

Please **HONOR** the copyright of
these documents by not
retransmitting or making any
additional copies in any form

(Except for private personal use).

We appreciate your respectful
cooperation.

Theological Research Exchange Network
(TREN)

P.O. Box 30183
Portland, Oregon 97294
USA

Website: www.tren.com

E-mail: rwjones@tren.com

Phone# 1-800-334-8736

ATTENTION CATALOGING LIBRARIANS

TREN ID#

Online Computer Library Center (OCLC)

MARC Record #

A STRATEGY FOR BUILDING SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE IN MARINES
USING THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

A MINISTRY FOCUS PAPER
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

STEVEN RANDALL MOSES
JULY 2011

ABSTRACT

A Strategy for Building Spiritual Resilience in Marines Using the Twenty-third Psalm

Steven Randall Moses

Doctor of Ministry

School of Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary

2010

This ministry focus paper develops a strategy for building spiritual resilience in Marines affected by combat and operational stress. It employs a spiritual discipline training seminar designed to build the resilience attributes of contentment, peace, restoration, security, grace, and joy as illustrated in the twenty-third Psalm. The paper argues that Marines who understand and apply six selected spiritual disciplines will experience a measurable decrease in combat stress symptoms and a measurable increase in spiritual resilience. Furthermore, this spiritual resilience will provide a measure of healing from the destructive effects of current combat stress exposure and protect them against the effects of future exposure to combat stress. The thesis was tested on Marines assigned to Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

Based on resilience research and a thorough examination of Scripture, this paper presents a theology of spiritual resilience with specific focus on the six spiritual resilience attributes of Psalm 23. These attributes have been paired with specific spiritual disciplines selected to develop the attributes based on theological conclusions drawn from this study. The disciplines include Scripture study for building contentment, meditation for developing peace, confession that leads to restoration, prayer that fosters security, service that inspires grace, and celebration that elicits joy. This strategy has employed these disciplines in a two-day seminar that includes pre-seminar and post-seminar assessments in order to analyze the effects of this approach.

This paper concludes that the practice of spiritual disciplines reduces the symptoms of combat and operational stress and increases spiritual resilience. However, additional research may be required to determine the long-term effectiveness of this strategy particularly the preventative aspect of this approach for those in combat. Based on this study, the project has potential for wider application beyond the military community to civilian churches, particularly those who offer ministry to former military members and their families.

Content Reader: Dr. Jeff Saville, DMin

Words: 300

To Joanne and Mandy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
PART ONE: MINISTRY CONTEXT	
Chapter 1. THE MARINES: A COMBAT-COMMITTED COMMUNITY	14
Chapter 2. CHAPLAINCY: A COMBAT-READY RELIGIOUS MINISTRY	39
PART TWO: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION	
Chapter 3. LITERATURE REVIEW	54
Chapter 4. AN ECCLESIOLOGY FOR MILITARY CHAPLAINCY	78
Chapter 5. A THEOLOGY OF SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE	96
PART THREE: MINISTRY STRATEGY	
Chapter 6. A SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE-BUILDING SEMINAR	129
Chapter 7. IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION	157
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	171
APPENDICES	176
BIBLIOGRAPHY	186

INTRODUCTION

Since September 11, 2001 when nineteen terrorists flew four commercial aircraft into the twin towers of the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania, the United States Marine Corps has been engaged in some of the bitterest conflicts since the Vietnam War. Combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have demonstrated the courage, resolve, and tactical skill of this modern generation of warriors, but these conflicts have also introduced a deadly threat often as lethal that bullets and bombs. The threat is combat and operational stress. It is a condition that affects military members physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. This condition, in various forms, has affected military personnel for centuries, but perhaps there is something more insidious about the condition in modern warfare. John Sippola, in *Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal*, writes,

In most previous wars, the support personnel—the bulk of any army—were behind the lines of combat and removed from immediate danger. In Iraq and Afghanistan, there are no rear lines. There is never a moment to let down one’s guard. Service members live bathed in fear for their entire tour; no place feels safe. They know that mortars may hit them in their barracks while they are sleeping, walking about, or while gathered to eat.¹

This traumatizing experience is not only a mental health issue, it is also a spiritual issue that deserves a ministry approach designed to meet these unique needs.

Combat and operational stress in its mildest form produces symptoms similar to other forms of stress. A person suffering from this condition might seem nervous or short-tempered. They often have trouble sleeping or relaxing; they may appear jumpy or

¹ John Sippola et al., *Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal* (Duluth, MN: Whole Person Associates, 2009), 12.

jittery. Part of the difficulty in recognizing combat and operational stress is the pedestrian nature of the symptoms. They do not appear all that significant in the early stages, but left untreated these mild symptoms can lead toward a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (hereafter, PTSD). PTSD is not the only effect of combat and operational stress, though it is one of the most serious illnesses produced by this phenomenon, and much of the research on treatment has focused on it. Furthermore, the symptoms of PTSD are representative of an entire cluster of symptoms of combat stress that lie on a continuum from mild to severe. Whereas combat stress reactions are mild, combat stress injuries, including those caused by trauma, fatigue, grief, and moral conflict, are more serious. Combat stress illness, including PTSD, is the most severe.²

More than 1.6 million military personnel have served in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars as of 2010. Sippola reports, “More than 5,150 have died, and over 35,000 have been physically wounded. Of those 1.6 million personnel, roughly one-third will eventually need medical and psychological assistance with war-related problems.”³ The number of medical and psychological casualties will only continue to rise; particularly as the long-term effects of war mount and PTSD symptoms rise. A Rand Center study found that “approximately 18.5 percent (around 300,000) U.S. service members who returned from Iraq and Afghanistan currently suffer from PTSD or major depression, and

² William P. Nash, “Combat Stress Injuries: Theory and Psychobiology,” in “Combat Operational Stress Control for Caregivers: Understanding and Addressing Combat Stress” (Professional Development Training Course, San Diego, 12-14 May 2008), 358. For example, an outburst of anger or explosive anger is a symptom of PTSD, but it is also a symptom of a combat stress reaction or a combat stress injury. The only difference is in the severity, duration and proximity to the original stressor. Cases are not normally diagnosed as PTSD until at least sixty days have elapsed from the period of the original stressor or trauma. Nash, “Combat Stress Injuries: Theory and Psychobiology,” 370.

³ Sippola et al., *Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal*, 11.

19.5 percent (320,000) report experiencing a traumatic brain injury.”⁴ In a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, a particular group of Marines serving six months in Iraq reported that “87 percent knew someone who was injured or killed; 75 percent saw death face-to-face; 57 percent handled human remains; 87 percent shot at the enemy; 65 percent were responsible for a death; 95 percent reported being attacked or ambushed; and 28 percent reported being responsible for the death of a noncombatant.”⁵

These startling statistics of psychological casualties and the prospect that these effects will only increase, suggest the need for a radical reexamination of the current approaches toward meeting the needs of those affected by combat and operational stress. This ministry focus paper has been developed in response to both the current threat of combat stress reactions as well as the potential threat these trends suggest. Of great concern is the possibility that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will produce the types of human tragedies that resulted after the Vietnam conflict. Research has shown that combat and operational stress is responsible for the tragic consequences apparent in the lives of a significant number of Vietnam veterans, many of whom never sought treatment for combat stress injuries.⁶ One of the great tragedies witnessed almost every day in some city in America is the homeless, often mentally ill, alcoholic, or drug addict holding a sign with the caption, “Homeless Vietnam Vet. Please help. God Bless.” If

⁴ Sippola et al., *Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal*, 12.

⁵ Charles Hoge, Stephen Messer, and Carl Castro, “Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan and Mental Health Problems and Barriers to Care,” *New England Journal of Medicine* 351, no. 17 (2004): 1798-1800, quoted in Sippola, *Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal*, 15.

⁶ Kent D. Drescher, Mark W. Smith, and David W. Foy, “Spirituality and Readjustment Following War-Zone Experiences,” in *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*, ed. Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash (New York: Routledge, 2007), 295.

something is not done to help the warriors of today who suffer from combat stress, those signs will one day read, “Homeless Iraq War Vet. Please help. God Bless.”

On a more personal note, this ministry focus paper has been developed in response to an incident that occurred during my deployment to Iraq in 2008. While visiting the Marines assigned to a transportation maintenance unit, I met a Marine who was on his third deployment in Iraq. While we were talking, the subject of PTSD came up in our conversation. He said, “I was diagnosed with PTSD after I came back from my second tour in Iraq. Medical took pretty good care of me. They gave me some meds, and I went to counseling, but it was only a 50 percent solution. What made the difference was the men’s Bible study I joined. That was for me the other 50 percent of the solution.”⁷ That conversation sparked an interest in developing ministry approaches to treat or mitigate PTSD and combat operational stress from a spiritual perspective.

Much of the work that has been done on treatment of combat stress and PTSD has focused on medical or psychological approaches, but many researchers and clinicians have recognized the potential for spiritual approaches. Recovery from PTSD is particularly difficult in light of the pathology that often results. Most PTSD diagnoses occur in individuals who have experienced a significant threat involving “terror, horror, or helplessness.”⁸ Regarding his experiences with warfighters in Afghanistan and Iraq, William Nash writes,

Among the most potentially traumatic combat events were witnessing the violent death of a buddy or valued leader, being responsible for the death of unarmed

⁷ Confidential conversation between a Marine and the author in Al Asad, Iraq, July 8, 2008.

⁸ William P. Nash, “Combat/Operational Stress Adaptations and Injuries,” in *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*, ed. Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash (New York: Routledge, 2007), 51.

children, failing to save a buddy from death or serious injury, friendly fire, witnessed atrocities, or surviving an unexpected assault in which many friendly casualties were suffered, such as a vehicle-borne IED attack or a large ambush. But combat of any kind is potentially toxic.⁹

“Healing” from this type of trauma requires a suspension of the normal definition of healing. This is not to suggest that healing from PTSD is impossible; however, full recovery to what life was like before the trauma is far less common than anyone would desire. With regard to the prospect of healing, trauma experts often take a very tentative approach toward using the term “healing” since in most cases adaptation and change are the primary goals of treatment. Nash argues that “adaptation to stress has been a central theme in psychoanalysis, health psychology, behaviorism, and cognitive psychology” and “in all these theoretical systems, successful adaptation to the stressors of life has been declared to be crucial to mental health and well being.”¹⁰

Adaptation and recovery from PTSD is difficult, but not impossible. More importantly, trauma experts see spirituality as a “resource in the recovery from trauma,” and they suggest specific practices that target PTSD symptoms.¹¹ For example, they suggest that building community by fostering connections in groups can help overcome symptoms of isolation and social withdrawal. Enabling self-forgiveness, they point out, can help overcome feelings of guilt and shame. Helping sufferers learn to forgive can address symptoms of anger, irritability, and “chronic hostile attitudes.”¹² Developing

⁹ Nash, “Combat/Operational Stress Adaptations and Injuries,” 51.

¹⁰ Ibid., 41.

¹¹ Drescher, Smith, and Foy, “Spirituality and Readjustment Following War-Zone Experiences,” 308.

¹² Ibid.

approaches to “mindfulness” or meditation can help overcome hypervigilance and “overall high levels of physiological arousal.”¹³ Finally, they add that formulating approaches to helping sufferers rediscover meaning and purpose can have a major impact on two particularly damaging symptoms: “foreshortened future and loss of interest in important activities.”¹⁴ These can be extremely dangerous as they often lead to hopelessness and ultimately suicide.

In cases where a person has suffered trauma, it is extremely important to provide support as early as possible to mitigate the possibility of PTSD. One research finding that supports the use of a seminar model, has found that trauma victims who received higher levels of social support were less likely to develop PTSD symptoms than those with lower levels of social support.¹⁵ This suggests that a program developed with attention toward building a social network of supportive relationships, has potential for providing intervention of more serious conditions such as PTSD.

Research suggests that resilience is a key factor in treating and preventing PTSD and other illnesses associated with combat and operational stress. Resilience is the capacity to “bounce back” after an experience of trauma with renewed strength and energy. In materials such as metal or plastic, it suggests durability and strength. In people, it is the capacity to experience a family tragedy, death in the family, or a horrific accident and rise from the occasion stronger and with renewed coping resources.

¹³ Drescher, Smith, and Foy, “Spirituality and Readjustment Following War-Zone Experiences,” 309.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Daniel W. King, Dawne S. Vogt, and Lynda A. King, “Risk and Resilience Factors in the Etiology of Chronic Posttraumatic Stress Disorder,” in *Early Intervention for Trauma and Traumatic Loss*, ed. Brett T. Litz (New York: Guilford Press, 2004), 39.

Resiliency should not be confused with invulnerability or self-sufficiency. As Froma Walsh points out in her book, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, “Most studies do not find that resilient individuals maintain a steady state of competence and high functioning through adversity, as some have proposed.”¹⁶ Resiliency is more characteristic of those who “struggle well,” experiencing both suffering and courage while effectively working through traumatic periods both internally and interpersonally.¹⁷

From a psychological perspective, resilience is “mental toughness.” It describes a person who, though stressed or distressed, is able to “bounce back” and rise above the stressful situation mentally prepared for the next stressful moment. From a physical or kinesthetic perspective, resilience is the ability to “bounce back” physically from physical stress to the body. It describes the person who takes a serious hit or tackle in football, but gets back up with more than enough strength to keep playing at the very highest level. Still another form of resilience is “emotional resilience.” David Viscott has written a book with that title encouraging a “natural healing process” to help overcome “toxic nostalgia,” which he describes as “old stored emotions” that block healthy emotions.¹⁸

Some writers see resilience in terms of a mindset suggesting that people develop assumptions or attitudes about themselves, which tend to influence their behavior and skills.¹⁹ From this perspective, building resilience is primarily concerned with developing the appropriate mindset. In their article, “Restructuring Resilience: Emerging

¹⁶ Froma Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 2nd ed. (New York: Guilford Press, 2006), 5.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁸ David Viscott, *Emotional Resilience* (New York: Harmony Books, 1996), 6.

¹⁹ Robert Brooks and Sam Goldstein, *The Power of Resilience: Achieving Balance, Confidence, and Personal Strength in Your Life* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2004), 3.

Voices,” Judith Bachay and Pamela Cingel suggest three factors that enhance resilience, “self-efficacy, well-defined faith lives, and the ability to reframe obstacles.”²⁰ They argue that “in conjunction with these emotional and cognitive factors, support networks and relational/psychosocial factors also play a role in enhancing the experience of resilience in individuals.”²¹ Walsh adds, “With supportive relationships, training, and practice, we can strengthen resilience to deal better with traumatic events and life challenges.”²² Resilience has psychological and emotional components, but it can also be seen from a spiritual perspective, which is a key insight for the purposes of this ministry focus paper. Spiritual resilience can be defined as the ability to harness spiritual resources in order to bounce back from stressful or traumatic life experiences with renewed strength and energy.

This ministry focus paper will develop a strategy for building spiritual resilience in Marines affected by combat and operational stress to enable them to bounce back from the effects of combat stress with strength and endurance. This strategy employs a spiritual discipline training seminar designed to build the resilience attributes of contentment, peace, restoration, security, grace, and joy as illustrated in the twenty-third Psalm. Building spiritual resilience involves identifying spiritual resources and learning how to harness them when faced with traumatic life experiences. In his book, *Resilience and the Virtue of Fortitude*, Philosopher Craig Titus describes spiritual resilience as “the

²⁰ Judith B. Bachay and Pamela A. Cingel, “Restructuring Resilience: Emerging Voices,” *Affilia* 14, no. 2 (1999): 162-175, quoted in Karen-Leigh Edward, “Resilience: a protector from depression,” *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association* 11, no. 4 (2005): 241.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 7.

capacity, when faced with hardship and difficulty, to cope actively using religious resources, to resist the destruction of one's spiritual competency, and to construct something positive in line with larger theological goals."²³

The concept of spiritual resilience crosses the religious spectrum. In Christianity, it is the capacity to draw on faith, hope, and endurance even in the face of calamity. In Judaism, spiritual resilience is developed through spiritual disciplines, appreciation of the Jewish historical experience, and recognition of God's presence.²⁴ In Islam, spiritual resilience is developed through actions that remind the worshipper of the constant presence of Allah and through continuous appropriation of resources for maintaining self-control, patience, and endurance in the face of difficulties.²⁵ From a Buddhist perspective, "solitude, silence and mindfulness" are considered resources for the development of spiritual resilience.²⁶ Even for those who claim no religious affiliation, there are spiritual implications represented by morality and the sanctity of life that suggest the viability of spiritual resilience approaches.²⁷

A critically important part of the seminar will involve providing a very clear justification for the selection of particular spiritual disciplines that will be used to build

²³ Craig Steven Titus, *Resilience and the Virtue of Fortitude* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 28, quoted in Henry Soussan, "A Jewish Perspective on Spiritual Resilience," *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 69.

²⁴ Henry C. Soussan, "A Jewish Perspective on Spiritual Resilience," *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 69.

²⁵ Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad, "*Taqwah* and *Sabr*: The Foundations of Spiritual Resilience in Islam," *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 55.

²⁶ Rich Heffern, "Make a difference in the world by being resilient," *National Catholic Reporter* 46, no. 4 (December 11, 2009): 14.

²⁷ Edward Tick, *War and the Soul* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 2005), 282.

specific spiritual resilience attributes. The selections have been made based on theological conclusions as well as research findings in the field of combat and operational stress. Once these connections have been established, the spiritual resilience-building exercises will be introduced. These exercises have been designed to utilize the spiritual disciplines in developing the resilience attributes based on conclusions drawn from Psalm 23. Connecting the exercises with the verses from the twenty-third Psalm offers two very significant benefits. First, the attributes and exercises become more memorable. Second, Psalm 23 offers a plausible element of pluralism to the approach. Even those from faith traditions other than Judaism and Christianity have found solace in the poignant shepherd metaphor. George Knight calls it the world's favorite Psalm, arguing that it is the favorite "of Jew, Eastern Orthodox, Western Protestant and wistful agnostic alike."²⁸

This ministry focus paper will be organized in three parts. Part One will present the ministry context in two chapters. Chapter 1 will provide a detailed description of the Marine Corps as a combat-committed community. A detailed analysis of the demographics, socioeconomic factors, social and cultural factors, as well as relational and community issues will lay the foundation for understanding the Marine Corps as a community. This chapter will also provide a more thorough discussion of combat and operational stress, including key insights on the condition, current responses toward

²⁸ George A. F. Knight, *Psalms*, vol. 1, in *The Daily Study Bible Series*, ed. John C. L. Gibson (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 115. Probing the verses of this precious psalm to offer support for those experiencing the effects of combat stress offers the potential for providing ministry across an even wider religious spectrum than might otherwise be expected with the use of other Scripture texts. That is the key to ensuring this project receives support both from military leaders and military personnel. It must be able to cross religious and cultural barriers and communicate without violating principles of religious pluralism. Few passages of Scripture offer this opportunity for broad expression and wide acceptance, but if any passage could be considered universal in appeal, then certainly Psalm 23 would be among the few contenders.

treatment, and a critique on current spiritual responses. Chapter 2 will offer a description of the Marine Forces chaplaincy by providing an historical framework for religious ministry in the Marine Corps, along with a thorough discussion of the vision, mission, core values, and theological convictions of Marine Forces chaplains. This paper will argue that chaplains are uniquely positioned to provide a ministry response to combat stress in light of their “insider” status.

In Part Two of the paper, three chapters will explore the theological implications of this ministry concept. Chapter 3 will review resources critical to the field of combat and operational stress ministry response. The relevant theoretical framework supporting this project is the literature on spiritual responses to combat stress with special emphasis on spiritual resilience. The literature review will present a discussion of the thesis, main argument, significant contributions, and limitations of each resource.

The fourth chapter of the paper will develop an ecclesiology for military chaplaincy. This paper will base the foundation for the ecclesiological development on the origin of military chaplaincy and traditional options in ecclesiology. The chapter will describe some of the key challenges that must be overcome in order to develop an ecclesiology for military chaplaincy and then present an ecclesiological approach that would prove effective based on a shepherding model.

Chapter 5 will present the development of a theology of spiritual resilience. It will begin with a discussion of spiritual resilience themes in Scripture, and these discussions will lay the foundation for a more detailed exegesis of the six spiritual resilience attributes illustrated in the twenty-third Psalm. These resilience attributes of contentment, peace, restoration, security, grace, and joy are based on the Psalm writer’s

experience of God's presence and provision in both peaceful and hostile settings. They will lay the theological foundation for the development of a strategy for ministry to Marines affected by combat and operational stress. The chapter will conclude by demonstrating that spiritual resilience can be built by employing spiritual disciplines.

Part Three of the paper will develop the ministry strategy in two chapters. Chapter 6 will describe a two-day spiritual resilience-building seminar based on the attributes illustrated in the twenty-third Psalm and corresponding spiritual disciplines which foster their development. This paper will attempt to prove that when these spiritual disciplines are understood and practiced, the participants will develop the spiritual resilience necessary to overcome destructive lifestyle patterns and serve as a defense against the destructive effects of combat and operational stress. The chapter will close with an identification of the initial target population and the leaders who will conduct the seminar.

Chapter 7 will provide a description of an initial field test of the seminar and an implementation timeline based on a projection of the length of time necessary to complete work on the resources, train the leaders, and gather participants for the initial field test. The agenda for the seminar will provide a detailed description of the various sessions of a two-day seminar with additional descriptive information beyond the content provided in the previous chapter. The chapter ends with the description of an evaluation tool and an explanation of how it may be used to improve the program.

PART ONE
MINISTRY CONTEXT

CHAPTER 1

THE MARINES: A COMBAT-COMMITTED COMMUNITY

Marines are a unique breed of men and women. They are a combat-committed community representing the best and brightest the United States has to offer. As a branch of military service, they have been called “America’s 911 Force.”¹ General Robert Barrow, the twenty-seventh Commandant of the Marine Corps said, “We will be prepared to fight anyone, anytime, anyplace. If not, who else?”² The Marine Corps recruiting website declares, “We will be first on the scene, first to help and first to fight. For this, we have earned the reputation, ‘America’s 911 Force’ our nation’s first line of defense.”³ The National Security Act of 1947 established the Marine Corps as a separate branch of service and includes among the mission requirements, “such other duties as the President

¹ Navy League of the United States, “‘Seapower’ Grades Corps’ Status for 2009,” *Quantico Sentry* (Jan 9, 2009), <http://www.quantico.usmc.mil/Sentry/StoryView.aspx?SID=2380> (accessed September 17, 2010).

² Allan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: McMillan Publishing, 1980), 624.

³ U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting, “Marines: the Few, the Proud,” Official website, http://www.marines.com/main/index/making_marines/culture/traditions/first_to_fight (accessed March 1, 2010).

may direct.”⁴ That seemingly insignificant line of text has been the impetus for many of the short notice, extremely volatile, and dangerous missions the Marine Corps has been called upon to carry out. They are the fighting force that the President of the United States can call upon at a moment’s notice to go where the danger lies and do what few others are able or willing to do. The Marine Corps Commandant considers it their primary mission to make Marines, win the nations battles, and create quality citizens.⁵ In order to better understand who they are, it will be helpful to provide some demographics on the kinds of men and women who become United States Marines.

Demographics of the U.S. Marine Corps

This combat-committed force is overwhelmingly made up of young people, the majority of which are unmarried. According to a recent demographics update from Marine Corps Community Services, “67% of Marines are 25 or younger, 25% of Marines are not old enough to legally consume alcohol,” and “45% of Marines are married.”⁶ Of the four military service branches, the Marine Corps is the youngest and the least married.⁷ Among those Marines who are married, their spouses tend to be the youngest by comparison to the other service branches. On average, Marine spouses are twenty-eight years old as compared to the next youngest, the Army spouses, which average over

⁴ Victor H. Krulak, *First to Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1984), 225.

⁵ U.S. Marine Corps, *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2009* (Washington, DC: Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, 2009), 169.

⁶ Marine Corps Personal and Family Readiness Division, *The Marine Corps “A Young and Vigorous Force,”* U.S. Marine Corps Demographics Update (December 2008), [http:// www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/USMC_Demographics_Report_Dec2008.pdf](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/USMC_Demographics_Report_Dec2008.pdf) (accessed March 1, 2010), 2.

⁷ Ibid.

thirty years old.⁸ Marines also have their children at younger ages. On average, Marines have their first child at age twenty-three.⁹

The commonly heard recruiting phrase, “The Marines are looking for a few good men,” is somewhat of an understatement. The Marine Corps “remains America’s most youthful and labor-intensive service,” and recruits at least 40,000 personnel each year to maintain the force.¹⁰ Fortunately, there are always plenty of Marines who want to reenlist, though there are rarely enough slots available for all those who wish to reenlist.¹¹ There are currently 20,188 officers and 178,317 enlisted personnel for a total of 198,505 on active duty in the Marine Corps.¹² The size of the Marine Corps has recently grown since 2006 when the President approved an increase of twenty-seven thousand Marines to grow the force from 175,000 to 202,000.

There are almost as many family members of Marines as there are Marines. The Marine Corps has a total of 82,365 Marine spouses, 109,441 children, and 306 dependent parents for a total of 192,112 family members.¹³ Though the family members were never enlisted or commissioned for service, they are as much a part of the Marine Corps community as their Marine. Their presence in the life of the Marines represents another

⁸ Marine Corps Personnel and Family Readiness Division, *The Marine Corps “A Young and Vigorous Force,”* 2.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Allan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: McMillan Publishing, 1980), 623.

¹¹ J. Robert Moskin, *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1987), 764.

¹² U.S. Marine Corps, *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2009*, 257-259.

¹³ Marine Corps Personnel and Family Readiness Division, *The Marine Corps “A Young and Vigorous Force,”* 2.

layer of combat commitment in this community. Most of the Marines married after they enlisted. Statistically 19.4 percent of the married Marines are junior enlisted personnel in the ranks of Private to Lance Corporal.¹⁴ Among the middle enlisted ranks of Corporal to Sergeant, the rate of married personnel swells to almost 60 percent, suggesting two thirds of junior personnel will marry after they enter the Marine Corps.¹⁵

Based on current trends, these young unmarried Marines will eventually marry and have a family and more than likely fold them into the culture of the Marine Corps. Their spouses will learn Marine Corps jargon including hundreds of acronyms. Their sons will likely go to the barber shop on base and have their hair cut “high and tight,” just like their fathers. Even their daughters will probably grow up to marry Marines. There is something about the Marine Corps that tends to affect the entire family so that the culture of the Corps finds its way into the entire community. This is self-evident for anyone who has lived near or visited a Marine Corps base. It is common to see women wearing camouflaged shirts emblazoned with sayings like, “I am the proud wife of a Marine,” or children wearing printed T-shirts bearing the words, “My Daddy is deployed to Iraq.” The culture of the Marine Corps has a way of seeping into the lives of Marines and their family members.

The Marine Corps, as a fighting force, is a male dominated organization, but it is not an all male organization. Females comprise almost 6 percent of the officers and just

¹⁴ Marine Corps Personnel and Family Readiness Division, *The Marine Corps “A Young and Vigorous Force,”* 4.

¹⁵ Ibid.

over 6 percent of the enlisted personnel.¹⁶ Of the four branches of military service, the Marine Corps has the lowest percentage of women serving. Females make up 13.6 percent of the Army, 15 percent of the Navy, and 19.6 percent of the Air Force.¹⁷ Women were first authorized to serve in the Marine Corps during World War I. By the end of World War I, over 277 women were enlisted in the Marine Corps when the total size of the Corps was 78,839 personnel.¹⁸ Contrast that with the current size of the Corps at 198,505 personnel, 12,291 of whom are women, and it is easy to see that the Marine Corps has made great strides in integrating women into this combat-committed community.¹⁹

Female Marines serve in combat alongside their male counterparts in almost every Marine occupational field. They can be found in logistics, communication, aircraft maintenance, utilities, and ordnance; however, female Marines are not currently authorized to serve in ground combat arms Marine occupational fields. The exclusion of women from these occupational skills is based on Congressional rules and a mandate from the Secretary of Defense in response to those rules.²⁰ Undeterred by these limitations, women serve in the Marine Corps alongside their male counterparts with the very same focused commitment toward combat.

¹⁶ U.S. Marine Corps, *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2009*, 257-262.

¹⁷ Marine Corps Personnel and Family Readiness Division, *The Marine Corps "A Young and Vigorous Force,"* 11.

¹⁸ Moskin, *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, 138.

¹⁹ U.S. Marine Corps, *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2009*, 257-262.

²⁰ Les Aspin, "Direct Combat Definition and Assignment Rule," Secretary of Defense letter dated January 13, 1994, [http://cmrlink.org/CMRNotes/LesAspin%20DGC%20DefAssign%20Rule %20011394.pdf](http://cmrlink.org/CMRNotes/LesAspin%20DGC%20DefAssign%20Rule%20011394.pdf) (accessed March 12, 2010).

This combat-committed community is also ethnically diverse. The 2010 Marine Corps demographics study reports, “One in every three Marines is a racial/ethnic minority.”²¹ Among the racial and ethnic groups represented, almost 12 percent are Hispanic, 10 percent are African-American, and 8.3 percent are American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Asians, Pacific Islanders, Multi-racial, other or unknown.²² Based on national census data from the 2000 census, the Marine Corp compares fairly consistently with national ethnic diversity. The census data reports the national population as just over 12 percent African American, 12 percent Hispanic, and just under 4 percent American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, and Pacific Islander.²³ These percentages will no doubt rise and fall, but service in the nation’s military will continue to be a viable and attractive option for segments of society who share this commitment to combat in support of the nation’s defense.

The recruiting process of the Marine Corps illustrates yet another aspect of this community’s commitment to combat. In his book, *First to Fight*, Victor Krulak writes, “In 1907, when Army posters said, ‘Join the Army and Learn a Trade,’ and Navy posters said, ‘Join the Navy and See the World,’ the Marine posters came to the point with disarming simplicity, ‘First to Fight.’”²⁴ Though one hundred years have passed, this distinction in recruiting approaches among the services is still evident today. Current

²¹ Marine Corps Personnel and Family Readiness Division, *The Marine Corps “A Young and Vigorous Force,”* 11.

²² *Ibid.*, 11.

²³ U.S. Census Bureau, “Population Estimates,” U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/popest/archives/files/MRSF-01-US1.html> (accessed March 12, 2010).

²⁴ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 176.

Marine Corps recruiting advertisements in movie theaters have one of two themes, they either portray a Marine climbing the heights of a great mountain in order to slay a dragon or they show the elite Marines of the Silent Drill Platoon with their precision rifle handling. Both advertisement styles conclude with a Marine wearing the dress blue uniform, holding a sword, while the tag line reads, “The Few, the Proud, the Marine Corps.” Unlike the other service branches, the Marines do not advertise educational opportunities or financial bonuses to entice recruits; instead they offer a title, a uniform, and a reputation. The charter of current Marine Corps recruiters is to serve as “living recruiting posters,” to remind the public of the national reputation of the Marine Corps. As the Marine Corps *Concepts* publication states, “The individual recruiter inspires applicants to pursue life as United States Marines, who once transformed, will be Marines for life.”²⁵

In terms of religious preference, Marine Corps personnel compare similarly to the religious preferences of the United States as a whole.²⁶ Among personnel assigned to the Marine Corps, 72 percent report that they are Christian, including 48 percent Protestant and 24 percent Catholic. This compares to a U.S. population preference of 78.4 percent Christian with 51.3 percent Protestant and 23.9 percent Catholic. Additional Marine Corps personnel religious preferences include: 1.2 percent Mormon, .35 percent Jewish, .46 percent Buddhist, .22 percent Muslim, and .04 percent Hindu. These percentages

²⁵ U.S. Marine Corps, *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2009*, 168.

²⁶ Data for the Marine Corps is drawn from the Defense Department Manpower Data Center on October 29, 2009 posted on *Anderson Cooper 360* at CNN.com in “Raw Data: Religious Preference in the Military,” <http://ac360.blogs.cnn.com/2009/11/12/raw-data-religious-preference-in-the-military/> (accessed March 16, 2010). Data for U.S. religious preference is drawn from “Pew Forum Religion and Public Life/U.S. Religions Landscape Survey,” <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-key-findings.pdf> (accessed March 16, 2010).

compare similarly to the U.S. Population, though the Marine Corps percentages are a bit lower for these religious groups.²⁷ Two other data points should be noted, regarding lack of religious belief. First, among Marine Corps personnel, 1.2 percent consider themselves either Atheist or Agnostic while in the U.S. population at large, 4 percent consider themselves Atheists or Agnostics. Second, among Marines, 15.9 percent say they have “no religious preference” as compared to 12.1 percent of the U.S. population, who report “nothing in particular.”²⁸ This data suggests the Marines largely represent the religious preferences of the nation as a whole.

Military Sub-Cultural Influences

There is a transformation that occurs when men and women become United States Marines. From the moment these young people step off the bus at Boot Camp and step on the yellow footprints painted on the pavement, a process is set in motion that will change them forever. Throughout this process, these young people are immersed in a military culture that will ultimately shape their values and thinking in ways they might never have predicted.

The Marine Corps instills in recruits a unique set of values beyond the core values of honor, courage, and commitment. These are important and foundational, but perhaps more uniquely, the Marines place a significant priority on the development of a warrior ethos. An ethos is the “character, disposition, or basic values peculiar to a specific

²⁷ U.S. population preferences: Mormon 1.7%, Jewish 1.7%, Buddhist .7%, Muslim .6%, and Hindu .4%. “Pew Forum Religion and Public Life/U.S. Religions Landscape Survey.”

²⁸ Cable News Network, *Anderson Cooper 360*, “Raw Data: Religious Preference in the Military,” and “Pew Forum Religion and Public Life/U.S. Religions Landscape Survey.”

people, culture or movement.”²⁹ As *Leading Marines* suggests, “Being a Marine is a state of mind.”³⁰ The change that takes place in the man or woman who enlists or is commissioned to serve in the Marine Corps is often permanent. It may be an overstatement to say that the symbol of the Marine Corps: the eagle, globe, and anchor, is “tattooed on the soul of everyone who wears the Marine Corps uniform,”³¹ but that ethos has certainly branded the hearts and minds of thousands of Marines who heartily and frequently quote the mantra, “Once a Marine, always a Marine.”³²

The ethos that makes a man or woman a Marine includes a number of traditions and historically grounded principles. These principles set apart the Marines, not just from their civilian counterparts, but also their military counterparts. The Marines have a credo, “Every Marine a Rifleman.”³³ It means that every Marine, officer and enlisted, regardless of their primary military occupational specialty, is combat-ready to serve as a rifleman. They must maintain proficiency with a rifle even if they fly or repair aircraft. Even the cooks, supply clerks, and administration specialists are trained riflemen. This is one of the primary reasons why chaplains, who are non-combatants, are provided by the U.S. Navy rather than being drawn from the ranks of the Marine Corps.

Engraved on the heart of every Marine is the oft-repeated phrase, “*Semper Fidelis*,” the motto of the Marine Corps. It is a Latin expression meaning “always

²⁹ *Webster’s II: New Riverside University Dictionary*, s.v. “ethos.”

³⁰ U.S. Marine Corps, “Leading Marines,” *Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 6-11* (Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, November 2002), 12.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 19.

faithful.”³⁴ This phrase helps explain some of the ethos that shapes their culture. *Semper Fidelis*, often shortened to “*Semper Fi*” is more than just a motto, for many Marines it defines who they are and is so ingrained in their culture that it has become the standard Marine Corps greeting used between Marines of all ranks. *Semper Fi* both describes how Marines see themselves and defines how committed they are to a combat lifestyle that at any moment may take them into harm’s way to fight the nation’s battles.

The training regimen of the Marine Corps, particularly the initial training at Boot Camp, is largely responsible for the indelible mark that is engraved upon Marines. This twelve-week training experience applies layers of physical, mental, emotional, and arguably spiritual material that will forever alter the way these young men and women think and behave. Krulak writes, “Young adults from diverse areas of the country and backgrounds are immersed in an environment wherein they are able to perceive, understand, and finally accept as dogma the essential Marine Corps virtues.”³⁵ The process of initiating this transformation begins with the stripping away of everything that is distinctive in these individuals. According to Krulak, the new recruits are “stripped naked in a group for physical examination, they are bathed together, their heads clipped, civilian clothing and jewelry removed, all dressed exactly the same. From this moment, none is different from any other. None is better than any other. After this egoectomy, they start from an initial zero and they are rebuilt from there.”³⁶ This transformation that

³⁴ U.S. Marine Corps, “Customs and Traditions,” Marine Corps History Division, http://www.tecom.usmc.mil/HD/Customes_Traditions/Marine%20Corps_Motto.htm (accessed March 11, 2010).

³⁵ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 159.

³⁶ *Ibid.*,

begins during initial training is considered an essential part of what makes a young man or woman a Marine and it is perhaps the most important weapon the Marine Corps has in combat. Commandant Pate is quoted as saying, "Recruit training consists in preparing and conditioning mentally, physically and emotionally a group of young and naturally well-disposed youths to meet the experience of violence and bloodshed which is war."³⁷

The reality of combat and preparation for combat is the primary consideration of the training and transformation process of Marines. This community is committed to combat from the very first day that a recruit arrives for training until that man or woman who becomes a Marine is laid to rest. The phrase "Once a Marine, Always a Marine" is more than just a nice phrase for recruiting commercials, it is an indelible mark that is inscribed on the heart of every Marine. That ethos has shaped this community and engraved its members with a self-recognition as a combat-committed community.

The Challenge of Combat and Operational Stress

The combat commitment of the Marine Corps has paid significant dividends in the defense of our nation, but it has also exacted considerable costs to the lives of Marines and their families in the form of combat and operational stress. Though often overlooked in the heat of battle and the day-to-day grind of constant vigilance, this seemingly innocuous affliction has the potential to destroy the combat effectiveness of a unit and ravage the lives of individual Marines and their families. Combat and operational stress represents one of the great challenges the Marine Corps is currently

³⁷ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 160.

facing in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.³⁸ The Marine Corps as well as the entire military has had to adapt to a growing array of complex threats in the modern theater of war. Improvised Explosive Devices have forced the military to build new fighting vehicles called “Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected” vehicles with V-shaped undercarriages to deflect explosives planted in roadways. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles have been developed and deployed in unprecedented quantities to meet the threats in modern urban warfare. Robots have been developed to inspect roadways and bridges with bomb sniffing capability and mounted cameras. All of these and many other new and improved tactics have been designed to protect military personnel and wage battles against enemy combatants that have given the concept of guerrilla warfare a whole new meaning. If anything, the changing environment of modern warfare has exacerbated combat stress, but this is not a new threat. Combat stress has been a challenge to warriors in every battle in modern recorded history and there is some evidence that it can be traced back to the earliest history of mankind.³⁹

Defining Combat and Operational Stress

Combat stress has been called by many different names down through history. In the late seventeenth century, it was called “nostalgia” when an attempt was made to provide a diagnostic label to a phenomena occurring on the battlefield where the troops

³⁸ U.S. Marine Corps, *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2009*, 12.

³⁹ Bret A. Moore and Greg M. Reger, “Historical and Contemporary Perspectives of Combat Stress and the Army Combat Stress Control Team,” in *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*, ed. Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash (New York: Routledge, 2007), 163.

were breaking down with no apparent cause.⁴⁰ The phenomena had previously been called the “Swiss disease” when the condition arose in Swiss villagers pressed into involuntary service for rogue armies.⁴¹ During the Civil War, the condition was known as a “Soldier’s Heart.” In 1871, a former Army psychiatrist wrote about a cardiac condition he called “irritable heart” which included symptoms “characterized by shortness of breath, sweating, nausea and diarrhea, dull aching of the chest, and a persistent tachycardia during mild levels of exertion.”⁴² During the First World War, these same symptoms were labeled “shell shock” due to a belief that the condition was caused by close proximity to exploding ordnance.⁴³

An abrupt shift in attitudes toward combat stress occurred in September 1916 when a group of German psychiatrists decided by a majority vote that the condition being referred to as shell shock, was “not caused by literal damage to the brain, but by a pre-existing character weakness known as ‘hysteria.’”⁴⁴ This change in opinion produced catastrophic consequences. What had been considered a condition that merited compassion in others suddenly became a sign of the worst kind of weakness. As one writer points out, “The label used to describe the pre-existing weakness believed to underlie stress casualties—hysteria—was deliberately chosen to produce shame in the young men given that label. Hysteria literally meant ‘disturbances of the uterus;’ even

⁴⁰ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” *Marine Corps Reference Publication 6-11C* (Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, December 2010), 5-6.

⁴¹ Moore and Reger, “Historical and Contemporary Perspectives of Combat Stress,” 163.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” 5-6.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

uneducated young European men in 1916 knew that being compared to a female reproductive organ was feminizing and shameful.”⁴⁵

During World War II, massive efforts were made to reduce the number of inductees thought to have this “pre-existing” condition; though these efforts proved useless to stop the increasing number of personnel affected by this condition. Ultimately, attitudes began to shift and the condition became known as “Battle Fatigue” rather than “shell shock” or “hysteria,” since it was determined that the symptoms occurred even among those not exposed to loud noises, and psychiatrists concluded that it did not result from a pre-existing condition.⁴⁶

After the Vietnam War, psychiatrists began labeling some of the phenomena earlier referred to as shell shock and battle fatigue as Post-traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD. Though it should be noted, not all the diagnostic criteria for PTSD are consistent with the earlier phenomena.⁴⁷ In their book, *Effective Treatments for PTSD*, Edna Foa, Terence Keane and Matthew Friedman describe PTSD as,

A serious psychological condition that occurs as a result of experiencing a traumatic event. The symptoms that characterize PTSD are reliving the traumatic event or frightening elements of it; avoidance of thoughts, memories, people, and places associated with the event; emotional numbing; and symptoms of elevated arousal. Often accompanied by other psychological disorders, PTSD is a complex condition that can be associated with significant morbidity, disability, and impairment of life functions.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” 5-7.

⁴⁶ Moore and Reger, “Historical and Contemporary Perspectives of Combat Stress,” 164.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Edna B. Foa, Terence M. Keane, and Matthew J. Friedman, *Effective Treatments for PTSD* (New York: Guilford Press, 2000), 1.

Studies show that “some five-to-seven percent of the Marines returning from Iraq and Afghanistan report PTSD symptoms.”⁴⁹ This diagnosis with these symptoms is appropriate in some cases, but as more study has been done in this area it has been determined that PTSD is not always an appropriate diagnosis.

It is far more common to witness symptoms of varying severity along a continuum, where PTSD is at the far extreme, and combat stress reactions are the least severe. In 1999, the Department of Defense mandated the use of the term “combat stress reactions,” but in the following two years the Marine Corps along with Navy and the Air Force wanted to rename it “operational stress reactions.”⁵⁰ This was due in large part to evidence that the condition arose not just in combat situations, but in all the operational missions associated with combat, including support missions. In other words, the military services were seeing these reactions among those who were never involved in direct combat operations. Modern warfare, particularly the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, is typically far more non-linear than battles that were fought during World War I and II. Those wars often had clearly defined “fronts” where the majority of the battle was being waged, and “rear” areas where most of the support functions took place. In modern warfare, battles are taking place across the full spectrum of the conflict theater. Convoy operations that provide resupply of ammunition, food, water, and fuel, often take fire from enemy attacks, though they may be miles away from the direct assault they are resupplying. The use of term “combat and operational stress” takes into consideration the recognition that this condition can result from both combat stress and operational stress.

⁴⁹ U.S. Marine Corps, *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2009*, 12.

⁵⁰ Moore and Reger, “Historical and Contemporary Perspectives of Combat Stress,” 166.

Types of Stressors

The “stressors” of modern warfare are the main contributors to combat and operational stress. In his article, “The Stressors of War,” William Nash has pointed out a number of these stressors and classified them under four categories: physical stressors, cognitive stressors, emotional stressors, social stressors, and spiritual stressors.⁵¹ Under the category of physical stressors, Nash includes: heat and cold, dehydration and wetness, dirt and mud, sleep deprivation, noise and blasts, fumes and smells, bright light or darkness, malnutrition, illness or injury. In the Southwest Asian desert, the temperature climbs to over 130 degrees and drops down to below 30 degrees, a one hundred degree temperature differential over the course of a year. The desert is so dry that walking in the sand is like walking through fields covered with crème colored flour, yet when it rains the mudslides can quickly drench every surface. The sights, sounds, and smells are doubly stressful because there is no relief. Living in a combat environment is an around-the-clock lifestyle. Those who live and work in the United States may experience stress on the job, but when the day ends, they return home to their families and hopefully find ways to reduce their stress away from the stressful environment. In combat and operations, there is no stress-free environment to return to, until the deployment ends.

In addition to the physical stressors that assault the body, there are cognitive stressors that affect the mind. In combat and operational contexts, there is often either a “lack of information or too much information.”⁵² Sometimes this occurs because the mission is ambiguous, or the mission keeps changing, along with the rules of

⁵¹ William P. Nash, “The Stressors of War,” in *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*, ed. Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash (New York: Routledge, 2007), 18-29.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 22-23.

engagement, which are constantly in flux due to shifting military or political decisions.⁵³ It is not uncommon for a Marine to hesitate in a combat situation because he is unsure of what the current protocol is for a given situation.

The combat and operational environment also presents stressors to the emotional well-being. Emotionally, military members face the loss of friends to death or injury; they can become afraid or experience shame and guilt. They sometimes feel helplessness and overwhelmed with the horror of the carnage they witness.⁵⁴ In his book entitled, *On Killing*, Lieutenant Colonel Dave Grossman points out that during World War II, General S. L. A. Marshall discovered that the U.S. soldiers only fired their weapons 15 to 20 percent of the time.⁵⁵ Marshall argued at the time that “the average and healthy individual . . . has such an inner and usually unrealized resistance toward killing a fellow man that he will not of his own volition take life if it is possible to turn away from that responsibility.”⁵⁶ Grossman adds,

That the average man will not kill even at the risk of all he holds dear, has been largely ignored by those who attempt to understand the psychological and sociological pressures of the battlefield. Looking another human being in the eye, making an independent decision to kill him, and watching as he dies due to your action combine to form the single most basic, important, primal, and potentially traumatic occurrence of war. If we understand this, then we understand the magnitude of the horror of killing in combat.⁵⁷

⁵³ Nash, “The Stressors of War,” 22-23.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 25-26.

⁵⁵ Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (New York: Back Bay Books, 1995), 15

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁵⁷ Grossman, *On Killing*, 30-31.

Social stressors are also a part of modern warfare. Combat troops are isolated from their family and friends. Their social support system is completely altered by combat and operational contingencies. Even something as simple as being able to pick up a telephone and call a friend is interrupted by combat. There is also a lack of privacy and personal space.⁵⁸ While in garrison, most military personnel either live in a home with their spouse and children or they live in a military barracks, quite often with only one roommate or less. In combat, there is no quiet room to return to at the end of a workday. Most combat troops will sleep and relax in large tents or buildings where there are few if any dividing walls. The toilet and shower areas also have limited privacy. With all these disruptions and interruptions of ordinary life, social stressors are common and painful.

In addition to the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social stressors, there are spiritual stressors in combat. Nash points out that among combat troops, it is not uncommon for them to experience a loss of faith in God. He writes, “Some find it difficult to continue believing in a benevolent, loving God after surviving the losses of operational deployment. Others cannot find a way to forgive their God for allowing the evils of war to exist.”⁵⁹ Still there are those who actually develop a stronger faith in the midst of combat. One of the great spiritual tests for combat is forgiveness. Some warriors find it difficult to forgive others, forgive themselves, or forgive God. This can be particularly stressful for those who went into combat with strong faith and suddenly found they had somehow lost the ability to forgive and feel forgiven.

⁵⁸ Nash, “The Stressors of War,” 27.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 28.

Current Responses to Combat and Operational Stress

The Marine Corps has responded to this growing threat of combat and operational stress with a number of creative and proactive solutions. Two of the most recent developments include the Operational Stress Control and Readiness (hereafter, OSCAR) program and combat operational stress first aid. OSCAR has been developed to provide easier access to psychological health providers and reduce the stigma of seeking care. This program places a team of psychologists, corpsmen, chaplains, and Religious Program Specialists embedded directly in combat deploying units before, during, and after a combat deployment.⁶⁰ The second initiative, combat operational stress first aid, is an approach developed by trauma experts based on studies that show early intervention for combat and operational stress must “preserve life, prevent further harm, and promote recovery.”⁶¹ This approach involves battlefield combat stress triage where trained individuals identify combat stress symptoms and provide the necessary responses to help the individual develop a sense of safety, reduced anxiety, increased confidence, and healthier emotional well-being.⁶² Training on administering stress first aid has been focused initially on chaplains, health care providers, and unit leaders, but the long-range goal is to provide this training throughout the Marine Corps, so that troops at every level will be able to provide this first aid in the same way they provide medical first aid.

The primary Marine Corps response to combat and operational stress is the Combat Operational Stress Control program (hereafter, COSC). COSC was developed to

⁶⁰ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” N-1.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 5-10.

⁶² *Ibid.* The seven actions involved in stress first aid are: check, coordinate, cover, calm, connect, competence, and confidence.

provide proactive information and support before, during, and after deployment.⁶³ The goal of the COSC program is resilience, defined as, “the ability to withstand adversity without becoming significantly affected, as well as the ability to recover quickly and fully from whatever stress-induced distress or impairment has occurred.”⁶⁴ The unit chaplain is typically presents the “Warrior Transition” brief, a key aspect of the COSC program. This brief features a discussion of the COSC Continuum, a tool for evaluating reactions to combat and operational stress on a four-color scale of green, “ready,” yellow “reacting,” orange, “injured, and red “ill.” The continuum was developed in response to a working group convened by the three Marine Expeditionary Force Commanding Generals, requesting that a new model be developed that would be “unit leader oriented, multidisciplinary, integrated throughout the organization, without stigma, consistent with the warrior ethos and focused on wellness, prevention, and resilience.”⁶⁵

The COSC Continuum provides a simplified approach to classifying various reactions to combat stress under the categories of: “ready, reacting, injured, and ill.” The continuum is part of the presentation that is used for “Warrior Transitioning,” a program that involves the delivery of a series of briefs to help raise awareness of combat and operational stress. As seen in Figure 1, the continuum is drawn as a table with four columns, each listing combat stress reactions that fall under one of the four categories. The columns are color-coded green for “ready,” yellow for “reacting,” orange for “injured,” and red for “ill.” The green zone “ready” category describes the Marine who

⁶³ M.W. Hagee, “Combat/Operational Stress Control (COSC) Program,” *White Letter* 08-05 (December 19, 2005).

⁶⁴ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” 1-2.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 1-7.

has experienced combat stress, but is not experiencing any ill effects. Most Marines who return from combat are in this ready category. They are ready to return to combat and pose no threat to themselves or their families. The three categories of “reacting, injured, and ill” are the areas where attention is really needed. The fundamental rationale for using the model suggests, “Stress tends to push individuals toward the yellow, orange or red zones.”⁶⁶ Identifying individuals who are responding to combat stress in this way is key to both treating the stress reactions and preventing more serious damage or illness.

READY (Green Zone)	REACTING (Yellow Zone)	INJURED (Orange Zone)	ILL (Red Zone)
<p>Definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adaptive coping and mastery - Optimal functioning - Wellness <p>Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well trained and prepared - Fit and focused - In control - Optimally effective - Behaving ethically - Having fun 	<p>Definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mild and transient distress or loss of optimal functioning - Always goes away - Low risk for illness <p>Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Irritable, angry - Anxious or depressed - Physically too pumped up or tired - Loss of complete self control - Poor focus - Poor sleep - Not having fun 	<p>Definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More severe and persistent distress or loss of function - Leaves a “scar” - Higher risk for illness <p>Causes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life threat - Loss - Inner conflict - Wear and tear <p>Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Panic or rage - Loss of control of body or mind - Can't sleep - Recurrent nightmares or bad memories - Persistent shame, guilt, or blame - Loss of moral values and beliefs 	<p>Definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persistent and disabling distress or loss of function - Clinical mental disorders - Unhealed stress injuries <p>Types</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PTSD - Depression - Anxiety - Substance abuse <p>Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Symptoms and disability persist over many weeks - Symptoms and disability get worse over time
Unit Leader Responsibility	Individual, Peer, Family Responsibility		Caregiver Responsibility

Figure 1. The Combat and Operational Stress Continuum

In the yellow zone category of “reacting,” Marines are experiencing mild and transient distress or loss of function. They may be feeling anxious, irritable or grouchy, short-tempered or mean. They may be cutting corners on the job, having trouble

⁶⁶ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” 1-8.

sleeping, eating too much or too little, or they may be experiencing apathy or loss of interest. They may be keeping to themselves, displaying negative or pessimistic attitudes, or having doubts about their ability to cope.⁶⁷ Marines, who either identify themselves as “reacting” or are identified by someone as falling into this category, are typically more closely monitored to see if the reactions increase or intensify over time. In many cases, these reactions diminish over time, but it is entirely possible that these signs are early symptoms of the more serious categories of “injured” or “ill.”

A person classified under the orange zone “injured” category experiences loss of control of body functions, emotions, or thinking. They may have trouble sleeping or experience vivid nightmares. They may experience intense guilt or shame. They sometimes have an inability to enjoy activities or they may experience a disruption of moral values, and possibly serious suicidal or homicidal thoughts.⁶⁸ When a military member has exhibited some or all of these tendencies, they are normally referred to medical personnel for treatment evaluation. In addition to these symptoms of a combat stress injury, experts have identified four types of injuries: trauma, fatigue, grief, and moral injury.⁶⁹ A “trauma” injury can result from an actual impact, as in the case of a “Traumatic Brain Injury, ”or it can occur as a result of close proximity to a traumatic

⁶⁷ Marine Corps Community Services, “Marine Operational Stress Training (MOST) Briefs” Warrior Transition Brief for Marines, [http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/Warrior%20Transition%20Redeployment%2029May08.ppt#1045,19,Recognizing Stress Problems](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/Warrior%20Transition%20Redeployment%2029May08.ppt#1045,19,Recognizing%20Stress%20Problems) (accessed March 17, 2010).

⁶⁸ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” 1-12.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 1-13.

event that triggers an emotional or psychological reaction.⁷⁰ “Fatigue” is a “wear and tear injury” that results from prolonged exposure to operational stress without sufficient time for recovery.⁷¹ A “Grief” injury results from an abnormal reaction to death when grief gets “stuck,” causing an inability to properly heal after facing the death of someone close. A “Moral Injury” can occur when a warrior has violated his or her conscience, causing shame or guilt. It can also occur when a Marine witnesses another Marine violating a Rule of Engagement. A Marine may experience “survivor’s guilt” when his convoy is struck by a mine and he alone survives, or a Marine may feel shame because he freezes in the face of combat and cannot fire his weapon. In some cases, a “Moral Injury” so shatters his core beliefs, he questions his ability to discern right from wrong. Robert Liften suggests young warriors experience a “death imprint” when they are faced with death and evil in such an intimate way.⁷² Nash writes, “Under almost no circumstance other than war would men and women in their teens and early twenties—barely adults—face the reality of their own mortality so brutally.”⁷³ This “death imprint” may leave a scar that takes years to heal.

When trauma, fatigue, grief, or moral injury symptoms persist for more than sixty days after return from deployment, they are considered a combat stress illness. This is

⁷⁰ William P. Nash, “Combat/Operational Stress Adaptations and Injuries,” in *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*, ed. Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash (New York: Routledge, 2007), 50. A “Traumatic Brain Injury” is another term for a concussion.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷² Robert J. Liften, “Understanding the traumatized self: Imagery, symbolization, and transformation,” in *Human Adaption to Extreme Stress*, ed. J.P. Wilson, Z. Harel, and B. Kahan (New York: Plenum Press, 1988), quoted in Nash, “Combat/Operational Stress Adaptations and Injuries,” 53.

⁷³ Nash, “Combat/Operational Stress Adaptations and Injuries,” 53-54.

the fourth and most serious category of the combat and operational stress continuum. Combat stress illnesses by definition are clinical mental disorders or unhealed stress injuries.⁷⁴ Four types of illnesses have been identified: PTSD, Depression, Anxiety, and Substance Abuse.⁷⁵ Marines and their leaders are very reluctant to apply the label “illness” or “red zone” to themselves or a member of their unit. In fact, according to *Marine Corps Reference Publication 6-11C*, “many young warriors would rather be told they have cancer than PTSD.”⁷⁶ Due to the severity of this condition and particularly since there is such a reluctance to accept the diagnosis, it is critical that that the military member receives urgent medical attention. Not only will early treatment greatly improve chances for full recovery, but it also may prevent some of the more serious consequences that result from these conditions.⁷⁷ Studies conducted by the Marine Corps have found that “since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan began in 2001, many Marines and Sailors diagnosed and treated for PTSD in military medical facilities have recovered and been returned to full duty. Most of them have successfully finished their tours of duty and many are still serving.”⁷⁸

Spiritual Responses: The Missing Element

The Marine Corps recognizes the contribution of spirituality in mitigating the effects of combat and operational stress before, during, and after combat. In response to

⁷⁴ Marine Corps Community Services, “Marine Operational Stress Training (MOST) Briefs.”

⁷⁵ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” 1-13.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Brett T. Litz, ed., *Early Intervention for Trauma and Traumatic Loss* (New York: Guilford Press, 2004), 6.

⁷⁸ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” 1-13 – 1-14.

this, the Marine Corps has developed some general guidance on the role of Religious Ministry Teams (hereafter, RMTs) in combat stress support. For example, before deployments RMTs are responsible for preparing deploying personnel for combat and operational stress by offering briefings to help them identify combat stress reactions, injuries, and illnesses.⁷⁹ These briefings, though useful for understanding combat stress, offer very little from a spiritual perspective. At most, the chaplain may discuss stress management techniques and talk about the benefit of prayer, but not much more in the way of spiritual content. In addition to the briefings, RMTs are encouraged to develop close relationships with members of the command prior to deployment. When this is done well, it helps foster trust and encourages service members to ask for help when they experience the effects of combat stress.⁸⁰

During deployments, RMTs are encouraged to respond to combat stress casualties by offering pastoral care, teaching core values, and making opportunities for spiritual development available to members of the command.⁸¹ These responses are helpful to a degree, but something is missing. The missing element is a more robust spiritual response that goes beyond the ordinary day-to-day function of chaplain ministry. What is needed is a more comprehensive program that focuses on identifying the resilience capacity of spirituality and capitalizing on it to build spiritual resilience in order to meet the needs of this combat-committed community.

⁷⁹ U.S. Marine Corps, “Combat and Operational Stress Control,” Q-1.

⁸⁰ Ibid., Q-2.

⁸¹ Ibid., Q-4 – Q-5.

CHAPTER 2

CHAPLAINCY: A COMBAT-READY RELIGIOUS MINISTRY

The United States Marine Corps has a dedicated source of military ministry personnel who are assigned specifically to them for religious ministry support in peacetime and in combat. The religious ministry personnel are members of the United States Navy Chaplain Corps. They wear the Marine Corps uniform, they train with Marines, and they go to war with Marines. The Navy Chaplains and their enlisted Religious Program Specialists assigned to the Marine Forces are the Marine Forces chaplaincy, a combat-ready religious ministry team. It should be noted that chaplains are noncombatants. In accordance with both U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps regulations, chaplains are forbidden to carry or employ weapons.¹ Since “every Marine is a rifleman,” and therefore a combatant, the U.S. Navy provides chaplains for the Marine Corps along with enlisted Religious Program Specialists. These enlisted personnel,

¹ Department of the Navy, “Religious Ministry within the Department of the Navy,” *Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.7D* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, August 2008), and U.S. Marine Corps, “Command Religious Programs in the Marine Corps,” *Marine Corps Order 1730.6D* (Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, September 1997). In the Geneva Conventions of 1949, chaplains were accorded a protected status when taken as prisoners of war during combat. That provision allows for chaplains to provide ministry to their fellow prisoners on the condition that they maintain their noncombatant status. *United States Navy Regulations*, 1990, Article 1063, quoted in U.S. Marine Corps, “Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps,” *Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 6-12* (Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, September 2009), 1-2.

among their other administrative responsibilities, serve as the combatant security detail for the chaplain. Each Marine Corps unit with seven hundred to one thousand personnel has at least one chaplain and one Religious Program Specialist assigned as their Marine Forces Religious Ministry Team. As a team they serve as a Marine Forces combat-ready religious ministry team.

The U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps Ministry to the Sea Services

The U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps was established on 28 November 1775. Since its founding, Navy Chaplains have served their country by providing for the free exercise of religion on ships, on land, and in the air. For over two centuries, they have provided ministry in every battle and every war since the earliest battles in American history.²

Vision and Mission of the Navy Chaplain Corps

The vision of the Navy Chaplain Corps is, “Devoted to God and Country, we unite to deliver innovative, life transforming services throughout and beyond the Sea Services.”³ This vision statement suggests several key elements of Navy chaplain ministry. First, it points out that chaplains are loyal and devoted both to God and their nation. They will not compromise either their relationship to God or their loyalty to the service of their nation. Second, the vision suggests that chaplains are united in their service. Chaplains have an unofficial motto, “Cooperation without Compromise.”⁴ This

² U.S. Marine Corps, “Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps,” iv.

³ Department of the Navy, “Religious Ministry in the U.S. Navy,” *Navy Warfare Publication 1-05* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, August 2003), 1-2.

⁴ Richard G. Hutcheson, Jr., *The Churches and the Chaplaincy* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), 120.

statement points to the tension that often exists in a pluralistic environment. Navy Chaplains represent more than one hundred different faith traditions, yet they are compelled by their service to cooperate with one another in the delivery of ministry. Third, the vision suggests that chaplains deliver ministry in innovative ways in order to bring about life transformation. These simple words open the door for creativity and provide a life-changing purpose that drives chaplains toward making a real difference in the lives of those to whom they minister. The final clause, “throughout and beyond the sea services,” reminds chaplains of their ministry to all the sea services including the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marines, as well as their family members and other authorized individuals, wherever sea service personnel are assigned.

According to Marine Corps regulations, the mission of chaplains serving with Marines is “to deliver religious accommodation, care and advisement in order to strengthen faith, values, and virtues, so that Marines, Sailors and their families may best serve their country.”⁵ The word “accommodation” means that chaplains will either meet a particular religious need according to their own faith tradition or they will facilitate the religious ministry by contacting another chaplain or civilian religious ministry professional to meet the religious need. There is an old axiom in the Navy Chaplain Corps: “We provide for our own faith group, we facilitate for others, and we care for everyone.” In other words, a chaplain endorsed by a Baptist denomination can provide ministry to Baptists, and probably many other Protestant denominations. However, if a Roman Catholic service member requests a chaplain to baptize his or her infant, the Baptist chaplain is expected to facilitate that request by locating a Roman Catholic priest

⁵ U.S. Marine Corps, “Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps,” 1-1.

to perform the baptism. Facilitation might also involve obtaining religious literature, or referring an individual to a civilian worship center. In some cases, facilitation involves locating, training, and certifying a lay religious leader to meet the needs of a larger group of individuals whose religious needs are not being met by the unit chaplain. The word “advisement” in the mission statement refers to the chaplain’s role in advising the commanding officer, as well as all other members of the command, on matters relating to religion or faith, ethics, morals, and values. In some cases, this may include advising the commanding officer on the conduct of operations that have a religious significance.⁶ Chaplains serve in the Marine Corps with this purpose: to meet the needs of Marines, Sailors, and their families while strengthening their faith, values, and virtues in order to make them better citizens of the United States.

Core Values and Theological Convictions

The Navy Chaplain Corps stands in a long tradition of serving the sea services by encouraging military personnel in their development of core values. The core values embraced by chaplains, along with all the sea services, are “honor, courage, and commitment.” The doctrinal publication on religious ministry in the U.S. Navy states that these three values are considered core because the “great religions of the world” acknowledge their spiritual dimension and influence on character development.⁷ The publication goes on to assert that they are “part of the universal virtues of philosophy and

⁶ Department of the Navy, “Chaplain Advisement and Liaison,” *Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.10* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, January 2009), 2.

⁷ Department of the Navy, “Religious Ministry in the U.S. Navy,” 4-10.

religion that constitute a moral standard that guides conduct.”⁸ The theological convictions of the Navy Chaplain Corps are broad indeed. There are currently over nine hundred chaplains representing ninety-five different faith groups spanning a broad spectrum of the religious life of America.⁹ Consequently, theological consistency is neither possible nor expected. Navy chaplains serve in a pluralistic environment and understand from the very beginning of their service that they are required to cooperate with chaplains who represent a wide variety of faith traditions.

The “Code of Ethics for Navy Chaplains” is another instrument that demonstrates the values and convictions of the Navy Chaplain Corps.¹⁰ The ethics code includes a promise to maintain the traditions and follow the directions of the religious body that endorses the chaplain. It supports pluralism and encourages chaplains to promise to care for individuals of other faith traditions and respect the faith traditions of fellow chaplains. It also reminds chaplains to maintain in confidence privileged communication, and model personal integrity and core values. The code addresses supervisory issues with this statement: “I will, if in a supervisory position, respect the practices and beliefs of each person I supervise. I will to the fullest extent permissible by law and regulations,

⁸ Department of the Navy, “Religious Ministry in the U.S. Navy,” 4-10.

⁹ By way of example, there are 125 Southern Baptists, 83 Roman Catholic priests, 57 Presbyterians, 34 United Methodists, 31 Evangelical Lutherans, 27 Assembly of God ministers, 26 Lutheran Missouri Synod ministers, 21 Cooperative Baptist Fellowship ministers, 16 Seventh-day Adventists, 12 African Methodist Episcopal ministers, 12 Nazarenes, 9 Evangelical Covenant Church ministers, 8 Eastern Orthodox priests, 5 Charismatic Episcopal Church ministers, 2 Muslim Imams, and 1 Buddhist priest to name just a few of the religious bodies represented. Data obtained for U.S. Navy Personnel Command.

¹⁰ U.S. Marine Corps, “Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps,” 1-7. Though this code of ethics is not “prescriptive,” it is a document prepared with the advice and consent of leading national religious advisory groups and has become a key source and sound reference for ethical reflection by chaplains.

exercise care not to require of them service or practice that would be in violation of the faith and practices of their religious body.”¹¹ This code serves as an important standard for evaluating how well chaplains adapt to the pluralistic environment in which they are called to serve.

Leadership and Decision-making

Chaplains serving in the Marine Corps are responsible to three distinct leadership and decision-making entities. Every Marine Forces chaplain serves under a Marine commander. Under almost any circumstance the orders of the commanding officer supersede all other responsibilities. Chaplains are evaluated on their performance by their commanding officer, and this evaluation is the instrument used by promotion boards to select eligible chaplains for promotion to the next higher rank.

Chaplains also have a responsibility to a chain of coordination in the Navy Chaplain Corps that extends from the Chief of Navy Chaplains, a two-star admiral, down to the most junior chaplain. The Chief of Navy Chaplains, among other responsibilities, “directs religious ministry” in the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, “establishes and approves policy for religious ministry,” and “is responsible for the professional development, education and training” of Chaplain Corps officers and Religious Program Specialists.¹² These responsibilities flow down through the leadership of the Chaplain Corps through the various ranks from senior chaplains to junior chaplains.

¹¹ U.S. Marine Corps, “Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps,” 1-7.

¹² Department of the Navy, “Religious Ministry within the Department of the Navy,” 2-3.

One of the most important functions of Chaplain Corps leadership is the coordination of ministry across an entire region. For example, if a Jewish chaplain is assigned to a command in California, but there is a need for a short-duration Jewish ministry in Okinawa, Japan, the senior leadership of the Chaplain Corps may arrange to transport that chaplain to provide the ministry. Though chaplains work for their commanding officers directly, they may also be directed to perform certain functions or provide some forms of ministry as directed by this Chaplain Corps chain of coordination.

The third leadership and decision-making entity is the chaplain's religious endorsement organization. Each chaplain must be endorsed by a religious body that has been recognized by the federal government to endorse military chaplains.¹³ For chaplains, the endorsing body is a third leadership and decision-making entity that can impact their ministry. Navy regulations direct that "as professionally qualified clergy of a certifying religious organization, chaplains have the responsibility to abide by, and remain loyal to, the tenets of their faith. Additionally, faith groups require their chaplains to maintain a close connection to the endorsing body via reports, personal contact, and annual meetings or conferences."¹⁴ Endorsing organizations have the authority to remove the chaplain's endorsement in cases where they feel there has been a violation of any of their stipulated requirements for endorsement. These three entities, the commanding officer, the senior leadership of the Chaplain Corps, and the endorsing body, all serve in a leadership and decision-making capacity over individual chaplains. The effectiveness

¹³ To be recognized they must meet "the religious purposes test" of Section 501 (c) (3) of Title 26, U.S. Code (2000), and hold current status as a Section 501 (c) (3) Schedule 'A' organization." This simply means that there are legal steps that must be taken before an organization can endorse a chaplain to serve in the military.

¹⁴ Department of the Navy, "Religious Ministry in the U.S. Navy," 3-4.

and sustainment of chaplain ministry is often dependent on how well the chaplain maintains allegiance and compliance with all three of these entities.

Chaplain Ministry in the Marine Forces

Marine Forces chaplains enjoy a special relationship with the Marines among whom they serve. Chaplains have had a long history with the Marine Corps that extends back to the very beginning of their shared history. The Marine Corps was born on 10 November 1775 in Philadelphia's Tun Tavern, and eighteen days later the Navy Chaplain Corps was formed on 28 November 1775.¹⁵ The Marine Corps has often been considered an assignment of choice by sea service chaplains among the other options of sea duty, shore duty, hospital duty, and Coast Guard duty. The Marines have a special bond with their chaplains, often treating chaplains as talismans in battle, integral to the mission of the Marine Corps. Accordingly, few commanders are willing to deploy without their chaplains. Chaplains who recognize their contribution to the mission, and leverage their responsibilities well, often experience some of the most fulfilling ministry imaginable.

Effective chaplain ministry in the Marine Forces is contingent upon three basic principles. First, the chaplain must meet the needs of individual Marines while being responsive to the commander's mission.¹⁶ This means that the chaplain must develop a flexible approach to ministry, bearing in mind the current status of the mission, the environment, and the threat conditions where the Marines are operating. Second, the

¹⁵ J. Robert Moskin, *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1987), 25; and Victor H. Krulak, *First to Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1984), 1.

¹⁶ U.S. Marine Corps, "Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps," 3-4.

chaplain must develop ministry that is proactive and purposeful. Particularly in an expeditionary environment, supplies, personnel, and support functions are often limited for the sake of mobility. Third, the chaplain must make the “ministry of presence” a priority.¹⁷ This means that the chaplain must visit the troops regularly and be seen by the troops. Marines will respond positively and seek out a chaplain for support when they see their chaplain regularly as a member of the command who cares about them. These three basic principles for ministering to Marines serve as a form of general guidance, but there are more specific features of ministry to Marines that apply to operational ministry, installation ministry, and combat ministry.

Operational Ministry – Infantry, Aviation, and Logistics Troops

Marine Forces chaplains assigned to the operating forces perform their ministry in a fashion that is quite different from the ministry of a local pastor, priest, or rabbi. The Marine Corps considers the operating forces “the heart of the Marine Corps; they comprise the forward presence, crisis response, and fighting power that the Marine Corps makes available” in support of missions directed by the President of the United States and the Combatant Commanders.¹⁸ The principal organization for Marine Corps operating forces is the Marine Air Ground Task Force.¹⁹ It combines the ground forces with amphibious capability and air forces along with logistics support forces into a single organization, and deploys as one single entity in various sizes depending on the mission.

¹⁷ U.S. Marine Corps, “Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps,” 3-4.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2-1.

¹⁹ U.S. Marine Corps, “Organization of Marine Corps Forces,” *Marine Corps Reference Publication 5-12D* (Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, October 1998), 2-1.

Chaplains who serve in the ground combat forces in a Marine Division provide ministry to personnel assigned to the infantry, tanks, artillery, and amphibious assault vehicles. The ministry of a chaplain in the Marine Division is primarily a “ministry of presence.”²⁰ The chaplain will spend a great deal of time visiting the troops, offering counseling, leading the occasional Bible study or worship service, but primarily the chaplain spends time with the troops.

Marine Forces chaplains assigned to the Marine Aircraft Wing provide ministry to personnel assigned to aviation combat missions. As is true in the ground forces, the ministry of presence is extremely important. Chaplains in the Wing will often fly with the squadrons they support, depending on the aircraft assigned. Squadrons employing helicopters and transport aircraft, such as C-130s, often bring the chaplain along to support the troops that are flying, as well as the troops where the mission takes them. Chaplains also provide counseling, Scripture studies, and worship services.

Chaplains assigned to the Marine Logistics Group deliver ministry to personnel who provide supplies, transportation, engineering, maintenance, medical, and dental support. The chaplains who work with the logistic combat element provide ministry very similar to the ministry provided in the Division and the Wing. They spend a great deal of time in visitation, counseling, and providing Scripture studies and worship services.

Installation Ministry – Chapels, Workspaces, and Families

Marine Forces chaplains assigned to installations provide religious ministry to the Marines and their families primarily through the services provided at the Base Chapel.

²⁰ U.S. Marine Corps, “Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps,” 3-4.

The chaplain assigned to a base chapel at a Marine Corps Base serves in a manner very similar to the pastor of a local church, or the rabbi at a local synagogue. Marine Corps bases are like cities within cities. They have their own department stores, grocery stores, gas stations, banks, and large housing areas. Each base also has a base chapel, often the center of religious life for the entire base. The chapel serves all the faith groups; therefore, chaplains must provide and facilitate for a number of different faith traditions.

The chaplains assigned to the installation do not typically deploy to the combat zone. Their primary responsibility is to provide ministry to those preparing to deploy, returning from deployment, and to the families left behind by deploying Marines. Often the installation chaplains will provide pre-deployment, mid-deployment, and post-deployment briefings for service members and their families. Whenever possible, the operating forces chaplains provide these briefings, but when they are unavailable, this responsibility falls to the installation chaplains.

Combat and Deployed Ministry – Deserts, Jungles, and Ships

Chaplain ministry in a combat and deployed environment is in some ways a hybrid of operating forces ministry and installation ministry. As in the operating forces ministry, the chaplain is assigned to a deploying operational unit, in this case deployed remotely to a combat theater or exercise location. As in installation ministry, many of the functions that are carried out in a base chapel are carried out in the combat deployed location, though in more austere conditions. Combat and deployed ministry can take place in desert environments as it does now in Iraq and Afghanistan, or in jungles as it does on many Pacific theater exercises, as well as on ships during transit to operations,

exercises, and contingencies. Combat deployed chaplains provide and facilitate worship services, administer sacraments, provide counseling, perform visitation, conduct ministry among the wounded and dying, conduct Memorial Services and offer training.²¹

The Need for a Chaplain Ministry Response to Combat Operational Stress

Combat and operational stress represents a unique challenge to the warfighting organization. Left unchecked, this growing threat will increasingly have a negative impact on the military and society as a whole. Cases involving combat and operational stress are growing each day, and with these mounting problems, the medical and psychological disciplines must be supplemented with clergy support to meet these dramatically increasing challenges. In fact, based on analyses of psychological journals over a four-year period, individuals are far more likely to seek out clergy support for mental health issues than mental health workers.²² One study concluded that individuals were five times more likely to seek out a clergy person.²³

The challenge of combat and operational stress suggests the need for a viable ministry response that will face this problem directly and focus ministry efforts toward a spiritual approach with long-term effectiveness. Many researchers have found that the problems these warriors face are often in the spiritual category, and meeting those needs in a spiritual way may be essential to bringing lasting improvement to their lives. In his

²¹ U.S. Marine Corps, "Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps," 6-3.

²² A. J. Weaver et al., "What do Psychologists Know About Working With the Clergy? An Analysis of Eight APA Journals: 1991-1994," *Professional Psychology – Research and Practice* 28, no. 5 (October 1997): 471.

²³ A.J. Weaver, H.G. Koenig, and F. M. Ochberg, "Posttraumatic Stress, Mental Health Professionals, and the Clergy: A Need for Collaboration, Training and Research," *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. 9, no. 4 (1996): 848.

lecture entitled, “Suggestions for Including Spirituality in Coping with Stress and Trauma,” Kent Drescher identifies four key spiritual “red flags”: loss of faith, negative religious coping, guilt, and lack of forgiveness.²⁴ His research suggests that almost 50 percent of troops reported abandoning their faith during the war in Iraq and almost 80 percent reported they had difficulty reconciling their beliefs with the traumatic events that occurred in the war zone.²⁵ In terms of negative religious coping, he found that 53 percent of Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans felt that God was punishing them for their sin or lack of spirituality, compared to 24 percent of the general public; and 53 percent of the veterans wondered whether God had abandoned them, compared to only 12 percent of the general public.²⁶ In the area of guilt, the types of guilt associated with “red flags” are commission or omission guilt and survivor guilt. These issues become “red flags” when they produce inappropriate, faulty, or distorted conclusions about the degree of responsibility they feel they bear, the justification for the actions they have taken, or their perceived wrongdoing. Guilt is particularly intractable when it represents a mislabeling of other emotions such as loss, grief, anger, or sadness.²⁷ Lack of forgiveness is the fourth major “red flag” spiritual issue. Lack of forgiveness may involve a lack of forgiveness for self, others, or God. Some research has been done which indicates that

²⁴ Kent Drescher, “Suggestions for Including Spirituality in Coping with Stress and Trauma” National Center for PTSD, <http://uwf.edu/cap/HCWMS/materials/Drescher%20-%20Suggestions%20for%20Including%20Spirituality%20in%20Coping%20with%20Stress%20and%20Trauma.pdf> (accessed April 11, 2011).

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

PTSD and depression can become more severe when there is a lack of forgiveness.²⁸

These researchers also point out that the feature of combat stress and PTSD that causes the re-experiencing of traumatic events, sometimes causes individuals to feel this proves they have not been forgiven, thereby undermining efforts to bring relief through work in forgiveness. This research suggests that a ministry response is needed to address these spiritual concerns in a spiritual manner.

Chaplains are uniquely positioned to provide a ministry response to this problem as they are daily engaged in combat environments with their troops, and chaplains are welcome members of the team. This ministry need can be met as long as the approach takes into consideration some of the unique challenges to providing ministry in the military. The ministry would have to align with current operations; it would have to be a pluralistic approach, both for the recipients of ministry, and for those who deliver the ministry; and it would have to harmonize well with current psychological models and ministry approaches that have proven effective. The next chapter will provide an analysis of relevant literature that addresses spiritual responses to combat stress, as well as potential avenues for further exploration of an effective approach toward a combat stress ministry response.

²⁸ C. V. Witvliet et al., "Posttraumatic mental and physical health correlates of forgiveness and religious coping in military veterans," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 17, no. 3 (2004): 270.

PART TWO
THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relevant theoretical framework informing this ministry focus paper is the literature on spiritual responses to combat and operational stress with particular emphasis on spiritual resilience. Combat stress has inspired an impressive array of literature, both in the form of attempts to describe the condition and in various attempts to treat the condition. However, there are significant limitations on the material that is available on ministry responses to this challenge. Much of the work in this field includes references to spiritual approaches. Several authors have noted the spiritual component, but at this juncture, there has been no definitive attempt to develop a ministry strategy that specifically targets combat stress from a theological perspective. This suggests an opportunity to take the current literature on spiritual approaches to a new level, and develop a strategy that incorporates the theoretical framework in these spiritual responses with a theology of ministry for meeting this important need in a new way. This literature review will focus on those sources that both describe combat stress and provide insight into possible spiritual responses in order to evaluate their contributions and limitations in light of this ministry focus.

Psychological Research on Spiritual Responses to Combat Stress

Spirituality and Readjustment Following War-Zone Experiences,
Kent D. Drescher, Mark W. Smith, and David W. Foy

Kent Drescher, Mark Smith, and David Foy offer a very thorough treatment on the effects of spirituality and its impact on how individuals respond to their former lives upon returning from war. Their contribution is based on personal experiences, including the experiences of a Navy chaplain, as well as research-based findings that cover a broad period of time beginning with the experiences of returnees from the Vietnam War up to the present conflicts. They contend that spirituality and religious experience demonstrate an “avenue for coping” that can be leveraged to bring about healing in individuals who have been traumatized by war.¹

A very useful section in this resource includes an article prepared by a Navy chaplain entitled, “Reflections on the Spiritual Effects of the War on Returning Troops.”² In the article, Chaplain Mark Smith suggests there are two kinds of war returnees that he interviewed, those he calls the “Never-Recoverers” and those he labels, “Nothing-Wrongs.”³ As the labels suggest, he found some troops who feared they would never recover. They were tired of talking about their experiences and wanted instead to talk about what they were going to do about their current problem, not realizing that the two

¹ Drescher, Smith, and Foy, “Spirituality and Readjustment Following War-Zone Experiences,” 295. Kent Drescher holds an MDiv and PhD and he is the coordinator of assessment and data management at the National Center for PTSD Inpatient Programs in Menlo Park, California. Mark Smith is a Navy Chaplain who served in Iraq with the First Marine Expeditionary Force in 2005. David Foy is a recognized expert on combat stress and PTSD. He holds a PhD and is the professor of psychology at the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California.

² Ibid., 296.

³ Ibid., 296-297.

were actually related.⁴ What Smith found remarkable was the fact that this group of “Never-Recovers” recognized an inner strength in some of their buddies, derived from their faith, and this recognition influenced them to rediscover their own faith tradition. Among the “Nothing-Wrongs,” Smith notes they fell into two distinct groups, those who were in denial and those who seemed to have grown from their war experiences. Smith suggests spirituality had a significant impact on how well they handled their war experiences. He points out three aspects of their spiritual lives that he believes had the greatest impact: “their faith had been challenged, they had found new purpose, and their spiritual religious practices had changed.”⁵ Chaplain Smith’s findings offer valuable insights into the prospects for discovering a benefit from spirituality, though they do not provide any specific ministry tools that can be leveraged to reproduce a more comprehensive spiritual approach to combat stress.

The authors point out promising research that may provide possible avenues for utilizing spirituality in response to combat stress. In one area of their research they noted that “anger, rage, and a desire for revenge may be tempered by forgiveness, spiritual beliefs, or spiritual practices” and “feelings of isolation, loneliness, and depression related to grief and loss, may be lessened by the social support of religious participation.”⁶ Another of their studies found that helping individuals recover a sense of meaning in life, “can be achieved through changed ways of thinking and involvement in meaningful caring activities or through rituals experienced as part of religious/spiritual

⁴ Drescher, Smith, and Foy, “Spirituality and Readjustment Following War-Zone Experiences,” 297.

⁵ Ibid., 298.

⁶ Ibid., 299.

involvement.”⁷ Taken together these research findings suggest possible courses of action that might be utilized in a ministry strategy. For example, a beneficial approach to ministry might include teaching on forgiveness, spiritual beliefs, and practices that directly counter anger, rage, and revenge, along with an emphasis on spiritual support for overcoming feelings of isolation, loneliness, and depression.

This work by Drescher, Smith, and Foy is a valuable contribution to the discussion on how spirituality can support a healing process for those affected by combat stress; however, it does present some limitations. First, the authors have provided some very useful research and program suggestions, but they have not developed an approach that can be translated into a specific model or program that is replicable. Certainly their ideas move the topic forward, but what is needed is a model or template for ministry that can be provided to military chaplains as a presentation guide or tool. Second, though the authors have developed some valuable general suggestions, they have not provided a theological basis for a spiritual approach to combat stress. This is an area that requires additional development and one in which this paper will offer a contribution.

Strengthening Family Resilience,
Froma Walsh

Froma Walsh has written a comprehensive research-based approach to building resilience in families whose lives have been affected by various forms of trauma. She

⁷ Drescher, Smith, and Foy, “Spirituality and Readjustment Following War-Zone Experiences,” 299.

defines resilience as “the ability to rebound from crisis and overcome challenges.”⁸ This field, she suggests, has become increasingly important particularly in the last several years with the increase in both natural disasters and human-caused disasters. Of course, among the human-caused disasters, war and its effect on the family is the particular point of departure for this paper.

Walsh’s approach is to “identify and fortify key interactional processes that enable families to withstand and rebound from disruptive life challenges.”⁹ She argues that families threatened with crisis must be viewed as “challenged rather than damaged,” and with their crisis they can learn to develop individual and relational strength for coping with crisis and adversity.¹⁰ Walsh wants the focus for bringing healing to trauma to remain on strengthening the individuals and families through building resilience. Her purpose and strategy are in line with the strategy of this ministry focus paper, though she is focusing her efforts on the family dynamic, and her methods for achieving resilience are far broader than the narrower spiritual approach advocated by this paper.

The most significant contribution this resource brings to this paper is found in Walsh’s chapter, “Belief Systems,” which she subtitles, “The Heart and Soul of Resilience.”¹¹ She breaks down belief systems into three categories. First, she asserts that beneficial belief systems must make meaning out of adversity, which involves

⁸ Froma Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 2nd ed. (New York: Guilford Press, 2006), ix. Froma Walsh holds a PhD and currently serves as the Mose and Silva Firestone Professor in the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago. She also has a joint appointment in the Department of Psychiatry at the Pritzker School of Medicine and is Co-Director of the university-affiliated Chicago Center for Family Health.

⁹ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰ Ibid., 4.

¹¹ Ibid., 49.

“normalizing and contextualizing” trauma.¹² She suggests the need for helping trauma victims develop a “sense of coherence,” by which she means a “global orientation to life as comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful.” This supports her thesis that key work must be done in helping trauma victims see distress as a challenge rather than damage.

Her second category of belief systems focuses on developing a positive outlook toward overcoming adversity. Walsh makes an important contribution to this study in her analysis of the effect of hope and a positive outlook in work done by Martin Seligman. His early studies focused on “learned helplessness,” finding that people can be conditioned to accept failure and give up trying to solve problems after a few failed attempts. Over time, these individuals develop a tendency to give up before they have extended much effort at all, preferring to believe that “things like this always happen to me.”¹³ Seligman focused his efforts toward the development of a “psychological immunization” that would vaccinate people against learned helplessness.¹⁴ His findings suggest that by countering negative and defeatist thinking with hope and a positive outlook, particularly one informed by faith and spirituality, a strategy of building resilience has the potential for making a lasting impact and overcoming some forms of depression.

Walsh’s third major category in her discussion of belief systems involves transcendence and spirituality. She admits this is a crucial area of discussion, pointing out that in recent surveys, “most Americans ranked ‘family ties, loyalty, and traditions,’

¹² Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 58.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 66.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

and secondly, ‘moral and spiritual values,’ as the main factors thought to strengthen the family.”¹⁵ Other studies, she notes, have found that spiritual beliefs and practices “foster strong family functioning, especially in times of crisis,” and in Gallup surveys, “nearly seventy-five percent of Americans report their family relationships have been strengthened by religion in the home.”¹⁶ She points out that the African-American community has found in religion “a well-spring of resilience” and surveys have found that “those who are deeply religious cope better with stress, have fewer alcohol or drug problems, less depression, and lower rates of suicide than those who are not religious.”¹⁷ Walsh points out that Medical studies have also found evidence that “faith, prayer, and meditation can actually promote health and healing, reducing stress by strengthening the immune and cardiovascular systems.”¹⁸ She notes that over the past decades, mental health professionals have typically chosen to ignore spirituality, leaving that up to the clergy, but they are finding that spirituality is far more important than they ever realized. In a recent Gallup survey, over 75 percent of Americans said they wanted to express their spiritual concerns to their physicians and health care providers.¹⁹ All these findings suggest the beneficial influence of spirituality and religion in building resilience.

¹⁵ Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 72.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁷ G. Gallup, Jr. and D. M. Lindsey, *Surveying the Religious Landscape: Trends in U.S. Beliefs* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1999), quoted in Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 74.

¹⁸ D. Dossey, *Healing Words: The Power of Prayer and the Practice of Medicine* (New York: Harper, 1993), H. Koenig, M. E. McCullough, and D. Larson, *Handbook of Religion and Health* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), quoted in Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 75.

¹⁹ Gallup and Lindsey, *Surveying the Religious Landscape*, quoted in Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 76.

Walsh provides a number of helpful contributions toward developing a spiritual approach to building resilience; however, there are some limitations that should be noted. First, though she suggests the potential and benefits of spirituality, she does not present a definitive spiritual or religious approach that can be replicated as a treatment program or ministry plan. Clearly, Walsh is approaching the subject from a clinician's perspective rather than that of a theologian, so this is not a criticism of her work. Second, Walsh's focus is on strengthening resilience for those who are affected by trauma, which is useful for this discussion, but her emphasis is on the field of trauma in general, rather than combat and operational stress. Once again, this is not a criticism of her work; rather a recognition of the limitation on her work's application to the special field of combat and operational stress ministry.

Research and Application of Spiritual Resilience

Combat Trauma, Resiliency and Spirituality,
Dean Bonura

U.S. Army Chaplain Dean Bonura has written an article on "Combat Trauma, Resilience and Spirituality" that brings together three of the major elements that support this ministry focus paper. His article is based on the premise that "the presence of spirituality and the use of spiritual fitness are recognized as important and effective resilience factors in moderating the effects of combat trauma or combat stress among soldiers."²⁰ His work is based on a year-long study involving 165 soldiers who served at least one tour in Iraq or Afghanistan. He used surveys and interviews to study the

²⁰ Dean Bonura, "Combat Trauma, Resilience and Spirituality," *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 74.

spiritual dimensions of combat trauma and the relationship between combat trauma and resilience. Among his findings, soldiers identified “spirituality as an important supportive factor.”²¹

Bonura’s findings on resilience provide some valuable insights that deserve mention. He offers support for research that has been done showing that “the development of strengths, whether derived from adversity or not, increases resilience and protects against the most damaging effects of traumatic stress.”²² This suggests that work in the area of resilience to increase strength can be a proactive solution to combat stress exposure. On the other hand, developing resilience after a stressful event has proven to provide beneficial results whether or not resilience development had ever been pursued in the past. In terms of soldiers’ reactions to stressful situations, he found that those who had some kind of relationship with God specifically pointed to their belief in the sovereignty of God over their lives as the enabling force that brought them strength in the midst of combat.

Part of Bonura’s study involved examining ways that spirituality can support resilience both during and after combat. He argues that “active spirituality during and after combat is a resilience factor in promoting healing and recovery.”²³ Research indicates that combat veterans who prayed “felt connected to God, possessed a sense of God’s presence and protection, and indicated spirituality continued to play a healing role

²¹ Bonura, “Combat Trauma, Resilience and Spirituality,” 74.

²² G. Higgins, *Resilient Adults: Overcoming a Cruel Past* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994), quoted in Bonura, “Combat Trauma, Resilience and Spirituality,” 77.

²³ Bonura, “Combat Trauma, Resilience and Spirituality,” 78.

after combat.”²⁴ The soldiers reported that prayer was the “most frequent and important spiritual activity they engaged in that enabled their coping during combat.”²⁵ In his study, 64 percent of the soldiers indicated faith provided comfort during combat, 61 percent had a positive outlook towards spiritual growth, and among those soldiers surveyed, “faith, prayer, family support, and leadership” were the factors that most often contributed toward their resilience and helped them cope with combat.²⁶

Bonura’s research and case study on combat stress, resilience, and spirituality provide some unique insights that certainly contribute to this ministry focus; however, there are some limitations that should be noted. First, Bonura has not established a resilience-building program or developed ideas for a resilience-building process. He has offered some ideas about what to look for in such a program, but he has not developed such a program. His work also focuses primarily on spirituality in a general sense and lacks a specific biblical or theological focus. On the other hand, one of the great strengths he offers is the insight from a chaplain’s perspective, recognizing that military chaplains must often work in a pluralistic environment.

The Human, Spiritual and Ethical Dimensions of Leadership in Preparation for Combat,
John Brinsfield and Peter Baktis

John Brinsfield and Peter Baktis offer an insightful look at some of the factors that should be considered when motivating, training, and leading personnel who engage in warfare. They recognize that human and spiritual needs should be considered when

²⁴ Bonura, “Combat Trauma, Resilience and Spirituality,” 78.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 79.

making decisions on training military personnel, and they are particularly concerned with the psychological, spiritual, and ethical preparation of soldiers for current and future combat. They assert that since all military members have human and spiritual needs, converting those needs into “strengths of will and character” are an important part of combat leadership.²⁷

Their work is divided into three major sections. First, they define human and spiritual needs; second, they examine ways these needs have been leveraged to build resilience in military members; and third, they propose some training options for capitalizing on this approach. As with other authors who have undertaken this study, Brinsfield and Baktis point out extensive examples of how religion and spirituality have provided support in all the major battles and wars this country has faced. They note, as others have, that prayer has been a central theme in many of the discussions about how military personnel were sustained during periods of combat. The authors give an account of the 1991 Gulf War, when General Norman Schwarzkopf held a staff meeting with thirty generals to read the announcement of the beginning of war operations, and asked the chaplain pray. After he prayed, the chaplain reflected that “even though it was not discussed as such, the prayer for a quick and decisive victory with few casualties had a unifying, cohesive effect on the staff as they set about the business of war.”²⁸

Incorporating prayer as an element in a program designed for the development of resilience would seem to be an important foundational component.

²⁷ John W. Brinsfield and Peter Baktis, “The Human, Spiritual and Ethical Dimensions of Leadership in Preparation for Combat,” *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 19. Dr. John Brinsfield is the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Historian at the U.S. Army Chaplain School and Peter Baktis is an Army Chaplain.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

Brinsfield and Baktis provide some useful ideas for the development of a spiritual response to combat stress and combat preparation in their emphasis on human and spiritual needs. However, there are some limitations that should be noted. First, they do not offer a program or process for the development of their ideas. They do offer some suggestions for renewed emphasis on existing training programs, but what seems important is an approach that focuses more clearly on meeting needs that relate specifically to the effects of combat stress. Second, though the authors make some valuable contributions to the subject of religion and spirituality, they do not present a theological argument or a theological basis for their views.

World Religions Approaches to Spiritual Resilience

Taqwah and Sabr: The Foundations of Spiritual Resilience in Islam, Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad

Chaplain Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad is an Army chaplain who offers insight into ministry from a Muslim's perspective, as well as significant experience in working with troops deployed in combat. His article entitled, "*Taqwah and Sabr: The Foundations of Spiritual Resilience in Islam,*" provides a framework for understanding some of the key themes Muslims use to address spiritual resilience.²⁹ He affirms that the Islamic concept of spiritual resilience is based on maintaining a continuous consciousness of the presence of God and recognizing that God is in control even when they face crisis situations.

²⁹ Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad, "*Taqwah and Sabr: The Foundations of Spiritual Resilience in Islam,*" in *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 55-60.

Among his contributions to the field of study, Muhammad points out that of all the “personal sources of resilience, spiritual resilience is the only one that is self-replenishing.”³⁰ From an Islamic perspective, Chaplain Muhammad suggests that the Arabic term *taqwah* provides for Muslims one of the essential elements necessary for maintaining spiritual resilience. *Taqwah* means “to be conscious of Allah (God) at all times, in all places, regardless of circumstances.”³¹ Muhammad suggests that this consciousness of God is the “ultimate defense against evil inclinations.”³² For the Muslim, recognizing the presence of God in any and every situation provides a source of power, comfort, and assurance. Muhammad provides two examples of how Muslims apply *taqwah*. First, during Ramadan, when Muslims fast from eating and drinking during daylight hours, the observant Muslim not only abstains from food and drink, he also practices *taqwah* by allowing God to help him control anger and avoid temptations toward lying, arguing, or vulgar speech.³³ A second example is in the obedience involved in praying five times a day as required by one of the pillars of Islam. Muslims who miss one or more of these prayers display a lack of *taqwah*.³⁴

The other important element that provides spiritual resilience for Muslims is *sabr*, an Arabic word meaning, “to maintain patience, composure, equanimity, self-control and endurance in the face of difficulties, hardships, stress or inconveniences that may come in

³⁰ Muhammad, “*Taqwah* and *Sabr*,” 55.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 56.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

living and doing things in the way prescribed by Allah.”³⁵ Mere belief, Muhammad writes, is not enough for the Muslim; they must also be willing to accept that everything that occurs is God’s will, a part of providence. The lifelong struggle to maintain both *taqwah* and *sabr* are what provides Muslims with the spiritual resilience to overcome the adversities of life.

Chaplain Muhammad demonstrates well how resilience can be treated in a pluralistic fashion without losing its essential theological character. For Muslims, spiritual resilience develops when they maintain a continuous consciousness of the presence of God and when they recognize that God is in control, even when they face crisis situations. This would appear to be one clear area where Christians and Muslims have something in common. Perhaps this suggests an approach to chaplain ministry where there is sufficient common ground to warrant developing a program that meets needs across a broader theological spectrum. Chaplain Muhammad’s contribution is only limited by the lack of systematic development of an approach for developing these Muslim concepts of *taqwah* and *sabr* in a fashion pluralistic enough to meet a broader array of participants.

A Jewish Perspective on Spiritual Resilience,

Henry C. Soussan

Henry Soussan is an Army chaplain who has written an article on spiritual resilience from a Jewish perspective. His article further advances the pluralistic aspect of a spiritual response to combat stress. Chaplain Soussan describes spiritual resilience as “the capacity, when faced with hardship and difficulty, to *cope actively* using religious

³⁵ Muhammad, “*Taqwah and Sabr*,” 56-57.

resources, to resist the destruction of one's spiritual competency, and to construct something positive in line with larger theological goals."³⁶ Soussan suggests that "coping actively" from a Jewish perspective involves three components: "spiritual discipline, the Jewish experience, and God's presence."³⁷ By spiritual discipline, he has in mind the Jewish requirement to pray three times per day and offer blessings over every item of food or drink they consume. This discipline includes offering blessings for natural phenomena, such as rainbows, thunder and lightning, "and even upon donning a new garment."³⁸ In addition to prayer, according to tradition, Jews are required to set aside time each day for the study of the Torah. Soussan suggests the spiritual disciplines of prayer and the study of Torah help them improve spiritually in the same way that physical discipline helps them improve physically.

As Jews look back over their history, they are reminded of the protection and intervention of God through many miraculous acts in history. This Jewish experience provides them with an additional source of spiritual resilience. Soussan writes, "It is through the annual reenactment of the Passover that Jews learn that hardship can lead to growth; the unleavened Mazza of slavery and oppression will eventually become the bread of freedom."³⁹ Along with the daily prayers, Torah study, and reminders of the Jewish experience, the Jewish perspective on spiritual resilience involves the continuous recognition of the presence of God in their lives. Soussan suggests this recognition of

³⁶ Henry C. Soussan, "A Jewish Perspective on Spiritual Resilience," *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 69.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 72.

God's presence infuses their existence with the divine and leads them to clearly see God's hand in every moment of their lives.⁴⁰

Chaplain Soussan's Jewish perspective provides an additional example of how spiritual resilience can be viewed from a pluralistic perspective. The Jewish concepts of spiritual discipline, involving regular prayer and Scripture study, are shared ideas in Christianity and Islam. The perspective on the spiritual resilience that flows from the Jewish experience is one that Christians share and similar to the view held by followers of Islam on their struggles. This idea that spiritual resilience develops from a continuous consciousness of the presence of God is shared by all three Abrahamic faiths and perhaps it is a concept that can be leveraged across an even wider array of faith traditions.

Psalm 23 and Spiritual Resilience

The Psalms have for centuries served as a spiritual resource for troubled times and Psalm 23 in particular has been employed for centuries to comfort those who grieve and bolster courage and hope for those who are afraid. Having recognized the potential of Psalm 23 for building spiritual resilience, this section of the literature review will lay the foundation for a more thorough exegesis of Psalm 23 in Chapter 5. The sources reviewed here represent two significant scholarly contributions to the study of the Psalms by Walter Brueggemann and Peter Craigie, as well as the oft-quoted devotional classic, *A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm*, by Phillip Keller.

⁴⁰ Soussan, "A Jewish Perspective on Spiritual Resilience," 73.

The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary,
Walter Brueggemann

In Walter Brueggemann's masterful commentary on the Psalms, he points out the need to examine the Psalms in a "post-critical" fashion, that allows formal gains in scholarship to "enhance and strengthen, as well as criticize, the substance of genuine piety in its handling of the Psalms."⁴¹ From a critical perspective, Brueggemann notes the scholarly contributions of Hermann Gunkel's form-critical approach, Sigmund Mowinckel's hypothesis that the Psalms represent texts used in the annual enthronement festival, and Claus Westermann's argument that the lament and responses to the lament represent the basic form of Psalmic expression.⁴² By "post-critical," Brueggemann argues that the Psalms should be interpreted by viewing them in three general themes, "poems of *orientation*, poems of *disorientation*, and poems of *new orientation*."⁴³ His analysis suggests that all of the Psalms can be categorized under one of these three major themes, but he adds that most of the Psalms also include one or more movements from one of these themes to another. Using Brueggemann's approach to analyze Psalm 23 suggests a Psalm that incorporates all three of these themes. In verses one through three, the Psalmist provides the "orientation" of sheep at peace. In verses four and five, there is evidence of "disorientation," with enemies surrounding the sheep suggesting the possibility of fear, and evoking a shift from third person to the more personal second person, "Thou art with me." In verse six, the Psalm moves to a "new orientation" of

⁴¹ Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1984), 16.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁴³ Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 19.

goodness and mercy while dwelling in the house of the Lord forever. This post-critical approach, incorporating elements of orientation, disorientation, and new orientation offers a promising model for building spiritual resilience. The Psalm actually captures the concept of “bouncing back” from trauma in the two transitional orientation movements.

Brueggemann points out a number of key features in Psalm 23 that warrant employing it as a tool for building resilience. First, he argues the placement of the formal covenantal name *Yahweh* at the beginning and ending of the Psalm suggests a life “lived fully in the presence of this name which sets the parameters for both life and speech.”⁴⁴ He adds that the presence of the pronoun “Thou” in the middle of the Psalm “seems to govern the Psalm.”⁴⁵ Perhaps there is no greater overarching principle for building resilience than the recognition of the presence of God.

The second significant feature of Brueggemann’s analysis is his discussion of the Psalmist’s use of the phrase, “I shall not want” or “I lack not” (Ps 23:1).⁴⁶ He argues that this expression cannot be applied to meeting spiritual needs alone; rather it affirms that “Yahweh is the satisfaction of all wants and needs.”⁴⁷ He supports this contention by noting that the reference to the cup and table argue against spiritualizing, since these items refer to “real food and real drink.”⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 154.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ All Scripture quoted is from the New American Standard Bible, unless otherwise noted.

⁴⁷ Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 155.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Brueggemann sees the transition of the pronouns from the third person to the second person after mentioning the “valley of the shadow of death” as the most significant element of the Psalm. He asserts that “it is God’s companionship that transforms every situation.”⁴⁹ He asserts that the comfort available in life’s deadly valleys comes through relationship with God and “confidence in God is the source of new orientation.”⁵⁰ Brueggemann’s post-critical analysis of the Psalm suggests a wealth of opportunity for development of Psalm 23 as a tool for building spiritual resilience. The only possible limitation for the purpose of this ministry focus is the lack of concrete developmental approaches to resilience. This is certainly not Brueggemann’s focus and therefore should not be considered a criticism of his work on the Psalm.

“The Shepherd Psalm” in *Psalms 1-50 of the Word Biblical Commentary*,
Peter C. Craigie

Peter Craigie provides a thorough, critical analysis of Psalm 23, taking into consideration both ancient and modern scholarship. From a preliminary perspective, he sees two key problems with interpreting the text. First, the structure of the Psalm has weathered a tremendous amount of speculation through the years. There is basic consistency in the view that the first four verses pertain to the Lord as Shepherd, but verse five and six have been the subject of much debate. Some scholars counter that verses five and six change the subject to the “Lord as host.”⁵¹ But he notes that several

⁴⁹ Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 156.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, vol. 19 of *Word Biblical Commentary*, ed. David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker and John D. W. Watts (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 204.

scholars contend that the shepherd motif is maintained throughout the psalm.⁵² A third option, which he supports, is the idea that the language of verses five and six should be taken literally as a sacrificial banquet which provides the setting for the psalm.⁵³

The second interpretive problem, Craigie notes, is the nature of the setting for the psalm. A number of possibilities have been proposed. Julian Morgenstern argues against a temple usage in support of the private worship of a pious Jew, Ernest Vogt proposes an elaborate liturgical thanksgiving ritual, and Pamela Milne views it as an occasion for worship arising from an exilic context.⁵⁴ Craigie takes a somewhat hybrid approach, suggesting the psalm is part of a thanksgiving ritual. Though he sees it neither as specific as Vogt's proposal nor necessarily as non-cultic as Morgenstern, and the language represents a clear reminder of exilic wandering.⁵⁵ He suggests the psalm began as an "individual psalm" and in later years became a "communal psalm."⁵⁶

Craigie contends that the fundamental purpose of the psalm is in the expression of a metaphor of interrelated protection and provision.⁵⁷ His conclusion suits well the contention that Psalm 23 is fundamentally capable of offering resilience-building support to those who are affected by combat and operational stress. His main contribution for the purpose of this project is his extensive knowledge of Hebrew idiom and Near Eastern

⁵² Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 205.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ J. Morgenstern, "Psalm 23," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 65 (1946): 13-24, E. Vogt, "The 'Place of Life' of Ps. 23," *Biblica* 34 (1953): 195-211 and P. Milne, "Psalm 23: Echoes of the Exodus," *Studies in Religion* 4 (1974/75): 237-47, quoted in Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 205.

⁵⁵ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 205.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

culture. For example, in Psalm 23:2, he points out “the quiet waters” are literally “waters of *placidity*,” an intensive plural also used in Numbers 10:33 as the “resting place” the Israelites were seeking in their wilderness wanderings.⁵⁸ In Psalm 23:4, Craigie recognizes another exilic reminder in the reference to the “shadow of death.” He sees this compound noun with the literal rendering, “very deep shadow,” as language associated with the Exodus and the Israelites wandering through the “deep shadow” of the wilderness, with the threat of death continually hanging over them.⁵⁹

Craigie’s commentary captures the profundity of the Psalm 23 metaphor while recognizing the beauty of the poetry that together makes this psalm so beloved and valuable for this project. Beyond stringing together delightful insights from the psalm, Craigie carefully lays out the fruit of diligent research and intense study. His insights offer a clearer understanding of the Psalmist’s intention and provide remarkable tools for clarity in the development of spiritual disciplines drawn from Psalm 23. The only possible limitation is the lack of specific reference to combat stress or its effects, but this is certainly beyond the scope of Craigie’s focus.

A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm,
Phillip Keller

This classic devotional text on the twenty-third Psalm has been widely quoted by theologians and pastors. Its enormous popularity is clearly evident with over two million copies in print. Though it does not claim to be a scholarly resource, it is simply so thorough in its treatment of Psalm 23 that the insights it offers should not be overlooked.

⁵⁸ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 207.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Keller argues that the Psalm has been over-spiritualized and often misinterpreted primarily because interpreters have failed to recognize the perspective of shepherds.⁶⁰

The modern urban mindset has clouded the quaint, rural agrarian world of shepherds and sheep. His objective in writing the book was to rekindle that insight for modern urban readers while capturing truths that have been lost through years of city-dweller neglect.

Keller grew up and lived in East Africa among native herders whose lifestyle and customs closely resembled their Middle Eastern counterparts. As a young man, he also made his living as a sheep owner and sheep rancher for eight years. In later years, he served as a pastor, sharing his insights and shepherding experiences, teaching his “flock” the truths he had learned from the twenty-third Psalm.⁶¹

Among the many insights Keller brings to the twenty-third Psalm, none can compare to his earthy descriptions of the basic needs of sheep and the ingenious ways the shepherds meet those needs. Keller points out that sheep are not capable of caring for themselves: “They require, more than any other class of livestock, endless attention and meticulous care.”⁶² This care provided by the shepherd suggests an insight that Psalm 23 offers for building spiritual resilience. Like sheep, human beings often need special care, particularly when they experience some of the great tragedies and traumas of life.

Keller makes a remarkable assertion about the meaning of the phrase, “He makes me lie down in green pastures” (Ps 23:2). He argues that sheep will not lie down on the ground unless four conditions are met: they must be free from fear, free from friction

⁶⁰ Phillip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1970), 6.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 14.

among their fellow sheep, free from flies or parasites, and free from hunger.⁶³ These four requirements easily translate into parallel human needs for peace in the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual dimensions. This insight offers tremendous opportunity for exploring the implications it represents for spiritual resilience, particularly with regard to the spiritual resilience attribute of peace.

Another valuable Keller insight is his treatment of the “downcast” sheep. He describes a “downcast” sheep as one that has fallen on its back with its feet in the air, possibly in a ditch or low spot, unable to get up without assistance.⁶⁴ Keller suggests this is what the Psalmist is portraying with the words, “He restores my soul” (Ps 23:3). He argues that the words of the Psalm paint a picture of the helplessness of the sheep and the loving care of the shepherd who meets all the needs of his sheep.

These few examples provide only a brief glimpse of the insights Keller offers to Psalm 23, but they are sufficient to demonstrate the depth of his contribution to the psalm. His approach to reading and interpreting the psalm will prove valuable in allowing the Scriptures to come alive for those who have become jaded or bored by tired expressions of spirituality. What Keller offers is a fresh reading of Psalm 23 that demonstrates the depth and breadth of this powerful passage of Scripture. Keller’s approach is primarily devotional, which represents somewhat of a limitation. This, of course, can be countered by frequent reference to more scholarly works along with a careful analysis of the insights being offered.

⁶³ Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm*, 29.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 52.

As noted throughout this literature review, these resources offer a number of useful contributions to this study; though they are limited in a number of ways that suggest opportunities to make a contribution in this field. The current literature available has not provided a model or template for ministry that can be replicated and broadly applied by chaplains. Most current approaches suggest different forms of support groups, training topics, or counseling approaches. What is needed is a ministry template, a set of principles, skills, or tools that can be applied by chaplains or civilian ministers with some expectation of healing response in combat veterans. Second, there is a need for the development of a theological foundation for ministering to those affected by combat stress. The existing literature lacks this theological focus. Third, there is a need for an ecclesiological model for chaplain ministry that provides the appropriate context for this theologically-based ministry approach. In response to these three limitations, the next three chapters will develop an ecclesiology for military chaplaincy, a theology of spiritual resilience, and a strategy for building spiritual resilience.

CHAPTER 4

AN ECCLESIOLOGY FOR MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

The term “ecclesiology” is derived from the Greek word *ekklesia*, etymologically suggesting a group of people who are “called out” or “called forth” from the Greek *ek*, “out” and *klesis*, “to call.”¹ *Ekklesia* was commonly used in the Greek-speaking community, whereas *synogoge*, another rendering of *qahal* in the Septuagint (the Greek Old Testament), came to be used more often among the Jewish religious community.² Ecclesiology then is the field of theological study that explores the meaning of the church, as described in the Bible, and as developed down through the ages in church history. Though this definition positions ecclesiology in the Christian context, the idea of developing an ecclesiology suggests a broader application of the word that encompasses all those who are “gathered” or “called out” from any faith group. This chapter is devoted to developing an ecclesiology for military chaplaincy. In order to do so, it seems appropriate to begin by providing some background on military chaplaincy to set the stage for a more thorough discussion of ecclesiology.

¹ Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King, eds., *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 250.

² Ibid.

The Origin of Military Chaplaincy

The origin of the word “chaplain” traces back to a curious incident that occurred in the Middle Ages. A compassionate fourth century soldier, St. Martin of Tours, came upon a shivering beggar on a cold winter night and removed his own cloak, slashed it in half with his sword, and offered it to the cold beggar. Later that night, Martin had a dream in which he saw Christ wearing that half-cloak. As a result of that incident, he became a Christian and devoted his life to the service of the Church. St. Martin’s cloak, *cappella*, became a banner carried into battle, signifying the presence of God. The priest who carried the cloak into battle was called the *cappellanus*, or “keeper of the cloak.” He also provided for the religious needs of the kings and his office became known as the “chaplain.” The place where the *cappella* was kept was the place of worship and became known as the “chapel.”³ In his book, *The Churches and The Chaplaincy*, Richard Hutcheson points out, “The story is more than a quaint bit of etymology explaining the origin of the terms ‘chaplain’ and ‘chapel.’ It is also a clue which points to the essential nature of chaplaincy.”⁴ Chaplains are members of one institution, a religious body, and they serve in another institution, the military. They are not half clergy and half military; they are fully a part of both institutions with all the responsibilities that entails.

Hutcheson writes, “A chaplain has ‘one foot in heaven’ and the other in a combat boot.”⁵

Chaplains who fail to recognize the importance of ecclesiology when developing ministries, often discover their attempts are ineffective and fruitless. The problem is

³ Richard G. Hutcheson, Jr., *The Churches and the Chaplaincy* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), 17.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

likely due to their attempt to fit their ecclesiology into an institution where that ecclesiology is not the best fit. Hutcheson offers some good examples of this ecclesiological mismatch. There are family-oriented chaplains who spend all of their time and effort on ministry to the families of officers and senior enlisted personnel with little regard for the young adult servicemen and servicewomen who make up the majority of the military. Another example is the “chapel-happy chaplain who is lost without a building, who even on a two-week bivouac feels an urgent necessity to ‘build a chapel.’”⁶ A third example is the chaplain who remains in his office, “remote from the military world, expecting his parishioners to leave their everyday pursuits and seek him out. Such chaplains are physically within one institutional environment, but psychologically within another.”⁷

Adopting an ecclesiological perspective is not as simple as it may appear. Ecclesiology has had a long and sometimes difficult history. Differences of opinion on ecclesiology have often been the reason for division in the Christian Church. A discussion of some of the views that have emerged in the history of the Church will lay a foundation for developing an ecclesiology suitable for military chaplaincy.

Traditional Options in Ecclesiology

The word *ekklesia* is used in the New Testament 108 times and all but a few references refer to the local church or churches rather than to the entire Church or

⁶ Hutcheson, *The Churches and the Chaplaincy*, 40.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

“universal Church.”⁸ In addition to scriptural passages that use the word *ekklesia*, there are a number of images used in the Scriptures to depict the Church. The Bible sometimes uses the term “people of God” to describe the Church (e.g. Rom 9:25 and 1 Pt 2:10). The “body of Christ” is another prominent image for the Church and a favorite of the Apostle Paul in the epistles of Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians.⁹ The imagery of the Church as a “temple” is a third expression used in the New Testament. John Hammett writes that “the first idea of the church as a building is implied by Jesus’ words in Matthew 16:18: ‘You are Peter, and on this rock I will *build* my church.’”¹⁰ This verse has created a great deal of controversy in the Church primarily due to the various interpretations of Jesus’ use of the word “rock.” The Roman Catholic Church has held the view that the “rock” Jesus referred to in this passage is Peter. Hammett points out, “Most discussion of this verse has focused on the relationship between Peter (*petros*) and rock (*petra*) on which the church is built, chiefly because this verse has been used by many Catholics to support the importance of the papacy for the church.”¹¹ Protestants, on the other hand, typically interpret the word *rock* in this passage as a reference to Peter’s declaration, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16).

⁸ The epistle to the Ephesians represents a major exception to this with nine uses of the word and all refer to the entire Church. The importance of this point is reflected in the fact that there are so many different ecclesiological views and yet all rely on the same 108 uses of the word *ekklesia*.

⁹ Paul’s use of this metaphor is quite different in these epistles. In Romans and 1 Corinthians, Paul’s emphasis is on the unity believers should enjoy in the body of Christ, referring to the local assembly of believers. While in Ephesians and Colossians his emphasis is on the universality of the Church as one body in which Christ is the head. John S. Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches: A Contemporary Ecclesiology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2005), 41.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

This biblical discussion only scratches the surface on what the Bible has to say about the Church, but it should be sufficient to point out that defining what is meant by the term “Church” is not as simple as one would hope. As the Church developed from those early beginnings, various views of the Church emerged. Each new interpretation of the Church brought with it changes that more often than not resulted in new iterations of Christianity that ultimately came to be known as denominations.

The oldest ecclesiology is based on the Patristic thought developed in Eastern Orthodoxy. Their ecclesiology places a priority on the Eucharist. Veli-Matti Karkkainen suggests their position is, “Wherever the Eucharist is, there is the church.”¹² They make no distinction between a local church and the entire Church since each gathering where the Eucharist is shared is a true expression of the church; so in that sense “every local church is a true church.”¹³

Similar to the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church sees ecclesiology as communion. Their views on the Church are sacramental, particularly the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist; these are for Roman Catholics the foundation of the church.¹⁴ The term “catholic,” sometimes troubling to Protestants, simply means “universal.” Cyril of Jerusalem said in his catechetical lectures in AD 350, “The Church,

¹² Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical & Global Perspectives* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 21.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 31.

then, is called Catholic because it is spread through the whole world, from one end of the earth to the other.”¹⁵

The Lutheran view of ecclesiology from Luther’s perspective was “the gathering of all believers, in which the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered in accord with the gospel.”¹⁶ In terms of the mission of the Church, Luther used the metaphor of the Church as a hospital, saying that “since Christians are living in the world, they are involved with people who are both sinful and less than perfect; therefore, the church of Christ in the world cannot be anything else except a hospital for the incurably sick.”¹⁷

Like Luther, Calvin’s ecclesiology emphasized the preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the sacraments. He was often quoted as saying, “Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ’s institution, there, it is not to be doubted a church of God exists.”¹⁸ Both Luther and Calvin were responding, in their ecclesiological formulations, to what they viewed as the excesses and errors of the Roman Catholic Church. The slogans of the reformation, *sola Scriptura*, *sola gratia*, and *sola fide*, “Scripture alone, grace alone, and faith alone,” demonstrate some of their key disagreements with the Roman Church. The Reformers felt the Roman Catholic Church had failed to preserve the pure preaching

¹⁵ Karkkainen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*, 58.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁸ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 63.

of the Word of God and they felt the Roman Mass of the Eucharist had altered the original meaning of the sacrament of communion.

In Free churches, two striking differences distinguish them from the Patristic, Roman, and Reformation ecclesiological views. First, they advocate a “believer’s church,” a church composed of only those who have accepted Christ as Savior and received “believer’s baptism,” and second, they are overwhelmingly congregational in their polity. Another important distinction is their view of the “secular.” Free churches oppose the intermingling of the secular society and the church, particularly as it relates to government. They were in opposition to “the medieval ‘Christian’ state in which the priest and the prince ruled together, the latter being the servant to the former.”¹⁹ In addition, Free Church ecclesiologies affirm a belief in “soul competence,” the view that “each individual is able and responsible before God for his relationship with God and does not require the mediation of any human priest to come before God.”²⁰

All of these ecclesiological approaches have a basis in Scripture, history, or tradition and all of them have their merits, but none of these approaches will quite fit military chaplaincy. It should be noted here that by suggesting the development of an ecclesiology for military chaplaincy, this does not mean that there should be a “military church” or a “military denomination.”²¹ This is not the intent of this chapter, nor should it

¹⁹ Karkkainen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*, 64.

²⁰ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 46.

²¹ Some have suggested the development of a civil religion as a possible model for American life in general or military life in particular, but this is not what is meant by an ecclesiology for military chaplaincy. John Dewey proposed a “common faith” in the 1930s suggesting it be “drawn from those common elements of religious experience shared by all Americans, with the non-essential elements of traditional religions (in Dewey’s thought, generally the supernatural elements) eliminated, and commended as a basis for national life and morality.” Hutcheson, *The Churches and the Chaplaincy*, 131.

be. In the next several pages, the emphasis will shift to the specific issues that must be examined in order to develop an ecclesiological model appropriate for military chaplain ministry.

The Challenge of Developing an Ecclesiology for Military Chaplaincy

The prospect of developing an ecclesiology for military chaplaincy presents some challenges that should be pointed out. Chief among them is the challenge represented by serving in a pluralistic environment. Military chaplains must provide ministry to Christians, Jews, Muslims, Orthodox, Mormons, Seventh-Day Adventists, Wiccans, and even those with no faith, to name just a few. There are currently 199 religious faith groups who have credentials for endorsing military chaplains.²² Add to these the thousands of other faith groups in the United States and the entire world; and it is easy to see how challenging it is to develop an ecclesiology that all chaplains could agree on. Not only do these various faith groups represent different beliefs, they also ascribe to different religious texts. Military chaplains often stock their supply shelves with Bibles, both Roman Catholic and Protestant versions, along with copies of the Torah, the Quran, the Book of Mormon, and various religious texts for Buddhists, Hindus, and other religions. Faced with these challenges, it is not uncommon for military chaplains to focus their ministry primarily on those military members whose faith group is similar to their own, and facilitate other religious needs by providing requested religious texts or making referrals to other religious leaders. Hutcheson calls this approach “cooperative

²² Department of Defense, “Armed Forces Chaplain Board,” Personnel and Readiness, <http://prhome.defense.gov/MPP/CHAPLAINS%20BOARD/ENDORSEMENTS.ASPX> (accessed December 14, 2010).

pluralism.”²³ This approach certainly is an accepted and agreeable way of handling pluralism, but it may fail in achieving a more comprehensive approach to chaplain ministry that reaches out to all the members in the command to which the military chaplain is assigned.

Another significant challenge has implications that impact the very foundation of military chaplaincy in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Military chaplains enjoy a tremendous opportunity for individual expression of religion, along with inherent limitations. Both are aspects of the First Amendment rights they have been sworn to protect and defend. The first portion of Article I of the Amendments to the U.S. Constitution states, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”²⁴ This line from the First Amendment includes two clauses that are pertinent to this discussion. The first clause, usually referred to as the “establishment clause,” represents for chaplains a responsibility to avoid government entanglement with religion. As members of the military, sworn to protect and defend the Constitution, chaplains must never participate in the establishment of a religion. This clause was historically a protection against the establishment of a “state church,” but military chaplains could theoretically or actually violate this clause through certain ecclesiological practices. The second clause, commonly referred to as the “free exercise clause,” supports the military chaplain’s opportunity and duty to preserve the rights for the free exercise of religion. This means that chaplains serve where the troops serve, whether at sea or on land, in peace time or in combat, within the United States or outside

²³ Hutcheson, *The Churches and the Chaplaincy*, 117.

²⁴ Charles W. Eliot, ed., *Constitution of the United States in American Historical Documents 1000-1904*, in *The Harvard Classics* (Danbury, CT: Grolier Enterprises, 1988), 194.

the United States. Chaplains serve where the military members serve in order to provide religious ministry and ensure that religious freedom is never abridged.

In order to clarify some of the pitfalls that ecclesiology presents to military chaplaincy due to the establishment clause, it might be useful to point out three examples of potential violations of the establishment clause. First, military chapels are not allowed to have a “membership roll” as this would suggest there are “church members” in violation of the establishment clause. Second, military chapels may have Chapel Councils, but they are not permitted to draw up a “Chapel Constitution,” and the decisions of the Chapel Councils are only non-binding recommendations. Otherwise the chapel may be accused of establishing a particular church polity, which would be a violation of the establishment clause. Third, military chapels are not permitted to ordain clergy, whether the ordination is through “laying on of hands” by ordained clergy members or through a vote of the congregation. Either approach would suggest a church body or an established ecclesiological structure, thus violating the establishment clause. These three examples of potential conflicts with the establishment clause should clarify how carefully the subject of developing an ecclesiology for military chaplaincy must be broached. This challenge along with pluralism, religious diversity, and competing models of ecclesiology, all have an impact on the approach to ecclesiology that best fits ministry in military chaplaincy, but they do not represent an insurmountable challenge.

A Shepherding Ecclesiology for Military Chaplaincy

What is needed in military chaplaincy is a model for ecclesiology which takes into consideration pluralism, religious diversity, and constitutional issues while laying a

foundation for ministry to military members that is in alignment with the biblical portrayal of ministers as shepherds to their flock. This approach is suggested by the approach of Jesus and the disciples in what could be referred to as a “penultimate” model for the Church.²⁵ Most theologians would suggest that during the ministry of Jesus, he was gathering disciples, but they were not called the Church until the day of Pentecost referred to in Acts 2.²⁶ Steve Lutz, writing from a Campus Ministry perspective, points out that in Matthew 18:15-20, the reference to “two or three gathering together” are not the *ekklesia*, rather they should be considered a “gathering” of believers.²⁷ That penultimate gathering of disciples who were “shepherded” until they ultimately became members of churches when the Church came into existence represents an appropriate model for the ecclesiology of military chaplaincy.

This ecclesiological approach suggests that military chaplains serve in the capacity as a shepherd in the same sense that Jesus and the disciples did prior to the emergence of the Church in its fullest sense after Pentecost. This model of ecclesiology is appropriate for at least three reasons. First, chaplains provide ministry to a broad cross-section of individuals who may or may not share their faith perspective. By taking this shepherding view, chaplains can provide ministry that cares for people and meets their spiritual needs regardless of the “flock” they may eventually join. Second,

²⁵ “Penultimate” means “next to last.” *Webster’s II: New Riverside University Dictionary*, s.v. “penultimate.”

²⁶ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 13.

²⁷ Steve Lutz, “The 5 Big Issues in Campus Ministry Today: #3 Ecclesiology,” *The Sentinel* (July 15, 2009), <http://stevelutz.wordpress.com/2009/07/15/the-5-big-issues-in-campus-ministry-today-3-ecclesiology/> (accessed March 24, 2010).

chaplains enter the military as endorsed representatives of a faith tradition with the expectation that they will meet the needs of members of their own faith group on an “interim” basis, that is, until the military members return to their home churches. Third, chaplains provide ministry in an institutional setting that sometimes takes precedence over meeting religious needs. By adopting this penultimate sense of ecclesiology, the pressure to create a church environment that matches their personal ecclesiology is eliminated.

Contemporary Examples of a Shepherding Ecclesiology

In order to clarify this shepherding approach to ecclesiology, it might be helpful to provide some examples of how this approach functions in contemporary settings. Chaplain ministry shares many characteristics with parachurch organizations, those groups who operate “alongside” churches. The Navigators, for example, have a long history of very supportive relationships both with the Church and the military. They consider themselves an interdenominational, nonprofit organization “dedicated to helping people navigate spiritually, *to know Christ and to make Him known* as they look to Him and His Word to chart their lives.”²⁸ Cadence International, another parachurch organization, refers to themselves as “an Evangelical mission agency dedicated to reaching military communities of the United States and the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ.”²⁹ Both the Navigators and Cadence International have developed very

²⁸ The Navigators, “Our Beliefs,” The Navigators, <http://www.navigators.org/us/aboutus/items/missionvisionvalues/items/Our%20Beliefs> (accessed March 25, 2010).

²⁹ Cadence International, “About Cadence,” Cadence International, <http://www.cadence.org/about> (accessed March 25, 2010).

supportive relationships with churches and the military, yet neither of these organizations have direct ties to a particular religious denomination. Lutz describes the appropriate ecclesiological approach for parachurch organizations by suggesting, “Parachurch ministries ought to adopt a John the Baptist role: prepare the way, and then be willing to get out of the way.”³⁰ He goes on to argue that parachurch ministries are illegitimate if they try to take the place of the Church.³¹

There is another phenomenon that is occurring in the present day that may help clarify this shepherding approach to ecclesiology. There appears to be a growing movement away from denominationalism. The evidence of this shift can be seen partly in the rise of mega-churches, most with no denominational label, whether or not they have a distinct denominational affiliation.³² In addition to these mostly non-denominational mega-churches, there has been an increase in the number of other smaller non-denominational churches all across America. Russell Moore quotes a Baylor Survey on Religion stating that “non-denominational churches now represent the second largest group of Protestant churches in America, and they are the fastest growing.”³³ Preferring a non-denominational label does not necessarily mean these churches eschew these labels; it may simply mean they want to make it clear that anyone is welcome, no matter what their religious background may have been. This is exactly the approach that will

³⁰ Lutz, “The 5 Big Issues in Campus Ministry Today.”

³¹ Ibid.

³² Jesse Bogan, “America’s Biggest Megachurches,” *Forbes* (June 26, 2009), <http://www.forbes.com/2009/06/26/americas-biggest-megachurches-business-megachurches.html> (accessed March 25, 2010).

³³ Russell D. Moore, “Where Have all The Presbyterians Gone?” *The Wall Street Journal* (February 4, 2011), <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703437304576120690548462776.html> (accessed April 5, 2011).

best serve chaplain ministry. To deliver a ministry that crosses traditional barriers, reaching people who might otherwise feel excluded by labels, as well as those who want to be a part of something welcoming to others – that is the kind of approach that is supportable in chaplain ministry.

Shepherding Ecclesiology in the New Testament

As described above, Jesus functioned in this penultimate ecclesiological fashion during His earthly ministry. One of the great images Jesus used to describe His relationship to His followers was that of a shepherd. Matthew records an incident in the life of Jesus that illustrates the compassionate heart of a shepherd for his sheep. Jesus had been moving about through the villages and cities, preaching, teaching, and healing. Matthew records, “And seeing the multitudes, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd” (Mt 9:36). The word translated compassion is the Greek word *esplagchnisthe*. It is a word formed from *splagchna*, the word for “entrails.” In his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, William Barclay calls it “the strongest word for pity in the Greek language” and describes the compassion that “moves a man to the deepest depths of his being.”³⁴ Jesus was moved with compassion because he saw the people “distressed” and “downcast.” The word translated “distressed” is the Greek word is *eskulmenoi*, and carries meanings such as plundered, spoiled or troubled.³⁵ Perhaps a better sense is “harassed.” The word

³⁴ William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, vol. 1, rev. ed. in *The Daily Study Bible Series* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), 354.

³⁵ Kurt Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament*, 3rd ed. (Federal Republic of Germany: United Bible Societies, 1983), 165.

“downcast” is the Greek word *errimmenoi*, which means thrown down, helpless, or dejected.³⁶ Matthew was suggesting that when Jesus saw these multitudes, He saw them as so much more troubled, harassed, and helpless than others saw them. He saw them through the eyes of a shepherd whose sole desire is to take care of his sheep, to keep them safe, and provide for their needs. This is a wonderful portrayal of the compassion that chaplains must have for their troops. It is this level of compassion and understanding that should drive chaplains to minister to people crossing all the traditional religious lines, to meet deep inner needs as a shepherd cares for his sheep.

After this moving account of His compassion, the metaphor shifts to a field and Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into the harvest” (Mt 9:37-38). Matthew chose this point to introduce the call of the disciples and their commission: “Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons; freely you received, freely give” (Mt 10:5-8). The key issue this passage raises for this discussion is Jesus’ use of the phrase “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Mt 10:6). Once again, Jesus is using this metaphor of sheep, but now He is sending out His disciples to care for the sheep. He is not asking them to build churches. He is not asking them to organize leaders, and He is not even asking them to gather the people together in one place. He is sending them out to care for the sheep, for the time being, recognizing that there is something more that will follow. Whether that is the “kingdom of heaven” or the

³⁶ Aland, *The Greek New Testament*, 159.

Church, and whether or not these two should be considered as one, is beyond the scope of this paper. What does seem clear is that Jesus sent the disciples out to care for the flock until they were gathered into a new flock. This suggests the view that chaplains ought to have toward their ministry in the military. It is not a ministry that seeks to establish a church. That would be a constitutional violation. It is not a ministry that seeks to replace the church; rather, it is the ministry of a shepherd caring for the sheep until they are reunited with their own flock.

Development of an Effective Military Ministry Model

There is one additional ecclesiological issue that should be examined in order to further clarify the function of ecclesiology in the military chaplaincy. In order to develop an effective ministry approach under the auspices of military chaplaincy, it is important to determine the ministry model that is most conducive to chaplain ministry. There are at least four possible military ministry models, each with varying degrees of viability. First, it is possible to adopt a “chapel-centric” model to military ministry where emphasis on ministry is placed on the building. This approach is far too inflexible for military life, particularly in light of the constant movement required among combat-deployed personnel. A second possible model is the “church-centric” approach in which the denominational affiliation of the chaplain becomes the center of ministry. This approach can cause a disjointed ministry that meets only the needs of a few and creates serious tension during turnover periods between chaplains. A third approach is the “chaplain-centric” model of ministry. In this approach, the chaplain develops ministry around his or her personality and gifts. The weakness of this approach is that the ministry is

dependent upon a particular ministry style. All these approaches can be somewhat effective in the short term, but for long term effective ministry, a model must be employed that takes into consideration the institutional nature of military ministry while staying true to an appropriate ecclesiology. The command religious program model is such a model. This model focuses attention on the needs of a particular military command or organization and applies the scriptural and theological tools that are necessary for meeting those needs under God's leadership. With this model, each new chaplain who comes to the command brings new ideas and methods that bring new vitality and fresh new approaches to ministry. If the command religious program has been developed with core programs that are flexible, sustainable, and pluralistic, then the command religious program will provide a model for long-term effective military ministry. Such a program would include provisions for worship, offered for a variety of faith groups, as well as Scripture study, pastoral care, outreach, community service, and training. In addition, a command religious program should have programs that meet the needs of the command across the religious spectrum. This might require the appointment and training of religious lay leaders. Among the core programs offered, combat-engaged commands should have a program that offers ministry to those affected by combat and operational stress.

In summary, an ecclesiology for military chaplaincy must be based on an approach to ministry that will survive after the chapel is destroyed or when no chapel is present. It must be able to survive if the chaplain dies or a new chaplain comes to serve, since most chaplains are reassigned every two or three years. It must be a ministry that enables spiritual growth and development across a wide spectrum of activities, locations,

age groups, genders, and ethnicities. It must be grounded in abiding principles that are translatable to each new chaplain who reports to the command. The command religious program model, functioning within a shepherding approach to ecclesiology, offers the most effective military ministry approach.

CHAPTER 5

A THEOLOGY OF SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE

Resilience is “the ability to bounce back or spring back into shape, after being stretched, bent or compressed” or “the ability to recover strength quickly.”¹ Froma Walsh defines it as “the capacity to rebound from adversity strengthened and more resourceful. It is an active process of endurance, self-righting, and growth in response to crisis and challenge.”² Resilience is a word that has become a key term in psychological and sociological circles, particularly in association with trauma and trauma victims.³ There are many ways that resilience can be built as a factor to overcome the effects of trauma. Psychologists sometimes refer to emotional resilience, psychological resilience, or even physical resilience, but the approach that is being advocated in this paper is “spiritual resilience.” Philosopher Craig Titus describes spiritual resilience as “the capacity, when faced with hardship and difficulty, to cope actively using religious

¹ *Webster’s II: New Riverside University Dictionary*, s.v. “resilience.”

² Froma Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 4.

³ *Ibid.*

resources, to resist the destruction of one's spiritual competency, and to construct something positive in line with larger theological goals."⁴

Spiritual Resilience Themes in Scripture

The word resilience is not used anywhere in the Bible, but the concept resides in many significant biblical themes. A biblical definition for spiritual resilience can be drawn from some of these significant themes. In this paper, spiritual resilience is defined as the endurance that grows out of faith tested by trials and hope that never surrenders even when faced with seemingly overwhelming circumstances. In order to develop a theology of resilience it is important to provide a discussion of these particularly significant spiritual resilience themes of endurance, faith, and hope.

Endurance: Thriving Under Pressure

Endurance is a theme in the Bible that carries this idea of resilience in a very profound way. The Greek word translated endurance or perseverance is *hupomone*, a word derived from *hupo* "under" and *mone* "to remain." It literally means "to remain under," a concept that fits well with the English translation "endurance." *Webster's* defines endurance as, "the ability to last, continue, or remain; the ability to stand pain, distress, fatigue," or the ability "to bear pain without flinching."⁵ This Greek word *hupomone* is used several times in connection with tribulation and affliction. In Romans 5:3 Paul writes, "We exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about

⁴ Craig Steven Titus, *Resilience and the Virtue of Fortitude* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 28, quoted in Henry Soussan, "A Jewish Perspective on Spiritual Resilience," in *The Army Chaplaincy* (Summer-Fall 2009): 69-73, 69.

⁵ Soukhanov and Ellis, *Webster's II: New Riverside University Dictionary*, 463.

perseverance.” Paul commends the Thessalonians, saying “Therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure” (2 Thes 1:4).

This word *hupomone* is also used in connection with faith and spiritual maturity. James writes, “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (Jas 1:2-4). In this passage, “endurance” is produced through the experience of trials that test faith, and this “endurance” ultimately produces spiritual maturity. The word used by James for “perfect” is the Greek word *teleion*, which means “complete, perfect, or fully developed.”⁶ It is a word that describes complete maturity, as fruit that has become fully ripened, or in this case a person who has come to complete maturity. In his book, *New Testament Words*, William Barclay defines *hupomone* as:

The spirit which can bear things, not simply with resignation, but with blazing hope; it is not the spirit which sits statically enduring in one place, but the spirit which bears things because it knows that these things are leading to a goal of glory. . . . It is the quality which keeps a man on his feet with his face to the wind. It is the virtue which can transmute the hardest trial into glory because beyond the pain it sees the goal.⁷

Spiros Zodhiates adds, “It refers to that quality of character which does not allow one to surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial.”⁸ Endurance beautifully epitomizes spiritual resilience as a quality that enables a person to undergo extreme levels of stress

⁶ Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 809.

⁷ William Barclay, *New Testament Words* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), 144-145.

⁸ Spiros Zodhiates, ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1992), 1425.

and anxiety without succumbing to its negative effects. The person who masters endurance is a person who has attained the spiritual resilience necessary to bounce back from effects of combat and operational stress.

Hope: The Possibility of the Impossible

Hope is another great theme that exemplifies spiritual resilience. In the Old Testament, *tiqvah* is the Hebrew word used most often for hope. It means “expectancy” or that which is longed for.⁹ It is used sixteen times in the book of Job, where in the midst of so much pain, loss, and suffering, one would not normally expect to find so much hope. It is that sense of expectancy even in the face of tragedy and loss that causes a person to refuse fear and dread and reach toward some great outcome or higher purpose. Walsh points out that “the book of Job is a story of resilience in which persistent adversity holds meaning beyond comprehension, testing both faith and endurance.”¹⁰

Hope looks for something positive beyond the present troubles. The writer of Proverbs writes, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but desire fulfilled is the tree of life” (Prv 13:12). Dr. E. R. Mudd picked up on this metaphor of the tree of life, adding, “without hope we can exist and plod away, but in a hollow and somewhat robot-like manner. We need hope to connect us to the tree of life.”¹¹ Hope is what lies behind

⁹ James Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in The Hebrew Bible in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 126.

¹⁰ Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 74.

¹¹ Ralph DePalo, “The Role of Hope and Spirituality on the Road to Recovery: Traumatic Brain Injury Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Series: Part Five (United States Military Section),” in *The Exceptional Parent* 39:2 (Feb 2009): 74.

Isaiah's promise, "Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary" (Is 40:31). Hope has the tangible quality of strengthening the weak to keep moving forward, even against all odds, because of the promise that this present weariness is only temporary.

In the New Testament, hope is a common theme. The Greek word *elpis* and its cognates are used sixty-five times, meaning "to anticipate, usually with pleasure," "confidence," or "expectation."¹² Paul "exults" in hope and places it at the end of a chain of life experiences that begins with tribulation and ends in hope. He writes, "We exult in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Rom 5:2b-5). One of the hallmarks of spiritual resilience themes is their proximity to tribulation, suffering, and pain. The person who has hope often recognizes the hope they have, not when everything is going well, but when everything is going very badly. Walsh affirms, "In times of deepest despair hope is most essential. Resilience involves coming to accept what has been lost and directing efforts to master the possible."¹³

¹² Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in The Hebrew Bible*, 27.

¹³ Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 295.

Faith: Standing Strong through It All

Faith is a third major theme of spiritual resilience. Along with its cognates “belief, believes, and believing,” faith is a common theme in the New Testament. The book of Hebrews has what amounts to a definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is the assurance of things hope for, the conviction of things not seen.” The word “assurance” in this translation is the Greek word *hypostasis* meaning “substantial nature, essence, reality” or perhaps what seems to fit best here “realization.”¹⁴ In other words, faith is the realization of everything that is hoped for and the evidence of those things that cannot be comprehended by the senses. In the context of spiritual resilience, faith is essential as a theme that can stand up in difficult times and bear tremendous burdens without failing.

Like hope and endurance, faith shines most clearly in the face of trouble, trials, and tribulation. In 2 Corinthians 4:13, Paul writes, “But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, ‘I believed, therefore I spoke,’ we also believe therefore also we speak.” Having laid this foundation on faith, Paul went on to assert,

Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor 4:16-18)

Paul is asserting that he welcomes affliction because it has the capacity to produce transformation of the “inner man.” This is occurring, Paul writes, because he viewed the afflictions through the “eyes of faith.” It is staggering that Paul called his experiences,

¹⁴ Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 847.

“momentary, light affliction,” in light of the catalog of troubles listed in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. Among his experiences, he was “beaten times without number, often in danger of death,” he received the Jews’ thirty-nine lashes on five occasions, he was beaten with rods three times, he was stoned, he was shipwrecked three times, he spent a night and a day in the sea, along with many other dangers, hardships, hunger, thirst, and sleeplessness, and after all these experiences he considers them “momentary, light affliction.” These passages provide clear examples of the spiritual resilience capacity of faith. Walsh points out that “resilience is promoted when hardship, tragedy, failure, or disappointment can also be seen as instructive and can serve as an impetus for change and growth.”¹⁵ She argues that resilient people do not waste their time in the past and nursing the wounds of failure. Instead they survey their experiences and work on the development of new lessons that can guide their future on a whole new course.

Faith, hope, and endurance represent significant biblical examples of the qualities that exemplify spiritual resilience, particularly when they are used in conjunction or in close proximity. In addition to these three major themes, there are a number of passages of Scripture where this concept of spiritual resilience is portrayed. Among them, the twenty-third psalm stands as one of the most insightful illustrations of spiritual resilience, particularly as it applies to those who face the rigors of combat. For the purpose of this ministry focus paper, the twenty-third Psalm will serve as a key passage of Scripture for the full development and application of spiritual resilience.

¹⁵ Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 79.

Six Spiritual Resilience Attributes in the Twenty-Third Psalm

The twenty-third Psalm is perhaps one of the most beloved passages of Scripture in the Bible. It is the text most likely to be read at the funeral of a Christian. In the U.S. military, it is a standard text that is read at nearly every memorial service or funeral regardless of the religious preference of the deceased. It is probably the one passage of Scripture in the Bible that every Marine has heard or read at least once in his or her lifetime. It is a passage of Scripture that provides comfort to those in grief, peace to those who are troubled, courage to those who are afraid, strength to those who are weak, and joy to those who are sad.

Psalm 23 is part of the larger collection of one hundred and fifty songs and prayers, written by a number of different authors, compiled over many years, forming the canonical book of Psalms.¹⁶ Psalm 23 is part of a Davidic collection that includes Psalms 3-41.¹⁷ As several scholars have pointed out, determining authorship may not be as simple as accepting what are likely editorial inscriptions placed at the beginning of the psalms, due to the ambiguity of the preposition included with them.¹⁸ The inscription, “A Psalm of David” could mean a Psalm written by David, a Psalm “for the use of David,” possibly “belonging to David,” or a Psalm “dedicated to David.”¹⁹ However, as Craigie concludes, “the absence of precise information concerning authorship is not a serious

¹⁶ Though most refer to the Psalms as a single book, it actually contains five separate books with clear divisions: Book I, Pss 1-41, Book II, Pss 42-72, Book III, Pss 73-89, Book IV, Pss 90-106, and Book V, Pss 107-150. Each division concludes with a doxology to denote the end of that particular book.

¹⁷ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 28. Seventy-three Psalms are attributed to David by inscription at the beginning of the Psalms.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 34-35.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

setback with respect to understanding the Psalms, for their theme is the relationship between a person and God, and their variations on that central theme have a universality and timelessness which transcend the particularities of authorship.”²⁰

It is difficult to ascertain a specific date for the writing of Psalm 23; however, most scholars agree that it was written during the early Hebrew monarchy, most likely during David’s reign.²¹ Assuming his reign is accurately dated 1004 to 965 BC, it is probably safe to conclude Psalm 23 was written around 1000 BC.²² The location where the Psalm was composed has been a matter of some speculation, primarily in devotional literature. Perhaps David wrote it while tending his sheep as a young shepherd boy, or perhaps his ideas for the psalm emerged during one of his many narrow escapes while fleeing from King Saul. Though it may be impossible to determine the exact location where it was written with any certainty, it seems plausible to suggest it was written somewhere in the hillsides of Judea or in the city of Jerusalem.

Psalm 23 has been called a “confidence Psalm.”²³ The Psalm certainly expresses confidence and assurance in God, though it is interesting to note as Craig Broyles points out, “our shepherd provides for and protects ‘the sheep’ but he does not fabricate a world

²⁰ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 35.

²¹ Charles A. Briggs and Emilie G. Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, vol. 1, in *The Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments*, ed. Samuel R. Driver, Alfred Plummer, and Charles A. Briggs (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1907), lxxxix.

²² Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1957), 203.

²³ Briggs and Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, 207.

free from hardship.”²⁴ For those who have been affected by combat and operational stress, Psalm 23 is perhaps the richest possible resource for meeting their spiritual needs in times of deep distress.

It is important to point out that the Psalms have for centuries been treated as devotional texts to enhance both private and corporate worship and piety. However, it should also be noted that they have been subjected to intense scholarship. Beyond the psalm’s capacity to provide encouragement and strength in a devotional sense, there is a theological content that should not be overlooked. As pointed out in the literature review, Brueggemann’s “postcritical” analysis of the Psalms suggests a model for interpreting and applying the Psalm both critically and devotionally in order to mine the text for even deeper theological truths.²⁵ For the purposes of this ministry focus paper, Psalm 23 will serve as a theological foundation for developing spiritual resilience as well as a resource for employing spiritual disciplines based on its text.

Careful study of Psalm 23 reveals the presence of six spiritual resilience attributes. These attributes are distinctive features or characteristics of spiritual resilience. Recognizing these attributes is critical to the development of a theology of spiritual resilience. The following subsections will describe the six spiritual resilience attributes that are described and illustrated in Psalm 23.

²⁴ Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, vol. 11 of *New International Biblical Commentary: Old Testament Series*, ed. Robert L. Hubbard and Robert K. Johnston (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), 123.

²⁵ Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1984), 16.

The Contentment of: “I shall not want”

Psalm 23 begins with the words, “The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want” (Ps 23:1). This verse lays the foundation for everything else in the Psalm. It establishes the all-sufficiency of God in providing for those who put their trust in him. All the resilience attributes of contentment, peace, restoration, security, grace, and joy flow from this trust in an all-sufficient God.

The shepherd motif likely originates from the pastoral life of early Israelites. Charles and Emily Briggs write, “Yahweh was conceived as taking the same patient, unwearying care of His people as the shepherd of his flock.”²⁶ Craigie views this metaphor as not merely drawing on ancient Hebrew tradition. He sees a much broader thought in mind, linking this imagery to the “God who had been experienced as shepherd by many persons over many generations.”²⁷ Much has been said about the metaphor of sheep. Some suggest they are “dumb animals” and others that they are “sensitive creatures,” though it is probably best to view them as “gentle and submissive,” “defenseless,” “and in constant need of guidance and care.”²⁸ Above all, one thing is clear: sheep are not naturally resilient creatures; they need a shepherd.

This first verse of the Psalm develops the spiritual resilience attribute of contentment. This verse highlights the Hebrew poetic principle of “synonymous parallelism.” In its simplest form, synonymous parallelism involves a couplet in which

²⁶ Briggs and Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, 208.

²⁷ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 206.

²⁸ Charles F. Pfeiffer, Howard F. Vos, and John Rea, eds., *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), 77.

two lines repeat the same idea with different words.²⁹ This implies that the Psalmist means, “When I have the Lord as my shepherd, I have all that I want.” This is real contentment at a deep level. In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul describes this kind of contentment when he writes, “Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need” (Phil 4:11-12). The secret he learned is found in the very next verse, “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (Phil 4:13). This is what the Psalmist has in mind. When he acknowledges the Lord as his shepherd, he recognizes he has all that he wants.

The word used in this phrase for “want” is the Hebrew word *haser*, “to lack, need, or be lacking.”³⁰ In context, it means “to have no lack, to have no need, or to be lacking in nothing.” Craigie views this as a reminder of God's care of Israel during their travels after the Exodus, where in Deuteronomy 2:7, the author writes, “You have not lacked a thing.”³¹ The nature of this word eliminates any conjecture that it is referring only to spiritual needs. The Psalmist is saying, “Because the Lord is my shepherd I shall not have any unfulfilled wants or needs.” He is describing a form of contentment that touches all the human dimensions, saying in effect, “When the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want physically, psychologically, emotionally, or spiritually.”

²⁹ Briggs and Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, xxxiv.

³⁰ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Christian Copyrights, 1979), 341.

³¹ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 206.

The Peace of: “He makes me lie down in green pastures”

The second verse of Psalm 23 reads, “He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.” This verse develops the resilience attribute of peace. The Psalmist uses words that convey vivid images of green grass and the tranquility of a gentle stream, clearly designed to give the sense of a peaceful setting. However, the language that more compellingly conveys peace is actually found in the words, “He makes me lie down.” It is not uncommon to see sheep grazing in verdant pastures with gentle flowing streams, but it is far less common to see the sheep actually lying down on the grass.

The Hebrew word used here is *rabas*, meaning to “stretch oneself out, lie down, or lie stretched out.”³² In this passage, the word is in the Hiphil stem, suggesting the meaning, “cause to lie down.”³³ The real theological issue, which is only implied, is how the shepherd causes the sheep to lie down. Phillip Keller, in his book, *A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm*, writes that it is almost impossible for sheep to lie down unless at least four conditions are met:

First, owing to their timidity, they refuse to lie down unless they are free from all fear. Second, because of the social behavior within a flock, they will not lie down unless they are free from friction with others of their kind. Third, if tormented by flies or parasites, sheep will not lie down. Only when free of these pests can they relax. Fourth, sheep will not lie down as long as they feel in need of finding food. They must be free from hunger. The unique thing about all of these needs is that only the Shepherd himself can provide them.³⁴

³² Brown, Driver Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 918.

³³ R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 2: 830.

³⁴ Phillip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1970), 35.

The Psalmist is saying, “When the Lord is my Shepherd, all my needs are being met and I am at complete peace.”

By using this phrase, “He makes me lie down,” the Psalmist is suggesting a peace that is all-dimensional. It is the kind of peace that is so desperately needed in those who have been affected by combat and operational stress. It is not strictly a peace that occurs because the setting is peaceful, where there is “green grass,” and “quiet waters.” It is a peace that is internal and external, material and spiritual. It suggests a peace that is free from fear, a peace in relation to others, a peace of mind that overcomes worry and doubt, and a peace with God that offers an opportunity for intimacy with God. This is physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual peace.

There is one additional phrase in this verse that provides further insight to this spiritual resilience attribute of peace: “He leads me beside quiet waters” (Ps 23:2). The word “quiet” is a translation of the Hebrew word *nuah*, meaning “rest.”³⁵ As an intensive plural, this expression literally means, “waters of placidity” or “waters of rest.”³⁶ The word has four theological meanings: rest in death, a psychological-spiritual rest, a rest from war, and a soteriological rest.³⁷ All of these meanings are possible and all provide sources of peace. However, in this passage, the emphasis is on a psychological-spiritual rest. According to its use in Psalm 116:7, “The only true place of spiritual rest is God.”³⁸ Briggs argues the verb should be translated, “unto quiet waters” rather than “beside quiet

³⁵ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 629.

³⁶ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 207.

³⁷ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2:562.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

waters," suggesting the Psalmist had in mind wells or fountains from which the flocks were usually watered.³⁹ He adds, "these waters are not merely drinking water, but choice water; not only satisfying thirst, but giving refreshment, implying the same kind of rich provision for the sheep as the grassy pastures."⁴⁰

There is a parallel idea of peace in the New Testament book of Philippians where Paul writes, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:6-7). The peace Paul refers to in this passage suggests the same multi-dimensional peace the Psalmist has in mind. It is a peace that affects the heart and mind. Paul also provides some additional guidance on how this peace is appropriated. It is a peace that God provides when three conditions are met: first, worry is set aside, second, requests are made to God in prayer, and third, the prayers are offered with thanksgiving. This harmonizes well with the Psalmists portrayal of sheep. They are lying peacefully on green grasses beside quiet waters, because the Shepherd has provided for all their needs, and calmed all their fears and concerns.

The Restoration of: "He restores my soul"

In Psalm 23:3, the Psalmist writes, "He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." In this verse, the Psalmist provides a vivid description of the spiritual resilience attribute of restoration. The root word for "restores"

³⁹ Briggs and Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, 208.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

is the Hebrew *shub*, meaning “to turn back or to return.”⁴¹ It is the twelfth most frequently used verb in the Old Testament with over 1,050 uses.⁴² It is used seventy-one times in the Psalms. In all but a few cases, the verb means “to turn back from evil and to turn to the good;” it is the most common Hebrew expression for repentance.⁴³ It seems clear that the Psalmist has used the context of the sheep and their shepherd to refer to a very important human need, the need for repentance and restoration. George Knight suggests the meaning is best conveyed by the expression, “He gives me back my life.”⁴⁴ For those who have been affected by combat and operational stress, restoration is a significant need. They struggle with images of death and carnage. They have doubts about their relationship with God. Some are troubled with guilt, warranted or not, for actions they have taken or not taken. They often complain about the images in their mind that they cannot escape, or about dreams that will not let them sleep. Restoration is a significant spiritual resilience attribute that every warrior ultimately needs.

The restoration the Psalmist has in mind is the restoration of the soul. The word translated “soul” is the Hebrew word *nephesh*, meaning “soul, living being, life, self, person, desire, appetite, emotion, and passion.”⁴⁵ In Hebrew, *nephesh* has the sense of “that which breathes, the breathing substance, or being,” and includes both the inner and

⁴¹ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 996.

⁴² Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2: 909.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ George A. F. Knight, *Psalms*, vol. 1, in *The Daily Study Bible Series*, ed. John C. L. Gibson (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 116.

⁴⁵ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 659.

outer elements resting “on a common substratum.”⁴⁶ It is the breathing part of the human being, the part that includes the life of man; it is the “man himself,” the “seat of appetites,” the “seat of emotions,” it is used for “mental acts” as in “my soul knows well,” and it is used for “acts of the will.”⁴⁷ Among other similar passages, including Ruth 4:15, Lamentations 1:11, Psalm 18:8, and Proverbs 25:13, the meaning is that “which consists of emotions, passions, drives, or appetites.”⁴⁸ In other words, the Hebrew idea of the soul includes the mind, will, and emotions. In Psalm 23, this restoration implies “refreshment” of the whole being that occurs when repentance has taken place.

The New Testament parallel word for the Hebrew *shub* is the Greek word *metanoia*, which means to “change one’s mind,” and is usually translated “repentance.”⁴⁹ It is a word that both Jesus and John the Baptist used in their preaching (Mt 3:2; 4:17; Lk 13:3, 5). It is a word used in the book of Acts as part of a call to conversion, “Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19). This proclamation by Peter captures beautifully the idea of the Hebrew in Psalm 23:3. It is a restoration that leads to refreshment or “times of refreshing.” There is a cleansing that can occur in the mind, will, and emotions when repentance has taken place. For those affected by combat and operational stress, there is hope for restoration and refreshing.

⁴⁶ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 659.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 659-661.

⁴⁸ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2: 589.

⁴⁹ Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 511.

There is an additional line in Psalm 23:3 that should be examined here as well. The Psalmist writes, “He guides me in paths of righteousness.” The word translated “guides” is the Hebrew *nahal*, meaning to “lead with care,” a cognate means “to pasture,” and it is parallel to *ra’a*, which means, “to shepherd.”⁵⁰ This word is most often used of a shepherd “protectively gathering young lambs in one’s arms, and carrying them in one’s bosom. The root specifically is connected with what such a shepherd does in leading pregnant ewes. . . . It is this loving concerned shepherd-like leading that typifies God’s conducting his people to Palestine.”⁵¹ The Psalmist draws a picture of a restored lamb that is now being led along the proper paths. Briggs points out that in the Eastern world, the shepherd leads the sheep and the sheep follow, “he does not drive them as in the West.”⁵² The paths are “paths of righteousness” from the Hebrew *tsedeq*, meaning, “rightness or righteousness,” that which is “right, just, or normal” these are the “right paths.”⁵³ The word *tsedeq* has been used to denote “rightness” in three kinds of relationships, “ethical, forensic, and theocratic.”⁵⁴ When used in the ethical sense, it denotes the quality of the relationship between two people. In the forensic sense, it is the relation of an individual to the standards of the law; and in the theocratic sense, it is the relation of an individual to God and the standards He has set. The usage here in Psalm 23 suggests a life in which all three of these aspects are manifested. When a person allows

⁵⁰ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2: 559.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Briggs and Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, 208.

⁵³ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 841.

⁵⁴ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2: 753.

God to lead him, he finds himself in good relationship with others, in conformity to the standards of God's Word, and in right relationship with God. This kind of "right" living is a powerful expression of the spiritual resilience attribute of restoration.

The clause in verse three ends with the line, "For His name's sake." The word translated "sake" is the Hebrew word *maan*. It means "purpose, intent," or "for the sake of" and here it specifically means, "to maintain his reputation, or character."⁵⁵ Notice the Psalmist is not suggesting that the sheep are led in paths of righteousness for their sakes; rather they are being led along these paths to maintain the reputation of the shepherd. This suggests that the restoration that takes place has a purpose. Certainly it is intended for the welfare of the one who is restored, but its primary function is to maintain the honor, integrity, and reputation of the one who has offered the restoration and followed through with leadership down the appropriate paths. Craigie sees in this expression a reference back to the Exodus, since the same expression is used in Psalm 106:8, in the context of the deliverance from Egypt.⁵⁶ In other words, God delivered the Israelites from Egypt for his own purpose and his own reputation. This spiritual resilience attribute of restoration has rich potential for those affected by combat and operational stress. The work of grace that God can accomplish through repentance to produce restoration has both a healing and protective quality. It produces a healing of the mind, will, and emotions and protection for the future through leadership along the "right" paths designed by God.

⁵⁵ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 775.

⁵⁶ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 207.

The Security of: “I fear no evil; for Thou art with me”

The spiritual resilience attribute of security is taught in Psalm 23:4, “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.” There is security from fear because of the presence of the shepherd and there is comfort and security in recognizing the significance of the shepherd’s implements. The hill country of Judah was filled with dark, gloomy ravines with deep shadows and dark caves that often held hiding places for wild beasts and robbers.⁵⁷ It is interesting to note that upon entering the valley of the shadow of death, the Psalmist suddenly shifts the perspective from third person to the second person. This implies that the Psalmist, possibly from personal experience, recognized how much more personal his relationship was to God when faced with a serious threat. As pointed out earlier, Brueggemann’s movement from *orientation* to *disorientation* takes place at this juncture of the Psalm, although the disorientation might only be imaginary.⁵⁸ The initial clause in this verse sets up an imagined case of a threat, “Yea though” or “Even though.”⁵⁹ The Psalmist is not saying here that he is going through this valley of the shadow of death; he is saying that he knows the shepherd will be with him even in these worst of circumstances. This is a very distinct allusion to the security and protection that is found in a trusting relationship with God.

The word translated “valley” in “the valley of the shadow of death” is the Hebrew word *gay*, which is often used figuratively “of an obstacle which must be overcome

⁵⁷ Briggs and Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, 209.

⁵⁸ Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 17.

⁵⁹ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 169.

(Isa 40:4) and of a grave danger which one might experience (Ps 23:4).”⁶⁰ Note the Psalmist does not refer to this as “the valley of death,” but the “valley of the shadow of death.” The word used here in Hebrew is *tsalmaveth* from *tsel*, meaning “shade” or “shadow” and *maveth*, meaning “death.”⁶¹ The Psalmist is making a clear distinction between walking to one’s death and walking into a valley where death is possible. One is a suicide mission; the other is a risky venture, but with security and protection. The prepositional possibilities in this sentence are somewhat ambiguous, but in at least seven English translations the preposition used is “through” the valley rather than “in” the valley.⁶² The Psalmist portrays the assurance that he is going through this valley and coming out on the other side, not entering the valley to go to his death.

The reason the Psalmist can enter the valley without fear is because of the assurance that comes from knowing that the shepherd is with him. For those affected by combat and operational stress, fear is a very real threat. It is not just the fear that one might experience in a combat situation. There are fears associated with returning from combat. Some fears are real and others imagined. The spiritual resilience attribute of security can cover a wide array of perceived and actual threats.

The word that is used in this verse for “evil” has an interesting array of meanings. In its root form it often means “misfortune or calamity” in the passive sense, and

⁶⁰ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 1: 159.

⁶¹ Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in The Hebrew Bible*, 99.

⁶² The *King James Version*, *New International Version*, *New Living Translation*, *New American Standard Bible*, *Revised Standard Version*, *English Standard Version*, and *Holman Christian Standard Bible* all translate the preposition “through.”

“wickedness” in the active sense.⁶³ More specifically it carries the idea of being “wrong in regard to God’s original and ongoing intention and detrimental in terms of its effects on man.”⁶⁴ The injury this evil causes to mankind can include “physical or emotional harm to the person” or “painfully unpleasant experiences.”⁶⁵ This suggests that building this spiritual resilience attribute of security provides the ability to bounce back from a broad array of stressful and fearful situations including both actual and perceived threats. The “valley of the shadow of death” for some may be a broken relationship, a serious illness, the death of a friend or family member, the close proximity of death, or the painful memories of atrocities and carnage that plague the mind.

The Psalmist amplifies the sense of the expression “Thou art with me” by adding, “Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.” It is not just the presence of the shepherd that provides the comfort. It is also the implements that he carries that provide comfort. The word translated “rod” is the Hebrew word *shebet*, a “club” or weapon a shepherd uses to protect his sheep.⁶⁶ In other contexts, the word *shebet* refers to a “rod of discipline” used for punishment as in Proverbs 13:24, “He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently.” It is possible the Psalmist considers the rod of discipline a comfort, but more likely because of the threat in the valley of the shadow of death, he has in mind the rod that is used as a weapon to ward off predators and enemies of the sheep. Briggs argues the rod is strictly for defense, “and any agitation or anxiety is

⁶³ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2: 854.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 987.

soothed and calmed” by the image of the shepherd with rod and staff in hand, ready to provide defense, and allay all fears.⁶⁷

The word translated “staff” is the Hebrew word *misheneth*, a “walking stick” or “support.”⁶⁸ It is often used figuratively “as that on which one relies.”⁶⁹ In Psalm 23, the sheep find comfort in the staff, seeing it as an implement of leadership. With his rod, the shepherd guards the sheep and with his staff he guides the sheep. These shepherd implements suggest the justification for using the word “security” to describe this attribute. Security encompasses protection and guidance. For example, a “security detail” for a dignitary, provides protection with an armed escort, and guidance by deciding on the safest course of travel. In the same way, the implements of the rod and staff suggest the security that God provides in both guarding and guiding His people.

The Grace of: “The table in the presence of my enemies”

In Psalm 23:5, the Psalmist writes, “Thou dost prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; Thou hast anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.” The word “prepare” used here is the Hebrew word *arak*, meaning “to arrange” or “put in order.”⁷⁰ In its simplest sense, it describes the shepherd arranging the items of a meal on a table, but this word *arak* is also often used as “a military term describing the drawing up

⁶⁷ Briggs and Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, 210.

⁶⁸ Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in The Hebrew Bible*, 74.

⁶⁹ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2: 945.

⁷⁰ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 205.

in battle order to commence fighting.”⁷¹ It evokes an interesting confluence of ideas, arranging a table for a meal while surrounded by enemies, using a word that describes drawing up in battle array.

Some theologians suggest that a shift in thought has occurred here so that the Psalmist is no longer a sheep in the Shepherd’s pasture, but now is reminded of the times he has been an honored guest in the house of God.⁷² Certainly, this may be the case, but it is also possible that the Psalmist is so overwhelmed by the thoughts of the care of the Shepherd for his sheep that he mixes the metaphors for the purpose of highlighting the extravagance and grace of God. The table or meal could as easily be referring to the “green grasses” beside “still waters.” Regardless of how this section is interpreted, it is clear that the Psalmist is emphasizing the overwhelming grace that God extends. He is freely giving, and even serving as Jesus served His disciples in the upper room on the night He was betrayed (Jn 13:3-15). Artur Weiser exclaims, “Even his enemies who look askance at his joy cannot spoil his delight in the goodness and presence of God. Thus the fact that he is able to enjoy God proves to be itself a means of grace whereby the bitter sorrows caused by the frictions of human social life can be overcome.”⁷³

This passage points to the spiritual resilience attribute of grace, in the sense that God provides far more than is deserved or needed and does so in a way that is far and above what is expected. Knight suggests this passage “expresses more vividly than any

⁷¹ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2: 1695.

⁷² Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary in The Old Testament Library* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), 230.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

other portion of Scripture the individual's private experience of God's grace."⁷⁴ The Psalmist vibrantly portrays overflowing grace in the imagery of a shepherd providing a meal in the midst of a battle or with predators hovering around. God's abundant supply of grace can also be seen in the fact that there is no mention here that God or the shepherd takes any action against the enemies. At least for that moment, grace is being extended even to the enemies. They are nearby, but they are not a threat because of the presence of the shepherd.

The anointing with oil is another poignant picture of the shepherd serving the sheep. For a shepherd, the anointing with oil was used as a method of warding off flies and other pests.⁷⁵ As a host, the practice of anointing with oil was an act of service reserved for honored guests. The word used for "anoint" literally means "to make fat" or "to grease;" it is "a symbol of festivity and joy."⁷⁶ Since fat animals were considered the healthiest, the idea of being fat carried the meaning of prosperity. Here the Psalmist refers to the head "made fat" with oil, "as a description of the blessing of God."⁷⁷ This overwhelming sense of blessing is further amplified by adding, "My cup overflows." It is an exclamation of "satisfaction" the literal translation of the Hebrew word *revayah*, which also means "runneth over" or "wealthy."⁷⁸ In this particular passage, the Hiphil stem is used meaning "saturation," and it is used in this stem only here and in Psalm

⁷⁴ Knight, *Psalms*, 115.

⁷⁵ Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm*, 105-107.

⁷⁶ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 206.

⁷⁷ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 1: 199.

⁷⁸ Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in The Hebrew Bible*, 107.

66:12, where it refers to a “place of abundance.”⁷⁹ It is implied that the blessings of God are so overwhelming and bountiful that no one can fully contain them, they overflow. It is as if God’s gifts are so extravagant that He leaves no suggestion that anything is being held back.

This spiritual resilience attribute of grace brings something entirely different to the one affected by combat and operational stress. To experience grace is to experience the blessings of God; not necessarily in solving some problem, but in providing something so beneficial and so undeserved that only God could have made it happen. To experience grace is to experience the power of God, the presence of God, and the provision of God. The power of God is demonstrated in the anointing oil, which for the sheep wards off insects, but for the believer it represents God’s power to ward off nagging thoughts and habits. To discover that power is available to overcome destructive tendencies and intractable symptoms is a great source of encouragement and blessing. The presence of God is suggested in the actual act of setting the table and anointing with oil. It may even be suggested by the oil itself, which often symbolizes the Spirit of God. For those challenged by combat stress, knowing that they can experience the presence of God to walk with them through their trauma is a great source of support against the staggering effects of combat stress. The provision of God is seen in the overflowing cup. Combat stress sufferers need to know that there is an abundant supply available to them to meet their needs. Some trauma sufferers believe there is no relief from the effects of combat stress, particularly those diagnosed with PTSD. On the other hand, this grace opens the door for relief that medical and psychological solutions may never offer.

⁷⁹ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2: 836.

The Joy of: “I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever”

Like the other verses of Psalm 23, the final verse is pregnant with truth for those affected by combat and operational stress. In verse six the Psalmist writes, “Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever” (Ps 23:6). The word used here for “goodness” is the Hebrew word *towb*, meaning “pleasant, agreeable, or good.”⁸⁰ It carries such meanings as “agreeable to the senses” of sight, of taste, smell, and “pleasant to the higher nature, giving pleasure, happiness, prosperity,” as well as “good, rich, valuable,” and appropriate.⁸¹ The word translated “lovingkindness” is the Hebrew word *chesed* sometimes translated “mercy,” a divine attribute meaning “kindness and fidelity.”⁸² It is a term specifically used to describe the blessings that flow from a covenant relationship with God. Craigie has argued that the language of the Exodus and wilderness wanderings permeate Psalm 23 and find their ultimate expression in this reference to lovingkindness as the covenant making God who has redeemed His people in the past and who will continue to bless them bountifully with covenant blessings in the future.⁸³

In his book, *The Way of the Shepherd*, Don Baker points out that “lovingkindness is the word used to describe the shepherd’s provision in times of need.”⁸⁴ It is most often applied in situations where life has not gone well. Mercy is what is needed after failure

⁸⁰ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 373.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 373-374.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 339.

⁸³ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 208.

⁸⁴ Don Baker, *The Way of the Shepherd* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1987), 83.

or sin. It is what God applies to His people instead of justice or wrath. Goodness, on the other hand, is the provision of God in good times. Both of these words suggest qualities that are well worth experiencing, but the Psalmist very intriguingly uses the expression “will follow me” to say something more here. The word translated “follow” is the Hebrew word *radaph*, which means “to pursue or chase, in a good sense,” or “to attend closely upon.”⁸⁵ The idea of goodness and mercy “following” does not quite capture the true sense of this Hebrew word; more accurately is the active sense of “goodness and mercy shall pursue me.”⁸⁶ This is an expression of absolute joy, as Weiser writes, “Ever more distinctly and with growing enthusiasm he has come to realize how unfathomably rich is the blessing which rules over his life. Filled with bliss, he has reached the culminating point of inward happiness.”⁸⁷

Of all the spiritual resilience attributes, joy is the one attribute that suggests an outward recognition of an inward reality. The Psalmist makes this clear by the expression of the final phrase of the psalm, “and I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever.” He is not saying that he will spend all of his time in the temple, nor is this a reference to heaven. On the contrary, he is saying wherever he is, will be like being in the presence of God. The word “dwell” is the Hebrew word *yashab*, meaning “to inhabit,” and in other contexts, it means “to marry.”⁸⁸ This implies the Psalmist is no

⁸⁵ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 922.

⁸⁶ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2: 834.

⁸⁷ Weiser, *The Psalms*, 230.

⁸⁸ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 442-443.

longer a sheep in the shepherd's sheepfold, nor just an honored guest at his table, now he is a resident, and actually more than just one who lives in the house of God; he is a family member in the house of God.

The spiritual resilience attribute of joy is really the culmination of all six of the resilience attributes. For some who have experienced the trauma of combat stress, there is little hope that life will ever be the same again. In fact, most people who have been severely affected by combat stress are encouraged to seek a new sense of what it means to be "normal" again, since a return to "normal" after these kinds of traumatic experiences is considered a remote possibility.

Joy offers the possibility of looking at the future with hope and optimism. Martin Seligman, well known for his "learned optimism," an approach he developed to psychologically "immunize" young people to help them overcome "learned helplessness," contended that "if helplessness can be learned, then it can be unlearned by experiences of mastery."⁸⁹ By helping those who have been affected by combat stress to experience joy as well as contentment, peace, restoration, security, and grace, a new "normal" can be achieved that is built on hope, faith, and endurance. Building these spiritual resilience attributes will require some effort. David developed the spiritual resilience attributes described in Psalm 23 through a disciplined walk with God, involving devoted prayer, meditation, and worship as evidenced by the Psalms he penned. The next section will suggest an approach for building spiritual resilience by employing spiritual disciplines.

⁸⁹ Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, 66.

Employing Spiritual Disciplines to Build Spiritual Resilience

Research has shown that it is possible to build spiritual resilience through spiritual practices. Drescher, Smith, and Foy's research in this area suggests the importance of "connecting to something outside the self."⁹⁰ They note the value of group exercises to encourage self-disclosure and they recommend involvement in the community as part of the process to encourage that sense of connectedness. They suggest that spiritual practices should be incorporated into a program of readjustment. In particular, they recommend the use of "simple rituals" or prayers that focus on key concepts such as self-forgiveness or forgiving others.⁹¹ Spiritual disciplines can be employed to build this sense of connectedness and resilience that fosters readjustment.

As is true for developing almost anything of significance, building spiritual resilience will require some effort. Since this discussion involves "spiritual" resilience, this must of necessity be a work of the Spirit of God. It is theoretically possible to practice spiritual disciplines in a way that ignores the involvement of God. Jesus condemned the religious people of His day for practicing their righteousness to be seen by men (Mt 6:1). On the other hand, there is great hope that in the practice of spiritual disciplines, a connection will be made with God so that even those who may have very little spiritual experience will have the opportunity to experience something very profound in the practice of spiritual disciplines. In order to fully appreciate the importance of spiritual disciplines, it is appropriate at this point to provide a theological foundation for their practice.

⁹⁰ Drescher, Smith, and Foy, "Spirituality and Readjustment Following War-Zone Experiences," 304.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 305-308.

A Theological Foundation for Spiritual Disciplines

In Richard Foster's book, *Celebration of Discipline*, he writes that spiritual disciplines are a way of "sowing to the spirit" (Gal 6:8). They are "God's way of getting us into the ground; they put us where he can work within us and transform us."⁹² The practice of spiritual disciplines opens doors for the development of resilience in ways that no other technique or approach can offer.

In the New Testament, Paul clearly encourages the practice of spiritual disciplines. He writes to Timothy, "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come" (1 Tm 4:7b-8). In *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, Dallas Willard points out that physical exercise and training were common in Paul's day, so naturally Paul was drawing on the parallel phenomena of physical training and spiritual training.⁹³ The analogy suggests further that like physical training, "one must *train* as well as *try*."⁹⁴

In order to develop spiritual resilience, discipline is necessary, both training and trying. However, this is not something that can be done in one's own strength, it occurs in response to a person's openness to receive God's grace. Spiritual disciplines, Willard explains, are "activities of mind and body purposefully undertaken, to bring our personality and total being into effective cooperation with the divine order. They enable

⁹² Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1978), 7.

⁹³ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988), 98.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

us more and more to live in a power that is, strictly speaking, beyond us, deriving from the spiritual realm itself, as we ‘yield ourselves to God.’”⁹⁵

Strengthening Spiritual Resources through Spiritual Exercises

Spiritual resources can be strengthened through the practice of spiritual disciplines in the same way that physical resources are strengthened through physical discipline, with one caveat. Building spiritual resources is ultimately a work of God. Lynda Graybeal and Julia Roller define a spiritual discipline as “an intentionally directed action by which we do what we *can* do in order to receive from God the ability (power) to do what we cannot achieve by direct effort.”⁹⁶ Willard adds, “The disciplines are activities undertaken to make us capable of receiving more of his life and power without harm to ourselves or others.”⁹⁷ These disciplines, Graybeal and Roller clarify, “are all actions of body, mind and spirit that are within our power.”⁹⁸ This is important in light of the fact that many of the spiritual resilience attributes of Psalm 23 are “multi-dimensional” touching on the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human life. Spiritual disciplines provide a means for addressing all the human dimensions and helping to build new strength in these various areas of life. Spiritual disciplines selected for building specific resilience attributes will serve as the basis for the development of spiritual resilience in this ministry strategy.

⁹⁵ Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 68.

⁹⁶ Lynda L. Graybeal and Julia L. Roller, *Connecting with God: A Spiritual Formation Guide* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2006), xi-xii.

⁹⁷ Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 156.

⁹⁸ Graybeal and Roller, *Connecting with God*, xii.

PART THREE
MINISTRY STRATEGY

CHAPTER 6

A SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE-BUILDING SEMINAR

This strategy for building spiritual resilience is based on the premise that understanding and applying certain spiritual disciplines will enable individuals affected by combat and operational stress to bounce back from the debilitating effects with renewed strength and energy. The seminar designed here has the capacity to offer healing for those who have experienced combat stress as well as protection for those who will experience combat stress in the future. Beyond these two key outcomes, there is also the tremendous prospect of providing a venue to encourage and cultivate spiritual growth. Although spiritual growth is not the primary focus, the practice of spiritual disciplines involved in developing the attributes of contentment, peace, restoration, security, grace, and joy will serve as a rich opportunity for spiritual growth and transformation.

Strategy Goals

This ministry strategy will ultimately serve two key purposes: First, it will provide an opportunity to focus ministry effort toward meeting the needs of Marines who have been affected by combat and operational stress. Second, it will provide a tool for

building spiritual resilience and training Marines in the practice of spiritual disciplines. Both of these purposes offer something entirely new and helpful in themselves, but in order to be considered a truly effective strategy, there are some specific goals that must be measurably attained. The following five goals, if achieved, will demonstrate the effectiveness of this ministry strategy.

Goal One: Recognize and Understand Six Spiritual Resilience Attributes

In order to fully appreciate the impact of spiritual resilience, it will be extremely important that participants are able to recognize and understand the six spiritual resilience attributes that are being highlighted in this ministry strategy. This goal will be achieved by beginning each of the six sessions of the seminar with an introductory explanation of the resilience attribute that will be developed in that session. The attribute will be paired with the corresponding passage from Psalm 23, to facilitate recognition of the attribute from both a biblical and practical perspective. A comparison of pre-seminar and post-seminar assessments will be used to determine whether or not this goal is achieved.¹

Goal Two: Understand and Apply Six Spiritual Disciplines

The key to the development of spiritual resilience is the practice of spiritual disciplines. Therefore, the participants must be able to understand and apply the disciplines. To accomplish this goal, each of the six sessions will include an introduction and explanation of the spiritual discipline selected for that session. In order to practice the spiritual disciplines, each session will involve three exercises that have been specifically selected to provide an experience of each spiritual discipline in multiple

¹ See Appendix B.

ways.² The ultimate accomplishment of this goal will occur if the experience of the disciplines proves rewarding enough to encourage the participants to employ them long after the seminar concludes.³

Goal Three: Experience a Measurable Increase in Spiritual Resilience

The effectiveness of this seminar is dependent on the achievement of a third goal. The participants should experience a measurable increase in spiritual resilience. The development of spiritual resilience enables a person to thrive under pressure by harnessing spiritual resources such as endurance, hope, and faith in the midst of stressful situations. When spiritual resilience is recognized for its potential to both heal and protect against the harmful effects of combat and operational stress, it serves as a great source of encouragement, strength, and hope.⁴ To measure this, the participants will be asked to complete a pre-seminar assessment to determine their current level of spiritual resilience to be followed up with a post-seminar assessment measuring the impact of the seminar. The questions on this assessment will ask them to make their evaluations on

² See Appendix C, Sessions One through Six.

³ The attainment of this goal will be measured using the seminar evaluation in Appendix D.

⁴ Researchers have found that “the construct of ‘hardiness’ (e.g., sense of control, viewing change as a challenge, and commitment to self) was negatively associated with PTSD in both male and female veterans in samples of Vietnam and Gulf War veterans.” Brett T. Litz, “Research on the Impact of Military Trauma: Current Status and Future Directions,” in *Military Psychology*, 1532-7876, vol. 19, Issue 3 (2007): 229. Building spiritual resilience is a way of constructing a “spiritual hardiness” that can enable those affected by combat stress to apply spiritual resources when faced with stressful and traumatic situations. Spiritual resilience enables a person to develop a sense of control through recognizing reliance on God. It enables them to see traumatic and stressful events as opportunities to exercise spiritual skills to overcome potentially negative outcomes and thrive in the midst of what might otherwise cause them to give up or give in to the pressure. Spiritual resilience represents an embodiment of endurance, faith and hope that recognizes reliance on God as a source of support, comfort and strength.

sliding scales from zero to ten in several categories.⁵ At the end of the seminar, the participants will be asked to take an identical assessment based on their post-seminar observations of their spiritual resilience. The goal is a measurable increase in the amount of resilience the participants report experiencing.⁶

Goal Four: Develop Recognizable Skill in the Practice of Spiritual Disciplines

The fourth goal is to develop a recognizable skill in the practice of spiritual disciplines. This goal is similar to goal two. It involves the understanding and application of the disciplines, but this goal will take the spiritual disciplines one step further. It will measure the cumulative effect of having practiced the six spiritual disciplines through the use of three exercises per discipline. The intent is to provide both a broad array of spiritual discipline experience and an increased intensity in the practice of each of the disciplines. In order to measure the achievement of this goal, the pre-seminar and post-seminar assessments will be analyzed; and the leaders will evaluate how well the participants are able to fully embrace the disciplines and master the exercises used to practice them.

Goal Five: Experience a Measurable Reduction in Combat Stress Symptoms

The fifth goal, to experience a measurable reduction in combat stress symptoms, is perhaps one of the most important goals of the project and the one that is most difficult to evaluate in the short term. In order to measure this change, the participants will be asked to assess their current level of combat stress symptoms at the beginning of the

⁵ See Appendix B.

⁶ This goal will also be measured using the seminar evaluation in Appendix D.

seminar and then reassess them at the end of the seminar.⁷ Changes in these types of symptoms can range from the subtle to the dramatic, so this will be quite subjective.

In terms of specific symptoms, the seminar should be able to generate changes in symptoms such as loneliness, isolation, anxiety, hopelessness, anger, and irritability. The basis for expecting these types of changes is theological. The seminar is designed to introduce the participants to the power of God's word and the inner working of the Holy Spirit through the sincere practice of spiritual disciplines. There are psychological and social factors that will be at work in this seminar setting as well, but the real transforming power for deep change and healing will come from the work of God. This is particularly true for some of the more deep-seated symptoms of combat stress including shame, guilt, and fear which may take longer to heal and therefore longer to evaluate any measurable change.

Six Spiritual Resilience-Building Disciplines

The spiritual disciplines are the key to the effectiveness of the seminar; they will serve as the spiritual resilience-building tools. This seminar will consist of six spiritual resilience-building sessions, which correspond to the six spiritual resilience attributes. Each of the six sessions will begin with the introduction of a spiritual resilience attribute corresponding to one of the verses of Psalm 23. The discussion will include a description of how this spiritual resilience attribute counters some of the specific effects of combat and operational stress. Once this foundation has been laid, the participants will be introduced to the spiritual discipline that builds this particular attribute. The spiritual

⁷ See Appendix B.

resilience exercises will offer the participants the opportunity to practice a particular spiritual discipline that has been selected to help build a particular spiritual resilience attribute. The selections have been made based on theological conclusions and research applied during treatment of those who suffer from combat and operational stress.

Each of the six sessions will last approximately two hours. The first thirty minutes of each session will be designated for discussion of the spiritual resilience attribute, the corresponding effects of combat stress, and the particular spiritual discipline that will be applied to build the resilience attribute. During the remaining ninety minutes the participants will practice the spiritual discipline selected for each session. After all six sessions, a post-seminar assessment tool will be used to determine whether or not the participants have experienced measureable improvements in each of the attributes. The next section of this chapter provides the specific content of each of the six sessions.

Session One: Scripture Study that Builds Contentment

From a theological perspective, the study of Scripture is foundational for developing contentment. The Scriptures are the “source book” for the promises and assurances of God and only by reading and studying them can a person come to recognize all that God has in store for those who trust in Him. In his book, *Fear No Evil*, David Watson has these words to say about studying the Scriptures,

As I spent time chewing over the endless assurances and promises to be found in the Bible, so my faith in the living God grew stronger and held me safe in his hands. God’s word to us, especially his word spoken by his Spirit through the Bible, is the very ingredient that feeds our faith. If we feed our souls regularly on God’s word, several times each day, we should become robust spiritually just as

we feed on ordinary food several times each day, and become robust physically. Nothing is more important than hearing and obeying the word of God.⁸

The idea of contentment is beautifully portrayed in the words of Psalm 23:1, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.” Contentment flows from a conviction that the Lord is supplying every need. The “synonymous parallelism” makes clear that the Psalmist has in mind something like, “Because the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want” or perhaps, “When I allow the Lord to be my shepherd, I will not be in want.”⁹ In order to draw out truths such as these, the discipline of Scripture study will be introduced as the tool for building the spiritual resilience attribute of contentment.

Studying Scripture as a discipline helps develop the spiritual resilience attribute of contentment through discovery of assurances and promises of God’s abiding presence. These features of contentment help overcome the combat stress symptoms of isolation and loneliness. Studying the Scriptures as a group in this seminar setting will also help participants overcome combat stress symptoms of social withdrawal and loss of interest in social activities.

Since this is the first session of the seminar in which Psalm 23 is introduced, the session will begin with a brief introduction on some key exegetical features of Psalm 23.¹⁰ As Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart write in *How to Read the Bible for All Its*

⁸ David Watson, *Fear No Evil: A Personal Struggle with Cancer* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984), 39, quoted in Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 177.

⁹ Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 37.

¹⁰ Among historical contextual issues, it should be pointed out that Psalm 23 is one of seventy-three Psalms attributed to King David and it was likely written around 1000 BC somewhere in the vicinity of Judea, possibly in the city of Jerusalem. The Psalm was written to inspire confidence. Other exegetical issues such as literary type and principles of exegesis of Hebrew poetry can be pointed out during the exercises.

Worth, the key to good Bible study begins with good exegesis in order to discover the author's original intended meaning.¹¹ They also point out that "a text cannot mean what it never meant."¹² This caveat may help prevent the group from meandering too far from the original intent and thus protect them from a poor interpretation.

The spiritual resilience-building exercise for this attribute will feature three key aspects of Scripture study: the meaning of words, the importance of context, and the significance of application. In order to practice the exercise on the meaning of words, the participants will be asked to focus on each of the words of Psalm 23:1 by placing enunciated emphasis on each of the five words of the first clause, as they read the verse aloud. For example, the first time the verse is read, the emphasis will be placed on the word "the" so that it is read, "THE Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." The second time the verse is read, the emphasis will be placed on the word, "Lord" so that it is read, "The LORD is my shepherd." This same pattern will be followed for the word, "is," then the word, "my," and then, "shepherd." After each time the verse is read with emphasis on a particular word, the group will be asked to discuss how that emphasis affects the meaning of the second part of the phrase, "I shall not want." They should be able to recognize that emphasis on "the" suggests the uniqueness of God. Emphasis on "Lord" should remind them that this promise is exclusive to the Lord, only He can meet all their needs. Emphasis on the word "is" suggests this experience with God is happening in the present. Emphasis on "my" should remind them that this is personal, while emphasis on "shepherd" should help them sense the comforting presence of the One whose existence

¹¹ Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1982), 21.

¹² *Ibid.*, 27.

is solely devoted to them. That is just one way to help participants recognize the importance of considering the meaning of words. The seminar leaders can also suggest other ways including consulting dictionaries, concordances, and word study resources.

The second exercise of Scripture study will focus on the importance of context. In order to practice this aspect of study, the seminar will feature a study of the meaning of the text from Psalm 23:1, “I shall not want,” with a focus on drawing out the multidimensional aspect of this phrase present in the entire Psalm. Participants will be led in an exegetical study of Psalm 23, which demonstrates how God meets physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs. The “green pastures and quiet waters” of verse two are metaphorical reminders of God’s physical provision. The restoration of the soul and guidance in “paths of righteousness” in verse three suggest God’s psychological provision. In verse four, the protection offered in the “valley of the shadow of death” implies God’s provision of emotional support. The “anointing with oil,” and dwelling “in the house of the Lord forever,” of verses five and six, brings to mind God’s provision for spiritual needs. These brief references should be sufficient to lay the foundation for a lively discussion of the implications of these various dimensions and this in turn will help the participants recognize the importance of context.

The third exercise of Scripture study will involve introducing the participants to the significance of application. This follows directly from the previous discussion of the multiple dimensions of God’s provision. The participants will be asked to think about and write down one or two specific needs they recognize that they have in each of the dimensions. Once they have developed their list of physical, psychological, emotional,

and spiritual needs, the group will be led in a discussion of how God can meet those needs based on Psalm 23.

Session Two: Meditation that Develops Peace

Psalm 23:2 beautifully portrays the spiritual resilience attribute of peace through the metaphor of the shepherd “making” his sheep “lie down in green pastures.” As pointed out earlier, sheep do not naturally lie down; they will only lie down if they are free from fear, free from friction in the flock, free of flies and parasites, and free from hunger.¹³ These lines from Psalm 23 describe a multi-dimensional peace that is internal, external, material, and spiritual. From a theological perspective, the spiritual resilience attribute of peace grows from an understanding that God can meet these needs.

The spiritual discipline of meditation helps clarify and solidify the sense that God is meeting these multi-dimensional needs. Isaiah writes, “The steadfast of mind Thou wilt keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in Thee” (Is 26:3). Isaiah conveys the thought that God develops peace in those who maintain their focus on Him because in that process they are building trust in God. Meditation is a biblical way of maintaining that kind of focus. Richard Foster points out that the two Hebrew words used for meditation occur fifty-eight times in the Bible and their meanings include: “listening to God’s word, reflecting on God’s works, rehearsing God’s deeds, ruminating on God’s law, and more.”¹⁴ In his article entitled, “Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of *Lectio Divina*,” Luke Dysinger writes, “The image of the ruminant animal quietly

¹³ Phillip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 1970), 35.

¹⁴ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1978), 15.

chewing its cud was used in antiquity as a symbol of the Christian pondering the Word of God.”¹⁵ The Psalms have many references to meditation including the first psalm, which describes the blessed man as the one whose “delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night” (Ps 1:2).

Meditation takes a slightly different approach to the Scriptures than occurs with Scripture study. In study, the purpose is to draw meaning out of the passage, but in meditation, the purpose is to enter into the reality of the passage. It involves internalizing the passage and experiencing the passage as a transforming truth. Foster suggests, “Our task is not so much to study the passage as it is to be initiated into the reality of which the passage speaks.”¹⁶ For the purposes of this strategy, Psalm 23 will serve as the key passage that will be utilized to practice the discipline of meditation. The passage supports the practice of meditation for the development of peace and it should serve as a good introduction to meditation as a spiritual discipline.

Practicing meditation in order to develop peace will help the participants in the seminar overcome several symptoms of combat and operational stress. Developing peace through meditation will help with hypervigilance and hyperarousal. Living in constant fear for personal safety often causes these symptoms. The person experiencing hypervigilance often appears “jumpy,” they are extremely alert, constantly looking around and often overreact to even small noises with an overactive startle response. They

¹⁵Luke Dysinger, “Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of *Lectio Divina*,” article in the notebook for the course, “Spirituality and Discipleship in a Postmodern World,” Fuller Theological Seminary, 16-27 June 2008.

¹⁶ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 30.

need peace. On a milder level, symptoms of anxiety, difficulty relaxing, and difficulty with sleep, can benefit dramatically from peace and the practice of meditation.

The spiritual resilience-building exercises in this part of the seminar will include three meditation sessions. The first session will focus on Psalm 23:2, the second and third sessions will incorporate *Lectio divina* for a meditation on the entire twenty-third Psalm in two separate sessions. The first session, concentrating on Psalm 23:2, will examine the multi-dimensional aspect of the peace that God offers in the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual dimensions. The participants will be asked to read Psalm 23:2 several times, while thinking about how God can bring peace in each of these four dimensions. A worksheet for this session will include space for writing down their thoughts, as they contemplate how God can bring peace in each of these four dimensions. For example, in the physical dimension, “He makes me lie down in green pastures” may evoke the thought that “God makes me feel safe even in circumstances where others might be afraid.” The goal of this meditation is to learn skills that can help when they experience hypervigilance, hyperarousal, anxiety, or difficulty relaxing.

The second and third exercises in this session will involve the mediation practice of *Lectio Divina*. The words *lectio divina* are Latin for “divine reading,” or “sacred reading.”¹⁷ Gabriel O’Donnell, in his article, “Reading for Holiness,” points out that *Lectio* is a “disciplined form of devotion, not a method of Bible study.”¹⁸ It is practiced in order to come to know God and to learn to listen to Him. Dysinger describes *Lectio Divina* as a “slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures which enables the Bible, the

¹⁷Gabriel O’Donnell, “Reading for Holiness: *Lectio Divina*,” *Spiritual Traditions for the Contemporary Church*, ed. Robin Maas and Gabriel O’Donnell (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 45.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 47.

Word of God, to become a means of union with God.”¹⁹ These exercises suggest a correlation to the second part of Psalm 23:2, where the Psalmist writes, “He leads me beside quiet waters.” This meditative practice is quiet and contemplative, and will allow the participants to be quiet so they can listen to God.

There are a number of approaches to meditation that may prove effective, but *Lectio Divina*, appears to be the approach that fully employs the Scripture while engaging the full range of human dimensions, without necessarily presenting a challenge to the “toughness” of the Marines. This may seem a minor point, but Marines typically do not respond well to circumstances that make them appear weak. There is already a stigma attached to the treatment of combat stress; therefore, every effort to avoid placing Marines in a position where they might appear weak should be avoided.

These sessions will begin with an introduction of the practice of *Lectio Divina* by providing a brief history of this spiritual discipline and an explanation of the process of Group *Lectio*. Richard Peace has suggested four steps for the process.²⁰ The first step is to hear the Word. The passage that will be used for this first session of *Lectio* is Psalm 23:1-3. A volunteer will read the verses through twice, while all the participants listen

¹⁹Dysinger, “Accepting the Embrace of God,” 1. Peace points out that *Lectio Divina* has been practiced for over fifteen hundred years. The early monks used this approach for their daily practice of reading the Scriptures and meditating. During their personal devotional times, they would read a passage of Scripture, usually out loud, but slowly and meditatively, while listening for words or phrases that particularly spoke to them. Then they would ponder that word or phrase, focus on it for a while, understanding this as a word that God was speaking to them, then they would offer that word or phrase back to God in prayer. Peace writes that as the monk “moved deeper and deeper into prayer he would come to the place where he rested in the presence of God” and this state of contemplation was something the monks constantly sought. Richard Peace, *Contemplative Bible Reading: Experiencing God Through Scripture* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998), 11.

²⁰ Richard Peace, “The Spiritual Discipline of Bible Reading: *Lectio Divina*,” article in the notebook for the course, “Spirituality and Discipleship in a Postmodern World,” Fuller Theological Seminary, 16-27 June 2008.

for a word or phrase that speaks directly to them. They should then repeat that word silently. After two or three minutes of silence, the participants will then say aloud that one word or phrase that spoke to them. They will not do any elaboration at this point.

The second step is to have a different volunteer read the passage a second time. The leader will ask, “How is my life touched by this word?” The participants will be encouraged to make connections to their life or note sensory impressions. After two or three minutes of silence, they will be asked to speak aloud briefly how the passage has touched their life. In the third step, a third volunteer will read the passage one more time. The leader will then ask, “Is there an invitation here for you?” The participants will be encouraged to discover an invitation that is relevant for the next few days. They will ponder this in silence. After two or three minutes, they will say aloud the sense of the invitation. The fourth step is prayer for each other. The participants will be asked to pray silently for the person on their right. This process will then be repeated for the second passage of Scripture which is Psalm 23:4-6. During the prayer step, the group should be asked to pray for the person on their left.

When both passages have been completed, the group will spend about ten minutes discussing their experience and its impact on their spiritual life. One of the major goals of these sessions is to encourage the participants to experience God and His Word in such a new way that they will make this a spiritual discipline that can be incorporated into their lives on a regular basis.

Session Three: Confession that Leads to Restoration

The words, “He restores my soul,” from Psalm 23:3 suggest one of the most significant aspects of the Shepherd’s care. The need for restoration is profoundly important if any progress is to be made in a relationship with God and other people. As pointed out earlier, restoration affects the mind, will, and emotions, but that is only the beginning of a fresh start. The Psalmist adds that the Shepherd guides his “sheep” into “paths of righteousness,” or put another way, “into the right paths.”

The spiritual discipline that can accomplish both the restoration that is needed from having followed the wrong paths, as well as the restoration that is needed to find the right paths, is confession. The word confession is a translation of the Greek word *homologeō*, from *homo*, “the same” and *logeō*, “to say or speak.” Literally it means, “to say the same thing,” or “agree in one’s statements.”²¹ The act of confession allows an individual to honestly confront their sin and agree with God that they have in fact violated His law and “fallen short of His glory” (Rom 3:23). The spiritual discipline of confession helps expose hidden actions, behavior, and thoughts that create inner conflict both in relation to God and in relation to other people. The primary purpose of confession is to gain forgiveness. From a Christian perspective, the ground of forgiveness, is the finished work of Christ on the cross. The Apostle John writes, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn 1:9). Confession can be practiced privately, between an individual and God, publicly in front of a large group, or one-on-one with another person.

²¹ Colin Brown, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967), 344.

For a variety of reasons, some confessions should be made privately either with one other person or with God alone, but relegating all confession to God alone has some possible disadvantages. Foster writes,

The person who has known forgiveness and release from persistent, nagging habits of sin through private confession should rejoice greatly in this evidence of God's mercy. But there are others for whom this has not happened. Let me describe what it is like. We have prayed, even begged, for forgiveness, and though we hope we have been forgiven, we sense no release. We doubt our forgiveness and despair at our confession. We fear that perhaps we have made confession only to ourselves and not to God. The haunting sorrows and hurts of our past have not been healed. . . . Eventually we begin to believe either that forgiveness is only a ticket to heaven and not meant to affect our lives now, or that we are not worthy of the forgiving grace of God.²²

When confession is practiced with another trustworthy individual, burdens can be lifted and hidden issues can be exposed that otherwise would lead to guilt and shame.

Guilt and shame are common effects of combat and operational stress. Some Marines who have been exposed to death firsthand, experience guilt after having taken a life. Others may feel a sense of shame for having taken the life of an "innocent" in the heat of battle. Still others may feel shame from having violated one of the rules of engagement. Any of these scenarios can also lead to "moral injuries" which affect how a person views their actions in relation to their own personal ethic. The discipline of confession can help heal these wounds.

In order to practice this spiritual discipline, three exercises will be utilized. First, using space provided on the seminar worksheets, participants will be asked to write out confessions to God. They may decide to divide their life into segments in order to think through particular periods in their life that need the restoration that comes from

²² Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 147.

confession. Richard Foster suggests this, calling it a “Diary of a Confession,” with his life divided into childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.²³ Participants will be assured that what they write down will be between them and God, unless during the second exercise they decide to share their confessions with a partner.

During the second exercise on confession, the participants will be paired up in groups of two so that they can practice the discipline of confession with another person. James writes, “Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed” (Jas 5:16). There is something very powerful and healing about confessing to another human being. This pairing should be voluntary with the understanding that the participants will be sharing as much as they feel comfortable with sharing, and with the understanding that what they share will be held in confidence. During this session, the participants may choose to confess some or all of what they have written in their confessions to God, or they may choose to confess entirely different information.

The third exercise in this session focuses more on the forgiveness aspect of confession and takes into consideration the second clause of Psalm 23:3, “He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” In the New Testament, the word forgiveness means to cancel a debt, to pardon or the “voluntary release of a person or thing over which one has legal or actual control.”²⁴ In the Sermon on the Mount recorded in Matthew, Jesus tells His disciples to pray, “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Mt 6:12). The word “as” in this sentence is very significant. It is

²³ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 149.

²⁴ Brown, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 697.

perhaps too strong to say that our receipt of forgiveness is conditional on our granting of forgiveness to others, but it certainly implies that the sincerity of our request for forgiveness is illuminated by how we forgive others.²⁵

Research indicates that forgiveness can aid in the healing process. In their article entitled, “Defining Forgiveness,” R. T. Denton and Michael Martin write, “practicing forgiveness helps us heal broken relationships, deal with pain of grief and loss, and aids in recovery from chemical dependency.”²⁶ This exercise will involve leading the participants in the process of forgiving those who have sinned against them in order to experience restoration in their own lives.

The session worksheet will provide an area for participants to write down a list of people whom they need to forgive. Some participants may need to forgive God. Others who carry around guilt may need to forgive themselves. The participants should choose to work on forgiveness on just one person or one issue that they recognize a need to forgive; other issues or persons can be dealt with later. The participants will then be asked to fully examine the experience or person whom they are planning to forgive. They should be encouraged to think about why they have withheld forgiveness and consider what it would mean to cancel that debt, and let that person or issue go.

²⁵ Matthew records a brilliant illustration of this contrast between forgiving and being forgiven in Matthew 18:21-35. In the parable, Jesus describes a debtor who entreats the king and is forgiven a vast sum of money only to refuse to forgive a much smaller debt owed by a fellow slave who similarly entreats him for more time to repay. Jesus quotes the king saying, “You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you entreated me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?” (Matthew 18:32-33) Jesus went on to say the unforgiving slave was handed over to the torturers until he could repay the entire sum. Then Jesus added, “So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart” (Matthew 18:35).

²⁶ R. T. Denton and Michael W. Martin, “Defining Forgiveness: An empirical definition of process and role,” in *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 26, no. 2 (1998): 281-292.

Forgiveness, it should be pointed out, does not mean that what was done by the other person is acceptable. It means that the forgiver chooses by an act of his or her will to “let it go,” to cancel the debt and choose no longer to hold it against them. It might be helpful to walk the group through a method of thinking about forgiveness in “penultimate” steps.²⁷ They may not be ready to forgive immediately, but perhaps they could agree to say, “I want to forgive this person.” If that seems too near forgiveness, they could be encouraged to say, “I want to, want to forgive this person.” That is a sort of “penultimate” step in forgiving another person. They may even require one additional step to say, “I want to, want to, want to forgive this person.” When they are ready to walk their forgiveness down from those penultimate steps to actually saying, “I forgive this person,” then they will have achieved a real breakthrough in forgiveness. A complete process of forgiveness will take more time than is available for the seminar, but this exercise can be introduced and the process of offering forgiveness can begin. Even if this exercise involves forgiving just one person from their past, the unburdening that can occur will prove uplifting and most individuals will sense a dramatic shift in their perspective. The goal of this session is to help participants understand and practice confession and forgiveness so that they can experience restoration, particularly restoration that helps them overcome feelings of guilt and shame.

Session Four: Prayer that Fosters Security

In Psalm 23:4, the Psalmist shifts from third person reference to the Shepherd as “He” to the second person reference, “Thou.” The psalm at this point turns from talking

²⁷ “Penultimate” means “next to last.” *Webster’s II: New Riverside University Dictionary*, s.v. “penultimate.”

about the Shepherd, to talking to the Shepherd, “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for Thou art with me.” This verse suggests the spiritual resilience attribute of security and the spiritual discipline that helps develop this attribute is prayer. Foster argues “of all the Spiritual Disciplines prayer is the most central because it ushers us into perpetual communion with the Father.”²⁸ Put in its simplest form, prayer is asking God to intervene and do something. Matthew records Jesus’ words, “Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.” (Mt 7:7). Prayer is communication with God. The spiritual discipline of prayer involves more than just an occasional prayer in emergencies. As Willard writes, “Prayer as a discipline has its greatest force in strengthening the spiritual life only as we learn to *pray without* ceasing (1 Thes 5:17; Phil 4:6).”²⁹ To develop the discipline of prayer is to develop a communicative relationship with God, so that conversing with Him occurs in both the good times and the bad times. In order to truly build security, prayer must help a person recognize the presence of God, so that in the midst of a fearful situation, he or she will turn to God in prayer.

The discipline of prayer helps build the resilience attribute of security by deepening intimacy and trust in God. The Psalmist writes, “When I am afraid, I will put my trust in Thee” (Ps 56:3). Combat stress symptoms such as fear, grief, worry, nightmares, and intrusive memories can be overcome through prayer and the security it helps foster. By recognizing prayer as a ready tool in times of distress, the Marines can be encouraged to immediately turn to God in prayer when they feel fear, grief, or worry.

²⁸ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 33.

²⁹ Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 185.

In order to practice the spiritual discipline of prayer, three exercises will be employed. The first exercise will focus on training the participants to pray by using the Scriptures. As in the other sessions, Psalm 23 will serve as the text for this exercise. The participants will be asked to take the words of Psalm 23 and translate the phrases into personal prayers for their life. For example, they may pray, “Lord, you are my Shepherd and because you are my shepherd, I shall not want. You make me lie down in green pastures. You lead me beside quiet waters.” The participants will be encouraged to take this exercise to a deeper level by incorporating some of the ideas developed in previous sessions. They may pray specifically about issues where they need contentment, peace or forgiveness. The key to this exercise is to help participants recognize what it means to employ a passage of Scripture as a starting point in developing a prayer.

The second and third exercises are based on the second clause in Psalm 23:4, “Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.” As pointed out in Chapter 5, the rod represents the shepherd’s weapon of protection and the staff represents the shepherd’s role as leader of the flock. In these two exercises on prayer, the participants will be taught how to pray for protection and direction. In the exercise on prayer for protection, the participants will be introduced to the idea of spiritual warfare. This type of prayer is a prayer against evil. It may include prayers for protection from spiritual enemies such as: the world, the flesh, and the devil. In the case of Marines, a prayer of protection would probably include prayers for protection in combat, protection against fear or failure, and perhaps protection against equipment failures and accidents. The session worksheet will provide space for writing down particular issues that warrant prayers of protection and the participants will be encouraged to bring those protection prayers to God.

The third exercise on prayer will focus on prayers for guidance or direction. Many people struggle with discerning the will of God for their lives. When they finally sense they have found God's will, there is no greater source of security. Praying for guidance or direction involves asking God to provide leadership. In this type of prayer, listening is crucial. This third exercise will encourage the participants to listen to God. The session worksheet will provide space for writing down particular areas where the participants need direction. They will be encouraged to ask God in prayer for direction in those identified areas. Hearing God in this type of prayer may seem foreign to many, but unless they are willing to listen they will never take this very important step toward spiritual development. The goal of these exercises is to help the participants develop a sense of security through a rewarding and comfortable prayer life.

Session Five: Service that Inspires Grace

Psalm 23:5 illustrates the spiritual resilience attribute of grace. The Psalmist portrays the shepherd as preparing his sheep to receive a meal while surrounded by enemies. He shows the shepherd anointing the heads of his sheep with oil and delivering an overwhelmingly abundant supply of provisions. The shepherd's actions suggest the grace of God at work in preparation, protection, and provision. The ability to receive and extend grace, particularly in traumatic times, is a resilience attribute that would help Marines facing combat or managing the effects of combat stress.

The spiritual discipline that inspires grace is service. The Hebrew word used for grace is *chen*, meaning "graciousness, kindness, or favor" and suggests "an action from a

superior to an inferior who has no real claim for gracious treatment.”³⁰ In the act of service, attitudes of prominence and entitlement are eliminated. Jesus illustrated this well when He washed the disciples’ feet at the Last Supper (Jn 13:12b-15). His act of service demonstrates extreme humility and when service is practiced appropriately, humility should be a key element of it. Foster writes, “More than any other single way, the grace of humility is worked into our lives through the Discipline of service.”³¹ Acts of service teach us to depend upon God. They require that we trust in God for resources, strength, direction, and guidance. The discipline of service can be practiced in a variety of ways. Some acts of service are apparent to everyone, but many other acts of service go unnoticed. Practicing the discipline of service can inspire grace by recognizing the need to depend upon God to carry out the actions that service requires.

For those affected by combat and operational stress, the spiritual resilience attribute of grace and the discipline of service help overcome symptoms of anger, irritability, hostility, unforgiveness, and inability to control emotions. In acts of service, the humility and the grace that it inspires helps control irritability and keeps the temper in check. Serving others while empowered by God, stimulates an emotional connection to the one being served, so that feelings of anger and irritability are averted, and replaced by compassion and love. It is hard to serve and serve well while angry. Many of these emotional reactions are signs of hidden resentments, unforgiveness, and perhaps feelings of guilt or shame. The sessions on contentment, peace, and restoration will have dealt with some of these underlying issues. In this session, the focus will be on “working from

³⁰ R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 302.

³¹ Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 130.

the inside out,” taking those changes that have been occurring inwardly and expressing them outwardly toward others.

The spiritual discipline of service will be employed in three exercises. The first of these will primarily focus on developing a plan to serve someone with whom the participants are close. This might be their spouse, a roommate, friend or neighbor. They will be provided with space on the session’s worksheet for writing down one or two ways they could practice the act of service in the next day or two. They might decide to perform a household chore, help with a work project or homework project, cook or serve dinner, repair something that is broken, wash the dog, or wash the car. The key is deciding on an act of service that extends grace to some other person. It should be some action that requires extra effort or self-control, and can be carried out recognizing that God will be available as a resource and support.

The second exercise will involve service among the group of participants. This session will be split in half with the first half occurring before lunch and the second half occurring after lunch. During the lunch period, the participants will be asked to find ways to serve one another during the meal. This might include passing food, refilling a drink, getting a dessert, or helping with clean up. The participants will be asked to perform at least one act of service during lunch. The act of service must not be against another person’s will. In other words, it should not be forced upon them and it should not be self-serving. As an act of service, it should focus on the other person and does not require nor warrant an acknowledgement of thanks. It can occur quietly or unnoticed. After the meal, the participants will return to the seminar and discuss their experiences with service.

The third exercise will require the participants to leave the seminar and go outside and find some way of serving a perfect stranger. They will be given about thirty minutes to do this. They should be encouraged to render some random act of kindness. Again, it must be an action that is welcomed or that would be welcomed if the recipient were aware. For example, it might not be appropriate to wash someone's car, if they are unaware that it is occurring. They should use their imagination. The act of service might be as simple as listening to someone, walking with someone, or encouraging someone. It might involve a skill, such as helping someone perform a task. The key point is to extend grace through service. Once the participants have returned to the seminar, they will be asked to discuss their experiences.

Session Six: Celebration That Elicits Joy

The spiritual resilience attribute of joy is illustrated well in the “goodness and mercy” that will follow the Psalmist all the days of his life (Ps 23:6). It is a joy that flows from recognizing the goodness of God when times are good and the mercy of God when times are bad. It is also a joy in knowing that the sheep will always be at home in the flock of God. The resilience attribute of joy is a commodity that can be experienced even when on the surface everything is not as it should be. God can bring joy in sorrowful times when there is recognition that his purpose transcends individual perspectives. The cross of Jesus demonstrates how God can take something as ugly as crucifixion and turn it into a source of great joy.

The spiritual discipline that elicits joy is celebration. The discipline of celebration helps make the other disciplines more rewarding and worthwhile. It keeps the spiritual

life from becoming dry and dull. To celebrate is to rejoice; and the Scriptures say that we are to “rejoice always” (1 Thes 5:16). Foster writes,

Celebration brings joy into life, and joy makes us strong. Scripture tells us that the joy of the Lord is our strength (Neh 8:10). We cannot continue long in anything without it. Women endure childbirth because the joy of motherhood lies on the other side. Young married couples struggle through the first difficult years of adjustment because they value the insurance of a long life together. Parents hold steady through the teen years, knowing that their children will emerge at the other end human once again.³²

Celebration involves giving thanks. Paul writes in Philippians 4:6-7, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Celebration means rejoicing and giving thanks. Foster suggests celebration be practiced by singing, dancing, noise-making and laughter, to name a few ideas.³³

The spiritual resilience attribute of joy and the discipline of celebration can help the participants overcome the combat and operational stress symptoms of hopelessness, the sense of a foreshortened future, loss of interest in important activities, and suicidal thoughts. Joy helps build hope. It inspires renewed interest in life, and makes a person want to live more, not less.

The first exercise for this attribute will involve completing three celebration inventories. Space for completing these inventories will be provided in the session worksheet. The first inventory will ask the participants to write down four reasons to celebrate the goodness of God. The second inventory will ask them to write down four

³² Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 191.

³³ *Ibid.*, 198.

reasons to celebrate the mercy of God. The third inventory will ask them to write down four reasons to celebrate belonging in their home, with their family, among their friends, and with God.

The second exercise for the discipline of celebration will involve asking the participants to share their celebrations with the whole group. They may want to share all or just part of what they have written in their inventories. The participants should be encouraged to help them celebrate with shouts of assent or words of encouragement.

The third celebration exercise will occur immediately after the participants have completed their post-seminar assessment. This assessment will mirror the pre-seminar assessment and demonstrate whether or not a change has occurred among the assessment categories. After the participants have completed their assessment, they will participate in the final celebration exercise by sharing how the seminar has helped them learn new truth, gain new insight, develop new skills, and build resilience attributes. The group will be encouraged to celebrate along with each person who shares, with shouts of assent or words of encouragement. After this final exercise, the participants will be asked to complete an evaluation of the seminar that will be used to improve the process.

The Initial Target Population: The Wounded Warrior Detachment

The Wounded Warrior Detachment located at Marine Corps Base Hawaii at Kaneohe Bay is comprised of approximately thirty Marines who are in various states of physical and psychological, non-medical, wounded warrior care. These are Marines who have returned from combat or overseas deployments with medical issues that require

multiple medical appointments or long-term convalescence that is more easily managed in a unit separate from their parent operational unit.

These Marines are prime candidates for this spiritual resilience seminar. They are very open to various programs that meet their needs and they have a lot of free time, which they are happy to fill with engaging activities. Their facilities offer a suitable classroom space in which to conduct the seminar and they are located relatively close to the base dining facility where lunch can easily be held. Many of the Marines are suffering from various symptoms of combat and operational stress, from very mild to more severe forms of PTSD. Their combat experience and symptoms will offer a prime test bed for determining the effectiveness of the ministry strategy.

The Seminar Leadership: Marine Forces Chaplains

This strategy has been developed with the intent that Marine Forces chaplains will be provided with a tool that can be used to offer ministry to those affected by combat and operational stress. Chaplains have a keen interest in ministering to the people they serve and the development of a program that is offered within their unit should be led by them. There is some precedent for offering a seminar approach. Programs such as “Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program,” a marriage enrichment workshop along with a retreat program called “Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation” have been utilized by chaplains for more than three decades. Both of these programs adopt a seminar model and are conducted by chaplains. The chaplains’ “insider status” and special kinship with their people, makes them ideal for leading this program.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Pilot Project Summary: Leadership Training and Initial Seminar Field Test

This spiritual resilience-building seminar will be launched by initially conducting the seminar for the leaders who will participate in the initial seminar field test. Both seminars will be conducted in the same manner and follow the same agenda, the only distinction will be in the actual participants. This is in order to ensure the leaders fully understand all the elements of the seminar and have experienced them personally before being asked to lead any of the sessions.

The two-day seminar will begin on day one at eight o'clock in the morning with leaders and participants introducing themselves to the entire group. The leaders will then introduce the basic idea of the seminar by explaining some of the key terms that will be used in the seminar. It will be important to carefully define spiritual resilience, spiritual resilience attributes, and spiritual disciplines since these three terms are significant components of the seminar process. The leaders will explain that the seminar will be conducted with the twenty-third Psalm as the scriptural foundation for developing spiritual resilience and that this text will be used throughout the seminar.

After the initial introductions, the participants will be asked to complete the pre-seminar assessment.¹ This tool will measure the degree to which they are experiencing the symptoms of combat and operational stress, their current level of spiritual resilience in six key categories, and their current experience with spiritual disciplines. This assessment will be used again at the end of the seminar to gauge their level of progress.

Once the introductions and assessments are complete, the main sessions of the seminar will begin. Each session is scheduled for a two-hour block, with three sessions occurring each day and a one-hour lunch break on both days. Each session will begin by introducing a spiritual resilience attribute as described and illustrated in Psalm 23. The leaders will engage the participants in a discussion on the spiritual resilience attribute and how it can help overcome particular combat and operational stress symptoms. The participants will then be introduced to a spiritual discipline selected to help build that particular spiritual resilience attribute followed by the practice of three exercises to employ that particular spiritual discipline. Some of the exercises involve writing down responses, some are individual exercises, and some are group exercises. All of the exercises relate in some way to Psalm 23. At the end of the last session, the participants will be asked to complete the post-seminar assessment to gauge their development during the seminar.

Implementation Timeline

The implementation of this project will take place over the course of the summer of 2010 through the winter of 2011. The specific details of the various elements of the

¹ See Appendix B.

timeline are included below. The actual dates for development and completion of these steps may vary depending on the approval process.

The seminar resources will be developed by late summer 2010. There are four resources that must be prepared before the seminar is ready for field test. These include the pre- and post-seminar assessment, the seminar agenda, the seminar worksheets, and the seminar evaluation tool. Each of these resources will be described in greater detail in this chapter and a copy of each completed product will be included in the appendices.

In early fall 2010, the leaders for the seminar will be chosen and trained. Identification of the leaders, selection criteria, and descriptions of the leadership tasks and training will be provided later in this chapter. One of the key elements of the training process will involve a complete dry run of the seminar for the leaders. The leaders will be drawn from Marine Forces chaplains assigned to units in the local area. Once the required resources are developed and the leaders are prepared, the initial field test of the seminar will be conducted in late fall 2010. The initial field test will serve as opportunity to reinforce the skills of the leaders as well as evaluate the effectiveness of the seminar.

During the winter of 2011, the seminar evaluations will be examined and the leaders will be interviewed in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the seminar and all of its elements. In late winter 2011, with the assistance of the feedback from the leaders involved in the initial field test, the seminar will be refined and improved. Issues such as the timing of the various elements, the instructions, assessments, and worksheets will all be evaluated to determine whether they require any further refinement or corrections. By late winter 2010, this process should be complete and upon completion, the report of results will be drafted.

Leadership Development of Seminar Leaders

The leaders who will conduct this seminar are critically important to the effectiveness of the program. Their understanding of the various elements of the strategy and their ability to train others to engage the process are essential to the successful implementation of the strategy. This section will provide guidance on the identification of the leaders, leadership selection criteria, leadership tasks, and training sessions.

This ministry strategy is designed for implementation by Marine Forces Chaplains, but they never serve alone. The enlisted Religious Program Specialists provide administrative support, resource management, as well as security for the Religious Ministry Team, among other key supportive tasks. The Chaplain and Religious Program Specialist serve together as a Religious Ministry Team. They will implement this seminar, as a team, once they have been trained.

The initial selection criteria for the leaders that will serve in the pilot project will be based on their experience and motivation. One important experience criteria, at least initially, is combat ministry experience. This will prove important for understanding combat and operational stress, but it will also provide the leaders an “insider status” with combat veterans. Chaplain ministry is very often “incarnational.” That sense of identifying with the troops and where they have been, may be a very important ingredient in the success of this program. Some chaplains and Religious Program Specialists, who are new to the force, may not have had an opportunity to deploy to a combat zone, but it is really only a matter of time until they do. For the initial launch of the seminar, leaders will be required to have deployed in combat. They will naturally have motivation for participating if they have had combat experience and seen the effects of combat stress.

Leaders in this ministry strategy will be teaching, modeling, guiding, and encouraging the participants. They will need to be able to teach spiritual resilience, the practice of spiritual disciplines, and they will need to understand the theological foundation of these principles in order to explain and apply their meaning accurately. The leaders will model both spiritual resilience and the spiritual disciplines.

The leaders should have a good grasp of spiritual disciplines and have a high level of experience with practicing them. They will guide the participants through the process, so they need to be able to recognize where the participants are in their spiritual journey and be able to give them helpful guidance on how to move forward in their journey. The leaders should be good encouragers. They will need to be able to encourage those who may feel hopeless or helpless. They may need to encourage some participants who have no experience with God, others who have lost faith in God, or even become angry with God. The effects of combat and operational stress can make some individuals very difficult to lead. The leaders will need to express compassion and strength in how they work with the participants.

The primary source of training for the leaders will involve a complete dry run of the seminar. The only difference between this seminar and the initial field test will be the inclusion of additional theological guidance. The leaders will be provided with a deeper level of insight on the theological foundation for spiritual resilience and the theological basis for each attribute of spiritual resilience. In addition, leaders will be provided with some additional theological insight on the spiritual disciplines that will be employed.

The Seminar Agenda

This section will provide a description of various elements of the seminar along with a sequence of events and suggested timing of the various parts. The agenda that will be used by the participants in the seminar will be provided in the appendices.² The seminar is designed for two days, but it can be modified and adapted to a variety of schedules. For example, it could be conducted over the course of six weeks in two-hour blocks each week; it could also be abbreviated and conducted in a single eight-hour day. The agenda that will be presented here will serve as the initial pilot test model.

The first day of the seminar will begin at eight in the morning and the first half-hour will be set aside for the introduction of the leaders, participants, and the process. The leaders will introduce themselves with a brief account of their experience in the military chaplaincy along with information about their exposure to combat. The participants will then introduce themselves similarly, by giving some information about their background, family, military experience, and exposure to combat. Next, one of the leaders will introduce the process by explaining how the pre-seminar and post-seminar assessments will be used, and by describing how each of the six sessions will be conducted.

During the second half-hour of the introductory hour on the first day of the seminar, the participants will be given the pre-seminar assessment. This tool will be completed individually and the participants will be told that the information they provide will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with other participants unless they

² See Appendix A.

choose to share it. A copy of the pre-seminar assessment is included in the appendices. This period should take approximately twenty to thirty minutes followed by a break.

At approximately nine in the morning, the first spiritual resilience-building session will begin. This session on contentment is scheduled for nine to eleven in the morning. During the first half-hour, the participants will be led in a discussion on the spiritual resilience attribute of contentment, the spiritual discipline of Scripture study, and the combat stress symptoms this resilience attribute can help overcome. The remaining ninety minutes is set aside for practicing three exercises on the spiritual discipline of Scripture study for approximately thirty minutes each.

The lunch period for this first day is scheduled for eleven to twelve. After lunch, the second resilience-building session on peace will take place between twelve and two in the afternoon, followed by the third session on restoration at two to four. Each of these sessions will follow a pattern similar to the first session.

The second day of the seminar will begin at eight in the morning with the fourth spiritual resilience-building session on security. This will be followed by the session on grace at ten. The session on grace will be slightly different from the other sessions due to the nature of the exercises. The first hour will be similar to the other sessions beginning with the introductory discussions of the first half-hour and the practice of the first exercise in the second half-hour. A break for lunch at this point will divide the session in half at eleven to twelve. During lunch, the participants will practice one of their exercises on service. After lunch, during the second hour of the session on grace, the participants will practice the final exercise on the spiritual discipline of service from

twelve to one in the afternoon. Part of that time will be spent outside the seminar meeting room, performing an additional act of service.

The sixth session on joy will take place at approximately one to three in the afternoon in much the same fashion as the previous sessions, with just one exception. The spiritual discipline for this attribute is celebration and the third exercise on celebration will occur after the participants have completed their post-seminar assessment. This is in order to provide them with the opportunity to celebrate any gains they have made from participation in the program.

As indicated above, the post-seminar assessment will be provided to the participants for completion just before the third and final exercise of the spiritual discipline of celebration. This assessment will be identical to the pre-seminar assessment and is designed to determine whether or not there has been any growth or development of spiritual resilience. It is also designed to determine whether the seminar has helped with any of the effects of combat and operational stress. After they have completed the assessment, the participants will practice one final exercise of celebration to celebrate any gains they have made during the seminar. Once that exercise is complete, they will be given a seminar evaluation form that will be used to assess the entire seminar.

After the participants have completed their evaluation forms, the leaders will offer some closing remarks and suggestions for maintaining resilience. During this fifteen- to twenty-minute period, they will summarize some of the key concepts that have been developed over the two days, they will offer some highlights from what they have observed, and they will provide some additional insights from their own experience to help the participants continue to maintain resilience.

Resources Required

This seminar approach is designed to require minimal set-up and equipment. It can be conducted in a very comfortable and well-appointed setting, or it can be conducted in a field expedient environment in a combat zone. The resources suggested are optimal for delivery of a quality program that is comfortable and free of distractions.

A conference room equipped with audio/visual equipment would be the best possible space for conducting this seminar. Alternatively, a classroom that is suitable for the set-up of portable audio/visual equipment, would also work well. The room should have comfortable seating and tables or desks for writing materials. An optimal group size is about twelve to twenty-four facilitated by one chaplain and one RP. A larger group can be accommodated with additional chaplains and RPs. The lighting should be adequate for open discussion and yet not so bright that the audio-visual equipment would be overwhelmed by sunlight. The room should be located away from distractions of other people or environmental noise, to maintain an appropriate learning environment for concentration.

The seminar can be conducted with the use of paper worksheets alone, but an optimal delivery would include the use of a computer and graphics projector for the display of PowerPoint slides. The seminar room should have an installed projection screen, a blank white wall, or a portable screen. An extension cord with multiple outlets and a surge suppressor should be available with at least one electrical outlet for the computer and one for the projector.

The training materials for the seminar include the pre- and post-seminar assessments, the exercise worksheets, the seminar evaluation, and a copy of the seminar

agenda. These materials will all be included in the appendices. Each participant should be provided with writing materials including a pen or pencil and some extra paper for taking notes. Bibles should also be made available for the participants in case they should want to refer to them.

Seminar Evaluation Plan

The seminar evaluation plan will include the evaluations completed by the participants along with follow-up evaluations thirty days after the seminar. The critical aspect of the evaluations will be in the development of good questions that actually measure the participants' experience in the seminar and evaluate the effectiveness of the program. A copy of the evaluation that will be used is included in the appendices.

At the end of the seminar, the participants will be asked to complete a seminar evaluation. The evaluation tool will assess how well the program meets the five goals that were established in Chapter 6. Specifically, the evaluation will ascertain the degree to which participants recognize and understand the six spiritual resilience attributes, the degree to which they understand and can apply the six spiritual disciplines, and the degree to which they experienced a measurable increase in spiritual resilience. This will be based partially on the way they respond to the pre- and post-seminar assessments. This evaluation will be somewhat subjective, but the participants will be asked to compare how well they practiced spiritual disciplines before the seminar and how well they practice them at the end of the seminar. The evaluation will ask the participants to make qualitative and quantitative assessments of their learning experience and allow them the opportunity to provide additional suggestions for program improvement.

An additional follow-up evaluation will be mailed or e-mailed to the seminar participants with instructions on how to complete and return the evaluation. This evaluation will be identical to the end of seminar evaluation, but its intent will be to determine whether or not there have been any additional developments or growth over the course of the thirty days since completing the seminar. The analysis and comparison of seminar evaluations will involve tabulating the results of the entire group of participants in the seminar for an overall assessment of the program as well as individual analysis of comments made by each participant. Since each person is so unique, these individual comments may be as important as any overall assessment. The analysis and comparison of the end of seminar evaluation and the follow-up evaluation could provide some valuable insight that may either affirm the process or suggest more definitive ways that it can be improved.

Report on Results

The initial seminar demonstrated the effectiveness of the ministry approach on many levels. The seminar was offered to a group of fourteen participants with varying degrees of combat exposure and experience. Half of the participants had returned from combat recently, the other half had been back from their deployment for more than six months. Based on the assessment tools, the overall consensus of participants showed moderate to marked decrease in combat stress symptoms.³ Most participants reported a reduction of from 20-40 percent from their pre-seminar assessment to their post-seminar assessment. On the resilience attribute scale, the participants reported increased

³ See Appendix B for the pre-seminar and post-seminar assessments.

resilience from 30-50 percent, and a 30-60 percent increase in the understanding and practice of spiritual disciplines. The results of data in all three assessment scales suggest the seminar proved beneficial to all the participants.

Perhaps more important than the overall results, the individual assessments show correlations between the particular combat stress symptom clusters, the resilience attributes, and their corresponding spiritual disciplines. In other words, the data shows the participants, whether consciously or unconsciously, experienced development in spiritual disciplines that increased their spiritual resilience and reduced their combat stress symptoms. Further study and a wider sample group would have to be employed in order to definitively defend this hypothesis.

The seminar evaluation conducted at the end of the seminar also demonstrated overall positive results.⁴ The question regarding the recognition and understanding of the spiritual resilience attributes showed participants achieved this objective to the 85-90 percent range. On the question asking about their ability to understand and apply the six spiritual resilience disciplines, most participants reported their ability at the 80-90 percent range. Perhaps the most important question in the evaluation concerns whether or not the participants experienced a measurable increase in spiritual resilience. On this question, all the participants reported they had experienced a measurable increase in spiritual resilience. Based on the fact that many of the participants had very little if any exposure to the concept of spiritual resilience prior to participating in the seminar, this fact alone represents an important achievement.

⁴ See Appendix D for the seminar evaluation.

The participants reported a 70 percent increase in the amount of spiritual resilience they experienced with a range of responses somewhat wider than other questions. This may be due in part to the variety of religious or spiritual experience of this group of participants. On the question asking whether the participants had developed greater skill in the practice of the six spiritual disciplines of the seminar, all the participants reported greater skill. On average, they reported a 65 percent increase in skill with a broad range from 50-80 percent representing the majority of responses. Once again, the wider range may represent a variety of previous religious experience. Based on the spoken and written comments, some of the participants reported a greater degree of satisfaction from some disciplines than they did from others. This may be related to a greater degree of skill in practicing certain disciplines. Given a longer time span, perhaps the other disciplines would produce similar results. On the other hand, the disciplines that produced the more satisfying results seemed to be more closely related to their particular needs or combat stress symptoms based on the pre-seminar and post-seminar assessments.

On the question asking whether or not they experienced a measurable reduction in combat stress symptoms, the overall results showed moderate to marked reduction. The responses widely ranged from 30-70 percent. This may be due in part to their own initial assessment of the amount of combat stress they were experiencing prior to the seminar. Based on the correlation of the pre-seminar and post-seminar assessments, this wide range is justified. Much of the wide variety of experience is based on where the Marine was assigned and the amount of exposure to traumatic combat they experienced.

Beyond the data of the assessments and evaluation, the spoken and written comments suggest the viability and benefit of the approach at a visceral level. One of the participants reported she slept through the night for the first time in months after the session on peace. Another participant reported greater endurance in traffic without what would have typically been an angry response. Many of the participants made comments about Psalm 23 that included remarks about how they were experiencing new insights from the Psalm that they had never seen before. Several participants reported that they felt God's presence, as they never had before. The exercise on forgiveness led many to report they forgave someone whom they had never been able to forgive before and others felt forgiveness from God that they had been struggling with for years. One Marine reported a greater degree of faith and recognition that his faith was now stronger than his fears. It seems clear from the assessments, evaluations, and the comments of the participants that this seminar model can in fact build spiritual resilience and reduce the symptoms of combat and operational stress.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This paper has focused on the development of a ministry strategy for building spiritual resilience in Marines affected by combat and operational stress. Three important factors lay the foundation for this approach. First, research has shown that resilience is the key to helping combat employed Marines overcome the negative effects of combat and operational stress. Resilience is the capacity to bounce back from trauma with renewed strength and energy. Recognizing the significance of resilience in the treatment and prevention of combat stress symptoms is a key factor in the development of this strategy. Second, this paper argues that resilience has a spiritual component that can be identified as spiritual resilience, the ability to harness spiritual resources in order to bounce back from stressful or traumatic life experiences with renewed strength and energy. The paper points out research that has shown the benefit of employing spiritual approaches in treating combat and operational stress. Though these approaches have been adjunct to medical and psychological approaches, this paper argues a more concerted effort employing spiritual approaches would produce even greater results. Third, this paper argues that spiritual resilience can be developed through the employment of spiritual disciplines. Though the term spiritual resilience is not used anywhere in the Scriptures, the concept can be demonstrated in the convergence of endurance, faith, and hope. When these words occur in the Scriptures, particularly when two or more of them are found in the same context, they describe what this paper means by “spiritual resilience.” A person who demonstrates endurance, faith, and hope, in difficult circumstances has the capacity to overcome the destructive nature of the

circumstances and rise to the occasion with greater strength, assurance, and capability. It is in order to build that capacity that this ministry strategy has been developed.

The spiritual disciplines employed in this strategy have been selected based on three specific criteria. First, this paper argues that spiritual resilience has certain attributes that can be identified based on how well they are able to build endurance, faith, and hope. This strategy asserts that these three key theological themes are integral to understanding spiritual resilience, and building the capacity to exercise them. Second, the spiritual disciplines employed in this strategy have been selected based on their ability to build the resilience attributes illustrated in Psalm 23. There are very likely many spiritual resilience attributes throughout the Scriptures, but only six have been selected. The six selected for this strategy: contentment, peace, restoration, security, grace, and joy have been selected because of the mitigating factors they offer for those affected by combat and operational stress. The fact that they are drawn from Psalm 23 makes them all the more beneficial. This Psalm has been selected for this strategy because of its long history with providing comfort and assurance to military personnel. Psalm 23 has long been a Scripture of choice for military memorial services and funerals, as well as a precious source of comfort to warriors in combat. Psalm 23 is also possibly the best example of a pluralistic Scripture passage in the entire Bible, which is very important in military settings.

The third criterion used for the selection of spiritual disciplines is based on their correlation to the six combat stress symptom clusters. Since the disciplines have been selected to build spiritual resilience attributes in order to bounce back from the negative effects of combat stress, it seems critical that these disciplines also correlate to the actual

symptoms they are intended to help overcome. Therefore, this ministry approach targets both the symptoms and the spiritual resilience attribute that can help overcome the symptoms. This paper argues that through the faithful and diligent practice of spiritual disciplines, spiritual resilience can be built to overcome the negative effects of combat and operational stress and quite possibly serve as a defense against the development of combat stress injuries and illness in future combat trauma.

The ministry strategy has adopted a seminar model for the introduction and practice of the selected spiritual disciplines. The adoption of this approach flows out of the ecclesiological model advocated in this paper. As pointed out in Chapter 4, ministry in the military by military chaplains is most effective when the role of the chaplain is seen as a shepherd gathering a “flock” in preparation for future inclusion in a local church or for nurturing them in the interim until they rejoin their local church. With this in mind, the seminar model serves as a way of gathering and nurturing that occurs parallel to local chapel or church ministries.

The seminar model offers both an environment for teaching the spiritual disciplines and an opportunity for practicing the disciplines. This strategy has advocated the use of three exercises for each of the six selected spiritual disciplines. These exercises allow the seminar participants to experience different aspects of the disciplines in order to gain a better understanding of them. It also offers them a greater opportunity to experience a benefit from each of the spiritual practices. This use of multiple exercises proved beneficial in the pilot test of the seminar. Each of the participants found different sets of exercises more or less rewarding depending on their individual tastes and previous

experiences, but every participant found a degree of fulfillment in at least one exercise per discipline.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy, the seminar incorporated pre-seminar and post-seminar assessments to allow participants to assess their combat stress symptoms, their experience of spiritual resilience attributes, and their understanding and practice of spiritual disciplines. As pointed out in the results section of the previous chapter, these assessments conducted during the pilot test of the seminar demonstrated the effectiveness of the approach for these participants. Both the results of the survey questions and the comments made during the seminar validated the benefit of this approach. Beyond the words written and spoken in the evaluations, the emotions expressed during the various sessions revealed a deeper response to the disciplines and their connection to combat and operational stress symptoms. The participants in the initial test displayed a depth of emotional and spiritual response that one would only expect from a deeper work of God.

The applications for this ministry strategy could easily be extended beyond use in a military setting. As more military members leave active service and enter civilian communities, it is very likely these civilian communities will see war veterans who exhibit combat and operational stress symptoms. This ministry strategy could be adopted with very little modification and used in local churches or parachurch ministries. The strategy could also be employed for helping family members who suffer from traumatic experiences not related to combat. Perhaps a couple's seminar could be developed to help combat veterans work through the spiritual disciplines with their spouses so that as a married couple they could draw closer to God and overcome trauma symptoms as a team.

The exercises could also be modified for use with youth and children to help them develop spiritual resilience as they face difficult experiences.

Further study would be required to determine the preventative effect of employing specific spiritual disciplines prior to combat exposure. Another potentially beneficial study might involve employing spiritual disciplines while in a combat zone to determine their mitigating effect on combat stress symptoms. In the final analysis, the question that remains is whether or not the participants who experience a beneficial increase in spiritual resilience will continue to employ spiritual disciplines over the course of their future experiences in order to build on the gains made possible in this seminar.

APPENDIX A
SEMINAR AGENDA

DAY ONE

- 0800-0830 INTRODUCTION
 Introduction of Leaders
 Participant Introductions
 Introduction of Seminar Process
- 0830-0850 PRE-SEMINAR ASSESSMENT
 Assessment of Combat Stress Symptoms
 Assessment of Spiritual Resilience Attributes
 Assessment of Experience and Knowledge of Spiritual Disciplines
- 0850-0900 BREAK
- 0900-0930 SESSION ONE – Scripture Study that Builds Contentment
 Discussion of contentment from Psalm 23:1
 Introduction to the Spiritual Discipline of Scripture study
 Combat stress symptoms contentment helps overcome
- 0930-1100 THREE SCRIPTURE STUDY EXERCISES
 Exercise one: The meaning of words
 Exercise two: The importance of context
 Exercise three: The significance of application
- 1100-1200 LUNCH
- 1200-1230 SESSION TWO – Meditation that Develops Peace
 Discussion of peace from Psalm 23:2
 Introduction to the Spiritual Discipline of meditation
 Combat stress symptoms peace helps overcome
- 1230-1400 THREE MEDITATION EXERCISES
 Exercise one: The multi-dimensional aspect of Psalm 23:2
 Exercise two: The practice of *lectio divina* on Psalm 23:1-3
 Exercise three: The practice of *lectio divina* on Psalm 23:4-6
- 1400-1430 SESSION THREE – Confession that Leads to Restoration
 Discussion of restoration from Psalm 23:3
 Introduction to the Spiritual Discipline of confession
 Combat stress symptoms restoration helps overcome
- 1430-1600 THREE CONFESSION EXERCISES
 Exercise one: Diary of confession
 Exercise two: Face-to-face confessions
 Exercise three: Forgiveness exercise

DAY TWO

- 0800-0830 SESSION FOUR – Prayer that Fosters Security
 Discussion of security from Psalm 23:4
 Introduction to the Spiritual Discipline of Prayer
 Combat stress symptoms security helps overcome
- 0830-1000 THREE PRAYER EXERCISES
 Exercise one: Praying the Scriptures
 Exercise two: Prayers for protection and spiritual warfare
 Exercise three: Prayers for guidance and direction
- 1000-1030 SESSION FIVE – Service that Inspires Grace
 Discussion of grace from Psalm 23:5
 Introduction to the Spiritual Discipline of Service
 Combat stress symptoms grace helps overcome
- 1030-1100 THREE SERVICE EXERCISES
 Exercise one: Acts of service for someone close to you
 Exercise two: Serving a fellow participant (During Lunch)
 Exercise three: Random act of kindness (After Lunch)
- 1100-1200 LUNCH AND SERVICE EXERCISE TWO
- 1200-1300 SERVICE EXERCISE THREE
 This exercise will occur outside the conference room
 Please ensure you return by 1245
 Discuss Service Exercise Three
- 1300-1330 SESSION SIX – Celebration that Elicits Joy
 Discussion of joy from Psalm 23:6
 Introduction to the Spiritual Discipline of celebration
 Combat stress symptoms joy helps overcome
- 1330-1500 THREE CELEBRATION EXERCISES
 Exercise one: Reasons to celebrate
 Exercise two: Sharing celebrations with the Group
- POST-SEMINAR ASSESSMENT
 Exercise three: Celebrate seminar gains
- 1530-1630 SEMINAR EVALUATION AND CLOSING REMARKS
 Evaluation of Seminar Experience
 Closing Remarks and Suggestions for Maintaining Resilience

APPENDIX B

PRE-SEMINAR AND POST-SEMINAR ASSESSMENT

Combat Stress Symptoms: On a scale from one to ten, to what degree are you currently experiencing the following symptoms? (Circle one number in each row.)

1. Isolation, social withdrawal
2. Hypervigilance, hyperarousal, anxiety, sleep issues
3. Guilt, shame, moral Injury
4. Fear, grief, worry, nightmares, intrusive memories
5. Anger, irritability, hostility, unforgiveness
6. Hopeless, suicidal thoughts, Loss of interest in important activities

Spiritual Resilience Attributes: On a scale from one to ten, to what degree are you currently experiencing these attributes? (Circle one number in each row.)

7. Contentment
8. Peace
9. Restoration
10. Security
11. Grace
12. Joy

Spiritual Disciplines: On a scale from one to ten, to what degree do you currently understand and practice these Spiritual Disciplines? (Circle one number in each row.)

13. Scripture Study
14. Meditation
15. Confession
16. Prayer
17. Service
18. Celebration

1. Isolation, social withdrawal

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Low ----- Med ----- High

2. Hypervigilance, hyperarousal, anxiety, sleep issues

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

3. Guilt, shame, moral Injury

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

4. Fear, grief, worry, nightmares, intrusive memories

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

5. Anger, irritability, hostility, unforgiveness

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

6. Hopeless, suicidal thoughts, loss of interest ...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

7. Contentment

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Low ----- Med ----- High

8. Peace

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

9. Restoration

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

10. Security

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

11. Grace

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

12. Joy

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

13. Scripture Study

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Low ----- Med ----- High

14. Meditation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

15. Confession

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

16. Prayer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

17. Service

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

18. Celebration

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

APPENDIX C

SESSION WORKSHEETS

SESSION ONE

SCRIPTURE STUDY THAT BUILDS CONTENTMENT

TEXT: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1). This verse illustrates the spiritual resilience attribute of contentment. Contentment flows from the assurance that the Lord is supplying every need. This verse demonstrates the Hebrew poetic practice of parallelism. The first clause is amplified by the second clause suggesting a meaning of "when I allow the Lord to be my shepherd, I have all that I want."

The Spiritual Discipline of Scripture study helps build the spiritual resilience attribute of contentment. In this session, three exercises will be introduced in order to practice this Spiritual Discipline. These exercises will help build resilience for overcoming isolation, loneliness, social withdrawal, and loss of interest in social activities.

Exercise One: Scripture Study that focuses on the meaning of words. Instructions: Select a volunteer to begin this exercise by reading Psalm 23:1 as it is written above without any particular emphasis on any single word. Next, ask a different volunteer to read the same verse, but this time with emphasis on the first word, "The." As a group, discuss whether or not that emphasis affects the meaning of the verse. Ask a third volunteer to read the verse again, this time with emphasis on the second word, "Lord." As a group discuss how this emphasis affects the meaning of the verse. Follow this same procedure for every word of the verse. Then discuss as a group how placing emphasis on certain words helps bring out meaning that was not as obvious before reading it with this level of attention. This exercise should demonstrate how important it is to pay attention to the meaning of individual words when studying Scripture.

Exercise Two: Scripture Study that focuses on the importance of context. This exercise will demonstrate the importance of examining the context of a passage of Scripture before trying to interpret its meaning or apply its truth. This study will place emphasis on the meaning of the words, "I shall not want" in Psalm 23:1. Instructions: Read Psalm 23 individually and look for ways in which the Psalmist points out the physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs that are met by the Shepherd. Write down your responses in the spaces below and then discuss your findings with the group:

- Physical Needs _____
- Psychological Needs _____
- Emotional Needs _____
- Spiritual Needs _____

Exercise Three: Scripture Study that focuses on the significance of application. Instructions: Write down one or two specific needs that you recognize that you have, and then discuss as a group how God can meet those needs based on Psalm 23.

SESSION TWO

MEDITATION THAT DEVELOPS PEACE

TEXT: “He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters” (Ps 23:2). This verse illustrates the spiritual resilience attribute of peace. Sheep will not lie down unless they are free from fear, free from friction in the flock, free of flies and parasites, and free from hunger. In the same way, we experience peace when we recognize that God is the source of all that brings us peace.

The Spiritual Discipline that helps build this attribute is meditation. In this session, three exercises will be introduced in order to practice this Spiritual Discipline. These exercises will help build resilience for overcoming hypervigilance, hyperarousal, anxiety, difficulty relaxing, and difficulty sleeping.

Exercise One: Meditation on the multi-dimensional aspect of Psalm 23:2. Instructions: Read silently Psalm 23:2 several times while considering how God can bring peace physically, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually. Write down your thoughts in the space provided below.

Physically God brings peace by _____
Emotionally God brings peace by _____
Psychologically God brings peace by _____
Spiritually God brings peace by _____

Exercise Two: Practice *Lectio Divina* on Psalm 23:1-3. Instructions: *Lectio Divina* means “divine reading” and involves a disciplined form of devotional reading that helps us come to know God better and listen to Him.

Step one: A volunteer reads the verses aloud twice. Listen for a word or phrase that speaks to you directly and repeat it silently several times. Say it aloud when the leader directs. You may also write it here:

Step two: A second volunteer reads the verses aloud and the leader asks, “How is my life touched by this word?” The participants will then think about connections to their life or note sensory impressions. When the leader directs, say aloud how this passage has touched your life. You may write it here:

Step three: A third volunteer will read the passage one more time. The leader will then ask, “Is there an invitation here for you?” Think about an invitation that is relevant for the next few days. After two to three minutes, say this aloud. You may write your response here:

Step four: Pray for each other. Pray specifically for the person on your right.

Exercise Three: Practice *Lectio Divina* on Psalm 23:4-6. Instructions: Repeat the procedures above for the next three verses of Psalm 23.

Step one: Read the verses. Listen for a word or phrase that speaks to you and repeat it silently.

Step two: Read the verses again. The leader will ask, “How is my life touched by this word?”

Step three: Read the verses again. The leader will ask, “Is there an invitation here for you?”

Step four: Pray for each other. Pray specifically for the person on your left.

SESSION THREE

CONFESSION THAT LEADS TO RESTORATION

TEXT: “He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake” (Ps 23:3). This verse illustrates the spiritual resilience attribute of restoration. Restoration affects the mind, will, and emotions, but the Psalmist adds the important additional dimension of restoration which involves guidance along the right paths.

The Spiritual Discipline that helps build this attribute is confession. In this session, three exercises will be introduced in order to practice this Spiritual Discipline. These exercises will help build resilience for overcoming guilt, shame, and moral injuries.

Exercise One: Write a “Diary of Confession” to God. Instructions: Using the space below write out some confessions to God including areas where you feel you have failed God, others or yourself. Feel free to use abbreviations or single words. These confessions will be kept between you and God unless you decide to share them with someone else.

Childhood Confessions:

Adolescent Confessions:

Adulthood Confessions:

Exercise two: Face-to-face confession with another person. Instructions: Pair up with another one of the participants with whom you feel comfortable sharing. Share your confessions with each other, they may be some or all of what you have written to God, or they may be other issues that you have not written down. Take turns offering confessions. Share something, but you do not have to share everything.

Exercise three: Forgiveness exercise. Confession is practiced in order to receive forgiveness, but it also suggests the need we have to offer forgiveness to others who we hold unforgiveness toward. Instructions: Make a list of the people who you should forgive along with issues that need to be forgiven. Your list may include people you feel you have forgiven or it may include people who you do not want to forgive right at this time. Your list may even include issues that involve unforgiveness toward God. You may also need to forgive yourself if you suffer from guilt or shame. Write down your list and then decide which one or more of these issues you can begin to forgive during the time that remains for this exercise.

The people I need to forgive:

The issues that need forgiveness:

SESSION FOUR

PRAYER THAT FOSTERS SECURITY

TEXT: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me” (Ps 23:4). This verse illustrates the spiritual resilience attribute of security. At this point in the Psalm, the writer moves from talking about the Shepherd, to talking to the Shepherd. Security is that sense of protection and guidance that offers us freedom from fear, and endurance for handling difficult or frightening times of our lives.

The Spiritual Discipline that helps build this attribute is prayer. In this session, three exercises will be introduced in order to practice this Spiritual Discipline. These exercises will help build resilience for overcoming fear, grief, worry, nightmares, and intrusive memories.

Exercise one: Praying the Scriptures. Instructions: Using Psalm 23, paraphrase the language and pronouns of the Psalm into a personal prayer that you offer to God individually. For example, you might pray, “Dear Lord, You are my shepherd and because You are my shepherd I have all my needs met...” It might be helpful to write out your prayer in the space provided below.

Exercise two: Prayers of protection and spiritual warfare. This exercise will focus on the “rod” of Psalm 23:4, which is a rod the shepherd uses for protection. Instructions: Write down below some issues that you need protection from. You may include specific spiritual enemy threats such as the world, the flesh, and the devil. You might also include specific physical threats such as combat threats, protection from fear or failure. Once you have prepared your list, bring these issues to God in prayer. Ask Him to meet those threats on your behalf.

Spiritual threats:

Physical threats:

Exercise three: Prayers for guidance and direction. This exercise will focus on the “staff” of Psalm 23:4, which is a staff the shepherd uses for guidance and leadership. Instructions: Write down a list of areas where you need specific direction or guidance from God. It may involve your personal life, your family life, work life, spiritual life, or your future. Once you have prepared your list, ask God to provide direction and listen carefully for God’s direction.

Areas where I need direction or guidance:

SESSION FIVE

SERVICE THAT INSPIRES GRACE

TEXT: “Thou dost prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; Thou has anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows” (Ps 23:5). This verse illustrates the spiritual resilience attribute of grace. The Psalmist describes how he receives preparation, protection, power, presence, and provision from God in such overwhelming fashion that he describes it as a cup that is overflowing. This overflowing supply suggests the grace that God offers to more than meet all of our needs. This grace is an attribute that we can experience by giving to others as well.

The Spiritual Discipline that helps build this attribute is service. In this session, three exercises will be introduced in order to practice this Spiritual Discipline. These exercises will help build resilience for overcoming anger, irritability, hostility, unforgiveness, and inability to control emotions.

Exercise one: An act of service for someone close to you. Instructions: In this exercise, you will be asked to develop a plan for serving someone who is close to you. It may be your spouse, your children, another family member, a room mate or co-worker. Write down in the space below one or two actions you could take as an act of service in the next day or two. It should be an action that requires some effort or cost on your part that meets a need or want that is not against their will for you to perform.

Act of service:

Exercise two: Act of service for your fellow seminar participants. Instructions: The group will break for lunch in the middle of this session. During lunch, find some way to perform an act of service for one or more of your fellow seminar participants. It could be an unnoticed act. It should not be an action that calls attention to you or leads to personal pride. Please ensure also that it is not an act of service that is against their will. It should be something that requires some effort and meets some legitimate need or want. When you return from lunch write down the action you took. The group will discuss these actions after lunch.

Act of service:

Exercise three: Random acts of kindness. Instructions: The group will be allowed to go outside the seminar room for about thirty minutes to provide some form of random act of kindness. It should be an action that is welcomed by the recipient. Do not wash someone’s car without their permission. It could be an action that goes unnoticed. It should be an action that brings a smile or sense of gratitude to the recipient, but it should not be something done in order to be complemented. When completed, discuss with the group your random act of kindness.

Random act of kindness:

SESSION SIX

CELEBRATION THAT ELICITS JOY

TEXT: “Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Ps 23:6). This verse illustrates the spiritual resilience attribute of joy. It is a joy that flows from knowing that the goodness of God will always be evident when times are good and the mercy of God will always be available when times are bad.

The Spiritual Discipline that helps build this attribute is celebration. In this session, three exercises will be introduced in order to practice this Spiritual Discipline. These exercises will help build resilience for overcoming hopelessness, a foreshortened sense of the future, loss of interest in important activities, and suicidal thoughts.

Exercise one: Reasons to celebrate. Instructions: This exercise will involve the completion of three inventories of reasons to celebrate. Write your responses below.

Four reasons to celebrate the goodness of God:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Four reasons to celebrate the mercy of God:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Four reasons to celebrate belonging: (in your home, in your family, with your friends, with God)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Exercise two: Sharing celebrations with the group. Instructions: As a group, share any or all of your celebrations with the whole group. As participants share, celebrate with them by shouting words of encouragement or clapping your hands.

Exercise three: Celebrate for your experience in the seminar. Instructions: Complete the post-seminar assessment by evaluating the progress you have made in reducing combat and operational stress symptoms, increasing your knowledge and experience of resilience attributes, and increasing your knowledge and experience of Spiritual Disciplines. After completing the post-seminar assessment, as a group, share with the other participants your experiences of growth, insight or experience. As participants share, celebrate with them by shouting words of encouragement or clapping your hands.

My successes in this seminar:

APPENDIX D

SEMINAR EVALUATION

1. During this seminar I have been able to recognize and understand the six spiritual resilience attributes of contentment, peace, restoration, security, grace, and joy.

(Please circle the number from one to ten that best describes your experience)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly	-----			Agree	-----			Strongly	
Disagree								Agree	

2. During this seminar I have been able to understand and apply the six spiritual disciplines of Scripture study, meditation, confession, prayer, service, and celebration.

(Please circle the number from one to ten that best describes your experience)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly	-----			Agree	-----			Strongly	
Disagree								Agree	

3. During this seminar I have experienced a measurable increase in spiritual resilience. I have developed spiritual resilience attributes that have built my endurance, faith, and hope.

(Please circle the number from one to ten that best describes your experience)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly	-----			Agree	-----			Strongly	
Disagree								Agree	

4. During this seminar I have developed greater skill in the practice of the spiritual disciplines of Scripture study, meditation, confession, prayer, service, and celebration.

(Please circle the number from one to ten that best describes your experience)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly	-----			Agree	-----			Strongly	
Disagree								Agree	

5. During this seminar I have experienced a measurable reduction in combat stress symptoms. I feel less isolated, less anxious, less guilt or shame, less fear, grief, and worry, less anger, unforgiveness, and hopelessness.

(Please circle the number from one to ten that best describes your experience)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly	-----			Agree	-----			Strongly	
Disagree								Agree	

6. How could the seminar be improved?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aland, Kurt, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce Metzger, and Allen Wikgren, eds. *The Greek New Testament*. 3rd ed. Federal Republic of Germany: United Bible Societies, 1983.
- Ammerman, Nanny T., Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney. *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.
- Aspin, Les. "Direct Combat Definition and Assignment Rule." Secretary of Defense letter dated January 13, 1994. <http://cmrlink.org/CMRNotes/LesAspin%20DGC%20DefAssign%20Rule%20011394.pdf> (accessed March 12, 2010).
- Bachay, Judith B., and Pamela A. Cingel. "Restructuring Resilience: Emerging Voices." *Affilia* 14, no. 2 (1999): 162-175.
- Baker, Don. *The Way of the Shepherd*. Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1987.
- Barclay, William. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Vol. 1 of *The Daily Study Bible Series*. Rev. ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975.
- _____. *New Testament Words*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964.
- Bauer, Walter, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.
- Bogan, Jesse. "America's Biggest Megachurches." *Forbes* (June 26, 2009). <http://www.forbes.com/2009/06/26/americas-biggest-megachurches-business-megachurches.html> (accessed March 25, 2010).
- Bonura, Dean. "Combat Trauma, Resilience and Spirituality." *The Army Chaplaincy* 16, (Summer-Fall 2009): 74-81.
- Briggs, Charles A., and Emilie G. Briggs. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*. 2 vols. In *The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments*. Edited by Samuel R. Driver, Alfred Plummer, and Charles A. Briggs. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1907.
- Brinsfield, John W., and Peter Baktis. "The Human, Spiritual and Ethical Dimensions of Leadership in Preparation for Combat." *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 18-40.

- Brooks, Robert, and Sam Goldstein. *The Power of Resilience: Achieving Balance, Confidence, and Personal Strength in Your Life*. New York: McGraw Hill, 2004.
- Brown, Colin, ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978.
- Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1979.
- Broyles, Craig C. *Psalms*. Vol. 11 of *New International Biblical Commentary: Old Testament Series*. Edited by Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., and Robert K. Johnston. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999.
- Bruce, Alexander B. *The Expositor's Greek Testament*. Vol. 1. Reprint. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1990.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *The Message of the Psalms*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1984.
- Cadence International. "About Cadence." Cadence International. <http://www.cadence.org/about> (accessed March 25, 2010).
- Cantrell, Bridget C. *Once a Warrior: Wired for Life*. Bellingham, WA: Hearts Toward Home International, 2007.
- Chaplains Commission. "The Southern Baptist Endorsement Manual for Chaplains and Counselors in Ministry," Southern Baptist Convention, North American Mission Board. http://www.namb.net/evangelism/cev/endorse_manual.asp/ (accessed December 16, 2010).
- Craigie, Peter C. *Psalms 1-50*. Vol. 19 of *Word Biblical Commentary*. Edited by David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker, and John D. W. Watts. Waco: Word Books, 1983.
- Defense Department Manpower Data Center. "Raw Data: Religious Preference in the Military." *Anderson Cooper 360* at CNN.com. <http://ac360.blogs.cnn.com/2009/11/12/raw-data-religious-preference-in-the-military/> (accessed March 16, 2010).
- Denton, R.T., and Michael W. Martin. "Defining Forgiveness: An empirical definition of process and role." *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 26, no. 2 (1998): 281-292.
- DePalo, Ralph. "The Role of Hope and Spirituality on the Road to Recovery: Traumatic Brain Injury Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Series: Part Five (United States Military Section)." *The Exceptional Parent* 39, no. 2 (Feb 2009): 74-78.

- Department of Defense. "Armed Forces Chaplain Board." Personnel and Readiness. <http://prhome.defense.gov/MPP/CHAPLAINS%20BOARD/ENDORSEMENTS.ASPX> (accessed December 14, 2010).
- Department of the Navy. "Chaplain Advisement and Liaison," *Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.10*. Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, January 2009.
- _____. "Religious Ministry in the U.S. Navy." *Navy Warfare Publication 1-05*. Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, August 2003.
- _____. "Religious Ministry within the Department of the Navy." *Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.7D*. Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, August 2008.
- Dossey, D. *Healing Words: The Power of Prayer and the Practice of Medicine*. New York: Harper, 1993.
- Drescher, Kent D. "Suggestions for Including Spirituality in Coping with Stress and Trauma." National Center for PTSD. <http://uwf.edu/cap/HCWMS/materials/Drescher%20-%20Suggestions%20for%20Including%20Spirituality%20in%20Coping%20with%20Stress%20and%20Trauma.pdf> (accessed April 11, 2011).
- Drescher, Kent D., Mark W. Smith, and David W. Foy. "Spirituality and Readjustment Following War-Zone Experiences." In *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*. Edited by Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash, 295-310. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Dugal, Mike. "Spiritual Resiliency and the Senior Chaplain's Role." *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 8-12.
- Dysinger, Luke. "Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of *Lectio Divina*." In "Spirituality and Discipleship in a Postmodern World." Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, 16-27 June 2008.
- Edward, Karen-Leigh. "Resilience: a Protector from Depression." *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association* 11, no. 4 (2005): 241.
- Eliot, Charles W. ed. *Constitution of the United States*. In *American Historical Documents 1000-1904*. In *The Harvard Classics*. Danbury, CT: Grolier Enterprises, 1988.
- Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985.
- Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1982.

- Figley, Charles R., and William P. Nash, eds. *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research and Management*. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Foa, Edna B., Terence M. Keane, Matthew J. Friedman, and Judith A. Cohen, eds. *Effective Treatments for PTSD*. New York: Guilford Press, 2009.
- Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. New York: HarperCollins, 1978.
- Gallup, G., Jr., and D. M. Lindsey. *Surveying the Religious Landscape: Trends in U.S. Beliefs*. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1999.
- Graybeal, Lynda L., and Julia L. Roller. *Connecting with God: A Spiritual Formation Guide*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2006.
- _____. *Learning from Jesus: A Spiritual Formation Guide*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2006.
- Grossman, Dave. *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. New York: Back Bay Books, 1995.
- Hagee, M.W. "Combat/Operational Stress Control (COSC) Program." *White Letter* 08-05 (December 19, 2005).
- Hammett, John S. *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches: A Contemporary Ecclesiology*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2005.
- Harris, R. Laird, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. 2 vols. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980.
- The HealthCare Chaplaincy Pastoral Care, Education and Research Center. *Combat Operational Stress and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Recommended Pastoral Care Best Practices*. New York: Healthcare Chaplaincy, 2008.
- Heffern, Rich. "Make a difference in the world by being resilient." In *National Catholic Reporter* 46, no. 4 (December 11, 2009): 14.
- Higgins, G. *Resilient Adults: Overcoming a Cruel Past*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994.
- Hodgson, Peter C., and Robert H. King, eds. *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.

- Hoge, Charles, Stephen Messer, and Carl Castro. "Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan and Mental Health Problems and Barriers to Care." *New England Journal of Medicine* 351:17 (2004): 1798-1800.
- Holmes, T., and R. Rahe. "The Social Readjustment and Rating Scale." *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 11 (1967): 213-218.
- Hughes, R. Kent. *Disciplines of a Godly Man*. Rev. ed. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001.
- Hutcheson, Richard G., Jr. *The Churches and the Chaplaincy*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975.
- Karkkainen, Veli-Matti. *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.
- Keller, Phillip. *A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1970.
- King, Daniel W., Dawne S. Vogt, and Lynda A. King. "Risk and Resilience Factors in the Etiology of Chronic Posttraumatic Stress Disorder." In *Early Intervention for Trauma and Traumatic Loss*. Edited by Brett T. Litz, 34-64. New York: Guilford Press, 2004.
- Knight, George A. F. *Psalms*. 2 vols. In *The Daily Study Bible Series*. Edited by John C. L. Gibson. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982.
- Koenig, H., M. E. McCullough, and D. Larson. *Handbook of Religion and Health*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Krulak, Victor H. *First to Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1984.
- Litz, Brett T. "Research on the Impact of Military Trauma: Current Status and Future Directions." *Military Psychology* 19, issue 3 (2007): 217-238.
- Litz, Brett T., ed. *Early Intervention for Trauma and Traumatic Loss*. New York: Guilford Press, 2004.
- Litz, Brett, David Foy, Patricia Watson, and Kent Drescher. "Red Flag Spiritual Issues for PTSD Care." In "Combat Operational Stress Control for Caregivers: Understanding and Addressing Combat Stress." Professional Development Course, San Diego, California, 12-14 May 2008. <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/cosc/conference/documents/Presentations/Thursday%2014%20Aug/Malana%20-%20PDTC%20COSC%20Conf.pdf> (accessed March 24, 2011).

- Litz, Brett, David Foy, Patricia Watson, and Kent Drescher. "Resilience." In "Combat Operational Stress Control for Caregivers: Understanding and Addressing Combat Stress." Professional Development Training Course, San Diego, 12-14 May 2008. [http://www.usmc-mccs.org/cosc/conference/documents/Presentations/Thursday%2014%20Aug/Malana %20-%20PDTC%20COSC%20Conf.pdf](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/cosc/conference/documents/Presentations/Thursday%2014%20Aug/Malana%20-%20PDTC%20COSC%20Conf.pdf) (accessed March 24, 2011).
- Litz, Brett T., M. J. Gray, R. A. Bryant, and A. B. Adler. "Early Intervention for Trauma: Current Status and Future Directions." *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice* 9 (2002): 112-134.
- Lutz, Steve. "The 5 Big Issues in Campus Ministry Today: #3 Ecclesiology." *The Sentinel* (July 15, 2009). <http://stevolutz.wordpress.com/2009/07/15/the-5-big-issues-in-campus-ministry-today-3-ecclesiology/> (accessed March 24, 2010).
- Malsakis, Aphrodite. *Back from the Front*. Baltimore: Sidran Institute Press, 2007.
- _____. *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*. Oakland: New Harbinger, 1994.
- Marine Corps Community Services. "Marine Operational Stress Training (MOST) Briefs." Warrior Transition Brief for Marines. http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/Warrior%20Transition%20Redeployment%2029May08.ppt#1045,19, Recognizing Stress Problems (accessed March 17, 2010).
- Marine Corps Personal and Family Readiness Division. *The Marine Corps "A Young and Vigorous Force."* U.S. Marine Corps Demographics Update (December 2008). http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/USMC_Demographics_Report_Dec2008.pdf (accessed March 1, 2010).
- Millett, Allen R. *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps*. New York: McMillan Publishing, 1980.
- Milne, P. "Psalm 23: Echoes of the Exodus." *Studies in Religion* 4 (1974/75): 237-247.
- Moore, Bret A., and Greg M. Reger. "Historical and Contemporary Perspectives of Combat Stress and the Army Combat Stress Control Team." In *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*. Edited by Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash, 161-182. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Moore, Russell D. "Where Have all The Presbyterians Gone?" *The Wall Street Journal* (February 4, 2011). <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703437304576120690548462776.html> (accessed April 5, 2011).
- Morgenstern, J. "Psalm 23." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 65 (1946): 13-24.

Moskin, J. Robert. *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*. 2nd Rev. ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 1987.

Muhammad, Abdul-Rasheed. "Taqwah and Sabr: The Foundations of Spiritual Resilience in Islam." *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 55-60.

Nash, William P. "Combat/Operational Stress Adaptations and Injuries." In "Combat Operational Stress Control for Caregivers: Understanding and Addressing Combat Stress." Professional Development Training Course, San Diego, California, 12-14 May 2008.

_____. "Combat/Operational Stress Adaptations and Injuries." in *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*. Edited by Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash, 33-64. New York: Routledge, 2007.

_____. "Combat Stress Injuries: Theory and Psychobiology." In "Combat Operational Stress Control for Caregivers: Understanding and Addressing Combat Stress." Professional Development Training Course, San Diego, 12-14 May 2008. <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/cosc/conference/documents/Presentations/Thursday%2014%20Aug/Malana%20-%20PDTC%20COSC%20Conf.pdf> (accessed March 24, 2011).

_____. "The Stressors of War." In *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*. Edited by Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash, 11-32. New York: Routledge, 2007.

The Navigators. "Our Beliefs." http://www.navigators.org/us/aboutus/items/mission_visionvalues/items/Our%20Beliefs (accessed March 25, 2010).

Navy League of the United States. "'Seapower' Grades Corps' Status for 2009." *Quantico Sentry* (Jan 9, 2009). <http://www.quantico.usmc.mil/Sentry/StoryView.aspx?SID=2380> (accessed September 17, 2010).

Newbigin, Leslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.

O'Donnell, Gabriel. "Reading for Holiness: *Lectio Divina*." In *Spiritual Traditions for the Contemporary Church*. Edited by Robin Maas and Gabriel O'Donnell. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990.

Paget, Naomi K., and Janet R. McCormack. *The Work of the Chaplain*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2006.

Paulson, Daryl S., and Stanley Krippner. *Haunted by Combat*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Publishing, 2007.

- Peace, Richard. *Contemplative Bible Reading: Experiencing God Through Scripture*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998.
- _____. *Meditative Prayer: Entering God's Presence*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998.
- _____. "The Spiritual Discipline of Bible Reading: *Lectio Divina*." In "Spirituality and Discipleship in a Postmodern World." Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, 16-27 June, 2008.
- Pew Forum. "Pew Forum Religion and Public Life/U.S. Religions Landscape Survey." Pew Forum.org. <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-key-findings.pdf> (accessed March 16, 2010).
- Pfeiffer, Charles F., Howard F. Vos, and John Rea, eds. *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*. 2 vols. Chicago: Moody Press, 1975.
- Phillips, Robert. "The Military Chaplain as Ethical Advisor in Combat: Pastoral Considerations." In "Character Development, Ethical Advisement, and Today's Sea Warrior." Professional Development Training Course, Okinawa, Japan, 14 March 2006.
- Powell, David W., and Tom Joyce. *My Tour in Hell*. Ann Arbor, MI: Modern History Press, 2007.
- Robertson, A. T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Vol. 1. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1930.
- Shay, Jonathan. *Achilles in Vietnam*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.
- Sippola, John, Amy Blumenshine, Donald Tubesing, and Valerie Yancie. *Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal*. Duluth, MN: Whole Person Associates, 2009.
- Soussan, Henry C. "A Jewish Perspective on Spiritual Resilience." *The Army Chaplaincy* 16 (Summer-Fall 2009): 69-73.
- Spurgeon, C. H. *The Treasury of David*. Vol. 1. Mclean, VA: Macdonald Publishing, n.d.
- Strong, James A. *Concise Dictionary of the Words in The Hebrew Bible in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984.
- Thibodeaux, Mark E. *Armchair Mystic: Easing Into Contemplative Prayer*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2001.
- Tick, Edward. *War and the Soul*. Wheaton: Quest Books, 2005.

- Titus, Craig Steven. *Resilience and the Virtue of Fortitude*. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2006.
- Tuttle, Robert G. *The Winds of Hope for a World Out of Breath: A Study of the 23rd Psalm*. Lima, OH: C.S.S. Publishing, 1993.
- Unger, Merrill F. *Unger's Bible Dictionary*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1957.
- U.S. Census Bureau. "Population Estimates." U.S. Census Bureau. <http://www.census.gov/popest/archives/files/MRSF-01-US1.html> (accessed March 12, 2010).
- U.S. Marine Corps. "Combat and Operational Stress Control." *Marine Corps Reference Publication 6-11C*. Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, December 2010.
- _____. "Command Religious Programs in the Marine Corps." *Marine Corps Order 1730.6D*. Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, September 1997.
- _____. "Customs and Traditions." Marine Corps History Division. http://www.tecom.usmc.mil/HD/Customes_Traditions/Marine%20Corps_Motto.htm (accessed March 11, 2010).
- _____. "Leading Marines." *Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 6-11*. Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, November 2002.
- _____. "Organization of the Marine Corps Forces." *Marine Corps Reference Publication 5-12D*. Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, October 1998.
- _____. "Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps." *Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 6-12*. Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, September 2009.
- _____. *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2009*. Washington, DC: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, 2009.
- U.S. Marine Corps Manpower and Reserve Affairs. "USMC Combat Operational Stress Continuum and Decision Matrix." Manpower and Reserve Affairs. https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page/portal/M_RA_HOME/MR/COSC%20Home/Stress%20Continuum%20and%20Decision%20Matrix (accessed December 14, 2010).

- U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting. "Marines: the Few, the Proud." Official website. http://www.marines.com/main/index/making_marines/culture/traditions/first_to_fight (accessed March 1, 2010).
- U.S. Navy. "Religious Ministry in the Navy." *OPNAVINST 1730.1D*. Washington Naval Yard, DC: Department of the Navy, May 2003.
- Viscott, David. *Emotional Resilience*. New York: Harmony Books, 1996.
- Vogt, E. "The 'Place of Life' of Ps. 23." *Biblica* 34 (1953): 195-211.
- Walsh, Froma. *Strengthening Family Resilience*. 2nd ed. New York: Guilford Press, 2006.
- Watson, David. *Fear No Evil: A Personal Struggle with Cancer*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984.
- Watson, Patricia, Brett Litz, Steven Southwick, and Elspeth Ritchie. *Theoretical Models of Stress, Trauma, and Resilience*. Virginia: Borden Institute, 2008. In "Combat Operational Stress Control: The Family Dynamic." Professional Development Training Course, San Diego, California, 8-10 April 2009.
- Weaver, A. J., H.G. Koenig, and F. M. Ochberg. "Posttraumatic Stress, Mental Health Professionals, and the Clergy: A Need for Collaboration, Training and Research." *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 9, no. 4 (1996): 847-856.
- Weaver, A. J., J. A. Samford, A. E. Kline, L. A. Lucas, D. B. Larson, and H. G. Koenig. "What do Psychologists Know About Working With the Clergy? An Analysis of Eight APA Journals: 1991-1994." *Professional Psychology – Research and Practice* 28, no. 5 (October 1997): 471-474.
- Weiser, Artur. *The Psalms: A Commentary*. In *The Old Testament Library*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962.
- Willard, Dallas. *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. New York: HarperCollins, 1988.
- Witvliet, C. V., K. A. Phillips, M. E. Feldman, and J. C. Beckman. "Posttraumatic mental and physical health correlates of forgiveness and religious coping in military veterans." *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 17, no. 3 (2004): 269-273.
- Zodhiates, Spiros., ed. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1992.