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**CHARACTERISTICS OF ELDERS AS LEADERS IN CHRISTIAN
CHURCHES/CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE YEAR 2010:
A DELPHI STUDY**

**A Dissertation
Presented to the Faculty of the
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
East Tennessee State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education**

**by
Peter Nelson Cummins
May 1997**

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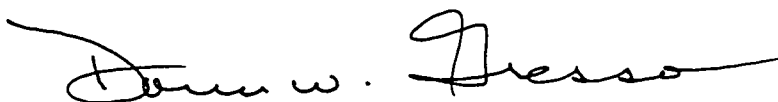
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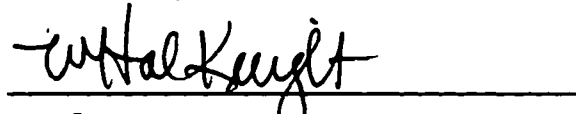
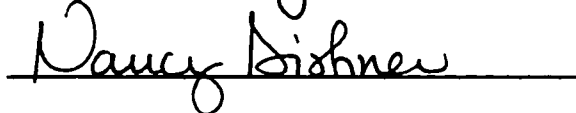
PETER N. CUMMINS

met on the

25th day of March, 1997

The committee read and examined his dissertation, supervised his defense of it in an oral examination, and decided to recommend his study be submitted to the Graduate Council, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership.


Chairman, Graduate Committee

Signed on behalf of
the Graduate Council


Interim Dean, School of Graduate Studies

ABSTRACT

**CHARACTERISTICS OF ELDERS AS LEADERS IN CHRISTIAN
CHURCHES/CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE YEAR 2010:
A DELPHI STUDY**

by

Peter N. Cummins

The purpose of this study was to compose a profile of characteristics of a competent elder as a leader of Christian churches/churches of Christ for the year 2010. An essential component of this composition was the identification of issues that elders are likely to face in the 21st century church. A second objective was to identify effective ways in which elders can be prepared to meet the challenges of leading congregations in the beginning of the 21st century.

A Delphi Technique was applied in this study since it is a particularly efficient research tool used in building consensus and in forecasting future needs and trends. A group consisting of 10 elders, 10 ministers, 10 faculty members, and 10 writers was assembled to serve as an expert panel. Two rounds of questionnaires were mailed to these individuals. The first round consisted of nine questions that solicited a narrative type response. Qualitative analysis of Round 1 yielded 66 statements that comprised the second questionnaire. The level of agreeability and likelihood of occurrence associated with the response of each panelist to the 66 statements of Round 2 was ascertained using a Likert scale and a probability factor.

Consensus was reached on 47 items. Issues identified include: family breakdown, fragmentation of society, pluralism, change, vision/mission, diversity, unity, and spirituality. Characteristics, based on consensus, suggest an elder in the year 2010 should be a team player, seeking to work in harmony with other elders and ministers. The effective elder will display a strong sense of collegiality, characterized by trust, love, respect, camaraderie, and mutual accountability. Elders will need to be carefully and prayerfully chosen with the primary criteria being spiritual qualities, giftedness, and proven leadership abilities. An elder must create and maintain a vital commitment to a clear and widely owned vision for the church and should be competent at keeping the vision lucid, pointing the way, guiding, motivating, challenging, inspiring, instructing, and enabling the congregation to function as a unified organism. Elders in the year 2010 should be committed to spiritual and leadership development in themselves. At the same time, the effective elder should be a mentor and teacher to others, helping to prepare them as servants of Christ. The elder must be a person who models integrity and genuine devotion to Christ thereby encouraging the congregation to be a moral and ethical people.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

This is to certify that the following study has been filed and approved the by
Institutional Review Board of East Tennessee State University.

Title of Project: Characteristics of Elders as Leaders of Christian Church/Churches
of Christ in the Year 2010: A Delphi Study.

IRB #95-176e

Principle Investigator: Peter N. Cummins

Department: Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

Date Submitted July 16, 1996

Institutional Review Board, Chair

David N. Wallace PhD

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to the following:

To Jesus Christ and His body, the Church. May this study bring Him honor and assist the Church to be more effective in its mission to spread the Good News and to be the family of God.

To my wife and helpmate, Nancy, whose enduring love has been manifested in her patience, support, prayers, and encouragement throughout our 16 years together but especially during this endeavor. OIL.

To my children Ellen Ann, Owen James, Isaac Peter, and Seth Nelson. They have each been a help and an inspiration in unique and talented ways. They are a joy.

To my parents Jim & Cindy Cummins and Richard & Virginia Owen. They have been examples of Christian parenting and marriage at its best. Their love was particularly evident in the hands-on assistance and feedback for this study and in the sustaining support and prayers offered for me and my family.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply grateful to the many individuals whose advice, support, and prayers kept me going and inspired my writing. My sincere appreciation goes to the following:

To Donn Gresso, my committee chairperson, advisor, and mentor. Your sensitive gentle spirit, thoughtful suggestions, availability, and patience provided the atmosphere necessary for me to persevere. To Hal Knight, whose feedback was always stimulating, always relevant, and always available. To Nancy Dishner, for those early discussions on leadership characteristics from Attila the Hun to Self-Renewal. To Brent Morrow, for direction setting at an early stage and for hearing me at a time when I needed to unwind.

To the auditor of this study, Penny Smith. You are a remarkable person whose professionalism is beautifully complemented by a sensitive caring spirit.

To Willie Sims, whose friendship over the years has been a real blessing. Thanks for all your help and data entry during a crucial and hair-pulling time.

To Russ West for enlightening me in so many ways. I am especially grateful for your having opened my eyes to the merits of a qualitative study and the confidence you instilled in me through our work together over the years.

To the members of my pilot study whose names must remain anonymous. Your help was invaluable and essential. Thanks for your time, encouragement, and feedback.

To the 40 members of the Delphi panel whose names must also remain anonymous. Your responses were thorough and indicative of the thoughtfulness, energy and time that you freely gave. I was truly honored by your willingness to share. Thanks!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Leadership has been the subject of considerable writing and thought in both the secular and religious worlds. Literature in numerous fields has demonstrated a link between the effectiveness of an organization and the abilities of its leaders to guide and direct. In the field of business, Peters and Waterman (1982) have written that “associated with almost every excellent company was a strong leader (or two) who seemed to have had a lot to do with making the company excellent in the first place” (p. 26). Research has supported that a direct relationship exists between leadership ability and school effectiveness (Finn, 1987; Russell, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1995; Steller, 1988). Recently there has been an increasing focus on the impact that leadership has on a church’s ability to fulfill its mission (Donaldson, 1995; Ferneau, 1995; George, 1993; Means, 1989). Means (1989) stated, “There are many reasons for church growth . . . but perhaps the one common ingredient in all churches that experience healthy growth is competent leadership” (p. 19). Many churches, including Christian churches/churches of Christ, have traditionally relied upon a group of volunteers called elders as the primary leadership body in a local congregation. Donaldson (1995) observed that a large number of contemporary Christian churches/churches of Christ were lacking in both spiritual and numeric growth. He wrote, “A large part of the problem is a shortage of outstanding spiritual leaders among our elders” (p. 6). The primary purpose of this research was to reveal characteristics of a competent elder as a leader in Christian churches/churches of Christ for the year 2010. In addition, this research sought to reveal ways of encouraging

development of gifts, skills, competencies, and knowledge identified as important for elders to have in order to effectively lead congregations in the beginning of the 21st century.

Two particular themes have dominated recent literature regarding leadership: the continual redefining of the word “leadership” and the evolving practice of leadership development. Writers and scholars have searched for ways of better conceptualizing leadership. De Pree (1989) noted the difficulty of this task stating, “Concepts of leadership, ideas about leadership, and leadership practices are the subject of much thought, discussion, writing, teaching, and learning. . . . Leadership is not an easy subject to explain” (p. 11).

Some scholars, influenced by a view that sees the world as “mutually shaping, perspectual, complex and diverse, heterarchic, holonomic, and spontaneously changing”, note that old models of leadership are being replaced by a new paradigm that sees “heterarchy (teams and networks), shared decision-making, and intuition” as essential leadership qualities (Rogers, 1992, p. 244). Describing a more relativistic approach, Quinn (1988) suggested a model that depicts the most effective leader as one who is able to work from a multiperspective, using whichever paradigm appears most appropriate in a given set of conditions. Sergiovanni (1995) advocated what he called a value-based approach to leadership. Leadership roles in many schools today are shaped in part by outcome measures (Sergiovanni, 1995). Sergiovanni warned that while such an approach may prove effective, it may also be morally wrong. He proposed instead that the role of principal, as school leader, should be based on the assumptions and beliefs that a community defines as its standard. “The specification of assumptions and beliefs

provides a standard for determining what is good and bad, effective and ineffective, and acceptable and unacceptable” (Sergiovanni, 1995, p. 7).

The increasing awareness of the need for competent leadership in organizations has provided the impetus for examining existing models of leadership development (Hallinger, 1992; Moss, Leske, Jensrud, & Berkas, 1994; Rogers, 1992). As leadership competency has become more clearly defined, important characteristics which leaders need to possess to be effective have gained more attention. Some educational leadership programs have recently changed strategies to encourage the acquisition and development of knowledge and skills identified as being critical characteristics of school leaders (Russell, 1994).

The nature of leadership in Christian churches has changed over the two millennia since the early churches were established in the first century. Leadership in the early churches was primarily provided by a group of elders or overseers (Means, 1989; O’Neal, 1985; Strauch, 1995). Within a few centuries, this team-style eldership was replaced by a moniscopacy, where one specific elder gained prominence and power over other local elders and eventually over several other churches (Campbell, 1994). It was not until the Protestant reform movements of the sixteenth century that attempts were made to reestablish the importance of church leadership by a plurality of elders (Hall & Hall, 1994). Since the sixteenth century there has been a gradual but distinct reversion back to a hierarchical type leadership structure throughout the various Protestant denominations and groups (O’Neal, 1985; Strauch, 1995).

Dabney wrote an article in 1860 entitled Theories of the Eldership (cited in Hall & Hall, 1994). He addressed the debate of his time regarding the confusion over the role

of elder in the Presbyterian Church. He noted that many church scholars in 1860 were asking, “Are fundamentals never to be settled among us? Is the church never to be relieved of these debates, which thus agitate the settled foundations of our theory?” (p. 539). In response, Dabney wrote:

We may answer to these indignant questions with an emphatic *No!* . . . While man remains the creature he is, such discussions are to be expected and desired. . . . For, by the very reason that general principles do not lie on the surface, but are to be detected by analysis and induction, they are always, in every science, other than first appearances and first impressions would lead men to suppose. . . . So in church government, the actual first truths of the New Testament are not those which our unreflecting impressions would lead us to suppose. Hence each generation must correct those first impressions for itself, and be led down to the true principles by the laborious collision of debate and investigation (p. 539).

As a result, in part, of this debate and investigation, and also in response to a “spiritual revival” and to the independent nature of early America, a second reform movement swept across Protestant groups and denominations during the last decades of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century.

This time period spawned the Restoration Movement, led by preachers and scholars from several denominational backgrounds such as Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Barton Stone, and Walter Scott (DeWelt, 1995; Helsabeck, 1997). This movement eventually resulted in the establishment of three identifiable groups: the Christian church/church of Christ, the Church of Christ (A Cappella), and the Christian Church or Disciples of Christ (Leggett, 1997a). Campbell wrote that within each congregation elders should “be selected by the congregation and ordained to preside over, to instruct, to edify the community, to feed the church of God with knowledge, to watch for their souls as those that must give an account” (cited in Deuble, 1987). Despite the initial focus on leadership by elders, Christian churches/churches of Christ have

increasingly come to rely upon professional ministers and trained professional staff to provide leadership and direction (O'Neal, 1985).

The Statement of the Problem

It has been postulated by many scholars and researchers that leadership is an important factor in a church's ability to grow and that churches today are experiencing a crisis in the quality of their leadership (Barna, 1992; Ellis, 1982; Elliston, 1992; Greenleaf, 1982; Hian, 1987; Miller, 1995; Mink, 1995; Keifert, 1996; Wagner, 1990). Elders have traditionally provided primary leadership within congregations of Christian churches/churches of Christ, but in recent years there has been a shifting of many leadership responsibilities to paid professional ministers and staff resulting in an ever increasing distinction between "clergy" and "laity" (Meade, 1996; O'Neal, 1985; Strauch, 1995). This growing distinction has provided considerable confusion in roles and has often been the source for conflict between professional ministers and elders (Graham, 1993). According to Deuble (1987), "The eldership calls for those persons from within the congregation who exhibit Christian character and spiritual maturity. The tone of spirit of a congregation is largely determined by that of its leadership. . . The elders are called to give spiritual oversight and leadership to the congregation" (p. 11). Several writers and scholars including Barna (1992), Ellis (1982), Elliston (1992), Ferneau (1995), and Wagner (1990) have noted the importance of on-going training and development of church leaders. The vast majority of developmental literature and programs addressing leadership within churches focuses on professional staff as the primary target population while ignoring elders (Strauch, 1995). Means (1989) wrote, "The church urgently needs

better leaders. Little growth, dissension, brief pastorates, leader burnout, spectator religion, and nonministering churches are facts in modern Christianity that both reveal deficiency in leadership and call for greater excellence in leadership” (p. 30). Deuble (1987), Donaldson (1995), and Illman (1995) have more specifically targeted the importance of encouraging development of elders, noting their key leadership roles in Christian churches/churches of Christ. Unfortunately, very little formal research has been conducted regarding eldership in either the present or future church. More information is needed to clearly identify characteristics of competent elders and to provide direction for preparing elders to be more effective as leaders in Christian churches/churches of Christ.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to compose a possible profile of a competent elder as a leader of Christian churches/churches of Christ for the year 2010. An essential component of this composition was the identification of issues that elders are likely to face in the 21st century church. A second objective was to identify effective ways in which elders can be prepared to meet the challenges of leading congregations in the beginning of the 21st century. The review of literature provided information regarding elders and the development of eldership from a historical standpoint. Traditionally, formal research involving churches in general and Christian churches/churches of Christ in particular has been limited (DeWalt, 1995). The independent nature of Christian churches/churches of Christ and their deliberate avoidance of centralized organization makes the collection of data, both quantitative and qualitative, very difficult to achieve (DeWalt, 1995; Helsabeck, 1997). In this research, a

Delphi Technique was applied since it is a particularly efficient research tool used in building consensus of values and social goals across a diverse group of people when communication between them is limited (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Further, the Delphi process has been successfully used to identify roles and competencies in professionals and to forecast a variety of professional development needs. (Thach & Murphy, 1995; Wheeler & Scheinost, 1994).

Significance of the Study

Dabney wrote in 1860 that each generation needs to carefully and thoughtfully consider for itself what is important regarding the eldership (cited in Hall & Hall, 1994). A clarification of the roles and functions of elders in Christian churches/churches of Christ will help prevent disharmony between professional staff and elders. Clarification will allow for identification of specific knowledge and skills needed for elders to lead effectively. Deuble (1987) states that in Christian churches/churches of Christ, “Recent trends include a desire to re-establish effective eldership” (p. 11). This trend calls for research to yield data that can help better define responsibilities and can be used to establish more effective leadership development programs for elders.

Questions are being raised by scholars and researchers in an effort to initiate studies that can begin addressing this neglected area. Ellis (1982) wrote, “Since good leadership is so important to healthy, productive congregations, since it is an area of frequent problems, and since it can be learned—what are some principles for improving leadership?” (p. 144). Stott (1985) asked, “What, then, are the marks of leadership in general, and of Christian leadership in particular? How can God’s gifts be cultivated and

leadership potential developed? And what is needed to blaze a trail that others will follow?" (p. 24). Answers to these questions and others will help promote programs that churches can use to encourage the development of more competent elders.

Research Questions

A review of literature revealed several issues that have formed the following research questions:

1. What internal issues are elders likely to contend with as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
2. What external factors are likely to influence elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
3. What characteristics should likely be manifested in elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
4. What organizational structure of the eldership is likely most effective in the year 2010?
5. What relationship between elders and minister is likely the most appropriate in the successful congregation for the year 2010?
6. How might individuals acquire and develop the characteristics deemed important for the 21st century elder?
7. What kinds of changes probably need to occur in how congregations function to allow the eldership to lead effectively?
8. How might congregations encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?

9. How might Christian church/church of Christ colleges encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?

Limitations

The research was limited to Christian churches/churches of Christ. Although there are similarities to other Protestant groups and denominations that incorporate eldership as a part of church government, caution must be used in extending findings from this study to these groups.

The research was limited by the perceptions of those individuals selected to participate in the Delphi exercise. Efforts were made to choose a panel that represents the major stakeholders involved in church polity.

Definitions

The following definitions pertain to words used in this study:

Congregation

Generally refers to the banding together of Christians forming a single church or body of believers meeting in a particular location. Contrast this with a denomination or movement that consists of a number of congregations joined together by a common creed or purpose.

Delphi Technique/ Exercise

A communication process used to establish consensus across a heterogeneous group on an issue that tends to be very complex (Linstone & Turoff, 1975).

Delphi Panel

A group of people, often leaders or experts in a field, whose opinions are sought in an effort to build consensus on a complex issue (Putnam et al., 1995).

Elder/Overseer

This term refers to a person chosen or set aside within a local congregation and placed in a position of significant leadership. The function of the elder varies somewhat from church to church, but generally an elder works in the context of a group of elders (Strauch, 1995).

Equipping

According to Elliston (1992), “Equipping aims to outfit the people of God for the work of service” (p. 5). This term is used frequently in Christian literature in place of words such as developing or preparing. In the New Testament it comes from the Greek word *kartismos*, which can be translated “complete furnishing” or “perfecting” (Strong, 1994).

Monepiscopacy

One bishop or elder ruling one church or a group of churches. This had become an established practice in many churches by the middle of the second century (Campbell, 1994; O’Neal, 1985; Smith, 1969).

Participant

An individual who has agreed to serve as a member of the Delphi panel.

Overview of the Study

This study is presented in six chapters. Chapter 1 contains a brief introduction to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research questions, limitations, definitions, and overview. Chapter 2 provides a review of the related literature. Chapter 3 describes the design, process of panel selection, instrumentation, qualitative audit, and summary. Chapter 4 describes the procedures followed specifically in Round 1 of the Delphi exercise. An analysis of the data and summarization of the findings are included. Chapter 5 describes the procedures used to construct and disburse Round 2. It includes an analysis of the data and a summary. Chapter 6 contains the summary, conclusions, and recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The primary purpose of this research was to compose a profile of a competent elder as a leader of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010. A second purpose was to identify effective ways in which elders can be prepared to meet the challenges of leading congregations in the beginning of the 21st century. The purpose of chapter 2 is to provide a review of the related literature focusing primarily on a historical perspective on the eldership, characteristics of elders, characteristics of leaders as identified in current secular literature, issues facing elders, and future trends in eldership. Chapter 2 concludes with an examination of leadership development practices in Christian churches/churches of Christ.

History of the Eldership

A review of elders in Christian churches/churches of Christ would be lacking if it did not provide a historical framework for the development of eldership. This examination begins by looking at the elders active in the nation of Israel approximately 1000 years before Christ. Eldership in Christian churches probably was initiated shortly after the first churches were established around 40 AD (Strauch, 1995). These early first century church elderships were impacted by the historical roots of Jewish eldership but were also uniquely transformed by teachings from New Testament writings (Strauch, 1995). Within a few generations, the eldership in many churches evolved into a moniscopacy, where one elder in particular assumed authority over others (Campbell,

1994; O'Neal, 1985). The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century was largely a revolt against the development of moniscopacy and Roman Catholicism and encouraged, partially, a return to leadership by a plurality of elders (O'Neal, 1985; Strauch, 1995). The Christian church/church of Christ movement began in the latter part of the eighteenth century with its central thrust being a call for unity of all Christians based on a return to scriptures as the source, authority, and practice for being a church (Leggett, 1997c; Murch, 1962)

Jewish Eldership

The eldership as portrayed in the New Testament church is deeply rooted in history of the Jewish people. The Hebrew word for elder, which literally means “with full beard” or “an old man,” occurs 125 times in the Old Testament scriptures (Smith, 1969). Governing bodies of elders were found in every Hebrew community during the time prior to the birth of Christ. The importance of leadership by groups of elders in ancient Israel is demonstrated by their active involvement in every crucial event in Israel’s history (Strauch, 1995). The primary responsibilities of these early elders were managing and overseeing the community over which they presided and, on a larger scale, over the nation as a whole (Strauch, 1995). In addition elders functioned as judges, administering justice, executing decisions, and enforcing the law of God (Grissom, 1994; Strauch, 1995). They were typically appointed to this position by community members based on their maturity, wisdom, and proven leadership abilities (Deuble, 1987). At various times, Jewish history describes large groups of elders, representing each tribe of Israel, getting together to help provide guidance and leadership to the nation as a whole (Strauch, 1995). By the time of

Christ, the Jewish Sanhedrin had become the primary ruling body for the nation of Israel.

The 70 individuals who made up the Sanhedrin included high priests, scribes, and elders (Strauch, 1995). The Sanhedrin was often called the “council of elders” and its primary function was to interpret law and administer justice on behalf of the entire nation. (Dean, 1994). The Sanhedrin was limited in its authority during the time of Christ because the nation of Israel was governed by an appointee of the Roman Emperor. Nevertheless, it was the Sanhedrin to whom Christ was first brought and charged with misleading the nation and claiming to be a king (Strauch, 1995). The elders depicted in the New Testament church in part developed out of the framework of the Jewish eldership.

First Century Church Eldership

Elders as leaders of Christian churches were first observed in the newly established churches of the first century, having been primarily appointed by the apostles and their representatives (O’Neal, 1985). Strauch (1995) noted, “The term elder is the predominant New Testament term used to describe local church leaders and is especially suited to the nature of the New Testament churches” (p. 31). At the same time, several other terms are used in the New Testament to describe this key leader position. Deuble (1987) provided a detailed study of several New Testament words:

It would seem that the words bishop, presbyter, elder, pastor, overseer and shepherd are all used interchangeably in the New Testament. They derive from three Greek words. The word for elder (sometimes translated as “Presbyter”) literally means one who is senior or older. Often it is used in a technical sense referring to the position. A second word, “episkapos” (sometimes translated as “bishop”) means overseer or superintendent. The Greek word “poimen” refers to a pastor or shepherd - a tender of sheep. Most biblical scholars agree that these terms refer to the same person and position. The qualifications are identical (1

Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9) and the words are used interchangeably (e.g. in Acts 20:17-28; 1 Peter 5:1-2). Most probably “elder” refers to the title or office, “overseer” describes the function or role, and “poimen” designates the task or responsibility (pp. 8-9).

Elders were active in almost every church described in the New Testament passages. Within the New Testament and early writings of first and second century church leaders, it seems clear that the elders functioned as a group or plurality in each congregation similar in many respects to that witnessed among the eldership of earlier Jewish communities (Campbell, 1994; O’Neal, 1985). In addition, a council of elders and apostles occasionally met together in Jerusalem to discuss issues, to make decisions, and to advise direction that affected all the churches throughout the ancient world (Grissom, 1994). A primary example of this council working together to establish direction is recorded in the New Testament in Acts 15. In this passage, a situation is described where certain individuals stated that a person could not be a Christian unless he first submitted to certain Jewish customs and laws. A council of elders and apostles met together with the church in Jerusalem to discuss this issue. After considerable discussion and examination of scripture, they agreed on a certain policy that they determined was consistent with God’s intentions for the church as a whole. Acts 15 states that the council proceeded to write a letter outlining their decision so as to avoid misunderstanding. The letter states simply:

The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings. Since we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with their words, unsettling your souls, it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater

burden than these essentials: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell.

It is significant that the council took great precautions to send reliable and trustworthy messengers to deliver the letter. It is also significant that this body of leaders had reached a consensus (“having become of one mind”) after much discussion and presented its findings and policy as a unified group.

These early elders at Jerusalem were quite possibly Jewish elders who had become Christians and were then appointed by the Apostles to provide leadership to local congregations (Strauch, 1995). By approximately AD 50, churches outside Israel and in other countries of the Roman Empire were also recorded as having elders appointed by the apostle Paul to provide local leadership. Strauch (1995) noted attendees in these churches were often non-Jewish and it was likely that the elders of the churches were a mixture of both Jewish converts and “God-fearing Gentiles” (a term used to describe non-Jews who studied and believed in the monotheistic God of Judaism). It is evident that Paul chose to appoint a group of elders in each church rather than a single person, similar to the custom already established in the churches of Jewish background (Deuble, 1987; Means, 1989; Strauch, 1995).

Monepiscopacy

It is unclear at what point the paradigm of leadership began to shift, but within less than two generations after the passing of the last apostle, the church was operating under a new system of church government that focused more on the leadership of one specific elder. The “monepiscopacy” (one bishop ruling one church or a group of

churches) was well established by the middle of the second century (Campbell, 1994; O'Neal, 1985; Smith, 1969). The bishops performed pastoral tasks, preached sermons, and conducted worship services. Often, perhaps usually, bishops were chosen from the ranks of the elders, thus making the bishops the chief elders (Grissom, 1994). During the next several centuries, the power and influence of the overseer/ruling bishop grew while that of the other elders weakened. By about 400 AD the ruling bishop had become the focus of both political and religious power with some bishops having control over a large region of churches, calling themselves archbishops or patriarchs (Deuble, 1987). O'Neal (1985) summarized this time period as follows, noting that the development of the Catholic church and ruling bishop continued

until a pyramid type of government existed which was identical to the government of the Roman empire during the reign of the emperors. As early as the third century, Cyprian advocated the supremacy of the pope which gave control of religion by political power to one man. By the fourth century the bishops of Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch and Rome sought control of the remaining churches. In the fifth century, Augustine gave a mode for the papacy in his City of God. This was developed in the succeeding centuries. Leo claimed authority over the Patriarchs in the fifth century. In 533, Justinian declared John II to be "Lord of the church." In 600, Gregory I, who became the first real pope, organized an army and fought wars on behalf of the church. In 607, Emperor Phocas made Boniface III "Head of all the churches." And so the final stone in the pyramid was put in place. Papal power flourished until the thirteenth century (p. 168).

It is interesting to note that throughout the "dark ages" (as the term came to be applied to this period) there was a small but frequent plea from various groups to return to the structure of eldership depicted in the New Testament (O'Neal, 1985).

Protestant Reformation

Reform movements such as the Priscillians, the Paulicians, the Albigenses, the

Waldenses and the Hussites cropped up in almost every century prior to the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century (O'Neal, 1985). The Hussites in particular decried the growing gulf between laity and clergy. Led by John Huss, these early reformers challenged the Roman Catholic hierarchy and called for a return to scriptural practice (Bainton, 1966). It was the Reformation initiated by Martin Luther in 1517, however, that ultimately led to the rejection of papal power and the return to a form of eldership that more closely resembled that established in the New Testament (Deuble, 1987; O'Neal, 1985). Martin Luther wrote regarding the Roman Catholic hierarchy:

that we now have bishops, rectors, priests, chaplains, canons, monks, and other similar titles signifying a difference in office should not surprise us; it has all come from our habit of so interpreting Scriptures that not a word of it retains its true meaning. Therefore God and His Scriptures know nothing of bishops (elders) as we now have them (cited in Burkill, 1971, p. 252)

Luther rejected the supremacy of the pope and claimed scripture to be the only authority. He held that scripture should not be the possession of the clergy within the Catholic Church but should be available for all to read. He translated the New Testament into the German language making it understandable to the common man (Bainton, 1966). Making the writings of the New Testament available for those outside the clergy helped to rapidly expand the reform movement.

John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli, contemporaries of Luther, were also major reformers. They too renounced the controlling power of the church at Rome and observed that only scripture should be held as authoritative over their lives (O'Neal, 1985). Calvin in particular reformed the leadership structure of the church and called for a return to the eldership as he interpreted the New Testament writings. The Protestant Reformation led to major changes in leadership of churches, but established for 1400

years habits were difficult to break and many Protestant groups reverted to power structures that demphasized eldership and soon reestablished a distinction between clergy or priest and other church attendees (Deuble, 1987; Strauch, 1995).

Christian Church/Church of Christ Movement

The Christian churches/churches of Christ grew out of the discontentment and spiritual renewal that swept through churches in America during the last decades of the eighteenth century, a time period frequently labeled the “Great Awakening” (Bainton, 1966; Murch, 1962). Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Barton Stone, and Walter Scott were early contributors to the movement that came to be called the Restoration Movement (DeWelt, 1995). This movement eventually resulted in the establishment of three identifiable groups: the Christian church /church of Christ, sometimes referred to as the Independents; the Church of Christ, sometimes referred to as Non-instrumentalist or A Cappella; and the Christian Church or Disciples of Christ (Helsabeck, 1997; Leggett, 1997a). The Disciples of Christ churches, according to recent reports (Leggett, 1997b; Yeakley, 1995) have become a formal denomination and no longer identify themselves with the Restoration Movement. The Church of Christ and Christian church/church of Christ groups share many common attributes with the main difference being over the use of instruments in worship services (Leggett, 1997a). Reports from one 1990 yearbook on church membership noted that these two remaining heirs of the Restoration Movement combined have 2,894,202 adherents, placing them as the 7th largest church group in the United States (Yeakley, 1995).

Characteristics of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ.

The Restoration Movement built upon the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century and is sometimes referred to as the Nineteenth Century Reformation (Dowling, 1964). Two central characteristics of this movement are the restoration of the spirit of the New Testament church depicted in scriptures and a return to the Bible as the only authoritative standard for Christians to follow (Cook, 1996; Dowling, 1964). Several slogans, including, “Where the scriptures speak, we speak; and where the scriptures are silent, we are silent”; and, “No creed but Christ, no book but the Bible, no plea but the gospel, and no name but the divine” (McLean, 1994) have developed over the years as expressions of the strong Biblical focus of this movement. Other typical characteristics of the Christian churches/churches of Christ are baptism by immersion; weekly celebration of the Lord’s Supper; and, autonomy of individual congregations (McLean, 1994; DeWalt, 1995). Despite the independent and autonomous nature of this group, it has been referred to as a unity movement, with its leaders denouncing the denominational barriers and creeds that have greatly divided Protestant groups (Dowling, 1964; Helsabeck, 1997; Leggett, 1997c; Murch, 1962). The slogan “In faith, unity; in opinion, liberty; in all things, love” was first worded in an effort to keep the Christian Churches unified during the Civil War (Leggett, 1997a; Murch, 1962). This particular slogan has helped to allow for diversity among the many autonomous congregations. Despite this diversity, however, the Christian churches/churches of Christ continue to share many common attributes.

A recent survey conducted by DeWalt (1995) reveals that senior ministers of Christian churches/churches of Christ continue to hold strongly to the characteristics that

have historically identified their congregations. DeWelt randomly selected 1,097 churches to survey their senior ministers. A total of 423 senior ministers responded to the survey with approximately 90% of them agreeing strongly that “having the Bible as the only authority,” “participating in a weekly observance of the Lord’s Supper,” “baptism by immersion,” and “only being identified by the name ‘Christian’” continue to be important characteristics of this movement. Unfortunately, the survey did not seek input from other stakeholders nor did it ask specific information regarding leadership issues. Nevertheless, results demonstrated the continued emphasis upon the authority of the Bible as being an essential aspect of this movement.

Leadership in Christian Churches/Churches of Christ.

In the area of organizational structure, Christian churches/churches of Christ tend to differ significantly from most traditional church groups in America. The autonomous nature of the early churches has continued to the present day resulting in no one central national, state, or even regional governing body. Each congregation is independent and exists under the primary leadership of a group of individuals who are typically identified as elders, using the same term that described leaders of the churches of the New Testament (Deuble, 1987; O’Neal, 1985). Although it is not mandated or documented, this group of individuals typically meets at least once per month and sometimes more frequently, varying within congregations and dependent upon local circumstances and needs. Strauch (1995) has affirmed that a plurality of elders where no one particular elder dominates or controls is the ideal model revealed in the New Testament. In actuality, oftentimes one particular elder will exert such influence or control that input from others

is stifled (Strauch, 1995). Several authors and scholars within the Christian church/church of Christ movement have written information concerning the duties of elders as leaders.

In Christian churches/churches of Christ primary leadership is also often provided by a professional minister or pastor who has been trained in seminary and received advanced degrees. The relationships between the elders and the minister vary from congregation to congregation. The minister in some churches is an elder and is the primary visionary. In other churches, the minister serves more as an employee of the elders similar to a city manager who is hired by a city council and who is responsible and answerable to this particular group of individuals. The resulting employee-employer relationship is often a source of friction and struggle between minister and elders (Deuble, 1988; Graham, 1993).

During the past century elders appear to be functioning less in their leadership responsibilities, often allocating various functions to the professional minister and sometimes having their authority usurped by the professional minister. O'Neal (1985) alleged colleges and seminaries have trained preachers and ministers to be leaders of congregations, relegating the elders to a symbolic position without any real responsibilities. Many writers and scholars see this process as a gradual shifting back towards the pre-Reformation distinction between laity and clergy (Deuble, 1988; Mean, 1989; O'Neal, 1985; Strauch, 1995). Hudson (1996) expressed concerns that such a model was unscriptural. She wrote

the church entering the 21st century has comfortably accepted and adopted a modern corporate model, one consisting of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and a Board of Advisors. Translated into church structure, we have made the senior

minister the CEO and the board consists of elders with a one-man one-vote philosophy (p. 14).

Campbell, one of the early nineteenth century leaders in the Restoration Movement, wrote that elders should “be selected by the congregation and ordained to preside over, to instruct, to edify the community, to feed the church of God with knowledge, to watch for their souls as those that must give an account” (cited in Deuble, 1987). These identified responsibilities are much the same as that prescribed for the elders in the New Testament church. Wilson (1983) summed up the practice of eldership by stating,

elders are men of faith, understanding, commitment, exemplary life and character, experience, teaching ability, and loving concern for every member. . . Elders have responsibility for every kind of action and program by which all the members are built up in the faith, matured spiritually, completely filled with Christ, and used in the service of the Lord (pp. 2-3).

Elders have been entrusted with the oversight and responsibility of ensuring that members of their congregation are prepared to be effective in accomplishing the goals of the church. Elders in Christian churches/churches of Christ are supposed to be responsible for general oversight over a congregation. Ellis (1988) wrote that the elder’s main functions are

guarding the identity and direction of the congregation, clarifying and emphasizing purpose, establishing policy and goals, keeping the counterproductive processes from undermining the dynamic of the congregation, developing strategies for implementing the mission of the church in its given time and place, and constantly generating momentum for goal achievement (p. 134).

Oversight and responsibility are considered important aspects of the eldership; however, other characteristics are of equal importance. Christian churches/churches of Christ have historically looked to scripture and practices of the early church as a source

for leadership design.

Characteristics of Elders

The characteristics of elders appear to have remained fairly consistent over the past 2000 years. Ideologically, leaders in Christian churches/churches of Christ hold the Bible and the practices of the first century church as critical resources for determining polity and aspects of leadership (DeWelt, 1995). It is therefore important to begin this section by examining relevant Biblical texts and practices in the early church.

First Century Attributes of Elders

There has been considerable debate regarding how much authority the elders had over the early churches (Means, 1989; O’Neal, 1985). Means (1989) noted scripture does not emphasize how much authority elders should have but focuses instead on what the qualifications and responsibilities of elders are as spiritual leaders. The role of elder in the New Testament was essential to the health of the church. Noting the significance of elders, Deuble (1987) wrote “the position of leadership over the local congregation is a crucially important and responsible undertaking. . . . By their overall maturity, Christian character and by their deep commitment and living relationship to Jesus Christ, the elders would set the spiritual tone for the church, and provide the example for others to follow” (p. 17). When considering attributes for elders in the first century church two primary New Testament passages are inevitably cited in addition to numerous other verses (Brunsman, 1995; Grissom, 1994; Illman, 1995; Means, 1989; Wilson, 1983). The apostle Paul wrote to his fellow worker Timothy stating:

It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it

is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil (1 Timothy 3:1-7).

In a similar passage, Paul wrote to Titus instructing him to make sure that qualified elders were appointed in various cities where churches had been established on the island of Crete. Paul wrote to Titus:

For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict (Titus 1:5-9).

Strauch (1995) and Illman (1995) include a third text from the apostle Peter as being critical. The apostle Peter provided instructions specifically to the churches scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. He wrote:

Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:1-3).

Table 1 provides comparative lists of the elder qualities found in these three passages of the New Testament.

Table 1

SCRIPTURE TEXTS ON ELDER QUALITIES

1 Timothy 3:1-5	Titus 1:5-9	1 Peter 5:1-3
1. Above reproach	1. Above reproach	1. Not (serving) under compulsion, but voluntarily
2. The husband of one wife	2. The husband of one wife	2. Not for sordid gain, but with eagerness
3. Temperate	3. Having children who believe	3. Nor yet as lording it over . . . but proving to be examples
4. Prudent	4. Not self-willed	
5. Respectable	5. Not quick-tempered	
6. Hospitable	6. Not addicted to wine	
7. Able to teach	7. Not pugnacious	
8. Not addicted to wine	8. Not fond of sordid gain	
9. Not pugnacious	9. Hospitable	
10. Gentle	10. Lover of what is good	
11. Uncontentious	11. Sensible	
12. Free from the love of money	12. Just	
13. Manages his own household well	13. Devout	
14. Not a new convert	14. Self-controlled	
15. A good reputation with those outside the church	15. Holding fast the faithful word—both to exhort and to refute	

Several writers have noted that these lists of qualifications were not exhaustive nor were they meant to comprise a legalistic check sheet (Deuble, 1987; Strauch, 1995). Elders were meant to be mature Christians who demonstrated a knowledge and understanding of what it meant to be a Christian and who were able to teach others. They were leaders by example and were cautioned never to use their position to dominate others. Strauch (1995) observed that the leaders of the early church were called to be different from the leaders typically observed in the rest of the world. Strauch (1995) quoted the words of Christ speaking to his disciples as recorded in the book of Mark:

You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not so among

you, but whosoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all (p. 247).

In addition to having a good knowledge of scripture, being able to teach, leading by serving, elders were also called to have integrity. In summarizing the scripture passages from Titus and Timothy, Means (1989) noted “integrity--soundness of moral principle and character, uprightness, and honesty--is the essential characteristic for effective spiritual leadership” (p. 32). Individuals who had a reputation for being immoral and hypocritical were not considered appropriate candidates for eldership in the first century church. Deuble (1987), summarized his discussion on the lists in Titus and Timothy, writing:

it is probably best to see them not so much as a list of qualifications, but as a profile. They show us a picture of Christian maturity applicable to all Christians and elsewhere summarized as the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) and ultimately in the person of Jesus, the very epitome of God’s personality.

The picture Paul paints is an ideal one. God is not asking perfection of us before we assume leadership. Nonetheless, these qualities need to be evidenced to a significant degree in our lives, and by God’s Spirit we should be constantly growing and progressing toward the goal of “becoming conformed to the image of His Son.” . . . Always we should have uppermost in mind that eldership is a high calling which requires secure, mature and spiritually alive individuals, committed to Christ and His church (p. 20).

These scriptural qualities provide considerable information regarding attributes of elders in the early church. Other characteristics can be gleaned from an examination of the roles that elders typically held in the early church.

First Century Roles and Responsibilities of Elders

Elders in the early church were given the primary responsibilities of teaching, directing, correcting, and protecting the local church to which they were attached

(Campbell, 1994; Carter, 1980; O'Neal, 1985; Wilson, 1983). Several authors have suggested that these responsibilities can best be depicted by the image created by the word shepherd (Illman, 1995; Strauch, 1995; Wilson, 1983). It is interesting and significant that many prominent leaders portrayed in the Bible were shepherds at some point in their lives. David, who is considered to be the author of Psalm 23, spent his childhood as a shepherd for his father Jethro. Moses, given the responsibility of leading the Hebrews out of slavery in Egypt, spent the first 40 years of his life being raised in the house of the Pharaoh of Egypt and the second 40 years as shepherd for his father-in-law. Strauch (1995) wrote that:

The shepherd-sheep relationship is so incredibly rich that the Bible uses it repeatedly to describe God and His loving care for His people. . . . Thus when Paul and Peter directly exhorted the elders to do their duty, they both employed shepherding imagery. It should be observed that these two giant apostles assign the task of shepherding the local church to no other group or single person but the elders. Paul reminds the Asian elders that God the Holy Spirit placed them in the flock as overseers for the purpose of shepherding the church of God (Acts 20:28). Peter exhorts the elders to be all that shepherds should be to the flock (1 Peter 5:2). We, then, must also view apostolic, Christianized elders to be primarily pastors of a flock, not corporate executives, CEO's, or advisers to the pastor (pp. 16-17).

Until recent years, most readers would probably quickly grasp the metaphor of a shepherd as one responsible for sheep. Today, however, individuals may very well not comprehend what such a job consist of or rather, what it entailed in the historical context of the New Testament. Wilson (1987) provided a description of shepherding that helps supply context for this word. He wrote

Ancient shepherds had a much closer relationship with their sheep than we might imagine. They did not ride in jeeps, or on horseback or donkey. Instead, they walked among the sheep. Each sheep had a name, and if one was missing, the shepherd knew the sheep so well he knew which one. If they shared a fold with another flock at night, in the morning the shepherd would call his own sheep

by name and lead them out.

Shepherding was a hands-on, labor-intensive, twenty-four hour-a-day, sometimes dangerous job. They had no fenced pastures or fine barns, no fancy nurseries for orphan lambs, no high-powered rifles to ward off wolves. If a lamb got sick, there was no vet to call—the shepherd was the doctor. When the ewes were birthing the lambs, he became a midwife. If one wandered away—and sheep are notorious for wandering—the shepherd went after it. And if bear, lion, or wolf should attack, the shepherd risked his own life to save the sheep. All that besides the biggest part of the job—seeing that the sheep had adequate food and water every day (p. 94).

Elders as shepherds need to develop significant relationships with each person under their care. Without this close personal attention, individual needs remain unknown and people become at risk of isolation or abandonment. Drawing from first century church practice and from Scriptural guidelines, recent writers and scholars have described various qualities and characteristics for elders in current congregations.

Current Characteristics of Elders

Mink (1995) recently described characteristics that the eldership he serves with have deemed critical in selecting individuals for leadership positions. He specifically listed eight important attributes in addition to the list of qualifications noted in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1:

1. A commitment to Christ. There are a lot of capable and talented individuals in the church who are not committed to Christ and therefore should not serve in leadership.
2. A commitment to the goals, direction, and strategy of the local congregation.
3. An optimistic attitude. Leaders need to be filled with hope and positive faith.
4. Prior involvement in ministry. Leadership ought to be the result of ministry, not ministry the result of leadership.

5. Support for the minister. Someone who doesn't at least respect ministers cannot effectively function as an unpaid leader in a local church.
6. A humble spirit. Understanding of one's relationship and dependence upon God.
7. A learner's attitude. Quality leaders continue to grow, develop, and learn even as they exercise their leadership. Good leaders constantly add to their knowledge and sharpen their skills.
8. A servant's heart. Jesus taught that servanthood is the foundation of leadership. (pp. 4-5)

Donaldson (1995) expressed his concerns that many Christian churches/churches of Christ are languishing today due to the lack of quality elderships. He identified 16 essential characteristics that should be present in dynamic and outstanding elders:

1. An elder must be a prominent and visible example of faithfulness and obedience to God and a faithful disciple of Christ.
2. An elder has a stewardship mentality recognizing that everything belongs to God and should be surrendered for service to God.
3. An elder is an avid student of scripture, studying both with others and alone. An elder learns and internalizes biblical principles and applies them consistently and rationally to all areas of life.
4. An elder is a teacher who can articulate his faith and give a clear, concise explanation of the Gospel.
5. The life of an elder is marked by wisdom, understanding, insights and compassion that flow from time spent in regular and frequent study, prayer, worship, and meditation.
6. An elder keeps current with modern trends in the church and in the world.
7. An elder is unbending on essential matters of faith, but receptive to new methods in ministry that can be used to effectively reach out to people in need.
8. An elder practices hospitality, opening the door of the home for fellowship and to meet the needs of others.

9. An elder must continue to grow in faith and godly virtues. Every year one should be better equipped as a spiritual leader than the year before.
10. The relationship of an elder with his preacher must be one of partner in the work of ministry. An elder is neither the servant nor the master.
11. An elder is responsible to seek out individuals gifted by God for eldership and then encourage, teach, and disciple them.
12. The role of elder presents a paradox in that an elder must be a decisive, forceful leader yet, also a compassionate servant devoted to meeting the needs of individuals.
13. An elder is a planner and an organizer, but is sensitive to the direction of the Spirit in each moment.
14. Elders are overseers, guarding against heresy and unbiblical practices.
15. Elders are pastors, guiding, encouraging and strengthening the believers.
16. Elders are shepherds, meeting the needs of the congregation and guarding them from false doctrine and bad programming. (pp. 6-7)

Donaldson concluded that congregations will continue to be weak so long as individuals are selected to be elders based on popularity, influence, or tenure rather than based on giftedness and the characteristics he identified.

Boultinghouse (1996) expressed his concerns that oftentimes elders are not effective because they are not sensitive to the needs of the congregation they have been charged with leading. He identified a number of characteristics that elders should either possess or should not have:

1. Elders should not let fear control them.
2. Elders need to listen to the hearts of the people they serve.
3. An elder should model a life filled with fervent, passionate prayer.

4. The life of an elder should be marked by an intimate relationship with God.
5. An elder should have a world vision.
6. An elder should exhibit a life-changing faith.
7. Elders should not operate from an authority mode. Jesus is clear that biblical leaders do not lord it over the flock.
8. The hearts of elders should be humble. (pp. 14-15)

Leaders in Christian churches/churches of Christ continue to express concern for the leadership problems that seem to be so pervasive. Lawrence Carter (1980) in his article “Developing a Responsible Eldership” stated:

What is the true responsibility and function of an elder? This was the question that elders and the minister of the Delta Church of Christ pondered as they grew increasingly frustrated by the demands on their time. We found the elder using most of his time to attend board and committee meetings, make nonspiritual decisions, conduct departmental meetings, and do 101 things that would take him away from his primary reason for being. . . This left the elders with a hopeless feeling (p. 905).

In a similar vein, Bayless (1993) stated, “Jesus put elders and evangelists in the leadership of His churches. Most of us know that the elders’ work is to shepherd the flock (Acts 20:28). What most don’t know is how they are to go about it” (p. 12). The church is not alone in its struggle to better understand characteristics of leadership. Researchers and scholars in the secular world have gone to great lengths to address this issue.

Characteristics of Leaders as Identified in Current Secular Literature

Characteristics of leaders change swiftly and often appear to be rather relativistic. Characteristics include those qualities, roles, tasks, and attributes that comprise who a

leader is. Rogers (1992) defined leader as “an enabler, servant, collaborator, facilitator, and meaning-maker” (p. 243); this she noted is very different from the more traditional definition that she identified as being based on a military model. Senge (1990), in his book The Fifth Discipline, stated that a new view of leadership is vital in developing organizations today. He wrote leaders are “responsible for building organizations where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models—that is, they are responsible for learning” (p. 340). Senge wrote that leaders of learning organizations are characterized by three roles:

1. **Leader as designer.** Senge notes that a leader must be adept at building a shared vision that includes identification of values and purpose of mission.
2. **Leader as steward.** Effective leaders see themselves as stewards of a purpose far greater than their own personal vision. “In a learning organization, leaders may start by pursuing their own vision, but as they learn to listen carefully to others’ vision they begin to see that their own personal vision is part of something larger” (Senge, 1990, p. 352). As a steward, a leader becomes motivated by a sense of “calling” towards the overarching purpose rather than being driven by personal vision.
3. **Leader as teacher.** Quality leadership creates an atmosphere where others catch the spirit of the purpose for the organization and the direction it is heading. Leaders need to foster a desire among people to learn and share in creating vision.

For Senge, the central task for leaders is to promote an atmosphere of creative tension where individuals, working together with common purpose, become empowered and excited to produce results that are truly important and transcendent.

Drucker (1996) wrote that leadership must be learned and that the only true definition of a leader is someone who has followers. Drucker noted that leaders are models for others and as such are highly visible. From his vast experiences working with individuals, Drucker identified six common behaviors that effective leaders

demonstrated in their lives:

1. They started out asking, “What needs to be done?” rather than “What do I want?”
2. They then asked, “What can and should I do to make a difference?”
3. Effective leaders constantly asked, “What are the organization’s mission and goals?”
4. Leaders were extremely tolerant of diversity in people yet intolerant when it came to a person’s performance, standards and values.
5. They were not afraid of strength in others, in fact they gloried in it.
6. Leaders submitted themselves to the “mirror test”--that is, they made sure that the person they saw in the mirror was the kind of person they wanted to respect and believe in. (p. 104)

De Pree (1992) stated that quality leadership takes a position of servanthood that is characterized by a forfeiture of rights and a posture of debt. De Pree described eight aspects of leadership which he believed were important to have:

1. Integrity is the linchpin of leadership. Leadership without integrity causes an organization to be directionless.
2. Vulnerability is trusting in the abilities of other people and allowing them to do their best.
3. Discernment is a leadership ability that lies somewhere between wisdom and judgment.
4. Effective leaders need to have an awareness of the human spirit, promoting personal skills over professional skills.
5. Leaders need to be predictable. Followers should be able to count on steadfastness in leaders, not being concerned that direction or vision might change from day to day.
6. Leaders should have an attitude of breadth, allowing for contributions from many

sources.

7. Effective leaders should be comfortable with ambiguity and even chaos.
8. Leaders need to be present and available to their followers. Leaders quietly and openly wait for the information, good and bad, that enables them to lead (p. 225).

Gardner has contributed a significant amount of material directed towards improving leadership in organizations. His book, On Leadership (Gardner, 1990), describes a number of aspects about leadership as well as addressing the interaction with followers. He suggests 9 tasks as fairly universal characteristics of leaders: (a) envisioning goals, (b) affirming values, (c) motivating, (d) managing, (e) achieving workable unity, (f) explaining, (g) serving as symbols, (h) representing the group, and (i) renewing. Gardner continues by proposing a number of actions which he believes are essential qualities that a leader should exhibit. These actions are in part what encourages and empowers constituents to achieve. He states that leaders need to be adept at:

1. "Sharing information and making it possible for followers to obtain appropriate kinds of education.
2. Sharing power by devolving initiative and responsibility.
3. Building the confidence of followers so that they can achieve their own goals through their own efforts.
4. Removing barriers to the release of individual energy and talent.
5. Seeking, finding, and husbanding the various kinds of resources that followers need.
6. Resolving the conflicts that paralyze group action.
7. Providing organizational arrangements appropriate to group effort" (Gardner, 1990, p. 22).

The relationship between leader and follower must be characterized by good two-way communications. Effective leaders share common attributes according to Gardner. He identifies 14 qualities that appear to predominate leadership:

1. Top leaders have great vitality and energy reserves. They are prepared to go the extra mile.
2. Leaders exhibit intelligence and judgment-in-action, able to discern the most appropriate course in a given situation.
3. Leaders should be willing and even eager to accept responsibilities, prepared to step forward when no one else will.
4. Effective leaders must have task competence. They must have enough knowledge and understanding of a situation and its context to do a good job.
5. Leaders must have an understanding of their followers and be sensitive to their needs.
6. Leaders must have good people skills. They need to be socially perceptive; able to accurately determine readiness or resistance in followers, able to be sensitive and aware of people's motives.
7. Top leaders will be marked by a need to achieve and to excel.
8. Leaders must have the capacity to motivate and energize people to action.
9. Leaders manifest courage, steadiness, and resolve. They boldly take risks as needed and are emotionally stable individuals. They can be counted on in all situations.
10. Leaders have the capacity to win and hold trust.
11. Leaders are good managers, able to make decisions and set priorities.

12. Leaders are marked by a confidence that permits risk taking and steadfastness in the face of adversity.

13. Successful leaders are assertive, often compelled to action by a fairly strong impulse to take charge.

14. Leaders are flexible, able to quickly change a course of action as necessary.

Gardner doesn't claim to have exhausted all the possible qualities of effective leadership. He submits that attributes required of a leader are dependent upon a variety of factors including: (a) the context of leadership, (b) the nature of the followers, and (c) the kind of leadership being exercised. Gardner emphasizes that in actuality leadership cannot be so easily distilled to well-organized lists of qualities and tasks. The culture that leaders are engaged with are not always orderly and surprises and inconsistencies are inevitable. The leader must be closely tuned in and aware of the context of leadership.

De Pree (1989) wrote briefly concerning leadership, "The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between the two, the leader must become a servant and a debtor. That sums up the progress of an artful leader" (p. 11). He also wrote,

Concepts of leadership, ideas about leadership, and leadership practices are the subject of much thought, discussion, writing, teaching, and learning. True leaders are sought after and cultivated. Leadership is not an easy subject to explain. . . . The goal of thinking hard about leadership is not to produce great or charismatic or well-known leaders. The measure of leadership is not the quality of the head, but the tone of the body. The signs of outstanding leadership appear primarily among the followers. Are the followers reaching their potential? Are they learning? Serving? Do they achieve the required results? Do they change with grace? Manage conflict?

I would like to ask you to think about the concept of leadership in a certain way. Try to think about a leader, in the words of the gospel writer Luke, as "one who serves." (pp. 11-12)

The review of secular leadership characteristics provides an interesting contrast to the previous section which focused on characteristics of elders. In fact, there is a considerable amount of common ground evidenced in the miscellaneous lists of roles, responsibilities, and attributes. Within both sections, leaders are characterized by being aware and sensitive to the culture in which they find themselves. Quality leaders make great effort to be apprised of issues they may contend with.

Issues Facing the Eldership

Elders as leaders of congregations are continually faced with issues both from within congregations and from without. Effective leaders must be sensitive to needs and potential problems within the confines of the organization that they function in as well as on a global level.

Concerning change brought on by leadership facing issues, Conner (1995) wrote, "It is hard for leaders to see beyond today's changes and instability to tomorrow's potential. For them, change isn't the friend of their churches, it is their foe" (p. 12).

Conner (1995) provided a partial list of nine issues leaders face from within congregations:

1. Role of women.
2. Styles of worship.
3. Ministerial roles.
4. Leadership structures and roles.
5. How to evangelize.

6. The role of home Bible studies.
7. The future of Sunday school.
8. The disappearance of Sunday night worship.
9. The fact that as many as 80 percent of current congregations are plateaued or declining in numbers.

Individuals and groups from Christian churches/churches of Christ annually get together for an international convention, the focus of which is corporate worship and educational workshops. A review of workshop titles at the 1995 convention (NACC, 1995) resulted in the identification of a number of contemporary issues facing leaders and followers alike in Christian churches/churches of Christ across America. Topics included:

1. Helping families deal with alcoholism and its effects.
2. How to be an effective witness to the drug culture.
3. How to change without getting fired.
4. Inclusion isn't optional: Preparing your congregation to include persons with disabilities.
5. Current issues from a redemptive perspective: Bringing the redeeming love of Christ to the issue of homosexuality.
6. The new information technology: Useful tools for even the small church.
7. So they are hungry and homeless. That's the government's responsibility isn't it?
8. Threat to religious liberty: To pray or not to pray.

9. Counseling persons who are being married a second time.
10. Bringing the healing of Christ to sexual abuse.
11. Spiritualism and the New Age Movement.
12. How Christians can be effectively involved in political and social issues.
13. Protecting your children and family from the assault of pornography.
14. Seniors reaching seniors: How golden agers can evangelize your peers.
15. Move the missions program to top priority in the local church.

Schaller (1996) identified a number of external factors that drives people to become involved in congregations. Schaller, discussing recent trends towards establishment of megachurches, noted the demand wasn't for big churches. Rather, he encouraged leaders to be aware the demand is for congregations that:

1. Clearly understand the questions, the agendas, the needs, the yearnings, the concerns, and the fears that people bring to the church.
2. Communicate to people that this congregation understands them and their questions.
3. Provide relevant, meaningful, high quality, and biblically based responses to those agendas.
4. Consistently offer a note of hope and a word of comfort to all worshipers.
5. Challenge people to continue their personal spiritual journeys.
6. Offer a broad range of challenging opportunities for people to progress in that pilgrimage.
7. Recognize the differences between the self-identified believer and the committed disciple and expect to enable people to move from the believer stage to discipleship.

8. Challenge both believers and disciples to be engaged in ministry and offer many meaningful opportunities to be involved.
9. Present to people a wide variety of opportunities to find a sense of community in a smaller group within the congregation and to be nurtured and supported by that community of Christians.
10. Place a high value on learning.
11. Offer an expanding range of choices in everything from worship to learning to involvement in ministry.
12. Are highly intentional in planning all aspects of ministry.
13. Offer a variety of attractive entry points to inquirers, agnostics, seekers, searchers, pilgrims, and others on self-identified faith journeys.
14. Place a premium on competence and quality. (p. 10)

Effective leaders need to be sensitive and aware of issues they will potentially be challenged with as they provide the way for congregations to move into the next century.

Future Trends of Eldership in Christian Churches/Churches of Christ

In part, the nature of the church is that it is future-oriented, looking forward to a time when there is no longer the separation that currently exist between the spiritual world and the physical world, between heaven and earth, between God and mankind. Within the Christian churches/churches of Christ, the future must be examined within the context of the present. An overwhelming number of senior ministers surveyed in 1995 stated that only scriptures should be followed as a rule for decision-making. Further, responses from the minister supported the conviction that congregations should remain independent from any type of hierarchy or outside structure (DeWelt, 1995). In keeping with the scriptural context, Illman (1995) has noted if elders are to be prepared for

leadership for the church of the 21st Century then their identities and responsibilities must reflect Biblical themes. He wrote that too often, “The eldership is considered to be a group of men who have long meetings, make decisions on budgets and programs and discipline members and preachers” (p. 1). Instead, Ilman suggested elders in the future need to be a team focused on goals that all have helped to establish. Elders need to practice the servant leadership attested to by Christ and revealed in scriptures (Strauch, 1995).

Deuble has written that recent trends in the Christian churches/churches of Christ have revealed a “strong desire to re-establish effective eldership, a ‘functional’ style of church organization, an emphasis on discovering and utilizing spiritual gifts, and the election of women to serve as elders” (Deuble, 1988, p. 11). At the same time there is a trend among many congregations to emphasize the need for multiple professional paid ministers at times including women in this function and at other times denying upon scriptural grounds their qualifications to serve as elders. Deuble (1988) noted, “Whatever works in making the church more effective in its mission is likely to commend itself, as long as it is not in conflict with the Word of God or Spirit of Christ” (p. 11). Strauch has stated that elders in the future need to become more like Christ, being a leader by having the spirit and heart of a servant. Strauch (1995) concluded his book, Biblical Eldership, by quoting the apostle Paul. In Paul’s letter to the church at Phillipi he specifically addressed the elders and deacons along with all the other Christians. Paul wrote:

To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons . . . make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal

interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Strauch, 1995, p. 295).

The growing awareness of the need for elders to become more effective has prompted a greater interest in the development and use of programs to encourage leadership growth.

Leadership Development Practices for Elders

The idea that a leadership development program can be established and a given person participate in such a program and become a competent elder is ludicrous to many writers (Clinton, 1988; Ferneau, 1995; Hian, 1987; Ilman, 1995). Hian (1987) wrote that some people look at leadership development as being the same thing as training a dog or a monkey a new skill or trick. Hian noted that Christian leadership training is much more than the simple imparting of skills and techniques. He wrote, "In Latin America they have substituted the word 'formacion' for training--(this is a Spanish word used in the forming and shaping of character that they feel is more what the New Testament stresses" (Hian, 1987, p. 72). A significant difference exists between training and development. Elliston (1992), presenting a paper before Christian church/church of Christ college presidents and academic deans, stated

Part of our task as educators is to instruct about the use of power and then to participate in the process of empowerment. The process of leadership development is essentially the process of empowerment. It goes well beyond training. Training is important, but leaders are not made by training nor by our educational programs. They may, however, be developed, equipped and empowered as leaders. One primary responsibility then we have in Christian education is the development of empowered leaders (p. 30).

Development of elders for leadership is a lifetime process. Clinton (1988)

described the process in this way:

God develops a leader over a lifetime. That development is a function of the use of events and people to impress leadership lessons upon a leader . . . All leaders can point to critical incidents in their lives where God taught them something very important (p. 25)

Ferneau (1995) pointed out that a leader needs to be able to see events in life, even failures, as opportunities to grow. Beginning with a scripture text he wrote

“Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope” (Romans 5:3-4). Emotionally healthy leaders know how to take advantage of apparent failures. They see them as educational opportunities (p. 75).

There is a recognition that in order to be an effective elder and empowered leader, one does not necessarily have to be highly educated in the sense of having several advanced degrees. Strauch (1995), reviewing some New Testament text, wrote that the Jewish leaders “observed the confidence of Peter and John, and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were marveling, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus” (p. 82). Strauch has clarified that being uneducated does not mean that an elder is ignorant of important leadership skills and understanding. It is clearly pointed out by various authors that maturing, developing, and growing as a Christian leader requires work and diligence and is not something that just “magically” happens (Elliston, 1992; Faust, 1994; Ferneau, 1995; Illman, 1995; McKenna, 1989; Strauch, 1995;). Mentoring is considered by several to be an important but frequently neglected resource that elders and church leaders should use (Ferneau, 1995; McKenna, 1989; Strauch, 1995). When the apostle Paul wrote a letter to his protégé Timothy, he stated, “The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to

reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Timothy 2:2) emphasizing the needed to mentor and develop future leaders (Ferneau, 1995).

Illman (1995) conducted an informal qualitative survey of 30 senior ministers serving in Christian churches/churches of Christ to identify strategies being used across the country to develop elders. Qualitative responses from this survey revealed that in several churches, some type of mentoring program was an essential part of elder development. One minister stated, “We are about to initiate an apprentice system where present elders choose a man to observe and with whom he can share in prayer and ministry” (p. 5). Another senior minister responded:

Our current elders and ministers conduct small discipleship groups in which we seek to develop character. We keep our eyes open for individuals with potential for eldership. When we find them, we seek to spend key time with them. Our annual selection process, five months in length, becomes the training ground. We take our men to seminars and hold retreats. We want them to catch a vision of something significantly beyond where we are. The biggest obstacle in getting men to consider eldership is three-fold. One, getting them to grasp the concept that elders must be sacrificial servants. Two, getting them to prove themselves by leading a ministry in the church. Three, getting them motivated to build within their lives the character reflected in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (p. 6).

Wisely (1993) conducted a survey of Baptist churches, Churches of God, and Christian churches/churches of Christ attempting to identify information regarding how they equip elders, teachers, and youth workers. The study had an extremely low response rate (25%) and no follow-up was conducted. Nevertheless, it was revealed that only seven churches out of the 19 that responded required elders to be equipped through some type of program prior to serving as elders. It was interesting to note that of the same churches that responded a considerably larger portion (15 of 19) required that their youth worker/teachers undergo some type of formal equipping time. Perhaps this finding is

indicative of the lack of action being taken to formally provide ways of preparing elders to be effective leaders.

Summary

Chapter 2 provided a review of the related literature focusing primarily on a history of the eldership, characteristics of the elders, characteristics of leaders, identification of issues, and leadership development practices for elders. The primary purpose of this research was to develop a profile of a competent elder as a leader of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010. A second objective was to identify effective ways in which elders can be prepared to meet the challenges of leading congregations in the beginning of the 21st century. Chapter 3 describes the technique used to conduct research and the analysis of subsequent data.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the procedures that were employed in this research to collect and analyze data. The chapter provides descriptions of the following: research design, panel selection, instrumentation, research procedures, and data analysis. The chapter concludes with a brief description of the auditing process that was used for the qualitative section of this research.

Chapter 2 drew upon existing literature to describe aspects and characteristics of elders as leaders in Christian churches/churches of Christ. The literature review also revealed that minimal formal research had been conducted within the Christian church/church of Christ movement. Nine research questions emerged from the review of literature in chapter 2.

1. What internal issues are elders likely to contend with as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
2. What external factors are likely to influence elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
3. What characteristics should likely be manifested in elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
4. What organizational structure of the eldership is likely most effective in the year 2010?
5. What relationship between elders and minister is likely the most appropriate in the successful congregation for the year 2010?

6. How might individuals acquire and develop the characteristics deemed important for the 21st century elder?
7. What kinds of changes probably need to occur in how congregations function to allow the eldership to lead effectively?
8. How might congregations encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?
9. How might Christian church/church of Christ colleges encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?

These 9 questions served as a guide both in the selection of appropriate research technique and in development and design for an instrument that could be used to conduct research.

Design

The researcher determined that the Delphi Technique was the most appropriate means for conducting research and analyzing data. The Delphi Technique has been used extensively as a means of soliciting the thoughts and opinions of “knowledgeables” regarding present and future conditions in order to assist in policy-making and planning (Delbecq et al., 1975; Linstone & Turoff, 1975; Patton, 1990; Putnam et al., 1995; Thomas & Vornberg, 1991; Wheeler & Scheinost, 1994). Patton (1990) wrote, “While most evaluation work involves looking at the effectiveness of past efforts in order to improve the future effectiveness of interventions, a futuring perspective involves anticipatory research and forward thinking in order to affect current actions toward

creating desirable futures” (p. 137). Linstone and Turoff (1975) described the Delphi Technique as a method for “structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem” (p. 3). Linstone and Turoff suggested that while there are many different procedures that can be use to aid in this process, they have identified four important steps that should occur in order for the Delphi Technique to be successful:

1. A method that allows feedback of individual contributions of information and knowledge.
2. Provision for some assessment of the group judgment or view.
3. An opportunity for individuals to revise views.
4. Some degree of anonymity for the individual responses (p. 3).

In keeping with typical processes used for a Delphi Technique, this research used a panel of stakeholders who were contacted by mail and provided the opportunity to respond in Round 1 to several open-ended questions designed to solicit their “expert” opinion. Responses from Round 1 were coded, compiled, and used to develop Round 2 which was mailed to the same panelists for further input, clarification, and consensus building (Putnam et al., 1995). Round 2 results were analyzed, conclusions drawn, and recommendations made.

To help determine the appropriateness of using a Delphi Technique in research, Linstone and Turoff (1975) have suggested the following properties be considered:

1. The problem does not lend itself to precise analytical techniques but can benefit from subjective judgments on a collective basis.
2. The individuals needed to contribute to the examination of a broad or complex

problem have no history of adequate communication and may represent diverse backgrounds with respect to experience or expertise.

3. More individuals are needed than can effectively interact in a face-to-face exchange.
4. Time and cost make frequent group meetings infeasible.
5. Disagreements among individuals are so severe or politically unpalatable that the communication process must be refereed and/or anonymity assured.
6. The heterogeneity of the participants must be preserved to assure validity of the results, i.e., avoidance of domination by quantity or by strength of personality (“bandwagon effect”) (p. 4).

All the properties listed by Linstone and Turoff were applicable to the focus of this research. Due to the independent nature of Christian churches/churches of Christ, the lack of any centralized inter-church structure and the distance separating potential participants, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to bring together a group to discuss the future of elders as leaders. “Disagreements among individuals” as stated in Item #6 could perhaps better be stated as being a potential problem but not one that is now known to exist. Nevertheless, it was important that confidentiality and anonymity be assured to all those involved in the research, so that participants would feel more open in sharing honest thought.

Panel Selection

An essential ingredient to the Delphi Technique is the employment of a panel of individuals, often leaders and experts, who are willing to participate in a selected study and who can provide relevant information (Putnam et al., 1995; Thomas & Vornberg, 1991). Participants in this research were selected from four primary groups: elders, senior

ministers, higher education faculty, and published writers/researchers. No specific number of participants for a Delphi Technique has been recommended as particularly critical. A review of literature demonstrated a wide range in numbers of participants, with one study having only twelve members on the panel (Raskin, 1994) and another involving over 400 panelists (Cyphert & Gant, 1971). Cyphert and Gant (1971) have pointed out that typically there are about 50 participants, with larger numbers becoming increasingly unwieldy. For purposes of this research it was determined that each identified group be represented by 10 participants, providing a total panel of 40 panelists. Delbecq et al. (1975) identified three criteria that all participants in a Delphi study should possess:

1. A feeling of personal involvement in the problem.
2. Pertinent information to share.
3. Motivation to participate as members of the panel.

Pool Development

The specific method that was employed in panel selection for this research was complex in an effort to choose people who reflected the above criteria and who adequately represented the various identified groups. A pool of names for all four identified groups was established by the following methods:

1. Christian churches/churches of Christ literature that dealt with eldership or related topics was reviewed. Authors of material that appeared related to the intent of this study were identified and placed in the “writer” category, while other individuals who were cited in literature were identified and placed in the appropriate group.

2. Potential panelists for all four groups were added to the pool based on referrals from pilot study members. Pilot study participants were asked to write down names of individuals who they believed would be appropriate to serve on the “expert panel”.

3. In order to assure representation of higher education faculty, thirty-two Christian church/church of Christ colleges in the United States were identified from a list published in The Directory of the Ministry (McLean, 1994). Eleven schools were identified as having more than 200 full-time students. The name of the president or academic dean from each of these schools was added to the pool as a contact person to be called in the process of building the “faculty” group.

4. In the process of calling individuals from the pool to solicit their involvement, additional referrals were requested and when given, were added to the appropriate group within the pool.

Solicitation for Involvement

The pool of names was reviewed and a list of “faculty” was formed insuring that each of the 10 schools was represented by at least one identified faculty member or the president/academic dean identified above. Individuals were contacted by telephone and briefed on the purpose of the research, the importance of the project, and a general idea of how the research was to be conducted. Faculty members or administrators were asked if they would serve on the panel. If they chose not to they were asked if they could refer someone from their institution. Phone calls were continued until one from each of 10 institutions agreed to participate in the research, making it unnecessary to call further.

A list of “writers” was similarly formed from the pool of names. This list was rank ordered based on those writers who were thought to be the most prolific or knowledgeable about elders in Christian churches/churches of Christ. Phone calls were made to individuals beginning at the top of the list. Individuals were briefed on the project as described above and their involvement was solicited. Calls were continued until 10 writers had been secured.

A list of ministers was generated from the pool and was rank ordered with the primary criterion being an effort to have a broad geographic representation of congregations. Using the same procedure described above, ministers were telephoned, briefed on the project and solicited for participation. Each who agreed was asked if there was a particular elder who would be good referral. This elder was then added to the pool of names for the elder group. For purposes of this study it was not necessary to have both an elder and minister from every congregation identified with the minister group. Ministers were contacted until 10 had agreed to serve on the panel.

A list of elders was established from the pool and was rank ordered with the primary criterion being an effort to have an elder selected from congregations identified with the minister group. Elders were telephoned, briefed on the project, and asked to serve as participants. Calls were continued until 10 elders had agreed to be on the panel.

Demographic information about resulting panel is recorded in chapter 4. One additional comment deserves recognition here. Responses from the pilot study indicated women in leadership roles would be a significant issue both within and without Christian churches/churches of Christ. For this reason, it was advised that effort be made to include some women as participants on the Delphi Panel.

Instrumentation

Delbecq, et al. (1975) has stated that the, “Delphi is essentially a series of questionnaires. The initial questionnaire asks individuals to respond to broad questions. (Delphi questions might focus upon problems, objectives, solutions, or forecasts.) Each subsequent questionnaire is built upon responses to the preceding questionnaire” (p. 83). With this in mind, Round 1 consisted of a questionnaire based on the literature review and research questions outlined in chapters 1 and 3:

1. What internal issues are elders likely to contend with as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
2. What external factors are likely to influence elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
3. What characteristics should likely be manifested in elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
4. What organizational structure of the eldership is likely most effective in the year 2010?
5. What relationship between elders and minister is likely the most appropriate in the successful congregation for the year 2010?
6. How might individuals acquire and develop the characteristics deemed important for the 21st century elder?
7. What kinds of changes probably need to occur in how congregations function to allow the eldership to lead effectively?
8. How might congregations encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?

9. How might Christian church/church of Christ colleges encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?

A brief cover letter relating the scope and importance of the research, appreciation for participant's time and input, and instructions accompanied each questionnaire. Participants were asked to answer these questions as fully as possible, providing rich descriptive data. The data was analyzed and used to develop the questionnaire for the second round. In addition, participants were asked to include further comments or suggestions to be examined and included in the construction of the questionnaire for Round 2 if deemed appropriate to the focus of the research.

Review Panel

A review panel of subject-matter experts was established to review the Round I questionnaire, suggesting appropriate changes. The review panel was specifically given the task of improving the clarity of each question so ambiguity or vagueness could be avoided. The panel consisted of four people representative of the identified groups. Each of these reviewers was provided a copy of the initial questionnaire and asked to read it and suggest improvements. Each reviewer provided written comments suggesting areas for improvement in the instrument. The questionnaire was then revised and prepared for a pilot study.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was used to help further refine the Round 1 questionnaire. In a Delphi study it is critical that questions be worded in such a way as to solicit germane

information (Delbecq et al., 1975; O'Brien, 1994). The pilot study panel was established by convenience sampling resulting in the selection of two members from each identified group, providing a total of eight participants. A letter was sent to each participant explaining the purpose and procedures for the pilot study. Participants were asked to read the cover letter and respond to the Round 1 questionnaire. In addition, members of the pilot study were asked to provide written feedback on suggestions for improving the questionnaire and cover letter. Finally, as mentioned above, pilot study participants were asked to respond to a referral form to aid in selection of members for the Delphi panel. The responses and feedback were reviewed by the researcher. Members of the pilot study were contacted for further clarification and refinement as necessary prior to final construction of the Round 1 questionnaire (see Appendix A for a copy of the pilot study cover letter, referral form, and questionnaire).

A considerable number of changes were made in the questionnaire. Comments from the pilot study suggested the questionnaire was too long and time-consuming. Other responses indicated there needed to be more congruency between the survey questions and the questions identified from the literature review. In the end, it was suggested that the literature review questions simply be used to form the Round 1 questions. Responses to the pilot study, as noted above, reflected the importance of female representation on the Delphi panel. The Round 1 questionnaire was constructed and mailed out to panel members in December 1996. Additional information and details regarding the mailing procedure for Round 1 is found in chapter 4 (See Appendix B for a copy of the Round 1 cover letter and questionnaire).

The Round 2 questionnaire was developed from the analysis and review of Round 1 responses. Since the primary purpose of the Delphi Technique is to build consensus, the Round 2 questionnaire was constructed using a Likert-type scale so that the level of acceptance or rejection regarding each particular item could be assessed. Panelists were also requested to indicate the likelihood of each item occurring in the year 2010. In addition, panelists were again given the opportunity to provide extra comments and statements. The Round 2 questionnaire was mailed out to the Delphi participants in late January 1997. Additional information regarding the construction and mailing out of Round 2 is found in chapters 4 and 5 of this report (See Appendix E for a copy of the Round 2 cover letter and questionnaire).

Qualitative Audit

It is impractical, indeed impossible to replicate a qualitative study to establish reliability as is expected of quantitative research. Guba & Lincoln (1981) have suggested that in lieu of replication of a study, consistency can be established based on an audit. The qualitative audit is similar in principle to an audit performed in accounting when an external agency examines financial records to ensure accuracy in various reports. An auditor was secured for this research and at the completion of Round 1, a sample of records including participant responses, analysis, and coding schemes was turned over to the auditor to be reviewed for consistency and accuracy. The auditor examined the information and provided feedback and suggestions, noting potential areas of oversight, bias or questionable categorizing of data. The auditor and the researcher met face-to-face for feedback and to discuss recommendations.

The auditor for this research was Dr. Penny Smith, an individual who has several years of training and experience in identification and coding of qualitative data. Dr. Smith is currently serving as an assistant dean of the Quillen College of Medicine at East Tennessee State University. (see Appendix C for a copy of the letter from the researcher to the auditor outlining the audit agreement and Appendix D for a copy of the auditor's findings)

Summary

Chapter 3 specified the methods employed in this research. A description of the Delphi Technique, panel selection, instrumentation, pilot study, and qualitative audit was provided. Chapter 4 of this research explains in further detail the review and analysis of the Round 1 questionnaire and the development of the Round 2 questionnaire. Chapter 5 of this research includes the review and analysis of the Round 2 questionnaire. Chapter 6 provides conclusions and recommendations based on this study.

CHAPTER 4

ROUND 1 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

Chapter 4 describes in detail the process of distributing Round 1, demographic information regarding the panelists, the compilation and analysis of results, and the auditing process. Chapter 4 concludes by describing how results from analysis of Round 1 were used to develop Round 2.

Distribution Process of Round 1

Using the process described in chapter 3, telephone calls were made to individuals during the first week of December, 1996 soliciting their participation in the research. Many individuals had to be called several times before contact was made. A detailed computerized database was established to track all correspondence and to record important information regarding each individual, including dates when questionnaires from both rounds were mailed out and received. Generally, those contacted were extremely interested in the project and receptive to participating on the panel. Faculty, in particular, were hard-pressed for time due to end-of-semester responsibilities. Only two individuals of those contacted stated they were unwilling to assist on the project at this time. The telephone solicitation resulted in the panel of forty individuals, ten from each of the four identified groups: (a) elders, (b) ministers, (c) faculty, and (d) writers.

Round 1 packets were constructed and mailed out to the panelists during the second week of December, 1996. Each packet contained a cover letter, Round 1 questionnaire, and a self-addressed stamped envelope to facilitate return of responses (see

Appendix B). In addition, a personal “sticky” note was attached to each cover letter thanking each panelist for his assistance and “wishing them a Merry Christmas”. It was thought that such a personal note, although somewhat time-consuming, would payoff in a quicker response rate. Panelists were asked to mail the responses back as soon as possible but not later than December 18, 1996. The response rate by December 28, 1996 was 70% which far exceeded the expectations, given the mailing had occurred in the midst of the holiday season. Follow-up telephone calls were initiated on December 28 to the 12 remaining panelists. The last response to Round 1 was received in the mail on January 15, 1997, providing a response rate of 100%.

Demographic Information

Forty individuals agreed to participate as panelists on this project and all 40 responded to the Round 1 questionnaire. Typical demographic information of respondents (age, educational level, SES, etc.) was not relevant to this study and was not requested in efforts to minimize time required to complete the questionnaire. The panel consisted of 10 elders, 10 ministers, 10 faculty, and 10 writers. Three of the panelists were female. Fourteen states were represented with eight individuals from Tennessee. The faculty included four deans and three presidents of higher education institutions. There were at least 28 different congregations represented by the members of the panel. While additional and more specific information is available, it will remain confidential since anonymity was promised to the panelists.

Compilation and Analysis of Round 1

The Round 1 questionnaire sought narrative or short-answer responses to ten questions (See Appendix B). Analysis began within a few days after arrival of the first responses to Round 1 and generally followed the format described below:

- Each questionnaire was date-stamped as it arrived.
- A unique color-coded label was placed on the front of each questionnaire identifying group (elder, minister, faculty, writer) and respondent ID.
- Questionnaires were first read completely through to get a feel for responses.
- Development of “Response Cards”. Using a computerized database, a template was developed for the recording of individual “responses” resulting in a unique “Response Card”. Each “response” was considered as a separate opinion made by a panelist to a specific question in Round 1. Most panelists had several opinions recorded for each question.
- Recording and sorting process for combining responses.
 - As questionnaires were received, every individual response was recorded for each question using the computerized database. The template required that each unique response card include a unique card ID, the respondent ID, the question from which the response was generated, and the individual response. Response cards could easily and almost instantaneously be sorted based on card ID, respondent ID, generating question, group affiliation (obtained from respondent ID), or any mixture of these variables.
 - Response cards were sorted with each unique card placed into a single “Question Stack” corresponding to the question it was generated from in

Round 1. For example, all response cards generated by question 1 from every participant in Round 1 were placed together in the “Question 1 Stack”. This process was used for each question, creating ten question stacks .

- **Sorting and coding process for each individual question stack.**
 - **First Sort:** Response cards from a single “question stack” were sorted into individual “thought stacks” based on common content (i.e. response cards that were essentially the same, although perhaps worded uniquely, were sorted into individual stacks, but still retained under the general question they originated from). Note: some response cards appeared to be more appropriately identified with a different question stack, in fact, some panelists indicated that certain responses were probably more appropriate to another question. These responses were placed under the more appropriate question stack.
 - Each “thought stack” was identified with a label or phrase that reflected the content. Often these phrases were modified or taken directly from one of the response cards.
 - **Second Sort:** Each label/phrase was compared with other labels/phrases from within the same question stack. Further consolidation of thought stacks based on similar content was done as appropriate. One summary label/phrase was created to identify the combined stacks.
- **Audit:** The outside auditor read a sample of the question stacks and examined the coding system described above, verifying appropriateness of reduction of

thoughts and summarizing labels/phrases for each “thought stack” (see appendices C and D for a more in-depth description of this process) .

The following section describes in detail the findings for each question.

QUESTION #1: Elders are faced with many issues that come primarily from within a congregation and could be described as internal issues. What internal issues do you believe elders will contend with as leaders of congregations in the year 2010?

This question generated the second largest number of response cards. The 40 panelists wrote down over 340 responses. Because of considerable redundancy, the initial sort of these responses collapsed the cards to 39 thought stacks. The second sort succeeded in reducing the 39 to 27 thought stacks. These thought stacks are described below and identified by their summary label/phrase.

Accountability issues.

Elders will likely be faced with the issues related to accountability according to some panelists. Thoughts such as “accountability structures within the congregation” . . . “greater need for accountability, personal and corporate” . . . and, “how to manage the church’s various ministries so that its leaders are supported and held accountable” reflect respondent observations of this issue.

Authority of the Bible.

Many responses reflected thoughts among panelists that the inspiration and authority of scripture would be increasingly challenged in the year 2010. Panelists noted specifically as issues “authority of scripture” . . . “authority of Biblical text” . . .

“authority of the Bible” . . . and “holding firm to Biblical truth”.

Biblical illiteracy.

A number of panelists considered ignorance of scripture would be a primary internal issue facing elders in the year 2010. Responses suggested “Biblical literacy will be an increasing problem in our churches and elders will need to insure that teaching is taking place” . . . “congregations will increasingly be populated with members who have extremely limited Biblical knowledge” . . . “lack of Biblical knowledge” . . . and simply “Biblical illiteracy”.

Change.

Panelists indicated that elders would be faced with issues related to “change”. Thoughts varied in brevity including “change” . . . “how to lead people through the process of change” . . . and, “striking a balance between novelty and tradition”. One minister wrote at length that elders need to be

change agents. Elders must lead the church to refrain from its back pedaling mode, afraid of the change going on around it, and instead see itself as an agent of change in the community, influencing the world as salt and light rather than cloistering ourselves away with our heads in the sand. Only as the congregation see its elders leading as change agents will the church assume this role in society .

Commitment issues.

“People are growing less inclined to see the importance of church membership,” wrote one respondent. A number of responses reflected the view by many panelists that many individuals would no longer see commitment as important. Thoughts included “How can we encourage commitment? What do we really expect of our members?” . . .

“tendency away from ‘joining’--‘belonging’” . . . “what constitutes congregational membership” . . . “commitment of church members” . . . and, “faithfulness of members”.

Declining resources.

Resources including money, people, and buildings was noted by some panelists as a potential issues facing elders in the year 2010. Thoughts included “adequate financial resources” . . . “tightening finances” . . . “financial stewardship will become a greater challenge” . . . and, “resources available--building, finances, land, etc.” Several individuals expressed concern that there would be “fewer trained preachers” in the year 2010 and that many congregations would need to look to “non-professional” elders to serve as preachers instead.

Discipline issues.

Several panelists conjectured that elders will continue to be faced with issues related to discipline in congregations of the future. Statements included “the need for purity within the membership” . . . “elders will need to deal more with sin issues within the fellowship” . . . “confronting immorality and false teaching” . . . and “church discipline”. One faculty member summarized the concerns expressed by others that “legal issues will continue to be settled by lawsuit making church discipline very difficult”.

Diversity of backgrounds.

Many panelists pointed out that elders in the future will be faced with a growing diversity of backgrounds of individuals within congregations. Several responses illustrate

that issues such as “socio-cultural characteristics of the congregation” . . . “makeup of congregation-socio/economic background, ethnic diversity” . . . “changing attitudes toward multi-ethnic congregations” . . . “demographic of the congregation” . . . “multi-ethnic congregation/pluralism” . . . and “revolving congregations with all different levels of denominations presenting their ‘old’ backgrounds”.

Doctrinal issues.

Comments from respondents indicated elders will encounter various doctrinal issues in the year 2010. Statements such as “our people are weak in understanding the basic doctrines of the faith and the implications those doctrines have for faith and practice” . . . “Doctrinal apathy-many people assume it doesn’t really matter what anyone believes as long as they’re sincere” . . . “false doctrine-especially New Age philosophy” . . . “doctrinal/theological positions” . . . and “de-emphasis of Bible doctrine” illustrate the prominence of this issue in the minds of many panelists.

Entertainment mindset.

Panelists expressed concern that the consumer and entertainment mindset of individuals would impact the eldership in the year 2010. One individual noted “worship is increasingly confused with entertainment or self-help. Strong eldership will hold the line on this core element of the church’s identity.” Another respondent wrote that elders will be faced with “balancing entertainment versus meaningful worship.” One elder suggested that “competition of entertainment available and competition of other denominations to steal members through offering more entertaining type programs, gyms, bus trips, etc. that larger congregations can provide.”

Family life issues.

Responses indicated a considerable consensus among panelists that issues related to family life and breakdown of family structure would continue to be a significant concern for elders in the year 2010. Many comments were as brief as “divorce” . . . “single parent issues” . . . “blended families” . . . and “deterioration of marriages”. Other responses were more detailed such as “the structure of the family will have changed so much that the elder will need to rethink ministry to families” . . . “the family will continue to be redefined with single parent homes and other difficult realities . . . “the continuing collapse of the family with its attending consequences in group and individual life” . . . and “meeting the needs of divided families, blended families, divorces, etc.”

Financial stress.

Many individuals wrote that “increased poverty” and “stewardship/finance issues” would be an issue for elders to contend with in the year 2010. One faculty member wrote “finances: growing wealth of Christians is a distraction and temptation, lack of finances will tempt some to compromise beliefs and practices.” Another respondent stated “wisdom to be effective stewards of limited resources.”

Geriatric issues.

A number of respondents indicated that the “aging of America” would affect elders in the year 2010. Other panelists wrote “aging (reaching the senior adults)” . . . “with people living longer and better, leadership needs to draw on those skills and abilities more, for the sake of the church” . . . and, “caring for the elderly. As America ages, so will our congregations. Elders will need to pastorally care for senior members--

more than hand holding, but helping them to engage in meaningful ministry”.

Heritage issues.

Some respondents indicated that such issues as a “continuing decline in denominational loyalty” would impact the eldership in the year 2010. One faculty member wrote that elders would face “the benefits and liabilities of ever greater ignorance of historical roots in all churches: i.e. less zeal for denominations but also less awareness of Restoration Movement principles.” Another faculty member noted “exploring what it means to be a Restoration Movement church.” Still another faculty member wrote “the place of the Restoration Heritage within the larger realm of Christendom.”

Hungering for community.

Panelists noted that there will be “a sense of growing isolation” and a “general and pervasive restlessness” within many congregations. This will likely cause a desire and hungering for community according to several responses. Panelists stated that it will be important for elders “to think of the church as community rather than institution”. One minister cited community is a key issue. He stated

Ours is a society in centrifuge. We long for community and a sense of belonging. Churches must be led by people who recognize this need. Elders themselves must practice true community to a greater degree. Elders’ meetings must be more than another business meeting, but one relationally based, because the church as a whole must grow to become more relationally based.

Leadership development.

A lack of quality leadership and the need for leadership development was

considered a significant internal issue based on the number of responses from panelist in Round 1. Examples of responses include “equipping leadership from within” . . . “how to recruit, train and empower an ever-growing group of leaders” . . . makeup and quality of leadership in existence” . . . “the issue of lack of trained elders” . . . and “developing a quality leadership within the congregation”. One minister wrote concerning development of leaders for the year 2010

elders must be recruited, trained, and intentionally developed. Elders must be modeling to younger future leaders the tasks, skills, and character necessary to effectively lead. This should be done through the apprenticeship model. Young potentially future leaders are prayerfully targeted, and invited to observe, accompany, assist, and generally learn from experienced elders.

Member involvement.

Several panelists identified various aspects of getting people involved in the life of the congregation as an issue elders will be facing in the year 2010. Responses included “need to recognize, develop, and use the giftedness of all members” . . . “acknowledging, identifying and enabling people to carry out ministry that is gift-based” . . . “how to identify and use spiritual gifts in ministry” . . . “incorporation of new members into congregational ministry” . . . and, “integration of new believers who have no understanding of church culture”. One panelist wrote “in 2010, more than today, churches will not survive with casual ‘attendees’ who are not involved in ministry or otherwise in the life of the church. Elders will see their role to include helping people to find a place of belonging and service in the church.”

Morality issues.

Thoughts such as “greater number of individuals with amoral values or standards” and “lack of consensus on moral issues” were expressed by many panelists. Others stated “morality-as always” . . . “moral issues” . . . “shifting moral stances” . . . and, “holiness/life-styles issues. The church is beginning to look more and more like the world in terms of ethics and morality”. One writer stated simply “holiness of life (Christians are acting a lot like their non-Christian neighbors . . . how can we be distinct without being weird and irrelevant?).”

Professionalism.

A few respondents indicated that elders would be pressured by issues related to professionalism in the year 2010. One minister noted “tension of increased professionalism and lack of personal attention to individuals versus growing need for personal attention to spiritual problems of members of the congregation.” Another stated “high expectations of professionalism in music, sermons, worship experience.” A third individual wrote that elders would be faced with a “heightened pressure to make the church more ‘professional’ in all aspects.”

Role clarification.

Panelists expressed concern there would be confusion and redundancy in responsibilities of various leaders in congregations in the year 2010. Participants sometimes simply stated “roles of deacons” . . . “power and control issues” . . . “relationships of elders and pastors” . . . “governance (e.g., the roles of the minister, elders, deacons, committees, other groups)” . . . and “roles of elders and pastors”. One

minister wrote at some length that “clarifying the relationship with pastoral staff is an ongoing source of confusion and conflict for many churches. Are they teammates or adversaries? Is the minister a leader among equals or a hired hand?”. Another response indicated that “too often the decision-making process in the church will be confused: who decides what? How? When? There will continue to be unnecessary overlap due to confusion of roles”.

Subjectivism.

Panelists raised the subject of subjectivism as a primarily negative issue that elders would likely face in the year 2010. Comments included “dealing with the extreme subjectivism of the culture, i.e., ‘I feel, therefore I am’” . . . “moving people from their ‘felt needs’ to dealing with their real needs” . . . “more ‘individualism’ from members” . . . and, “inward focus-‘take care of me’”.

Tension in focus.

Some respondents identified tension in the focus and direction of the church as being an issue that elders would experience in the year 2010. Thoughts typically included such comments as “tension between designing church for saved or seeker” . . . “focused programming that is for believers and seekers” . . . “the push to be a mega-church or seeker-church or to have the programs of a super-church” . . . and, “tension between maintenance-oriented people verses mission-oriented people”. One minister wrote adamantly “we must get over the ‘maintenance of the church’ as the goal and see the church as the training ground for reaching out to the real scene of Jesus’ ministry, beyond the walls and into the world.”

Unity.

A major issue that will face elders from within congregations in the year 2010 according to several panelists will be unity, especially in the face of diversity and pluralism. Many respondents simply stated “unity” . . . “preserving unity” . . . “lack of concern over failure of fellowship and unity” . . . and “unity of direction”. One minister wrote at length stating

as pluralism and cultural diversity continue to leave their mark on our communities, the church will be increasingly populated with people from incredibly disparate backgrounds, educational levels, race, etc. . . Elders will need to lead the way for unity at the local church level, exercising a Christ-like tolerance at times, and a Christ-like firmness at other times.

Vision/mission.

Close to 50 percent of the panelists identified some aspect of the vision or mission of the church as being a significant internal issue that elders will be faced with in congregations in the year 2010. Common thoughts shared by many include “agreeing on an articulation of purpose of the church” . . . “how to create an environment where people dream great dreams for God” . . . “need for clear, commonly held, Biblically based vision of nature of the church, i.e. who they are to be as the body of Christ” . . . “membership losing focus of purpose for the church” . . . and “how to unite a church around a common vision of growth”. One minister wrote that in the year 2010 there will be a need for “visionary church leadership. Elders need to see themselves as being part of a missionary planning team, willing to strategize and plan for the growth of the church into the future. Day to day maintenance must be replaced with visionary dreaming”.

Women's roles.

Many panelists noted the role of women in various positions will continue to be a major internal issue that elders will struggle with in the year 2010. Almost 40 percent of the respondents identified this as a significant internal issue for the future church.

Responses included “women as elders, preachers, teachers, etc.” . . . “persistent question of whether women may serve according to their giftedness” . . . “identifying legitimate place of ministry for women” . . . “the challenge of involving women in leadership roles” . . . and “roles of women in leadership”.

Worship style issues.

Responses were generated concerning worship style issues. Many individuals simply stated “changes in worship styles” or “styles of worship.” Other were more specific and stated such things as “contemporary music verses hymns” . . . “worship styles and musical preferences” . . . and, “the increasing multiplicity of options, styles, etc., as well as trying to be all things to all people”. One minister wrote with some alarm “the tendency toward shallow, entertaining corporate worship.”

QUESTION #2: Congregations do not exist in a vacuum. Elders contend with many factors and issues that come from the world outside a congregation. What external issues do you believe elders will face as leaders of congregations in the year 2010?

Almost 300 response cards were generated from this question. The first round compiling reduced this number to 24 thought stacks. The second sort resulted in a total of 17 thought stacks. Each of these stacks is identified below with a summary label/phrase.

Christian schools.

There were several comments made about schools and the potential effect that this issue may have on the eldership in the year 2010. One minister wrote “Christian education versus public education up through high school-the church’s role.” A writer stated simply “the Christian school, pre-school, and home school movements.” One elder wrote “church/state issues-government funded-church schools.” A second minister noted “public school education. How much should we support it?”

Community needs.

Several respondents predicted that elders in the year 2010 would be faced with a number of external issues that dealt with community needs. For example, one writer noted the importance of “the ministry of the church beyond its walls, in community service and in areas we’ve in recent years looked to the government to be responsible for.” Other panelists stated elders will be faced with “homelessness” . . . “unemployment” . . . “dealing with social outcasts (homeless, mentally ill, etc.) that were taken care of by government but now are not” . . . “increased pressure to assume some social services (child care, elderly)” . . . “working with community concerns and issues” . . . and the question “How can church serve community as a ‘servant church’?”.

Consumerism/materialism.

Responses indicated early consensus among panelists regarding this issue facing congregations in the year 2010. Thoughts included “church shopping with a focus on having needs met” . . . “persistent consumer mindedness of unchurched or transitional church people in selecting a church” . . . “the demands of the ‘consumer’ for more and

more technical ‘helps’ in worship and ministry” . . . “the endless pursuit of pleasure and personal gain” . . . and, “consumerism, entertain them or lose them”.

Declining resources.

Panelists identified several external issues related to an anticipated general decline in resources in America. Some responses simply stated “declining economy” . . . “difficulty in survival of the small church” . . . “cost of operation-threat to small churches” . . . “fewer qualified candidates for paid ministry roles” . . . and, “competition with other churches for resources: land, ministers, and people”. One writer predicted that “many small churches may have to merge or look to laymen to serve as preachers. This will be caused by rising salary needs and fewer young men entering the ministry.”

Family breakdown.

Responses were generated by panelists noting that continued collapse of the traditional family will be an issue that elders will deal with in the year 2010. Many responses simply stated “breakdown of families in society” or “continued break down of the family.” Others wrote more specifically such as “divided and blended families with each parent having a different religious faith and value system” . . . “a continuing redefinition of the family by society in America” . . . “the increase of divorce and single parent families” . . . and, “the erosion of family units”. One writer observed that the breakdown in families will create a “demand for specialized ministries.”

Fragmentation of society.

A number of respondents stated that “fragmentation of society into interest

groups” and “a move toward Bohemization of America and all the backlash this ethnic fragmentation could entail” will be major external issues for elders in the year 2010.

Gender issues.

There were a many responses dealing with internal issue of the roles of women as leaders. There were also several panelists who indicated that pressure from society would continue to be exerted on congregations to encourage women to function as leaders. Sometimes panelists simply wrote “women’s issues” or “dealing with issues of a woman’s role in the local church”. One respondent wrote that an external issue facing elders would be “broader societal acceptance of women in leadership and expecting the same in the church.” One faculty member noted rather negatively and strongly “other minor issues will occupy a lot of time and energy in the future including women’s role in the church, style of worship, etc. Satan loves for us to get bogged down in such Christian pulp. These should be given no more time than they are worth.”

Mission strategies.

A number of respondents indicated that thoughts related to the church’s mission in the world was an external issue. Some noted that by the year 2010 “the majority of the world’s missionary force will be non-western” and that “non-western missionaries will be more common in the west to re-evangelize western cities.” Another respondent stated elders would have to deal with “local church strategies concerning evangelism.” A minister wrote “only as we see ourselves connected to the mission of Christ worldwide will we be faithful to our calling. Elders must hold local congregations accountable here.”

Persecution/hostility.

Panelists suggested that Christians would experience increasingly hostile attitudes from the world around them. Many panelists felt that Christians might openly be persecuted and their leaders prime targets of persecution. Responses reflected a fairly wide range of hostility. Additionally panelists suggested that elders as leaders would need to contend with “oppression from certain segments of society” . . . “being the church in a post-Christian nation” . . . “social ostracism as ‘radicals’. Being Christians no longer the ‘in’ thing. Cultural alienation” . . . “a public school system hostile to the Christian faith” . . . and “a growing anti-Christian influence in the culture”. One elder stated that “elders will need to protect the congregation from increasing anti-Christian influence”. A faculty respondent wrote “it is possible that by 2010 American Christianity will be openly persecuted and its leaders (elders) will be the main persecution targets”. One minister considered persecution an opportunity for the church to stand out. He wrote that elders would need to

see the church as a counter-cultural community. The church is often anemic when it believes it has a prominent place in the culture. But when it senses that it is unwelcome in the arenas of power, influence, and leadership, however, as it increasingly will be as we move toward 2010, the church is forced to carve out its identity and rediscover what it believes and stands for. Elders must lead the way in this. We must prepare for living in an unchurched culture, with local congregations being places where the faithful can live together as a peculiar people, a counter-cultural people in a society that will grow toward persecution of Christianity.

Pluralism/cultural diversity.

Panelists were very expressive concerning the need for elders in the year 2010 to be aware of the potential impact of pluralism and cultural diversity as the world continues

to “get smaller”. Statements typically were short and to the point such as “pluralism- especially ‘New Age’/Eastern Mysticism thinking” . . . “persistent cultural pluralism that doesn’t favor the church” . . . “Christians in relation to American Buddhists, Hindus, Muslim-pluralism of society” . . . “influence of cultural religions” . . . “Islam will be the fastest growing religion in the US” . . . and “acknowledging John 14:6 in a pluralistic age”.

Political activism.

Several panelists wrote that elders will be faced with issues related to political activism in the year 2010. Such comments included “political activism: how far is too far?” . . . “keeping the church from becoming politically aligned” . . . “the results of political right and left views” . . . and, “keeping the balance: the temptation to become a ‘political movement’”. One faculty member wrote at length that in the year 2010

elders must overcome the tendency and strong encouragement of others to encounter social issues by focusing the energies of the church on becoming a political power block. We must always keep in mind that ours is a spiritual battle and not a political one. This is not to say that we Christians should not be politically and socially involved. It is to say that all of that involvement will be meaningless unless we lead people to Christ.

Relativism/post-modernity.

Panelists indicated that post-modernism and relativism will be prominent external issues facing elders in the year 2010. Respondents thoughts included “post-modernism” . . . “Christianity in a post-Christian world” . . . “a postmodern reading of the Bible” . . . “general apathy for the church” . . . “dismissal of the church as relevant” . . . and, “morality that is situationally pragmatic”. One writer suggested that “the issues of post-

modernity, relativism, and pluralism will have wrought havoc on the church leaving large sections as nominal and weak.”

Role of technology.

Several comments were made by panelists regarding the issue of technology in the year 2010. A few of the respondents seemed to voice concern, stating “technology-people will lose interpersonal skills in a society which is electronic” and “the illusion of technology-how to minister in the age of technology and maintain a personal sensitivity.”

Social issues.

Responses indicated the panelists’ concerns for a variety of issues which were simply grouped together under one stack labeled “social issues”. A faculty panelist summarized the overarching issue stating that elders will be faced with “articulating for the congregation and implementing appropriate stances toward social problems that either the church will become isolated from or the church will be consumed by”. The individual issues identified were as follows: “abortion and all that relates to it” . . . “ethical issues related to euthanasia, abortion, and medical technology” . . . “euthanasia” . . . “AIDS and related STD’s” . . . “homosexuality-this issue isn’t going to go away” . . . “drug abuse” . . . “alcoholism” . . . and the “spread of pornography”.

Spirituality issues.

A number of panelists wrote about various issues related to spirituality. Typical comments included “renewed spiritual sensitivity of general population with threats and opportunities” or “staying sensitive to their spiritual needs and life situations.” One

panelist wrote at length stating

the life searches of contemporary people. If we continue as we are, by 2010 I fear we will be speaking to questions no one is asking. People are grasping for true spirituality, hope, and meaning. Many have given up on the traditional institutional church for one reason or another. Elders must lead churches to speak to those needs and yet not throw out its tie with the traditional church of history. We must address the life searches of people.

Taxation issues.

Many respondents indicated that issues related to taxes and tax exemptions would be a factor facing elders in the year 2010. Several noted that tax breaks would likely end in the near future. Thoughts included “government removal of clergy tax benefits/breaks” . . . city and county governments trying to eliminate the ‘exempt’ status that churches now enjoy” . . . and, “legal issues: no tax breaks”. One elder wrote “the church will be faced with local, state and federal governments imposing standards for the church to accept such as homosexual rights, tax and tax exempt status, education, and discrimination.” A writer stated that “decreased political support for churches will likely be experienced in the west. The privileged legal status that churches and parachurch organizations have enjoyed in the past may be gone. Such issues as tax breaks, etc.”

Violence.

A few panelists identified elements of violence that would likely be faced by elders in the year 2010. Thoughts ranged from “wars” to “terrible chaos and violence in urban areas that require attention by the church” to “explosive racial/ethnic/class tensions.”

QUESTION #3: What specific responsibilities and characteristics do you believe will be important for an elder to have in the year 2010?

This question generated the greatest number of responses with over 370 response cards generated by panelists. The first sort reduced the number of cards to 34 thought stacks. The second sort resulted in the final number of 23 thought stacks listed below by summary label/phrase.

Biblically informed.

A large number of duplicate thought cards were identified by panelists dealing with the importance for elders to be well-informed Biblically. Typical responses included “a solid working knowledge of scripture, theology, doctrine, polity” . . . “Biblically informed and able to communicate the faith” . . . “growing knowledge of scripture” . . . and, “focus on centrality of Bible and its teaching for the Christian, church and world”.

Conflict resolution/unity.

Panelists indicated that elders in the year 2010 will need to be skillful in conflict resolution and management. Respondents stated elders will need to have “excellent skills in conflict resolution and team building to enable harmony and unity in the midst of growing diversity” . . . “an understanding of conflict management and some skills in resolving conflict” . . . “readiness to confront divisiveness in love” . . . and “new levels of commitment for resolving conflict so the body can model Christian harmony and unity.”

Cultural awareness.

Elders will need to have “an awareness of the local, national, and world

environment in which the church must accomplish its mission,” stated one writer.

Another writer noted that an effective elder will “be a student of his culture, being certain his church is not swallowed up by prevailing secularism on the one hand nor retreating into monasticism on the other.” A third writer stated that elders simply need to be “informed-up with contemporary issues.”

Defend/guard.

Several respondents identified a primary responsibility of elders in the year 2010 to be protecting and guarding the congregation. The following thoughts best summarize this role as elders of the future will be responsible to: “guard the doctrinal integrity of the congregation” . . . “defend the faith” . . . and “act as guardians, protecting the church from self-seeking individuals and from false doctrine”.

Developing community spirit.

Several responses from panelists indicated the importance they felt that elders should develop community spirit. Thoughts indicated by panelists included “developing community” . . . “keeping the church from institutionalism” . . . “creating dynamic organizational structures (rather than static)” . . . and, “recognizing the church as a living organism, family fellowship”. One writer addressed this issue rather eloquently stating elders need to

function as a “grandfather” for the family of God. His role is primarily relational rather than official. In view of the continuing collapse of family, the elder will want to see himself as a “family” man in the church, caring more about the general welfare of his “children and grandchildren” than about policies and programs.

Discerning.

In the year 2010 elders will need to “be wise to discern what can change and what cannot” wrote one panelist. Other panelists stated “discernment in dealing with real needs verses contrived needs” and “ability to distinguish essentials from non-essentials.” Several other suggested that wisdom was an important criteria in the ability to make good decisions. One respondent simply wrote “discernment.”

Disciplinarian.

Some panelists wrote about the importance of elders being responsible for disciplining those in the congregation who were in error. Responses were fairly similar such as “redemptive discipline” . . . “a commitment to Biblical doctrine and Christian moral behavior including corrective discipline” . . . “discipline issues. Either elders face this or they will lose credibility” . . . and “elders are responsible for correcting, reproofing, and rebuking to keep the people on target when they stray”.

Flexible/creative.

Panelists expressed responses identifying flexibility and creativity as important characteristics for elders to have in the year 2010. Comments from panelists included “creativity” . . . “ability to not get too mundane” . . . “open to change, flexible” . . . and, “openness to seekers, to doing new and non-traditional things.” One faculty member wrote that elders need “flexibility in adapting structures and programs to serve the mission and spirit of Christ in changing times.” An elder suggested that elders need to have “an open mind to change. The ability to not be afraid to try new ideas without losing the real message of Christ to build a bond of love among church members.”

Gift discernment.

Several response cards indicated the thought among panelists that elders will need to be able to discern giftedness both in themselves and in others. For example, panelists stated elders will need to have “knowledge of Spiritual giftedness - personality strengths and weaknesses” . . . “knowledge and use of one’s spiritual giftedness” and “discernment of giftedness of all members (including elders and staff) and nurture growth and faithfulness in exercising gifts”.

Healthy marriages/stable family.

Responses from panelists indicated the importance that elders have healthy marriages and stable families. Many respondents linked the importance for elders to set an example of healthy marriages due to the issue described above in question one that reflects the deteriorating state of marriages and families in churches. Panelist wrote that elders should be characterized by “healthy marriages” . . . exemplary home life-loving marriage and disciplined Godly children” . . . “stable families” . . . “a solid family life exhibiting mutual respect” . . . “ability to strengthen the marriages and families of others” . . . “family man, exhibiting love for wife and children” . . . and “responsible to his own family as well as the church family”.

Interpersonal/relational/communication skills.

Panelists suggested elders in the year 2010 will need to be very good at being able to relate to other people as well as encouraging other to interrelate well with each other. Common thoughts that were stated included “people skills” . . . “able to work with people in productive ways-interpersonal skills” . . . “ability to relate to a variety of age groups” . .

. . . and “people skills of listening, encouragement, and edification”. One minister wrote in some depth that elders will need to have “the ability to work intergenerationally. Too many churches are locked up in war between the oldsters and the youngsters. Elders need to be able to work across the mythical generation gap in order to lead the church forward.”

Learning-centered attitude/actions.

According to many panelists, elders will be committed to continual learning both for their own sakes and as examples for others. Responses indicate that Elders will need to “show evidence of personal spiritual development” . . . “be a spiritual person, growing as a Christian” . . . “be a learner” . . . exhibit an “unyielding commitment to learning about God, self, the needs of the world, scripture, etc.” . . . “have a willingness to learn; including making mistakes”. In addition, panelists noted that elders will “be responsible for Spiritual pace-setting, guiding, modeling by example, encouraging with sound doctrine” . . . “be models and mentors for younger, potential leaders” . . . “take seriously his role as teacher, either in a classroom or through the apprenticeship model” . . . “be able to teach - maybe not formally always but significantly” . . . “disciple” . . . and “have the ability to be a role model”.

Mission minded.

A significant number of panelists identified aspects of mission mindedness as being an important characteristic for elders to have in the year 2010. Examples of responses include “elders need to have a desire to see the Gospel spread to all parts of the world” . . . an elder will seek ways to help his church make a positive impact on the

community” . . . “missions oriented” . . . and “vision for mission, evangelism.” One respondent stated that elders must be

missionary minded. An elder who wants a post, a position, an office, or a title is of no use to the church. We must be led by leaders who see the urgency of the task at hand, and who are committed not only to the worldwide mission of Christ in the world, but who seek the task at hand locally as a mission work in which we are engaged.

Moral/ethical integrity.

Elders should be characterized by moral integrity. This one characteristic received a considerable number of responses from panelists indicating that it would probably have a high level of consensus within the group as a whole. Typical thoughts included “integrity (honesty, morality)” . . . “integrity and character” . . . “remain consistent in faith and actions” . . . “impeccable moral character” . . . “she/he will have to be a person of character” . . . and, “personal integrity in the Christian walk (reputation).” One individual included why he believed integrity was so important when he wrote “elders will need integrity because of the place of the church in today’s culture, it is crucial that its leaders be people of integrity, genuinely devoted to Christ in all respects of life.”

Oversight.

“Oversight” was one of the responsibilities identified by a number of respondents on Round 1. Panelists wrote that elders should have “management skills and experience” . . . “delegation, supervision, and oversight” . . . “ability to set policy and delegate details” . . . and “responsible for general oversight , managing, looking after the church, directing its affairs.” Several panelists cautioned against too much oversight noting that the

effective elder “will not micromanage the church. He’ll turn to staff leadership as the natural way to lead the church, with himself in a supportive role (in terms of the programmatic operation of the church).”

Pastoring/caregiving.

Elders will need to be characterized by “compassion” noted many panelists. Elders should have “compassion and empathy” . . . “pastoral sensitivity” . . .”kind” . . . and “caring”. One elder wrote that elders should “share and display the love of God” . . . having the “ability to care and express that caring.”

Prayerful.

According to many panelists, elders need to be characterized by prayer-filled lives. Many responses simply stated “prayer” or “person of prayer.” One elder wrote that elders in the year 2010 should have a “strong prayer life - being in touch with God on an individual basis.” A faculty member wrote “prayer without ceasing.”

Relationship to Christ.

Respondents wrote elders will need to have a very significant relationship to Christ to be effective as leaders of His church. Typical responses include “a deep personal spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ” . . . “a very strong personal relation to Christ that clearly defines one’s place in life” . . . and “a steadfast faith in the Risen Lord - believing each day that He alone saves.”

Restoration heritage.

Several panelists identified the need for elders to be “knowledgeable of Restoration Principles.” Responses included “commitment to Stone/Campbell movement principles” and “to be well-informed and knowledgeable about our own religious heritage (Campbell/Stone-Christian Churches, Churches of Christ, Disciples of Christ).”

Scriptural characteristics.

A variety of responses either directly identified passages of scripture or quoted from Biblical texts. It could almost be assumed based on the number of responses that consensus on the importance of scriptural characteristics would be inevitable. A number of panelists simply stated “1 Timothy 3 & Titus 1” . . . or “1 Timothy 3 and 1 Peter 5”. Another wrote “the characteristics of character will never change from Paul’s description.” Many respondents listed individual characteristics such as “humble” . . . “humility that sees eldership as service and not power control” . . . “gentle spirits” . . . “self-controlled” . . . and “ hospitable”.

Spirit-led.

It will be important, according to several panelists, that an elder in the year 2010 be a “spiritual leader filled with the Holy Spirit.” Responses included “sensitivity to the Spirit’s leading” . . . “open to the Holy Spirit leading” . . . and “elders must become spiritual leaders, Holy Spirit filled and Holy Spirit led.”

Team player.

The idea that elders in the year 2010 should be “team players” was noted by many

panelists under several different questions of Round 1. Respondents made comments such as “elders should have a willingness to share leadership with others” . . . “know how to work as a team” . . . “ability to work well with other in moving toward a goal” . . . and, “able to work with a variety of ‘specialists’ in church work.” One minister wrote at length stating

Team players: We spin our wheels if elders aren’t truly interested in moving a congregation ahead as a group. Fragile egos, angry spirits, and irrationally negative attitudes certainly have a place in the church-but not in leadership. There is too much at stake to entertain them there. They need to be ministered to, not followed. Also, team players will wisely choose a minister they believe they can rally behind.

Visionary/strategist.

Responses reflected the early consensus among the panelists that elders should be heavily involved in planning, strategizing and creating vision for the congregation of the year 2010. Respondents noted that elders will be responsible for “vision -casting it, defining it and communicating it” . . . “strategic planning including honoring the church’s unique identity and values” . . . “long-range vision. Most elders today do not look beyond next week” . . . and “developing a vision for what the congregation can do at its location and in its community in 2010. One writer nicely encapsulated the general thoughts of other panelists stating

elders serve as the “eyes” of the body, helping it to see where it is and where it must go. They create and maintain a vital commitment to a clear and widely-owned purpose-stating, restating, reminding, and clarifying it. They keep the vision lucid, point the way, guide, motivate, challenge, inspire, instruct, enable the people to function well together.

QUESTION #4: Elders in a congregation have worked together in many ways over the

centuries. For example, at times elders have been very team oriented and at other times have been more individualistic, with a strong top-down structure. Please describe what you believe to be the most appropriate organizing structure for the eldership for congregations in the year 2010.

Question four resulted in the development of 100 response cards. These cards were sorted into 8 thought stacks. A second sorting resulted in 4 thought stacks labeled as follows:

Giftedness.

Several panelists identified the notion that elders should be gifted in certain aspects of leadership. Comments by respondents included “leadership skills and personalities will always vary within the group of elders, but each elder brings his unique gift to the table to form a group consensus in all decisions” . . . “the ideal structure is a team in balance with each individual leader possessing different gifts, strengths, etc.” . . . and “church elders in the year 2010 should work together as a team with shared responsibility. God has given each gift for the building up of the body.” One faculty member wrote

the Spirit of Leadership . . . “Body” model of interdependence, recognizing the character of Christ as common “DNA” with unique giftedness and role of each. Leaders have authority to lead, based on their giftedness, but never to lord-over. They are of no greater worth though their corporate voice, affirmed by the body, does have more weight.

Identified leader.

In addressing the structure of eldership, many panelists stated that there needed to be some type of leader over the other elders. One elder noted “the structure of eldership

should have a clearly defined chair or president and other officer roles who serve the rest of the group by modeling, coordinating, organizing, facilitating, so the whole eldership fulfills its identified mission.” Another panelist simply stated “I think the elders will work better with a chairman as appointed to a committee.” A minister wrote in detail that

without a doubt, they must be a closely-knit team; a plurality of guys who have a common mind. They must know and respect each other personally. They will need a leader among them who can give practical direction to their team-ministry (someone to bring them together and guide their dialogue) but he must not dominate. Open discussion must be the process that results in a common mind.

Situational structure.

Many panelists indicated they believed there would not be any one organizing structure that would be appropriate to all congregations in the year 2010. Rather, these panelists tended to suggest that the most appropriate structure would be situationally based. One faculty member nicely summarized what many other panelists worded,

the most appropriate organizing structure for the eldership would be one grounded in Biblical norms. I’m convinced there is not a single structure that is more Biblical than others. Individual contexts would change the appearance from congregation to congregation. Prayer, fasting, study, and lots of counsel would be the starting point for discerning the most effective structure in a given local church.

Another faculty member stated “I do not know what the most appropriate structure is. Since the church is a body, it is a living organism. Therefore, while there is a basic structure of elders as leaders, there must be opportunity for that body to function as it best can at a particular time. That may dictate a variety of responses due to circumstances”. One elder wrote “I believe congregations in 2010 will be like those today, in that current circumstances lead churches to adopt a variety of organizing structures to address their needs. Between theological posture and local context, its hard to identify one overarching

‘most appropriate’ structure”.

Team approach.

Responses reflected early consensus among panelists that the most effective structure for the eldership was one that took a team approach. The following statements of respondents summarized the intent of most of the group. One writer wrote “community and team is the way of the future . . . and has solid Biblical backing. “ Another writer suggested “no elder should insist upon having the final word or upon having his opinion dominate decision making. Each one should listen to the view of all of the others. In every decision, the conclusion should be one of consensus. The only exception should be in the case of any departure from Biblical absolutes.” A minister stated

A cooperative, mutually submissive relationship would be the most effective structure for the eldership. The work of Christ should be led by those who seek to submit to Him and to prize one another. No elder has all the insight, experience and giftedness necessary to provide leadership and protection for an entire congregation. The plurality of elders as seen in the New Testament offers security and stability to the local body.

QUESTION #5: Think about a congregation in the year 2010 that you believe will be effective at carrying out its mission. What will the relationship between elders and minister(s) look like that you anticipate will be necessary to allow this congregation to exist successfully? Identify as many characteristics as possible.

The narrative responses for this question resulted in 159 response cards which were initially sorted into 14 thought stacks. The final number of thought stacks after the second sorting was 8 and were identified with the following summary labels/phrases.

Minister as elder.

Panelists suggested that having the minister be an elder would be an important characteristic of the eldership that would help a congregation be more effective. Responses included “minister will function as one of the elders. Authority minimized, ministry defined more as service” . . . “those ministers who meet the Biblical qualifications of elders should be empowered to serve as one (1 Timothy 5:17, 18)” . . . “the senior minister should report to the elders and probably should be an elder” . . . “ministers need to begin functioning as paid elders, joining arms with elders rather than fighting them” . . . and, “elders need to accept the minister as a fellow elder, rather than seeing him as an employee to be supervised.”

Minister as leader.

Respondents noted that it would be important in the year 2010 that the senior minister be the primary leader of the congregation in addition to being an elder. It is probably noteworthy that no panelists from the elder group mentioned this thought. Responses from writers, ministers and faculty included “I think ideally the preacher should be seen as ‘first among equals’-a primary leader” . . . “the minister, when feasible, should be seen to function as an elder, as first among equals, with special responsibilities and leadership obligations” . . . “the senior minister needs to be an elder and as such will be a leader among leaders” . . . and “the minister as primary leader and visionary”. One writer predicted “some churches will move toward minister as CEO, the role of Elders will diminish to business issues, then the minister will fail due to lack of accountability and participation of the whole congregation”.

Mutual accountability.

Over 25% of the panelists brought up accountability as a primary need in the relationship between elders and minister(s). Comments included “those churches that I am aware of that I believe will be most effective at carrying out God’s mission in that place will be marked by mutual accountability. Loving accountability” . . . “accountability both ways -- minister to elder and vice versa!” . . . “accountability for spiritual character” . . . and simply “mutual accountability.”

Role clarification.

The issue of role clarification came up in several areas but was of particular concern when addressing the relationship between elders and minister(s). Many respondents clearly identified the importance of considering this issue in order to have a congregation that would be effective at carrying out its mission in the year 2010. They stated “the relationship requires clarity of roles and expectations” . . . “a solid understanding and accountability for divisions in responsibilities will need to develop” . . . “there must be freedom for specialization so that elders and ministers don’t have the same ‘job description’” . . . and simply “acceptance of roles and responsibilities”.

Serving the community.

Several panelists listed issues dealing with serving the community under question 5. There were enough responses in this area to warrant not moving it to the similar stack in question 2. Responses ranged from “concerned about needs in community” . . . and “the congregation must live its concern for the community in which it lives” to “as time goes by and culture becomes less ‘Christian’, much greater need to be servants to people.

Good ministers and elders will be less CEOs and more models of loving actions.”

Shared vision/mission.

Panelists identified the importance that ministers and elders should work together identifying a shared vision for the congregation. Responses came from all four groups of participants noting “the relationship between elders and ministers will be one where they are of the same mind and purpose, working together to encourage leaders in the church so that the church will fulfill the stated mission” . . . “elders and ministers will need to share goals and hold in common priorities” . . . “elders and ministers must be able to lead the congregation in its mission” . . . and “both must have the same goals in mind and agree on the same path for reaching these goals”.

Team mentality.

Over 75% of the respondents identified some aspect of teamwork between elders and minister(s) as being important in allowing a congregation to be effective. This early consensus among the group identified teaming as a major factor revealed in this study. Some comments were as simple as “team mentality” or “teamwork”. Other, however, were more detailed. One elder wrote “for a growing congregation to thrive, elders must be active team players alongside the staff members. The eldership cannot act like a school board in function and expect the church to grow.” Another elder wrote “I believe ministers and elders must get together and as a team, set the course they will follow to bring Christ best to the local area.” Thoughts from ministers included “no ‘boss-hireling’ arrangement where either party (elders or minister(s)) assume preeminence. Teamwork toward the purpose and mission” . . . “there needs to be an attitude of team work and

harmony rather than an adversarial one” . . . and “I believe ministers and elders should work in a collegial relationship together.” Comments from writers reflected that “elders must see themselves as a team with the staff. Decision must be made by consensus. We must break through the ‘we-they’ mindset that kills progress” . . . “on a day by day basis, the elders and minister(s) are a team working together in harmony” . . . and “first, team comes to mind. It is not, and cannot be the successful congregation which has elders and the Minister(s) on different pages. It cannot be a ‘lone ranger’ mentality, either.” Faculty were equally vocal. One faculty member suggested that ministers and elders “should work together as a team with a shared vision. The relationship should not be adversarial, nor should it be employee-employer. Rather the minister and elders should be colleagues.” Another faculty member wrote emphatically “elders and pastors are equals, the ‘ministers’ being paid pastors. Therefore, there is a team relationship between these leaders. If the non-paid elders’ work weeks increase in hours the pastors will take on a greater role in the day-to-day functions and operating of the congregation’s ministries.”

Trust/mutual respect.

This thought stack included over 25 response cards out of 40 respondents. Many panelists suggested the relationship between minister(s) and elders should be characterized by “mutual respect, love and support” . . . “trust, partnership, obedience to the same Lord, a mature spirituality, a spirit of forgiveness” . . . “mutual appreciation and encouragement - it is always Christian and right” . . . and “strong Biblical principles such as trust, love, caring, concern and genuine desire to see the Gospel taken to the world.” One minister wrote “ministers need ongoing support and encouragement. Some system

or network of support that works must be set in place, and all elders should see it as their responsibility. Elders need the same support and encouragement from ministers.”

QUESTION #6: In what ways might individuals be prepared and equipped as elders to handle the anticipated issues, responsibilities and characteristics you have identified in the previous questions?

There were 164 cards in response to question six. The first stage of sorting resulted in 21 thought stacks which were further reduced in the second sort to five thought stacks.

Accountability.

Similar to responses in question 5, several panelists advised that some type of accountability system would help in elder development. One minister noted “1-to-1 accountability helps people in their daily struggles with sin, integrity, pride, etc.” A writer suggested “accountability - openness to being mentored and mentoring others.” An other minister wrote to the point “accountability system that works.”

Lifelong development.

Participants noted that one of the best ways to prepare an individual to be an effective elder is to do so intentionally, consistently and as early as possible in the life of a person. One elder stated “the church must intentionally seek out those who show the qualities of pastoring required by elders.” A minister wrote

I would like to see orientation sessions or training seminars given to those interested in future church leadership (as elder, deacon, or other roles). Sunday School classes need constantly to imply that an implicit goal of the curriculum and programming from youth on up is to prepare members to become church leaders,

elders, and ministers.

The responses of a number of participants reflected that “elders must see themselves as involved in a lifelong quest for improvement and growth” . . . “the church’s education and programs of nurture should be designed to turn out leaders who are biblically informed, spiritually mature, people-sensitive, and concerned for Christ’s mission in the world” . . . “leaders must be mentored from conversion, then get away from popularity contest and choosing leaders based on secular positioning (having a banker, corporate leader, dignitary, etc., just because it looks good to have this person on the board)” . . . and “start teaching at a young age the role, responsibilities, and characteristics of a real biblical eldership”.

Mentoring.

Participants identified mentoring or similar words as a primary method for preparing elders. Panelists wrote “mentoring - effective elders need to take younger men ‘under their wings’ and develop them over time” . . . “mentoring is a proven training process. Ministers and experienced elders are potential candidates for the mentor role” . . . “preparation might include mentoring promising young men in the congregation to lead them to mature faith” . . . “the best methodology is found in one spiritually mature man mentoring another man” . . . and “the Lord will continue to work through existing leaders to mentor others. The range of instruction that has been used over the last 2500 years is not likely to be lost in the next fifteen”. One minister summarized

Elderships need to take more responsibility for leadership development. We have too often abrogated this serious responsibility by deferring to some weak process of nomination. The elders need to play the lead in developing elders-who else is supposed to do it? It’s basic discipleship!

Seminar/continuing education.

Panelists specifically identified seminars and workshops as a means of encouraging elder development and growth. Responses from all four groups included “when possible, elders should attend college/seminary continuing education or seminar classes that are offered” . . . “I think our Bible colleges are going to have to conduct more teaching arms as one night seminars and weekend retreats of elders to promote a common direction” . . . “maybe seminars provided by colleges and available with 2 or 3 professors as presenters for area assemblies of elders” . . . and simply, “attend a host of seminars on these themes.”

Spiritual formation.

One panelist wrote “key training which cannot be produced or arranged is hunger for God, spirituality - filled with the Holy Spirit and a passion for Jesus and the lost.” One writer noted wistfully about the year 2010, “hopefully there will be an understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in leadership development that will have emerged and been accepted before that time.” A third panelist stated that elders should have “a balance between the issues of spiritual formation, cognitive development, skill development, ministry experience and reflection.”

QUESTION #7: What changes do you believe need to occur in how congregations function on a day to day basis in order to allow the eldership to effectively lead in the year 2010?

Comments of panelists to this question resulted in 110 response cards. Initially, these cards were compiled into 19 thought stacks. The final sorting resulted in 10 thought

stacks as listed below.

Body life/ministry team.

Responses indicated that many panelists believe elders can function more effectively if the congregation is treated as an “organism” rather than a “corporation.” Several respondents noted specifically that this was a more biblical model of the church. Panelists wrote “everyone needs to accept the view of the church as the ‘body of Christ’ and start functioning” . . . “the church is a family, a patriarchal community, and a flock. Its purpose for existing is the Great Commission. . . . the structure must be geared to soul-winning and edification. This can be done through ministry teams with elders as shepherds/ministers leading each team” . . . and “Elders need to see themselves as ministers, not as board members or office holders. They should serve on the eldership as leading ministers (albeit non-paid) in their areas of service”. One elder wrote

the biblical plan is for each member of the congregation to use his/her talents to further the work and all members working together form a complete body. Somehow (this is the tough part!) we must figure out a way to get more people involved. If paid workers really are going to be harder to find then a more full body approach will be critical.

A minister stated “looking to the New Testament ideal it is obvious that many congregations fall far short in their basic understanding of the essential nature of the church. Men equipped to lead the body of Christ, the family of God, the ‘sheep of His pasture’ may be totally unable to lead the emerging ‘mega-institution’.” One writer epitomized the thoughts worded by many other panelists when he wrote

the basic change needs to be the move from a corporate style of administration and management to a ‘Body Life’ style in which gifts are identified, ministry needs are met and consensus is reached in decision making based upon a clear understanding of mission and purpose, as well as contemporary situations.

Clear vision/purpose.

Several panelists noted the importance for the congregation in the year 2010 to have a common and clear vision for its existence. Some noted that in part this was the responsibility of the elders. This same thought was also identified in several other questions. One respondent wrote that congregations will change because there will be “more need of setting vision, goals, focus of congregation, rather than just letting things run as they always have.” Another stated that congregations will change by expressing a “common focus on winning the lost and sense of responsibility for fellow Christians - CLEAR PURPOSE!” A third summarized the thoughts of other panelists noting, “elders will set the vision for the church but will seek input widely”.

Communications.

Respondents indicated that communications was an important factor that needed to be addressed in congregations. Comments included “two way communications - elders to congregation and vice-versa” . . . and “across the board, in congregations of all sizes, there is a need for better, intentional, consistent, 2-way communications with all members, staff, and elders.” One writer stated that

the meeting together of elders should focus on prayer, growing as an elder, the needs of the people/community and strategizing for more effective ministry. More face-to-face contact with the members will be required. This could be accomplished in a town meeting environment with the people sharing their needs and vision and elders sharing dreams and visions.

Flocks/small groups.

The idea of congregations being organized into small groups was voiced by a number of panelists. Feedback from respondents tended to be rather lengthy. One faculty

member wrote

I believe a return to a “cell” model of primary church life would be extremely beneficial for the American church in the 21st Century. That would mean “church” may be any day of the week that a “cell” meets, not just on Sundays. Elders and other leaders would devote more time to caring for, serving people in their “cell” and serving the poor, sick, lonely, and outcasts WITH the people of their cell. They would devote less time to oiling the machinery and supporting the various activities of the “program-based design” church we know now.

A minister put forward his belief that “a network of small groups, cells, or shepherding groups will help elders to attend daily to pastoral care matters. This way the church’s ministry is decentralized, so that the church office is not the bottleneck for pastoral ministry. Ministry takes place ‘out there’ and elders should be able to track progress more readily.” Another minister stated

every church must encourage the development and multiplication of small groups. In the context of a caring and supportive relationship (with people they know and who know them) the most effective pastoral care is received. Elders must be group leaders and strongly support the multiplication of groups and the training of leaders.

One elder identified the need for “relationships of all church members, especially with leadership, needs to be a little more personal. People need more than a handshake and a smile. They need God’s love and expect to see it coming forth from all members, especially elders or leaders.”

Followership.

Several respondents identified “followership” as an important concept for congregations to cultivate. It was the contention of many panelists that without good followership practices the efforts of leadership would be greatly hampered. Responses included “understanding the concepts of leading and following” . . . “learn to let leaders

lead. Trust and respect them as men who accept a heavy load of responsibility from God and from the local church” . . . “willing to follow - need to be leadable” . . . “get over the view of the church as a democracy so the elders can lead and shepherd” . . . and “emphasis will not just be on leadership - but effective following. We spend too much time elevating the role of ‘leadership’ and not emphasizing the importance of good followership”.

Free-up.

Panelists noted the need for elders to be freed-up from a number of inappropriate activities so that they can focus instead on essentials. Comments included “allow them to do less business and more ministering” . . . “get ‘instrumental’ details off the backs of elders and preachers so they can specialize in leading and equipping” . . . “restrict elder functions to the essentials: setting a vision, spiritual leadership through prayer, teaching and mentoring/discipling” . . . and “elders need to be freed from all the ‘meeting’ responsibilities so as to genuinely minister to hurting people.” Another respondent stated eloquently

too often the forest is thrown at them (elders), and they are prevented from doing much day to day ministry because they are constantly swallowed with matters of policy, administration, etc. At the same time, elders must resist the inertia urge to become bogged down in small matters better left to others. The classic elders’ discussion about the color of toilet paper must become a thing of the past.

One faculty member wrote that congregations need to encourage elders to “devote time and energy to being men who know the Word, know their people and immerse themselves in prayer about the Word and people. Vision is best birthed when the elders are not smothered with petty concerns.”

Open to change.

Flexibility and openness to change was voiced in other parts of Round 1 but were found by many panelists to be particularly relevant here. They stated thoughts such as “elders need the encouragement of the people to try new ideas” . . . “more freedom to do more and try new things” . . . and “willingness to accept change without compromise of Truth.” One faculty member wrote at length that in the year 2010

new programs of education and outreach will be added. Ineffective programs will be dropped. The church doors will be open more for a wider variety of activities. New people will be coming to the church perhaps reflecting the diversity of the community. New worship styles will be added and the kinds and number of services will change. The congregation will need to be open to change!

A writer suggested that “the church of the 21st Century must be flexible in the methods it uses, while remaining true to its nature and mission.”

Prayer/encouragement.

This thought was also shared in other questions and illustrates the degree of relevance that many panelists felt about this topic and how important it is to foster an attitude within congregations that promotes encouragement of leadership. Respondents shared the congregation needs to “encourage elders and honor them” . . . pray for the elders more” . . . and “honor those who have served faithfully as elders”.

Priesthood of all believers.

It is not surprising that a number of respondents addressed this issue in some form or another since it is a primary basis of both the Protestant Reformation and Restoration Movement. Thoughts included “the congregation must realize its call as a minister - a holy priesthood - instead of delegating this to the paid minister” . . . “adjust assumptions

and expectations of members so that they see themselves as the ‘ministers’ of the church and see the elders/preachers as their equippers” . . . “elders and staff are the ADMINISTRATORS and the members are the MINISTERS” . . . and “we must move away from the clergy system to a system where people have differing yet complementary functions. Some are ‘part-time’ elders; some are ‘full-time’; and some are paid”. One faculty panelist stated emphatically

We have done by professionalism what Roman Catholicism did by theology: created the “Clergy Class.” We must overcome the “Clergy Mentality” that says that we hire the minister to do our religious thing for us and instill in the people prior to baptism and beyond that every believer has a ministry and the only thing that separates the church member from the preacher is not purpose but function.

Selection process.

The process of selecting elders was a concern raised by respondents as they considered what kinds of changes may need to occur in congregations to allow for a more effective eldership. Some panelists simply suggested that there would need to be “increased involvement in elder selection” and that elders will need to be “appointed on spiritual qualities and character.” One respondent predicted “it will take work to counter the American cultural phenomenon of electing or selecting leaders; expecting them to accomplish the tasks by themselves, and criticizing them if they don’t.” A minister wrote at considerable length stating

I believe that elders should be selected by mutual agreement of the existing leadership of a congregation after a period of prayer and study. It shouldn’t happen too quickly in the case of new works and shouldn’t be allowed to degenerate into a populist election process. The term “elder” is in a sense a designation for one already functioning in that capacity within a congregation, but it is still important for those people to be recognized as “elders”.

Another panelist suggested that in the year 2010 each elder should be “selected on the basis of personal spiritual maturity and the demonstrated ability to function in one or more ways as gifted.”

QUESTION #8: What role do you believe the local congregation should have in encouraging development of individuals for service as elders for the congregation of the year 2010?

Panelists seemed to have no level of difficulty distinguishing this question from question 6. Many similar thoughts were shared in both questions, yet by different respondents. A total of 113 cards were created and after the initial sort, were condensed to 18 thought stacks. The final sort resulted in the 7 thought stacks listed below.

Church board.

Respondents worded their opinion about the limitations they felt a “traditional board structure” would place on future elders and congregations. One writer noted that in the future congregations should

discontinue the typical Robert’s Rules of Order agenda for Elder’s meetings and follow a procedure that allows for reflection on personal growth and development, ministry concerns, general state of the congregation, reflections, discussion of specific needs that grow out of these reflections and prayer, seeking the Holy Spirit’s guidance before any consensus is sought!

Others indicated their thoughts stating “the concept of the ‘church board’ that has been used in many of our churches for many years is neither Biblical nor effective” . . . “church board is not Scriptural. Eliminate large voting board” . . . “congregations need to DUMP the democratic system of government from the spiritual issues of church management. ‘Voting’ can be such a popularity thing that it inhibit needed change” . . . and “I do not

think there will need to be a lot of formal organization to their meetings, procedures, and the transaction of ministry-business. Voting is worthless. Consensus, agreement, understanding and unity are the priorities". One minister wrote rather emphatically that congregations in the year 2010 will be better served if elders stop "seeing themselves as members of a glorified committee or a 'board', coming together to 'sit' and discuss and decide". He goes on to suggest as an alternative that elders should see themselves as "serving as part of a team, which does its work 'out there' rather than around the table. Meetings will then be when each comes to it with a contribution from their area of specialization, a report on their area of involvement, concern, or ministry".

Encourage/identify new elders.

The responsibility of the local congregation for actively encouraging and developing quality leaders for the future was an issue identified by respondents. Similar thoughts were also shared in question six. One writer noted at length the

local congregation is the context in which leaders emerge. It is the community where the world view is formed, skills are developed and habit shaped. It is the community that legitimates leadership. It is also the community that will recognize and affirm the call of God in the life of an individual to be an elder or another kind of leader.

A minister wrote "even in very casual ways, elders should be targeting individuals they believe should be elders in the future and tell them so, begin praying for them, and ask the person to begin preparing". The thoughts of panelists included "make a priority the training of younger men to become elders. Plant a seed in them" . . . "encourage likely candidates" . . . "young men will need to be identified, and then nurtured into the roles we expect them to fill" . . . and "encourage prayer within individuals and so when one is

'ready' for eldership, he's already very active in what he's to be doing". A faculty respondent stated "where else will these individuals be found except as they are identified, nurtured and equipped to become elders by and through local churches? The local congregation is the seed-bed for elders in the 21st Century."

Encourage/pray for elders.

According to many respondents, the congregation as a whole can facilitate development of elders by encouraging, praying, and upholding them. Some thoughts stated "honor the position of elder and those who hold that position" . . . "probably the greatest help is undergirding prayer" . . . "congregations should heed the Biblical injunctions to treat their elders in such a way that the best potential elders come to 'desire' the office" . . . "encourage and appreciate leaders" . . . and simply "pray". One minister shared "the local congregation should first pray for and respect current elders. Holding elders in high regard is the best way to encourage others to desire a leadership role."

Funding.

Several panelists felt that congregations could encourage elder development by providing funding for educational experiences and resources. Statements from panelists included "provide financial help for men to attend conferences on church leadership" . . . financial support for ministry internships; local and missions" . . . and "willingness to fund opportunities for leaders' growth." One faculty members suggested "congregations could pay tuition for elders or future elders to take classes at a near-by Christian college, attend workshops, and seminars, etc."

Mentoring.

This thought was very similar to that found in question 6; however, it was retained due to the significant number of cards indicating the importance of this concept within the context of the congregation. One elder wrote

mentoring is critical. Finding men who have an interest and the talents to be elders and getting them through some basic training and then attached via prayer partners and study partners to mentors would improve awareness and increase the level of understanding of what is required before men become elders.

A minister stated “every elder ought to have a Timothy - at least one person for whom the elder prays, and cares, and teaches, and mentors. Every elder should see it as a very high priority to be reproducing oneself all the time. This alone would solve many leadership development problems”. A writer noted “a perennial task of current elders should be identifying potential elders and becoming mentors to them”. Several other comments suggested “the primary role for elder development must be owned by the elders of each congregation” . . . “the present elders must take responsibility for putting into effect as many of the elements listed in question 6 as possible” . . .”existing elders should identify and mentor young men” . . . and “encourage potential leaders to get teamed up in a one-on-one discipleship group to form a mentoring partnership”.

Selection process.

There were enough thought cards on selection process generated from both question 7 and question 8 to endorse them being stacked in both areas. Although thoughts were very similar in both stacks, they came primarily from different sources. One minister stated “congregations must choose their leaders (especially elders!) on the basis of spiritual sensitivity and depth, not on longevity or ‘whose related to whom’ or

‘who’s feelings will get hurt’.” Another minister indicated that “deacons who serve well are not necessarily elder material. We need to look for those whom the Lord appoints and to whom people are drawn for counsel and encouragement.” One respondent shared

I’ve been blessed through the years in serving with fine elderships. I’ve come to appreciate why 1 Timothy 3 does not give us a job description but instead offers several character traits to be sought when electing elders. Just as integrity and other virtues are essential in the father of a family, so these qualities are essential in the elected “grandfathers” of the church. Without these spiritual qualifications in the leadership, the entire church suffers.

A minister noted the difference between a church and a social club when he stated “ministers need to study (with their people) the role and function of elders within a congregation and learn to select elders on a spiritual basis, not selecting them as they choose a chairperson at the local Kiwanis club.”

Understanding role of eldership.

Over 40% of the panelists identified some aspect of the need for individuals in a congregation to have a better understanding of the role of elders. Thoughts shared included “the congregation should teach and emphasize the importance of the role of the elder” . . . the congregation needs to be more aware of the functions of the elders and how important their role is to have church at all” . . . and, “the importance of the function of elder must be communicated.” A minister suggest that “churches could provide elder information sessions, classes and studies to see what is involved, required, and so forth. Raising congregational consciousness is a large factor.” Another minister wrote resolutely

I think the role of the local congregation in development of elders is the most important role imaginable. If the congregation is not aware and mobilized to develop leaders, it’s not going to happen. For many congregations, this will

happen at the top level of leadership that currently exists. Minister need to talk more about leadership within the congregation to existing leaders.

One writer stated that “the congregation needs to be aware of the importance of the ministry of the church. They need to understand the need for leadership that will look to God and His Word, and the need for vision, studying and planning.”

QUESTION #9: What role, if any, do you believe Christian church/church of Christ colleges should exhibit in encouraging development of individuals for service as elders for the congregation of the year 2010? If applicable, please note as many specific ideas and activities as come to mind.

Slightly over 100 response cards were generated by the 40 members of the Delphi panel. After two sortings, this number was reduced to five unique stacks from the original nine. Similar to question eight responses, many panelist included thoughts they or others had already shared relative to question six.

Information resource.

Many panelists identified the opportunity that Christian colleges have of collecting and providing resources to encourage the development and growth of elders. Comments varied but included “offer their resources for consulting/assisting in developing eldership education in local congregations - developing models, curricula, materials, training programs, etc.” . . . “encouraging professors to participate and write/talk/teach about leadership issues” . . . “sharing of a wide range of ideas and practices in churches” . . . and making elders knowledgeable about “trends in today’s world that impact the ministry of the church.” One writer noted somewhat

pessimistically that colleges

should be at the forefront of developing understandings of our times, how churches can become effective, and leadership. They should become dynamic resources to preachers, elders, and local churches with a real perspective on these issues. This will require not only developing practically-focused resources but innovative delivery systems and intense motivation. Unfortunately, we are a long way from this at this time.

An elder wrote about the opportunity that colleges have in encouraging development of elders. The elder stated “our Christian colleges are in the unique position of being knowledgeable about many different churches. They can see what’s working and what isn’t. Through conferences, retreats, classes, etc., they could communicate the successful programs that exist in their area.”

Internships/practical experiences.

Encouraging college students to participate in internships with local church leadership was suggested by panelists. One minister wrote that college and congregations should cooperate in “developing internship experiences for student not pursuing a ministry degree. The internship could have a student work alongside a select few elders/deacons in a local church for the summer”. An elder suggested that colleges should “expand intern ministry opportunities with local/regional churches”. Other thoughts such as “colleges could combine Biblical knowledge courses with encouragement of small groups studies, volunteer ministries, worship opportunities in local churches because . . . leadership is developed through opportunities to lead” and “colleges can offer programs which provide strong Biblical understanding along with some career outside church work, which helps the person understand Biblical foundations for leadership, both paid and unpaid” depicted the view that practical experiences could

be extremely beneficial in development of individuals as elders.

Preparing ministers as trainers.

Respondents identified colleges as having a role in preparing ministers and ministerial students to train elders. Responses included “training ministers to train elderships would be the most effective way to reach a larger audience over time” . . . “equip ministers to train leaders” . . . and “equip ‘professional’ ministers to equip the eldership for their service.” An elder suggested that

Christian colleges are going to have to teach their ministerial students and make them know before they are released from school, that a strong eldership is an absolute must for their success in any congregation. Usually it is up to the minister to encourage men or women into the eldership. They must encourage and foster a team between them and the elders to accomplish the church’s goals.

A minister noted that colleges could “provide ministerial students and potential ministers with some clear understanding of the need to train elders, what to teach them and how to deal with ‘well intentioned’ but ill mannered elders.” A writer commented that

Christian colleges can accomplish much. They can teach their students so that they have a clear understanding of the role/function of the elders. They can assist their students in understanding how to have a fulfilling relationship with elders--how to work with them. They can also equip their students to train and develop elders.”

Another writer stated “Christian colleges should equip leaders who equip leaders. Leadership courses should and could be taught. Current research into leadership emergence patterns and equipping methods can greatly improve the stale teaching or absent teaching about leadership that is present in many of our colleges.”

Spiritual development of students.

Several panelist identified the role colleges could play in spiritual development of students who may one day be serving as elders. Thoughts included “produce informed and challenged Christian graduates who can go on in their spiritual growth and develop into effective elders” . . . “emphasize, demonstrate, re-emphasize the importance of personal devotional life, mentoring, accountability” . . . and briefly but to the point, “developing one’s spiritual life.” One minister suggested that colleges should “mandate that all student both receive and lead a personal discipleship program to give them experience in receiving and giving personal, spiritual nurture.”

Workshops/seminars.

Workshops and seminars were identified as methods that Christian colleges could use to encourage development of elders. One elder wrote at length stating “if actual classes for elders were developed, to be effective they would need to be done at a local congregation or at least very regionally. Areas such as facilitating vision and strategy sessions, dissemination of information on worship, shepherding techniques, etc. would be helpful.” A number of responses could be summarized by one faculty member’s thought “conferences, seminars, and workshops should be offered to provide continuing education for ministers and elders.” One minister wrote colleges should “offer continuing education seminars for elders focusing on critical issues: Minister care, church finance, advanced teaching skills, etc.” Another minister complained “the heroes who are held up for emulation are too rarely elders in local churches but superstar ministers. Why not allow elders to have a role in speaking and educating students?” An elder stated “colleges

should offer courses through video and mail - on issues which would provide advanced Biblical training for elders in the areas of: Biblical training, social issues, psychological training, marriage and family counseling.”

Auditing Process

Upon the completion of the sorting and coding process for Round 1, the auditor for this study was contacted and a meeting was set up to review the auditing process. Clear steps were identified and written. Some discussion occurred regarding how to best sample the thought stacks since it was impractical for the auditor to review every coded item. It was determined that the most appropriate sample should be the complete auditing of one and preferably two complete question stacks. With this in mind, the researcher provided the auditor with all the cards associated with questions 3 and 9. The letter of agreement to the auditor with explanation of process and tasks is included in Appendix C. The report and findings of the auditor are disclosed in Appendix D. Following the audit, no major changes were made in the original identifying of thought stacks. The auditor did comment with some degree of surprise at the pervasive assumption among most panelists that all elders are males. The auditor was informed that this was one reason that some effort was made to include female panelists as well as male. Affirmation of the sorting and coding process by the auditor allowed for the researcher to begin the final stages of development of Round 2.

Development of Statements used in Round 2

Each summary label/phrase from Round 1 was expanded to develop complete summary statements that were easy to read and understandable yet reflected the content of

the underlying thoughts. Frequently, labels/phrases of similar content were joined together. Each statement is listed below in italics followed by the labels/phrases that were used to develop them. These statements were subsequently used to construct the items that formed the Round 2 questionnaire.

Statement 1: It will be extremely important that elders in 2010 have healthy marriages and stable families. Elders should demonstrate marital faithfulness and responsibility in a society where marriages and families have frequently disintegrated or are fairly dysfunctional.

This statement is linked to “family life issues” on page 67 and “healthy marriage/stable family” on page 84.

Statement 2: Elders in the year 2010 should prize learning. Elders should be committed to spiritual and leadership development within themselves. At the same time, elders should be mentors and teachers to others, encouraging their personal growth and maturity as Christians and equipping them to be servants for Christ.

This statement is linked to “leadership development” on page 68.

Statement 3: Congregations in the year 2010 will be populated with large numbers of individuals who are Biblically illiterate, who question the authority of scripture and who are doctrinally ignorant and apathetic.

This statement is linked to “authority of the Bible” on page 63; “Biblical illiteracy” on page 64; and “doctrinal issues” on page 66.

Statement 4: In the year 2010, responsibilities and roles of elders, deacons, staff, and other leaders should be more clearly defined in order to avoid unnecessary overlap and ineffective use of time and talents.

This statement is linked to two stacks that share the same label and basic content but originate from separate questions. From question 1 see “role clarification” on page 70 and from question 5 see “role clarification” on page 94.

Statement 5: Elders should be alert to the impact of pluralism and cultural diversity on congregations in the year 2010.

This statement is linked to “diversity of backgrounds” on page 65 and

“pluralism/cultural diversity on page 77.

Statement 6: In the year 2010, elders should create and maintain a vital commitment to a clear and widely-owned vision for the church. They should keep the vision lucid, point the way, guide, motivate, challenge, inspire, instruct, and enable the congregation to function as a unified organism.

This statement is linked to “vision/mission” on page 72 and to

“visionary/strategist” on page 89.

Statement 7: Discipline of individuals within congregations will be very difficult in the year 2010 due to increasing threats of lawsuits.

This statement is linked to “discipline issues” on page 65.

Statement 8: Elders in the year 2010 should be skillful in conflict resolution and team building in order to enable harmony and unity in the midst of growing diversity.

This statement is linked to “unity” on page 72; “conflict resolution/unity” on page 81; and “interpersonal/relational/communication skills” on page 84.

Statement 9: Elders of effective congregations in the year 2010 must have a pioneering spirit. They should boldly lead the church in adapting structures and programs to serve the mission and spirit of Christ in changing times without compromising essentials. Elders should strike an appropriate balance between novelty and tradition.

This statement is linked to “change” on page 64; “flexible/creative” on page 83; and “discerning” on page 83.

Statement 10: By the year 2010, there will be a significant ignorance of historical roots in all churches including less awareness of Restoration Movement principles.

This statement is linked to “heritage issues” on page 68.

Statement 11: Elders in congregations in the year 2010 should thoughtfully consider what true Biblical worship is, leading the congregation in appropriate change and variety without creating an atmosphere of “entertainment”.

This statement is linked to “entertainment mindset” on page 66.

Statement 12: *In the year 2010, declining resources, severe financial strain, and fewer trained preachers should cause many congregations to pool resources or to merge with each other.*

This statement is linked to “financial stress” on page 67 and “declining resources” on page 75.

Statement 13: *Elders must resist the tendency in the year 2010 to focus energies of the congregation on political or social activism.*

This statement is linked to “political activism” on page 78.

Statement 14: *Elders, in 2010, should be adept at helping people find a place of belonging, where they can be committed to using their gifts, talents and resources in service to Christ.*

This statement is linked to “member involvement” on page 69.

Statement 15: *Declining resources, severe financial strain, and fewer trained preachers should cause increasing numbers of congregations to look to “unpaid” or “non-professional” elders to serve as preachers in the year 2010.*

This statement is linked to “declining resources” on page 75.

Statement 16: *In the year 2010, an “entertainment mindset”, produced in part by increasing subjectivism and consumerism, will place pressure on the church to resort to marketing techniques to “sell its wares” and to become increasingly “professional” in all aspects of ministry and worship.*

This statement is linked to “professionalism” on page 70; “subjectivism” on page 71; and “consumerism/materialism” on page 74.

Statement 17: *In the year 2010, elders should encourage the development of specialized ministries (e.g. single parents, divorced, elderly, singles, counseling, etc.) in order to meet the challenge caused by changing demographics (e.g. continued breakdown of families, the “aging of America”, and the decline of marriages) in the world and within congregations.*

This statement is linked to “geriatric issues” on page 67; “family breakdown” on page 75; and “cultural awareness” on page 81.

Statement 18: Elders in the year 2010 should be aware of the tension between designing church for “the saved” versus “the seeker”, between a maintenance-orientation and a mission-orientation.

This statement is linked to “tension in focus” on page 71.

Statement 19: Congregations will struggle in the year 2010 with establishing accountability structures with leaders and various ministries.

This statement is linked to “accountability issues” on page 63; “mutual accountability” on page 94; and “accountability” on page 97.

Statement 20: There will be increasing tension related to styles of worship in the year 2010.

This statement is linked to “worship style issues” on page 73.

Statement 21: In 2010, individuals will become less and less inclined to see the importance of church membership.

This statement is linked to “commitment issues” on page 64.

Statement 22: Many elders in the past have seen the issue of women in key leadership positions (deacons, elders, ministers, etc.) as a matter of doctrine, but in the year 2010 it should come to be viewed more as a matter of mission, service, and giftedness.

This statement is linked to “women’s roles” on page 73.

Statement 23: In the year 2010, the decline of morality and the issues of relativism and pluralism will have wrought havoc on the church leaving many congregations nominal and weak.

This statement is linked to “morality issues” on page 70 and “relativism/post-modernity” on page 78.

Statement 24: In the year 2010, Christians in America will be openly persecuted and Christian leaders could well be the main targets.

This statement is linked to “persecution/hostility” on page 77.

Statement 25: In the year 2010, elders should articulate and implement for the congregation appropriate stances toward social issues such as abortion, euthanasia, AIDS, pornography, homosexuality, alcoholism, drug addictions, etc.

This statement is linked to “social issues” on page 79.

Statement 26: *In the year 2010, elders should study and clarify appropriate places of ministry for women within the local congregation. Broader societal acceptance of women in leadership positions will place tremendous pressures on congregations to conform to secular standards.*

This statement is linked to “gender issues” on page 76.

Statement 27: *In the year 2010, elders should lead the congregation in being a “servant church” to the community, especially as government-sponsored programs for individuals (e.g. homeless, elderly, unemployed, mentally ill, etc.) decreases.*

This statement is linked to “community needs” on page 74 and “serving the community” on page 94.

Statement 28: *In the year 2010, society will become increasingly fragmented, with individuals desiring community and a sense of belonging.*

This statement is linked to “hungering for community” on page 68 and “fragmentation of society” on page 75.

Statement 29: *By 2010, the majority of the world’s missionary force will be non-western and many of these non-western missionaries will be actively re-evangelizing American cities.*

This statement is linked to “mission strategies” on page 76.

Statement 30: *The privileged legal status that congregations and individuals enjoyed in the past (e.g. clergy tax benefits/breaks, tax exemption status, deduction for contributions) will diminish or end, greatly impacting financial aspects of the church in the year 2010.*

This statement is linked to “taxation issues” on page 80.

Statement 31: *Elders must be missionary minded, leading congregations in developing evangelistic strategies that are sensitive to a “shrinking world” where “aliens in our midst” will necessitate greater missionary effort in America.*

This statement is linked to “mission minded” on page 85.

Statement 32: *There will be chaos and violence in urban areas in the year 2010 that will greatly impact congregations and their elders.*

This statement is linked to “violence” on page 80.

Statement 33: Problems in public schools will continue to intensify so that congregations in the year 2010 will be faced with issues regarding Christian school and home school education versus public school education.

This statement is linked to “Christian schools” on page 74.

Statement 34: In the year 2010, elders must be aware of and speak to the needs of people who will be grasping for true spirituality, hope and meaning and who have given up on the traditional institutional church for one reason or another.

This statement is linked to “spirituality issues” on page 79.

Statement 35: Due to extensive use of technology in the year 2010, individuals will increasingly lose interpersonal skills as they become more electronically dependent.

This statement is linked to “role of technology” on page 79.

Statement 36: Elders in the year 2010 should be vigilant in protecting the congregation from self-seeking individuals and from false doctrine.

This statement is linked to “defend/guard” on page 82.

Statement 37: Elders in the year 2010 should practice redemptive discipline of individuals when they are in need. Not to do so will, at the very least, result in elders losing their credibility.

This statement is linked to “disciplinarian” on page 83.

Statement 38: The characteristics of an elder described by Paul in the New Testament (1Tim 3; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5) should be found in the lives of elders in the year 2010.

This statement is linked to “scriptural characteristics” on page 88.

Statement 39: Elders in the year 2010 should be able to discern giftedness in others and in themselves and should be able to nurture growth and faithfulness in exercising these gifts.

This statement is linked to “gift discernment” on page 84.

Statement 40: In the year 2010, elders should seek to free the church from institutionalism and promote the scriptural concept of the church as a living organism that is relationally based and incorporates family-type fellowship.

This statement is linked to “developing community spirit” on page 82 and

“pastoring/caregiving” on page 87.

Statement 41: Elders in the year 2010 need to be knowledgeable and committed to Restoration Movement principles and promote this understanding within their congregations.

This statement is linked to “restoration heritage” on page 88.

Statement 42: One of the most important characteristics of elders in the year 2010 is that they must be spiritual leaders, Holy Spirit filled and Holy Spirit led. The life of an elder should reflect spiritual maturity that includes a solid, working and growing knowledge of scripture, prayer-filled days, and an unwavering commitment to Christ.

This statement is linked to “Biblically informed” on page 81; “prayerful” on page 87; “relationship to Christ” on page 87; “spirit-led” on page 88; and “spiritual formation” on page 99.

Statement 43: Elders in the year 2010 should lead their congregations in being ethical and moral people. Their lives should model integrity and a genuine devotion to Christ.

This statement is linked to “moral/ethical integrity” on page 86.

Statement 44: Elders should have general oversight over the congregation in the year 2010. They should be able to establish policy, manage resources, and delegate details while avoiding micromanaging the staff and other leaders.

This statement is linked to “oversight” on page 86.

Statement 45: Elders in the year 2010 should work together as a closely-knit team of individuals, each being gifted in specific areas of ministry. One elder should serve as a leader or facilitator to provide practical direction and focus. Decision making should occur by consensus with no individual elder insisting upon having the final word.

This statement is linked to “team player” on page 88; “giftedness” on page 90; “identified leader” on page 90; and “team approach” on page 92.

Statement 46: In the year 2010, there will be no one specific structure that is more Biblical than another for how the eldership organizes itself, so long as it is grounded in Biblical norms. Prayer, fasting, study, lots of counsel, and contextual sensitivity will be a good means for discerning the most effective structure in a given local congregation.

This statement is linked to “situational structure” on page 91.

Statement 47: In the year 2010, the most effectively organized congregations will be those where the senior minister works closely with the elders and is considered the “leader of leaders” or “first among equals”.

This statement is linked to “minister as leader” on page 93.

Statement 48: Ministers who meet the Biblical qualifications of an elder should be recognized as elders and serve alongside other elders in the congregation of the year 2010.

This statement is linked to “minister as elder” on page 93.

Statement 49: Congregations in the year 2010 must have a clear, commonly held, Biblical based vision of the purpose and mission of the church.

This statement is linked to “shared vision/mission” on page 95 and “clear vision/purpose” on page 101.

Statement 50: An attitude of teamwork and harmony should be characteristic of the relationship between elders and minister(s) in the year 2010. The “we-they” mindset, that kills unity and progress, should be replaced with a strong sense of collegiality, characterized by trust, camaraderie, a mature spirituality, patience, love, respect, encouragement, a spirit of forgiveness, obedience to the same Lord, and mutual accountability.

This statement is linked to “team mentality” on page 95 and “trust/mutual respect” on page 96.

Statement 51: The local congregation will be the seed-bed for elders in the year 2010. Congregations should intentionally seek out those who show the qualities and giftedness required for elders, then aggressively nurture and equip them for future service.

This statement is linked to “lifelong development” on page 97 and “encourage/identify new elders” on page 107.

Statement 52: Congregations in the year 2010 must move away from the clergy or corporate style of administration. Instead the “body life” style should be emphasized, encouraging all members to work actively together as ministers, each with varying but complementary gifts and abilities.

This statement is linked to “priesthood of all believers” on page 104.

Statement 53: In the year 2010, congregations must focus on developing good followership as much as leadership. Followers need to trust, honor, respect, encourage, submit to and pray for elders.

This statement is linked to “followership” on page 102; “prayer/encouragement” on page 104; and “encourage/pray for elders” on page 108.

Statement 54: Individuals within congregations in the year 2010 should be carefully and prayerfully chosen for eldership. Selection should be based on spiritual qualities and character, giftedness, and proven leadership abilities, not on popularity, “whose related to whom” or “whose feelings will get hurt”.

This statement is linked to “selection process” for question 7 on page 105 and for question 8 on page 109.

Statement 55: Elders in the year 2010 should be freed up to do less business and more ministering. Their functions should focus on the essentials: setting a vision, spiritual leadership through prayer, teaching/equipping, and mentoring/discipling.

This statement is linked to “free-up” on page 103.

Statement 56: Congregations in the year 2010 should be organized in a network of small cells or shepherding groups so that elders can better attend to daily pastoral care matters while also encouraging individuals to serve each other and the community in which they find themselves.

This statement is linked to “flocks/small groups” on page 101.

Statement 57: Across the board, in all sizes of congregations, there must be better, intentional, consistent, two-way communications with all members, staff, and elders in the year 2010.

This statement is linked to “communications” on page 101.

Statement 58: A congregation in the year 2010 must be open to change and flexible in the methods it employs, while remaining true to its nature and mission.

This statement is linked to “open to change” on page 104.

Statement 59: The “traditional church board” will be an inappropriate structure for a congregation that seeks to effectively carry out its vision and purpose in the year 2010.

This statement is linked to “church board” on page 106.

Statement 60: Congregations in the year 2010 should make funds available for elders and potential elders to pursue opportunities for leadership growth. Opportunities may

include, but not be limited to, participation in courses at a college, attendance at seminars and works, purchase of books and resources, etc.

This statement is linked to “funding” on page 108.

Statement 61: Congregations will need to know, teach and emphasize the importance of the role of elder in the year 2010.

This statement is linked to “understanding role of elder” on page 110.

Statement 62: Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide opportunities for students to be a part of settings where they can both observe leadership of others and experience times of leading themselves. Such times may occur through formal internships, small group studies, volunteer ministries, etc. and whenever possible, should be in the context of a local congregation.

This statement is linked to “internships/practical experiences” on page 112.

Statement 63: Christian colleges should be in the unique position of being knowledgeable about many different churches and issues. In the year 2010, colleges should serve as a “clearing house”, communicating to elders “what’s working and what isn’t” and what kinds of issues may impact their congregations.

This statement is linked to “information resource” on page 111.

Statement 64: Christian colleges in the year 2010 need to provide seminars, workshops and resources for leadership development of elders within local congregations. Emphasis should be placed on skill development, spiritual development, and leadership principles.

This statement is linked to “seminar/continuing education” on page 99 and

“workshops/seminars” on page 114.

Statement 65: Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide ministerial students and potential ministers with some clear understanding of the need to train elders, what to teach, and how to work with elders.

This statement is linked to “preparing ministers as trainers” on page 113.

Statement 66: In the year 2010, Christian colleges should encourage spiritual development of students so that they will have a strong foundation from which to be effective elders, leaders, and followers.

This statement is linked to “spiritual development of students” on page 114.

Summary

Chapter 4 provided a detailed description of the process of distributing Round 1 and the qualitative analysis of Round 1 responses. Over 1700 individual thought cards generated from 9 questions and 40 panelists resulted in the development of 105 thought stacks. An audit was conducted of two of all the thought cards associated with 2 of the questions from Round 1. A favorable audit report permitted the further refinement of thought stacks resulting in the development of 66 summarizing statements. Chapter 5 describes the process used to construct Round 2 based on the 66 summarizing statements developed from analysis of Round 1.

CHAPTER 5

ROUND 2 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

Chapter 4 concluded by describing how results from analysis of Round 1 were used to develop Round 2. Chapter 5 initially describes the methods used to construct, disburse, and analyze Round 2. The remainder of chapter 5 provides tables and discussion of the findings from Round 2.

Construction of Round 2

Chapter 4 presented a detailed description of the analysis for Round 1. The final section of chapter 4 recorded summary statements that had been developed from the qualitative data in Round 1. The summary statements were used to form Round 2 using a Likert-type scale and a probability factor (See Appendix E). The Likert scale was used to measure the level of agreeability the panelists had with each item. Panelists were asked to circle a number on a scale ranging from five (strongly agree) to one (strongly disagree). A choice of three was considered midrange and the lowest level of agreement. The probability factor was requested to indicate how likely panelists thought the content of the item would occur. Respondents were asked to write down the “likelihood of happening” for each statement based on a scale of 1% to 100%.

Round 2 was developed with a cover letter explaining instructions, reiterating the purposes of the project, and encouraging panelists to return the questionnaire as soon as possible but to have it in the mail no later than February 10, 1997. The Round 2 instrument was reviewed by a few members of the original pilot study for clarity and

readability. Several improvements were made in the questionnaire based on suggestions from the reviewers. One major change was the randomization of the order for the items in Round 2. It was believed that changing the order of the items might make the questionnaire less tedious and encourage more thoughtful responses.

Disbursement and Response Rate of Round 2

Packets containing the Round 2 questionnaire, cover letter, and a stamped self-addressed return envelope were assembled. A small personal note, thanking each panelist for his or her input from Round 1 and for his or her continued involvement in Round 2, was attached to each questionnaire. The packets were mailed out to all 40 participants from Round 1 on January 31, 1997. By February 14, all but seven packets had been received in the mail. Telephone follow-ups were initiated on February 14 to the seven individuals whose questionnaires had not yet been received. All but one packet had been received by February 24 providing a return rate of 97.5%. A decision was made to proceed with analysis of Round 2.

Round 2 Data Analysis

Raw data from Round 2 were entered into a template using a computerized spreadsheet. The spreadsheet allowed for easy arrangement of data so that a variety of statistical measures could be performed efficiently. Data entry was carefully audited to insure accuracy in recording.

Trim-scores

For purposes of this research, the trim-mean and trim-standard deviation for the Likert-scale and the likelihood of happening score were performed. Initial scatter plots of

data indicated occasional outliers could skew the mean score. Trim-mean and trim-standard deviations are useful in assessing the impact that outliers have on data (Hintze, 1996). A 5% trimming factor was used in this study and resulted typically in ignoring responses of two panelists at each end of the data spectrum.

Agreeability

Round 2 used a Likert scale to measure level of agreeability for each of 66 items. Panelists had been instructed to circle the number on a scale of one to five that was indicative of their level of agreeability to a particular item. A “1” represented strong agreement with the item while a “5” indicated strong disagreement with an item. Frequency distributions, trim-mean (\bar{M}_{trim}) and trim-standard deviations (SD_{trim}) were used as tools for determining consensus among the Delphi panelists for agreeability.

Frequency distribution.

Frequency distributions were compiled for portraying level of agreeability among panelists for each item in Round 2. The range of data for the Likert scale was divided up into four areas: Strongly Agree (2 or less), Agree (greater than 2 but less than or equal to 3), Disagree (greater than 3 but less than or equal to 4) and, Strongly Disagree (greater than 4). The frequency table was used as the primary means of determining consensus within the group (Putnam, Spiegel, & Bruininks, 1995). Those items that had 100% agreement (no respondent selected a value greater than 3) were considered to have complete consensus. Partial consensus was defined as those items that had at least 90% agreement among the panelists. Appendix I (Round 1 Issues . . .) provides a rank order of Round 2 items based on cumulative percentages for strongly agree and agree. Twenty-

seven of the 66 items from Round 2 had complete consensus among the panelists. An additional 20 items were considered to have partial consensus among the respondents.

Trim-mean and trim-standard deviation.

A trim-mean of “3” for the Likert scale was the lowest level of agreement for the panelists. A trim-mean close to one indicated the highest level of agreement for the item. The trim-standard deviation was used as an additional way of identifying level of consensus within the group. Standard deviation is a measure of variance about the mean. A low standard deviation was an indicator of greater consensus among the panelists, regardless of whether they as a group strongly agreed or strongly disagreed with a particular statement or whether the group indicated an item was likely to occur. Generally, those items that had combined frequency scores for strongly agree and agree greater than 90% also had very low standard deviations.

Likelihood of happening.

Round 2 used a probability factor to measure likelihood of happening for each of the 66 items. Panelists had been instructed to write in a percentage on a scale of one to 100 that predicted how likely they believed an item would occur in the year 2010. A trim-mean of .50 for the probability factor indicated that the panelists as a group indicated there was a 50% possibility that the content of the associated item would occur in the year 2010. A mean score greater than .50 reflected a higher likelihood of occurrence. Any item that had a probability mean greater than .60 ($P \geq 60\%$) was considered “likely to happen.” This is consistent with other Delphi studies that have used probability mean of .60 as a cutoff point for predicting likeliness of an item’s occurrence (O’Brien, 1995;

Putnam et al., 1995).

A comparison of data showing the trimming effects on agreeability and likelihood are depicted in Appendix F and G respectively. The first two columns represent a sorted comparison between mean values in ascending order. There was very little difference noted between the untrimmed mean and the trim-mean values. The strongest levels of agreement or probability are at the beginning of the lists. The third column represents a sort in ascending order of the trim-standard deviation. Initially there was little variation between the trim-standard deviation list and either of the sorted lists based on mean scores. However the scores further down the lists become increasingly divergent. For example, Item 39 in Appendix F, was ranked second to last in the first two columns, but was ranked 45 when sorting was based on trim-standard deviation. Therefore, Item 39 with a trim-mean of 3.04, has a higher level of consensus within the group than Item 62 which has a trim-mean of 1.68. The trim-standard deviation was used as the second sort criteria for ranking agreeability of items. The trim-mean for likelihood of happening was used as the probability factor for all items.

Round 2 Findings

Thirty-nine of the original 40 panelists returned Round 2 providing a response rate of 97.5%. One of the more interesting general observations of the data is that the items that had the highest level of consensus were not necessarily the items with the greatest likelihood of occurrence. Appendix H compares an ascending sort of the cumulative scores for “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” items with a descending sort of the trim-mean scores for likelihood of occurrence.

The issue from Round 2 that had the highest level of consensus within the group was Item 56. The standard deviation was 0.16 with 97% of the panelists strongly agreeing that an attitude of teamwork and harmony was very important between elders and ministers for the year 2010. However, the panelists thought there was only a 60% likelihood that this would happen in congregations in the year 2010. This indicates that educational programs that would foster collegiality between elders and ministers would be helpful in promoting teamwork and camaraderie.

Two statements from Round 2 received the second highest level of consensus within the group. Both Items 28 and 54 had a standard deviations of 0.17 with 93% of the Delphi respondents strongly agreeing with the content of the items. Responses of panelists to Item 28 indicated it was a very important that individuals be carefully and prayerfully selected for eldership in the year 2010; however, responses also indicated there would only be a 63% likelihood of this occurring. The discrepancy between the high desirability and the relatively low probability factor would suggest a need for activities to encourage congregations to improve their elder selection process. Item 54 addressed the moral and ethical character of an elder. Panelists concurred that the lives of elders should model integrity to those who follow them. Respondents indicated elders would likely do this in the year 2010 (P=71%).

The highest level of consensus (based on SD_{trim}) for probability was reached with Item 24. Panelists indicated there was an 87% likelihood that society will become increasingly fragmented in the year 2010. Elders would do well to pay attention to this identified issue as they encourage congregations to develop a culture better suited to meeting the needs of individuals who desire community and a sense of belonging. Item

24 was also ranked 18 for consensus on agreeability with 62% of the panelists strongly agreeing with the statement and the remaining 38% agreeing. The remainder of the items will be analyzed below grouped according to the research question(s) they are associated with.

QUESTION #1: What internal issues will elders contend with as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?

Twenty-two items in Round 2 directly addressed this question. Panelists arrived at consensus on 15 of these items. Table 2 provides descriptive information regarding those items which achieved consensus among the panelists. The mean ranged from a low of 1.03 for Item 1 to a high of 2.30 for Item 4. Ten items had complete consensus with an additional five items achieving partial consensus. The likelihood of happening ranged from 81% for Item 33 to a low of 52% for Item 32. Seven items were predicted to occur in the year 2010 ($P \geq 60\%$).

TABLE 2

ROUND 2 ITEMS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 1

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on M_{trim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD_{trim}	M_{trim}	
1	Item 1 ^a . It will be extremely important that elders in 2010 have healthy marriages and stable families. Elders should demonstrate marital faithfulness and responsibility in a society where marriages and families have frequently disintegrated or are fairly dysfunctional.	92	8	100	0	0	0.18	1.03	77
2	Item 14. In the year 2010, elders should create and maintain a vital commitment to a clear and widely-owned vision for the church. They should keep the vision lucid, point the way, guide, motivate, challenge, inspire, instruct, and enable the congregation to function as a unified organism.	90	10	100	0	0	0.25	1.07	53
3	Item 22. Elders in the year 2010 should be skillful in conflict resolution and team building in order to enable harmony and unity in the midst of growing diversity.	72	28	100	0	0	0.44	1.29	58
4	Item 32. Elders of effective congregations in the year 2010 must have a pioneering spirit. They should boldly lead the church in adapting structures and programs to serve the mission and spirit of Christ in changing times without compromising essentials. Elders should strike an appropriate balance between novelty and tradition.	62	38	100	0	0	0.49	1.40	52
5	Item 49. Elders in the year 2010 should be aware of the tension between designing church for "the saved" versus "the seeker", between a maintenance-orientation and a mission-orientation.	62	38	100	0	0	0.49	1.37	57
6	Item 9 ^a . Elders should be alert to the impact of pluralism and cultural diversity on congregations in the year 2010.	72	28	100	0	0	0.52	1.29	60
7	Item 37. Elders in congregations in the year 2010 should thoughtfully consider what true Biblical worship is, leading the congregation in appropriate change and variety without creating an atmosphere of "entertainment".	69	31	100	0	0	0.53	1.34	53
8	Item 41. Elders, in 2010, should be adept at helping people find a place of belonging,	69	31	100	0	0	0.53	1.33	57

(Table Continues)

TABLE 2 (continued)

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD _{trim}	M _{trim}	
	where they can be committed to using their gifts, talents and resources in service to Christ.								
9	Item 24 ^a . In the year 2010, society will become increasingly fragmented, with individuals desiring community and a sense of belonging.	62	38	100	0	0	0.48	1.42	87
10	Item 47 ^a . In the year 2010, elders should encourage the development of specialized ministries (e.g. single parents, divorced, elderly, singles, counseling, etc.) in order to meet the challenge caused by changing demographics (e.g. continued breakdown of families, the "aging of America", and the decline of marriages) in the world and within congregations.	49	51	100	0	0	0.63	1.64	66
11	Item 3 ^a . Elders in the year 2010 should prize learning. Elders should be committed to spiritual and leadership development within themselves. At the same time, elders should be mentors and teachers to others, encouraging their personal growth and maturity as Christians and equipping them to be servants for Christ.	85	10	95	0	5	0.35	1.12	60
12	Item 52. Congregations will struggle in the year 2010 with establishing accountability structures with leaders and various ministries.	21	74	95	5	0	0.69	2.20	59
13	Item 33 ^a . By the year 2010, there will be a significant ignorance of historical roots in all churches including less awareness of Restoration Movement principles.	51	41	92	5	3	0.67	1.57	81
14	Item 7. In the year 2010, responsibilities and roles of elders, deacons, staff, and other leaders should be more clearly defined in order to avoid unnecessary overlap and ineffective use of time and talents.	56	36	92	8	0	0.88	1.66	57
15	Item 4 ^a . Congregations in the year 2010 will be populated with large numbers of individuals who are Biblically illiterate, who question the authority of scripture and who are doctrinally ignorant and apathetic.	23	67	90	8	3	0.86	2.30	73

Note. Items are rank ordered first by C then by SD_{trim} for Agreeability

^aIndicates item Likely to Happen in the year 2010 (P≥60%)

QUESTION #2: What external factors will influence elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?

There were 18 items in Round 2 that directly addressed this question; however, consensus was reached on only 8 of the items. Table 3 provides descriptive information regarding each of the 8 items that obtained consensus among the panelists. The mean ranged from a low of 1.03 for Item 1 to a high of 1.70 for Item 8. Five items had complete consensus with an additional 3 items achieving partial consensus. The likelihood of happening ranged from 87% for Item 24 to a low of 56% for Item 20. Seven items were considered likely to occur in the year 2010 ($P \geq 60\%$).

TABLE 3

ROUND 2 ITEMS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 2

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on M_{trim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD_{trim}	M_{trim}	
1	Item 1 ^a . It will be extremely important that elders in 2010 have healthy marriages and stable families. Elders should demonstrate marital faithfulness and responsibility in a society where marriages and families have frequently disintegrated or are fairly dysfunctional.	92	8	100	0	0	0.18	1.03	77
2	Item 24 ^a . In the year 2010, society will become increasingly fragmented, with individuals desiring community and a sense of belonging.	62	38	100	0	0	0.48	1.42	87
3	Item 9 ^a . Elders should be alert to the impact of pluralism and cultural diversity on congregations in the year 2010.	72	28	100	0	0	0.52	1.29	60
4	Item 60 ^a . In the year 2010, elders must be aware of and speak to the needs of people who will be grasping for true spirituality, hope and meaning and who have given up on the traditional institutional church for one reason or another.	49	51	100	0	0	0.59	1.60	61
5	Item 47 ^a . In the year 2010, elders should encourage the development of specialized ministries (e.g. single parents, divorced, elderly, singles, counseling, etc.) in order to meet the challenge caused by changing demographics (e.g. continued breakdown of families, the "aging of America", and the decline of marriages) in the world and within congregations.	49	51	100	0	0	0.63	1.64	66
6	Item 59 ^a . Problems in public schools will continue to intensify so that congregations in the year 2010 will be faced with issues regarding Christian school and home school education versus public school education.	21	76	97	3	0	0.66	2.14	68
7	Item 20. In the year 2010, elders should lead the congregation in being a "servant church" to the community, especially as government-sponsored programs for individuals (e.g. homeless, elderly, unemployed, mentally ill, etc.) decreases.	54	43	97	3	0	0.71	1.60	56
8	Item 8 ^a . In the year 2010, elders should study and clarify appropriate places of ministry for women within the local congregation. Broader societal acceptance of women in leadership positions will place tremendous pressures on congregations to conform to secular standards.	50	44	94	3	3	0.72	1.70	62

QUESTION #3: What characteristics should be manifested in elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?

There were 17 items in Round 2 that directly addressed this question. Table 4 provides descriptive information regarding each of these items that achieved consensus among the panelists. The mean ranged from a low of 1.03 for Items 1 and 54 to a high of 1.83 for Item 30. Eleven items had complete consensus with the remaining 6 items achieving partial consensus. The likelihood of happening ranged from 77% for Item 1 to a low of 46% for Items 13 and 30. Six items were predicted to occur in the year 2010 ($P \geq 60\%$).

TABLE 4

ROUND 2 ITEMS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 3

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on M_{trim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD_{trim}	M_{trim}	
1	Item 54 ^a . Elders in the year 2010 should lead their congregations in being ethical and moral people. Their lives should model integrity and a genuine devotion to Christ.	92	8	100	0	0	0.17	1.03	71
2	Item 1 ^a . It will be extremely important that elders in 2010 have healthy marriages and stable families. Elders should demonstrate marital faithfulness and responsibility in a society where marriages and families have frequently disintegrated or are fairly dysfunctional.	92	8	100	0	0	0.18	1.03	77
3	Item 14. In the year 2010, elders should create and maintain a vital commitment to a clear and widely-owned vision for the church. They should keep the vision lucid, point the way, guide, motivate, challenge, inspire, instruct, and enable the congregation to function as a unified organism.	90	10	100	0	0	0.25	1.07	53
4	Item 21 ^a . The characteristics of an elder described by Paul in the New Testament (1Tim 3; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5) should be found in the lives of elders in the year 2010.	87	13	100	0	0	0.29	1.09	70
5	Item 50. One of the most important characteristics of elders in the year 2010 is that they must be spiritual leaders, Holy Spirit filled and Holy Spirit led. The life of an elder should reflect spiritual maturity that includes a solid, working and growing knowledge of scripture, prayer-filled days, and an unwavering commitment to Christ.	87	13	100	0	0	0.29	1.10	55
6	Item 10 ^a . Elders in the year 2010 should be vigilant in protecting the congregation from self-seeking individuals and from false doctrine.	72	28	100	0	0	0.44	1.26	67
7	Item 22. Elders in the year 2010 should be skillful in conflict resolution and team building in order to enable harmony and unity in the midst of growing diversity.	72	28	100	0	0	0.44	1.29	58
8	Item 31. Elders must be missionary minded, leading congregations in developing evangelistic strategies that are sensitive to a "shrinking world" where "aliens in our midst" will necessitate greater missionary effort in America.	62	38	100	0	0	0.48	1.40	55
9	Item 32. Elders of effective congregations in the year 2010 must have a pioneering spirit.	62	38	100	0	0	0.49	1.40	52

(Table Continues)

TABLE 4 (continued)

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD _{trim}	M _{trim}	
	They should boldly lead the church in adapting structures and programs to serve the mission and spirit of Christ in changing times without compromising essentials. Elders should strike an appropriate balance between novelty and tradition.								
10	Item 24. Elders in the year 2010 should be able to discern giftedness in others and in themselves and should be able to nurture growth and faithfulness in exercising these gifts.	62	38	100	0	0	0.60	1.46	56
11	Item 47 ^a . In the year 2010, elders should encourage the development of specialized ministries (e.g. single parents, divorced, elderly, singles, counseling, etc.) in order to meet the challenge caused by changing demographics (e.g. continued breakdown of families, the "aging of America", and the decline of marriages) in the world and within congregations.	49	51	100	0	0	0.63	1.64	66
12	Item 63. Elders in the year 2010 should work together as a closely-knit team of individuals, each being gifted in specific areas of ministry. One elder should serve as a leader or facilitator to provide practical direction and focus. Decision making should occur by consensus with no individual elder insisting upon having the final word.	64	33	97	3	5	0.48	1.36	55
13	Item 13. Elders in the year 2010 should practice redemptive discipline of individuals when they are in need. Not to do so will, at the very least, result in elders losing their credibility.	44	53	97	3	0	0.54	1.63	46
14	Item 3 ^a . Elders in the year 2010 should prize learning. Elders should be committed to spiritual and leadership development within themselves. At the same time, elders should be mentors and teachers to others, encouraging their personal growth and maturity as Christians and equipping them to be servants for Christ.	85	10	95	0	5	0.35	1.12	60
15	Item 29. In the year 2010, elders should seek to free the church from institutionalism and promote the scriptural concept of the church as a living organism that is relationally based and incorporates family-type fellowship.	58	34	92	8	0	0.69	1.51	51
16	Item 30. Elders in the year 2010 need to be knowledgeable and committed to Restoration Movement principles and promote this understanding within their congregations.	45	45	90	10	0	0.87	1.83	46
17	Item 62. Elders should have general oversight over the congregation in the year 2010. They should be able to establish policy, manage resources, and delegate details while avoiding micromanaging the staff and other leaders.	58	32	90	7	3	0.91	1.68	55

QUESTION #4: What will the most effective organizational structure of the eldership look like in the year 2010?

There were two items in Round 2 that directly addressed this question. Table 5 provides descriptive information regarding each of these items that achieved consensus among the panelists. The mean ranged from a low of 1.36 for Item 63 to a high of 1.73 for Item 16. Both items achieved partial consensus. The likelihood of happening ranged from 59% for Item 16 to a 55% for Item 63. Neither of these items was considered likely to occur in the year 2010 based on the probability factors ($P \leq 60\%$).

TABLE 5

ROUND 2 ITEMS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 4

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on M_{rim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD_{rim}	M_{rim}	
1	Item 63. Elders in the year 2010 should work together as a closely-knit team of individuals, each being gifted in specific areas of ministry. One elder should serve as a leader or facilitator to provide practical direction and focus. Decision making should occur by consensus with no individual elder insisting upon having the final word.	64	33	97	3	0	0.48	1.36	55
2	Item 16. In the year 2010, there will be no one specific structure that is more Biblical than another for how the eldership organizes itself, so long as it is grounded in Biblical norms. Prayer, fasting, study, lots of counsel, and contextual sensitivity will be a good means for discerning the most effective structure in a given local congregation.	49	41	90	5	5	0.88	1.73	59

Note. Items are rank ordered first by C then by SD_{rim} for Agreeability

^aIndicates item Likely to Happen in the year 2010 (P≥60%)

QUESTION #5: What will be the most appropriate relationship between elders and minister in the successful congregation for the year 2010?

There were 7 items in Round 2 that directly addressed this question. Table 6 provides descriptive information regarding each of these items. The mean ranged from a low of 1.0 for Item 56 to a high of 2.20 for Item 52. Two items reached complete consensus with an additional four items achieving partial consensus. The likelihood of happening ranged from 65% for Item 12 to a low of 56% for Item 20. Four items were predicted to occur in the year 2010 ($P \geq 60\%$).

TABLE 6

ROUND 2 ITEMS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 5

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on M_{rim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD_{rim}	M_{rim}	
1	Item 56 ^a . An attitude of teamwork and harmony should be characteristic of the relationship between elders and minister(s) in the year 2010. The “we-they” mindset, that kills unity and progress, should be replaced with a strong sense of collegiality, characterized by trust, camaraderie, a mature spirituality, patience, love, respect, encouragement, a spirit of forgiveness, obedience to the same Lord, and mutual accountability.	97	3	100	0	0	0.16	1.00	60
2	Item 48 ^a . Congregations in the year 2010 must have a clear, commonly held, Biblical based vision of the purpose and mission of the church.	90	10	100	0	0	0.24	1.06	60
3	Item 20. In the year 2010, elders should lead the congregation in being a “servant church” to the community, especially as government-sponsored programs for individuals (e.g. homeless, elderly, unemployed, mentally ill, etc.) decreases.	54	44	97	3	0	0.71	1.60	56
4	Item 52. Congregations will struggle in the year 2010 with establishing accountability structures with leaders and various ministries.	21	74	96	4	0	0.69	2.20	59
5	Item 7. In the year 2010, responsibilities and roles of elders, deacons, staff, and other leaders should be more clearly defined in order to avoid unnecessary overlap and ineffective use of time and talents.	56	36	92	8	0	0.88	1.66	57
6	Item 12 ^a . In the year 2010, the most effectively organized congregations will be those where the senior minister works closely with the elders and is considered the “leader of leaders” or “first among equals”.	46	44	90	8	2	0.95	1.92	65
7	Item 45 ^a . Ministers who meet the Biblical qualifications of an elder should be recognized as elders and serve alongside other elders in the congregation of the year 2010.	49	38	87	13	0	0.98	1.84	64

Note. Items are rank ordered first by C then by SD_{rim} for Agreeability

^aIndicates item Likely to Happen in the year 2010 (P≥60%)

QUESTION #6: How might individuals acquire and develop the characteristics deemed important for the 21st century elder?

Five items in Round 2 directly addressed this question. Table 7 provides descriptive information regarding each of these items. The mean ranged from a low of 1.10 for Item 50 to a high of 2.20 for Item 52. Two items had complete consensus with the remaining three items achieving partial consensus. The likelihood of happening ranged from 60% for Items 17 and three to a low of 55% for Item 50. Two items were predicted to occur in the year 2010 ($P \geq 60\%$).

TABLE 7

ROUND 2 ITEMS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 6

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on M_{rim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD_{rim}	M_{rim}	
1	Item 50. One of the most important characteristics of elders in the year 2010 is that they must be spiritual leaders, Holy Spirit filled and Holy Spirit led. The life of an elder should reflect spiritual maturity that includes a solid, working and growing knowledge of scripture, prayer-filled days, and an unwavering commitment to Christ.	87	13	100	0	0	0.29	1.10	55
2	Item 17 ^a . The local congregation will be the seed-bed for elders in the year 2010. Congregations should intentionally seek out those who show the qualities and giftedness required for elders, then aggressively nurture and equip them for future service.	85	15	100	0	0	0.33	1.13	60
3	Item 38. Christian colleges in the year 2010 need to provide seminars, workshops and resources for leadership development of elders within local congregations. Emphasis should be placed on skill development, spiritual development, and leadership principles.	56	41	97	3	0	0.81	1.63	58
4	Item 3 ^a . Elders in the year 2010 should prize learning. Elders should be committed to spiritual and leadership development within themselves. At the same time, elders should be mentors and teachers to others, encouraging their personal growth and maturity as Christians and equipping them to be servants for Christ.	85	10	95	5	0	0.35	1.12	60
5	Item 52. Congregations will struggle in the year 2010 with establishing accountability structures with leaders and various ministries.	21	74	95	5	0	0.69	2.20	59

Note. Items are rank ordered first by C then by SD_{rim} for Agreeability

^aIndicates item Likely to Happen in the year 2010 (P≥60%)

QUESTION #7: What kind of changes need to occur in how congregations function to allow the eldership to lead effectively?

Eight items in Round 2 directly addressed this question; however, only seven of the items reached consensus among the respondents. Table 8 provides descriptive information regarding each of these items that achieved consensus. The mean ranged from a low of 1.03 for Item 28 to a high of 2.03 for both Items 35 and 36. Five items had complete consensus with an additional two items achieving partial consensus. The likelihood of happening ranged from 63% for Item 28 to a low of 48% for Item 36. Two items were predicted to occur in the year 2010 ($P \geq 60\%$).

TABLE 8

ROUND 2 ITEMS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 7

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on \underline{M}_{trim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	\underline{SD}_{trim}	\underline{M}_{trim}	
1	Item 28 ^a . Individuals within congregations in the year 2010 should be carefully and prayerfully chosen for eldership. Selection should be based on spiritual qualities and character, giftedness, and proven leadership abilities, not on popularity, "whose related to whom" or "whose feelings will get hurt".	92	8	100	0	0	0.17	1.03	63
2	Item 48 ^a . Congregations in the year 2010 must have a clear, commonly held, Biblical based vision of the purpose and mission of the church.	90	10	100	0	0	0.24	1.06	60
3	Item 55. A congregation in the year 2010 must be open to change and flexible in the methods it employs, while remaining true to its nature and mission.	85	15	100	0	0	0.32	1.12	58
4	Item 51. Across the board, in all sizes of congregations, there must be better, intentional, consistent, two-way communications with all members, staff, and elders in the year 2010.	69	31	100	0	0	0.46	1.29	52
5	Item 19. In the year 2010, congregations must focus on developing good followership as much as leadership. Followers need to trust, honor, respect, encourage, submit to and pray for elders.	56	44	100	0	0	0.50	1.44	57
6	Item 35. Elders in the year 2010 should be freed up to do less business and more ministering. Their functions should focus on the essentials: setting a vision, spiritual leadership through prayer, teaching/equipping, and mentoring/discipling.	66	31	97	3	0	0.78	2.03	50
7	Item 36. Congregations in the year 2010 should be organized in a network of small cells or shepherding groups so that elders can better attend to daily pastoral care matters while also encouraging individuals to serve each other and the community in which they find themselves.	31	66	97	3	0	0.78	2.03	48

Note. Items are rank ordered first by C then by \underline{SD}_{trim} for Agreeability

^aIndicates item Likely to Happen in the year 2010 (P≥60%)

QUESTION #8: How might congregations encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?

Seven items in Round 2 directly addressed this question. Table 9 provides descriptive information regarding each of these items. The mean ranged from a low of 1.03 for Item 28 to a high of 1.92 for Item 11. Four items had complete consensus with the remaining three items achieving partial consensus. The likelihood of happening ranged from 63% for Item 28 to a low of 40% for Item 34. Three items were predicted to occur in the year 2010 ($P \geq 60\%$).

TABLE 9

ROUND 2 ITEMS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 8

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on M_{trim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD_{trim}	M_{trim}	
1	Item 28 ^a . Individuals within congregations in the year 2010 should be carefully and prayerfully chosen for eldership. Selection should be based on spiritual qualities and character, giftedness, and proven leadership abilities, not on popularity, "whose related to whom" or "whose feelings will get hurt".	92	8	100	0	0	0.17	1.03	63
2	Item 17 ^a . The local congregation will be the seed-bed for elders in the year 2010. Congregations should intentionally seek out those who show the qualities and giftedness required for elders, then aggressively nurture and equip them for future service.	85	15	100	0	0	0.33	1.13	60
3	Item 42. Congregations will need to know, teach and emphasize the importance of the role of elder in the year 2010.	55	45	100	0	0	0.49	1.47	57
4	Item 19. In the year 2010, congregations must focus on developing good followership as much as leadership. Followers need to trust, honor, respect, encourage, submit to and pray for elders.	56	44	100	0	0	0.50	1.44	57
5	Item 34. Congregations in the year 2010 should make funds available for elders and potential elders to pursue opportunities for leadership growth. Opportunities may include, but not be limited to, participation in courses at a college, attendance at seminars and works, purchase of books and resources, etc.	44	53	97	3	0	0.72	1.77	40
6	Item 3 ^a . Elders in the year 2010 should prize learning. Elders should be committed to spiritual and leadership development within themselves. At the same time, elders should be mentors and teachers to others, encouraging their personal growth and maturity as Christians and equipping them to be servants for Christ.	85	10	95	0	5	0.35	1.12	60
7	Item 11. The "traditional church board" will be an inappropriate structure for a congregation that seeks to effectively carry out its vision and purpose in the year 2010.	36	58	94	6	6	0.78	1.92	58

Note. Items are rank ordered first by C then by SD_{trim} for Agreeability

QUESTION #9: How might Christian church/church of Christ colleges encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?

Five items in Round 2 directly addressed this question. Table 10 provides descriptive information regarding each of these items. The mean ranged from a low of 1.10 for Item 65 to a high of 2.22 for Item 25. Two items had complete consensus with the remaining three items achieving partial consensus. The likelihood of happening ranged from 69% for Item 65 to a low of 52% for Item 25. Three items were predicted to occur in the year 2010 ($P \geq 60\%$).

TABLE 10

ROUND 2 ITEMS RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTION 9

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on M_{rim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Frequency Distribution (%)					Agreeability		P (%)
		St A	A	C	D	St D	SD_{rim}	M_{rim}	
1	Item 65 ^a . In the year 2010, Christian colleges should encourage spiritual development of students so that they will have a strong foundation from which to be effective elders, leaders, and followers.	87	13	100	0	0	0.29	1.10	69
2	Item 53 ^a . Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide ministerial students and potential ministers with some clear understanding of the need to train elders, what to teach, and how to work with elders.	76	24	100	0	0	0.41	1.22	62
3	Item 6 ^a . Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide opportunities for students to be a part of settings where they can both observe leadership of others and experience times of leading themselves. Such times may occur through formal internships, small group studies, volunteer ministries, etc. and whenever possible, should be in the context of a local congregation.	79	18	97	0	3	0.39	1.17	66
4	Item 38. Christian colleges in the year 2010 need to provide seminars, workshops and resources for leadership development of elders within local congregations. Emphasis should be placed on skill development, spiritual development, and leadership principles.	56	41	97	3	0	0.81	1.63	58
5	Item 25. Christian colleges should be in the unique position of being knowledgeable about many different churches and issues. In the year 2010, colleges should serve as a "clearing house", communicating to elders "what's working and what isn't" and what kinds of issues may impact their congregations.	26	66	92	8	0	0.84	2.22	52

Note. Items are rank ordered first by C then by SD_{rim} for Agreeability

^aIndicates item Likely to Happen in the year 2010 (P≥60%)

Summary

Chapter 5 described the construction, distribution, and analysis of Round 2. Sixty-six items were distilled from Round 1 results and were used to form Round 2. Two scales were used to help establish consensus and predict future trends for elders in Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010. A Likert-type scale measured agreeability of panelists with the 66 items in Round 2. A probability factor labeled “likelihood of happening” was used to project how likely the content of an item would occur in the year 2010. Analysis of data indicated that panelists reached partial or complete consensus on 47 of the items. Twenty-one of the 47 items were considered likely to occur in the year 2010 ($P \geq 60\%$).

Conclusions and recommendations for elders and individuals involved with leadership in Christian churches/churches of Christ will be developed in chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study focused on researching and revealing information that could be used to strengthen the eldership leading Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010. The method of research employed in this study made analysis more complex than many research projects. Qualitative analysis of narrative responses from Round 1 was discussed in chapter 4 and resulted in the formation of 66 statements that comprised the Round 2 questionnaire. The level of agreeability and likelihood of happening associated with the response of each panelist to the 66 items of Round 2 was ascertained using a Likert scale and a probability factor. Findings from data analysis in Round 2 were recorded in chapter 5.

The primary purpose of this study was to compose a profile of characteristics of a competent elder as a leader of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010. An essential component of this composition was the identification of issues that elders will face in the 21st century church. A second objective was to identify effective ways in which elders can be prepared as leaders to meet the challenges of guiding congregations in the year 2010.

Conclusions

Research techniques and findings from this study allowed the researcher to draw the following conclusions in four primary areas: (a) general observations, (b) issues facing elders, (c) development suggestions, and (d) profile of a 21st century elder.

General Observations

A number of conclusions can be drawn from looking comprehensively at the entire study including the literature review, the Delphi Technique, and a broad observation of the data.

1. Based on the high rate of return for both instruments and the quantity and quality of comments that panelists produced, it may be concluded there is a significant interest among the panelists in helping elders become better leaders both currently and in the future. Further, it can be concluded that there is a legitimate need for leadership studies within congregations.
2. Based on the quantity and quality of data revealed in Round 1 and the consensus that was reached by the group in over 72% of the Round 2 items, it may be concluded that the Delphi Technique was extremely useful and productive, providing the means by which consensus on some potentially sensitive issues could be obtained across a diverse grouping of individuals.
3. Based on verbal feedback from panelists, it can be concluded that participating in the study was very thought provoking and challenging. Comments such as “if nothing else, this has got me to think carefully about the future” and “I intend on using this (Round 1) with my elders to stimulate thought” demonstrate that the Delphi is not simply a research tool, but also a powerful catalyst for introspection and potential change.
4. Based on the amount of gender bias observed in the narrative type responses of Round 1, the researcher concluded that the majority of panelists either intentionally or naively assume that the role of elder is a male role and does not include women.

Even the outside auditor commented on the disproportionate number of references to elders as males despite the fact that female elders exist (two of the 10 elder panelists were female). Within Christian churches/churches of Christ, elders have traditionally been male, although there are some noted exceptions. In addition, the majority of scriptural passages from the Bible that refer to elders does so within a male context (See Table 1). Christian churches/churches of Christ will be faced with pressure to consider women in elder positions as women in society at large are increasingly found in leadership positions.

5. Based on findings in this study, it can be concluded that there is a great deal of parallelism between lists of attributes and roles generated by panelists and those identified in the literature review. Senge (1990) identified 3 roles: (a) leader as designer and visionary, (b) leader as steward of a purpose greater than his/her own, and (c) leader as teacher. These roles tie in closely with Items 14 and 48 from Round 2 which were ranked 5th and 6th according to level of consensus (See Appendix H). Qualities and issues identified in this research such as integrity, discernment, visionary, unity, conflict resolution, communications, trust, and flexibility reflect the content, and sometimes the exact wording, of lists created by De Pree (1992) and Gardner (1990).

Issues Facing Elders

1. Based on the high level of consensus reached concerning teamwork between elders and minister(s) and the low probability level (P=60%), it can be concluded that congregations are currently facing significant problems on this area.

2. Based on the extremely high probability factor for Item 24 of Round 2, it can be concluded that elders will undoubtedly be faced with the opportunity of helping people find a place of belonging and community.
3. It can be concluded that elders need to thoughtfully address issues related to breakup of families within their congregations as well as in the world around them. Elders should creatively seek ways to minister to those who are involved in the process of divorce.
4. It can be concluded that congregations will experience tremendous pressure to conform to what society and other churches do relative to women serving in formal leadership positions.
5. Findings would suggest that the Weberian-type model for church boards is inappropriate and needs to be replaced with a team-oriented approach that allows for a culture that promotes “body-life” and fellowship between all members.

Development Practices

A second objective of the research was to identify ways in which elders can be prepared as leaders to meet the challenges of guiding congregations in the year 2010. Appendix K depicts Round 2 items that are associated with the issue of development of elders as leaders. Findings suggest several areas where individuals could be better prepared to meet the challenges of leading congregations in the year 2010.

1. It can be concluded there is a significant need among congregations to select as elders those individuals who exhibit spiritual qualities and character, giftedness, and proven leadership abilities. Therefore, there is great need within congregations to encourage

and nurture individuals that they might develop these attributes and be given opportunities to lead and learn.

2. It can be concluded that elders need to be lifelong learners. They should never stop growing in their knowledge and understanding of scripture and should seek out opportunities to develop spiritual maturity. Therefore, there is a significant need for elders to be involved in ongoing and purposeful development activities both personally and in groups.
3. It can be concluded that Christian colleges need to pay greater attention to their role in promoting spiritual development of students so they will have a strong foundation from which to draw upon as they become elders of future congregations.
4. It can be concluded that there is considerable ignorance among individuals in congregations as to the importance and role of the elder. Further, it can be concluded that it is important for congregations to become more knowledgeable about elders and their role as leader.
5. It can be concluded that students at Christian colleges should be given opportunities to observe leadership of others and themselves have experiences in leading.
6. It can be concluded that elders need to be very active in mentoring others, grooming them for leadership positions.

Profile of a 21st Century Elder

The following profile of an elder is based on the findings from the rank ordering of frequency distribution for Round 2 items (See Appendix I). Only those items which had the highest level of consensus (C=100%) and at least 85% “strong agreement” among the panelists were used to compile the following profile.

1. An elder in the year 2010 should likely be a team player, seeking to work in harmony with other elders and ministers. The effective elder will likely display a strong sense of collegiality, characterized by trust, love, respect, camaraderie, and mutual accountability. Elders will need to be carefully and prayerfully chosen with the primary criteria being spiritual qualities, giftedness, and proven leadership abilities. The elder should be a person who models integrity and genuine devotion to Christ thereby encouraging the congregation to be a moral and ethical people. The qualities of an elder described by Paul in the New Testament will likely continue to be extremely important qualities for the elder to possess in the year 2010.
2. An elder in the year 2010 should be a spiritual leader, Holy Spirit-filled and Holy Spirit-led. The life of an elder should reflect spiritual maturity that includes a solid, working, and growing knowledge of scripture, prayer-filled days, and an unwavering commitment to Christ. It is likely important that elders be characterized by healthy marriages and stable families so that their lives demonstrate marital faithfulness and responsibility in a society where marriages and families will probably continue to disintegrate.

3. In the year 2010 the effective elder should create and maintain a vital commitment to a clear and widely owned vision for the church. The 21st century elder should be skilled at keeping the vision lucid, pointing the way, guiding, motivating, challenging, inspiring, instructing, and enabling the congregation to function as a unified organism.
4. Elders in the year 2010 should be committed to spiritual and leadership development in themselves. At the same time, the effective elder should be a mentor and teacher to others, encouraging personal growth and maturity as Christians and preparing them to be servants for Christ.

Recommendations

Less than 15 years separate today from 2010. Many panelists commented that the issues and characteristics that they identified as important for 2010 are just as relevant for today's eldership. The following recommendations are suggested so that elders and leaders in Christian churches/churches of Christ may be encouraged to take steps now that will help prepare them for the 21st Century.

1. It is recommended that current elders endeavor to improve their own leadership abilities while encouraging the growth of others through intentional development practices. It would be helpful if more practical material were developed that could facilitate in-house growth activities.
2. It is recommended that a leadership laboratory be established where leaders, including elders, can spend time taking advantage of information resources, simulation activities, and group learning events. This laboratory could perhaps exist as a stand-alone facility or be connected with a college or seminary.

3. It is recommended that the Christian college take advantage of being in a position to act as a resource center, collecting and disseminating useful information gathered from congregations around the country and the world.
4. It is recommended that a newsletter geared specifically toward development of elders as leaders, filled with practical tips and suggestions, would be extremely beneficial to elders and leaders around the world.
5. It is recommended that Christian colleges consider and implement programs that foster preparation of individuals as effective leaders in congregations. Faculty members as well as ministers and elders should be facilitators of such activities, breaking down some of the existing barriers between college and congregation.
6. It is recommended that greater efforts be made at networking elders between local congregations. Leaders and elders can be enriched by the sharing of ideas that such cross-congregational dialogue would permit.
7. It is recommended that colleges establish better alliances with local congregations, promoting opportunities for students to observe leadership in action and to allow participation in hands-on experiences.
8. It is recommended that research should be conducted to examine the relationship between elder and minister. Because this issue received the highest level of consensus but a relatively low probability, research should focus on exploring ways of improving relationships so congregations can be more effective. Those congregations that exhibit a “we-they” mindset need to consider changing to a design that promotes collegiality and teamwork.

9. It is recommended that further study on leadership roles of women in congregations be conducted. Congregations need to periodically examine in light of scripture and other material why they hold certain beliefs related to women serving in key leadership positions such as the eldership. More research is needed so that appropriate decisions can be made.
10. It is recommended that additional studies be conducted that would seek input from members within the congregation. This study was limited in that it sought information only from elders, ministers, faculty and writers.
11. Finally, it is recommended that a similar Delphi Study be conducted approximately every five years to aid individuals, congregations, and colleges to stay abreast of future trends and thought.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
PILOT STUDY

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ELDERSHIP FOR CHRISTIAN CHURCHES/CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE YEAR 2010: A DELPHI STUDY

ROUND 1

“What is the true responsibility and function of an elder?”

“I wish the elders could get together on this, its like they don’t even know what they’re supposed to do.”

These comments and others like them are in part what prompted this research. Thank you for your willingness to serve as a member of the panel for this “future” study. As a reminder, this “expert” panel consists of individuals who have been grouped together for the very specific purpose of providing information on what the eldership will look like in the church for the year 2010. Additionally, you will be asked to share your thoughts and insights on how elders may best be equipped to meet their anticipated responsibilities.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Attached are the questions for Round 1. **First, please briefly read through all the questions then go back and respond to each questions as thoroughly as possible using the back of each page as more space is needed.** There is no specific “answer” being looked for, only your particular thoughts. While each question is unique, you will notice that at times there is some overlap. Please return the completed questionnaire as soon as possible but no later than _____. A self-addressed stamped envelope has been provide in this packet to assist in mailing your response. If you have any questions please call or E-Mail me at the numbers listed below.

Remember, all responses will be kept anonymous. Your name is requested for tracking purposes only and all responses will be recorded anonymously. The information from all participants will be collected, analyzed, and subsequently used to develop the Round 2 questionnaire. It is anticipated that the Round 2 questionnaire will take **considerably less time to complete** and should be arriving to you in the mail within the next several weeks.

Again, a sincere thanks for your willingness in sharing both your time and knowledge in this project. The information will be used as the basis for my doctoral dissertation at East Tennessee State University. I am excited about the possibilities that could develop from this study and I fully anticipate that you too will be encouraged and enlightened as a result of the sharing and consensus that occurs by all participants. A copy of the findings will be made available for all participants at the conclusion of the study.

Pete Cummins

703 Rolling Hills Drive

Johnson City, TN 37604

PHONE: (423) 929-7849

E-MAIL: pete0248@watauga.watauga.org

Please fill out these brief biographical questions:

NAME: _____ (will be kept confidential!)

Estimated years involved with Christian churches/churches of Christ

You have been selected for this project because you have been associated primarily with one of the following groups of individuals: ELDER / MINISTER / WRITER / COLLEGE FACULTY. You may be a member of one of the other groups, but please keep in mind that in responding to questions, you should do so **primarily** from the perspective of the group circled above.

QUESTION #1

One author has recently noted that elders, according to the New Testament, are responsible to “lead the church, teach and preach the Word, protect the church from false teachers, exhort and admonish the saints in sound doctrine, visit the sick and pray, and judge doctrinal issues.” Think about the **congregation you are most familiar with and consider that congregation in the year 2010**. Please identify responsibilities of elders that you believe are essential for this “future” congregation. (*Remember, please use the backside of each question if additional space is needed*)

QUESTION #2

Again, think about the **congregation you are most familiar with**. Discuss your general level of satisfaction in the eldership, noting particularly how well you believe elders are prepared and equipped to meet the needs of the congregation over the next fifteen years, **based on those responsibilities you have identified in Question 1**.

QUESTION #3

Consider Question 2 again. This time, think about **Christian Churches/Churches of Christ as a whole**. Please discuss how well do you believe elders are prepared and equipped to meet the needs of their respective congregations over the next fifteen years, **based on those responsibilities you have identified in Question 1**.

QUESTION #4

Elders are faced with many issues that come primarily from **within** a congregation. Think about **the congregation you are most familiar** with and consider the **next two decades**. Please list below as many **internal** issues you believe elders will be contending with as leaders of that specific **future** congregation.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____

QUESTION #5

Consider **Question 4** again. This time, think about **Christian churches/churches of Christ as a whole** and consider the **next two decades**. Please list below as many **additional internal** issues you believe will influence elders as leaders of **future** congregations in our fellowship.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____

QUESTION #6

Elders also contend with many factors that come primarily from the world **outside** a congregation. Think about **the congregation you are most familiar with** and consider the **next two decades**. Please list below as many **external** issues you believe elders will be faced with as leaders of that specific **future** congregation.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____

QUESTION #7

Consider **Question 6** again. This time, think about **our fellowship of churches as a whole** and consider the **next two decades**. Please list below as many **additional external** issues you believe will influence elders as leaders of **future** congregations in our fellowship.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____

QUESTION #8

Leadership in the church has gone through many changes over the centuries. At times it has been very team oriented and at other times it has been more individualistic, with a strong top-down structure. Please describe what you believe will be the most appropriate leadership structure to meet the challenges facing congregations in the year 2010, focusing primarily on the role of elders.

QUESTION #9

Think about a congregation in the year 2010 that you believe will be effective at carrying out its mission. Describe the relationship between elders and minister(s) that you anticipate will be necessary to allow this congregation to exist successfully. Identify as many characteristics as possible.

QUESTION #11

What role, if any, do you believe the **local congregation** should play in efforts to equip elders or potential elders for the congregation of the year 2010. If applicable, please note as many specific ideas and activities as come to mind.

QUESTION #12

What role, if any, do you believe the Christian Church/Church of Christ **colleges** should play in efforts to equip elders or potential elders for the congregation of the year 2010. If applicable, please note as many specific ideas and activities as come to mind.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, SUGGESTION, ETC.

Please use space on the back of this sheet to communicate any thoughts, insights, or questions you may have regarding the subject at hand. Again, thank you very much for your time!

APPENDIX B
ROUND 1

December 7, 1996

[Recipient Name]

[Address]

[City, State/Province Zip/Postal Code]

Dear [Recipient]:

"I wish the elders could get together on this, it's like they don't even know what they're supposed to do."

"Why do missionaries seem to see the importance of developing elders and other leaders overseas and we aren't doing anything to help our elders in the United States?"

Thank you for agreeing to help me with this study. The above questions illustrate the frustration increasingly voiced in many churches about the eldership. As an elder and as a student of educational leadership, I have also been concerned about the effectiveness of elders in Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. Findings from this study should provide considerable information that can be used to encourage the preparation and strengthening of elders within our fellowship of churches.

A primary purpose of my research is to provide a picture of what the eldership should look like in the year 2010. A secondary purpose is to gain insight into issues that will be facing elders in the near future and to offer suggestions on how elders can be better prepared to meet these challenges. Two separate questionnaires will be used to gain information for this study. Attached is the Round One questionnaire. Please return the completed questionnaire as soon as possible to assist me in making a timely response to this need in the churches. If you have any questions, please call or E-Mail me at the numbers listed below.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Briefly read through all the questions to provide yourself with a general overview.**
2. **Go back and respond to each question, noting that there may be some overlap. Use the back side of each question if additional space is needed.**
3. **Use the self-addressed stamped envelope provided to return your responses as soon as possible, but please mail the completed questionnaire no later than DECEMBER 18.**

The information from this round will be collected, analyzed, and subsequently used to develop the Round Two questionnaire which you should receive in the mail in January. It is anticipated that the responses to Round Two will be shorter and will take less time. All responses will be kept confidential. Your name is requested for tracking purposes only and all responses will be recorded anonymously.

Again, a sincere thanks for your willingness in sharing both your time and knowledge in this study. I am optimistic about the possibilities that could develop from this research and I fully anticipate that you too will be encouraged and enlightened as a result of the sharing that occurs by all participants. A summary of the findings will be provided to all participants at the conclusion of the study.

Pete Cummins
1305 Plantation Drive
Johnson City, TN 37604
PHONE: (423) 929-7849

E-MAIL: pete0248@watauga.watauga.org

ROUND ONE

NAME: _____ (will be kept confidential!)

You have been selected for this study because you have been associated primarily with one of the following groups of individuals: ELDER / MINISTER / WRITER / COLLEGE FACULTY.

You may be a member of one of the other groups, but please keep in mind that in responding to questions below, you should do so **primarily** from the perspective of the group indicated above.

QUESTION #1

Elders are faced with many issues that come primarily from **within** a congregation and could be described as internal issues. What **internal issues** do you believe elders will contend with as leaders of congregations in the year 2010. (*Numbering below is for your convenience, please feel free to use the back side for additional issues*)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

QUESTION #2

Congregations do not exist in a vacuum. Elders contend with many factors and issues that come from the world **outside** a congregation. What **external issues** do you believe elders will face as leaders of congregations in the year 2010? (*Numbering below is for your convenience, please feel free to use the back side for additional issues*)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

QUESTION #3

What specific responsibilities and characteristics do you believe will be important for an elder to have in the year 2010? (*Numbering below is for your convenience, please feel free to use the back side for additional issues*)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

QUESTION #4

Elders in a congregation have worked together in many ways over the centuries. For example, at times elders have been very team oriented and at other times have been more individualistic, with a strong top-down structure. Please describe what you believe to be the most appropriate organizing structure for the eldership for congregations in the year 2010. *(Use the backside of each question if additional space is needed!)*

QUESTION #5

Think about a congregation in the year 2010 that you believe will be effective at carrying out its mission. What will the relationship between elders and minister(s) look like that you anticipate will be necessary to allow this congregation to exist successfully? Identify as many characteristics as possible. *(Remember, use the backside of each question if additional space is needed!)*

QUESTION #6

In what ways might individuals be prepared and equipped as elders to handle the anticipated issues, responsibilities and characteristics you have identified in the previous questions? *(Remember, use the backside of each question if additional space is needed!)*

QUESTION #7

What changes do you believe need to occur in how congregations function on a day to day basis in order to allow the eldership to effectively lead in the year 2010? *(Remember, use the backside of each question if additional space is needed!)*

QUESTION #8

What role do you believe the **local congregation** should have in encouraging development of individuals for service as elders for the congregation of the year 2010? If applicable, please note as many specific ideas and activities as come to mind. *(Use the backside of each question if additional space is needed!)*

QUESTION #9

What role, if any, do you believe Christian Church/Church of Christ **colleges** should exhibit in encouraging development of individuals for service as elders for the congregation of the year 2010? If applicable, please note as many specific ideas and activities as come to mind. *(Use the backside of each question if additional space is needed!)*

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, SUGGESTION, ETC.

Please use space below and on the back of this sheet to communicate any additional thoughts, insights, or questions you may have regarding the subject at hand. Again, thank you very much for your valuable information and time!

APPENDIX C
AUDIT AGREEMENT

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January 13, 1997

Dear Dr. Smith:

Thank you for agreeing to examine material from Round 1 of my Delphi study. I have enclosed "thought cards" which record the individual responses of each participant for the audit sample, questions 3 and 9. The "thought cards" have been sorted into stacks based on common or redundant content. Each of these stacks has been identified with a label or summary statement which depicts the stack's central thought. I have then resorted and further collapsed the labels in an effort to establish a mutually exclusive but exhaustive set of thoughts. Finally, I have identified each resulting grouping of stacks with a label or summary statement which adequately represents this unique combination of thoughts.

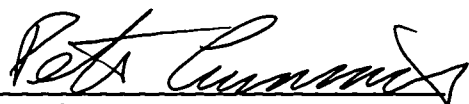
I would ask that your central task be as follows:

1. select a sample of "thought cards" for examination
2. audit initial sorting of thoughts into stacks making any observations/reflections as to appropriateness of reduction and subsequent summarizing labels
3. audit second sorting of stacks making any observations/reflections as to appropriateness of reduction and subsequent summarizing statement
4. provide a letter that describes your observations and any recommendations to be considered

Thanks for your time and assistance. If you have questions please call me at home 929-7849 or E-

Mail me at Woodridge Hospital as follows: pete0248@watauga.watauga.org

Sincerely,



Pete Cummins

Enclosure: Round 1 blank packet, "Thought Cards", Purpose of Study, Research Questions

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study will be to compose a profile of a competent elder as a leader of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010. An essential component of this composition will be the identification of issues that elders will face in the 21st century church. A second objective will be to identify effective ways in which elders can be prepared to meet the challenges of leading congregations in the beginning of the 21st century.

Research Questions

1. What internal issues will elders contend with as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
2. What external factors will influence elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
3. What characteristics should be manifested in elders as leaders of Christian churches/churches of Christ in the year 2010?
4. What will the most effective organizational structure of the eldership look like in the year 2010?
5. What will be the most appropriate relationship between elders and minister in the successful congregation for the year 2010?
6. How might individuals acquire and develop the characteristics deemed important for the 21st century elder?
7. What kind of changes need to occur in how congregations function to allow the eldership to lead effectively?
8. How might congregations encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?
9. How might Christian church/church of Christ colleges encourage the development and growth of individuals so they are prepared to be elders for the church in the year 2010?

APPENDIX D
AUDITOR'S REPORT

Auditor's Report

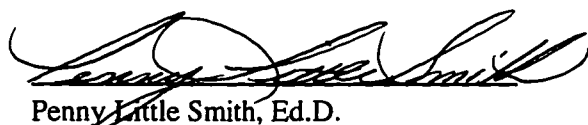
Early in the planning stages of his dissertation, Mr. Peter Cummins requested that I serve as auditor for the portion of his dissertation that involved qualitative data. As the design for his dissertation began to emerge. Mr. Cummins shared his topic, his planned methodology, and why he felt his study was important. As he refined his design we continued to discuss benefits and pitfalls of using differing approaches to glean the information needed to complete his study. As the researcher worked with his committee, he shared key conversations with me to assist in my understanding of both his feelings and expectations as well as his committee's expectations concerning his study.

We met several times and talked at length about data collection, particularly the use of the Delphi Technique for ascertaining needed information. Mr. Cummins asked that I examine two complete subsets of collected data. The data resulted from surveys containing open-ended question to which subjects had responded. The data from this initial inquiry was separated into clusters of information reflecting the same or a very similar line of thought. Once data clusters were formed, the researcher developed a topical sentence or phrase that encompassed the information within that cluster. These topical conclusions were then to be used to create a second instrument that would be sent to subjects allowing them to respond to the compressed set of thoughts expressed by all subjects.

My major auditing task was an in-depth examination of two data subsets. Without reading Mr. Cummins overview phrase, I read each data bit within a cluster. I examined the data bits for logical grouping based on similarity of response. I then formulated a phrase that seemed to encompass the responses. After formulating a unifying phrase, I read the phrase that the researcher had formulated for the information cluster. I found the researcher's consolidating phrases/sentences to be at all times logical based on legitimately grouped responses. After examining the subsets, Mr. Cummins and I met to discuss my findings. I shared my findings that related to the subsets and my thoughts in general about the information procured. I found the researcher to be appreciative and receptive to comments and suggestions.

Based upon in-depth conversations with the researcher and a thorough examination of data, grouping, and decisions made, I, without reservation, conclude that the researcher has dealt ethically and logically with the information obtained through the use of the Delphi Technique. I was tremendously impressed by the painstaking work that Mr. Cummins had done to keep his study methodologically pure. At all times he sought to keep the identity of his subjects protected and to keep his findings data based.

Serving as an auditor for this dissertation was both a privilege and pleasure. The researcher seems to have identified fertile ground in an area where little research has been conducted. I found the researcher to be ethical, conscientious and professional at all times. I congratulate Mr. Cummins on a study that promises to be of great value in an area heretofore receiving little attention.



Penny Little Smith, Ed.D.
Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs
James H. Quillen College of Medicine

APPENDIX E

ROUND 2

January 31, 1997

[Recipient Name]

[Address]

[City, State/Province Zip/Postal Code]

Dear [Recipient]:

Round 2
***“Characteristics of the Eldership
 in Christian Churches/Churches
 of Christ in the Year 2010”***

Thank you for taking the time to respond to Round 1. I am pleased to report that there was a 100% response rate and that the responses were extremely thorough and relevant. The following statements, composing Round 2, have been carefully worded in order to reflect and summarize the thoughts expressed in Round 1. Please read and follow the instructions below.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Circle the number on the scale under each statement that best represents your level of agreement/disagreement.**
2. **Indicate how likely you believe the statement will occur in the year 2010 by placing a percent in the box labeled “likelihood of happening”.**

EXAMPLE: In the year 2010, gasoline lawn mowers should be outlawed in the United States. (A respondent who strongly disagrees with this statement but believes it is very likely to occur would record the following)

.....1.....2.....3.....4.....**5**.....
 STRONGLY AGREE AGREE STRONGLY DISAGREE

Likelihood of Happening
90 %

If you have any comments you would like to make about a particular statement, please use the backside of the appropriate page, numbering your comment to correspond to the statement number. Use the self-addressed stamped envelope provided to return your responses as soon as possible, but please, place it in the mail no later than **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10.**

All responses will be kept confidential and will be recorded anonymously. As a reminder, the primary purpose of this research is to provide a picture of what the eldership should look like in the year 2010. A secondary purpose is to gain insight into issues that will be facing elders in the near future and to offer suggestions on how elders and congregations can be better prepared to meet these challenges.

Thoughts from Round 1 reflected the desperate need many congregations have for examining this topic. Several respondents described “War Stories” that they had experienced or heard about and attributed directly to issues that this study addresses. A summary of the findings will be provided to participants at the conclusion of the study. If you have questions, please call or E-Mail me at the numbers listed below. Again, a sincere thanks for your willingness to share your time, thoughts and knowledge in this study.

Pete Cummins
1305 Plantation Drive
Johnson City, TN 37604
PHONE: (423) 929-7849

E-MAIL: pete0248@watauga.watauga.org

ROUND 2

1. It will be extremely important that elders in 2010 have healthy marriages and stable families. Elders should demonstrate marital faithfulness and responsibility in a society where marriages and families have frequently disintegrated or are fairly dysfunctional.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

2. In the year 2010, Christians in America will be openly persecuted and Christian leaders could well be the main targets.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

3. Elders in the year 2010 should prize learning. Elders should be committed to spiritual and leadership development within themselves. At the same time, elders should be mentors and teachers to others, encouraging their personal growth and maturity as Christians and equipping them to be servants for Christ.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

4. Congregations in the year 2010 will be populated with large numbers of individuals who are Biblically illiterate, who question the authority of scripture and who are doctrinally ignorant and apathetic.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

5. In the year 2010, elders should articulate and implement for the congregation appropriate stances toward social issues such as abortion, euthanasia, AIDS, pornography, homosexuality, alcoholism, drug addictions, etc.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

6. Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide opportunities for students to be a part of settings where they can both observe leadership of others and experience times of leading themselves. Such times may occur through formal internships, small group studies, volunteer ministries, etc. and whenever possible, should be in the context of a local congregation.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

7. In the year 2010, responsibilities and roles of elders, deacons, staff, and other leaders should be more clearly defined in order to avoid unnecessary overlap and ineffective use of time and talents.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

8. In the year 2010, elders should study and clarify appropriate places of ministry for women within the local congregation. Broader societal acceptance of women in leadership positions will place tremendous pressures on congregations to conform to secular standards.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

9. Elders should be alert to the impact of pluralism and cultural diversity on congregations in the year 2010.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

10. Elders in the year 2010 should be vigilant in protecting the congregation from self-seeking individuals and from false doctrine.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

11. The “traditional church board” will be an inappropriate structure for a congregation that seeks to effectively carry out its vision and purpose in the year 2010.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

12. In the year 2010, the most effectively organized congregations will be those where the senior minister works closely with the elders and is considered the “leader of leaders” or “first among equals”.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

13. Elders in the year 2010 should practice redemptive discipline of individuals when they are in need. Not to do so will, at the very least, result in elders losing their credibility.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

27. The privileged legal status that congregations and individuals enjoyed in the past (e.g. clergy tax benefits/breaks, tax exemption status, deduction for contributions) will diminish or end, greatly impacting financial aspects of the church in the year 2010.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

28. Individuals within congregations in the year 2010 should be carefully and prayerfully chosen for eldership. Selection should be based on spiritual qualities and character, giftedness, and proven leadership abilities, not on popularity, “whose related to whom” or “whose feelings will get hurt”.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

29. In the year 2010, elders should seek to free the church from institutionalism and promote the scriptural concept of the church as a living organism that is relationally based and incorporates family-type fellowship.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

30. Elders in the year 2010 need to be knowledgeable and committed to Restoration Movement principles and promote this understanding within their congregations.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

31. Elders must be missionary minded, leading congregations in developing evangelistic strategies that are sensitive to a “shrinking world” where “aliens in our midst” will necessitate greater missionary effort in America.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

32. Elders of effective congregations in the year 2010 must have a pioneering spirit. They should boldly lead the church in adapting structures and programs to serve the mission and spirit of Christ in changing times without compromising essentials. Elders should strike an appropriate balance between novelty and tradition.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

33. By the year 2010, there will be a significant ignorance of historical roots in all churches including less awareness of Restoration Movement principles.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

34. Congregations in the year 2010 should make funds available for elders and potential elders to pursue opportunities for leadership growth. Opportunities may include, but not be limited to, participation in courses at a college, attendance at seminars and works, purchase of books and resources, etc.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

35. Elders in the year 2010 should be freed up to do less business and more ministering. Their functions should focus on the essentials: setting a vision, spiritual leadership through prayer, teaching/equipping, and mentoring/discipling.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

36. Congregations in the year 2010 should be organized in a network of small cells or shepherding groups so that elders can better attend to daily pastoral care matters while also encouraging individuals to serve each other and the community in which they find themselves.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

37. Elders in congregations in the year 2010 should thoughtfully consider what true Biblical worship is, leading the congregation in appropriate change and variety without creating an atmosphere of "entertainment".

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

38. Christian colleges in the year 2010 need to provide seminars, workshops and resources for leadership development of elders within local congregations. Emphasis should be placed on skill development, spiritual development, and leadership principles.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

39. In the year 2010, declining resources, severe financial strain, and fewer trained preachers should cause many congregations to pool resources or to merge with each other.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

40. Elders must resist the tendency in the year 2010 to focus energies of the congregation on political or social activism.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

41. Elders, in 2010, should be adept at helping people find a place of belonging, where they can be committed to using their gifts, talents and resources in service to Christ.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

42. Congregations will need to know, teach and emphasize the importance of the role of elder in the year 2010.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

43. Declining resources, severe financial strain, and fewer trained preachers should cause increasing numbers of congregations to look to “unpaid” or “non-professional” elders to serve as preachers in the year 2010.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

44. In the year 2010, an “entertainment mindset”, produced in part by increasing subjectivism and consumerism, will place pressure on the church to resort to marketing techniques to “sell its wares” and to become increasingly “professional” in all aspects of ministry and worship.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

45. Ministers who meet the Biblical qualifications of an elder should be recognized as elders and serve alongside other elders in the congregation of the year 2010.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

46. There will be chaos and violence in urban areas in the year 2010 that will greatly impact congregations and their elders.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

47. In the year 2010, elders should encourage the development of specialized ministries (e.g. single parents, divorced, elderly, singles, counseling, etc.) in order to meet the challenge caused by changing demographics (e.g. continued breakdown of families, the “aging of America”, and the decline of marriages) in the world and within congregations.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

48. Congregations in the year 2010 must have a clear, commonly held, Biblical based vision of the purpose and mission of the church.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

49. Elders in the year 2010 should be aware of the tension between designing church for “the saved” versus “the seeker”, between a maintenance-orientation and a mission-orientation.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

50. One of the most important characteristics of elders in the year 2010 is that they must be spiritual leaders, Holy Spirit filled and Holy Spirit led. The life of an elder should reflect spiritual maturity that includes a solid, working and growing knowledge of scripture, prayer-filled days, and an unwavering commitment to Christ.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

51. Across the board, in all sizes of congregations, there must be better, intentional, consistent, two-way communications with all members, staff, and elders in the year 2010.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

52. Congregations will struggle in the year 2010 with establishing accountability structures with leaders and various ministries.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

53. Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide ministerial students and potential ministers with some clear understanding of the need to train elders, what to teach, and how to work with elders.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening

_____ %

54. Elders in the year 2010 should lead their congregations in being ethical and moral people. Their lives should model integrity and a genuine devotion to Christ.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

55. A congregation in the year 2010 must be open to change and flexible in the methods it employs, while remaining true to its nature and mission.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

56. An attitude of teamwork and harmony should be characteristic of the relationship between elders and minister(s) in the year 2010. The “we-they” mindset, that kills unity and progress, should be replaced with a strong sense of collegiality, characterized by trust, camaraderie, a mature spirituality, patience, love, respect, encouragement, a spirit of forgiveness, obedience to the same Lord, and mutual accountability.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

57. There will be increasing tension related to styles of worship in the year 2010.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

58. In 2010, individuals will become less and less inclined to see the importance of church membership.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

59. Problems in public schools will continue to intensify so that congregations in the year 2010 will be faced with issues regarding Christian school and home school education versus public school education.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

60. In the year 2010, elders must be aware of and speak to the needs of people who will be grasping for true spirituality, hope and meaning and who have given up on the traditional institutional church for one reason or another.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

61. Due to extensive use of technology in the year 2010, individuals will increasingly lose interpersonal skills as they become more electronically dependent.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

62. Elders should have general oversight over the congregation in the year 2010. They should be able to establish policy, manage resources, and delegate details while avoiding micromanaging the staff and other leaders.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

63. Elders in the year 2010 should work together as a closely-knit team of individuals, each being gifted in specific areas of ministry. One elder should serve as a leader or facilitator to provide practical direction and focus. Decision making should occur by consensus with no individual elder insisting upon having the final word.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

64. Many elders in the past have seen the issue of women in key leadership positions (deacons, elders, ministers, etc.) as a matter of doctrine, but in the year 2010 it should come to be viewed more as a matter of mission, service, and giftedness.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

65. In the year 2010, Christian colleges should encourage spiritual development of students so that they will have a strong foundation from which to be effective elders, leaders, and followers.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

66. In the year 2010, the decline of morality and the issues of relativism and pluralism will have wrought havoc on the church leaving many congregations nominal and weak.

..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....
STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Likelihood of Happening
 _____%

67. General Comment(s) -- Use space below to write any additional comments that you might wish to make. Again, thank you very much for all your assistance on this project.

APPENDIX F
MEAN AND TRIM-MEAN FOR AGREEABILITY

MEAN AND TRIM-MEAN FOR AGREEABILITY

Legend: M =Agreeability Mean SD =Agreeability SD Ct =Count
 M_{trim} =Agree. Trim-Mean SD_{trim} =Agree. Trim-Mean SD R =Rank Order

R	Sort by Agreeability Mean				Sort by Agree. Trim-Mean (5%)				Sort by Agree. Trim-SD (5%)			
	Item	M	SD	Ct	Item	M_{trim}	SD_{trim}	Ct	Item	SD_{trim}	M_{trim}	Ct
1	56	1.03	0.16	39	56	1.00	0.16	35	56	0.16	1.00	35
2	28	1.08	0.27	39	28	1.03	0.17	35	28	0.17	1.03	35
3	54	1.08	0.27	39	54	1.03	0.17	35	54	0.17	1.03	35
4	01	1.08	0.27	38	01	1.03	0.18	34	01	0.18	1.03	34
5	48	1.10	0.31	39	48	1.06	0.24	35	48	0.24	1.06	35
6	14	1.12	0.31	39	14	1.07	0.25	35	14	0.25	1.07	35
7	21	1.13	0.34	39	21	1.09	0.29	35	21	0.29	1.09	35
8	50	1.14	0.34	39	50	1.10	0.29	35	50	0.29	1.10	35
9	55	1.15	0.37	39	65	1.10	0.29	35	65	0.29	1.10	35
10	17	1.17	0.37	39	55	1.12	0.32	35	55	0.32	1.12	35
11	65	1.17	0.43	39	03	1.12	0.35	35	17	0.33	1.13	35
12	53	1.28	0.50	38	17	1.13	0.33	35	03	0.35	1.12	35
13	10	1.31	0.52	39	06	1.17	0.39	35	06	0.39	1.17	35
14	06	1.31	0.77	39	53	1.22	0.41	34	53	0.41	1.22	34
15	03	1.31	0.92	39	10	1.26	0.44	35	22	0.44	1.29	35
16	22	1.33	0.52	39	22	1.29	0.44	35	10	0.44	1.26	35
17	51	1.36	0.58	39	51	1.29	0.46	35	51	0.46	1.29	35
18	09	1.36	0.63	39	09	1.29	0.52	35	24	0.48	1.42	35
19	41	1.40	0.63	39	41	1.33	0.53	35	31	0.48	1.40	35
20	37	1.41	0.63	39	37	1.34	0.53	35	63	0.48	1.36	38
21	31	1.44	0.54	39	35	1.34	0.54	35	32	0.49	1.40	35
22	49	1.44	0.60	39	63	1.36	0.48	38	42	0.49	1.47	34
23	63	1.44	0.63	39	49	1.37	0.49	35	49	0.49	1.37	35
24	35	1.44	0.72	39	31	1.40	0.48	35	19	0.50	1.44	35
25	32	1.46	0.59	39	32	1.40	0.49	35	09	0.52	1.29	35
26	42	1.47	0.49	38	24	1.42	0.48	35	37	0.53	1.34	35
27	24	1.47	0.58	39	19	1.44	0.50	35	41	0.53	1.33	35
28	19	1.50	0.60	39	23	1.46	0.60	35	13	0.54	1.63	35
29	23	1.51	0.67	39	42	1.47	0.49	34	35	0.54	1.34	35
30	29	1.61	0.86	38	29	1.51	0.69	34	60	0.59	1.60	35
31	60	1.64	0.66	39	33	1.57	0.67	35	23	0.60	1.46	35
32	20	1.67	0.81	39	60	1.60	0.59	35	47	0.63	1.64	35
33	47	1.68	0.68	39	20	1.60	0.71	35	59	0.66	2.14	35
34	38	1.68	0.86	39	13	1.63	0.54	35	33	0.67	1.57	35
35	13	1.69	0.68	39	38	1.63	0.81	35	29	0.69	1.51	34
36	33	1.69	0.93	39	47	1.64	0.63	35	52	0.69	2.20	35

R	Sort by Agreeability Mean				Sort by Agree. Trim-Mean (5%)				Sort by Agree. Trim-SD (5%)			
	Item	M	SD	Ct	Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}	Ct	Item	SD _{trim}	M _{trim}	Ct
37	07	1.74	0.99	39	07	1.66	0.88	35	20	0.71	1.60	35
38	18	1.76	1.02	38	18	1.68	0.91	34	08	0.72	1.70	34
39	62	1.79	1.09	38	62	1.68	0.91	34	34	0.72	1.77	35
40	08	1.80	0.95	38	08	1.70	0.72	34	36	0.78	2.03	35
41	34	1.82	0.82	39	16	1.73	0.88	35	11	0.78	1.92	35
42	16	1.86	1.11	39	34	1.77	0.72	35	66	0.80	2.69	34
43	30	1.89	0.97	38	30	1.83	0.87	34	38	0.81	1.63	35
44	45	1.91	1.06	39	45	1.84	0.98	35	25	0.84	2.22	35
45	11	2.00	0.97	39	11	1.92	0.78	35	39	0.85	3.04	35
46	12	2.00	1.09	39	12	1.92	0.95	35	43	0.86	3.00	34
47	36	2.05	0.85	39	36	2.03	0.78	35	04	0.86	2.30	35
48	59	2.15	0.75	39	15	2.12	0.89	33	30	0.87	1.83	34
49	15	2.16	0.98	37	58	2.13	0.97	34	07	0.88	1.66	35
50	58	2.18	1.07	38	59	2.14	0.66	35	16	0.88	1.73	35
51	52	2.23	0.82	39	40	2.20	0.99	34	15	0.89	2.12	33
52	25	2.24	0.93	39	52	2.20	0.69	35	02	0.90	3.19	35
53	40	2.28	1.16	38	25	2.22	0.84	35	26	0.91	2.31	34
54	05	2.32	1.28	39	05	2.25	1.14	35	18	0.91	1.68	34
55	04	2.33	0.98	39	04	2.30	0.86	35	62	0.91	1.68	34
56	26	2.36	1.05	38	26	2.31	0.91	34	12	0.95	1.92	35
57	57	2.46	1.14	38	57	2.46	1.09	34	27	0.95	2.70	35
58	46	2.61	1.07	38	64	2.56	1.16	34	46	0.95	2.59	34
59	64	2.61	1.28	38	44	2.59	1.02	35	61	0.96	2.68	34
60	44	2.63	1.16	39	46	2.59	0.95	34	58	0.97	2.13	34
61	27	2.71	1.07	39	61	2.68	0.96	34	45	0.98	1.84	35
62	61	2.71	1.12	38	66	2.69	0.80	34	40	0.99	2.20	34
63	66	2.72	1.00	38	27	2.70	0.95	35	44	1.02	2.59	35
64	43	3.00	1.03	38	43	3.00	0.86	34	57	1.09	2.46	34
65	39	3.03	1.01	39	39	3.04	0.85	35	05	1.14	2.25	35
66	02	3.21	1.00	39	02	3.19	0.90	35	64	1.16	2.56	34

APPENDIX G
MEAN AND TRIM-MEAN FOR LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE

MEAN AND TRIM-MEAN FOR LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE

Legend: \underline{M} =Likelihood Mean \underline{SD} =Likelihood SD

Ct=Count

 \underline{M}_{trim} =Like. Trim-Mean \underline{SD}_{trim} =Like. Trim-Mean SD

R=Rank Order

R	Sort by Likelihood Mean				Sort by Like. Trim-Mean (5%)				Sort by Like. Trim-SD (5%)			
	Item	M	SD	Ct	Item	M_{trim}	SD_{trim}	Ct	Item	SD_{trim}	M_{trim}	Ct
1	24	.86	0.12	39	24	.87	0.10	35	24	0.10	.87	35
2	33	.80	0.15	39	33	.81	0.13	35	01	0.11	.77	34
3	01	.76	0.13	38	01	.77	0.11	34	48	0.12	.60	35
4	04	.72	0.21	39	04	.73	0.19	35	47	0.12	.66	35
5	58	.70	0.23	38	58	.72	0.19	34	65	0.12	.69	34
6	54	.70	0.17	39	54	.71	0.14	35	49	0.13	.57	34
7	21	.69	0.20	39	21	.70	0.13	35	33	0.13	.81	35
8	65	.68	0.15	38	65	.69	0.12	34	21	0.13	.70	35
9	59	.68	0.18	39	59	.68	0.15	35	51	0.13	.52	35
10	47	.66	0.14	39	10	.67	0.15	34	30	0.14	.46	33
11	10	.66	0.20	38	57	.67	0.20	34	54	0.14	.71	35
12	57	.66	0.24	38	47	.66	0.12	35	50	0.15	.55	35
13	06	.65	0.19	39	06	.66	0.16	35	32	0.15	.52	35
14	12	.65	0.20	38	12	.65	0.17	34	19	0.15	.57	35
15	44	.63	0.19	38	45	.64	0.18	34	41	0.15	.57	35
16	45	.63	0.22	38	44	.63	0.16	34	59	0.15	.68	35
17	28	.63	0.20	38	28	.63	0.16	34	34	0.15	.40	35
18	08	.62	0.20	38	08	.62	0.18	34	05	0.15	.54	35
19	40	.61	0.18	35	53	.62	0.19	34	22	0.15	.58	35
20	53	.60	0.22	38	40	.61	0.15	31	40	0.15	.61	31
21	26	.60	0.23	38	60	.61	0.17	35	10	0.15	.67	34
22	60	.60	0.21	39	26	.61	0.20	34	56	0.15	.60	35
23	15	.60	0.23	36	48	.60	0.12	35	63	0.16	.55	34
24	48	.59	0.17	39	61	.60	0.21	34	62	0.16	.55	34
25	61	.59	0.25	38	03	.60	0.17	35	31	0.16	.55	35
26	46	.59	0.23	38	56	.60	0.15	35	44	0.16	.63	34
27	03	.59	0.20	39	15	.60	0.20	32	06	0.16	.66	35
28	09	.59	0.23	39	09	.60	0.20	35	07	0.16	.57	35
29	27	.59	0.22	39	17	.60	0.20	35	28	0.16	.63	34
30	56	.59	0.18	39	46	.59	0.21	34	38	0.16	.58	35
31	17	.59	0.24	39	27	.59	0.18	35	37	0.16	.53	35
32	11	.58	0.20	37	16	.59	0.17	35	03	0.17	.60	35
33	52	.58	0.22	39	52	.59	0.19	35	60	0.17	.61	35

R	Sort by <u>Likelihood Mean</u>				Sort by <u>Like. Trim-Mean (5%)</u>				Sort by <u>Like. Trim-SD (5%)</u>			
	Item	M	SD	Ct	Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}	Ct	Item	SD _{trim}	M _{trim}	Ct
34	16	.58	0.21	39	11	.58	0.17	33	36	0.17	.48	35
35	55	.57	0.20	39	55	.58	0.17	35	11	0.17	.58	33
36	22	.57	0.19	39	22	.58	0.15	35	55	0.17	.58	35
37	66	.57	0.23	38	38	.58	0.16	35	43	0.17	.44	34
38	19	.57	0.18	39	49	.57	0.13	34	12	0.17	.65	34
39	07	.57	0.19	39	42	.57	0.21	34	16	0.17	.59	35
40	38	.57	0.20	39	19	.57	0.15	35	25	0.17	.52	35
41	49	.56	0.17	38	41	.57	0.15	35	35	0.18	.50	35
42	42	.56	0.24	38	66	.57	0.20	34	08	0.18	.62	34
43	41	.56	0.19	39	07	.57	0.16	35	45	0.18	.64	34
44	23	.56	0.22	39	20	.56	0.19	35	27	0.18	.59	35
45	20	.56	0.22	39	23	.56	0.18	35	14	0.18	.53	34
46	50	.55	0.18	39	50	.55	0.15	35	13	0.18	.46	35
47	63	.54	0.18	38	63	.55	0.16	34	23	0.18	.56	35
48	31	.54	0.19	39	31	.55	0.16	35	58	0.19	.72	34
49	05	.53	0.18	39	62	.55	0.16	34	53	0.19	.62	34
50	62	.53	0.20	38	05	.54	0.15	35	04	0.19	.73	35
51	14	.53	0.21	38	14	.53	0.18	34	29	0.19	.51	34
52	37	.53	0.18	39	37	.53	0.16	35	20	0.19	.56	35
53	32	.52	0.18	39	32	.52	0.15	35	18	0.19	.48	34
54	25	.52	0.21	39	25	.52	0.17	35	52	0.19	.59	35
55	51	.51	0.17	39	51	.52	0.13	35	66	0.20	.57	34
56	29	.51	0.22	38	29	.51	0.19	34	15	0.20	.60	32
57	64	.49	0.23	35	35	.50	0.18	35	09	0.20	.60	35
58	35	.49	0.21	39	64	.49	0.20	31	17	0.20	.60	35
59	18	.49	0.22	38	18	.48	0.19	34	39	0.20	.42	34
60	36	.48	0.19	39	36	.48	0.17	35	26	0.20	.61	34
61	13	.47	0.21	39	13	.46	0.18	35	64	0.20	.49	31
62	30	.45	0.17	37	30	.46	0.14	33	57	0.20	.67	34
63	43	.44	0.22	38	43	.44	0.17	34	46	0.21	.59	34
64	39	.43	0.23	38	39	.42	0.20	34	02	0.21	.41	35
65	02	.42	0.25	39	02	.41	0.21	35	61	0.21	.60	34
66	34	.41	0.19	39	34	.40	0.15	35	42	0.21	.57	34

APPENDIX H
AGREEABILITY VERSES LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE

AGREEABILITY VERSES LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE

Legend: R=Rank Order C=Cumulative (St A + A)

Agreeability				Likelihood			
Round 2 Item	C	SD _{trim}	R	Round 2 Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}	
Item 56. An attitude of teamwork and harmony should be characteristic of the relationship between elders and minister(s) in the year 2010.	100	0.16	1	Item 24. In the year 2010, society will become increasingly fragmented, with individuals desiring community and a sense of belonging.	0.87	0.10	
Item 28. Individuals within congregations in the year 2010 should be carefully and prayerfully chosen for eldership.	100	0.17	2	Item 33. By the year 2010, there will be a significant ignorance of historical roots in all churches including less awareness of Restoration Movement principles.	0.81	0.13	
Item 54. Elders in the year 2010 should lead their congregations in being ethical and moral people.	100	0.17	3	Item 1. It will be extremely important that elders in 2010 have healthy marriages and stable families.	0.77	0.11	
Item 1. It will be extremely important that elders in 2010 have healthy marriages and stable families.	100	0.18	4	Item 4. Congregations in the year 2010 will be populated with large numbers of individuals who are Biblically illiterate, who question the authority of scripture and who are doctrinally ignorant and apathetic.	0.73	0.19	
Item 48. Congregations in the year 2010 must have a clear, commonly held, Biblical based vision of the purpose and mission of the church.	100	0.24	5	Item 58. In 2010, individuals will become less and less inclined to see the importance of church membership.	0.72	0.19	
Item 14. In the year 2010, elders should create and maintain a vital commitment to a clear and widely-owned vision for the church.	100	0.25	6	Item 54. Elders in the year 2010 should lead their congregations in being ethical and moral people.	0.71	0.14	
Item 21. The characteristics of an elder described by Paul in the New Testament (1Tim 3; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5) should be found in the lives of elders in the year 2010.	100	0.29	7	Item 21. The characteristics of an elder described by Paul in the New Testament (1Tim 3; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5) should be found in the lives of elders in the year 2010.	0.70	0.13	
Item 50. One of the most important characteristics of elders in the year 2010 is that they must be spiritual leaders, Holy Spirit filled and Holy Spirit led. . . .	100	0.29	8	Item 65. In the year 2010, Christian colleges should encourage spiritual development of students so that they will have a strong foundation from which to be effective elders, leaders, and followers.	0.69	0.12	
Item 65. In the year 2010, Christian colleges should encourage spiritual development of students so that they will have a strong foundation from which to be effective elders, leaders, and followers.	100	0.29	9	Item 59. Problems in public schools will continue to intensify so that congregations in the year 2010 will be faced with issues regarding Christian school and home school education versus public school education.	0.68	0.15	

<u>Agreeability</u>				<u>Likelihood</u>			
Round 2 Item	C	SD _{trim}	R	Round 2 Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}	
Item 55. A congregation in the year 2010 must be open to change and flexible in the methods it employs, while remaining true to its nature and mission.	100	0.32	10	Item 10. Elders in the year 2010 should be vigilant in protecting the congregation from self-seeking individuals and from false doctrine.	0.67	0.15	
Item 17. The local congregation will be the seed-bed for elders in the year 2010. . . .	100	0.33	11	Item 57. There will be increasing tension related to styles of worship in the year 2010.	0.67	.20	
Item 53. Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide ministerial students and potential ministers with some clear understanding of the need to train elders, what to teach, and how to work with elders.	100	0.41	12	Item 47. In the year 2010, elders should encourage the development of specialized ministries . . .	0.66	0.12	
Item 22. Elders in the year 2010 should be skillful in conflict resolution and team building in order to enable harmony and unity in the midst of growing diversity.	100	0.44	13	Item 6. Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide opportunities for students to be a part of settings where they can both observe leadership of others and experience times of leading themselves. . . .	0.66	0.16	
Item 10. Elders in the year 2010 should be vigilant in protecting the congregation from self-seeking individuals and from false doctrine.	100	0.44	14	Item 12. In the year 2010, the most effectively organized congregations will be those where the senior minister works closely with the elders and is considered the "leader of leaders" or "first among equals".	0.65	0.17	
Item 51. Across the board, in all sizes of congregations, there must be better, intentional, consistent, two-way communications with all members, staff, and elders in the year 2010.	100	0.46	15	Item 45. Ministers who meet the Biblical qualifications of an elder should be recognized as elders and serve alongside other elders in the congregation of the year 2010.	0.64	0.18	
Item 24. In the year 2010, society will become increasingly fragmented, with individuals desiring community and a sense of belonging.	100	0.48	16	Item 44. In the year 2010, an "entertainment mindset", produced in part by increasing subjectivism and consumerism, will place pressure on the church to resort to marketing techniques to "sell its wares" and to become increasingly "professional" in all aspects of ministry and worship.	0.63	0.16	
Item 31. Elders must be missionary minded, leading congregations in developing evangelistic strategies . . .	100	0.48	17	Item 28. Individuals within congregations in the year 2010 should be carefully and prayerfully chosen for eldership.	0.63	0.16	
Item 32. Elders of effective congregations in the year 2010 must have a pioneering spirit. They should boldly lead the church in adapting structures and programs . . .	100	0.49	18	Item 8. In the year 2010, elders should study and clarify appropriate places of ministry for women within the local congregation. . . .	0.62	0.18	

<u>Agreeability</u>				<u>Likelihood</u>			
Round 2 Item	C	SD _{trim}	R	Round 2 Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}	
Item 42. Congregations will need to know, teach and emphasize the importance of the role of elder in the year 2010.	100	0.49	19	Item 53. Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide ministerial students and potential ministers with some clear understanding of the need to train elders, what to teach, and how to work with elders.	0.62	0.19	
Item 49. Elders in the year 2010 should be aware of the tension between designing church for "the saved" versus "the seeker", between a maintenance-orientation and a mission-orientation.	100	0.49	20	Item 40. Elders must resist the tendency in the year 2010 to focus energies of the congregation on political or social activism.	0.61	0.15	
Item 19. In the year 2010, congregations must focus on developing good followership as much as leadership. . . .	100	0.50	21	Item 60. In the year 2010, elders must be aware of and speak to the needs of people who will be grasping for true spirituality, hope and meaning and who have given up on the traditional institutional church for one reason or another.	0.61	0.17	
Item 9. Elders should be alert to the impact of pluralism and cultural diversity on congregations in the year 2010.	100	0.52	22	Item 26. By 2010, the majority of the world's missionary force will be non-western and many of these non-western missionaries will be actively re-evangelizing American cities.	0.61	0.20	
Item 37. Elders in congregations in the year 2010 should thoughtfully consider what true Biblical worship is, leading the congregation in appropriate change and variety without creating an atmosphere of "entertainment".	100	0.53	23	Item 48. Congregations in the year 2010 must have a clear, commonly held, Biblical based vision of the purpose and mission of the church.	0.60	0.12	
Item 41. Elders, in 2010, should be adept at helping people find a place of belonging, where they can be committed to using their gifts, talents and resources in service to Christ.	100	0.53	24	Item 56. An attitude of teamwork and harmony should be characteristic of the relationship between elders and minister(s) in the year 2010.	0.60	0.15	
Item 60. In the year 2010, elders must be aware of and speak to the needs of people who will be grasping for true spirituality, hope and meaning and who have given up on the traditional institutional church for one reason or another.	100	0.49	25	Item 3. Elders in the year 2010 should prize learning. Elders should be committed to spiritual and leadership development within themselves. . . .	0.60	0.17	
Item 23. Elders in the year 2010 should be able to discern giftedness in others and in themselves and should	100	0.60	26	Item 15. Discipline of individuals within congregations will be very difficult in the year 2010 due to increasing	0.60	0.20	

<u>Agreeability</u>				<u>Likelihood</u>		
Round 2 Item	C	SD _{trim}	R	Round 2 Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}
be able to nurture growth and faithfulness in exercising these gifts.				threats of lawsuits.		
Item 47. In the year 2010, elders should encourage the development of specialized ministries . . .	100	0.63	27	Item 9. Elders should be alert to the impact of pluralism and cultural diversity on congregations in the year 2010.	0.60	0.20
Item 6. Christian colleges in the year 2010 should provide opportunities for students to be a part of settings where they can both observe leadership of others and experience times of leading themselves. . . .	97	0.39	28	Item 17. The local congregation will be the seed-bed for elders in the year 2010. . . .	0.60	0.20
Item 63. Elders in the year 2010 should work together as a closely-knit team of individuals, each being gifted in specific areas of ministry. One elder should serve as a leader or facilitator to provide practical direction and focus. Decision making should occur by consensus with no individual elder insisting upon having the final word.	97	0.48	29	Item 61. Due to extensive use of technology in the year 2010, individuals will increasingly lose interpersonal skills as they become more electronically dependent.	0.60	.21
Item 13. Elders in the year 2010 should practice redemptive discipline of individuals when they are in need. . . .	97	0.54	30	Item 16. In the year 2010, there will be no one specific structure that is more Biblical than another for how the eldership organizes itself, so long as it is grounded in Biblical norms. . . .	0.59	0.17
Item 35. Elders in the year 2010 should be freed up to do less business and more ministering. . . .	97	0.54	31	Item 27. The privileged legal status that congregations and individuals enjoyed in the past . . . will diminish or end, greatly impacting financial aspects of the church in the year 2010.	0.59	0.18
Item 59. Problems in public schools will continue to intensify so that congregations in the year 2010 will be faced with issues regarding Christian school and home school education versus public school education	97	0.66	32	Item 52. Congregations will struggle in the year 2010 with establishing accountability structures with leaders and various ministries.	0.59	0.19
Item 20. In the year 2010, elders should lead the congregation in being a "servant church" to the community . . .	97	0.71	33	Item 46. There will be chaos and violence in urban areas in the year 2010 that will greatly impact congregations and their elders.	0.59	0.21
Item 34. Congregations in the year 2010 should make funds available for elders and potential elders to pursue opportunities for leadership growth.	97	0.72	34	Item 22. Elders in the year 2010 should be skillful in conflict resolution and team building in order to enable harmony and unity in the midst of growing diversity.	0.58	0.15
Item 36. Congregations in the year 2010 should be	97	0.78	35	Item 38. Christian colleges in the year 2010 need to	0.58	0.16

<u>Agreeability</u>				<u>Likelihood</u>		
Round 2 Item	C	SD _{trim}	R	Round 2 Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}
organized in a network of small cells or shepherding groups so that elders can better attend to daily pastoral care matters while also encouraging individuals to serve each other and the community in which they find themselves.				provide seminars, workshops and resources for leadership development of elders within local congregations.		
Item 38. Christian colleges in the year 2010 need to provide seminars, workshops and resources for leadership development of elders within local congregations.	97	0.81	36	Item 11. The "traditional church board" will be an inappropriate structure for a congregation that seeks to effectively carry out its vision and purpose in the year 2010.	0.58	0.17
Item 3. Elders in the year 2010 should prize learning. Elders should be committed to spiritual and leadership development within themselves. . . .	95	0.35	37	Item 55. A congregation in the year 2010 must be open to change and flexible in the methods it employs, while remaining true to its nature and mission.	0.58	0.17
Item 52. Congregations will struggle in the year 2010 with establishing accountability structures with leaders and various ministries.	95	0.69	38	Item 49. Elders in the year 2010 should be aware of the tension between designing church for "the saved" versus "the seeker", between a maintenance-orientation and a mission-orientation.	0.57	0.13
Item 8. In the year 2010, elders should study and clarify appropriate places of ministry for women within the local congregation. . . .	95	0.72	39	Item 19. In the year 2010, congregations must focus on developing good followership as much as leadership. . . .	0.57	0.15
Item 11. The "traditional church board" will be an inappropriate structure for a congregation that seeks to effectively carry out its vision and purpose in the year 2010.	95	0.78	40	Item 41. Elders, in 2010, should be adept at helping people find a place of belonging, where they can be committed to using their gifts, talents and resources in service to Christ.	0.57	0.15
Item 33. By the year 2010, there will be a significant ignorance of historical roots in all churches including less awareness of Restoration Movement principles.	92	0.67	41	Item 7. In the year 2010, responsibilities and roles of elders, deacons, staff, and other leaders should be more clearly defined in order to avoid unnecessary overlap and ineffective use of time and talents.	0.57	0.16
Item 29. In the year 2010, elders should seek to free the church from institutionalism and promote the scriptural concept of the church as a living organism that is relationally based and incorporates family-type fellowship.	92	0.69	42	Item 66. In the year 2010, the decline of morality and the issues of relativism and pluralism will have wrought havoc on the church leaving many congregations nominal and weak.	0.57	0.20
Item 25. Christian colleges should be in the unique	92	0.84	43	Item 42. Congregations will need to know, teach and	0.57	0.21

<u>Agreeability</u>				<u>Likelihood</u>			
Round 2 Item	C	SD _{trim}	R	Round 2 Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}	
position of being knowledgeable about many different churches and issues. In the year 2010, colleges should serve as a "clearing house" . . .				emphasize the importance of the role of elder in the year 2010.			
Item 7. In the year 2010, responsibilities and roles of elders, deacons, staff, and other leaders should be more clearly defined in order to avoid unnecessary overlap and ineffective use of time and talents.	92	0.88	44	Item 23. Elders in the year 2010 should be able to discern giftedness in others and in themselves and should be able to nurture growth and faithfulness in exercising these gifts.	0.56	0.18	
Item 4. Congregations in the year 2010 will be populated with large numbers of individuals who are Biblically illiterate, who question the authority of scripture and who are doctrinally ignorant and apathetic.	90	0.86	45	Item 20. In the year 2010, elders should lead the congregation in being a "servant church" to the community . . .	0.56	0.19	
Item 16. In the year 2010, there will be no one specific structure that is more Biblical than another for how the eldership organizes itself, so long as it is grounded in Biblical norms. . . .	90	0.88	46	Item 50. One of the most important characteristics of elders in the year 2010 is that they must be spiritual leaders, Holy Spirit filled and Holy Spirit led. . . .	0.55	0.15	
Item 12. In the year 2010, the most effectively organized congregations will be those where the senior minister works closely with the elders and is considered the "leader of leaders" or "first among equals".	90	0.95	47	Item 63. Elders in the year 2010 should work together as a closely-knit team of individuals, each being gifted in specific areas of ministry. . . . Decision making should occur by consensus with no individual elder insisting upon having the final word.	0.55	0.16	
Item 30. Elders in the year 2010 need to be knowledgeable and committed to Restoration Movement principles and promote this understanding within their congregations.	89	0.87	48	Item 31. Elders must be missionary minded, leading congregations in developing evangelistic strategies . . .	0.55	0.16	
Item 15. Discipline of individuals within congregations will be very difficult in the year 2010 due to increasing threats of lawsuits.	89	0.89	49	Item 62. Elders should have general oversight over the congregation in the year 2010. They should be able to establish policy, manage resources, and delegate details while avoiding micromanaging the staff and other leaders.	0.55	0.16	
Item 62. Elders should have general oversight over the congregation in the year 2010. They should be able to establish policy, manage resources, and delegate details while avoiding micromanaging the staff and other	89	0.91	50	Item 5. In the year 2010, elders should articulate and implement for the congregation appropriate stances toward social issues such as abortion, euthanasia, AIDS, pornography, homosexuality, alcoholism, drug	0.54	0.15	

<u>Agreeability</u>				<u>Likelihood</u>			
Round 2 Item	C	SD _{trim}	R	Round 2 Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}	
leaders.				addictions, etc.			
Item 18. Congregations in the year 2010 must move away from the clergy or corporate style of administration. Instead the "body life" style should be emphasized, encouraging all members to work actively together as ministers, each with varying but complementary gifts and abilities.	87	0.91	51	Item 37. Elders in congregations in the year 2010 should thoughtfully consider what true Biblical worship is, leading the congregation in appropriate change and variety without creating an atmosphere of "entertainment".	0.53	0.16	
Item 45. Ministers who meet the Biblical qualifications of an elder should be recognized as elders and serve alongside other elders in the congregation of the year 2010.	87	0.98	52	Item 14. In the year 2010, elders should create and maintain a vital commitment to a clear and widely-owned vision for the church.	0.53	0.18	
Item 26. By 2010, the majority of the world's missionary force will be non-western and many of these non-western missionaries will be actively re-evangelizing American cities.	84	0.91	53	Item 51. Across the board, in all sizes of congregations, there must be better, intentional, consistent, two-way communications with all members, staff, and elders in the year 2010.	0.52	0.13	
Item 40. Elders must resist the tendency in the year 2010 to focus energies of the congregation on political or social activism.	84	0.99	54	Item 32. Elders of effective congregations in the year 2010 must have a pioneering spirit. They should boldly lead the church in adapting structures and programs . . .	0.52	0.15	
Item 66. In the year 2010, the decline of morality and the issues of relativism and pluralism will have wrought havoc on the church leaving many congregations nominal and weak.	82	0.80	55	Item 25. Christian colleges should be in the unique position of being knowledgeable about many different churches and issues. In the year 2010, colleges should serve as a "clearing house" . . .	0.52	0.17	
Item 58. In 2010, individuals will become less and less inclined to see the importance of church membership.	82	0.97	56	Item 29. In the year 2010, elders should seek to free the church from institutionalism and promote the scriptural concept of the church as a living organism that is relationally based and incorporates family-type fellowship.	0.51	0.19	
Item 46. There will be chaos and violence in urban areas in the year 2010 that will greatly impact congregations and their elders.	79	0.95	57	Item 35. Elders in the year 2010 should be freed up to do less business and more ministering. . .	0.50	0.18	
Item 44. In the year 2010, an "entertainment mindset", produced in part by increasing subjectivism and consumerism, will place pressure on the church to resort	79	1.02	58	Item 64. Many elders in the past have seen the issue of women in key leadership positions (deacons, elders, ministers, etc.) as a matter of doctrine, but in the year	0.49	0.20	

<u>Agreeability</u>				<u>Likelihood</u>		
Round 2 Item	C	SD _{trim}	R	Round 2 Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}
to marketing techniques to "sell its wares" and to become increasingly "professional" in all aspects of ministry and worship.				2010 it should come to be viewed more as a matter of mission, service, and giftedness.		
Item 5. In the year 2010, elders should articulate and implement for the congregation appropriate stances toward social issues such as abortion, euthanasia, AIDS, pornography, homosexuality, alcoholism, drug addictions, etc.	79	1.14	59	Item 36. Congregations in the year 2010 should be organized in a network of small cells or shepherding groups so that elders can better attend to daily pastoral care matters while also encouraging individuals to serve each other and the community in which they find themselves.	0.48	0.17
Item 61. Due to extensive use of technology in the year 2010, individuals will increasingly lose interpersonal skills as they become more electronically dependent.	76	0.96	60	Item 18. Congregations in the year 2010 must move away from the clergy or corporate style of administration. Instead the "body life" style should be emphasized, encouraging all members to work actively together as ministers, each with varying but complementary gifts and abilities.	0.48	0.19
Item 27. The privileged legal status that congregations and individuals enjoyed in the past . . . will diminish or end, greatly impacting financial aspects of the church in the year 2010.	74	0.95	61	Item 30. Elders in the year 2010 need to be knowledgeable and committed to Restoration Movement principles and promote this understanding within their congregations.	0.46	0.14
Item 57. There will be increasing tension related to styles of worship in the year 2010.	71	1.09	62	Item 13. Elders in the year 2010 should practice redemptive discipline of individuals when they are in need. . . .	0.46	0.18
Item 39. In the year 2010, declining resources, severe financial strain, and fewer trained preachers should cause many congregations to pool resources or to merge with each other.	67	0.85	63	Item 43. Declining resources, severe financial strain, and fewer trained preachers should cause increasing numbers of congregations to look to "unpaid" or "non-professional" elders to serve as preachers in the year 2010.	0.44	0.17
Item 43. Declining resources, severe financial strain, and fewer trained preachers should cause increasing numbers of congregations to look to "unpaid" or "non-professional" elders to serve as preachers in the year 2010.	66	0.86	64	Item 39. In the year 2010, declining resources, severe financial strain, and fewer trained preachers should cause many congregations to pool resources or to merge with each other.	0.42	0.20
Item 64. Many elders in the past have seen the issue of	66	1.16	65	Item 2. In the year 2010, Christians in America will be	0.41	0.21

<u>Agreeability</u>				<u>Likelihood</u>		
Round 2 Item	C	SD _{trim}	R	Round 2 Item	M _{trim}	SD _{trim}
women in key leadership positions (deacons, elders, ministers, etc.) as a matter of doctrine, but in the year 2010 it should come to be viewed more as a matter of mission, service, and giftedness.				openly persecuted and Christian leaders could well be the main targets.		
Item 2. In the year 2010, Christians in America will be openly persecuted and Christian leaders could well be the main targets.	56	0.90	66	Item 34. Congregations in the year 2010 should make funds available for elders and potential elders to pursue opportunities for leadership growth.	0.40	0.15

APPENDIX I
ROUND 2 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

ROUND 1 ISSUES/THOUGHTS BY ROUND 2 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree P=Probability based on M_{rim} of Likelihood

R	Round 2 Item	Round 1 Issue/Thought	Frequency Dist. (%)					P (%)
			St A	A	C	D	St D	
1	56	q5 Team mentality q5 Trust/mutual respect	97	3	100	0	0	60
2	28	q7 Selection process q8 Selection process	92	8	100	0	0	63
3	54	q3 Moral/ethical integrity	92	8	100	0	0	71
4	1	q1 Family life issues q3 Healthy marriage/stable family	92	8	100	0	0	77
5	14	q1 Vision/mission q3 Visionary/strategist	90	10	100	0	0	53
6	48	q5 Shared vision/mission q7 Clear vision/purpose	90	10	100	0	0	60
7	21	q3 Scriptural characteristics	87	13	100	0	0	70
8	50	q3 Biblically informed q3 Prayerful q3 Relationship to Christ q3 Spirit-led q6 Spiritual formation	87	13	100	0	0	55
9	65	q9 Spiritual development of students	87	13	100	0	0	69
10	17	q6 Lifelong learning q8 Encourage/identify new elders	85	15	100	0	0	60
11	55	q7 Open to change	85	15	100	0	0	58
12	53	q9 Preparing ministers as trainers	76	24	100	0	0	62
13	9	q1 Diversity of backgrounds q2 Pluralism/cultural diversity	72	28	100	0	0	60
14	10	q3 Defend/guard	72	28	100	0	0	67
15	22	q1 Unity q3 Conflict resolution/unity q3 Interpersonal/relational/com. skills	72	28	100	0	0	58
16	37	q1 Entertainment mindset	69	31	100	0	0	53
17	41	q1 Member involvement	69	31	100	0	0	57
18	51	q7 Communications	69	31	100	0	0	52
19	23	q3 Gift discernment	62	38	100	0	0	56
20	24	q1 Hungering for community q2 Fragmentation of society	62	38	100	0	0	87
21	31	q3 Mission minded	62	38	100	0	0	55

R	Round 2 Item	Round 1 Issue/Thought	Frequency Dist. (%)					P (%)
			St A	A	C	D	St D	
22	32	q1 Change q3 Flexible/creative q3 Discerning	62	38	100	0	0	52
23	49	q1 Tension in focus	62	38	100	0	0	57
24	19	q7 Followership q7 Prayer/encouragement q8 Encourage/pray for elders	56	44	100	0	0	57
25	42	q8 Understanding role of eldership	55	45	100	0	0	57
26	47	q1 Geriatric issues q2 Family breakdown q3 Cultural awareness	49	51	100	0	0	66
27	60	q2 Spirituality issues	49	51	100	0	0	61
28	6	q9 Internships/practical experiences	79	18	97	0	3	66
29	38	q6 Seminar/continuing education q9 Workshops/seminars	56	41	97	3	0	58
30	35	q7 Free-up	67	31	97	3	0	50
31	20	q2 Community needs q5 Serving the community	54	44	97	3	0	56
32	13	q3 Disciplinary	44	54	97	3	0	46
33	34	q8 Funding	44	54	97	3	0	40
34	36	q7 Flocks/small groups	31	67	97	3	0	48
35	63	q3 Team player q4 Giftedness q4 Identified leader q4 Team approach	64	33	97	3	0	55
36	59	q2 Christian schools	21	77	97	3	0	68
37	3	q1 Leadership development q3 Learning centered attitude/actions	85	10	95	0	5	60
38	52	q1 Accountability issues q5 Mutual accountability q6 Accountability	21	74	95	5	0	59
39	11	q8 Church board	36	59	95	3	3	58
40	8	q2 Gender issues	50	45	95	3	3	62
41	7	q1 Role clarification q5 Role clarification	56	36	92	8	0	57
42	33	q1 Heritage issues	51	41	92	5	3	81
43	25	q9 Information resource	26	67	92	8	0	52
44	29	q3 Developing community spirit q3 Pastoring/caregiving	58	34	92	8	0	51
45	16	q4 Situational structure	49	41	90	5	5	59

R	Round 2 Item	Round 1 Issue/Thought	Frequency Dist. (%)					P (%)
			St A	A	C	D	St D	
46	4	q1 Authority of the Bible q1 Biblical illiteracy q1 Doctrinal issues	23	67	90	8	3	73
47	12	q5 Minister as leader	46	44	90	8	3	65
48	30	q3 Restoration heritage	45	45	89	11	0	46
49	62	q3 Oversight	58	32	89	8	3	55
50	15	q1 Discipline issues	32	57	89	11	0	60
51	45	q5 Minister as elder	49	38	87	13	0	64
52	18	q7 Priesthood of all believers	55	32	87	13	0	48
53	40	q2 Political activism	34	50	84	11	5	61
54	26	q2 Mission strategies	21	63	84	13	3	61
55	66	q1 Morality issues q2 Relativism/post-modernity	11	71	82	13	5	57
56	58	q1 Commitment issues	29	53	82	16	3	72
57	5	q2 Social issues	28	51	79	10	10	54
58	44	q1 Professionalism q1 Subjectivism q2 Consumerism/materialism	21	59	79	13	8	63
59	46	q2 Violence	21	58	79	18	3	59
60	61	q2 Role of technology	16	61	76	16	8	60
61	27	q2 Taxation issues	18	56	74	23	3	59
62	57	q1 Worship style issues	26	45	71	29	0	67
63	39	q1 Financial stress q2 Declining resources	10	56	67	28	5	42
64	64	q1 Women's roles	26	39	66	29	5	49
65	43	q1 Declining resources	11	55	66	29	5	44
66	2	q2 Persecution	3	54	56	33	10	41

APPENDIX J
ROUND 2 BASED ON TRIM-MEAN OF LIKELIHOOD

ROUND 2 ITEMS BASED ON TRIM-MEAN OF LIKELIHOOD

Legend: M_{trim} = Trim-Mean of Likelihood

R=Rank Order

R	Item	M_{trim}	R	Item	M_{trim}
1	24	87.24	34	11	58.33
2	33	80.84	35	55	58.18
3	01	76.73	36	22	57.56
4	04	72.93	37	38	57.54
5	58	71.73	38	49	57.30
6	54	70.84	39	42	57.28
7	21	70.25	40	19	57.14
8	65	68.65	41	41	56.97
9	59	68.25	42	66	56.83
10	10	67.26	43	07	56.56
11	57	67.16	44	20	56.13
12	47	66.15	45	23	55.71
13	06	65.98	46	50	55.41
14	12	64.88	47	63	54.97
15	45	64.36	48	31	54.81
16	44	63.35	49	62	54.65
17	28	63.33	50	05	53.56
18	08	62.18	51	14	53.23
19	53	61.83	52	37	53.13
20	40	61.43	53	32	52.42
21	60	61.31	54	25	52.12
22	26	60.54	55	51	51.84
23	48	60.41	56	29	51.43
24	61	60.13	57	35	49.57
25	03	59.98	58	64	49.42
26	56	59.97	59	18	48.41
27	15	59.94	60	36	48.02
28	09	59.69	61	13	46.15
29	17	59.55	62	30	45.76
30	46	59.24	63	43	43.71
31	27	58.86	64	39	41.96
32	16	58.69	65	02	40.88
33	52	58.56	66	34	40.02

APPENDIX K
DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

ROUND 1 DEVELOPMENT ISSUES BY ROUND 2 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

Legend: R=Rank Order St A=Strongly Agree A=Agree C=Cumulative (St A + A)
 D=Disagree St D=Strongly Disagree SD_{trim} =Trim-SD for Agreeability

R	Round 2	Round 1	Frequency Distribution					P (%)
	Item	Development Issues	St A	A	C	D	St D	
1	28 ^a	Selection process	92	8	100	0	0	63
2	50	Spiritual formation	87	13	100	0	0	55
3	65 ^a	Spiritual develop. of students	87	13	100	0	0	69
4	17 ^a	Lifelong development	85	15	100	0	0	60
5	17 ^a	Encourage/ident. new elders	85	15	100	0	0	60
6	53 ^a	Prep. ministers as trainers	76	24	100	0	0	62
7	42	Understanding role of elder	55	45	100	0	0	57
8	19	Encourage/pray for elders	56	44	100	0	0	57
9	6 ^a	Internships/practical exper.	79	18	97	0	3	66
10	34	Funding	44	53	97	3	0	40
11	38	Seminar/continuing ed.	56	41	97	3	0	58
12	38	Workshops/seminars	56	41	97	3	0	58
13	3 ^a	Mentoring (Q6)	85	10	95	5	0	60
14	3 ^a	Mentoring (Q8)	85	10	95	0	5	60
15	52	Accountability	21	74	95	5	0	59
16	11	Church board	36	58	94	6	6	58
17	25	Information resource	26	66	92	8	0	52

Note. Items are rank ordered by C. Some items have more than one contributing issue.

^aIndicates item Likely to Happen in the year 2010 (P≥60%)

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