider participating in the Seminar Retreats and for answering this questionnaire. Feel free to contact me at any time if you need any more information. My number is (021) 901202 and my email is pemagal@hotmail.com. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Pastor Pedro Magalhães

I volunteer to participate in the study described above and so indicate by my signature below:

Your signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print your name:

I allow the use of this questionnaire information but without mentioning my name: ( )

yes, ( ) no

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