

ABSTRACT

RESTORING THE BALANCE BETWEEN DOING AND BEING:

THE FUNCTIONAL PASTOR AND ADRIAN VAN KAAM'S

FORMATIVE SPIRITUALITY

by

H. Fred Meadows

The concern of this study has to do with identity formation of pastors that is shaped by what they do rather than the integrity found in being a child of the Creator God. Adrian van Kaam identifies this mode of life and ministry that focuses on *doing* versus *being* as *functionalism*. Due to its damaging influence on the pastor's soul, the problem investigated was the obstacle of functionalism in pastors' lives that forms self-identity and ministry praxis in a negative and a deformative way.

The purpose of the research was to determine if the online intervention designed to provide education and to give opportunity to deepen the practice of key spiritual disciplines strengthened the soul health for the twenty-one pastors throughout the country who participated in a twelve-week interactive emphasis to restore a balanced functional mode of ministry presence.

The findings suggest that those who found time for silence and solitude in their ministry context had a better balance between their ministry functioning and a healthy self-identity formation, moving from a functional style of ministry to a more transcendent model of ministry.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
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FORMATIVE SPIRITUALITY

A Dissertation

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Doctor of Ministry

by

H. Fred Meadows

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Introduction

An agonizing consideration for men and women in Christian ministry today is why pastors are “experts on the truth and dropouts on the way” (Peterson 35). This haunting issue proposed by Eugene Peterson presupposes that those in pastoral leadership are subject to falling away from a commitment of serving the Lord at some given point in the ministry life of the pastor unless measures are instituted to undergird the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual dimensions of the pastor. Stress, job dissatisfaction, family tension, physical exhaustion, emotional pain, burnout, and spiritual dryness are some of the many results of clergy being pressed by the limits of what they are able to do.

Examining just one of these results—pastoral burnout—studies reveal that it is attributed to mental, emotional, and physical depletion. Stephen Muse researched hundreds of pastors and ministry leaders in crises from a clinical perspective and comments on his findings:

[Burnout] occurs most often in the persons who are highly motivated and extremely competent and who tend to identify their value and their life increasingly with their work, to the neglect of meeting legitimate human needs for relaxation, intimacy and play. Gradually becoming exhausted, cynical, losing joy and fulfillment in the work itself, they begin to question their self-worth, all the while attempting to work even longer hours as a way of compensating. (184)

Western American productive-oriented society typically measures self-identity in the individual according to what functions he or she is able to perform. One receives rewards for achievement and success in a wide variety of tangible and intangible ways: monetary increase or bonus, a job promotion, or even perhaps public affirmation. M. Robert

Mulholland, Jr. suggests the asking of the question, What do you do for a living? illustrates how the culture links a person's vocation to self-identity: "Our culture establishes the meaning, the value, the purpose, even the self-image of persons on the basis of function" (*Shaped by the Word* 85). Therefore, burnout results from an overemphasis of priority given to one's functional capabilities.

During the 1990s, many congregations throughout America experienced a division among the people with regard to personal preferences of worship style and practice. Unfortunately, my life in ministry consisted of selecting the correct balance of song titles between hymns and choruses, adjusting worship practices based on the latest negative anonymous letter and preparing music charts, while hoping and trusting that I would survive the weekly Sunday morning worship service without offending someone because of music stylistic issues. I dealt with unhealthy anxiety brought on by an extreme amount of criticism due to personal musical preferences of the congregation. Every goal toward which I had worked I had achieved, yet, I was faced with the fact that I was miserable. I experienced a hunger in my soul for a deeper meaning of life.

Following a heart attack in 2001 and experiencing a very difficult leadership crisis in ministry in 2003, I resigned my position at the congregation I served for nearly twelve years. Blown apart by these two formative events and my world appearing to have experienced collapse, I entered a one-year sabbatical that served as an important pivot in my spiritual journey. Through healing prayer and sharing with friends and mentors, I discovered that I had a soul, that place of innermost private depth that needed care. Spending time in solitude, prayer, and reading the Bible along with the writings of the spiritual masters, I saw that God was doing something new in my heart. I found that I had

been a person with self-deprecating thoughts in my patterns of daily conversation and in my overall approach to life. I was emotionally depleted, having lost hope and a sense of self-worth, while fighting depression and anxiety. I was not able to look up to see a wider vista because of my singular focus on the negativity and harshness of people. I engaged with my small situation to the point that I was not able to sense the awe of a very present, holy, and mysterious God walking along beside me and at work in my larger world. I did not fully abandon myself to the plan, purpose, and will of God in my life. I lived unto myself and depended on my talent and my experience to sustain me. Without knowledge of my spiritual condition, I was failing miserably in the midst of what appeared to be a successful and tremendous blessing to the Lord.

Not until I discovered the work of Adrian van Kaam was I able to discover the unique connection that exists in some pastors' lives between doing good work in the church, performing ministry functions, and leading others effectively *with* achievement and success to the degree that identity formation began taking shape in a deformative way. The van Kaamian concepts of human and spiritual formation offered me the language and precise thinking for what I had encountered in my life and ministry.

The loss of a person's ability to experience transcendence—rising above or seeing and sensing something greater or higher at work in a situation—is the result of an identity that has become self-absorbed and deformed. A recent study illustrates that “[people] conceptualize spiritual transcendence as a subjective experience of the sacred that affects one's self-perception, feelings, goals, and ability to transcend difficulties” (Seidlitz et al. 441). Transcendence is a vital element in one's understanding of God. From a Christian perspective, transcendence is the component in the spiritual life that allows a person to be

in tune with the Holy Spirit, which is central to living a life of liberty, unencumbered by physical, emotional, and mental stress. Nurtured by faith, hope, and love, transcendence in pastors' lives allows them to rise above the daily grind of doing ministry that depletes their inner souls. Transcendence opens their hearts to receive the replenishing that only the Spirit can provide in order that they might be able to minister out of the overflow of God's power, presence, and purpose in their lives.

Fr. Adrian van Kaam (1920-2007), a Dutch theologian and psychologist, is renowned in the field of spiritual formation for developing a voluminous work that offers theory and a precise language in the area of spiritual formation. This formation initiative, created and instituted by van Kaam, is known as formative spirituality. The ecumenical tone of this body of work complements a wide diversity of faith traditions, including the Wesleyan holiness tradition. While van Kaam's rich Roman Catholic faith tradition shapes his theological perspective, many of these concepts have foundations in the writings of the spiritual masters whom John Wesley had also studied and appreciated. The essence of van Kaam's work is rooted in the premise that people become a new creation through formation, reformation, and transformation by grace illumined by scripture and the spiritual masters through the Holy Spirit. Throughout this study, while some theological tension is evident, much of the formative spirituality concepts transcend one theological pole or another, all the while highlighting the co-operant nature of grace that is found between humanity and God.

Within the framework of this body of formative spirituality, one element that is the focus of this dissertation is the over-achievement mentality and success-driven way of life that van Kaam identifies as functionalism. Functionalism is a deformative obstacle in

spiritual formation that identifies individuals as “human-doings than as human-beings” (van Kaam and Muto, *Foundations* 210). Functionalism refers to the idea that *I am what I do*. A self-sufficient, prideful mode of operation, functionalism leads people to define themselves in terms of practical accomplishments, status, and success rather than in the dignity found in being created as God’s children, in his image (“Basics of Formation Anthropology” 14). Functionalism is a type of deformation that many pastors have subtly adopted as a way of living and doing ministry that can become poisonous to one’s calling, block transcendent living, halt attempts of incarnational serving, and, eventually, stop pastoral leadership dead in its tracks.

According to Dr. Stephen Martyn, “functionalism distorts our priorities, throws our lives out of balance, erodes our social presence, opens us up to demonic influence and implosion that quickly depletes us spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and even physically.” Additionally, functionalism, as an enemy to the spiritual life, leads individuals to become driven and defined by their own ambitions rather than listening carefully to the gentle invitations of the Spirit. Worse is the manipulation and utilization of their connection with God to serve functional needs or to serve grandiose ego projects in order to seek the rewards of personal affirmation. According to van Kaam and Dr. Susan Muto, this concept of spirituality serving personal agendas is known as *functional transcendence* (*Foundations* 230). Muto describes functional transcendence as “harnessing a spiritual high in order to accomplish more” (Epiphany). The greatest travesty is when functional transcendence becomes the primary mode of ministry operation for a pastoral leader for it grips pastors’ understanding and expression of ministry to others.

Mulholland substantiates the concept of functional transcendence in viewing young ministers and seminarians that fall into this trap with “ministry ... self-identity, value, meaning, and purpose [being] inseparably related to the effectiveness of their functional activities” (*Shaped by the Word* 87). Because of its damaging influence in ministry, the problem that this study investigated was the obstacle of functionalism in pastors’ lives as it related to the pastors’ self-identity and its effects on ministry.

Purpose

The purpose of the research was to determine if the online intervention designed to provide education and to give opportunity to practice key spiritual disciplines strengthened the soul health for the twenty-one pastors throughout the country who participated in a twelve-week online, interactive emphasis to restore a balanced functional mode of ministry presence.

Research Questions

In order to fulfill the purpose of this study, the following questions have been constructed.

Research Question #1

What level of functionalism, as determined by the pre-intervention interview, existed in the ministry lives of the pastors selected for this research in relationship to their practice of key spiritual disciplines?

Research Question #2

What transitions took place in ministry praxis once the pastors became aware of the concept of functionalism and began to implement key spiritual disciplines in their lives during the twelve-week period?

Research Question #3

How did the intervention, as determined by the post-intervention interview, begin to reshape the self-identity of the pastors selected for this research and move them from a ministry life dictated by functionalism to practicing ministry out of the overflow of their connection with God through key spiritual disciplines?

Research Question #4

What was the quality of the educational content and presentation that was utilized during the intervention to help participants understand the problem and begin to implement any needed changes to practical ministry?

Definition of Terms

The following terms used in this study require some definition. Some terms used throughout this dissertation are part of the meta-language created by van Kaam and Muto of the Epiphany Association for the field of formative spirituality.

Formative spirituality is the overarching term to refer to the umbrella of spirituality that oversees three distinctive fields of study as formulated by van Kaam: formation science, formation anthropology, and formation theology.

Like any science, *formation science* is built on a body of knowledge with a precise language that accurately names theories that have been tested and applied in real life situations in order to indicate how humans give and receive form.

Formation anthropology relates to the construct of human life including one's mind, body and soul. In this study, formation anthropology specifically deals with the "innate transcendence-potential in all human beings" (van Kaam and Muto, *Foundations* 7), addressing the various human life dimensions as outlined by van Kaam.

Formation theology grapples with how human souls give and receive form in everyday living as superintended by the Holy Spirit. Special emphasis is given to faith tradition, be it doctrinal or denominational in nature (van Kaam and Muto 7). Formation theology is the layer of Christian understanding that blankets the fields of formation science and formation anthropology as formulated by van Kaam.

Unique-communal life call or one's founding life form refers to one's "basic life call situated in the shared community of one's Church and formation tradition" (van Kaam and Muto, "Foundations" 15). The founding life form is implanted in the human soul at creation. The unique-communal life call is the foundation upon which every other life call, in particular the call to ministry, is received. One might think of the unique-communal life call as one's original God-given purpose in life.

Preformation from a theological perspective "refers to our life as emanating from the eternal abyss of Trinitarian Love in the belief that our divinely pre-planned *essence* unquestionably precedes our *existence*" (emphasis mine; van Kaam and Muto, *Foundations* 59). Preformation relates to the Scripture found in Psalm 139:13: "For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb" (NRSV). Preformation addresses one's identity deeply rooted in the work of the Creator God.

Consonance in formation theology refers to "oneness with the Mystery of formation" or a "sounding together with the Mystery" (Muto, Epiphany). Consonance is a person's attentiveness to the movement and guidance of the Holy Spirit, acting in agreement to the will of God by following him.

Dissonance refers to a discontinuity with the mystery of formation, or being out of tune with the mystery of formation—the center of one's formation field (van Kaam,

Fundamental Formation 61; Muto, Epiphany). Like the musical term, dissonance in formation theology refers to the disharmony that results in competing forces. Dissonance is the result of the many distractions that keep persons from enjoying a harmonious experience and relationship with God.

Inordinate attachment refers to excessive bonds to attitudes, things, or people that keep persons from experiencing the presence and purpose of God in their lives.

Functionalism is a self-sufficient operation of the pride form that pushes people to define themselves in terms of practical accomplishments, status, and success rather than in the dignity found in their being created in the image of God (van Kaam and Muto, “Basics of Formation” 14).

Pride form is a term that refers to the counterfeit of the true self, sometimes understood as the false self. The pride form is the self that leads one astray from the plan, purpose, and will of God (van Kaam and Muto, *Foundations* 19).

Deformative refers to “events and attitudes that affect formation in such a way that they give rise to dissonance [or the state of not being in tune with the Spirit of God] in one’s life and world” (Lough 31). Deformative connotes something that is destructive to the original form.

Fr. van Kaam develops within his work of formative spirituality five primary *dimensions of human life*. The dimensions of human life include (1) the sociohistorical dimension that relates to the culture to which one is born (e.g., family origin, time in history, place, and any particular traditions), (2) the vital dimension referencing the physical body, (3) the functional dimension relating to one’s ability to function, do, or perform, (4) the transcendent dimension helping one to be in tune with God and to have

relationship with him (in van Kaam's understanding, the dimension that makes people distinctively human), and (5) the pneumatic dimension serving as the "crowning inspiring dimension of our Christian personality. It is the inner inspirational source of distinctively Christian life formation" (van Kaam and Muto, "Foundations" 28). The pneumatic dimension refers to union with God in Christ, through the work and person of the Holy Spirit.

Functional transcendence is a "descriptor of the transcendent dimension, which tends to make [transcendence] a servant of the functional [dimension]" (Lough 56). It is a crossover phase where people feel inspired by the mystery of formation to go beyond the functional phase while functional striving is still too dominant (van Kaam and Muto, "Basics of Formation" 105). *Functional transcendence* harnesses a person's relationship with God for the purpose of fostering and energizing personal ambitions and goals.

Mystery of formation is the term used in van Kaam and Muto formative spirituality referencing the "basic mysteriousness of life and cosmos as we know them" (*Foundations* 6). The Christian articulation of this concept refers to the holy Trinitarian God.

Appreciative abandonment refers to the abandoning of oneself to the mystery of formation, or the holy Trinitarian God, "learning to appreciate any epiphany of the Mystery we encounter on our formation journey" (van Kaam and Muto, "Foundations" 43). It is the "behold[ing] in every burden, a blessing in disguise" (43). Appreciative abandonment develops a positive attitude in all things, highlighting the Apostle Paul's mandate to "rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil. 4:4).

Formative detachment refers to the letting go of “passions, moods, and emotions” as being ultimate (van Kaam, *Fundamental Formation* 151). Formative detachment is the letting go of “attachments that distract us and may deter our Beloved from making his [home] in us” (van Kaam and Muto, *Foundations* 188).

Transcendence is the awareness of more than what appears to be limiting a person’s immediate circumstance. It speaks of one’s capacity to be in tune with the Spirit of God who speaks the deepest directions of life to the human soul.

Ministry Intervention

The ministry intervention encompassed four distinctive components: (1) weekly online educational podcasts, (2) the practice of key spiritual disciplines, (3) an online focus group, and (4) a weekly journal. For a period of twelve weeks, a selected group of twenty-one staff pastors and ministry leaders from various denominational settings and ministry assignments were evaluated for the level of functionalism in their contexts of ministry with relationship to their practice of key spiritual disciplines. Initially, participants only understood that this study engaged them in some type of spiritual formation exercise. Before the intervention, I asked open-ended questions about ministry assignments, context of ministry, devotional life, family scene, time management, concepts of God, and personal goals and aspirations of each participant through a pre-intervention interview.

During the twelve-week experience, a teaching component undergirded the intervention, identifying important spiritual formation concepts. An attempt was made in the online teaching to identify and explain the van Kaamian formation concepts in light of a primarily Wesleyan, albeit totally Protestant, audience. Online class sessions

presented via video podcasts allowed each person to view the sessions on their personal computers. The online classes were carefully designed to encourage movement from a focus on *doing* ministry functions to a focus on *being* in the presence of the Trinitarian God in the midst of everyday life commitments. Additionally, these pastors participated in an online focus group where they were able to post comments responding to a designed question centered on the topic of study for the week. Participants also practiced key spiritual disciplines: solitude, silence, formative reading, meditation on the Word, prayer, and journaling. Each pastor kept a personal journal to record responses to journal prompts related to the topic of study for the week. The journal doubled as a means of keeping the participants accountable in their practice of the disciplines. Finally, a post-intervention interview, having identical inquiry as the pre-intervention interview, helped to determine the findings.

Context

The broad level of dissatisfaction that is experienced in persons serving in ministry throughout evangelical Protestantism is an alarming trend today. According to studies initiated by the Francis Schaeffer Institute, more than 1,500 pastors leave the ministry every month (Krejcir). Enjoyment of the work of ministry, a keen sense of call, and a personal satisfaction in serving the Lord have never been more compromised due to the great expectations parishioners place on their pastors as well as the expectations pastors place on themselves. The latter issue has much to do with the inner life of pastors. Studies indicate a growing tendency for pastors in ministry today to derive their self-worth and identity formation from doing good work in the church, performing ministry functions, and pleasing others. These indications represent pastors in large or small

churches, as well as urban or rural congregational settings, who are at risk of becoming functionalistic—or consumed by *doing*—in their approach to ministry, failing to take care of their own souls.

For those pastors currently confronting personal crises, experiencing burnout, or encountering any number of difficult leadership issues, this study addresses significant implications to their ministry future and the health of their souls. Practicing the key disciplines utilized in the intervention aids those in crisis to draw near to the presence of God and offers them the opportunity to listen to the Spirit. The findings of this study promoted pastoral soul care and served as a launching point for spiritual direction possibilities.

The context of the study itself focused on a small group of pastors from around the United States and one international participant. During the selection of those participating in the study, no determination was initially made to evaluate burnout, family stress, or any other difficulty in ministry. The setting for the intervention took place mainly online with the individuals enjoying a type of community where they were able to have theological and formative discussion in a safe environment.

Methodology

The strategy of methodology utilized education and the practice of key spiritual disciplines that, in the process, facilitated a level of awareness to the problem and confronted the ministry models and spiritual formation practices of pastors. Additionally, this intervention planned to give necessary aids for improvement for transition from a focus on *doing* to *being*. A carefully mapped-out educational process addressed the issue of transforming a *doing* versus *being* mind-set toward practicing ministry. The

educational series confronted the concept of functionalism, teaching key insights harvested from the systematic formative spirituality work of van Kaam and Muto of the Epiphany Association. Other ancillary works that formed the education included works from Thomas Merton, Peterson, Ruth Haley Barton, Mulholland, and several sources from Christian spiritual masters (the classic writings from Church history that illuminate consonant Christian living for all people of faith in all times). The practice of the key spiritual disciplines of silence, solitude, meditation on the Word, spiritual reading, journaling, and prayer composed another major component of this research methodology.

The research model for this study was an exploratory mixed-methods design, utilizing multiple qualitative instruments. First, I administered a pre-intervention semi-structured interview by means of videoconference (or teleconference when video was not available) to each of the selected twenty-one pastors who agreed to participate in the study. Second, a weekly journal documented the experiences participants encountered as they practiced the key spiritual disciplines of solitude, silence, formative spiritual reading, meditation on the Word, journaling, and prayer. The journal instrument served as a method of accountability to the process of practicing these disciplines. Third, an online focus group served as a means of providing community and offered additional conversation for gathering information. Finally, a post-intervention interview determined whether the intervention was successful in providing the necessary tools the pastors needed to transition away from a functional way of living and doing ministry.

Participants

The population for this study consisted of twenty-one pastors and ministry leaders ranging in age between 25 and 50, living in a wide variety of settings throughout the

United States, as well as one participant living in Beirut, Lebanon, and representing multiple denominational groups. Purposive sampling provided the means to designate over forty candidates for this study. The sample included a mix of gender, social status, family design, job descriptors, and educational backgrounds. The candidates who were preselected were persons with whom I have had previous ministry relationship and those whom I believed would commit to the breadth of the study. After sending invitations via e-mail to join the study, twenty-one pastors responded, showing an interest and subsequently committing to being a participant in the project.

Instrumentation

A semi-structured interview protocol provided a way to gain insight and understanding into the level of functionalism and the depth of practice of the key spiritual disciplines evidenced in each pastoral subject. The researcher-designed soul health pre-intervention interview consisted of questions that were left open-ended, as opposed to a forced-answer approach, encouraging the participant to sense openness to vulnerability and authenticity during the interview. Following the interviews, I made careful generalizations, exploring and analyzing the responses in relationship to research question one. I coded responses according to themes and images that arose throughout the interview. Second, the researcher-designed soul health journal, an online tool prompting weekly responses to a series of questions or thoughts, tracked the experiences of the subjects with regard to their practice of the key spiritual disciplines. Responses from this instrument addressed research questions two and three. Third, the online discussion forum, created specifically for this ministry intervention, gave the opportunity for the pastors to participate in a community focus group that provided further means of

collecting and validating information and supported research question two. Finally, I aligned questions delivered in the soul health pre-intervention interview to the researcher-designed soul health post-intervention interview to measure any movement to living a more transcendent life from a focus on functional living (*being versus doing*) based on both the teaching and spiritual disciplines components of the intervention, also bringing analysis to research questions two, three, and four.

Variables

Multiple variables existed throughout the study. The quality of the researcher-designed intervention served as a variable in that each video podcast and the Web site used to deliver the instruction was rated differently for each participant based on their level of technical online ability and their ability with regard to cognitive learning.

Another variable consisted of the commitment to the process by each participant. Not every person maintained the commitment to be a part of the entire twelve weeks. Overall, the unwillingness to complete the process on the part of some participating pastors, or a half-hearted involvement of other pastors to participate fully in the project due to the nature of the study and/or the busyness of the pastors to dedicate time to the project proved to be a major variable in this study. Other variables included the many cognitive, affective, and psycho-spiritual changes that took place in the lives and ministry practice of the pastors and ministry leaders involved that proved difficult to measure.

Data Collection

I conducted the soul health pre-intervention interviews and the post-intervention interviews by videoconference (or teleconference when video was not available) on the computer. The semi-structured interview process offered a medium for collecting

valuable information that led to significant thematic material that could be explored, assessed, and analyzed. Throughout the twelve-week process, with regard to the online focus group that was created for posting comments within a discussion forum, I gleaned concepts that surfaced from the postings and categorized them in an appropriate manner for further study. Finally, the journal instrument recorded thoughts, feelings, and attitudes during the intervention. Keeping the study pure, participants received journal prompts via e-mail with an expectation of a response within a three-day period. Weekly, I collected participants' thoughts and entries, and coded them for further analysis. During the soul health post-intervention interview, the soul health journal offered an avenue for further discussion to ascertain alignment with the other collected materials.

Data Analysis

During both the soul health pre- and post-interviews, I took careful notes and categorized major themes that materialized by way of conversation with the subjects. Likewise, I coded responses from the soul health journal by patterns and themes. I utilized the online focus group to validate the responses given through the other three instruments developed for this study. Throughout the analysis of the data received, I gave careful consideration with regard to the relationship between the perceived level of functionalism in the lives and ministry practice of the pastors to the level of practicing the key spiritual disciplines. By and large, the primary analysis of data took place by observing the patterns and themes suggested from the pre- and post-interviews and the online journal prompts, followed by further validation of those patterns and themes utilizing the focus group discussion comments. Finally, I categorized the patterns and themes to facilitate the understanding of major findings presented in the study,

specifically to observe and analyze the movement in the pastors' lives toward a more transcendent mode of living and ministry.

Generalizability

A small, limited number of pastors and ministry leaders throughout the United States and one person in the country of Lebanon participated in the study. All the pastors selected could be considered high-capacity leaders in their own settings. Due to the profile of leadership, the up-front characteristic of being a pastor, a generalization could be made that these pastors represent a multitude of similar situations throughout the country in evangelical Protestant ministry contexts. In that case, this study could be valuable for ministers in leadership positions in a myriad of ministry settings. The strength of this study resided in the individualization of the interview process that provided an in-depth examination into the hearts and souls of persons in pastoral ministry. This study would serve many souls who are in the crux of either deriving their self-identity from what they do or struggling to resist doing so.

Theological Foundation

The issue of functionalism, or the focus of *doing* versus *being*, displays itself through the biblical story of Mary and Martha found in Luke 10:38-42:

Now as they went on their way, [Jesus] entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

At first reading, Martha appears to be a very busy person preparing for the Lord's visit. The reader readily identifies Martha as one who is insensitive to the fact that the holy God is under her own roof.

The Scriptures indicate that Martha was distracted by the preparations she had to make upon the arrival of Jesus and the clan following him. The reader likely identifies Mary, her sister, as the one who is not concerned about work but only desiring to sit at the Lord's feet to listen. Fred B. Craddock teaches a balanced understanding between the two roles characterized by Mary and Martha:

We must not cartoon the scene: Martha to her eyeballs in soapsuds, Mary pensively on a stool in the den, and Jesus giving scriptural warrant for letting dishes pile high in the sink. If we censure Martha too harshly, she may abandon serving altogether, and if we commend Mary too profusely, she may sit there forever. There is a time to go and do; there is a time to listen and reflect. Knowing which and when is a matter of spiritual discernment. (152)

Craddock's remarks illustrate the spiritual formation foundation of balancing the *doing* and the *being*: the ministry functioning and the listening. Martha then calls upon the Lord to help her in her desperate situation, to which the Lord reminds her that actually Mary has chosen the right thing, spending her moments listening at his feet. Jesus' comments indicate that listening comes first before doing.

Martha often receives a great deal of blame for her dismissing an opportunity to be with Jesus in the privacy of her home, yet she should not be indicted for preparing for the Lord's visit. Muto and van Kaam agree that Martha's preparing for Jesus' coming to her home was not the problematic issue:

What Jesus reproached was not the work she was doing but, the fact that Martha allowed this labor to make her so anxious and restless that she could no longer hear the voice of the Spirit within her heart. She had lost touch with her call to obedient openness. (171)

The problem is not with making the preparations; the problem lies in the fact that Martha becomes distracted, which leaves her with feelings of irritability and deep frustration. Therein lies the problem of focusing on ministry functioning: a focus on *doing* becomes a distraction to an encounter with the divine Mystery. The distractions cause attention to slip away and focus on the labor. Muto and van Kaam describe the delicate balance of serving from a heart transformed by holy love:

We should serve, of course, but our service should be animated by divine love, however busy we may be. To keep in touch with the voice of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, we must maintain inner stillness even in the midst of our daily labors. We must listen to Christ's invitation, "Follow me." (171)

Martha's call for help resonates with committed followers of Christ who might make a desperate cry from a functional transcendent heart for God to come to their rescue and bless the efforts they have made on his behalf. In a sense, Jesus asks Martha to have a transcendent functional heart, preparing for the needs of Jesus and his group out of the overflow of a peaceful and serene disposition that God gives her in a relationship with himself.

People, such as Mary at Jesus' feet, however, "cannot be peaceful, serene, relaxed and experience oneness with Christ if they are spread out in numerous cares and concerns. They feel dismembered, fragmented, dissected, torn in various directions, no longer whole and centered or at one with themselves" (van Kaam, *Fundamental Formation* 159). Union with God is essential before pouring oneself out in ministerial functioning, and what is poured out is love for God and love for others. Martyn states, "This is where we as ministers go tragically off course." He asserts, "What a presumptuous thought that I can go out and serve in my own power, ingenuity, thoughts,

and energy. If I am going to follow Christ in kenotic love, then union is [crucial]!”

Wayne Douglas Griffith agrees that the discouragement that so often accompanies ministry “comes from trying to find a sense of adequacy from [the pastor’s] own performance” (111). He further suggests that people would either find their adequacy from personal performance—giving of their own resources (*kenosis*) or in Christ’s righteousness, which results from being in union with him (111).

The Scripture text in Philippians 2:1-11 becomes the focus for the concept of union preceding kenosis:

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, and any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The unity that is being emphasized in this text is the union of likeness with Christ that reflects his very nature, “sounding together in harmony with the Trinitarian God” (Martyn). Trinitarian thought that is rooted in this particular Scripture teaches correctly that Christ’s divinity was still intact. Even in his humanity, Jesus is not separated from his divinity, which is the miracle of the Incarnation. The self-emptying of Jesus refers to the fact that he does *not* exploit his divinity, nor does he use his divinity for his advantage. One might appropriately say that Christ did not utilize his union with God,

through the economy of the Trinity, as a means of exalting himself. God exalted Christ after he was obedient and emptied himself. Biblical scholar Morna Hooker identifies Christ's emptying as rejecting what rightfully belonged to him and his abandonment of his divine privileges (508). The supreme example of the idea of union preceding *kenosis* relates to Christ "being in the very form of God" (vs. 6), deliberately emptying himself and becoming totally focused on others in agape love to the glory of God.

Overview

Chapter 2 of this study explores further the biblical and theological context for the study and reviews pertinent literature on formation science, functionalism, transcendence, and the resulting crises from a life and ministry focused on *doing* versus *being*. Chapter 3 outlines the design of the research, the ministry intervention, and the methodology utilized in the study. Chapter 4 reports the findings of the research. Chapter 5 concludes the study with summary, interpretation, and a discussion of the implications and ramifications resulting from the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Introduction

An achievement-oriented and success-driven ministry that pastors cultivate in their lives yields little room for offering a steady and peaceful presence to those receiving the fruit of their ministry. This way of living creates a distracted, goal-driven, hyper-busy disposition of life that leads to ministry degradation and life depletion. When a person's life and ministry are primarily about hard work, personal effort, and reward for that effort, their emphasis is predominantly on giving, which tends to deplete the inner life of the soul. This mode of living, concentrating on *doing*, with little priority given to one's *being*, is called functionalism and is a serious issue in pastoral ministry because it ultimately begins to shape in a deformative way the self-identity of the minister.

This study investigated the obstacle of functionalism in ministry. Specifically, functionalism blocks the ability of one being able to perceive beyond the tangible and the immediate—what van Kaam would identify as transcendence. When one's ministry practice is shaped by the minutia of daily tasks, designated by one's calendar and timepiece, being constantly connected to his or her smart phone, the ability to form ministry practice from a transcendent dynamic is duly challenged.

The purpose of the research was to determine if the online intervention designed to provide education and to give opportunity to practice key spiritual disciplines strengthened the soul health for the twenty-one pastors throughout the country who participated in a twelve-week online, interactive emphasis to restore a balanced functional mode of ministry presence. The following literature review details the central

problem by first examining the construct and formation of the human person under the umbrella of the empirical disciplines of formation science, formation anthropology, and formation theology as formulated by van Kaam. The review further addresses the deeper formational obstacle of functionalism followed by a search of key biblical and theological passages, highlighting the problem of functionalism. The trail of research focuses next on the main symptoms of functionalism related to ministry degradation, depletion, and dropout. Finally, the literature examines the reformation of the appropriate balance between ministry functioning and ministry presence through a greater awareness and attentiveness to the transcendent dimension of human life as illuminated by van Kaam. The precise meta-language of van Kaam deepens the knowledge and conversation of the topic of the obstacle of functionalism in ministry and provides a means for discussion regarding the reformation and transformation of one whose leadership is enveloped by this dysfunction.

The Formation of the Human Person

To understand the development of functionalism in human life, one must first begin to understand how the human person is constructed and formed. Components exist within the personhood of individuals that are common to all of humankind, while simultaneously the individuality of each person is distinct and defined by that which is scientifically known by DNA and genetics and that which is unknown and left to mystery. A glance through the lenses of society and culture today offers evidence of personalities, physical appearances, social contexts, personal histories, and psychological characteristics being vast and diverse. Conversely, similarities appear among people that enable individuals to have relationship with each other, to communicate, to encounter the

world, to be participants in it, to love, and to engage with the transcendent—life beyond everydayness.

John Wesley underscores the fact that humanity is a complex being and places the significance of humankind in the spiritual order rather than the physical or even intellectual order (Cannon 179). Kenneth J. Collins notes that Wesley viewed humanity as being embodied spirits that “are able to transcend the limitations of physical, bodily existence in any number of ways” (51), highlighting the ability for the human being to live from a transcendent perspective. Deep within this complexity of humanity, one also inherently possesses the ability to discover God’s call and his purpose. Collins notes that Wesley, in relationship to the transcendent self, viewed the “self [as having] a conscience as it hears the voice of another, even the call of the Holy Spirit...” (83). Particularly, ministry life for pastors is birthed from a specific pastoral call by the Holy Spirit within a more general call that God places on all persons to live a life holy and blameless before him (Eph. 1).

Essence Preceding Existence and the Calling of God

Each person, created in the image of God, is called forth and chosen in Christ “to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ...” (Eph. 1:4-5). Fr. van Kaam and Muto identify the destiny outlined in the Ephesians passage as “preformation.” They propose, “In some sense, all of our possibilities and all of our limits have been preformed or given unto us by the Divine Forming Mystery [or the holy Trinitarian God]” (“Basics of Formation” 12). While preformation may appear at first to have predestination inferences, preformation in this context refers more to what Wesley would call the *natural image* of God, “consist[ing] of

those endowments with which [creatures are] blessed that [make them] ‘capable of God,’ that is, as spirits able to enter into conscious relationship with God” (Runyon 14). Wesley states, “Man at his creation was full of love, which was the sole principle of all his tempers, thoughts, words, and actions” (qtd. in Outler 3: 460). Due to the fact that love permeated the entire spirit of humankind in Adam and Eve, their hearts, minds, and will were all properly aligned to the heart, mind, and will of God, which was their highest aim (Collins 52). In both the Wesleyan context and in van Kaam’s formative spirituality, humankind’s truest destiny is centered in the renewal of the image of God and living out that renewed image through the perspective of one’s life call for the benefit and sake of others.

Responding to one’s original vocation is only possible in the fact that persons are created with the ability to hear the call of God upon their lives—part of their preformation. Barton suggests, “Being called by God is one of the most essentially spiritual experiences of human existence, because it is a place where God’s presence intersects with a human life” (76). Generally, God calls people from the deepest center of who they are to have relationship with him and to be adopted as his children. With this particular study in mind, pastors are not initially called to be pastors; they are called to be human beings entering into a relationship with the divine.

In Wesleyan circles, the concept of preformation might also be understood to a degree as being related to the doctrine of prevenient grace. Collins describes some of the benefits of prevenient grace:

Wesley asserts that a basic knowledge of God ... is revealed to all men and women as a result of the prevenient agency of the Holy Spirit. Once again, humanity has not been left in the natural state, devoid of all grace and therefore knowing nothing of God, but all people have at least some

understanding of God, however clouded or scant this knowledge may be.
(77)

Collins indicates that without prevenient grace at work in a soul's life, one does not have the "inclination to comprehend the dictates of God's holy law" (77); in other words, one would be spiritually dead. These thoughts are very closely linked to the concept of preformation, that before a human being exists, he or she carries deep within a primordial essence that is marked by the image of God, yet Wesley's theology promotes that God initiates the awakening of this essence by his grace.

Therefore, human formation strives to bring together one's primordial call, one's purpose, and one's action activated by God's prevenient work of grace. In van Kaam and Muto's terminology, a person's *essence precedes his or her existence*:

Any human existence that is not an expression of its preformed essence is a contradiction of terms. Our life from conception to death must be the expression of that which creates and sustains our very being and inserts who we are in a higher order of coherent truth and meaning. (*Foundations* 22)

Essence preceding existence serves as a foundational understanding that one's ministry action flows from and out of a deeper place, making immanent that which began as transcendent. Barton agrees with van Kaam with regard to the primordial call on human life:

God's call on our life is so tightly woven into the fabric of our being, so core to who we are, that to ignore it or to refuse it would be to jeopardize our well-being. If we were to try to compromise or to live it only halfway, we'd run the risk of plunging into emptiness and meaninglessness. (74)

Commenting on the balance between *doing* and *being*, Barton highlights, "Before calling has anything to do with *doing*, it has everything to do with *being* that essence of yourself that God knew before the foundations of the earth, that God called into being and that

God alone truly knows” (emphasis mine; 77). Barton substantiates how functionalism invades the inner depth of an individual and disturbs the self-identity of a human being.

The Formation Field

Giving further understanding of the construct of human life and illustrating how the deep self, the soul, is hidden with Christ in God, van Kaam presents a concept known as the formation field model that explains the union of the human construct and challenges a popular dualistic notion that humans are divided into body and soul. This formation field pertains to the human person in continuous formation as illustrated in Figure 2.1.

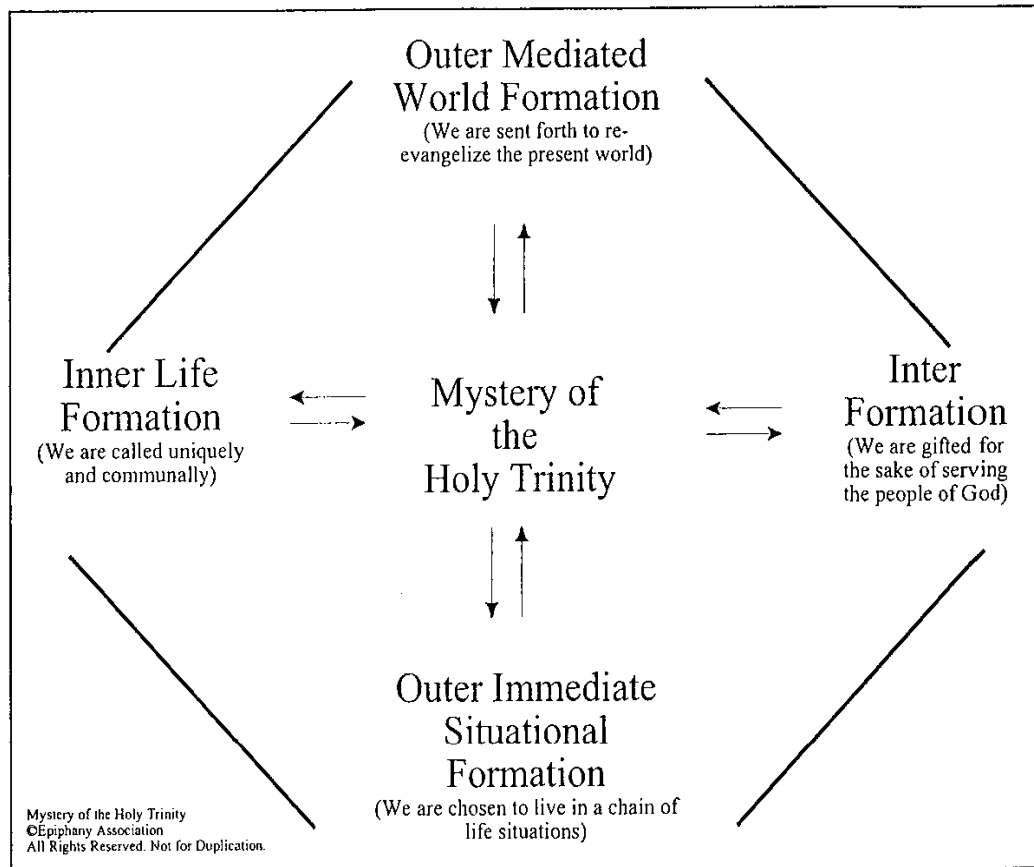


Figure 2.1. van Kaamian full field model of formation (used by permission).

Fr. van Kaam positions in the very center of the formation field the Mystery of the Holy Trinity, also termed as the Divine Forming Mystery, “[signifying] God in whom we are sourced and from whence our life receives its direction...” (“Foundations” 11). Joined with the Divine Forming Mystery, at the center of one’s formation field is one’s unique-communal life call. James C. Wilhoit illuminates van Kaam’s concept: “This [concept of acknowledging the Mystery of the Holy Trinity at the center of one’s formation field] serves as a practical reminder that a Christian must see formation beginning with being ‘preformed’ by God in terms of natural abilities, gifting, genetic makeup, etc.” (177). For the believer in Christ, the Divine Mystery, the Holy Trinitarian God, is seated at the center, calling humanity forth to existence.

The four quadrants encircling the Mystery relate to the ways one gives and receives form. *Inner life formation* relates to one’s inner devotional life, and one’s interior world. *Inter-formation* addresses how a person gives and receives form through interpersonal relationships with others. Spiritual formation is, in Mulholland’s words, “for the sake of others” (*Invitation* 47), explaining further the concept of inter-formation. The *outer immediate situational* formation quadrant refers to where one is situated in life at any given time. Life situations, everyday happenings, and cultural backgrounds speak into one’s overall life formation. Finally, the *outer mediated world* formation relates to giving and receiving form globally, throughout a wider world context. The evangelization process and one’s mission to the wider world constitutes this quadrant of human life. The formation field model effectively illustrates the fact that “our formation ... involves our entire formation field. Our emergent life form also exists in the people, events, and things

in our daily surroundings” (van Kaam and Muto, “Foundations” 24), not simply housed within the interior life.

Reforming a functionalistic mode of living and ministry includes a careful appraisal of one’s formation field. A helpful tool in spiritual direction, the appraisal of one’s formation field serves as a means of understanding the holistic nature of the human construct. Those in spiritual direction understand, through the formation field model, that they do not live from only one perspective or another but that life is integrated and lived out through all four dynamics of the formation field model with Christ at the center.

The Human Life Dimensions Articulated by van Kaam

Four main dimensions that shape the human construct form a key component to the van Kaam formation science, formative anthropology, and formation theology. These dimensions continually form human nature, unlike schools of psychology where stages of human development are progressive. These four dimensions are sociohistorical, vital, functional, and transcendent. Applying a Christian articulation to this science, van Kaam adds a fifth dimension known as the pneumatic-ecclesial dimension (see Figure 2.2). Pertaining to the topic of this study, *the obstacle of functionalism*, persons faced with this obstacle have a high emphasis on the functional dimension that throws their lives out of balance with the higher dimension of the transcendent.

The first of the van Kaam dimensions of the human life form is known as the sociohistorical dimension. The sociohistorical dimension in life relates to the dynamics that are given persons before their existence: parents, the culture into which individuals are born, the time in human history into which they are born, and various traditions that relate to the era of history in which they live. “The sociohistorical dimension is the ever

present underlying setting or situatedness in which our life formation occurs; we are born into a culture and situation, in a family, with a particular tradition, at a certain moment of time” (“Foundations” 27). The sociohistorical dimension of life will always serve as a foundational formational role in human life and will constantly shape one’s ongoing formation.

The second dimension of human life, determined by van Kaam’s formation theology, is identified as the vital dimension. “The vital dimension accounts for our bodily constitution as well as for our temperament” (“Foundations” 27). Again, the vital dimension is an aspect of human life that is given in one’s preformation—that which is primal, referring to one’s preexistence. One’s DNA, genetic makeup, and physical predispositions all can be linked to the vital dimension.

The third dimension is the functional dimension and refers to the aspect of human life that helps one to function or to perform. Doing ministry tasks and functioning in the pastoral role would be an example for those of the clergy ranks of the functional dimension at work. The functional dimension is the component of the human person that animates the soul. This dimension is defined as “the awareness of our individual skills and talents [beginning] to emerge” (van Kaam and Muto, “Foundations” 28). The functional dimension is the key dimension serving as the primary focus of this study.

The fourth dimension relates to one’s awareness of what van Kaam and Muto call “the More Than” (*Foundations* 86): “The transcendent dimension is the God-given, unmistakable mark of human life as human; it helps us to know ultimately what to accomplish and where to go; it provides the deepest direction we need to grow in Christ” (86). The transcendent dimension is the aspect of human life that makes one distinctively

human, having the ability to relate to one's Creator, sensing the higher Other that is superintending one's life and life call. The transcendent dimension, which is more fully discussed later in this study, is the dimension that gives a human person the ability to think beyond, to sense a higher power at work, and to know instinctively that more exists than what one is able to see, touch, taste, smell, and hear in the everyday world.

Finally, when van Kaam and Muto overlay the Christian articulation of these dimensions, they add the pneumatic dimension, which they call "the crowning inspiring dimension of our Christian personality" (*Foundations* 86). The pneumatic dimension refers to God's gift of the Holy Spirit who gives all persons divine directives in order that they might have the power to do ministry and live life according to God's will:

Our pneumatic dimension enables us to be receptive to the inspirations given unto us as a gift of grace by the Holy Spirit, who overshadows our human spirit and draws us to the kind of prayer and contemplation that renders our actions most effective and prompts us to generous and charitable service. ("Foundations" 29)

This dimension highlights one's union with Christ through the Holy Spirit.

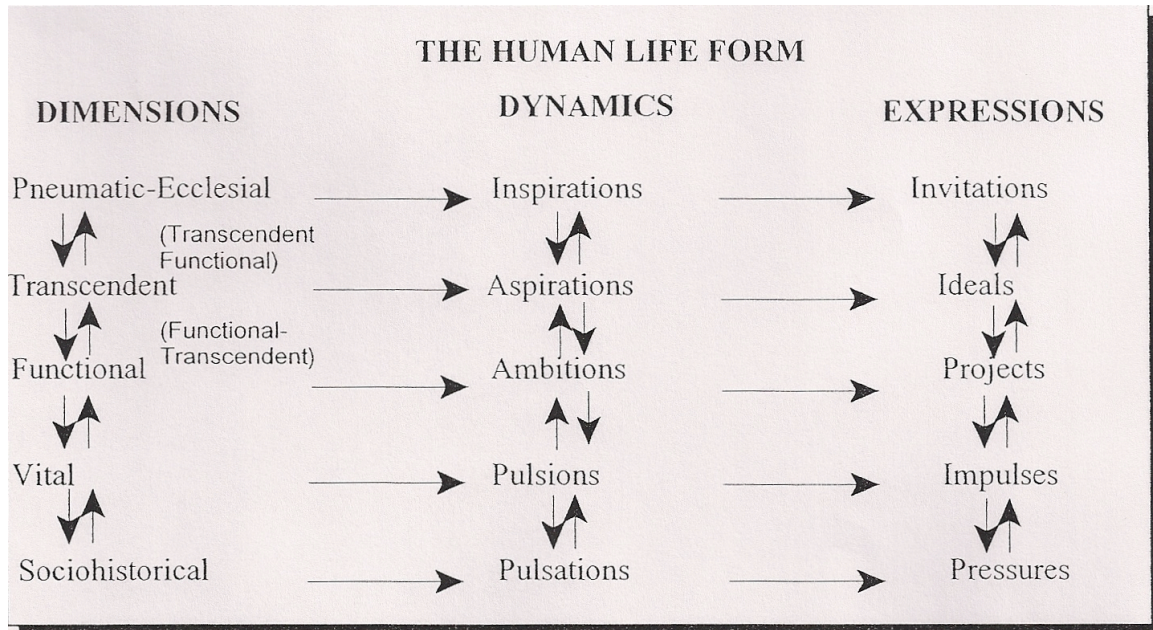


Figure 2.2. van Kaam’s analysis of the dimension of human life diagram (used by permission).

Functionalism—Deformation of the Functional Dimension

A discussion of the human life form dimensions as interpreted by van Kaam and Muto is an essential understanding as it relates to the central problem of this study, which refers to a deformation of the functional dimension. The gravest danger of functionalism is that it detracts attention away from the unique-communal life call or founding life form. Human beings in their very essence are “endowed with an innate dignity” (*Foundations* 210), and functionalism, conversely, tends to determine persons’ worth by their usefulness and ability to accomplish certain tasks (van Kaam, *Transcendent Self* 123; Mulholland, *Shaped by the Word* 85). Pastor Kendall Franklin refers to this scenario as *identity theft*. He writes, “It’s not about your position; it’s about your person. It has occurred to me that many pastors lose their identity in the failure or success of their churches. They define their value and their esteem by numbers, statistics, and awards.”

When self-identity is determined by what one can do, a failure to accomplish that task results in a sense of failure in one's personhood.

Self-identity springs from a much deeper place than one's abilities, taking a lifetime to discover fully the depth of his or her personhood grounded and formed by the Creator. Validating this idea, van Kaam and Muto write, "[We] are always engaged in an implicit conversation with our origins in God, even if we are not yet able to grasp the mystery of his plan as it emerges from the ground of our existence" (*Foundations* 92). A healthy sense of self is a response to a clear identification of one's God-given purpose and life call. One's life call begins to unfold more fully as the human person, by means of a cultivated sense of awareness of God's intimate interaction and a heart poised toward a positive, appreciative spirit, begins to listen and obey the directives of the Holy Spirit. Disrupted by functionalism, a soul originally seeking to live in consonance with God's will sidetracks and begins to live life for one's self. Functionalism "[urges one] to manipulate everything to suit avaricious ends [and] tempts us to depreciate and deform nature, [which leads us away from connecting with our life purpose]. People lose their sense of dignity" (70). Functionalism destroys the awareness of God's intimate presence because it forces one to focus on selfish ambitions rather than inspirations from the Holy Spirit.

Functionalistic Orientation of Life

In the West, organizational advancements, technological discoveries, and specialized training have stressed and nearly paved the way for a predominance of living life and ministry out of a functionalistic mode. These improvements in the marketplace, however, aid daily life in many wonderful ways: communication, health, education,

business, manufacturing, ministry, and other important cultural services. The functional dimension in life is not to be discounted and forgotten, for it is a significant part of being human. The issue for the functional dimension, according to van Kaam, is for it to be appropriately held in its rightful place—as a servant to the transcendent dimension:

Frantic functional overachievers, for instance, do not have to destroy their disposition for achievement, only its excessive expression; its lack of congeniality, compatibility, and compassion; its motivation by pride, insecurity, anger, and immoderate self-assertion. Once purified, it might serve the loving concern of the transcendent disposition that wants to exert itself in effective performance. (*Human Formation* 84)

The key to keeping the functional mentality in its rightful place, serving the transcendent dimension of human life, is in part found in the development of the disposition of awe. According to van Kaam and Muto, “The disposition of awe is more a mode of readiness than achievement, of surrender than mastery, of silence than speaking” (“Formation” 10).

The human heart is the place where the disposition of awe is nurtured and developed though the human heart is often divided between two sets of poles: the responsible heart, which focuses on doing or form donation, and the sensible heart, relating to the being. In other words, these two poles of the heart, according to van Kaam relate to the functional dimension (responsible or form donation) and the transcendent dimension (sensible or form reception) of human life. A careful balance between these two aspects of the human heart is essential. The spread of the gospel, showing compassion to the sick, ministering to the needs of a congregation, leading a local church in realizing its vision, all require an active, well-formed functional dynamic. The efficiency of this dimension, though, must be energized by a deeper, more sensible value.

Particularly relating to ministry and considering the symptoms of functionalism (e.g., burnout, emotional exhaustion, family struggles, physical depletion), a

functionalistic orientation distorts one's sense of value. Valuing oneself should permeate the human spirit due to the fact that each person has been designed with a sacred dignity, extended a call to purpose, and given talents, abilities, and gifts to fulfill one's destiny. The opposite, says van Kaam, is so often true: "We do not feel valuable outside of our performance. We have exchanged the sacredness of who we are for what we have accomplished" (*Transcendent Self* 106). Barton concurs from a ministry perspective, "More and more we find ourselves going through the motions of doing ministry but disconnected from a true sense of who we are and what God is calling us to do" (105). Often, the most difficult hurdle for persons to overcome is the inability to see themselves as God sees them as valued and beloved.

A functionalistic orientation has the propensity to manipulate one's spiritual practices. Mulholland suggests that one's spiritual formation can potentially develop into a functionalistic exercise:

There is a strong temptation to see spiritual formation as a technique that we *do*. We may even be seeing spiritual formation as something we *do* to revive a burned-out ministry. We may be seeing spiritual formation as something we *do* to replace worn out methods of devotion or worship. How often do we see worship as something we *do* to get right with God, instead of an offering of ourselves to God in worship through which we can be drawn into the depths of God's loving presence. This functional dynamic threads its way throughout our lives, including our "spiritual" activities. (original emphasis; *Shaped by the Word* 88)

Mulholland discusses one of the most despicable aspects of the functionalistic mind-set—that of using spiritual methods to achieve one's own goals and ministry agenda further. Barton adds to Mulholland's thoughts with regard to the spiritual practices being unfortunately relegated to the functional. She explains, "Practices that are normally life-giving (solitude and silence, prayer, personal reflection on Scripture, journaling, self-

examination, caring for the body) become burdensome, and we don't have energy for them even though we know they are good for us" (106). Spiritual practices, by nature, put one on the path to experiencing a true encounter with the Spirit. When functionalism takes root in the soul, spiritual practices that serve as means of connecting with the Almighty God become mechanical, arbitrary, and stale, leading to a paralyzed spiritual life (van Kaam, *Human Formation* 19). Functionalism demonstrates itself especially in pastors who utilize sermon preparation and lesson planning as personal devotions, using functionalistic activity as a model for spiritual growth, which potentially leads to spiritual dryness.

Lofty Ambitions Fostering Activity

Nothing of notable distinction happens without someone having dreams and ambitions to see it through to completion. Fr. van Kaam would agree that passion and ambitions are true gifts, for "they give flavor and vigor to our spiritual life [and] enable us to incarnate our aspirations in society in effective and attractive ways" (*Transcendent Self* 22). He also cautions that these ambitions need to be "open to the messages of [the] transcendent self" (22). He states, "We are planners and builders, organizers and technicians. There is nothing wrong with being that way as long as our ambitions are not totally closed off from transcendent motivations" (23). A balance between passion and listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit, by practicing key contemplative spiritual disciplines, keeps a functional mind-set in perspective with God's original design and call on one's life.

In a church setting, when ministries are in need of personnel to fulfill positions, financial resources to support them, and creativity to breathe life into them, a tendency to

see people as objects or as resources is high and is a result of a functionalistic way of thinking. When ministry is measured by the number of church members one has or the strength of the church's budget, van Kaam suggests one has crossed over into a mode of functionalism driven by ambition:

Isolated functional ambition sees people and things only in terms of goals to be achieved, feats to be accomplished, a reputation to be made.... [Ambitions] may be in line with our divine destiny. However, achievements are at odds with the unique divine image at the core of our life if they have to be forced forward under constant tension and the keeping up of pretenses. (*Transcendent Self* 23)

Churches commonly adopt a functionalistic mode of operation when they are driven, not by kingdom ethics, but by worldly goals that have little to do with furthering the message and ministry of Christ. Ambitions that are not under the scope of a transcendent frame of mind position the pastor to indulge in excessive and gratuitous activity.

Most pastors indicate that a percentage of activity they accomplish throughout the week seems unfruitful and meaningless; however, any worthy activity can be a holy endeavor if it is done under the supervision of the transcendent dynamic. Some of the greatest spiritual masters and contemplatives were very active people: Brother Lawrence, St. John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, and Mother Teresa. St. John and St. Teresa "labored and suffered much for the reform of the Carmelite Order" (Merton, *Inner Experience* 101). The difference in laboring out of an ambitious spirit rather from a sense of divine directive is recognized by St. John of the Cross, saying, "[A]ctivities prompted by our own tastes and ambitions will be riddled with imperfection and will always tend to disturb the union of our soul with God" (qtd. in Merton, *Inner Experience* 101). Pastors in the Protestant evangelical church could benefit by reconnecting with the writings of

the spiritual masters for examples of those who have effectively balanced contemplation and action.

People may convince themselves that their activities are unto the Lord and in service to the greater good of humanity, yet the possibility exists for a pastor to slip into an attitude of achievement for achievement's sake and potentially lose connection with God in the process (van Kaam, *Transcendent Self* 22). The tragedy in this false sense of accomplishment is that in the process of doing good works for God, one's interior life is overwhelmed by mere activity. Jean-Baptiste Chautard reminds the busy pastor, "In a life that is almost exclusively active, the soul is excited, worked up, scatters its energies and, by that very fact, weakens itself" (51). He further suggests, "[A]ctive workers are animated with a burning desire to spend themselves, [and they] are liable to neglect the necessary measures to keep their devoted work fruitful for souls, without wreaking havoc on their own inner life" (26). Chautard's words indicate that a minister in the Lord's service can be so inclined to his or her own abilities that fervor to do good things overshadows the supernatural connection with the One whom he or she serves.

Functionalism Affecting the Vital Dimension

Once the functional dimension has consumed one's entire orientation of life, negative effects to the body also begin to surface. A purely functional way of life begins to send the false signals to one's body that proper nutrition, adequate rest, and a time to play can take a secondary role (van Kaam, *Fundamental Formation* 88). Examining the physical condition, when serving out of an overly functionalistic mind-set, "[a]drenaline pours into our bloodstream. Our veins swell, our heart beats faster, our blood sugar increases, our judgment becomes clouded. Our behavior strikes others as irritable and

agitated, not humble, serene, and effective” (van Kaam and Muto, *Foundations* 205). Fr. van Kaam and Muto report specifically on the effects of stress on the vital dimension or the body:

Stress releases glandular overdoses of chemicals into our bloodstream, harming vital organs like our heart and brain and contributing to coronary disease and strokes, digestive problems, and increased hypertension. Proof now exists that people who neglect the transcendent dimension of life seem more prone to such diseases. (211)

Some pastors express difficulty finding time for exercise, play, and maintaining a healthy diet, which further exacerbates the effects of stress and adrenaline on the physical component of life.

Perfectionism

Rooted in functionalism, many pastors also experience the popular emotional dysfunction of perfectionism. Bruce Demarest declares perfectionism to be “a common emotional disorder [and] is the dogma that a person’s performance must be flawless to be valued and accepted. Perfectionists think that if the achievement numbers don’t compute, God won’t accept them” (239). This concept of linking perfection to God’s acceptance is especially troubling when it stems from a poor theological understanding of a doctrine of holiness and Christian perfection. One might note a cause and effect relationship between functionalism and perfectionism, the latter perhaps being the cause of the former.

Gary Jones, in his dissertation on the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification, explains how a pastor growing up in a holiness church thought that entire sanctification meant performance perfection; this understanding of holiness and perfection directed his ministry efforts once he was a pastor (83). Jones examines the concept of perfectionism in this story:

[This pastor] had been taught in his ... church that the Christian performed perfectly under pressure. As long as he performed “perfectly,” he was the follower Christ had called to Himself.

Although he learned a different theology in college and seminary, he allowed his emotions to direct his ministry. Consequently, he thought that he had to help everybody under his care. He said that his practice of ministry was “helping his parishioners carry their burdens rather than teach them how to find grace for them.” His wife told him: “You are more of an enabler of folks rather than making them accountable for what they need to do.” He tried to be the “perfect” pastor in every way to each parishioner. (83)

Jones indicates that this pastor focused on his perfect pastoral performance rather than the meaning of being in a relationship with God while simultaneously attempting to help others, through grace, have an understanding of the meaning of being a follower of Christ. “Thus, he lived under the bondage and fear that if he did not do everything ‘perfectly,’ he would fail the parishioners and ultimately God. That load drove him into depression and despair” (84). The bondage associated with perfectionism often leads pastors to carry it into their ministry and pile it on the shoulders of the people to whom they minister. “Perfectionism, as distinct from the reasonable pursuit of Christian perfection, is a destructive force attacking trust and fidelity. It sends negative commands to our mind and imagination. They soon succeed in deforming our thoughts, feelings, decisions, and actions” (van Kaam and Muto, *Foundations* 201). With a possibility of misunderstanding the doctrine of holiness, pastors serving in deep holiness traditions should carefully examine their theological underpinnings and investigate the potentiality of perfectionism creeping into their ministry, avoiding the biblical teaching of works righteousness.

True Self versus False Self

Much of the literature reviewed with regard to functionalism focuses on one's true self and false self. Functionalism promotes a dualistic approach to living, separating one's *doing* from one's *being*. The presumption in much of the writings is that a life that is excessively functional is one primarily lived out from the perspective of the false self. Thomas Kelly does not limit the problem to just the true self and false self but indicates how self can be divided into many parts:

We are trying to be several selves at once, without all our selves being organized by a single, mastering life within us. Each of us tends to be, not a single self, but a whole committee of selves. There is the civic self, the parental self, the financial self, the religious self, the society self, the professional self, the literary self. (91)

This compartmentalizing approach to the self is indeed part of the functionalistic problem—not having an integrating center from which all things flow. Merton (1915-68) likens the inner self with the true self:

The inner self is not a part of our being, like a motor in a car. It is our entire substantial reality itself, on its highest and most personal and most existential level. It is like life, and it is life: it is our spiritual life when it is most alive. (*Inner Experience* 6)

The false self, however, relates to the pride form and, according to van Kaam, is like a counterfeit, “unable to follow the divine call as it revealed itself in [one's] life situation” (*Transcendent Self* 190). Mulholland explains how the false self functions as a counterfeit form in ministry:

The worst form of the false self is when it becomes “religious.” One of the chief characteristics of the religious false self is its ability to manipulate the scripture consciously or, more often, unconsciously to avoid a transforming encounter with God. (*Shaped by the Word* 54)

The plight of a functionalistic pastor, as noted in the previous conversation, reveals itself when the pastor is identified as ministering out of a religious perspective and the false self even while being oblivious to his or her condition.

Pastors often discover that revealing their true inner selves can be a risky endeavor, for their congregations perceive them to be superior in their walks with Christ. Basil Jackson discusses this quandary from a more psychological perspective, indicating that healthy ego functioning takes place when people bring together in conversation the real inner self that the outside world rarely sees with the self that others do see and perceive (103). Cultivating the inner life of contemplation and extending an invitation of relationship to an accountability partner with whom a pastor can engage in redemptive conversations help develop vulnerability and a heart that reveals its true self. The work of revealing the true self, especially in a ministry context, is the work of the Holy Spirit. “Functionalism is never totally absent. . . . At any time it might reappear and ensnare us again. The difference is that we know now experientially of the Transcendent Love always there to restore us...” (van Kaam, *Transcendent Self* 119). Rising above a functional mentality requires pastors to place themselves sincerely in the light of the transcendent dimension.

Expanded Biblical and Theological Framework

Scripture speaks to the problem of the obstacle of functionalism, especially in the realm of serving the Lord. The Mary and Martha story of Luke 10 serves as a quintessential literary piece that brings a familiar biblical connection to the concept of functionalism. Philippians 2:1-11 also provides solid biblical support for union with God preceding ministry action.

Weary in Well Doing

Martha's weariness in well doing, represented in the text, creates a type of duplicitous existence that eventually serves as an impediment to her encounter with God. Martha was distracted and her distractions created an anxiety within her that severed an experience with God. Etymologically, the verb *perispao* used in the Lucan passage means, "has the sense of being distracted," in this case because of the amount of work for Martha to do (Johnson and Harrington 173). This hyper-anxiety in the original language is from the Greek word *thorubazomai*, indicating she was "making an uproar" (174). Jesus' rebuke, "Martha, Martha," is a way of saying, "You are putting yourself in an uproar" (174; Culpepper 232).

Martha gave priority to what van Kaam would call inordinate attachments: busyness, perfectionism, fastidious preparations, and making impressions on others. All these attachments distracted Martha to the point that she was removed from the experience that Mary had sitting at the feet of Christ. Some of the spiritual masters throughout the history of the Church add to the discussion surrounding the Martha and Mary passage. Jean-Pierre de Caussade (1675-1751) writes in his seminal work on divine providence about the significance of enjoying the present moment:

We must keep ourselves detached from all we feel or do if we are to travel along his path and live only for God and the duties of the present moment. We must stop all imaginings about the future, keep our attention on what is happening now and not bother about anything that has gone before or what may follow. (80)

Both van Kaam and de Caussade raise two important points related to doing ministry within a context of relationship with Christ: the concept of detachment from inferior

things and a focus on the present moment, which is an ongoing theme of many other spiritual masters, generally referred to as contemplation.

Inordinate attachments to inferior things, or the ordinary affairs of life, trapped Martha “into operating with an earthbound frame of reference. She is not experiencing the peace that results from one who experiences the immediacy of God’s presence and provision” (Nolland, Metzger, Hubbard, Barker, and Martin 606). John Nolland, Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker, and Ralph P. Martin offer biblical commentary on the Martha and Mary story and identify the need for Martha’s detachment of inferior things:

Troubled by worries aroused by a preoccupation with the practical affairs of life,... Martha has been seduced away from the kind of trustful preoccupation with the kingdom of God that should be the orientation of the faithful disciple. Being taken up with God is the one [and only] thing necessary. (602)

The multiple concerns that occupy the daily life keep persons from giving full attention to the Word. The one necessary thing that Jesus suggested for Martha was attentiveness to the Word, providing a focused vision for her life in that given moment. The seduction that is so prevalent in human existence, seen in this vivid story of Jesus’ visit to Martha and Mary’s home, is to attach a primary emphasis on secondary things.

The second immediate lesson learned from this story is what de Caussade calls the “sacrament of the present moment” (39). He writes, “Our only satisfaction must be to live in the present moment as if there were nothing to expect beyond it” (51). To Martha’s frustration, Mary attempted to enjoy life from the perspective of the present moment. She immersed herself in the mystery of the One whose presence she worshiped. Martha saw life that day in her home as a problem to be solved; Mary saw it as an

unfathomable gift (Peterson 64). The spiritual writer de Caussade conceptualized living in the present moment in this way: “The present moment is always overflowing with immeasurable riches, far more than you are able to hold” (49). Persons who cultivate and harvest a transcendent mode of living place themselves in the present moment, expecting no more than what the moment has to offer them.

The One Thing That Is Needed

Jesus acknowledged Mary’s ability to understand the one thing necessary: the love of God and obedience to his Word. Biblical scholars Luke Timothy Johnson and Daniel J. Harrington teach, “Jesus’ response to Martha makes clear that the ‘one thing necessary’ for hospitality is attention to the guest, rather than a domestic performance. If the guest is a prophet, the appropriate reception is listening to God’s word!” (175).

Johnson and Harrington identify the significance of giving awe-filled attention to Jesus rather than trying to impress him or others by performance that is birthed from an ambitious self-oriented heart.

In Luke 10:38-42, the reader observes a self-identity issue creeping into Martha’s heart, exacting her sense of self-worth from a well-done performance. The characteristic of over-doing sent Martha to the emotional edge and put her world in dissonance with Mary and with Jesus’ caravan on the day of this visit to her home. Martha also attempted to force her will upon the setting by presuming to tell Jesus what he should do to get Mary to bring her aid to the situation, which illustrates a pride form in Martha making an appearance. Saint John of the Cross (1542-91) was fearful that practicing a virtue of any kind could lead to vainglory. He explains, rather, how performing ministry is to be poured out of love:

5. One should rejoice, not when one has such graces and makes use of them, but when one reaps from them the second spiritual fruit, that is, that of serving God in them with true charity, for in this is the fruit of eternal life. For this cause Our Savior rebuked the disciples who were rejoicing because they cast out devils, saying: Do not rejoice in that devils are subject to you, but rather because your names are written in the book of life. By this it is understood that a person should not rejoice except when he is walking in the way of life, which he may do by performing good works in charity.
6. Where is the profit and what is the worth in the sight of God of anything that is not love of God? (148-49)

Saint John of the Cross promoted the concept of formative detachment, deferring the credit or joy from ministry functions and instead singling out the glory of God as the primary joy and satisfaction.

Martha imposed her definition upon Jesus of what that one good thing or that better part was, in this case, helping her meet the needs of the visiting caravan, yet God does not allow his children to define the good thing (Martyn). In his nineteenth century modern spiritual classic, Chautard (1858-1935) comments on the Mary and Martha dialogue: “[How] striking is the example of Our Lord’s reply to Martha who, desiring Jesus to condemn the supposed laziness of her sister, meant that He should proclaim the superiority of the active life” (47). In contrast, Mary illustrates what the one good thing is: to love the Master by sitting at his feet *and* to listen to the Word. Biblical scholar Craig Evans agrees, “It is more important to hear and obey the word of Jesus than to be busy with other matters, even though they may be commendable of themselves” (177). He, like-minded with Johnson and Harrington, further believes that Martha would have been better off making preparations that would not have totally consumed her in order that she might be able both to minister to Jesus and his guests without missing the opportunity to sit at his feet and listen (177). In contrast to Martha’s plea, Chautard points

out that Jesus' saying that Mary chose the better part illustrates "the pre-eminence of the interior life" (48). Like a student at the feet of her rabbi, Mary, contrasted to her sister, has centered herself to listen.

Being versus Doing

The story of Martha and Mary highlights an important theological discourse on the balance between being in the world for God and being in God for the world: the balance between *being* versus *doing* (Mulholland, DM 856). The balance is a delicate one between two extremes: a theology of works righteousness and quietism. Saint Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225-71) gives a tremendous visual of this overflow: "The apostle is a chalice full to the brim with the life of Jesus, and his overflow pours itself out upon souls" (qtd. in Chautard 69). In order for ministry functions to be incarnational, they must be offered from the overflowing power, presence, and purpose of God that is already evident in the life of the believer.

Jesus commented, as recorded by the gospel writer John, in chapter 15:5, "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing" (NLT). Pastors whose souls lack the depth of relationship with the encountered Word are running on empty and ministering out of the nature of the self or, as van Kaam and Muto identify it, the pride form (*Foundations* 52). Martha, in the biblical account, illustrates the potentiality of dysfunctional ministry by becoming intoxicated with her preparations, which becomes a source that sustains her personal self-identity.

The Great Commandment, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength ... [and] love your

neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:30-31), gives a snapshot of the vision Jesus had for the balance between being and doing. Jesus expected humans to continue his work in ministry, but he also expected them to perform that ministry from the deep well of love through a relationship with him. Wesley likens this passage to what he would call, “spiritual respiration”:

God’s breathing into the soul, and the soul’s breathing back what it first receives from God; a continual *action* of God upon the soul, the *re-action* of the soul upon God; an unceasing presence of God, the loving, pardoning God, manifested to the heart, and perceived by faith; and an unceasing return of love, praise, and prayer, offering up all the thoughts of our hearts, all the words of our tongues, all the works of our hands, all our body, soul, and spirit, to be an holy sacrifice, acceptable unto God in Christ Jesus. (original emphasis; qtd. in Runyon 18)

Wesley describes the essence of being unified with God and the rhythm of life that allows one, as the image of God, to breathe in life from God in order that one might give life to others.

Union Preceding Kenosis

The Scriptures teach that ministry functioning must flow from the heart connected with God—the deep well of relationship with the Trinity. Bernard de Clairvaux (1091-1153) describes the heart-action relationship as reservoirs and channels:

If you are wise, you will be reservoirs and not channels. The channels let the water flow away, and do not retain a drop. But the reservoir is first filled, and then, without emptying itself, pours out its overflow, which is ever renewed, over the fields which it waters. How many there are devoted to works, who are never anything but channels, and retain nothing for themselves, but remain dry while trying to pass on life-giving grace to souls! We have many channels in the Church today, but few reservoirs. (qtd. in Chautard 55)

Bernard’s illustration of channels and reservoirs links up with Wesley’s breathing in and out the life of God, clarifying that ministry action flows from the inside out. Connecting

with the heart and action relationship with regard to performing ministry functions, Father Saint-Jure (1588-1657) offers another analogy that illustrates how the heart and the action relate to one another:

The heart goes on beating day and night. Let this all-important organ stop, even for a moment, and immediate death would result. The arm, however, merely an integral part of the human body, only moves from time to time. And thus, we ought sometimes to seek a little respite from our outward works, but never on the other hand, relax our attention to spiritual things. The heart gives life and strength to the arm by means of the blood which it sends forth, ... and in the same way, the contemplative life, a life of union with God, thanks to the light and the constant assistance the soul receives from this closeness to Him, gives life to our external occupations. (63)

These illustrations connect with the portion of Scripture in Philippians 2, often identified as an early Christian hymn, that “clearly functions as a call to unity, love and humility” (Black 305). This kenotic passage forms a distinctive pattern of how the Christian life is to be lived out in Christian service and ministry—union with Christ, first, and then Christian action.

In the early verses of Philippians 2:1-11, union preceding *kenosis* (a Greek word found in Phil. 2:7) relates to the unity within the body of Christ and their emptying themselves of self-interest and self-ambition through the dispositions of love and humility, being others-referenced. Later in the passage, the concept of union preceding *kenosis* is further developed in the supreme example of the person of Jesus Christ. Hooker describes, “Now we find Christ, who was in the form of God, emptying himself, taking the form of a slave, and *becoming man* [original emphasis]. Christ’s incarnation was a deliberate act of self-emptying” (502). Union, as it pertains to the Christ example, refers to the fact that Jesus existed in the form of God and was one in him (Phil. 2:6).

Union defined further in the nature of the Trinity lays the groundwork for the self-emptying, or *kenosis*, of Christ, for this self-emptying is his incarnational task. Christ emptied himself, not of his divinity, because at that point he would cease to be God, but he emptied himself, as Gregory of Elvira (died ca. 392) says, “[of] the honor of his majesty” (qtd. in Edwards 242).

Union preceding *kenosis* is the understanding that Christian action in the name of Christ is to have its foothold in loving relationship with God. Like Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus, this type of contemplation is the spiritual place from which ministry flows. For Saint John of the Cross, union meant total conformity to Christ through faith, hope, and love (45). Muto recapitulates the theme of union preceding *kenosis* as it particularly pertains to the issue of functionalism:

If service is insufficiently rooted in contemplative presence, it may lead to arrogance and activism out of touch with our original intention. We work to attain our own success with little consideration for what God may be asking of us.

Our projects need to be rooted in contemplation. In stillness, we can listen to God’s directives and do our best to execute them gently but firmly in the given situation.... Contemplation enables us to be serenely present in the world, doing what we can, without succumbing to the ways of the world. We remain rooted in the love of God while going forth in labors for the kingdom. (*Pathways* 171-72)

From a formation perspective, Muto is suggesting that before form is donated or expended, form is to be received. Before persons empty themselves of self, a divine filling must be evident.

In summary, union that precedes *kenosis* can be articulated as both loving God and loving others. Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa explains this concept and suggests that often times humanity fails to internalize the love of God fully—the sitting at Jesus’ feet in deference to attempting to show God how much he is loved by doing ministry for him:

The expression “love of God” has two meanings. In one, God is the object and we are talking about our love for God. In the other, God is the subject and we are talking about God’s love for us. Far too often we tend to give more importance to the first meaning, to our duty to love God. Christian preaching has often followed this line, speaking at times almost exclusively about the “commandment” to love God. But revelation gives more importance to the second meaning, to God’s love for us rather than our love for God.

What is most important is not that we should love God but that God loves us and that God loved us first (1 John 4:10). We must re-establish the proper order revealed by the Word of God, once again placing the gift before the commandment and putting the simple and overwhelming message that God loves us before anything else. Everything depends on this, including our own chance of loving God. (5)

Attempts made to serve God are futile if intimacy with Christ is not first and foremost. A pastor focused primarily on ability, education, and experience is one who is functioning as a channel rather than a reservoir and one whose self-emptying is tragically not chiefly energized in the transforming union with Christ. Fr. van Kaam and Dr. Muto illustrate the practical understanding of union preceding *kenosis* and doing ministry out of the overflow of a relationship with God:

Our service may be washing cars or writing books, shining shoes or building a business, taking care of a baby or entertaining guests, tending gardens or teaching a class. What matters is that each mundane act be elevated by the grace of God to a sharing in Christ’s care with a generosity of spirit that comes from him. (*Foundations* 224)

Before ministry donation, before emptying one’s life on the altar of good deeds, and pastoral functioning, union or intimacy with the Trinitarian God is primary. Ultimately, union with Christ provides a pastor’s sense of self-identity and not position, power, authority, or accomplishments.

Symptoms of a Greater Problem

As union with God wanes and draining activities increase, disappointment in ministry, emotional exhaustion, burnout, loneliness, family friction, poor personal health

and stress, interpersonal relationship issues, sexual immorality, emotional immaturity, and deep personal identity crises arise as conflicts and symptoms of the underlying problem of an over-functionalistic mode of existence. With over ten years of experience working with hundreds of members of the clergy, Muse corroborates this claim: “For many clergy, conflict exposes the attempt to succeed in ministry on human power alone, fueled by unconscious attempts to carve out a self in the process,... [which can ultimately lead to burnout]” (183). These conflicts, as Muse states, are the results of a pastor attempting to do ministry according to his or her own strength. Muse, among other sources, reports that out of the 1,500 pastors who leave their positions in ministry every month, half of them leave during the first five years (183; Krejcir; “Pastoral Ministries”). The figures quoted indicate eighteen thousand pastors a year dropping out of public ministry. Muse further substantiates the effect that leaving the ministry has on an individual:

While the reasons given are varied, conflict of one sort or another is always central, which often leads clergy to question the validity of their call to ministry and takes a toll on their personal sense of self-worth and family well-being. (183)

Denise George, in her contemporary study of hundreds of pastoral types, likens these figures to a real crisis that is taking place in the church:

Our pastors are hurting in silence. They are suffering from physical exhaustion, overwhelming stress, painful loneliness, deep emotional scars, spiritual burnout, and disillusionment. They have a lack of money, lack of friends, lack of time, and lack of confidence in their abilities and ministries. (11)

Additionally, pastors have few places where they can be authentic and honest about their emotional and spiritual needs.

Statistics on Pastors

Scientific research on pastoral ministry and the effects on pastors' health and extenuating social dynamics of ministry began as early as the 1950s (Lee and Iverson-Gilbert 249). Popular research studies on pastors' personal lives and ministry have been examined more recently by the Fuller Institute, the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership Development, Focus on the Family, and the Barna Group. In 1989, the Fuller Institute embarked on a journey to research pastoral trends as they related to the symptoms earlier addressed. In 1998, the Francis Schaeffer Institute picked up the project and continued the research that has now spanned at least eighteen years (Krejcir). The Francis Schaeffer Institute retested the data in 2005 and 2006. Focus on the Family compiled more studies as recently as 2009.

The statistics show that over 70 percent of pastors consider leaving the ministry due to stress. "Thirty-five to forty percent of pastors actually do leave the ministry, most after only five years" (Krejcir). This figure is slightly less than the 50 percent that Muse highlights: however, the figure is still significant. Over the period of 2005-06, the Francis Schaeffer Institute (FSI) surveyed 1,050 pastors. Each pastor could attest to having a pastoral friend who had dropped out of the ministry due to burnout, church conflict, or from a moral failure (Krejcir). Of the pastors surveyed, 90 percent complained of being fatigued and "worn out on a weekly and even daily basis" (Krejcir), and 89 percent of the pastors in this study had considered leaving the ministry at one time. Additionally, 57 percent of the surveyed pastors indicated they would leave their current position if they had a better place to go, which included work outside of ministry (Krejcir; Zondag 256).

The analysis of pastors' personal lives is even more troubling when the pastors' marriage and family lives are involved. As 77 percent of these pastors stated, they "did not have a good marriage" (Krejcir). The rate of divorce among clergy is alarmingly high as 38 percent said they were divorced or currently going through the process of divorce. The report disturbingly revealed that 30 percent of these pastors indicated they had either been in an ongoing affair or had a one-time sexual encounter with someone in their church (Krejcir).

Additionally, theological qualifications played a role in pastors' sense of self-worth and their feeling competent to take care of congregational members, as 75 percent did not believe they were qualified theologically to lead a congregation or to counsel others. The sense of poor self-worth relates to the following fact: "Competent pastors will derive satisfaction from their work, because competence enables them to achieve goals they deem important. Moreover, competent pastors derive satisfaction from a sense of their own competence" (Zondag 257). Should this competence be challenged, the job satisfaction of a pastor begins to wane.

Hessel J. Zondag's study in 2004 suggests pastors expect that ministry will aid their spiritual lives, and, in some cases, pastors believe they can live out their spiritual lives through the pastorate (257). According to the Focus on the Family (FOTF) survey, just over half of the pastors in the survey reported having daily devotions for at least thirty minutes. Another 45 percent report spending less than thirty minutes daily in devotions. In the Schaeffer study, 72 percent admitted to studying only the Bible when they were preparing for sermons. Only 38 percent read the Bible for personal devotions,

and out of that number, only 26 percent said they had a regular time for personal devotions that adequately fed them spiritually (Krejcir).

The FOTF survey also revealed a slight shift from previous reports regarding longevity in ministry. The average length of time that pastors stay in pastoral ministry is just over twenty years. According to the Barna Group, “the average pastoral career lasts only fourteen years” (“Pastoral Ministries”). The Zondag study confirms a movement toward pastoral longevity as it relates to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. He indicates that pastors’ satisfaction with their role of pastor is compartmentalized. For example, “[t]he majority (87%) are generally satisfied with their profession, while very few pastors (3%) are generally dissatisfied” (260). In other categories, such as physical satisfaction in the role of pastor, “pastors are dissatisfied: pastoral work is felt to be physically taxing” (263). Zondag reveals, “With respect to physical satisfaction, pastors appear to be less happy with their jobs, with almost half (49%) professing to be dissatisfied” (260). The FOTF survey examined the level of physical exercise pastors accomplish throughout the week. The survey indicates that nearly a third (28 percent) do not have any exercise regimen throughout the week (7). Zondag, with regard to another category, states, “In the psychological sense, . . . most are satisfied (67%) and only a very small minority (2%) express dissatisfaction” (7). The Focus on the Family study agrees that 87 percent of pastors are fulfilled with ministry (7), which corresponds with the Zondag study. These responses cause some confusion as pastors testify to being generally satisfied in their roles, while simultaneously the level of burnout and the significant dropout rate for pastors in ministry is high.

Expectations people place upon the pastorate and criticism of the pastor are harsh realities of the ministry, bringing disillusionment to pastors and, in some situations, making quitting the ministry seem to be the only way out (Nishimoto 10; Zondag 256).

Scott D. Carmer comments on the situation in which many pastors find themselves:

Pastors sometimes become victims of the negative use of influence in the parish when they are confronted by church members with different agendas and notions of what the church ought to be. That sort of victimization is frequently unanticipated by pastors who often have an unexpressed notion that if one is faithful in answering the call to ministry, things shouldn't go wrong. Many pastors struggle with understanding why God would lead them into situations of misunderstanding and abuse. They feel as though answering the call ought to serve as insulation from the slings and arrows of adversity. (110)

Additionally, pastors' expectations that they place on themselves cannot be overlooked.

Griffith agrees, "[M]uch of [a pastor's] discouragement in ministry comes from trying to find a sense of adequacy from [his] own performance" (122).

Ministry, like other occupations, has an element of being driven by results, and pastors, like other professionals, enjoy knowing that they are effective in their work.

Zondag states, "[P]astors do not need to see much in the way of results in order to derive satisfaction from the profession, . . . [but] awareness of results is the primary source of satisfaction, and it is this awareness which boosts psychological and physical satisfaction" (264). Confirming this statement, the FOTF survey illustrated that 34 percent of pastors value a "simple expression of appreciation periodically" over a salary increase (11). These figures might surprise most church board members.

Pastoral Burnout

Perhaps the greatest underlying symptom of functionalism is the level of burnout that has plagued pastoral ministry today. Henri Nouwen, through his own experience, identifies the path to ministerial burnout:

In general we are very busy people. We have many meetings to attend, many visits to make, many services to lead. Our calendars are filled with appointments, our days and weeks filled with engagements, and our years filled with plans and projects. There is seldom a period in which we do not know what to do, and we move through life in such a distracted way that we do not even take the time and rest to wonder if any of the things we think, say, or do are worth thinking, saying, or doing. . . . [H]ow horrendously secular our ministerial lives tend to be. (*Way of the Heart* 12-13)

Confirming Nouwen's remarks, van Kaam offers further explanations from a formative spirituality perspective:

Undoubtedly, the number of "burnt-out cases" is bound to increase in a society that prepares people for pragmatic lives. Contemporary culture tends to be one-dimensional. Its formative effort concentrates on the functional development of life with a subsequent neglect of the transcendent mode of presence. As a result, many contemporaries . . . become victims of mere functionality. (*Transcendent Self* 184)

Burnout is something that many pastors believe they should never encounter because their work is unto the Lord, yet burnout is very common among those who work in social service occupations. Burnout, as a symptom of functionalism in Christian ministry, alludes to the fact that one's busyness has taken the inappropriate place of the power, purpose, and presence of God in life—putting second things in first place. The role of the pastor is to lead the people under his or her care into the awareness of the presence of God in their lives. Peterson concurs, "The adjective of *busy* set as a modifier to *pastor* should sound to our ears like *adulterous* to characterize a wife or *embezzling* to describe a

banker” (original emphasis; 17). Busyness serves as a major impediment to the role of a pastor and leads to burnout.

Surveys have indicated that most full-time pastors work over forty hours a week. According to the FOTF survey, over 62 percent of full-time pastors work more than fifty hours a week, with 20 percent working over sixty hours a week (“Pastoral Ministries”). People generally refer to burnout as being overworked and tired, but studies support that burnout is a conglomeration of many facets. Burnout results from a type of dysfunction in the workplace and personality of the individual (Ahola et al. 12; Golden et al. 115). A study on spirituality and burnout reveals that little research has been done with pastors in mind, taking into consideration the special nuances that appear in the work of the pastorate (Golden et al. 115). Initially, researchers observed burnout in occupations that dealt primarily with interpersonal relationships, such as the ministry or the healthcare field (Ahola et al. 12).

Jonathan Golden et al.’s investigation as well as Kelvin J. Randall’s widely respected study on spirituality and burnout discuss burnout from a pastor’s perspective and utilize Wilmar Schaufeli and Dirk Enzmann’s definition of burnout in their work. According to Schaufeli and Enzmann, burnout is “a persistent, negative, work-related state of mind in ‘normal’ individuals that is primarily characterized by exhaustion, which is accompanied by distress, a sense of reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation, and the development of dysfunctional attitudes and behaviors at work” (36). Randall, of the Centre for Ministry Studies, University of Wales, investigating Anglican priests leaving ministry, highlights that perhaps the most widely recognized instrument for evaluating burnout is the Maslach Burnout Inventory. “Maslach and Jackson saw burnout as a

syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among those who work in people-related occupations” (21). Three distinct elements pertain to burnout, according to this inventory: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment (21). Christina Maslach and Michael P. Leiter write, “Burnout is the index of the dislocation between what people are and what they have to do. It represents an erosion in values, dignity, spirit, and will—an erosion of the human soul” (17). Golden et al. further state, “Burnout among the clergy may represent a threat not only to one’s vocation, but to one’s sense of life calling and identity as a pastor” (115). According to all of these studies, burnout appears to be symptomatic of a greater problem (functionalism) that affects self-identity and self-esteem and brings disintegration to one’s soul.

Muse relates burnout to “persons who are highly motivated and extremely competent and who tend to identify their value and their life increasingly with their work, to the neglect of meeting legitimate human needs for relaxation, intimacy and play” (184). The inability to relax, enjoy the friendship of another, and find time for recreation is a slippery slope downward to emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion is identified in this sense as compassion fatigue, which gives pastors the false impression that the advancement of kingdom work rests in their hands alone (Darling, Hill, and McWey 263; Jackson 113).

A study performed on behalf of Australian clergy specifically explored emotional exhaustion in the life of the pastorate. Male and female alike showed the signs of emotional exhaustion, which was contrary to the initial Maslach Burnout Inventory done by other groups, which indicated that women were more prone to emotional exhaustion

than men (Francis et al. 275). This study also notes that younger pastors were “significantly more susceptible to emotional exhaustion than older clergy” (275). Some of the thinking regarding this condition of younger ministers relates to the fact that many of those who are new to the ministry “view their ministry as not simply a vocational choice but as a divine mandate informing their identity” (Golden et al. 116), literally spiritualizing their busyness and relating it to their call. The linkage between what one does and who one is begins very early on in the ministry life of a pastor.

According to van Kaam and Muto, an ebb and flow of giving and receiving ministry must be evident, maintaining balance between two dispositions that they refer to as sense-ability and response-ability (*Formation* 181). Sense-ability has to do with the *being* while response-ability maintains the *doing*. In other words, sense-ability connotes “being with and caring for self and others” (“Formation” 18) and response-ability means “paying careful attention [an action—doing] to the needs of self and others” (18). Humanity is not in the world simply to feed at the banquet table of God and to seek as many consolations as they can but also to serve and minister to the needs of others—to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31). The term *social presence* identifies one’s utilization of God-given gifts in order to care for others; these gifts are indeed spiritual and are discovered through the intimate relationship one has with God (*Formation* 183).

Social presence, however, can erode into total ministry depletion. The erosion of social presence, as noted by van Kaam and Muto, happens gradually. They illustrate that depletion usually begins with having high ambitions followed by a dose of reality that challenges those ambitions. Dissonance is, therefore, created in the heart because good ideas and plans are thwarted; van Kaam and Muto call this situation a “clash between our

unrealistic aspirations and our realistic accomplishments” (*Formation* 183). As the increase of dissonance within the spirit increases, individuals might have an awareness that a greater crisis is looming, which can then lead to a sense of feeling abandoned by God (183).

The erosion of social presence is difficult for several reasons; for example, a major victim of erosion of social presence is one’s personality. “Erosion of social presence may create crevices in our personality into which the demonic may slip. The Evil One prowls around seeking any opening to disrupt our heart” (van Kaam and Muto, *Formation* 186). The self-identity of pastors, in this particular instance, is very vulnerable if they are finding service to others and ambitious ego projects to inform identity. As well-intentioned goals, good ideas, and creative ministry options begin to implode and fail according to plan, the tendency is for them to degenerate into having depreciative attitudes that lead to severe depletion (186).

Repletion requires the ministry leader, as well as all followers of Christ, to possess an open awareness to the divine wisdom of God. “A repleted heart first rests in God in contemplative presence before plunging into the performance of charitable deeds ranging from small kindnesses to world-changing reforms” (van Kaam and Muto, *Formation* 187). Creating a rhythm of sense-ability and response-ability will certainly offer a way to avoid ministry depletion and give a greater opportunity to serve others out of the overflow of God’s goodness, grace, and mercy.

Marriage and Family Strains

Perhaps a more disturbing symptom of functionalism in ministry is the stress on the pastor’s family. Carol Anderson Darling, E. W. Hill, and Lenore M. McWey’s

investigation regarding clergy families discovered that the average number of hours pastors spent in their profession was 54.5 hours compared to 27.7 waking hours spent with their families (266). Exploring how stress affects the pastor's family life, Cameron Lee and Judith Iverson-Gilbert's work concludes, "The more demanding the congregation, the lower the pastor's well-being and life satisfaction, and the higher his or her burnout..." (255). One of the symptoms of burnout is the depersonalization of people who are in need of a pastor's compassion, support, and care. The danger lurks beneath the fabric of pastors' family lives when the depersonalization begins to affect the relationships of their own children and spouses, clouding their vision in seeing them as distinctive human beings who need their love and undivided attention. Lee and Gilbert found that almost half of the pastors surveyed indicated that the ministry had been a stress on their families and was a legitimate reason for leaving the ministry (249).

John Ortberg identifies this dysfunction that affects pastors' family life as "sunset fatigue". He writes, "We come home after work, and those who need our love the most, those to whom we are most committed, end up getting the leftovers". Few studies dealing with coping mechanisms for family-related stress in ministerial families is indicative of the problem. Instead of adopting positive strategies to deal with the feelings of burnout, frustration, and difficulty in ministry that pastors tend to bring home with them, they are left to incorporate their own methods of coping, which often lead to unhealthy addictive behaviors that ultimately affect pastors' marriages and families. Many admit the need to escape temporarily from the reality of a difficult moment by means of pornography, extramarital affairs, the overindulgence of food, obsessive-compulsive behaviors, surfing the Internet, or even consuming alcohol and drugs. Benjamin Doolittle of the Yale

University School of Medicine, concurs, “Identifying constructive coping strategies that ministers employ to protect against the burnout syndrome [including emotional exhaustion and deep frustration] would be helpful for the wider church [including their families]” (32). A strong marriage and family life in ministers’ homes is directly related to having positive coping models for stress and frustration.

Interpersonal Relationship Issues

The amount of criticism that flanks the pastor in the church today is commensurate with the level of overall disrespect for authority that is found in today’s postmodern culture. Carmer highlights the fact that pastors attempting to work within the political structures of the church can become very disappointed in the level of commitment and the governing board’s willingness to follow leadership. He writes, “Tension between laity and pastors is created when laity utilize their influence to attempt to reach goals which may be in conflict with the goals of the pastor” (112). Many local congregations often operate under a democratic style of church governance without applying a more thorough understanding of biblical leadership of the pastor toward the direction of the church.

The level of criticism that is unleashed on pastors makes them susceptible to anxiety and guilt. Jackson interjects that pastors commonly have these particular feelings without having a substantial understanding of why the feelings have surfaced (109), including feelings of fear, anxiety, doubt, and guilt. Nouwen concurs, “[T]here is little praise and much criticism in the church today, and who can live for long in such a climate without slipping into some type of depression?” (*In the Name* 17). The nature of unfounded criticism fuels this type of paranoia. Disputes that pastors encounter with

congregational members, according to Jackson, are often signs of congregational immaturity, psychologically as well as spiritually (108). In all fairness, these disputes can also be the result of pastoral emotional immaturity. The greater problem to consider in this scenario is the fact that most pastors' relational support comes from some of the same people who bring about the criticism. This reality creates a cautious approach to ministry as it relates to trusting others, potentially fostering a defensive ministry posture.

The inability to trust in formative relationships with others creates a lonely existence for the ministry leader. Philip Yancey writes, "We push our pastors to function as psychotherapists, orators, priests, and chief executive officers. Meanwhile, we place on them a unique burden of isolation and loneliness" (104). Loneliness in ministry is a hurdle many ministers never overcome. Nouwen writes substantial material relating to depression and loneliness for those in the clergy ranks:

I am not at all surprised that so many ministers and priests suffer immensely from deep emotional loneliness, frequently feel a great need for affectivity and intimacy, and sometimes experience a deep-seated guilt and shame in front of their own people. Often they seem to say, "What if my people knew how I really feel, what I think and daydream about, and where my mind wanders when I am sitting by myself in my study?" It is precisely the men and women who are dedicated to spiritual leadership who are easily subject to very raw carnality. The reason for this is that they do not know how to live the truth of the Incarnation. They separate themselves from their own concrete community, try to deal with their needs by ignoring them or satisfying them in distant or anonymous places, and then experience an increasing split between their own most private inner world and the good news they announce. (*In the Name* 47-48)

The duplicitous nature of this kind of living infects the pastor with a greater sense of guilt and shame. The vicious circle of the divided heart lays the foundation for many types of dysfunctional relationships, including extramarital affairs. A recent study by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research indicates that 23 percent of Christian churches had

experienced a pastoral dropout due to an inappropriate sexual relationship (Sutton and Thomas 583). Other studies have indicated that emotional loneliness can also increase the propensity toward physical ailments such as heart disease, which could lead to cardiac death due to the stress on the heart and the immune system (Muse 185).

Pastors' Self-Esteem

As earlier stated, pastors steeped in functionalism will have a tendency to relate their self-identity according to their station of ministry, spiritual giftedness, expertise, and accomplishments. When these security devices are in any way compromised, challenged, or discredited, the potential for pastors to experience a loss of self-identity is real. Philip A. Greenway, Lisa C. Milne, and Veronica Clarke's study on pastors' personalities interestingly links the personality of pastors to their perception of God. The findings of this inquiry provide "some evidence that a habitual, positive presence in an individual's life, in this instance God, may contribute to having constructive feelings about oneself and to becoming more self-actualizing" (57). A. M. Maclean, Lawrence J. Walker, and M. K. Matsuba support this perspective: "Religion [is] a significant component of identity formation" (429). Misperceptions of God as an angry Deity who cannot be satisfied, for example, encourages perfectionism—trying to please God by trying to please people. Greenway, Milne, and Clarke suggest, "Religious beliefs and practices can evoke the kind of perfectionism and feeling of unworthiness, which characterizes the obsessive-compulsive style" (46). They speak to the vital importance of pastors engaging in solid spiritual formation practices that help them develop appropriate concepts of God, for the leadership, health, and well-being of the pastor and church are at stake. The answer is to restore the pastoral role to a proper balance of ministry functioning, being

mindful of God's active presence and viewing life and ministry from a higher perspective.

Transcendence

Kelly evokes a beautiful description of transcendence: "Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Center, a speaking Voice, to which we may continuously return. Eternity is at our hearts,... warming us with intimations of an astounding destiny, calling us home unto Itself" (3). Kelly's description is a reminder that the dimension of transcendence is inherently part of all humans. Fr. van Kaam agrees, "Transcendence is a possibility we did not choose or devise ourselves; it is a call we cannot escape" (*Fundamental Formation* 165). According to van Kaam, one is to live life from a transcendent perspective (dimension) in order to overcome the prominence of ministry practice from a functionalistic orientation.

Transcendent Spirituality

The precise language with regard to the dimensions of human formation as proposed by van Kaam gives the transcendent dimension concrete, theological underpinnings on which to build a definition of spiritual transcendence. He puts forward the idea that the transcendent dimension is *the* dimension that ultimately makes one human, the dimension that all other dimensions of human life serve. His view is precisely that "the spiritual person is truly involved in everyday endeavors while at the same time transcending them. To be an embodied spiritual presence is to be beyond all things and yet remain in the midst of them" (*Fundamental Formation* 156). This view of spiritual transcendence enhances pastoral ministry, for it does not bring to demise the activities of

ministry but offers a way to transcend the activities as merely functional and to give deeper meaning to them.

A Vision of Transcendence

Transcendence is an aspect of human life that is beyond the tangible, giving a higher vision of purpose to the simple everyday activity. Helping define transcendence, the spiritual masters have long been ones who have been able to give words to the wordless, sight to the unseen, and a voice to the silent. Kelly offers this vision of transcendence:

One walks in the world yet above the world as well, giddy with the height, with feather tread, with effortlessness and calm security, meeting the daily routine, yet never losing the sense of the Presence. Sometimes these periods [of transcendence] are acute and brief, too dazzling to report to anyone. Sometimes they are less elevated but more prolonged, with a milder sense of glory and of life, yet as surely of a piece with the more acute experience. (70)

Simply put, transcendence is awareness of the presence of God. The presence of God continually permeates human life, yet experience of the manifest presence of God generally happens when people open the eyes of their hearts to become aware of it.

Teresa of Avila was known for her awareness of the transcendent, blending the ordinary routines of the day while pondering on higher spiritual matters and *walking in the truth of who she was*. “Truly Martha and Mary met in Teresa of Avila,” comment van Kaam and Muto (*Foundations* 83). Another vision of one who lived a transcendent life was Brother Lawrence, who walked the way of transcendent living in his daily routine as a monk. In his seminal work, *Practicing the Presence of God*, he writes how he would especially not allow the spiritual practices to become ends in themselves:

I gave up all devotions and prayers that were not required and I devoted myself exclusively to remaining always in his holy presence. I keep

myself in his presence by simple attentiveness and a general loving awareness of God that I call “actual presence of God” or better, a quiet and secret conversation of the soul with God that is lasting. (53)

Brother Lawrence kept an ongoing conversation with God throughout his daily life, keeping a transcendent perspective alive in whatever he did. Dr. Maureen Watson likens what Brother Lawrence experienced to “listening to the Voice in the stillness, . . . [a] conversation that is happening on a level just below the surface, . . . a new layer of ever deepening prayer” (24). These visions of transcendent awareness provide a practical look at ministering and living life in a way that supersedes the frustration, disappointment, and demoralizing effects that pastoral ministry can have on individual pastors.

Cultivating awareness of the presence of God, which is the heart of transcendent living, means slowing down and fostering a gentle approach to the simple activities of the day. Fr. van Kaam explains, “The art of involvement [in daily life] entails the ability to be as attentive to simple appearances like the shape of a flower, the form of a tree, the face of a person, the flowing lines of furniture or dress” (*On Involvement* 16). Muse suggests that an increased embracing of the transcendent dimension involves not only awareness but also vulnerability:

The fruit of [the] meeting between the known and the unknown, between that which is “in control” and that which is not yet known and potentially “out of control,” at least from the standpoint of the conscious self, is that God breaks freshly into our lives precisely at the meeting place of encounter between “I” and “Other.” This is Eucharist in the midst of Emmaus—the place where dialogue with brokenness is revealed as ultimately redemptive. Vulnerability is more valuable than security; “not knowing” more revealing than having an answer. Wonder, awe, compassion and humility are more transformative than compulsive needs to preserve the heaven-bearing seed of the self which is fulfilled only by being planted in the soil of earthly life and in dying, giving birth to the miracle observed by St. Paul, that “it is no longer ‘I’ but Christ who lives in me.” (189)

Muse effectively points toward a movement from a self-oriented disposition of life, through human brokenness, to a rich understanding of the presence of God that brings about transformation of the heart and eventually ministry functioning.

Barton agrees that vulnerability to the Spirit and brokenness are key components of a movement toward transcendence. She writes, “All of us have burning bushes in our lives, places that shimmer with grace, alerting us to the possibility that God is at work doing something that we could not have predicted” (63). Often these moments are not fully seen. Barton claims that spiritual leaders need to be vulnerable to the Spirit in a way that they have capacity to notice the burning bush ablaze in the middle of one’s own situation (64). She comments, “The burning bush was, after all, a most ordinary object that became extraordinary because it was on fire with divine activity” (64). She reminds pastors that God definitely calls in the middle of one’s wilderness places. Personal brokenness or moments of spiritual aridity provide opportunities for God to accomplish some of his greatest work in one’s life as long as vulnerability (or openness) and a broken and willing spirit yield to the epiphanic presence of the Almighty.

The transcendent dynamic is not conjured up by agonized effort, but it unfolds through the experiences of life. The over indulgence of one’s own selfish attitudes and pursuits delays this selfless presence (van Kaam and Muto, *Foundations* 237). As one departs from a functionalistic approach to ministry, van Kaam suggests that reforming the functionalistic mode will be difficult. He says, “[I]t is like losing familiar surroundings, but in the midst of this aridity we may touch the mystery that dwells in us and our world” (*Transcendent Self* 111). The culture illustrates to humanity that a functional-vital life is the ultimate pursuit of the individual. Even popular ministry leadership training focuses a

great deal on the methods of operating a church or ministry program. On the contrary, one must recall in the midst of this functionalistic focus that the inner being needs to be permeated with the fruits of living from a transcendent perspective: calmness, gentleness, and serenity.

Reforming the Balance of the Functional and Transcendent Dimensions in Practical Ways

Bringing reform to the issue of functionalism begins with the soul. Thomas Aquinas taught that the soul is the innermost fountainhead of the personality (van Kaam and Muto, *Foundations* 81). The soul is the source for ministry that flows from the pastor's life to another. Barton contends, "Spiritual leadership emerges from our willingness to stay involved with our own soul—that place where God's Spirit is at work stirring up our deepest questions and longings to draw us deeper into relationship with him" (25). Reforming the balance between being and doing requires both one's intentionality of reforming that balance and the appreciative abandonment to the Spirit's work in one's life.

Spiritual Formation of Pastors

Practically, pastors should indeed examine their own spiritual formation practices. Jesus had much to say about the development of the inner life by referencing the core self, or the heart, suggesting that how one lives life streams from what is in the heart (Issler 197). "For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks" (Luke 6:45). The work of spiritual formation is not the individual's work to do alone; it is cooperation with God as he does the work of forming, reforming, and transforming one's character to

reflect the nature of his Son, Jesus Christ. Klaus D. Issler speaks to the issue of spiritual self-reflection:

Deep spiritual formation insists that we attend to the core of our self—the heart—and yield to God’s good work within. Jesus teaches that the Holy Spirit is the divine agent who facilitates this formation process from within us. (183)

Fr. van Kaam and Muto concur, “To the Spirit we ascribe the efficacious power of the transformation of human life into the form or image of God, who is love” (*Foundations* 36). Often, the work of spiritual formation begins with reforming one’s concepts of God, affirming the nature of God being full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness (Exod. 34:6).

John Charles Dendiu’s study reveals that many pastors try to serve the spiritual needs of others effectively without giving full attention to their own:

Those in ministry need to see a vision of their lives and ministries based first of all on their identity in Christ and only then as what they can do for Christ. The spiritual development of the pastor is a primary key to effective ministry. The reason many pastors do not have this type of perspective of ministry is that they have not had enough practical exposure to the importance of their own spiritual formation in a way that could effectively reshape their understanding of the primary calling in ministry, which is to incarnate the life of Christ. (4)

Barton concurs with Dendiu, suggesting that people who look to pastors to provide spiritual leadership need to know that their pastors are also spiritual seekers:

[People] need [pastors] to keep searching for the bread of life that feed [the pastors’] own souls so that [pastors] can guide them to places of sustenance for their own souls. Then, rather than offering the cold stone of past devotionals, regurgitated apologetics or someone else’s musings about the spiritual life, we will have bread to offer that is warm from the oven of our intimacy with God. (29)

The aim of ministerial leadership is to lead from the deep place of the soul, the well of inspiration and love. Some might believe that a focus on one’s own spiritual formation

resembles a type of navel gazing or narcissistic behavior (25). Barton emphatically denies this idea of spiritual formation being narcissistic, suggesting that spiritual leadership should come not from one's intellect, activism, or performance drive but consistently from the soul where one is encountering God (25).

Spiritual Conversation

Spiritual conversation is a vital element toward reforming deformative mentalities and coping with the struggles of the pastorate. Katheryn Rhoads Meek et al. suggest that, from a practical side, pastors immediately need a place to be able to be vulnerable and to share their struggles in a way that they will be validated rather than judged:

Prevention begins at the seminary level by supporting seminaries in their efforts to foster an atmosphere of openness in which all aspects of the pastorate are discussed, including the problems of dealing with difficult people, managing feelings of sexual attraction, protecting one's marriage, seeking out supportive friendships and mentoring relationships. (345)

Fr. van Kaam suggests the healing of the soul encompasses more than just a pretranscendent, therapeutic model of counseling. While acknowledging the benefits of psychotherapy, spiritual healing requires spiritual direction that can help move one toward having a deeper understanding of the transcendent dynamic (*Foundations* 37). Meek encourages members of the clergy to have a spiritual director, saying, "Like those they serve, pastors need a pastor to listen and take notice of signs of distress, perhaps even before they are aware of it themselves" (345). The Meek et al. study also indicates that denominations or church movements should follow up on providing places of communication, help, and support (345).

Experts continue to stress the importance of the pastor having a safe community, where they will not feel alone, understanding that someone will stand with them as they

are in partnership with others (Meek et al. 345; Dendiu 61). Meek et al. indicate, “Essentially [pastors] expressed a need for an advocate who will not only listen and understand, but one who will walk beside them in viewing and solving [some of the] problems at hand” (343). Dendiu’s study revealed that pastors agreed that accountability would be valued, having “meaningful relationships of mutual encouragement” (61). Issler, an admitted “recovering loner,” supports the idea that pastors who wish to reform their deformative dispositions cannot do so themselves. He indicates such reformation takes “grace-filled loving relationships in community” (197). Therefore, a significant aspect of restoring balance relates to pastors living in spiritual community with others, having the freedom to share their struggles, finding support in partnerships with spiritual friends, and releasing unrealistic expectations that are placed on them by others.

The Practice of Spiritual Disciplines

A second practical way of bringing restoration to this balance of a primary focus on doing ministry over nurturing one’s inner life has to do with the practice of the classic spiritual disciplines. Meek et al. suggest in one of the studies that only 33 percent of clergy engage in the spiritual practices such as silence, solitude, reading, journaling, and prayer (343). Meek et al. once again raises the significance of these disciplines in placing a pastor’s heart and mind on the path where God can meet them:

In the face of stress and extreme difficulty, clergy and other religious people often find strength and purpose through releasing personal control and trying to work under God’s empowering guidance. . . . [T]hey have attempted to rest their identity in the character of God, thus acknowledging their own weakness and relying on one whom they perceive to be stronger and more capable, making daily connection through spiritual disciplines essential. (343)

Other studies further indicate that these spiritual resources are key to reforming balance in a pastor's ministry life. Duke University's Center for the Study of Religion/Spirituality and Health has studied the very topic of how spirituality and faith integrate with personal health. Their groundbreaking findings indicate that people who are deep spiritually and have a strong faith have less depression, lower blood pressure, and are less likely to be hospitalized for illness (Darling, Hill, and McWey 274).

Darling, Hill, and McWey indicate that spiritual resources mediate the fatigue that comes with taking care of others; they also help promote psychological and physical health (271). The Darling, Hill, and McWey study on stress among the clergy links spiritual well-being to quality of life:

Spiritual resources had a direct and inverse relationship to physiological and psychological stress and a positive relationship to sense of coherence. This indicated that greater spiritual resources helped to alleviate psychological and physiological stress and enhanced one's sense of coherence. (268)

The opposite appeared to be true as well: “[T]hose clergy who were experiencing greater compassion fatigue, perceived a lower level of spiritual resources” (268). The Darling, Hill, and McWey investigation strongly suggests that clergy need centers or arenas, as do clergy spouses, to experience spiritual renewal by being able to share their stories with others, such as in a retreat setting (275).

Other studies indicate that pastors struggle with incorporating the spiritual disciplines into the rhythm of their week; they also wrestle separating the practice of the disciplines from preparing sermons, lessons, counseling sessions, and more. Dendiu's study tells of pastors whose general sense of practicing the disciplines was not structured or consistent to the point that it facilitated growth (62). His intervention with pastors

indicated that once the spiritual practices had become a part of the daily routine, spiritual growth in life and ministry began to be evident:

All participants recognized the haphazardness of their own devotional lives and became more consistent. This regularity of seeking God through the classical disciplines resulted in a greater spiritual foundation for life and ministry. The intentionality of such a pursuit of God created more freedom in both life and ministry. Not only did the regularity and consistency of a disciplined life increase, but the disciplines became more life-giving and refreshing as the year progressed, rather than simply being routines or obligations to be fulfilled. (69)

He continues to report that pastors had, following the practice of these classical spiritual disciplines, a more pleasant disposition, more joy in their walk with the Lord, and even a greater sense of purpose—all due to the deepening of their prayer lives and the practice of disciplines such as solitude, silence, contemplation, and reflection (69). Dendiu reports on one of the participants in his study:

He discovered that he was being less “exterior” and more devotional, undergoing a shift in focus away from methods and toward people. He began to see those he was ministering to and with as legitimate ends in themselves and not as projects or means of completing a task or project. (72)

Charles Shonkwiler created a similar study on pastors, and he agrees that an engaged prayer life is the key. He suggests that pastors ought to utilize the model of Jesus before engaging in difficult ministry scenarios (19). He says, “A goal to emulate Jesus in this way may assist clergy in maintaining balance in the hectic pace of ministry in this age” (19). Pastors who develop some type of systematic approach of practicing the disciplines are those who create space for God in their lives and ministry, and ministry functioning then becomes a servant to the relationship one has with God.

A Sense of Self-Awareness

A third key aspect in practically bringing reform to a functionalistic mode of ministry is for the pastor to have a healthy degree of self-awareness. This sense of awareness is not based on some type of “analytical sense of self-awareness, but a humble self-appraisal paired with an understanding of God’s grace and forgiveness” (Meek et al. 344). Fr. van Kaam would call this self-awareness, with regard to the formation field model, a *full-field appraisal*, which is an evaluation of all four quadrants of the formation field usually in a spiritual direction setting (Muto, Epiphany). Pastors, who are self-aware, are both spiritually and psychologically healthy people.

In order for pastors to see the good in others, they must be able to notice the good in themselves; their self-perception is a key ingredient to reforming a balance between performance and contemplation. Merton comments, “We need to see good in ourselves in order to love ourselves. [God] does not. He loves us not because we are good, but because He is” (*New Man* 96). He indicates that a failure to understand this love of God is where a lot of pastors get derailed (91). He writes, “The man who does not care at all whether or not he is loved is ultimately unconcerned about the true welfare of the other and of society. Hence we cannot love unless we also consent to be loved in return” (91). Merton’s idea is that pastors who do not have positive self-images discount the fact that they need to be loved; the outcome usually results in people pleasing (91).

A careful, deep look within requires pastors to embrace fully the truth that they are created in the image of God. “The recognition of our true self, in the divine image, is then a recognition of the fact that we are known and loved by God” (Merton, *New Man* 124). Meek et al. suggest that people who have this understanding are those who are

“keenly aware of God’s ongoing work in their lives, the reality of His power in whatever successes or failures they experience, and their need for God’s forgiveness and mercy” (334). Merton reminds those who are seeking transformation, “Since we are made in the image and likeness of God, there is no other way for us to find out who we are than by finding in ourselves the divine image” (*New Man* 120), highlighting the critical aspect of self-awareness in moving forward to a transcendent mode of ministry.

Formative Detachment

People who are aware that their calling and purpose is grounded in the depth of being created in the image of God brings about two necessary perspectives that will now be required for ministry. The first perspective is detachment. Nouwen reminds pastors, “It is not a leadership of power and control, but a leadership of powerlessness and humility in which the suffering servant of God, Jesus Christ, is made manifest” (*In the Name* 63). He remarks that true spiritual leadership is about abandoning a sense of power for an attitude of love (63).

Ministry life is a constant interaction and rhythm of detachment and action. Fr. van Kaam once again offers insight on what detachment is and how it affects ministry. He says, “Passion, greed, ambition, needs for self-enhancement and success cloud my vision and involvement. Candid presence to the Divine in daily life is unattainable without detachment” (*On Involvement* 39). The question from what pastors must detach themselves becomes an issue. Meister Eckhart (ca. 1260-1327) writes, “There are plenty to follow our Lord half-way, but not the other half. They will give up possessions, friends, and honors, but it touches them too closely to disown themselves” (qtd. in Kelly 26). Kelly adds, “But what trinkets we have sought after in life, the pursuit of what petty

trifles has wasted our ears as we have ministered to the enhancement of our own little selves” (36). All the spiritual masters infer the priority of detachment as integral to the spiritual journey that ultimately leads to union with Christ.

Two types of detachment in the spiritual life relate to this discussion: passive detachment and active detachment. Passive detachment refers to that which is taken away. Known as imposed or forced detachment, “people, things, and experiences dear to us become detached from our life. Detachment may be from position and opportunity; from health, skill and energy, . . . from parents, family members, friends and colleagues taken away from us” (van Kaam, *Transcendent Self* 55). Active detachment is the giving up of something voluntarily. Active detachment can also imply, “giving up inwardly our attachment to what has been taken away from us” (67). Both passive and active detachment are formative in nature; both are opportunities for people to open themselves to the greater formative work of God.

Formative detachment in the spiritual life resembles a process of moving from a particular disposition or way of life, moving through a process that might entail crisis, and eventually moving to a preferable future or a more consonant way of life (van Kaam and Muto, “Foundations” 63). Merton refers to detachment as a death of the exterior self, “so that the inner self, purified and renewed, can fulfill its function as image of the Divine Trinity” (*Inner Experience* 36). Fr. van Kaam compares detachment to a death and resurrection sequence; the death of something one is attached to that ultimately leads to the resurrection of that which now has a greater transcendent meaning (*On Involvement* 99). An example of this sequence would be a pastor who lost his or her ministry due to negative dispositions in his or her life, representing the death in the

sequence. Working through the process of detachment, God in cooperation with the minister restores his or her ministry from the depths of despair to a greater work, harvested from a transcendent perspective, representing the resurrection phase of the sequence.

Contemplation

Finally, contemplation in the midst of action is the key to reforming the functionalistic mind-set where willfulness and self-absorption reign supreme. Merton defines contemplation as “the highest expression of man’s intellectual and spiritual life” (*New Seeds* 1). Mulholland describes contemplation as “centering in silence where we offer ourselves to God” (DM 856). Continuing to describe contemplation, Mulholland defines the difference between acquired contemplation and infused contemplation. Acquired contemplation refers to “being totally attentive to God,” which is a spiritual discipline that allows God to make his presence very known (DM 856). Infused contemplation “is graced to us by God.... It is where we become aware of the reality of God and He fills us with his Spirit” (DM 856). The deep connection with God that contemplation offers is what is needed to prepare and enrich pastors’ inner lives in order that they might incarnate their ministry to a wider world.

The avenue to approach contemplation is through detachment—“the slow relinquishing over a lifetime of desires that stand between us and full surrender to God” (Muto, *Pathways* 130). The approach to contemplation is through the inner life, yet as Kelly recalls, “We are not skilled in the inner life, where the real roots of our problem lie” (91). Therefore, pastors are now encouraged to consider the workings of their inner

lives and to seek what a contemplative life means to them, adapting it into their daily reality:

Life is meant to be lived from a Center, a divine Center. Each one of us can live such a life of amazing power and peace and serenity, of integration and confidence and simplified multiplicity, on one condition—that is, if we really want to. (93)

Kelly and Muto both agree that in order for a contemplative life to take root in one's soul, a desire is needed to relinquish oneself of self and to engage in a process of detachment.

Contemplation, though, is more than self-emptying and detachment; it also relates to the continual filling of one's life with the love of God through listening with one's ears, eyes, mind, and heart. Contemplation is being present in the Lord's holy temple, practicing the presence of God, knowing that God is near and "in us and we are in him" (Demarest 127). Merton, one of the great teachers on contemplation says, "Contemplation is a supernatural love and knowledge of God, simple and obscure, infused by Him into the summit of the soul, giving it a direct and experimental contact with Him" (*Inner Experience* 73). Contemplation is centering in the presence of the One who, when his garment hem is touched, sends forth power, healing, love, forgiveness, and mercy.

Contemplatives keep the practice of the presence of God alive in their hearts and souls through prayer. In contemplative prayer, individuals remain in touch with their identity as God's children. Demarest believes that in contemplation, people can let go of their false selves and experience their true selves (new selves) in Christ, bringing reform to their spiritual as well as emotional lives (69). Listening is the difference between verbal prayer and contemplation, where God continually affirms pray-er's identity in him. Muto adds, "Listening is only possible to the degree that we let go of the grip of our

egotistic will and become inwardly and outwardly silent, alert, receptive, attentive” (*Pathways* 84). Once again, the connection is made with Muto that contemplation and detachment are appropriately paired in reforming the spiritual life.

Living a contemplative life is not cocooning or cloistering oneself away from all contact from the real world. It is not sitting under a tree with palms open to the heavens. The danger of this over-the-top concept of contemplation is that this mode of over-spiritualizing life “isolates the contemplative within himself and cuts him off from all other realities” (Merton, *Inner Experience* 147). Contrary to popular belief, contemplative living is not drawing away from others, activity, and even the world. Contemplative living actually prepares the heart and the soul to encounter others in the world with the mind and heart of Christ. Living a contemplative life simply means being detached from a dependency on the exterior world in order that the inner world might be the source of one’s primary thoughts, motivations, and activities. Merton states, “The contemplative seeks to liberate his soul from all external control, to purify and detach it from material, sensual, and even spiritual compulsions, and to surrender it to the truth and creative freedom of the Holy Spirit” (129). Contemplatives are holistic in living, experiencing life in the present moment with all its momentary surprises and deviations, having the ability to rise above what life brings while discovering peace and serenity in knowing that God is with them. Unfortunately, as Merton describes, “There are thousands of Christians walking about the face of the earth bearing in their bodies the infinite God of Whom they know practically nothing. They are themselves sons of God and are not aware of their identity” (48). This tragedy spills over into the pastorate where self-identity becomes a viable concern.

Research Design

The research design utilized for this project that examined functionalism in a ministry context was an exploratory mixed-methods design study. The emphasis of this type of research design is on gathering qualitative data, which can then be presented in the ways to highlight themes and relationships that arise from the outcomes of the ministry intervention. “In qualitative research, we identify our participants and sites based on places and people that can best help us understand our central phenomenon” (Creswell 213), in this case, *exploring* the issue of functionalism in pastoral ministry that affects a minister’s self-identity. The method utilized for selection of participants was purposive sampling.

John W. Creswell notes, “A popular application of this design is to explore a phenomenon, identify themes, design an instrument, and subsequently test it” (561). Indeed, this design was the process that took place for this study. Researcher-designed instruments provided the means for data collection, due to the fact that existing instruments did not exist that pertained to the uniqueness of this study.

The interview type administered in this study was an open-ended semi-structured interview protocol. According to Lisa S. Whiting, semi-structured interviews are often utilized when in-depth, personal, and intimate responses are expected (36). For this reason, the semi-structured interview protocol is often used in the health and social service fields where people are usually sharing the details of their personal story and vulnerability is needed. The characteristics of the semi-structured interview include (1) an interview scheduled in advance at a designated time, (2) an interview organized around a set of predetermined questions, (3) an interview where other questions emerge from

dialogue, and (4) an interview that lasts from thirty minutes to several hours (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 315-17). DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree agree with Whiting: “This type of interview allows the interviewer to delve deeply into social and personal matters” (315). The semi-structured interview served as the correct research protocol for this study. All subjects responded to prepared questions, but the open-ended component allowed for discussion where the researcher became, in a sense, part of the research instrument. A soul health pre-intervention interview and post-intervention interview (see Appendixes C and F) guided the majority of data collected from each participant.

Additionally, the research utilized a focus group through an online discussion forum. Geoffrey Marczyk, David DeMatteo, and David Festinger substantiate the legitimacy of focus groups:

Focus groups are formally organized, structured groups of individuals brought together to discuss a topic ... during a specific period of time. Like surveys, focus groups can be an extremely useful technique for obtaining individuals' impressions and concerns about certain issues, services, or products. (154)

Other studies indicate that online focus groups are ideal for research that needs a consistent method. The obvious benefit of online focus groups is that it eliminates the need for all participants to be in the same room at the same time (Hopewell 22). In this study, the participants lived throughout the country and one lived in Beirut, Lebanon, but they were still able to come together in a focus group online in order to experience community, drawing out insights of the participants. The online focus group validated attitudes and impressions that surfaced throughout the duration of the investigation.

Additionally, a researcher-designed soul health journal provided further opportunity to collect qualitative data. The journal, collected via participants' e-mail,

insured a consistent method of gathering data throughout the study. The e-mail journal prompt insured privacy for the participants to share openly with regard to the precise question served each week.

Examining spiritual formation practices of pastors requires a design that is created around the interview process. In his dissertation that explored the spiritual formation programs for pastors, Dendiu utilized a mixed-methods qualitative design that centered on the interview process. He highlights the importance in taking careful notes and making meaningful observations during the interview due to the challenge of analyzing the data (43). A cursory observation online indicates the exploratory mixed-methods design has also proven itself a viable means of research in the medical and psychology/psychiatric fields, dealing with the application of various modes of therapy for patients with issues such as depression, anxiety, and other psycho-spiritual phenomena.

Summary

The symptoms of a functionalistic mode of ministry are evident as the number of pastors leaving ministry posts continues to grow. These symptoms are also seen in the number of pastors who continue to serve in the church but are fatigued, stressed, unhealthy, worried, frustrated, and absent from family for too many hours. This study did address the topic of functionalism and suggested a way to curb the deformative dispositions and ways of life that feed individuals' need to prove their worth by what they do and how they perform, in this case in pastoral ministry.

Through the biblical story of Mary and Martha to the writings of the spiritual masters throughout the history of the Church to modern-day testimonies of practitioners in the ministry today, the literature reviewed the ongoing problem that an over-busy

mentality of ministry can create. With the expertise of van Kaam and Muto, this study attached specific words and concepts to the central problem. The literature from van Kaam, Muto, Merton, Mulholland, Barton, and others speaks to the nature of the human person and how each one is uniquely created in the image of God, given a specific calling or purpose, and invited to a relationship with the Trinitarian God who initializes and energizes that life call.

The pathway to reforming the appropriate output of ministerial tasks lies with the ability to live in the very presence of God—in van Kaam’s terms—to live from the perspective of the transcendent dimension. Certainly human life is in constant conversation with all dimensions of human life, as articulated by van Kaam: sociohistorical, vital, functional, and transcendent. The central idea of all the literature reviewed is that the latter dimension does not serve the former three, but the former three (i.e., sociohistorical, vital, and functional) indeed serve the transcendent dimension. The transcendent dimension is the place of depth where disciples of Christ are able to hear, sense, and understand his call on their lives. The transcendent dimension serves as a deep place of human life from where ministry flows—out of the depth of a relationship with God who provides power, purpose, and plan for life and ministry.

The practice of key spiritual disciplines is the foundation to living a transcendent, contemplative life. The practice of the disciplines of silence, solitude, spiritual reading, meditation, and prayer provide avenues for individuals to create space for God that will allow them to encounter his presence. The ministry intervention challenged the participating pastors to engage in these disciplines for a twelve-week period, encouraging them to develop a rhythm of practicing these disciplines. The stories of life change and

ministry practice followed and are further explained in the following chapters of this investigation.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Problem and Purpose

Attentiveness to the ongoing formative work of God in one's life is the lifelong pursuit of all who consider themselves true Christ followers. Those who have the role of serving others through pastoral ministry often times discover the delicate balance between doing the work of ministry and finding moments to sit at the feet of Christ in humble contemplation a challenging endeavor. Slipping into a mode of functionalism is a subtle journey, often beginning by replacing the practice of the presence of God with religious activity. For those who are practitioners in the church, the statistics indicate that the level of burnout, marital difficulties, family relational issues, interpersonal conflict, and overall stress point to an underlying problem of pastors trying to equate what they do with who they are. This underlying issue of functionalism is all encompassing for some. Many who are consumed by it perhaps are unaware that they are spiraling downward in terms of their ministry future, personal health, and their own spiritual formation. The problem on which this study focused was the obstacle of functionalism in pastoral ministry that affects one's life, ministry, and self-identity in negative ways.

The purpose of the research was to determine if the online intervention designed to provide education and to give opportunity to practice key spiritual disciplines strengthened the soul health for the twenty-one pastors throughout the country who participated in a twelve-week online, interactive emphasis to restore a balanced functional mode of ministry presence.

The study measured the level of functionalism, if any, that was already evident in each pastor's life and ministry. Following a twelve-week intervention, the investigation examined the impact education, practice of key spiritual disciplines, and a safe social community environment played in moving one from a functionalistic lifestyle through a process of reforming the balance of functional presence to a lifestyle that is more contemplative and lived from a more transcendent perspective.

Research Questions

Four main research questions guided the investigation and exploration of the central phenomenon of functionalism in pastoral ministry. The first question was crafted to ascertain the level of functionalism that was evident in the pastors' lives before they understood the deformative nature of functionalism. The second and third questions examined the transitions and changes the participating pastors addressed and made, if any, in their lives once the intervention was under way, in progress, and finally completed. The fourth research question considered the quality of the educational podcasts and the overall study in reference to clarity and cognitive accessibility on behalf of the participants. All four questions were developed to provide the possibility for various themes to emerge as well as the possibility for ideas not previously considered to arise.

Research Question #1

What level of functionalism, as determined by the pre-intervention interview, existed in the ministry lives of the pastors selected for this research in relationship to their practice of key spiritual disciplines?

The responses to this research question offered an overall view of how the pastors' workweek was constructed, which included the amount of hours spent in giving ministry compared to how many hours a week they spent in rest, play, and personal growth. The instrument also evaluated the depth of spiritual formation practices they had adopted into their lives and ministry practice. The researcher-designed soul health pre-intervention interview (SHPI, see Appendix C) was the primary instrument utilized on behalf of this first research question. The interview provided qualitative data that revealed how the practice of key spiritual disciplines affected the ministry lives of the pastors interviewed. The SHPI additionally explored the pastors' personal concepts of the nature of God and the nature of the human person in order to determine a preliminary understanding of how the pastors view God as well as their understanding of transcendence as it pertains to ministry functioning. Questions 1-4 on the SHPI helped determine basic demographic information pertaining to each pastor. Questions 5-6, 11, and 13-15 measured the level of functionalism that existed in the lives of the pastors interviewed. Questions 7-8, focused on the inclusiveness of key spiritual disciplines in the pastors' lives, and questions 9-10, and 16-17 explored the issue of the pastors' self-identity and the connection between their identity and functionalism. Finally, question 12 approached their thoughts regarding the image and concept of God.

Research Question #2

What transitions took place in ministry praxis once the pastors became aware of the concept of functionalism and began to implement key spiritual disciplines in their lives during the twelve-week period?

Research question #2 guided the inquiry of the transitions that began to occur once the participants of the intervention addressed the level of functionalism and the inclusivity of key spiritual disciplines in their lives and ministry. A measure of impact on the pastor's spiritual life and ministry practice served as the main goal of the intervention as pastors became aware of the deformative effects of functionalism and deepened their practice of key spiritual disciplines of silence, solitude, spiritual reading, meditation on the Word, prayer, and journaling. The twelve-week online educational series (see Appendix D) and the practice of key spiritual disciplines (see Appendix I) served as the foundations of developing this awareness of functionalism and reforming this deformative way of living. The instruments utilized with research question #2 in mind were the researcher-designed soul health journal (see Appendix E), the soul health post-intervention interview (see Appendix F), and the online community focus group (see Appendix G).

The soul health journal covered all the major areas of focus throughout the twelve weeks as well as provided the opportunity for accountability for the practice of the spiritual disciplines. Journal prompts 1, 5, and 6 addressed transcendence as being the key dimension that brings balance to an overly engaged functional dimension. Prompts 2-3, and 8 addressed self-identity of the pastor. Journal prompts 4 and 9 aligned with the issue of functionalism, while prompts 7-8 and 10 aided in discovery of the use of classic spiritual disciplines by participants. In much the same way, the online community focus group instrument provided the same type of qualitative data: Weeks 1 and 5-6 addressed transcendence, weeks 2 and 3 considered the pastors' self-identity, weeks 4 and 7-8 focused on the level of functionalism in the pastors' lives, and weeks 9-11 collected data

regarding the practice of classic spiritual disciplines. Similarly, the soul health post-intervention interview explored the same topics as the soul health pre-intervention interview only after the twelve-week intervention was completed.

Research Question #3

How did the intervention, as determined by the post-intervention interview, begin to reshape the self-identity of the pastors selected for this research and move them from a ministry life dictated by functionalism to practicing ministry out of the overflow of their connection with God through key spiritual disciplines?

This research question explored the life and ministry changes that took place for the twenty-one participants who were a part of this study, particularly focusing on pastoral self-identity. This key question focused on whether or not the awareness of the deformative nature of functionalism and the practice of key classic spiritual disciplines supplied an appropriate balance and brought reform to what, in some cases, were functionalistic modes of ministry. The primary instrument utilized in relationship to this research question was the researcher-designed soul health post-intervention interview. The soul health journal provided additional qualitative data supporting this research question.

Research Question #4

What was the quality of the educational content and presentation that was utilized during the intervention to help participants understand the problem and begin to implement any needed changes to practical ministry?

This research question identified the quality level of the educational podcasts and the Web site developed for the administration of the project. Participants expressed their

thoughts and feelings regarding the online component of the project via a 1-5 scale rating of both the quality of the educational podcasts in relation to understanding the weekly lessons as well as the video quality that supported the teaching. Respondents had the opportunity on a 1-5 scale to rate the Web site (www.souljournalcenter.com) utilized to house the podcasts and discussion forums, in the areas of its ergonomics, general usability, and attractiveness of the website. The final two questions on the post-interview protocol was the instrument for the quality inquiry.

Participants

Out of the general population of Protestant, evangelical pastors in the United States, the participants who were the focus for this study and represented a sample from this very large group included pastors who occupied full-time ministry assignments throughout the church. The intervention was designed for a diverse group of men and women from a variety of denominational settings and a plethora of ministry assignments from senior pastors to solo pastors to various other staff pastor positions. The group of twenty-one pastors was selected by means of purposive sampling from an initial group of forty full-time pastors, based on the high-profile characteristic of their jobs as well as the rich depth of information that was potentially suitable to the central phenomenon of this study.

All the participants have had some level of prior relationship with me, either in context of a ministry assignment or in service as an intern under my ministry leadership. None of the participants knew fully what the intervention would reveal. Each agreed to participate with this limited knowledge. Additionally, I chose the method of purposive sampling to select individuals who might not have been exposed to the formative work of

van Kaam and Muto, thus creating a clean and pure learning environment for these new concepts. Pastors selected represented the Church of the Nazarene, the Church of God (Anderson), the Independent Christian Church, the Evangelical Free Church, and nondenominational congregations.

Initially, I invited participants to be part of the ministry intervention by means of e-mail (see Appendix B). The e-mail request highlighted the time commitment, a very brief explanation regarding the study, and the hope that each pastor would experience some level of life and ministry change during the twelve weeks of study. The age range of the participants was between 25 and 50.

Design of the Study

Ultimately, this study was intended to improve the potential for growth of the inner life and the strength of the soul of pastoral leaders in the church. The project encompassed four parts: a researcher-developed, fifteen to twenty-minute online educational video podcast to be viewed weekly, the organized practice of six key spiritual disciplines throughout the intervention, a weekly journal entry, and an invitation to participate in discussion with other participants through the online community focus group. The online nature of this intervention provided the means and opportunity for persons throughout the country, as well as one international student, to participate. The online characteristic of this study also served as a significant avenue for data collection.

The research method for this study was an exploratory mixed-methods design with multiple instruments. It was exploratory in nature due to the fact that the study examines whether or not the practice of spiritual disciplines and awareness of the central phenomenon through education made a difference in the ministry praxis of those in

pastoral ministry. While the study is primarily qualitative, built around a semi-structured interview protocol, the design of the study incorporated both qualitative and quantitative measures, which designate it as a mixed-methods design. This type of research design is valid to the exploration of spiritual formation and ministry practices of a pastor. The semi-structured nature of the interviews (pre and post), the online journal, and the focus group allowed participants to share openly and perhaps on a deeper level rather than responding to questions that would otherwise seek quantitative analysis. The multiple instruments utilized provided opportunities to validate analysis from a number of perspectives. The findings of this study related to personal, individualized experiences of those in the ministry field—each speaking into the central phenomenon contributing to a greater understanding of how to reform a balance of the functional and transcendent dimensions in pastoral ministry.

The ministry intervention occurred over a period of three months—from September through November 2010. Due to the fact that the project was progressive in nature where each week built upon the former weeks, each part of the study took place simultaneously over the twelve-week duration. The rhythm of the week began Monday mornings with a new educational podcast available. The practice of the key spiritual disciplines took place throughout the week. The journal prompt was made on Thursday mornings, and the online focus group was ongoing with participants posting comment threads throughout the experience.

Instrumentation

I constructed each of the four instruments employed for this study specifically to obtain research information pertinent to exploring levels of functionalism in ministry, to

ascertain if practicing the spiritual disciplines made a difference in that level of functionalism, and, finally, to observe how functionalism in ministry affected the self-identity of the pastors. A team of persons with expertise in the fields of spiritual formation, psychology, and research methods in education validated each instrument. A research reflection team further validated the instruments.

The first instrument utilized for the intervention was the soul health pre-intervention interview. The interview served as a method to obtain a baseline of how pastors associate what they do with their self-identity by determining if a level of functionalism existed in the lives and ministry practice of the pastors and, if so, to what measure of functionalism existed. A series of questions provided access to how many hours they spent in work, recreation, and study. Questions addressed facilitated data regarding the spiritual formation practices of each participant. This information was ultimately matched with the participants' personal view of God and how God influences life and ministry. The rationale for beginning an intervention with this type of interview process allowed me to gain insight into the nature of the participants' ministry practice and relationship with God prior to any education of the central phenomenon, problem, or even the characteristic of the intervention itself. The interview format was semi-structured and open-ended; it additionally provided an opportunity for me to create an environment of openness for each subject in order to achieve honesty and integrity.

The soul health journal, the second instrument established and utilized on a weekly basis throughout the intervention, provided a method for participants to respond to how they were doing with the teaching and the practice of spiritual disciplines. On Thursday mornings during the twelve weeks of study, participants received from me a

journal prompt by e-mail to which the participants replied by the end of the week (see Appendix E). The nature of the online journal through the means of e-mail offered accuracy of response, privacy, and confidentiality for each one of the participants. This instrument tracked the progress of the practice of spiritual disciplines and the pastors' self-awareness with regard to their self-identity being wrapped around their vocation. The open-ended nature of the questions prompted each week for journal writing gave a view of potential progressions in the pastors' inner lives as they pertained to ministry praxis.

The online community focus group also provided useful qualitative data. This focus group offered participants a way to connect with other participants throughout the twelve weeks and provided authentic information in the midst of conversation that proved helpful in validating responses from the other instruments. The online focus group was very open-ended, and participants posted threads at will each week. Each Monday of the week, I posted an opening comment with a question of discussion (see Appendix G). These questions for the focus group helped steer the conversation among participants while additional information was gleaned from comments posted. The focus group online also fostered a greater rate of participation for some of the pastors involved in the study. Freedom of discussion was enhanced by private screen names within the discussion forum on the secure Web site created for the project.

Finally, the last instrument of the study was the soul health post-intervention interview. Specifically researcher designed, this instrument obtained information regarding the progressions and life changes made in the lives and ministry practice of the intervention participants. Again, this interview protocol was open-ended and semi-structured in nature. Compared to the soul health pre-intervention interview, I made

observations noting any differences that pertained to the pastors' ministry life and soul health, including any greater sense of self-identity being oriented toward one's unique-communal calling of God.

Expert Review

Persons with expertise in the fields of spiritual formation, psychology, and research methods in education reviewed the instruments of research. I drafted a letter to inform the expert reviewers of the problem, the purpose of study, and the research questions that were a part of the study. Each expert reviewer has earned a post-graduate degree in his or her respective field. One man and two women were a part of the review, plus the faculty mentor. Expert reviewers had extensive backgrounds in spiritual formation, psychology, and education. Once reviewers agreed to assess the research instruments, I created a simple protocol for them to use to respond to each instrument (see Appendix H). Finally, I invited my research reflection team, consisting of one pastor, a university vice president, two doctoral candidates, and two of the original experts to bring additional refinement to each instrument.

Variables

One variable in this study was the actual intervention created for those who were full-time ministers in the church and the ability for the quality of the study to reach the desired objectives. The intervention consisted of four components, including (1) an online educational podcast, (2) the practice of key spiritual disciplines, (3) an online journal, and (4) an online focus group. The intervention was managed online with respondents confidentially sharing their growth experiences and reflections during the study. Some respondents reacted to certain components better than others; some really

enjoyed the online discussion forums while others preferred the journal prompt that provided more privacy.

Another variable consisted of the actual spiritual growth, knowledge of spiritual formation theory (van Kaam and Muto's formation science, formation anthropology, and formation theology), personal awareness of self-identity formation, and transition from functionalistic ministry to a more transcendent mode of functioning in ministry. The latter was determined specifically by the responses gained from the pre- and post-interviews. Perhaps more subtle, was the impact that practicing key spiritual disciplines had upon a functionalistic way of ministry.

The most important variable was the participants' willingness to commit to the discipline and the time required to undergo such a defined experience that would foster a change in the mode of their ministry practice. In order to help bring control to this variable, I created a soul health covenant (see Appendix A) to assure the participants understood the seriousness and integrity of participating in the study. However, a percentage of participants did not fulfill their obligation while others did not give a full effort to the project.

Reliability and Validity

One of the conditions for reliability of qualitative data is consistency. Creswell notes, "Reliability means that scores from an instrument are stable and consistent" (169). The question of reliability raised in this qualitative study dealt with whether or not answers and statements given throughout the study appeared to be consistent and reliable, thus giving credence to the participants understanding of the topic. The consistency from data received from multiple instruments offers reliability that the information gathered is

correct. This study incorporated multiple instruments to assure reliability in the study. The consistency between the pre- and post-intervention interviews produced reliable results to determine whether transition took place during the intervention. A degree of consistency between the educational units, the journal prompts, and the focus group questions, existed to dovetail together the same theme, helping control the topics of thinking for all participants in the study. Responses throughout the twelve weeks through multiple instruments proved to be consistent with each participant.

Expert informants (reviewers) in the areas of spiritual formation, psychology, and educational research methods reviewed the instruments for further reliability and validity. They measured each instrument for face validity, or whether or not the instruments appeared to be valid “on the face of it” (Downing 7) for persons who were going to be a part of the study. The Research Reflection Team, consisting of six members, examined the instruments further. In each case, I made suggested changes to incorporate greater validity and reliability into the instruments of this study. The data collected from one instrument corroborated with evidence collected from another instrument as the data from each instrument for each participant was triangulated to ascertain the various themes that arose in the study. This process of triangulation, according to Creswell, helps ensure accuracy of the study (266).

For those participants who did not respond to the instruments each week of the study, every attempt was made to follow up on why they did not respond. The lack of response posed important considerations and findings to the study and proved to be reliable data itself, assessing the impact that practicing spiritual disciplines and education

had on pastors' transition from the focus of doing to a deeper concentrated understanding of being.

Questions and prompts on each instrument carefully measured the responses of pastors with relationship to their spiritual formation. Each instrument was administered for each participant in the same way, on the same controlled Web site, within the boundaries of confidentiality to enhance the honest responses of the pastors. Increasing the validity of the study, participants did not have an overabundance of information regarding the nature of the study on its onset—only that they would be participating in an investigation of pastors' spiritual formation.

Data Collection

Collecting qualitative data from the pre- and post-intervention interviews, as well as the weekly online journals, served as the primary mode of data collection. Additional threads of data gleaned from the online focus group validated the previous methods of data collection. Interviews were recorded and notes were transcribed for each interview. Throughout the twelve weeks, an ongoing collection of data took place based primarily on the journals and supported by the focus group online comments. Exact details of responses were recorded and maintained by way of a secure Web site (www.souljourncenter.com). Throughout the length of the study, analysis was ongoing. The online teaching component facilitated the intervention *map* (see Appendix D).

The purposeful selection of twenty-one participants took place to begin the investigation; each participant was initially invited to be a part of the project via e-mail. Upon agreement to participate, a soul health covenant (see Appendix A) between the researcher and the participant was sent, and the candidates signed the covenant in order to

begin. Once I received the covenants, I initiated a schedule to begin the soul health pre-intervention interview (see Appendix C). The interviews took place over a thirty-day period.

The ministry study was launched on 6 September 2010 for a twelve-week journey. The study, accessed online through a prepared Web site, included individualized logins and protection by password. Once the study began, each Monday morning for twelve weeks, a new online twenty-minute educational podcast (see Appendix D) and a focus group question (see Appendix G) appeared on the Web site, so each participant could begin the process. On Thursdays, I sent a journal prompt to each participant, expecting a reply by the end of the week.

Journal keeping served as the means by which accountability to the spiritual practices took place. Each participant practiced the key spiritual disciplines that were designated by this study. Each participant received a copy of Richard Foster and Emilie Griffin's book, *Spiritual Classics*, to assist with the required spiritual reading.

Data was initially evaluated for patterns and themes that were then categorized under these headings: level of functionalism apparent, depth of spiritual disciplines practiced, transitions in ministry style and practice, concepts of God, and overall image of self-identity. Charts and graphs were created to enhance visually the stories that were being told by the pastors of this study.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the qualitative data as it became available and assimilated into patterns and themes based on observations. I then coded and illustrated the information in preliminary categories and illustrated visually on a chart or a graph. The method utilized

for categorizing the interview notes, journal entries, and the focus groups threads included (1) reading individual journal notes and threads, (2) tracking each participant linearly on a spread sheet, (3) grouping responses according to categories based on data received, (4) coding the data within the categories, (5) illustrating coding within the context of chart or graph, and (6) developing final themes and patterns based on relationships within the coded data. The Nvivo 9 software utilized for qualitative analysis proved to be an invaluable element to the process of organizing responses and the developing of thematic patterns throughout the responses.

Ethical Procedures

I took all measures to protect the identity of the participants and their responses. Due to confidentiality, only the participants and I recognized their login and screen names; no one else online knew of the persons with whom they were sharing this study. I kept all journal prompts strictly confidential. Each participant gave informed consent at the signing of the soul health covenant (see Appendix A).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Problem and Purpose

The central problem of this study focused on an overemphasis of *doing* (ministry functioning) versus *being* (self-identity in Christ) in ministry to the church. Specifically, the study utilized the body of work in spiritual formation written by van Kaam and Muto, which identifies this overemphasis on *doing* versus *being* as *functionalism*, a self-sufficient, pride-oriented way of living and doing ministry.

The purpose of the research was to determine if the online intervention designed to provide education and to give opportunity to practice key spiritual disciplines strengthened the soul health for the twenty-one pastors throughout the country who participated in a twelve-week online, interactive emphasis to restore a balanced functional mode of ministry presence.

Participant Profile

Participants for this study included twenty-one pastors from throughout the United States, and one pastor living and doing ministry in his homeland of Beirut, Lebanon. The age span ranged from 25-50 years of age, and all but three persons were married. All but one possessed a bachelor's degree or higher. One individual earned a PhD in theological ethics. Seven persons held a master's degree while the other participants had some type of bachelor's degree. Four persons ministered in the Church of the Nazarene, ten persons pastored in the Church of God (Anderson), one served in the Evangelical Free Church, one was an independent Christian Church pastor, two were

United Methodists, and the remaining had ministry contexts in nondenominational settings.

Of the twenty-one pastors who agreed to participate wholeheartedly, signing a covenant that would potentially assure their commitment to the study, four of the twenty-one participants did not continue past week three, two dropped out at week four, and two did not finish past week five. Each one indicated the busyness of schedule and the lack of time to participate as reasons for their insufficient participation. Each, who was deficient in their practice and study of the ministry intervention, indicated that the study was not at fault, that they enjoyed the study, but they lacked the personal time and internal motivation to persevere. Even while these candidates dropped from the study by not participating, e-mail journal prompts and contacts continued to flow each week, encouraging and allowing them to reconnect with the program at their will. The post-survey at the end of the study revealed the reasons for the lack of participation from these eight individuals. This lack of participation proved to be a significant piece of data that addressed the heart of the central problem of this study.

The remaining thirteen participants remained faithful to the study and persevered to the end, testifying to personal growth at the study's closure. While some participants encountered a week or two where the pressures of ministry precluded involvement, those who remained committed to the task indicated a level of diligence in their study. Those who did poorly in their participation corresponded to those who had not earned any type of graduate or post-graduate degree, perhaps illuminating the discipline of completing a program of study. Table 4.1 illustrates further demographics on each participant, including age, gender, years in full-time ministry, degree held, and denominational

setting. Additionally, Table 4.1 illustrates the level of participation each person had out of the twelve weeks given for the study.

Table 4.1. Demographics and Participation Level of Study

Age, M/F, Years in FT Ministry	Degree	Denomination	Weeks of Participation
#1 37, M, 9	Master's	Church of God	12
#2 33, M, 7	Bachelor's	Church of God	6
#3 25, F, 3	Bachelor's	Nazarene	2
#4 34, M, 12	Bachelor's	Church of God	12
#5 49, M, 15	Master's	Nazarene	9
#6 39, M, 17	Bachelor's	Nazarene	12
#7 34, M, 12	Master's	Evangelical Free	12
#8 39, M, 17	Bachelor's	Independent Christian	4
#9 34, M, 4	High school	Nondenominational	2
#10 39, F, 16	Bachelor's	Church of God	12
#11 25, M, 2	Bachelor's	Nondenominational	1
#12 39, M, 17	Bachelor's	Church of God	6
#13 32, M, 10	Master's	Church of God	12
#14, 34, M, 6	Bachelor's	Church of God	5
#15, 40, M, 4	Bachelor's	United Methodist	4
#16, 50, M, 28	Master's	Church of God	12
#17, 36, M, 14	Bachelor's	United Methodist	3
#18, 37, M, 15	PhD	Nondenomination	10
#19, 33, M, 9	Master's	Church of God	12
#20, 30, F, 9	Master's	Nazarene	12
#21, 50, M, 21	Master's	Church of God	12

Research Question #1

Initially, the guiding research question of this study attempted to secure data that would give some indication of the seriousness of the problem of the obstacle of functionalism in ministry.

What level of functionalism, as determined by the pre-intervention interview, existed in the ministry lives of the pastors selected for this research in relationship to their practice of key spiritual disciplines?

The level of functionalism was primarily determined by assessing how the pastors utilized the 168 hours of a typical week. I made comparisons between times spent in spiritual growth to the spiritual practices that were already evident in the lives of the participants. Respondents shared information regarding their family time as well as their moments for physical exercise. Themes began to emerge as I began to triangulate the amount of hours pastors spent in the office, the amount of time spent for spiritual and personal growth, and the general attitudes that were prevalent during the pre-intervention interviews. I studied the goals of each participant to determine if the said goals were functional in nature. Participants revealed their concepts of God, which gave information on their understanding of transcendence—the key component that lessens the degree of functionalism. Participants also shared from a deep perspective their feelings on personal self-identity and self-worth.

A Typical Week in the Life of a Pastor

To assist with determining the level of functionalism that existed, I took careful inventory of how the participants utilized the 168 hours during the seven-day week to benefit their personal growth, their physical health, and the amount of time spent with

family against the amount of hours they spent at the office or in a ministry context. The level of physical exercise that pastors reported showed a lack of care for the body, which spoke to a high level of functionalism in ministry. Functionalism, by nature, crowds out attempts not only to take care of one's soul but of one's body, as well. Physical exercise aids one to combat stress and supports cardio-pulmonary functioning. Exercise also increases endorphins that are necessary for positive mental health. Nearly half (47.6 percent) of the participants indicated that they spent no time in regular exercise throughout the week. Only 38 percent reported spending three or more hours a week in physical exercise. Generally, thirty minutes a day is a healthy goal.

Further study of the amount of hours spent in personal spiritual growth compared to the amount of hours spent in ministry to their congregations supported the fact that functionalism is at least a moderate issue in the lives of these participants. For those participants who dropped from the study, the level of functionalism was considerably higher, according to their personal statements. According to the pre-intervention interview, the average of the hours spent in personal spiritual growth was only 3.64 hours a week compared to the average amount of hours spent each week in ministry to the church at 51.95 hours per week. Given the total time pastors spent on both ministry at the church and personal spiritual growth, 93.5 percent of this time is spent in ministry to the church versus 6.5 percent of the time spent in spiritual growth. A third of the pastors reported to spending an hour or less a week in personal spiritual growth. Another 23.8 percent admitted to dedicating between one to three hours a week in spiritual growth. According to the hours reported, family time was not a factor toward functionalism in these pastors' lives. Each indicated that family played a major priority in the structure of

their week. The hours allocated for each area suggested pastors are committed to taking care of their families and their churches but leaning toward the negligent side with regard to taking care of themselves as far as physical exercise and personal spiritual growth are concerned (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2. Distribution of Hours in the Week (approximate)

Ministry Hours	Spiritual Growth	Family Time	Sleep/Exercise
#1 60	2	50+	49/1.5
#2 40	1	40+	49/5
#3 45	5	15+	42/5
#4 55	5	10+	49/0
#5 40	3	20+	54/5
#6 47	4	25+	49/3
#7 57	6	45+	49/0
#8 55	3	5+	56/0
#9 55	1.5	25+	49/4
#10 40	0.5	20+	49/3
#11 50	12.5	20+	49/5
#12 60	2.5	24+	45/0
#13 55	0.5	25+	56/0
#14 47	1	25+	54/2
#15 50	5	20+	42/1
#16 70	0.5	5+	42/0
#17 55	5	20+	49/0
#18 40	5	50+	49/0
#19 45	0.5	50+	49/10
#20 75	12	15+	49/0
#21 50	1	20+	49/0

Additionally, I requested information regarding the ongoing spiritual practices that were already a part of the inner life development of participants' lives. Most pastors had some type of practice throughout the week for prayer and Scripture reading. Eight of the twenty-one pastors indicated that they spent five hours or more a week in personal spiritual growth. Two participants spoke of spending ten hours a week or more in intentional Bible study, prayer, and other types of growth experiences. One participant shared that he and his wife cut out their cable and had turned the television off in order to read and spend time together. Interestingly enough, this respondent was one of the youngest candidates of the study, yet one who participated the least in the study. While this participant chose not to respond to why his participation was weak, he had obviously already had a very steady spiritual growth emphasis in his life and perhaps did not feel that he needed to further his spiritual formation practices through this study.

Ministry Output and Ministry Received

I asked a follow-up question during the pre-intervention interview with regard to how participants generally felt about the difference between ministering to others and receiving ministry. The question had to do with the balance of ministry output as compared to ministry received on a percentage scale. Pastors of this study indicated in the pre-intervention interviews a lack of sensing anyone ministering to their needs, especially their spiritual needs. For example, a respondent indicated that he felt he poured out ministry 90 percent of the time while feeling that he was receiving ministry only 10 percent of the time. Overall, sixteen of twenty-one, or 76 percent of the pastors thought they regularly expended themselves in ministry far more than they received ministry in return with at least an 80 percent to 20 percent (80/20) ratio (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3. Percentage of Ministry Output Compared to Ministry Received

Ministry Output %	Ministry Received %	Participants Sharing	% of All Participants
60	40	2	9.50
70	30	2	9.50
75	25	1	4.76
80	20	4	19.00
85	15	4	19.00
90	10	3	14.28
95	5	5	23.80

Practice of Spiritual Disciplines

Statistics for the practice of spiritual disciplines indicated that the primary focus was on reading Scripture and prayer. Less than 20 percent practiced journaling and less than 10 percent practiced any kind of meditation, silence and solitude, or spiritual reading (see Figure 4.1). Respondents reported that their practice of Scripture reading was primarily informational in nature rather than formational (mastering the biblical text in preparation for sermons and Bible studies versus allowing the text to serve as a formative encounter with God). The practice of *lectio divina*, or meditation on the Word, was not a part of these pastors' regular discipline of reading Scripture. Only one person mentioned the spiritual discipline of fasting, and 38 percent shared that the practice of spiritual disciplines felt like a duty rather than an experience with God. The common theme of spiritual practices serving as preparation moments for sermons, teaching lessons, or devotions reduced the efficacy of the spiritual practices to the level of an implement or a tool to serve pastors' functional needs for the production of services for the congregation.

Even while pastors reported reading the Bible for the main purpose of preparing sermons and Bible studies, they did indicate a measure of encountering the Word in this process. However, the concern lies in the approach to the disciplines as a functional enterprise rather than as an encounter with the holy, living God.

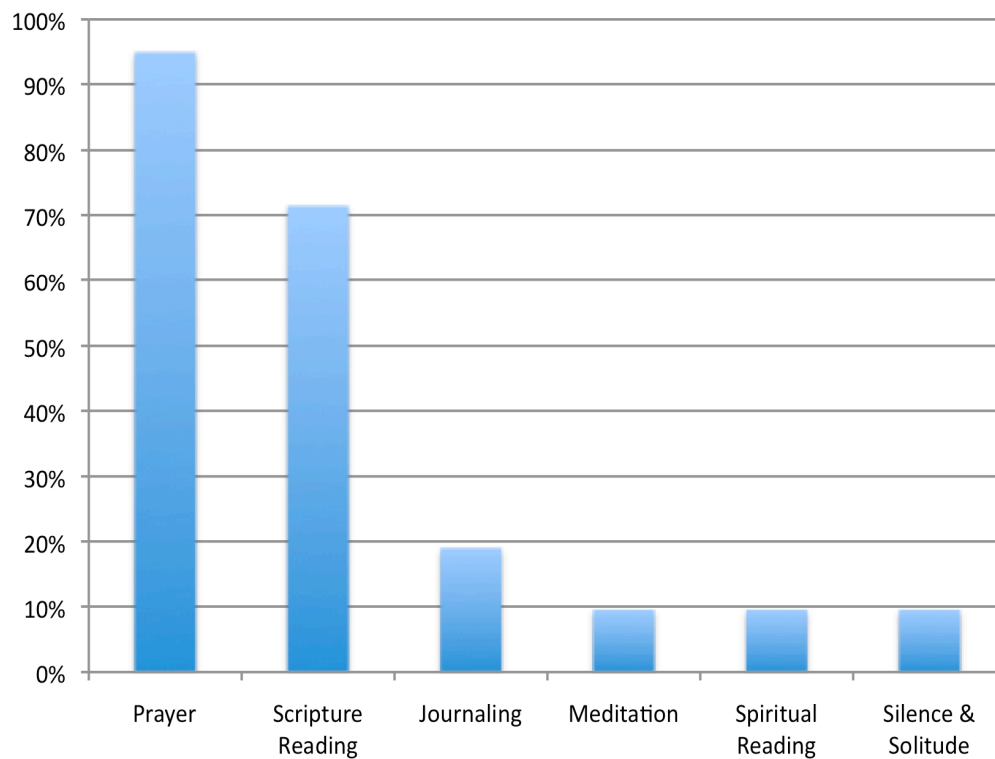


Figure 4.1. Spiritual disciplines practiced before study.

Ministry Goals

I further assessed the level of functionalism in these pastors' lives by having them share their ministry goals during the soul health pre-intervention interview. Evaluation of goals determined if they intrinsically possessed either a functional or a transcendent

nature. Given the subjective nature of goal evaluation, the method of assessment took into consideration the language used by the respondent and the overall focus of each goal—be it a personal advancement, ministry advancement, or some type of spiritual growth initiative.

The sharing of goals, during the pre-study interview, revealed a tremendous amount of information pertaining to functionalism and the pastors' self-identity. Out of the twenty-nine different goals identified by these twenty-one pastors, ten or 34.4 percent of the goals focused singularly on making an impact on other people's lives, indicating a desire for acceptance and for determining significance in how others view what they do. Participant #12 said, "I want to be a person who is important to other people, . . . to be an effective leader in the church and teach people to grow on their own." Respondent #14 shared, "I want to be a person who can create great artistic moments in worship, to be somewhere that I can be respected as one who engages and cares for his flock." These statements could be interpreted as having a direct link between the self-identity of the pastors and what they do for a living.

Other more task-oriented, success-driven goals arose from the discussions with the participants. The motivation of said goals seemed often to be birthed out of personal ambition. Participant #9 shared, "I want to grow as an executive, . . . to manage a larger operation." Respondent #15 stated, "I want to get our new building built, . . . to have more media production and to grow our ministry to have a greater impact outside the church, to produce ministry tools that have a life of their own." None of these individuals reflected on their goals being something other than for furthering the kingdom of God, yet the aspiration-oriented nature of some goals pointed to a functionalistic mind-set that was

prevalent at the beginning of the study. Participants #9 and #15 were not able to continue the study to completion due to the busyness of schedule and a focus of accomplishing these tasks that would further their functional and success-driven goals.

Conversely, 24 percent of the goals shared reflected a true pastoral heart for God and for others without being self-focused and self-initiated. These goals shared a desire for others to know Christ in a deeper way or for others to worship the Lord in a way that led to life change. Participant #4 stated, “I want to see students come to a realization that they are loved by God.” Participant #18 offered another goal that reflected a higher approach to goal setting: “I want to learn to be more attentive to vulnerable neighbors.” The respondents’ goals illustrate a higher perspective or a more transcendent dynamic at work. These goals are more kingdom-oriented rather than being focused on individual achievements. Taking inventory of participants’ goals, only one-third of the goals mentioned did not possess a functional quality (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4. Goals of Participants

Goal Themes	# of Respondents	Functionally-Oriented	% of Goals Stated
Develop leaders	2	Yes	6.8
Grow as an executive	1	Yes	3.4
Have an impact on people	10	Yes	34.4
See others know the Lord	7	No	24.0
Get building built	1	Yes	3.4
Become a senior pastor	2	Yes	6.8
Read a good number of books	1	Yes	3.4
Be a part of a thriving church	1	Yes	3.4
I don't know/don't have goals	4	N/A	13.8

Self-Identity Scale

A further indication of functionalism present in the pastors' lives was their conversation regarding self-identity being driven by being a pastor. When asked a scale question between 1 and 5 (1 meaning "being a pastor does not determine my self-identity" and 5 meaning "being a pastor determines my self-identity at a very high level"), pastors indicated that their jobs determined their self-identity on the average at a level of 4.04. This level of response indicated that being a pastor determines the participants' self-identity at a high level. When given the opportunity to express their deepest understanding of their true-identity, 38 percent of the respondents stated that they considered themselves children of God. Three persons shared that they never had thought about it or did not know. Others saw themselves as creations of God (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5. Self-Identity Responses of Pastors

Identity Themes	# of Respondents	% of Respondents
Child of God	8	36.36
Nobody/Sinner	4	19.00
Do not know/Do not think about it	3	14.28
Creation to glorify God	2	9.50
Husband/Father/Pastor	1	4.70
A stubborn learner that God still works on	1	4.70
A person who is struggling to know what God wants	1	4.70
Lover of people	1	4.70

Image of God

Lastly, in determining an initial level of functionalism before the study, a review of the pastors' concept or image of God revealed a level of encounter with the transcendent dimension of their lives (the dimension of human life, according to van Kaam, that fosters the connection of God). The participants illustrated a very positive image of God, substantiating an awareness of the transcendent dimension, opening them up to any possible reformation of functionalism that might have been present and active in their lives. Nine persons, or 42.9 percent, revealed that their image of God consisted of being a loving Father while five respondents, (23.8 percent) reported their image as being a sovereign, all-powerful God. Another five persons, (23.8 percent) viewed God as something of a mystery. Only one person had a vision of God being a judgmental God, while another saw him as a gentle shepherd.

Research Question #2

What transitions took place in ministry praxis once the pastors became aware of the concept of functionalism and began to implement key spiritual disciplines in their lives during the twelve-week period?

The findings that support this research question were discovered through the soul health journals and the discussion forums, measuring any significant movement from functional ministry practice to one more oriented toward the transcendent dimension.

Time Management Shift

One of the themes that surfaced throughout the study was a measure of movement toward a balance between being task oriented and finding the time to spend in quiet contemplation. The movement toward a more balanced approach to life and ministry was

a thread that ran through the responses throughout the weeks of the study. The accountability of practicing of the spiritual disciplines in the context of this study facilitated this movement for those who remained committed to growth. Most participants shared that finding time for quiet meditation and contemplation was a time management problem. Participant #4 stated, “I think that it is difficult for a pastor to lead a contemplative life because many pastors have difficulty managing their time. The workload dictates their time—and possibly their lives.” This participant started getting away from the desk and began walking in his neighborhood, trying to connect with God. Another respondent, Participant #1, shared that he previously lived according to his *to-do* list. He has, since this study, begun to limit his list to those things that only he can do. He writes, “It is [now] not a very long list. It is hard to let go of the things that are not on that list, but I am finding that many of them were not as important as I thought.” He also indicated that by limiting what he alone could do had challenged his laity to step up and get the work accomplished, admitting that they were able to do these tasks better than he.

Participant #5 admitted, “There is always something else, I convince myself, I need to be doing.” This respondent agreed that the “functional aspects of ministry ... trump our contemplative lives.” He continued to say that his upbringing had a lot of influence on how his time management had become a functional exercise.

Other participants agreed that they had no modeling or teaching of what a contemplative life should be. Directly linked to time management, the lack of teaching and modeling was an obvious concern on behalf of these participants. The teaching that this study provided increased the awareness the participants had with regard to creating the time to spend with God and to live from a more contemplative experience.

Respondent #1 substantiated this belief: “I believe that for many of us, contemplation was never modeled or taught; not in our homes, from our pastors or from our professors in seminary.” This respondent further emphasized, “Understanding truth has always been drilled in my head, but not getting away and taking the time to hear from the Lord.” This respondent stated that through this study, he began to take “baby steps” in creating more time with the Lord. Participant #21 agreed, “Our grandparents, parents, teachers, [professors], etc.,... inevitably modeled kenosis before union.” This pastor indicated that he was beginning to spend more time in the Word, taking one scriptural passage per week and contemplating on it, allowing it to live in and through him.

With time management an issue for the participants of this study, I examined the movement that took place with regard to the practice of spiritual disciplines, measuring the number of hours that were logged during the study compared to the number of hours indicated during the pre-intervention interview. Respondents shared during the pre-intervention interview that on average they each spent 3.64 hours a week collectively in practicing the spiritual disciplines. During the study, the figure actually proved to be only 2.56 hours a week spread across all weeks of the study. Given the fact that these participants had accountability during the project, the figure of 2.56 hours probably represented an actual slight increase over the real number of hours spent in spiritual growth. During the study, some pastors experienced weeks without the practice of spiritual disciplines. In all fairness, hours missed were largely due to illness or an overly busy week. Averaging hours over the entire study, two-thirds of the participants spent less time practicing the spiritual disciplines than they originally reported during the pre-intervention interview. Table 4.6 indicates the difference between the average of hours

throughout all the weeks of the study compared to the average of hours stated during the pre-intervention interview (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6. Number of Hours Practicing Spiritual Disciplines

Participant/Average Hours Reported during Pre-Interview	Actual Average Hours Reported throughout the Study	Difference between Hours during Study from Hours Stated during Pre-Interview	Actual Hours + or - from Hours Reported during Interview
#1 2.0 hours	2.08	.08 hours	+
#2* 1.0 hour	0.39	-.61 hours	-
#3* 5.0 hours	1.56	-3.44 hours	-
#4 5.0 hours	4.39	-.61 hours	-
#5 3.0 hours	7.40	4.4 hours	+
#6 4.0 hours	3.20	-.8 hours	-
#7 6.0 hours	4.32	-1.68	-
#8* 3.0 hours	0.00	-3 hours	-
#9* 1.5 hours	0.66	-.84 hours	-
#10 0.5 hours	1.57	1.07 hours	+
#11* 12.5 hours	1.55	-10.95 hours	-
#12 2.5 hours	1.07	-1.43 hours	-
#13 0.5 hours	2.69	2.19 hours	+
#14 1.0 hour	0.80	-.2 hours	-
#15* 5.0 hours	0.19	-4.81 hours	-
#16 0.5 hours	3.44	2.94 hours	+
#17 5.0 hours	1.60	-3.4 hours	-
#18 5.0 hours	2.53	-2.47 hours	-
#19 0.5 hours	3.55	3.05 hours	+
#20 12.0 hours	7.78	-4.22 hours	-
#21 1.0 hour	3.14	2.14 hours	+

*Dropped from the study by week 4

Awareness and Attentiveness Shift during Study

Another major transition that took place during the study was one toward awareness and attentiveness to God's presence and awe. Participant #18 stated, "For me it is a matter of being aware. It's simply not my regular disposition to notice God so I [am trying] to develop habits that help me to see." Participant #12 shared that too often persons have developed a far too casual approach to God, approaching him "as if he's almost become an equal or a divine buddy, rather than the King who sits on the throne and is holy." Much discussion took place throughout the journals and the discussion forums that related to becoming more aware and attentive to the awe of God through the disciplines as God reveals himself through Scripture and prayer.

To increase intentionality toward discovering awe and opening themselves up to a more transcendent perspective, a great number of respondents began developing elements in their congregational worship services that applied the concept of transcendence. Others mentioned increasing intentionality toward transcendence by slowing down and seeing the wonder in the small things, or the wonder and awe in their children's eyes. Participant #4 responds, "Rather than worrying about all of the tasks that need to be accomplished, [I'm] focusing on what God may want to say to me through the simple things of life." Participant #10 illustrated, "I'm afraid all too often we miss the majesty that is hidden ... in the mundane—washing dishes, bathing our child, preparing a meal." This participant began to apply the concept of slowing down in the worship service by giving the congregation a chance to pause and in humility consider the awe of God. Participant #6 also was intentional about giving the congregation moments to reflect on the awe of God yet cautioned that persons need to be careful in programming this silent pause to the point

that it becomes inauthentic. Participants seemed to have understood this concept of transcendence to the point that they began to teach it to their congregations and began to apply it in their own lives, even within their family structures.

A definite frustration developed during the study as participants began to connect the dots between over busyness and missing the grandeur of God. Participant #13 stated, “When I saw the [video podcast for this study] and thought of all the things entrusted to me in ministry, I felt overwhelmed with the responsibilities I have and how they may seem so inconsequential in the grand scheme of the Kingdom of God.” Frustration developed through the realization that much of the ministry being done by these study participants was merely functional; however, respondents linked their frustration to a new understanding and a new hope that the over-functionality of their ministry could change.

Respondents noted throughout the study that the reason for a lack of awareness, attentiveness, and even intentionality for the presence of God was simply a loss of focus in the present moment and a level of self-absorption related to the participants’ lives. Participant #10 said that worship can even start out focused on God but quickly shift to their own needs, making worship “all about me.” The awareness of this loss of focus was a significant theme throughout the study. Participant #2 spoke on behalf of many of the pastors:

Every single day, I walk into my office and see my Bible lying on my desk. I can feel my spirit wanting to open it and spend time with it. But far too often, another voice begins to speak to me, and it is much louder. It’s the voice of the tasks I need to complete that day, and I find myself saying, “I’ll get to reading my Bible once my tasks are all completed and then I won’t have the distractions of the tasks while I’m reading my Bible.” I justify way too many things because I’m doing them for Jesus, or at least that’s what I tell myself. If I’m really honest, a lot of what I justify doing for Jesus is nothing more than keeping up the status quo of what my

church expects of me. I can say that I'm doing things for Jesus, but in reality, I simply long for the affirmation of a job well done.

Comments such as these echoed throughout the study with regard to the impact functionalism had on some of these individuals. Much of the awareness of missing the present moment occurred during the teaching and discussions that followed around the story of Mary and Martha in the Bible. Out of the transitions that took place during this study, certainly an increased attentiveness to the present moment was one of them.

Awareness and attentiveness continued to be a main theme throughout the study pertaining in particular to self-identity. Three persons admitted never giving self-identity a thought, assuming they were the sum total of what they did in life. Participant #1 said, "Being reminded that who I am is not wrapped up in what I do can really take the pressure off." Participants began to understand that long before God called them to be pastors, he called them to have relationship with him. Participant #1 shared the haunting reality that many pastors feel as it relates to their self-identity:

Recently I have been wrestling with the feelings of not being as good at my job as the other guys. You know, those larger churches in the community,... those pastors and leaders who look the part, have the stellar team in place, and don't seemed to be worried about getting people to commit to ministry at their church. They've got better qualified people waiting in the wings than the people I rely on each week. And if one of my volunteers quits, I don't have a replacement. This is where the thoughts come rushing in that maybe I'm not good enough.

Another participant stressed how activity had dominated his life:

I am guilty of focusing more on what I am doing then on who I am. I have allowed activity to take up residence in my life. The other day during my quiet time, I just sat there. It was an incredible feeling—one that I hope I will be able to experience again.

I was encouraged to observe, during the study, pastors coming to grips with the fact that they must bring balance to all of the dimensions of whom they were as people in Christ.

Balance Shift during Study

Once again, balance proved to be a theme related to the pastors' self-identity. Some respondents were appreciative for being confronted with the concept of functionalism in their lives. The level of functionalism, at one point, seemed so significant that the activities that they were depending on for personal self-worth were no longer feeding their souls. Participant #20 stated, "I find myself so busy creating and promoting experiences for others to experience God's transcendence, that I miss the transcendent God myself." Others responded that their work no longer fed them like it used to. Respondent #16 said, "For years I have led worship at my church but never truly worshiped.... I have been challenged to find this balance in my life of being functional yet transcendent." Most of these pastors had never addressed the fact that they were linking self-identity and self-worth to their job performance.

Research Question #3

Responses during the post-intervention interview provided a very real observation of any movement from ministry dictated by functionalism to one that was shaped by the Holy Spirit and poured out of the overflow of a relationship with God.

How did the intervention, as determined by the post-intervention interview, begin to reshape the self-identity of the pastors selected for this research and move them from a ministry life dictated by functionalism to practicing ministry out of the overflow of their connection with God through key spiritual disciplines?

The post-intervention interview followed the general script of the pre-intervention interview to determine the changes of attitude and practices of the pastors who participated in the project.

Increase of Spiritual Practices

First, the number of various key spiritual disciplines practiced by the pastors increased because of the intervention study. Participants continued to practice prayer and Scripture reading but incorporated some of the other spiritual disciplines that gave shape to the pastors' spiritual lives as well. Those practicing journaling increased from 19 percent to 24 percent. The number of participants including meditation and spiritual reading as spiritual practices both rose from 9.5 percent to 33 percent. Likewise, those practicing the spiritual discipline of silence and solitude rose from 9.5 percent to 38 percent.

Out of the spiritual disciplines practiced, the respondents identified spiritual reading, biblical meditation, and silence and solitude as methods of practicing the Christian faith that gave them the most sense of spiritual renewal. In fact, during the post-intervention interview, respondents discussed the newer disciplines they had incorporated having a deepening effect on the disciplines they were already practicing before the study. Many of the participants shared that the practices of silence and solitude, *lectio divina*, and reading the spiritual masters were never taught or modeled to them by parents, grandparents, teachers, pastors, and even professors in the seminary. All of the participants who continued the study through the end incorporated at least one new spiritual discipline in their devotional lives. Figure 4.2 indicates the percentages of the key spiritual disciplines practiced by participants following the intervention (see Figure 4.2).

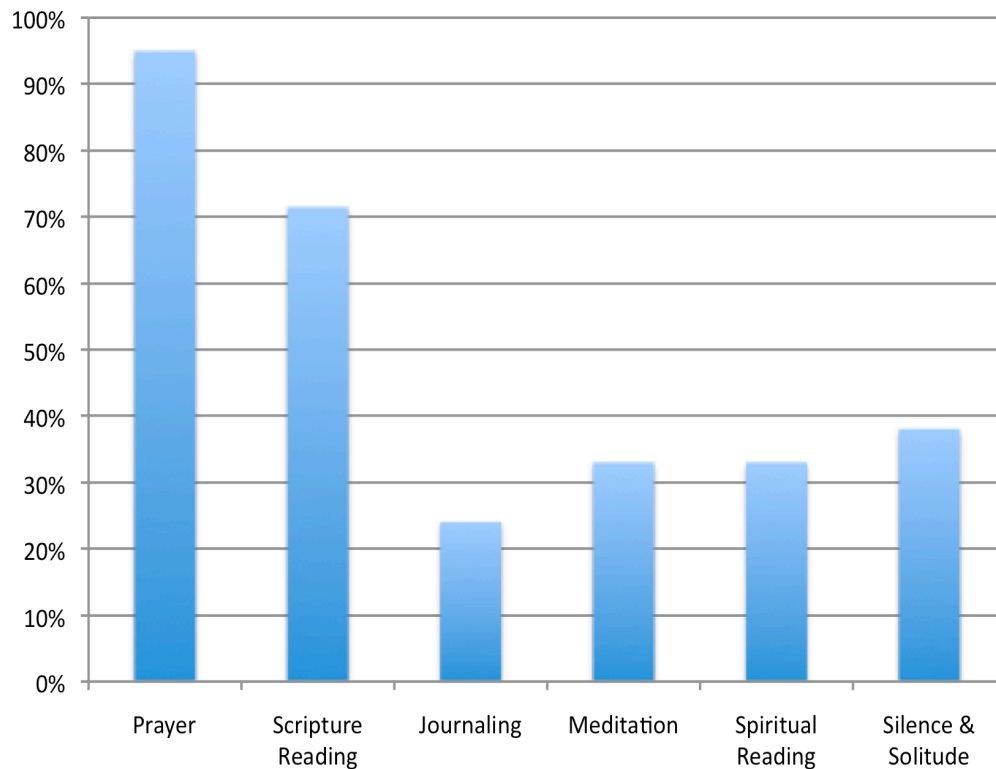


Figure 4.2. Practice of spiritual disciplines following the study.

The figures pre- and post-interview indicate that not every pastor is fully engaged with prayer and Scripture reading as a spiritual discipline. While pastors shared that they might pray around the dinner table or find a Scripture to help them prepare for a sermon, they were not able to say that these two basic practices were to the level of being a discipline, making a difference in their relationship with God.

No real significant differences existed with regard to the number of hours pastors dedicated to their work at the church due to this study. Hours in the office, hours with family, and physical exercise generally remained the same. While the number of spiritual disciplines increased, giving variety to the pastors' spiritual growth practices, the figures

for the number of hours spent in spiritual growth did not indicate an increase during the study. After assessing the figures, I believe pastors were not reporting accurately during the pre-interview, inflating their own view of how much time they spent in spiritual growth. A very small group of people shared having an accountability partner; thus, many of the participants may not have had an accurate picture of the amount of hours spent in the spiritual disciplines. During the post-intervention interviews, participants did say their focus while at the office changed. Participant #6 said, “My perspective did change, now I am seeing more of the larger picture and I’m trying to guard against fatigue.” Several of the respondents shared that their approach to the workweek was more relaxed, spending more time in intentional spiritual growth. Participant #7 stated, “I have not changed the number of hours as this is the normal amount expected by the church I serve. However, I did incorporate more of the silence and solitude time into my work structure.” With a newfound understanding of functionalism, respondents agreed throughout the post-intervention interviews that perspectives and priorities changed even though the number of hours spent in the office did not change.

Self-Identity Improvement

Pastors indicated a significant movement in the area of self-identity. Of the thirteen pastors who continued the study through the end of the twelve weeks, seven respondents identified themselves as children of God, five stated that they were beings created in the image of God, and one shared he was a servant of God. Two others who did not complete the study weighed in on the self-identity question. One individual stated he was a person loved by God, while another said he was a person who believes in God

but cannot sustain a relationship with him. Positive self-identity images rose post-study from 57 percent to 93 percent.

Positive Shift in Ministry Output and Ministry Received

A meaningful decrease appeared in the pastors' thinking that their ministry output exceeded ministry received. The sense of being ministered to actually increased because of this study, significantly due to the fact that they were in an accountable relationship and were receiving ministry from me. Those who believed that ministry output was at a level of 80 percent or higher went from 76 percent pre-study down to 46.67 percent post-study, which indicates a significant degree of shift in balance between ministry given and ministry received (see Table 4.7). Participants shared how the ministry intervention helped them receive ministry during the weeks of the study. One participant noted, "The one thing that I am taking away from this study is the importance of who I am versus what I do. I think that for a good amount of time in my life, I have focused more on what I do." Another individual shared, "During the course of this study, I began to turn my thoughts more on who I am as a child of God. This has been a valuable lesson for me to learn and embrace. I really hope that I will continue to hold tight to this lesson." Finally, another pastor indicated, "Reading about those great men and women of God who have spent a great deal of their time praying and listening to God made me recognize that this should not be an option but a priority in my life." A strong sense of continuance of spiritual nurture existed among these pastors along with a desire to grow additionally through the disciplines they practiced during the study.

Table 4.7. Ministry Output Compared to Ministry Received Post-Study

Ministry Output %	Ministry Received %	Participants Sharing	% of All Participants
60	40	3	20
65	35	2	13.3
70	30	1	6.67
75	25	2	13.3
80	20	5	33.3
90	10	2	13.3

Pastors were once again asked a scale question between 1 and 5, indicating how being a pastor determines self-identity (1 meaning “being a pastor does not influence their self-identity” and 5 meaning that “being a pastor shapes their self-identity at a very high level”). During the pre-intervention interview, the average response was 4.04, which was considered high, meaning pastors had a significant sense that their self-identity was shaped by being a pastor. After the study, the level of pastor’s self-identity being shaped by their role as a pastor was more neutral with an average of 3.03.

On Dealing with Expectations of Others

During the post-intervention interview, respondents were asked to share if the study helped shape their ability to deal with the expectations of others. The question referred to the self-identity of pastors and how the expectations of others often motivate those in service-oriented professions. Two-thirds of the participants indicated that the study did make a difference. Participant #5 stated, “[The study] has made me look hard at some strong ‘people pleasing’ tendencies of mine.” Several pastors discussed the difficulty in balancing the needs of people and the direction that God was leading them;

often these two were in competing directions. Respondent #13 shared affirmatively that the study helped shape this area of his life and ministry: “I think that I put many expectations upon myself having assumed others would place those expectations on me. Now, I think I approach things from a healthier standpoint, realizing that Jesus died for the church so I don’t have to.” One participant even used the study in the context of his youth ministry, helping young people identify the expectations they put on themselves. Another participant said, “I have come to realize that I am never going to satisfy each person’s expectations of who I am. I will just continue to live for Christ and serve Him to the best of my ability.” While a third of the participants did not indicate a change in how they handled expectations of others, some of those did not seem to have a problem with the expectations of others affecting self-esteem and self-identity on the outset of the study.

Ministry Goals More Balanced

Pastors were also asked if the study had any effect on ministry goals. Pastors agreed strongly that goals had either shifted, intensified, or had become more balanced. Over 80 percent of the pastors interviewed shared positive feedback regarding personal ministry goals. Participant #10 shared, “[My goals] are a little more balanced or tempered in keeping them in proper perspective.” Another respondent indicated that his personal ministry goals had been revitalized since participating in the study. Respondent #19 was very positive that his feeling of needing to be successful diminished during this study—a major issue in functionalism. He said, “I’ve been stirred to put any feeling of being ‘successful’ in the trash. I do what I do to be obedient, not to be successful.” While some participants stated that they still struggled with personal goals, others indicated they

wanted to be more intentional about making goals more balanced toward what the Holy Spirit was calling them to do, rather than being focused on their own personal aspirations.

Deeper Reliance on God's Guidance

Participants were asked if the study improved their sense of God's guidance in their ministry. The same percentage of respondents (over 80 percent) who indicated the study helped with personal goals also responded that the study helped in allowing God to guide their ministry, meaning that pastors were practicing their ministry with a higher perspective in mind. Participant #5 admitted, "[The study] has helped me be a bit more genuinely present and less task oriented when dealing with others." Participant #2 stated, "I find myself stopping a little more to seek God's direction as opposed to just making decisions by myself." Overall, participants had a greater sense of God's control in the everyday decisions and operations of their ministry. Conversely, no great measure of difference existed in the participants' image of God. Some of the responses indicated a deeper awareness of God, but any actual sense of their images or views of God changing was not evident in this study. This lack of movement in their views of God suggested that the pastors of this study did not deepen their awe of God nor the intimacy needed to encounter God to the point that it affected their understanding of God. More intentional time in spiritual growth is needed for these participants' views and knowledge of God to be deepened.

Main Ideas Apprehended

With regard to the study's effect on the pastors' self-identity, participants shared the main ideas they apprehended throughout the study during the post-intervention interview. Numerous ideas were shared, but a strong emphasis leaned toward the concept

of contemplation and related subjects (silence and solitude) having an effect toward pastors' self-identity and ministry practice. These statements proved significant to the study in that the concepts mentioned, such as contemplation, were key in transitioning functionalism to living life from a more transcendent perspective. Respondent #19 stated, "I have become deeply aware of how easily I can move from great intentions of a contemplative life and with one phone call I am a functional pastor again!" Participant #10 highlighted, "One concept I learned in particular was contemplation and how healing and transformational that can be." Respondent #21 indicated that one of the gems he learned was that he must add more contemplation and times of stillness to his life. These comments supported the study's goal to help pastors transition from an over functional mode of ministry to a more transcendent one through the practice of spiritual disciplines like silence and solitude.

Participant #4 substantiated the study's affect on his self-identity: "I would say that the main concept that I have learned is the importance of considering who I am as a person and child of Jesus Christ rather than what I do." This new awareness of one's being versus doing was the major theme of the intervention. Respondent #19 stated, "I have learned how easy it is to allow the 'doing' to take over my focus and distract me from 'being' who I really am." Furthermore, Participant #12 shared, "Remembering to function out of my 'being' and that my 'doing' is best done when my 'being' has been stilled and stayed on Jesus is the main thing." The model of van Kaam's formation field played an important role in helping pastors fully understand the central problem of this study and that the functional dimension of life and ministry is to be superintended by the transcendent dimension according to van Kaam's dimensions of human life.

Research Question #4

This study of pastors' spiritual formation practices was a qualitative study, which brings into evaluation the quality level of the actual study. I asked the participating pastors during the post-intervention interview, on a scale between 1 and 5 (1 meaning "poor quality" and 5 meaning "a very high quality") the quality level that existed in terms of the educational podcasts and the study overall. The average response of participants was a 4.46, demonstrating a high quality level of the study. The only negative element of the quality of the study related to the nature of the van Kaam terms that were at times difficult to apprehend.

Participants also evaluated the Web site utilized for the study. The Web site called SoulJourn Center, housed the entirety of the online intervention (www.souljourncenter.com). It supported the access to the educational podcasts, discussion forums, and the spiritual discipline weekly assignments. The same scale question from 1 to 5 was asked, and respondents rated the quality of the Web site 4.5, indicating a high quality level. The only negative comment related to the Web site referred to somewhat difficult navigation as it related to posting threads on the discussion forum. Once some participants learned how to utilize the discussion forum page, users described the Web site as one that flowed well, was user-friendly, and was more than satisfactory for the study.

Summary of Major Findings

The major findings and implications of this study are both positive and negative. The following summary lists the major findings of this study, discussed in Chapter 5.

1. Western focus on productivity and success defines the nature of ministry praxis in the church.
2. Spiritual practices have developed into functional exercises rather than serving as *means of grace* to encounter God.
3. Greater attentiveness to one's inner life and the disposition of *awe* is needed to foster a balance between being and doing.
4. Greater awareness of the problem of functionalism in ministry led pastors to reassess their modes of ministry practice, bringing reformation and transformation to a functionalistic way of doing ministry.
5. A deeper practice of the contemplative spiritual disciplines improved the balance between being and doing in pastoral ministry.
6. An intentional practice of nurturing the soul proved to be necessary for pastors to align ministry output properly to a transcendent dimension.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Major Findings

The concern for this study focused on a perceived tendency for pastors to equate their self-identity with their role as a pastor. Utilizing the formative spirituality of van Kaam as a framework, the central problem of functionalism served as the guiding force for research into pastors' spiritual formation practices. The purpose of the research was to determine if the online intervention designed to provide education and to give opportunity to practice key spiritual disciplines strengthened the soul health for the twenty-one pastors who participated in a twelve-week online, interactive emphasis to restore a balanced functional mode of ministry presence.

Western Cultural Influence

The findings of this study highlight and affirm the essential fact that the Church in the Western world is shriveling in cultural influence due to the fact that it has taken on the nature of the world in which it lives, rather than offering another way out of the meaninglessness of human life that pervades our postmodern society. Kingdom ethics have been replaced by success-driven, production-oriented, bigger-is-better mind-sets. The culture of the Western church is dependent on external motivations (e.g., competition, reward, accolades, appearance, functional objectiveness) rather than living from an internal priority where the still small voice of the Spirit encourages, comforts, energizes, and guides. This study uncovered some alarming trends in discipleship and revealed some disheartening realities with regard to the spiritual nurture of pastors in ministry. The study also demonstrated that pastors who do give attention to their souls

have a much better potential of recovering life from self-referenced attitudes and ways of living.

The influence of the Enlightenment in the Western world has permeated the ways and means that the church goes about spreading its message of love. The church in the West has traded the methods of discipleship that Jesus modeled—mentoring and apprenticing others into followers of Christ—for elaborate, intellectual sermons, lessons, programs, and other exercises in presenting truth to those who need to encounter a holy God. The ministry presence of relationship with others has waned and needs to be recovered, and this recovery must begin with pastors and ministry leaders in the church, rediscovering their souls through contemplative presence to the Holy One.

Rather than pastors growing in their own discipleship and dedicating themselves to disciple others, they often find themselves consumed with the tasks of preparing for services, meetings, and events—all roles that resemble most any other job in today's contemporary society. This type of ministry model confirms Nouwen's words: "How horrendously secular our ministerial lives tend to be" (*Way of the Heart* 13). The church needs articulate pastors from the pulpit, but it also needs pastors who are living authentic Christian lives and who are apprenticing others to do the same. Unfortunately, the expectation of being all things to all people swallows the ministry leader up in busyness and preoccupation with tasks over relationships. Paul's second letter to Timothy surely instructed the young pastor to handle the Word of Truth with accuracy, but surrounding those words are instructions of discipleship, how to endure the hardships and how to relate to God and to others.

Functional Spiritual Practices

A huge finding of this study was the fact that one-third of the pastors who agreed to participate in the intervention spent an hour or less a week in spiritual growth. This statistic illustrated the depth of functionalism that is evident even in the spiritual practices of Christian people as a whole. This type of attitude toward the spiritual practices is the epitome of what van Kaam calls *functional transcendence*—using the fruits of spiritual practices to harness power for functional endeavors. Many of the pastors of the study saw the project as a functional thing to do, which supported what Mulholland suggests about spiritual practices developing into a “technique that we *do*” (*Shaped by the Word* 88). Some of the pastors broke free from this mind-set, but it was initially a struggle for most. Those who were not able to persevere through the project indicated they were sorry that they disappointed me as a researcher. This sharing of embarrassment spoke volumes to the fact that they saw the project merely as a task to be completed—another expectation they were trying to meet—rather than as an opportunity to step away from this type of living and to take advantage of the opportunity to give careful nurture to their souls. For them, this project was just another thing to do, and they felt sorrowful that they let me down.

The functional nature given to the practice of the spiritual disciplines of this study revealed a serious lack in a pastoral approach to the disciplines, substantiating Dendiu’s study indicating a lack of structure and consistency to the practice of spiritual disciplines (62). Rather than the disciplines serving as *means of grace* (as Wesley would call them) to encounter a holy God, the motivations had more to do with making some *feel* more holy or to have a sense of being more spiritual. The practice of spiritual disciplines are

for the sole purpose of connecting with God and nurturing and sustaining the soul through the Holy Spirit, not for any type of self-aggrandizement or increased sense of feeling more holy.

Attentiveness

A significant finding in this study proved to be the challenge of pastors finding time and energy to be attentive to their inner lives. A high degree of functionalism was an obstacle or even blocked some participants in growing spiritually. Good intentions coupled with an under-developed time-management system served as key functionalistic roadblocks that precluded pastors from giving attention to their souls. The findings of this study substantiated the Zondag study of 2004, determining that “pastors believe they can live out their spiritual lives through the pastorate” (257). Unfortunately, pastors living their spiritual lives through their ministry did not prove to be an effective method of spiritual growth. Participants’ time management was such that their calendars, dictated by other people, ruled their days yet, in a disturbing way, seemed to have given them a positive feeling of doing the good work of God. This cycle of busyness and meeting the demands of others crowded out moments with God and led to pastors running on empty, emphasizing a need for greater attentiveness to their souls.

Pastors who did not complete the study indicated that signing the soul-health covenant to be a part of this research was something they took seriously and they initially intended to complete. However, when the novelty of the first two weeks began to wear off, these pastors admitted to losing interest and motivation in finishing the project. I observed in these pastors something that kept pulling them away from giving attention to their souls. I noted a subtle attention deficit toward practicing the spiritual disciplines and

a lack of desire to share in accountability within this group of pastors. I further noted that these pastors were having a more difficult time posting comments on the discussion forum and waited until the end of the week to do so. Finally, some began to drop out of the study without confirming with me until the end of the study during the exit interview, which did create an awkward situation for them and for me. Eight of the twenty-one pastors did not complete the study through to its entirety, which actually confirmed the central problem of the study.

For those pastors who did complete the project, an overarching sense of being more attentive to the *awe* of God permeated the comments made by pastors during the study. With a positive tone in the participants' articulation of their spiritual growth, pastors discussed how giving more attention to their inner lives made a difference in how they ministered to others. Pastors commented on how this study helped them slow down and take note of the simple things, which, by and large, enabled them to put into perspective the many tasks on their pastoral plates, heightening their ministry presence to their parishioners. Chapter 2 addresses the renewal of any spiritual formation issue as a process of moving *from* a particular disposition or way of life, moving *through* a process, and eventually moving *to* a preferable and more consonant way of life (van Kaam and Muto, "Foundations" 63). For the participants in this study, a significant *through* movement, regarding their attentiveness to awe-filled attention to the Spirit, was evident and a positive outcome of this intervention.

The practice of the contemplative disciplines of this study developed the attentiveness to the transcendent dimension of human life and thus made a difference in the pastors' overall sense of self-identity being rooted in the holy Trinitarian God. While

the van Kaamian language was difficult to comprehend fully, the precision of the meta-language, especially with regard to the human life dimensions, proved to be helpful in giving pastors points of reference to their own functionalistic ways and how to, by God's grace, transform them.

One highlight of the twelve-week intervention was the teaching on the biblical story of Mary and Martha. Martha's insistence regarding what the "good thing" was in this story set up the fact that humanity makes decisions based on the tyranny of the urgent rather than operating ministry from the deep well of connection with God. How typical, pastors said, to bypass moments with God in order to *do* something good for him. Lessons from Mary's decision to choose the one "good thing" or the "better part" spoke to many of the participants in how to examine the ways pastors are pulled into the turbulent waters of busyness and away from the source of living water.

Growing in attentiveness to their inner lives and to the *awe* of God will facilitate pastors in moving forward in their ministries with a greater sense of the transcendent dimension in their lives in the future. During the twelve-week study, signs were evident that many of these participants who completed the study were beginning to operate their ministries from a different perspective than before they became aware of the problem, a direct result of growing in their attentiveness to their inner lives.

Awareness

Participants initially indicated they were somewhat familiar with the main problem of this study; however, after observing the formation practices of many of these pastors, their awareness of the concept of functionalism was not as deep as they expressed. In other words, a pseudo-type of awareness of the problem of functionalism

lulled pastors into thinking they were fully aware of an overemphasis on *doing* versus *being*, but no indication appeared that this awareness made a difference in balancing these two dynamics. Perhaps the most significant issue for these ministers' lives relates to disillusionment of what the biblical mandates are for the role of pastors in the church. The idea that their jobs determined their self-identities at a high level is indicative of the fact that a deformed cultural understanding exists, even in the church, with regard to the role of a pastor.

Pastors' awareness of the need to pay attention to their souls increased during this study. As pastors became increasingly more aware of their souls, they were also more aware of the needs of others. Pastors became more aware of the needs of others by being more attentive to the Spirit through contemplative practices, honoring the transcendent dimension of their lives. Participants practiced being reservoirs of God's goodness and grace, overflowing to others, rather than channels that can run dry. In the analogy of Bernard of Clairvaux, these pastors identified during the study the importance of ministering out of the overflow rather than from the aridity of their own grit, strength, and resources.

The educational video podcasts and the practice of the contemplative disciplines surely helped pastors grow in a greater awareness of God, themselves, and others. The significant piece of increasing self-awareness centered on van Kaam's formation field model. During the study, I had participants administer a full-field appraisal on themselves, examining all four quadrants of their formation fields, ascertaining whether their lives were in service to the Mystery of formation—the holy Trinitarian God.

Participants gleaned from this exercise that their inner lives were in definite need of attention.

While the fact remained that the pastors' inner lives needed attention, in fact, the research indicated that the primary issue gleaned from the full-field appraisals was a misunderstanding of the self in God. The statements in the pre-intervention interview revealed a high level of placing self at the center of one's formation field, allowing the Pride-form to slip in to take control. Participants also made several statements relating to self-guilt in not being able to meet all the needs and expectations of others, which spiraled some of the ministry leaders into a disposition of self-pity and some depression. The teaching of the formation field model was crucial to the understanding that the Mystery of formation, the holy Trinitarian God is the One who needs to be in the center of one's formation field, giving life through a relationship with the Holy to all four quadrants of one's formation.

The Mary and Martha story in Scripture addresses the lack of awareness of the significance of Jesus' presence evidenced in Martha's world. Pastors made a strong connection between this story and their being too busy for God. The study confronted pastors with the fact that they typically do not fully honor the present moment, focusing most of their efforts in planning the future. The work of de Caussade spoke well to this part of the project and encouraged pastors to slow down, to become aware of the present moment, and to enjoy who God is, joining him in what *he* is already doing.

Because of a greater awareness of the problem of functionalism, pastors reassessed their workweek, trying to give more attentiveness to the present moment. The awareness that was gained from this study hopefully will continue to create conversation

within the hearts and minds of these participants as they continue to strategize how their ministry will be effective to others. Additionally, the awareness of, not only the central problem, but the symptoms of the problem that include burnout, spiritual dryness, and physical depletion, will offer these pastors methods and practices that will bring reformation and transformation to an otherwise very busy, overly functionalistic way of doing ministry, if they submit and abandon themselves to the process.

Balance

The title of this dissertation has to do with balance. Clearly, the need for balance was a key finding in this research. Obviously, the balance between functional tasks and nurture of the soul created the greatest degree of confrontation for the participants of this study. Balance between the functional dimension and the transcendent dimension of human life mentioned in Chapter 2, dealing with form donation and form reception, or what van Kaam would identify as a responsible heart and a sensible heart consumed much of the conversation among participants during the study. Participants struggled with aligning these two aspects together with the appropriate balance between them. Their *doing* consumed their *being*, again, due in large part to the desire to meet the expectations of others and the expectations they created for themselves.

Additionally, pastors still struggled with the balance needed to foster a healthy self. The inference here is that pastors pay a great deal of attention to their families and their congregants but leave their self-nurturing to last. Further discovery showed that pastors were *aware* that they saved the nurturing of their souls to last; they indeed knew they were not balanced as it pertained to ministry output and ministry received. A type of martyrdom complex existed in some pastors who poured themselves out so heavily and

freely that, according to their responses, leaving the tank empty was a sign of holy leading. In fact, this pseudo-kenotic activity was nothing other than the pride-self consuming their ministry presence. The martyrdom complex was very apparent with those who struggled with dealing with expectations being placed on them.

The formation field model and van Kaam's human life dimensions gave a concrete vision of how to reform the balance of doing and being in human life. The four quadrants of the formation field, along with doing the full-field appraisal, addressed where the needs were in developing a balance in life, which, by and large, was the allowing of the Holy Spirit to be the transformer of these formation fields. As earlier noted, most indicated a need to strengthen the interior life; however, some indicated that their interpersonal world or their situated world needed to be brought under the light of illumination by the Spirit.

I sensed from the pastors' post-interviews that this study would engage them in future conversations of spiritual self-direction that will foster greater growth of their inner lives. The residual effect that this study provides is integral in giving these participants the boost they need and the articulation required in addressing their functionalism and the reformation of their unbalanced functional and transcendent dimensions. Personal and professional goals will be more aligned with the Spirit's call. Pastors will seek with greater fervor, being reservoirs instead of channels.

Intentionality

Another major finding highlighted in this research was one of intentionality. Many of the participants commented on the fact that the intentionality of the study caused them to take greater concern for their souls and to practice the spiritual disciplines.

Coinciding with the Dendiu study, the intentionality of keeping a consistent practice of spiritual disciplines actually gave more meaning to the disciplines rather than them becoming routine (69). Intentionality is directly related to accountability and this study proved once again that Wesley's emphasis on accountable discipleship is effective for nurturing a life of fidelity to Christ. The intentional nature of practicing certain spiritual disciplines that held the participants accountable for twelve weeks was the single factor in motivating the pastors to read the spiritual masters and to practice silence and solitude. Perhaps the largest shift in ministry goals and ministry practice was due to the incorporation of silence and solitude, along with the readings of the spiritual masters, into the routine of their practice of spiritual disciplines. In fact, some pastors suggested that the intentional nature of practicing these disciplines put them on the path to encounter God on a deeper level. Without the intentionality of the study, some pastors admitted that they would have never read the masters nor practiced the disciplines of silence and solitude.

Theologically, this intentional practice of the disciplines connects with the idea earlier presented of union preceding *kenosis*. Intentionality offers pastors a mode of discipline in securing their ministry functioning in the practice of contemplation. Loving God is the fountainhead from which springs one's ability to be intentional about loving others. A self-identity grounded in the identity of Christ will always put the Father first. Jesus regularly took breaks from the crowds and the busyness of ministering to the needs of others to spend a quiet moment with the Father, reconnecting his heart to his Father's heart. Without the intentional practice of spiritual disciplines, one is not going to encounter God in a deep, transformative way, nor will ministry functioning be birthed out

of a deep sense of being called by God according to his grand purpose and design (unique-communal life call).

Other Findings

The study showed a deep need for pastors to possess a sense of self-significance, to be loved, accepted, and valued. Many participants indicated a lack of feeling valued by their congregations. At first glance, I began to wonder if a serious ego issue existed among the respondents, but upon further inquiry, the problem appeared to be more related to a strong desire to make a difference in the lives of others, which would, in turn, give their lives meaning. As I researched the spiritual formation of these pastors over the twelve weeks, I did get an idea that functionalism in the life of the pastorate could become a type of chronic addiction: highly satisfying by meeting the needs of others and doing the good work of God but demanding more and more all the time.

The warning here is that a desire to make a difference in the lives of others could begin to feed functionalistic ambitions and goals that are not biblically sound. Loving God first, or union with him, comes before pouring self out for others (*kenosis*). Jesus asked Peter three times after the Resurrection, “Do you love me?” Peter indicated all three times that he certainly did. Jesus then told Peter to feed his sheep. Pastors need to consider the weight of Jesus’ words here and, in their zeal to make a difference in the lives others, allow the Lord first to make a difference in them. A final concern with the implications of making a difference in others’ lives for the sake of oneself lies in the fact that this concept can lead to developing a self-identity based on ego and performance rather than on being a child of God, called into a loving relationship with him.

Implications of the Findings

At the completion of the study, a sense existed among the participants that all was not finished. In other words, we were just beginning to get started with identifying the problem and reforming ministry concepts. While the concept of focusing on doing versus being was not a new concept for some, surely the framework that van Kaam provided gave an entirely different perspective on the problem. Other studies exist that delve into the spiritual practices and how the disciplines foster a greater awareness and attentiveness to the Spirit of God. Other research has been done on the methods of contemplation, yet most of these pastors have not encountered them.

More teaching is needed in seminaries and churches with regard to what the contemplative life is. Spiritual formation is tragically absent from some seminaries and many churches. Congregations typically focus on worship services, revival services, and outreach programs but fail to disciple those they are reaching. Spiritual formation must begin to occupy a high place of priority in the lives of pastors and leaders of the church. More opportunities for spiritual growth must be developed in educational structures to facilitate this growth. Homiletics, church history, theology, and the study of ethics is vital in training pastors for ministry, but these training opportunities must be linked with a deep spiritual formation that will bring together knowledge and skill with the transformation of the heart.

One of the aspects I gleaned from my conversations with pastors was the fact that many of those who participated were in the thirties—post-college, having young families, and being in the early stages of their ministries. A level of high maturity was missing among some of these wonderful men and women who were serving the best they knew

how. I would, through this research, link these maturity issues to the fact that a high number of pastors are leaving their ministry posts every month.

The unique element of this study was that it complemented other studies with the rich formative spirituality work of van Kaam, bringing together formation theology from a Roman Catholic perspective to a primarily Protestant audience. My attempt to unite van Kaamian theories with issues with which pastors are confronted in the Protestant church proved to be a worthwhile study. The ecumenical nature of this great body of work transcends theological debate and focuses on the dignity of human persons, how they were created, and how they function out of their self-identities grounded in the mystery of formation, the Holy Trinitarian God. Compared to Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, I believe the disciplines under the umbrella of van Kaam's formative spirituality (formation science, formation anthropology, and formation theology) will serve as its own kind of *Summa* in the areas of spiritual formation. Time will eventually inform as to the degree of depth related to the significance of the work of van Kaam and Muto. This research resides among other research projects dedicated to the spiritual growth of pastors. Offering the framework of van Kaam along with the meta-language that gives precision to the steps of recovering from a functionalistic lifestyle, pastors learned that all of life is under the superintendence of the transcendent dimension, centered in the Holy Trinitarian God.

Limitations of the Study

The project was limited to twenty-one pastors. While participants represented areas throughout the country as well as one international locale, the group was relatively

small. I do believe that these were good representatives of pastors from a wide diverse background and provided adequate research for this study.

In some ways, the online feature of this ministry intervention served as a limitation. While the online component facilitated this type of qualitative study with participants in various locales, it also proved that the ideal context of dealing with spiritual formation and spiritual direction is in person. The online feature accessed participants to the discussion forum, allowing them to post conversation threads, but this did not prove to be the most effective way to obtain research. Disengaging with another human being through the medium of e-mail is easy to do; likewise, participants of this study found it easy to disengage and could have been more fully engaged had this study been performed face-to-face or even in a small group experience. Again, this limitation highlights the importance of accountability in the discipleship process, and that accountability takes place better in a small group environment compared to an online medium. I offered accountability throughout the project each week, which did prove effective in spurring the participants on to the goal. I further believe that this study would have been more advantageous being one-to-one, face-to-face. One positive aspect of the online component was the ability to post educational podcasts for participants to view at their leisure.

Data collection during the pre- and post-interviews were done via SKYPE, which proved as a successful method of gathering data in a personal way. The e-mail prompt for the soul health journals was only as effective as participants responded to them. Data analysis proved successful as data was funneled through Excel spreadsheets and through the Nvivo 9 software.

A final limitation of the study pertained to the participants who did not follow through with the commitment to the project. The lack of participation did not prove to be a lack of research. These participants helped substantiate the fact that the focal point of this study was a true problem. However, the study might have been more effective had a live small group gathered rather than having them meet for the online component. Perhaps additional study could take place regarding the best methods for spiritual formation.

Unexpected Observations

With the emphasis on social media in this culture, I was surprised that participants did not fully engage on the discussion forum. Participation on the discussion forum began to wane after just a few weeks. I was also surprised that one-third of the pastors dropped out after only a few short weeks of the study. I originally believed that the nature of relationship I had with these pastors would have given a sense of greater commitment to the study.

I was pleasantly surprised with an embracing of the writings of the spiritual masters. Not every participant enjoyed reading the works of the masters, but many gravitated to the readings and felt a sense of spiritual renewal while reading them. The participants also shared a zeal for silence and solitude, which gave a positive tone to the study.

Recommendations

This study has great potential for pastoral staff groups. I would see this study benefiting any pastor who is in a ministry context in the church, on the mission field, or even in a parachurch situation. I plan to create a retreat setting from this study that can be

used over a weekend time away for church staffs. I also plan to strengthen the study by creating materials that could be obtained online, continuing to utilize the Web site created for this project.

Postscript

As earlier stated, I believe if I would have had the encounter with this material earlier on in my ministry, I could have avoided some devastating leadership crises. As I spent time with these pastors, I could not help but recall the numbness of spiritual things that I felt while being overly functional in my ministry context. My *doing* was more important than my *being*. I was doing good work for God but losing my soul in the process.

This study is an ongoing personal work of the Holy Spirit in my life. Without this study, I would have continued to wonder what took place in my ministry that had created such a drastic shift in my heart, my location, my ministry interests, my focus, and my entire inner world. I had no words to describe what happened to me. The formative spirituality of van Kaam and Muto gave me a way to theorize, contemplate, and articulate what my life has been about over the span of my ministry. Furthermore, it has offered me wisdom in how to allow God to form, reform, and ultimately transform my life so that his grand purpose and design for my life will be accomplished.

In my early years, ministry was about performance. In my early formation, ministry was centered on becoming. In the music field, I was becoming a leader in the church, an up-front, charismatic leader who could ignite the passions of people in corporate worship. I fought the worship wars of the 80s and 90s. I was successful in what I did, and yet I was miserable.

According to van Kaam, I underwent what is known as a transcendent crisis, a moment in one's life that creates a major shake-up, an interruption, or a sense of loss in order to redirect one's focus from self to God. Crises of transcendence connote a repentance theme: a turning from one direction to another direction. My transcendent crisis took place in a way that created a major shift of ministry calling. My calling to help people discover the presence of God on a corporate level has been renewed to helping people discover the presence of God in their lives on a deeper, more intimate level. My crisis of transcendence created awareness and an attentiveness in me to orient my socio-historical, vital, functional life in proper service to the transcendent dimension that is superintended by the Holy Spirit.

I will continue to concentrate on reorienting my functional ways to live more transcendentally, contemplatively, and with full awareness of who I am in the process: one created in the image of God for his plan and his purpose in this world and for eternal relationship with him here and in heaven. I must continue this journey, for still to a degree, this functional life is still very much a part of me. I remain as an open vessel, filled to the brim with the goodness and grace of God, in order that I might help some other pastor or pastors, with deep understanding, come to a greater awareness of the presence of God in their lives.

My prayer is for the Church of Jesus Christ to be a discipling church. In order for this desire to become reality, especially in the Western world, the church must shift from its Enlightenment idealism to a mind-set that prioritizes the life formation of humankind. Action is necessary in the church for the work of Jesus Christ to be actualized, yet

contemplation in the midst of action will be the remedy for an overly functionalistic society, church, and world.

APPENDIX A

SOUL HEALTH COVENANT

These are the words to the covenant made between Fred Meadows, doctoral candidate, Asbury Theological Seminary and _____.

The **participant** of the Soul Health Ministry Intervention will commit to fully engage in the study for a 12-week duration. The participant will agree to a pre-intervention and post-intervention private interview either via phone, Skype, or in person. These interviews are to be open, honest, and assuring the highest level of confidentiality. Second, the participant will agree to view a 20-minute video podcast emphasizing the central teaching of the week, which will be made available each Monday during the study online. Third, the participant will agree to practice the key spiritual disciplines of silence, solitude, biblical meditation (*lectio divina*), spiritual reading (from *Spiritual Classics* by Foster and Griffin), prayer and journaling at moments throughout each week. A weekly response form must be filled out to share the details of the time spent for the practice of the spiritual disciplines. Fourth, for the practice of journaling, the participant will agree to respond via e-mail to the weekly journal prompt that will be sent on Thursday of each week (response is due by the end of the week—before Sunday midnight). Lastly, the participant will agree to post at least one comment thread to the online community focus group per week of the study.

In short, the participant agrees to:

- 1) Pre- and post-intervention interviews (30 minutes in length)
- 2) View a 20-minute educational video per week
- 3) Practice spiritual disciplines and be held accountable for them
- 4) Respond to a journal prompt via e-mail
- 5) Post an online thread to a focus group

The **administrator/researcher** of this study (Fred Meadows) will agree to provide total and strict anonymity and confidentiality to all participants of this study. At no time will a participant's name or place of ministry be used in the study nor online in the community focus group. The researcher will provide all online materials and the spiritual reading materials. The researcher will also provide means online for passwords and login/screen names to a secure Web site. The researcher will commit to pray for each participant of the study weekly so that the entire process is bathed in prayer.

The **participant** understands that there will be no remuneration for being a part of this study. It is the hope and prayers of the researcher that the transformation and spiritual growth of each participant is significant to his or her life and ministry.

Signed (Participant) _____ Date _____

Signed (Researcher) _____ Date _____

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INVITATION TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

Dear (Potential Participant Name Here),

I am writing you today to invite you to be a part of a very special study that is part of the work that I am doing in the area of spiritual formation. This study is central to the process of the doctoral work that I am currently completing at Asbury Theological Seminary. The study is specifically focused on the spiritual formation practices of those in pastoral ministry.

It is my hope that your involvement in this project would be very helpful to you in your ongoing ministry life and would strengthen your soul. I am asking you specifically to join a few other pastors in this endeavor because I think you have so much to offer the study, and I believe your involvement will be beneficial to hundreds of other pastors and their spiritual formation.

The time commitment is a twelve-week study beginning September 6 and will be completed by Thanksgiving. You will need a computer for the study is primarily online. There will be a weekly online twenty-minute video podcast to view, one e-mail journal prompt to respond to each week, participation in a discussion forum online, and you will be asked to practice some key spiritual disciplines throughout the week that I believe will help you encounter God during your private worship moments.

You will receive a book as part of the study to aid you in reading some brief meditations of the classic spiritual masters. Otherwise, there is no remuneration involved. Lastly, your privacy is of utmost concern to me. At no time during the study and after, will your name or place of ministry context be shared. Additionally, you will not know the other participants in the study. You will have a private screen and login name on a prepared Web site, which will offer freedom to share openly from your heart. I will be the only one that will be working with you throughout the study and your anonymity will be honored through and through.

I would ask that you would read and sign the covenant attached to this e-mail and return to me by e-mail. Your typed signature sent through your personal e-mail will suffice. Once I receive your response, I will schedule with you a brief pre-study interview that will help launch our time together. Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to potentially spending these moments with you.

In Him,

Fred Meadows
Doctoral Candidate, Asbury Theological Seminary

APPENDIX C

SOUL HEALTH PRE-INTERVENTION INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your name and age?
2. What is your family status?
 - a. Married (no children)
 - b. Married (with children)
 - c. Single
 - d. Divorced
3. How many years have you been in full-time vocational ministry?
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - a. What degree did you complete?
 - b. What was the degree concentration?
 - c. From what educational institution did you complete the degree?
5. Given there are 168 hours in the week, how many hours would you estimate you spend in ministry to the church? How many hours do you typically carve out for family time? For personal growth? For recreation? For sleep or rest?
6. Do you do anything on a regular basis, apart from your normal preparations for sermons, lessons, etc., that allow you to grow spiritually?
7. What spiritual disciplines would you say you have incorporated into your life to help your spiritual life grow?
8. How often do you practice these disciplines?
 - a. Daily
 - b. Weekly

- c. Monthly
- d. Yearly

9. At your deepest understanding, briefly answer the following question: who am I?
10. How much would you say being a pastor shapes your personal self-identity?
(scale between 1 and 5; 1 being it shapes your identity little and 5 being it shapes your identity a great amount)
11. What percentage (100%) of your life would you consider to be *ministering to others* rather than *being ministered to*? (e.g., 50/50, 60/40).
12. Describe briefly your image of God.
13. How does God guide your ministry?
14. What are your personal goals in ministry?
15. In ministry, how do you deal with the expectations of others?
16. If you were to leave the ministry today, what would you do?
17. In three words, what is the condition of your soul today?

APPENDIX D

THE FUNCTIONAL PASTOR ONLINE EDUCATIONAL SERIES

1. A View from the “Orange Bucket”: Living a Life of Awe
2. Your Unique Communal Life Call
3. The Formation Field and the Human Life Dimensions
4. Mary and Martha
5. Union Precedes Kenosis
6. Transcendence
7. Detachment and Contemplation
8. Appreciation
9. Consonance and Dissonance
10. Reforming Our Dispositions
11. Spiritual Direction
12. Reforming the Functional Pastor

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week One

Seeing Beyond the Orange Bucket: Living a Life of Awe (20 minutes)

- I. Introduction of Video Series (5 minutes)
 - A. Introduction of myself
 - B. Introduction of the problem of the study
 - C. Introduction of Formative Spirituality and Fr. Adrian van Kaam and Susan Muto
 - D. Introduction of what we hope to accomplish through this series
- II. Harvesting a disposition of awe (5 minutes)
 - A. Attitude of readiness to experience something beyond the tangible
 - B. Attitude of surrendering to the creativity of God
 - C. Attitude of silence that ushers in the mystery of the work of God in all of creation and in life (transcendence and immanence)
- III. Awe disposition permeates all of life (5 minutes)
 - A. Having a sense of awe connects us with the presence of God in good and bad moments
 - B. The opposite of awe and inverted awe
- IV. Cultivate awe (2 minutes)
 - A. Detachment from things
 - B. Openness to a greater awareness
 - C. Contemplation; being attentive to the presence of God

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Two

Your Unique Communal Life Call (20 minutes)

- I. Foundational moments in Ephesians 1 and Psalm 139 (5 minutes)
 - A. He chose us in him before the creation of the world (vs. 4)
 - B. He predestined us to be adopted as his sons and daughters through Jesus Christ (vs. 5)
- II. Essence precedes Existence (van Kaam) (5 minutes)
 - A. Founding Life Form
 1. Original call
 2. Still maintains freedom to make choices
 3. Pastoral call is birthed out of our original call
- III. True Self Versus False Self (5 minutes)
 - A. Compartmentalized living (a slippery slope)
 1. Kelly quote on compartmental living
 2. Merton illustrations of a car and motor; shy animal
 - B. False self as a counterfeit self (van Kaam) that is unable to follow the divine call
 - C. Mulholland’s quote on the false self becoming religious; spiritual ambition
- IV. How to know your true self (5 minutes)
 - A. Cultivate the inner life through contemplation
 - B. Rise above your doing and consider your being

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Three

The Characteristics of the Human Person

- I. The Unity of the Human Person
 - A. Mind, body, soul unity
 - B. Formed in the image of God
- II. Introduction to the van Kaam Formation Field Model
 - A. The Mystery of Formation (Holy Trinity) at the center
 - B. Inner Life Formation
 - C. Inter-Formation (our relationships with others whom we serve)
 - D. Outer Immediate Situational Formation
 - E. Outer Mediated World Formation
- III. Introduction to the van Kaam Human Life Dimensions
 - A. Sociohistorical
 - B. Vital
 - C. Functional
 - D. Transcendent
 - E. Pneumatic-Ecclesial
- IV. The problem of this study pertains to functionalism
 - A. A deformation of the functional dimension
 - B. Functionalism distracts our attention away from our unique communal life call
 - C. Functionalism steals our identity of being children of God

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Four

The Martha Complex

I. Weariness in Well Doing

A. Martha is distracted

1. Martha’s distractions are causing anxiety
2. Martha is giving too much priority to inordinate attachments
 - a. We must detach from our concerns
 - b. We must focus on the present moment (de Caussade)

II. One Thing is Needed

- A. Appropriate attentiveness to God through listening
- B. Martha was devoted to Christ too but Mary experienced the presence of Christ
- C. The better part that Mary chose indicates a priority of the interior life

III. Theological Discourse on Being versus Doing

- A. A delicate balance between works righteousness and quietism
- B. Contemplative nature of Mary enables her to experience inner unity and was in tune with the transcendent dynamic
- C. Ministry must be offered from the overflow of who we are as called individuals
- D. Martha’s pride led her to become intoxicated to making preparations that becomes a source that sustains her personal identity

IV. A balanced functional presence is needed

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Five

Union Precedes Kenosis

- I. Union with God is essential before pouring oneself out in functioning (Philippians 2 passage)
 - A. What a presumptuous thought to think we can serve in our own power
 - B. Union of likeness with Christ
 - C. Christ’s union with the Father
- II. Paul’s understanding of unity
 - A. Unity among the people of Christ
 - B. Unity with Christ
 - C. Humility is the key to calm troubled waters
- III. Kenotic passage (the meaning of kenosis)
 - A. Referring to Christ’s emptying of self-interest and self-ambition
 - B. Being others-referenced
- IV. Union Preceding Kenosis
 - A. Christian action having a foothold in relationship with God
 - 1. Like Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus
 - 2. Contemplative mode of living
 - 3. Total conformity to Christ through faith, hope, and love
 - B. Loving God and loving others

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Six

Transcendence

- I. Transcendence definition
 - A. Some psychologists call transcendence a sixth sense
 - B. Beyond the tangible
 - C. Attentiveness to the Spirit
- II. Transitioning a functional life to living from the transcendent dimension
 - A. This is a work of God in your life
 - B. Begins with the awareness and care for your soul
- III. Spiritual practices help us connect with the transcendent dimension
 - A. Wesley called spiritual practices “means of grace”
 - B. Spiritual practices help sustain our relationship with God
- IV. Conversation helps us transition our functional lives to a more transcendent experience
 - A. Spiritual director
 - B. Small group
- V. Full formation field appraisal
 - A. Having a healthy awareness of self/soul
 - B. Examining the four quadrants of the formation field
- VI. Transcendent Crisis
 - A. Formative event that gives us a greater awareness of transcendence
 - B. Universal pattern of moving: *from, to, through*

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Seven

Detachment and Contemplation

- I. Detachment and Contemplation help reform our functionalism
 - A. Ministry life is a constant interaction between detachment and action
 - B. Detachment and contemplation lead to union with Christ
- II. Two types of detachment
 - A. Passive detachment (that which is taken away; forced detachment)
 - B. Active detachment (giving up something voluntarily)
 - C. van Kaam compares detachment to a type of death experience in order that something might be resurrected
- III. Contemplation
 - A. Contemplation in the midst of action (Merton)
 - B. Acquired and Infused contemplation
 1. Acquired meaning attentive to God
 2. Infused meaning we become aware of God’s presence because he has come near
 - C. Living a contemplative life is not hiding away from all contact with the real world
 - D. Contemplative living helps prepare people to encounter others in the world that need the compassion of Christ
 - E. Contemplative living is understanding the present moment

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Eight

Appreciation

- I. We have a choice to make
 - A. Appreciative
 - B. Depreciative
- II. Statistics of pastors leaving ministry
 - A. 35-40 percent of pastors leave the ministry
 - B. 90 percent complain about being overworked and tired
 - C. 57 percent say they would leave their current ministry assignment if something else that was better would come along
 - D. Depression in ministry is high
- III. Being hopeful versus being hopeless
 - A. Abandoning ourselves to God
 - B. Being abandoned by God
- IV. In crises, it is difficult to be hopeful
 - A. Easy to see hindsight rather than out in front
 - B. Affects our physical lives (depression and anxiety)
- V. Abandoning to being appreciative
 - A. Moving past “me-ism”
 - B. Cultivating awe-filled attention to the everydayness of life

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Nine

Consonance and Dissonance

I. Consonance

- A. To be in harmony with
- B. Sounding together; being in tune with the Holy Spirit

II. Dissonance

- A. A *rubbing together* of two competing forces
- B. Against the grain; sounding harsh

III. Dissonance is an opportunity for deeper consonance

IV. The C’s of Consonance

- A. Congeniality
- B. Compatibility
- C. Compassion
- D. Competence
- E. These are dispositions that help us live the appreciative option

V. The D’s of Dissonance

- A. Denial, disgust, depletion, depression, despair
- B. These are dispositions that describe living in dissonance

VI. Consonance means that we are living in harmony with our unique-communal life

call

- A. Dissonance equals living out of our pride
- B. Dissonance equals living out of our own ambitions

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Ten

Reforming Our Dispositions

- I. Formation of the Christian heart
 - A. Begins with the Holy Spirit
 - B. Prevenient work of grace
- II. Key dispositions that relate to pastoral ministry
 - A. Gentleness versus firmness
 1. Culture denotes leaders as strong and courageous
 2. Gentleness is often associated with being weak
 3. Firmness is to be thought of as *relaxed firmness*
 - B. Privacy versus community
 1. We need moments of privacy in the midst of our action
 2. We need moments to distance ourselves from the pressures
 3. Jesus retreated to be with his Father
 4. Privacy disposition helps us not become drained by people
 5. Practicing the privacy of the heart
 - a. Keeping the heart for Christ
 - b. Not sharing everything in my heart with others
 - C. Social presence
 1. Where the Christ in me meets the Christ in you
 2. Tough moments in ministry often builds walls; need balance between boundaries and empathy

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Eleven

Spiritual Direction

- I. Every pastor should have a spiritual director
 - A. One who listens to you and the Holy Spirit
 - B. One who helps discern what the Spirit is saying
- II. Spiritual direction is not a new thing
- III. Differences between spiritual direction and psychotherapy
 - A. Both can be effective means of soul care
 - B. Psychotherapy is generally problem-oriented
 - C. Spiritual direction is related to one’s relationship with God
 - D. Psychotherapy deals with more pre-transcendent issues
 - E. Spiritual direction deals with transcendent issues
 - F. Psychotherapy is a meeting between two humans in the presence of God to pursue a human goal of growth (Leech, qtd. in *Spiritual Direction*, 24)
 - G. Spiritual direction is a meeting between a person and God in the presence of another for the goal of growth of relationship with God (24)
- IV. Spiritual director is a physician of the soul
- V. Spiritual direction is not “client” based
- VI. Formational Counseling
 - A. Christian guidance bringing together spiritual direction and pastoral care
 - B. Redemptive work for people with damaged emotions and seeking wholeness in Christ

“The Functional Pastor” Video Podcast Outline Week Twelve

Reforming the Functional Pastor Wrap Up

- I. Life from a higher perspective
 - A. Disposition of awe
 - B. Ministry being the overflow of unique-communal life call
 - C. Essence preceding existence
- II. Examples
 - A. Formation Field model
 - B. van Kaam’s human life dimensions
- III. Central problem of functionalism
 - A. Mary and Martha story
 - B. Union needs to precede kenosis
- IV. Reforming functionalism
 - A. Key spiritual disciplines
 - B. Detachment and Contemplation
 - C. Contemplation in the midst of action
- V. Transcendence
 - A. Crisis of transcendence
 - B. Consonance and Dissonance
 - C. Appreciative versus Depreciative
- VI. Spiritual direction helping reform key dispositions

APPENDIX E

SOUL HEALTH JOURNAL

The online journal prompts below are for each of the twelve weeks of the ministry intervention. The online journal was in the form of an e-mail message in order to assure privacy and offer a way to collect data from responses to the journal prompts. Along with the single question focus each week, accountability questions were developed for participants to respond to every week regarding the practice of spiritual disciplines.

Week #1: How have you seen the grandeur and majesty of God today in something small or seemingly insignificant?

Week #2: How would you define your life call? How do you believe God revealed that to you?

Week #3: What part of your “formational field” do you believe needs particular attention as you examine your life?

Week #4: How do you resemble Martha? How do you resemble Mary?

Week #5: Now that you have had some encounter with the concept of transcendence (from a Christian perspective), how does knowing about the transcendence dimension in your life affect and shape your ministry?

Week #6: Have you ever had a crisis of transcendence in your life? Explain.

Week #7: What practical steps do you need to take to live a more contemplative life?

Week #8: What gifts can come forth from your own life when you give awe-filled attention to God and become a more appreciative person?

Week #9: Where in your life is there evidence of dissonance and do you see it leading you to a deeper consonance?

Week #10: Which of the dispositions that were discussed do you believe you need the most help reforming?

Week #11: What one main concept did you learn throughout this study that has the potential to change something about you and/or your ministry?

Week #12: Wrap up

Weekly Accountability Questions

The answers to these questions of accountability are completely confidential. Your honesty is not only of key importance to the study but also to your spiritual growth and soul health. Thank you for your vulnerability and your integrity to the study.

1. Were you able to find moments of silence and solitude this week? List days and approximate time spent in silence and solitude below.
2. Were you able to find moments for spiritual reading?
3. Were you able to find moments for biblical meditation (*lectio divina*)? Did you incorporate *lectio divina* into your prayer time? List the days you were able to practice these disciplines.

Spiritual Discipline	Days of the Week Practiced	Estimated Combined Time Spent during Week	Did You Grow in the Practice of This Discipline This Week?
Silence and solitude			
Spiritual reading			
Biblical meditation			
Prayer			

4. Please share anything this week that spiritually affected you during the practice of these spiritual disciplines.

APPENDIX F

SOUL HEALTH POST-INTERVENTION INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your name?
2. Following the study, how many of the 168 hours in the week do you now spend in ministry to the church? Did this number of hours change once the study was completed? Can you identify any differences in how you structure your week since going through the twelve-week study?
3. What have you changed, if anything, about your spiritual formation practices as separate from your preparations for sermons, lessons, etc., since doing the study?
4. What spiritual disciplines would you say you have incorporated into your life to help your spiritual life grow, resulting from this twelve-week experience?
5. Has the amount of time that you spend in spiritual disciplines increased as a result of this study? Approximately how many hours a week do you spend in practicing spiritual disciplines?
6. At your deepest understanding, following this twelve-week encounter with this formation study, briefly answer the following question: who am I?
7. Having learned some of the major concepts of van Kaam's formative spirituality, how much would you say being a pastor shapes your personal self-identity? (scale between 1 and 5; 1 being it informs your identity little and 5 being it informs your identity a great amount; 3 being neutral)
8. What percentage (100%) of your life would you consider to be *ministering to others* rather than *being ministered to*? (e.g., 50/50, 60/40)

9. Has your image of God changed any since the beginning of this study?
10. Do you allow God to guide your ministry any differently since studying some of the concepts of this project?
11. Have your personal ministry goals shifted since participating in this study?
12. Has this study helped you in dealing with the expectations of others? How?
13. In three words, what is the condition of your soul today?
14. What was the quality of the online educational content (educational video) as it related to understanding the problem of the study and implementing necessary changes in practical ministry? (Scale between 1 and 5; 1 meaning quality was poor and 5 meaning quality was high with 3 meaning neutral; answer n/a if you did not view at least half of the video content)
15. Was the Web site of a high quality to support the study? (Scale between 1 and 5; same criteria as above; answer n/a if you did not engage with the Web site on a regular basis)
16. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 meaning your participation was poor, 3 meaning that you engaged and participated at least 6 weeks, and 5 meaning that you engaged and participated at least 10 of the 12 weeks) rate your participation in the study over the twelve weeks.
 - a. If your answer is 3 or less, please explain why your participation was at this level.

APPENDIX G**ONLINE COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP**

The following questions were asked each week to ignite online community for the pastors who participated in the ministry intervention during the twelve-week investigation. Each question responds to the topic of discussion for the particular week of the online educational series as well as the online journal prompts.

1. How can we cultivate or harvest a disposition of awe in our active ministry settings?
2. How does the freedom to make choices interact with van Kaam's concept that our "essence precedes our existence"?
3. Which of the human life dimensions of van Kaam do you feel dictates your life at this time?
4. Jean Pierre de Caussade says we are to focus on "the present moment." Can you make a case for Martha (in the Martha and Mary narrative of Luke 10) that she was living in the present moment?
5. If the transcendent dimension (according to van Kaam) is the dimension of human life that makes us uniquely human, can there ever be an overemphasis of this dimension in daily life? Have you seen this in your life? Have you seen it in the lives of others?
6. Can we avoid a crisis of transcendence, or is that all in God's hands? Would we want to avoid it?

7. Why is it difficult for those of us who are pastors (“experts in the Truth”) to lead a contemplative life? What positive things can we incorporate into our lives that will help us, as Teresa of Avila said, “live in the truth of who we are”?
8. When criticism comes, when the long hours hit, and it seems as if you have lost your sense of sanity, how do you turn that into joy? What do you practice or what routine might you have that helps turn your heart from a potentially depreciative model to an appreciative one?
9. Do you think the Apostle Paul is dealing with an issue of consonance vs. dissonance in the Romans 7 passage (verses 14-25)? How might he be able to rectify this issue in his life?
10. If there was a disposition in your life that needed to be reformed, how would you go about it based on what you have taken from this study?
11. Do you have any questions regarding spiritual direction? Are you confident in knowing what a spiritual director does? Can you see yourself benefiting from a spiritual director?
12. Wrap up

APPENDIX H
EXPERT REVIEW EVALUATION PROTOCOL
INSTRUMENT EVALUATION

Question #	Was the Question Clear?	Was the Question Unclear?	Suggestions for Change to the Question
<hr/>			

APPENDIX I

PARTICIPANTS' GUIDE TO THE PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

The spiritual disciplines that are part of this study include silence, solitude, spiritual reading, meditation on the Word, prayer, and journaling. The fruits from these practices will be the food from which we will feed others who are hungry to experience faith in Jesus and to allow him to meet their needs. Below is a brief guide on each of the disciplines that will guide and shape the practice of the disciplines.

Silence

Perhaps, silence is a discipline that is rarely practiced due to the obscurity of the nature of silence. Today's world is noisy and silence has become a strange oddity for the culture. One of the goals of this study is for you, the participant, to deepen your practice of silence. Not only will spending time in silence be good for your soul, it will also rejuvenate you physically and emotionally.

You are encouraged to practice this discipline of silence weekly throughout the study. You may have to begin with a few moments a day, and then increase that to thirty-fourty minutes three times a week. You might desire to take a day a week or a half-day a week. Please log the moments you spend in silence and solitude on the form provided and report it with your journal response each week. This time well spent will multiply the moments you will have in your week to meet the heavy demand of your ministry assignment.

Solitude

A *cousin* to silence, these two spiritual practices go together. You are not required to cloister yourself away from your community to practice solitude to strengthen your inner life. Please log the moments you spend in solitude in the same way you record your moments of silence. While this may not be an easy endeavor at first, and will likely take some readjustment to personal schedule, solitude is a very biblical practice that allows us to retune our minds and hearts to the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Solitude is not simply being by yourself; solitude is considered to be a place where Christ forms, reforms, and transforms your over-functional life in order that you might begin to experience the freedom of living in the Spirit so that your ministry might be transformed from a functional mind-set to a transcendent mode of ministry.

Spiritual Reading

Spiritual reading in this study refers to the reading of the spiritual masters, both ancient and modern. These readings are part of the collection *Spiritual Classics*, compiled by Richard Foster and Emilie Griffin. Reading the words of those who have gone before us and have journeyed the way of Christ hundreds of years ago illumine the way of those today on their formation journey. Reading the spiritual masters also reminds us that, in some regard, much of what we deal with today spiritually is not far from what our spiritual ancestors experienced before us. The collected wisdom of the masters is something that the participants of this study will all share. You may use some of your moments of silence and solitude to incorporate this reading into your disciplines.

Mediation on the Word

The challenge of the spiritual leader is to master the biblical text, yet, in this study, participants will be challenged to allow the text to master them. Participants will experience a move from informational reading to formational reading. The purpose of meditation on the Word will **not be to prepare a sermon or Bible study**. While these are important and necessary functions of the pastor, this time will implement a type of Bible reading that is more formative in nature. You may incorporate meditation on the Word in your moments of silence and solitude as well; however, please allow for moments of silence to be silent and not fill all the space with doing. Find a way to also *be*.

Lectio Divina is a mode of meditating on the Word that is evidence in the Rule of St. Benedict, and some would suggest that even the desert fathers practiced this method of biblical reading. Four parts to the practice of *lectio divina* exist: *lectio*, *meditatio*, *oratio*, and *contemplatio*. *Lectio* is formational reading that the reader takes a small portion of the Scripture and allows it to sink down slowly into the soul. *Meditatio* refers to the reader then, chewing on the text, engaging with the text, going over the text, and considering various reactions that surface as you read the text. *Oratio* is prayer; prayer is a response to God that postures the reader in a way that invites God to speak. *Contemplatio* is the being still before God, open to receive his gift of love, mercy, wisdom, and grace.

Prayer

Prayer is to the soul what breath is to life. Prayer is the glue that holds all the practiced disciplines together. Unfortunately, “the average Christian spends barely five

minutes a day with God in prayer; the typical pastor, only seven” (Demarest, *Satisfy Your Soul* 159). The lack of prayer in the spiritual life is where the inner life begins to disintegrate, diving quickly into a mode of functionalism where we rely on our abilities to get us through.

When we prioritize a time of prayer, our fragmented world within begins to experience some peace and unity with God. Activities of ministry fall into place when they are empowered by a life of prayer. Once again, you will log the time you spend in prayer as part of the study process over the twelve weeks.

Journaling

The former spiritual disciplines were contemplative in nature. Journaling is the one very practical activity-oriented discipline that is a part of this ministry study. The journal will serve as our means of accountability and will be an instrument utilized to record your thoughts and reflections on the themes of the study.

Keeping a journal is a formative experience in two ways. First, the actual writing of your deep thoughts is a very formative exercise, allowing you to speak from the core of your true self. Second, keeping a journal helps us recollect how God was very present through the particular trials and moments of difficulty as we leaf back through the pages of our journal and see how God has worked in and through us.

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