

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

**"Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church:
A Study of the Divorce Rate"**

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Rawlings School of Divinity

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

by

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LIBERTY UNIVERSITY RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

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ABSTRACT

Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate

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The purpose of this project is to bring healing and direction to a particular area of the Christian church that is destroying marriages and greatly emotionally damaging children and families. This specific research will look at both the divorce rate in the secular community and the divorce rate in the Christian church, thus comparing and contrasting the two. While at the same time, showing how unhealthy leadership in the Christian church continues this damage. Furthermore, this research will also illustrate which gender is most likely filing for the divorces here in the 21st century and answer the questions why, where, and how? At the same token, this thesis project will analyze the effects Christian divorces have on the children involved from a spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional perspective.

In addition, to answering the questions why, where, and how? This thesis project will impact the Christian church at-large in a way that will encourage Christian churches to look at qualified authentic pastoral leadership that will actually deal with the divorce rate in their churches, as opposed to simply facilitating outcome-driven preachers who only care about the numeric size of the church instead of caring about actually saving biblical marriages and traditional families.

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This thesis project is dedicated first and foremost to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
forever.

It was through His will that I was able to write this thesis project.

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Abbreviations

- (ATS) Association of Theological Schools
- (BCPPC) Board of Christian Professional & Pastoral Counselors
- (CEO) Chief Executive Officer
- (CPU) Central Processing Unit
- (DPC) Divorce Preventative Care
- (GAD) Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- (KJV) King James Version
- (MCA) Ministry Change Agent
- (MIA) Missing in Action
- (MPC) Medical Preventative Care
- (NAMI) National Alliance on Mental Illness
- (NKJV) New King James Version
- (OCD) Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
- (PCA) Proficient Change Agent
- (QCCC) Qualified Christian Church Counseling

Chapter 1

Introduction

James 3:1 states, "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."¹

Here in the 21st century, as has been in centuries previous, the state of traditional marriage between a man and a woman is in grave disarray, dysfunction, and bringing destruction to the family unit. There are so many things going wrong in the essence of God's holy covenant of marriage in general that the majority of marriages in the secular world and the Christian church simply are not working the way God created them to. Therefore the majority of the marriages are ending up in divorce court. The marital divorces at that time were due by and large to the disobedience and rebellion towards God's Word. Here in the 21st century, many marital divorces are caused by some Christian church leadership, including those on pastoral staff, those leading small group marriage ministries, and various unqualified marital and family counseling ministries.

In the book of Genesis, God's lawgiver Moses spoke about marriage between a man and a woman; in the book of Proverbs, King David's son Solomon spoke about marriage between a man and a woman, in the book of Jeremiah, he as a priest spoke about marriage between a man and a woman, and in the book of Malachi, this messenger of God spoke about marriage between a man and a woman.

Now, looking at the New Testament, in the books of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus Christ Himself spoke about marriage between a man and a woman, in the letters of 1 and 2

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New King James Version (NKJV) Bible, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 1982).

Corinthians, the holiest of the holy apostles commissioned by Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul spoke about marriage between a man and a woman, as he also did in the book of Romans.

Additionally, in Galatians and Ephesians, the apostle Paul spoke about marriage between a man and a woman, whereas in Hebrews, the unknown author spoke about marriage between a man and a woman as well. Last but not least, in the book of Revelation, John spoke about marriage between Jesus Christ and His bride (the Christian church).

With that being said, there is so much emphasis on marriage between a man and a woman in the Bible that any disobedience and rebellion to destroy God's holy marital covenant brings forth His hatred, wrath, and judgment. So, where do the traditional spouses consisting of a man and a woman in these marriages turn to? Some may try and handle the issues (i.e., adultery, anger, lying, selfishness, breach of fiduciary duty, etc.) on their own through internal will power, some may seek out a licensed clinical psychologist or a licensed marriage and family therapist, some may even seek out a trusted family member or personal mentor of some sort, and some spouses may seek out a Christian pastor

When the researcher looks for a particular ritual that is clear, predictable, and central to the church's marital culture, in general, what is found is a "sweep it under the carpet" mentality when it comes to tough marital, separation, and divorce questions, or circumstances. The "not wanting to rock the boat" mentality and attitude is extremely unhealthy for the church, and the reality is that "secrets breed sin." Luke 8:17 states, "For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light."

Conversely, when the researcher thinks of any symbols that best describe who the regular and rebellious members are, the physical appearance of the cross is where the focus is. The cross is a symbol that describes this group. Another symbol that has become prominent is the social

media communications amongst one another, regardless of which social media platform is being used at any given time. The people who carry meanings within this group are family members and disloyal friends (frenemies) who are familiar or not with each other's marital situations that link them to the ideals of the group. Interestingly, some of the ideals of the group concerning the biblical facilitation of marriage, separation, and/or divorce is also what is in question. The question is created by the unbiblical facilitation and the improper interpretation of God's word to pander false ideas concerning marriage in this church marriage ministry/group.

The routine practices of this church ministry/group include gathering together in the church marriage ministry during its scheduled times, communicating via social media, meeting at the ministry leader's house from time to time, or attending events or functions out somewhere in the public marketplace.

In this particular context, the beliefs and ideas that best describe what this group thinks a practicing member ought to be like include all, in a nutshell, a "false interpretation" of biblical authority when it comes to the accountability and sincere facilitation of marital responsibility between a man and a woman.

Many members of the group believe that "false teaching" is okay simply because the senior pastor says it is. So, any new member that enters the group should think the same way or risk being secretly ostracized, which then become public irony via social media by certain members of the marriage group. The members of this particular marriage group are a part of the church congregation and the church's social media platform.

Ministry Context

Geographical

The geographical area of this group is located in Irvine, CA, in Orange County, and they communicate through the online social media platform called Facebook. For the most part, this ministry context is centered around this particular marriage ministry, where many of the participants communicate via online posts concerning this ministry. This is the biggest reason why the researcher formulated a marriage questionnaire and made it available through social media for anyone in this marriage ministry and anyone outside of this ministry to fill out, instead of doing individual live interviews.

Historical

The historical information of this particular marriage ministry dates back about 9-years or so. It was started by unhealthy leadership on church staff, who placed unhealthy volunteer leadership over the ministry as leaders. During the 9-years, regardless of what these unhealthy leaders did for marriage events, church services, book readings, and social gatherings, this church ministry has seen many divorces. Many spouses were filing for divorce.

At the same token, there was a lot of "greasy grace" rendered out by these unhealthy leaders for "adultery." In fact, the adultery was celebrated by these particular leaders by supporting the adulterers and helping them enter into other adulterous marriages. The unhealthiness amongst church leadership got so bad that the lead pastor on staff married a woman who committed adultery on her husband, to then file an unbiblical divorce without any authentic repentance or confession to God or her first husband, and married her to another man who was also an adulterer and divorced.

In this scenario, this marriage ministry created "serial" adulterers and helped bring

apostasy into the church. As a matter of fact, adultery is an abomination to God. So, as a historical backdrop, this particular marriage ministry was operating in abomination under the ire of the Almighty Father God in heaven (1 Corinthians 6:9).

Demographical

The demographical data says that this marriage ministry is multi-racial, consisting of Caucasians, Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and others. Furthermore, the marital status of the members was mixed, some were previously married, and some are currently married, and there are those who were still unmarried in dating relationships. At the same token, there were even single people who attended this ministry from time to time.

Relationship to this Marriage Ministry Group

The researcher is a former member of this marriage ministry group who was very involved in it and personally witnessed the unhealthy leadership throughout the years. With that being said, for the most part, the researcher personally knows many of its previous members.

Current Activities

Communication with various members of this group takes place on the Facebook social media platform. As such, Facebook is the main social media platform anyone can take the "Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate," marriage questionnaire by anonymously answering the 54-questions.

Statement of the Problem

This thesis project will accomplish one major thing, amongst a couple of smaller things, by default. It will bring awareness and a solution(s) to the Christian church's marriage and divorce ministry that will also shed light on one of the main areas that are destroying many marriages in the Christian church and causing much emotional damage to the children and

families. The main issue that is destroying marriages in the Christian church is the poor leadership, consisting of unqualified pastors, unhealthy church leadership, and the "sinful character" of many men and some of their gossiping troublemaking wives.

Unfortunately, these sinful men can con their way into various Christian church communities by exploiting vulnerable areas that are below the "caution" radar. Their destructive ulterior motives are revealed once they are hired on a church staff or placed as leaders over certain small group ministries where people with troubled marriages are plentiful with nowhere else to go for real practical help.

Not to mention, the ineffective men who are placed on church staff through politics and the buddy-buddy system, and who have no theological (seminary) training or extensive real-life authentic experience dealing with troubled marriages heading for separation or divorce. Preferentially, this thesis project will also look at the rising divorce rate in the Christian church in general, and who the responsible parties are, as the researcher and the church body (the saints) moves through the 21st century.

Example 1

Pastors who offer greasy grace or "cheap grace" during any marital counseling are a serious sign of unhealthiness in the Christian church. So, what is "cheap grace?" Greasy Grace Theology equals greasy grace preachers offering "cheap grace." Meanwhile, former German preacher and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer stated that "Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without repentance, is baptism without church discipline, is communion without confession of sins, is absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without the living, and incarnate Jesus Christ." Furthermore, Dr. John Snyder chimes in and says that, "Cheap grace is preaching of forgiveness

without repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession of sins, and absolution without personal confession."²

Example 2

Pastors and their wives who meddle in marital affairs of members in the church that they should not be involved in because they are themselves improperly emotionally invested. This caused them to take sides and relinquish any neutral objectivity in order to impart God's biblical Scripture accordingly. They are a part of the unhealthy leadership in the Christian church. Ironically, when a married couple is going up the rough side of the mountain and through the valley of dry bones and undergoing an unbiblical separation while being pursued by a rebellious adulterous wife. The church's senior pastor's wife plants a seed (through a spoken word) of divorce into the inquiring mind of the man's wife, this in essence, to a great degree, is pastoral malpractice indirectly through the senior pastor's wife. An example of this would be in Matthew 14:4-11, where God's Word talks about King Herod's brother Philip's wife Herodias planting a seed into her daughter's mind to ask the king during his celebration for the head of John "the Baptist" on a platter. Make no mistake about it; divorce is a real spiritual, mental, and emotional death.

Example 3

There are unhealthy leaders in the Christian church who are not really born again and saved by Jesus Christ but yet are walking around the church and pretending to be spiritual and perpetrating religious fraud. "You will know them by their fruits." (Matthew 7:16) However, no leader exposes them, and the members of the church are no wiser; no one heeds the warning, "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition

² Snyder, John. "*Cheap Grace, Cheap Forgiveness in the Church.*" Theology Mix, accessed January 20, 2019, <https://theologymix.com/healthy-leaders-healthy-churches/cheap-grace-cheap-forgiveness/>.

of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ." (Colossians 2:8)

Example 4

Pastors who invite their heretical and adulterous friends as guest speakers in the pulpit or do musical worship, thereby deliberately ushering in the grave sin of adultery right into the congregation, adding to the unhealthiness of the Christian church. This gives Satan, the devil, the enemy, and the evil spirit of divorce, a spiritual foothold right there in the church sanctuary, enlarging his territory.

Example 5

Pastors who perform unbiblical marriages creating serial adulterers in the church, while at the same time knowing it is wrong to open up God's house to the abomination of apostasy from unhealthy leaders who have no internal fear of God. It is like these unhealthy pastors are provoking, challenging, and daring God to render His consequences as a present judgment, which could be life-altering.

Example 6

So-called Pastors and some volunteer leaders who are false teachers are simply giving the wrong marital counseling advice, leading the sheep astray, and are simply unqualified to do any marital counseling whatsoever. The shepherdless do not hear Colossians 2:8, which states, "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

Interestingly, a married couple had gone into this particular church for marital counseling and a veteran volunteer counseling leader introduced himself and said, "You sure did draw the short end of the stick when you got me."

Now, whether this guy was joking or even if he was serious about himself, why would he even say something like that to inadvertently create a lack of confidence in his marital counseling abilities to this particular couple? This was a sure sign that this marital counseling was going to be ineffective and a waste of everybody's time.

Example 7

Egalitarian pastors, who believe in equal ministry opportunities for women and men, and who pander evangelical feminism, make it easy for women to file unbiblical divorces (on the grounds of irreconcilable differences) against the will of God for His holy marital covenant, thus destroying marriages, families, emotionally damaging children, and adding to the divorce rate in the church. They are ignorant of this critical issue. Meanwhile, evangelical feminism has entered into many evangelical churches saying that men and women have equal access to the office of pastoring and preaching on stage in the pulpit. It is a very slippery slope. Could traditional secular feminism be disguising itself as evangelical feminism and trying to infiltrate the Christian church through the evil spirit of divorce & legal murder? (i.e. irreconcilable differences & abortion)

Example 8

Pastors who lie and change the Word of God to make it mean what they want it to mean instead of what God says it means in order to manipulate unsuspecting marital spouses, which then causes unbiblical separations or unnecessary marital strife that will eventually lead to unbiblical divorces. For example, when a senior pastor says to those caught in a marital sin, "Jesus never got mad at anybody who committed abominable sins like adultery, lying, and stealing. God is a happy God." These types of pastors are called "greasy grace preachers."

The Lack of Healthy Qualified Christian Church Counseling

1 Corinthians 12:4:12 it begins with, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit." Then the holy Bible continues with a list of those spiritual gifts, which is the gift of administration, the gift of operations, the gift of being able to discern good and evil, the gift of wisdom, the gift of knowledge, the gift of faith, the gift of healing, the gift of prophecy, the gift of speaking in many different tongues, and the gift of interpretation of tongues. Furthermore, in 1 Corinthians 12:28 it states, "And God has appointed these in the church; first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues."

Last but not least, 1 Corinthians 12:31 states, "But earnestly desire the best gifts, And yet I show you a more excellent way." (*NKJV*) The *NIV* states it this way, "But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way."

Qualified Christian Church Counseling (QCCC)

Contrarily, before the researcher gets further into what saith the Lord, he wants to touch on the importance of an academic education. However, before he does, let him just add that according to biblical scholars, Jesus was an educated man. He could read, write, and speak in various languages like Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. Jesus did not just do carpentry and woodwork. He was more like an independent contracting architectural engineer.

So with that being said, it is obvious that Jesus Christ was a scholar Himself and the holiest Scriptural teacher. Obviously, Jesus is the Son of God, so He knows everything. In the meantime, the researcher believes that the majority of practical, rational, and logical thinkers, both Christian and non-Christian, no matter where they come from, will agree that getting a college education is extremely important for "All" intents and purposes. So let the researcher

just state why getting a college education is so important without the obvious economic, connection networking, and opportunistic benefits that are attached.

According to Katharin Hansen in her article entitled, "What Good is a College Education Anyway? The Value of a College Education," she states her five ways that the college experience will make someone a better person: "college will likely make you more prosperous. It will give you a better quality of life. It will give you the power to change the world. It will be something you can pass on to your children, and that it makes you a major contributor to the greatest nation on earth." Furthermore, the researcher had to add this part as well because he thinks it is also important. Hansen says that:

Research shows that children of college-educated parents are healthier, perform better academically, and are more likely to attend college themselves, than children of those with lower educational attainment. Your education builds a foundation for your children -- for our nation's children, and for the children of our global community -- which leads to the last point. Education is the cornerstone of public progress.³

Now, according to Dr. Steve Tietjen, when a student is trained in a college or university, there are fundamental benefits that are achieved. In his article called, "Why Pursue a College or University Degree?" he states, "Students have the opportunity to read books and to listen to the lectures of top experts in their fields. This stimulation causes students to think, ask questions, and explore new ideas, which allows for additional growth and development."⁴

Last but not least, according to Matthew Stanford, a Neuroscientist, he weighed in with the "Ten Ways to Keep Your Brain Healthy in College." Stanford is currently the Professor of

³ Katharin Hansen, "What Good is a College Education Anyway? The Value of a College Education." Live Career Website, accessed on August 18, 2019, <https://www.livecareer.com/resources/careers/planning/college-education-value>.

⁴ Tietjen, Steve. "Why Pursue a College or University Degree?" Merced County CA Office of Education, accessed on August 18, 2019, <https://www.mcoe.org/deptprog/edservices/CandC/calsoap/Pages/Student-Information.aspx>.

Psychology, Neuroscience, and Biomedical Studies at Baylor University, where he also serves as the Director of the Doctoral Program in Psychology. In this article, he states:

Reading is a highly complex cognitive task that simultaneously engages a significant number of neural systems throughout the brain. Much like an athlete that works his or her muscles through physical exercise, the brain is strengthened by the "mental" exercises of reading. Individuals who read often have superior memories, vocabularies, comprehension skills, and attention. Good readers are also better writers.⁵

Diversely, when pastors, Bible teachers, and pastoral counselors look at the Christian church, they have to look at the mental health of its congregations. The divorce rate in this country is well over 51%, and more than half of the 51% getting a divorce consider themselves "Christian" in some way, shape, or form. Many of those couples turn to the Christian church automatically for help in the form of church family counseling. Romans 12:2 states, "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Just as importantly, being active in the Christian church for more than 22+ years and knowing many pastors and church leaders in small to medium to large churches, and then having to turn to the Christian church himself in the past for help during various family crises, he knows all too well that the Christian church "in general" does not have "qualified Christian counselors" helping the many spiritually hurting people who turn to the church for healthy authentic help and guidance. David Brenner states it this way with regards to pastors, "87 percent reported a need for further training in pastoral counseling. Both seminary training and existing books on pastoral

⁵ Matthew Stanford, "Ten Ways to Keep Your Brain Healthy in College." Super Scholar, accessed on August 18, 2019. <https://superscholar.org/features/ten-ways-to-keep-your-brain-healthy-in-college/>

counseling leave most pastors unprepared for counseling. This lack of preparation is a major reason as to why so many pastors reported that counseling is frustrating and unfulfilling."⁶

Six-Reasons for Pastoral Failure

In the interim, there are many Christian overseers/pastors that stand in the pulpit and cast a gloomy shadow over "secular academia" in general. They preach messages about a lesser-known biblical man whose "qualifications" to be in the position he is in by God are not gleaned from the text accordingly, knowing that their congregations won't investigate the biblical story any further to gather the proper interpretation of the text.

In the same respect, these same overseers/pastors always make these particular men in the Bible seem to be lowly and ignorant in characterization, which is untrue and not interpreted properly just to try and appeal to some men who may not have a college education for one reason or another. Or better yet, they try to justify why they do not have a college education of any kind, be it secular or seminary. For some reason, as the researcher deals with this area of this thesis project, false teachers and charlatans come to his mind.

For example, there was this one preacher who has no college education of any kind. He has written no theological books. He has done nothing in the community himself personally on behalf of the Christian church. And, no one in his community's local media machine interviewed him for any reason, especially for any reason to do with the Christian church.

Ironically, this man was placed in a paid top pastoral position via a close personal in-law connection. As a matter of fact, years ago, this is one reason why the researcher wrote and preached a sermon called, "The Qualified Are Anointed, Called and Chosen." In this particular sermon, the researcher spoke about "The Twelve Qualified Apostles." In brief, he said, "When

⁶ Brenner, David. "*Strategic Pastoral Counseling: A Short-Term Structural Model.*" Grand Rapids, MI. Baker Academic. 2003, pp. 10-11.

Jesus Christ chose men for His inner circle, He chose the 12-men who had the right internal stuff to begin facilitating His gospel in excellence according to His Father's will. By the same token, as a man, Jesus Christ had a great intuition about people in general." 2 Corinthians 8:7 states, "But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—*see* that you abound in this grace also."

This one pastor in question preached his message referring to Ananias of Damascus in the New Testament book of Acts 9 called, "Being Called but Not Qualified" with a tag line that stated, "Be 'uncertain' in your qualifications but be confident in your calling." He then said, "God loves to call the 'unqualified,'" as to say that Ananias was "unqualified" to be in the position he was in to lay hands on Saul after Saul's conversion, as if Jesus Christ didn't know what He was doing when He gave Ananias Orders and said to Ananias in Acts 9:11 in part, "Arise and go." And then in Acts 9:15, He said to Ananias in part, "Go."

This is a clear example of what the researcher is talking about concerning pastors who preach watered-down false interpretations of God's Word. There is nothing in Acts 9:10-19 that illustrates that Ananias was "unqualified" to be the person to lay hands on Saul, who became Paul, the holiest of the holy Apostles. Ananias's description in Acts 9:10 simply calls Ananias, "A certain disciple." Being called "A certain disciple" does not mean Ananias was some lowly ignorant, uneducated man. Dr. Luke simply did not give Ananias a descriptive title in this particular area of Acts when he wrote the book of Acts and told Saul's story.

In fact, according to Wikipedia, the name Ananias in Hebrew is the same as Hananiah, which means, "Favoured of the Lord." In Acts 22:12, Dr. Luke describes Ananias this way, "Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt *there*." So, Ananias was a "devout man/knowledgeable about Mosaic law"

and a "faithful man." He had a "good reputation" in his community. Ananias was an intellectually sharp man, and he was highly qualified to be chosen by Jesus.

Interestingly, in Acts 8:1, Ananias was not one of the people who was scattered throughout the region of Judea during a great persecution against the church. He was one of the original 70-disciples who stayed behind in Jerusalem with the other devout men. Technically, one could even surmise that Ananias of Damascus was a New Testament chosen prophet of God, similar to an Old Testament prophet of God, because, in Acts 9:17, Ananias is explaining to Saul that Jesus Christ spiritually sent him to give him back his eyesight. So, Ananias was given special spiritual power by Jesus Christ Himself. Then, in Acts 22:14, Dr. Luke states, "The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth." Ananias had the spiritual gift of prophecy.

So, to tie all of this together, the particular unqualified pastor the researcher mentioned above who gave the message about Ananias of Damascus called, "Being Called but Not Qualified," was giving a false message without any real due diligence to the book of Acts. The fact of the matter is that Ananias was "very qualified." He was an anointed, called, and chosen vessel of God. Ananias was not just "called" by Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ could have chosen any of the other 69-disciples to do what Ananias did; instead, He chose Ananias for this critical point in New Testament history that gave us Paul the holiest of the holy Apostles. Ananias was a "devout man/knowledgeable in Mosaic Law" and a "faithful man." He had a "good reputation" in his community. Furthermore, he had the spiritual gift of prophecy. "The Qualified Are Anointed, Called, and Chosen by God." Jesus Christ knew exactly what He was doing when He called, chose, and ordered the anointed qualified man Ananias of Damascus for the job.

In the researcher's point-of-view, these are the various reasons why many Christian churches fail in the Qualified Christian Church Counseling (QCCC) area by allowing unhealthy leadership to exist. Remember, God expects excellence! In 1 Corinthians 14:12, the Apostle Paul states in part, "*Let it be* for the edification of the church that you seek to excel." And then in 2 Corinthians 8:7, Paul states, "But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—*see* that you abound in this grace also."

Reason One

Many Christian Overseers/pastors do not have a valuable collegiate academic background secularly or through an accredited Christian theological seminary for one reason or another. So they hate on those in their sermons which do have an academic background. They deliberately create sermons or borrow someone else's sermon that diminishes the hard brainwork of those God gifted men to learn in a structured academic environment at a high level.

Reason Two

Some Christian Overseers/pastors are intimidated by a broader mental perspective that goes beyond their tunnel vision. So they rebel against God's anointed/instigated/ordained change for the church and turn away authentic qualified church help who just may apply for the position. Therefore, bringing God's rebuke against their church. Acts 13:51 states, "But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and came to Iconium."

Then in Matthew 10:14-15, the Holy Bible states, "And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city."

Reason Three

Many Christian Overseers/pastors simply turned to the church as an easy way to make money, a salary, when they were never really anointed, "spiritually gifted," called, or chosen by God to preach and counsel hurting people. To begin with, "It's like the monkey see monkey do syndrome." They say, "Oh! That guy up the street and around the corner did it and made some money, so I might as well do it too."

Reason Four

Some Christian Overseers/pastors never got over or dealt with their own personal biases, hang-ups, anger, insecurities, jealousies, and irrational point-of-views in order to be a solid instrument for healthy change in their congregations. In "diversity management psychology," it is what the researcher calls being a "Proficient Change Agent" (PCA).

Reason Five

Many Christian Overseers/pastors do not understand or acknowledge the overall health ramifications of real mental illness issues brought to them through church counseling, such as Bipolar Disorder, Manic-Depressive Disorder, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), General Anxiety Disorder (GAD), Anxiety Attack Disorder, and Multiple Personality Disorders, just to name a few.

According to an article written by Health Day entitled, "Even Today, the Stigma of Mental Illness Won't Fade," states, "Depression is talked about in the media and is considered a treatable disease. But when you reach psychosis and schizophrenia, there's still a lot of misunderstanding and fear." Then it goes onto say, "An estimated one in five people will suffer from a mental or neurological disorder at some point in their lives, according to the National

Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). However, two-thirds of people with a known mental disorder never seek treatment.”

Just as importantly, these are serious issues that need real Christian licensed expert evaluations. Unqualified, inexperienced, and unhealthy Overseers/pastors in this area do a disservice to the congregation, those sitting in the pews during regular church counseling. This is due to giving the wrong types of advice that further acerbate the marital or dysfunctional family problems helping to drive a stake into an individual’s impending divorce, separation, or the simple destruction of a family.

Reason Six

Many Christian Overseers/pastors “ignore” or avoid the truth that many unmarried and married women are abusively controlling. Many women on either side are physically, emotionally, mentally, and economically abusive towards their husband(s) as some men in the distant past have done to their wives or women that they were in a relationship with. As of the year 2019, recent statistics are almost 50/50.

These egalitarian, disobedient, and stubborn so-called Overseers/pastors who are biased towards men in favor of women need to pay attention to the 2012 Domestic Violence Statistics Organization, “Domestic violence against men and domestic violence against women happens in almost equal proportions.” And, in 2014, according to Rymes, “In domestic violence cases where there was reciprocation, over 71% of the initiators were women, and in those cases, men were more likely to be injured than women.” Furthermore, according to the Domestic Violence Statistics Organization, “There is relatively little research on domestic violence against men because no organization, including the U.S. government, is willing to fund the research.” Lastly,

according to the Domestic Violence Statistics Organization, men generally do not report domestic violence in fear of ridicule by both law enforcement and the public.”⁷

With regards to Christian church marital counseling in general, some unhealthy, unqualified, and inexperienced pastors are biased towards the men. Therefore, taking on the egalitarian perspective while at the same time allowing evangelical feministic principles to take root in their approaches, totally rendering the counseling sessions one-sided, leaving no room for neutral objectivity.

In addition, because more women attend church than men, many Overseers/pastors avoid offending women because they do not want to lose the money the women give to the church ministry in the form of tithes and offerings. In 1 Timothy 6:10, it is stated, “For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

Consequently, the Holy Bible has various stories about abusive women. And yes, this is one of the main reasons why many Christian marriages fail. In the 21st century, many women have bought into the idea of secular feminism and evangelical feminism to the point where they are destructive to their male spouses and, in many cases, self-destructive with evil spiritual blinders on. They have become, in an ungodly way, “a man’s competitor.” Interestingly, this biblical inspiration is a deep one, and the Lord has inspired the researcher to open up a dialogue about this subject to shine a much needed bright light on this area of “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate.”

With that being said, according to an article by Christian Education, it states, “As a pastor, you have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of many. By leading a

⁷ Facts. “*False Accusations and Domestic Violence.*” The Father’s Rights Movement, accessed on September 24, 2019, https://fathersrights_movement.us/facts/.

congregation in worship, you can expand the Christian family. By serving as a counselor, you can impact the direction of an individual or family, helping them to make wise choices and guiding them through the journey of life.”

It is noted that Qualified Christian Church Counseling (QCCC) also comes in the form of Christian pastoral counseling by those who are anointed with the gifts of healing, helps, and knowledge by God 1st, along with being experienced in the areas of the brain, specifically the mind (a *transformed mind*). Considering the “negative” connotation surrounding the area of psychology in general, as it applies to the Christian church, people, in general, are afraid and biased towards things they do not understand or are misinformed about.

The unqualified Overseer/pastor is performing family church counseling when there are many aspects of the brain (the mind) that he does not even understand himself. Reality states that just because someone is an Overseer/pastor, that does not mean he is qualified to be a family or marital counselor at any point in the process. The unqualified Overseer/pastor needs to put his pride aside.

God’s Spiritual Gifts

This leads the researcher back to his earlier illustration of “Gods Spiritual Gifts,” in 1 Corinthians 12:4-12 and 1 Corinthians 12:28. God gave certain people the spiritual gifts of help, healing, wisdom, and knowledge. With reference to other areas of the medical profession, the researcher sincerely believes that God truly anointed certain doctors and other medical personnel with the ability (gifts) to heal and to help the human body (God’s temple). Dr. Luke (a Gentile) was a great medical doctor who traveled with and looked after the holiest of the Holy Apostles, the Apostle Paul.

Just as importantly, when God gifted help and healing, it includes the human brain and its psyche. So the Christian church's negative attitude toward "secular psychology" in general is basically too narrow. There are certain chosen and "special" people in the Christian psychological field who are Born Again Christians that God has gifted with the ability to help people with their mental issue(s) as long as God's Holy Word is the foundational platform. And, the researcher does acknowledge that this is a controversial subject for the church in general.

The gift of wisdom refers to the mind. And the gift of knowledge refers to the mind also. The Almighty Father God even goes a step further and says in 1 Corinthians 12:31 (*KJV*), "But covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."

In this Scripture, God is referring to the most "qualified." It was in the researcher's spiritual interpretation when God gave the gift of healing to a specific medical doctor, that same gift refers to the "healing" of the brain (the mind) as well. In fact, God says via His Holy Word in Romans 12:2 (*KJV*), "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

If God gave a licensed Christian psychologist the gift of mental healing, helps, wisdom, and knowledge, wouldn't the transformation of the renewing of the mind take effect during the meeting sessions? When this is coupled with the individual's gift of faith in God 1st, wouldn't God perform a miracle on someone's mind? Colossians 4:14 states, "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you."

It is the responsibility of healthy Christian Overseers/pastors to seek out QCCC(s), instead of trying to do something they were not gifted to do. In the Scripture 1 Corinthians 12:31,

God's Word says, "But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent Way."

More importantly, having healthy QCCC is one of the paramount issues for the success of the Christian church in general as a corporate body in Christ (God's House). In Luke 4:23 in the Holy Bible, Jesus states, "He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, "Physician, heal yourself!"

Again, by the grace of God, this Bible inspiration is a deep one, and it will create a much-needed dialogue concerning this important issue where marriage ministry and healthy church leadership are concerned. In fact, reaching back into the Old Testament in the book of Isaiah, Isaiah states in Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born. Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Furthermore, through the God-given gifts of help, healing, wisdom, and knowledge, Jesus Christ manifests Himself as the Wonderful Counselor, who brings peace of "Mind." So when the researcher looked at Isaiah 28:23-29, this Scripture helped him understand more clearly about the discernment the Christian church must have in order to affect the QCCC part of its ministry accordingly. Isaiah 28:29 then states, "This also comes from the Lord of hosts, *who* is wonderful in counsel and excellent in guidance."

At the same token, when referring to those God-given gifts bestowed on the anointed, called, and chosen QCCC, biblical validation is even clearer in John 15:26 as it states, "But when the Helper comes, when I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me." And then in John 16:7 the text goes on to say, "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away,

the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.” Jesus was talking about sending “The Holy Spirit” here.

Just as importantly, when the researcher thought about the Overseer/pastoral leadership in this area of QCCC, he went straight to 1 Timothy 4:15, which states, “Meditate on these things, give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.”

Pro Bono Work

So here’s some food for thought! Many civil attorneys or attorneys, in general, gain valuable legal experience doing pro-bono work for the community. The researcher would venture to say that there are qualified Born Again licensed Christian Psychologists and qualified Board Certified Pastoral Counselors, or those Christians who are working under a qualified licensed Christian Psychologist who would also do pro-bono work for the Christian church in his or her allotted spare time. Or, there should be a “paid” qualified Christian church counselor / Board Certified Pastoral Counselor(s) on staff just like any of the other paid church pastoral staff members.

Basically, there is no excuse for (God’s House) not to have healthy qualified Christian church counselors extending themselves for service in the areas of the “mind” concerning God’s people, His children. The New Testament is ever so clear here in Romans 12:2, “And be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (KJV)

This whole issue of the lack of healthy “qualified leaders” in the Christian church is being debated everywhere amongst Christian intellectuals. This particular class that the researcher was working through was referencing an area called, “The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership.” This has really quickened his spirit. The questions were asked, such as, is

a pastor a Leader? Should a pastor even be a pastor if he cannot lead the church correctly? If a pastor only focuses on pastoral care, is he neglecting the congregation because he cannot lead them accordingly? Are leaders born or made? And should someone become a pastor if they are not anointed, called, and chosen by God to be?

Interestingly, this only reinforces the researcher's previous point about the Christian church allowing "unhealthy" and "unqualified" individuals attempting to lead in areas they are neither anointed, called, or chosen by God, spiritually gifted, or educated in. This God-inspired revelation seals the deal here.

For example, marriage and family ministries and Christian church counseling areas in the church should be led by people who are anointed, called, chosen by God, biblically educated through a quality accredited academically competitive theological seminary or school of Divinity, spiritually gifted, and real-life experienced with all these areas joined together.

This perspective of the church is paramount to the mental and emotional state of the congregation who reaches out to the Christian church for help. At a minimum, the qualifications to lead in this very important area should be as follows in any arrangement they are ascertained.

A Master's Degree

There are Master's degrees in Christian ministry or pastoral counseling from an accredited Christian theological seminary program or school of Divinity, a member of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), with certification from an accredited Christian counseling association like the Board of Christian Professional & Pastoral Counseling (BCPPC). Or, a Master's degree in Christian psychology or Christian psychiatry, a Master's degree in marriage & family therapy, followed by a State license in psychology or Psychiatry,

thus obtaining an M.D. or a Ph.D. Let the researcher further reiterate, God's Holy Word (The Holy Bible) has to be the foundational capstone, and the end result of all QCCC.

Furthermore, for those working on (in the process of) obtaining a Master's degree in the right area, you must be doing church counseling under a licensed, qualified Christian psychologist, therapist, or a Pastor/Overseer with a (DMIN) Doctor of Ministry, Ph.D., or a Doctorate of Divinity. Obviously, a Doctor of Ministry, Ph.D., or a Doctorate of Divinity raises the academic qualifications bar quite a bit.

Unfortunately, due to the unqualified status and the significant problems that are caused or that may be caused on many fronts with regards to various church marital counseling sessions, lay counselors need not apply even when the church gives them a different title like, "Bible Study Leader" or "School of Discipleship Teacher." The catchy titles do not make the lay leaders qualified under any circumstances.

Legal Risks

The risk is simply too great, and the damage helps to ruin families, thus causing the church congregation to splinter and the spiritual damage to intensify. Ironically, most married counselees do not know their legal rights with regard to Christian church counseling. Therefore, they are reluctant to seek a viable legal remedy in the event of some unhealthy leader deliberately sabotaging their marriages and causing great emotional distress.

According to Richard Hammer, a graduate of Harvard Law School who is the legal counsel to The General Council of the Assemblies of God with regards to "Negligent Hiring" he states, "The church should carefully screen any candidate for a lay counseling position to ensure, as much as possible, the suitability of the person for counseling ministry."⁸

⁸ Richard Hammer, "Counseling Ministries: A Legal Checkup." *Assemblies of God Enrichment journal*, accessed on July 22, 2014, 3-4, http://www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org/199803/042_legal_checkup.cfm.

Richard further states, “The church can be sued for injuries inflicted by a lay counselor if the church either knew or should have known of a dangerous propensity of the counselor.” Then with regards to “negligent supervision,” Richard states, “The church should consider adopting mechanisms to ensure that unlicensed lay counselors are supervised by appropriately trained and licensed mental health professionals.”⁹

The academic area is so important because it broadens the mental capacity from all of the intellectual training that takes place. Besides, there are important spiritual, historical, practical, intellectual, and procedural things you learn that you just cannot learn anywhere else inside the church; just trying to wing it, that will help you make important decisions that need an intellectual emphasis from a healthy trained brain (a transformed mind).

Real Life Trials and Tribulations

Just as importantly, the academic requirement has to be coupled with actually having the spiritual gifts to lead, and having the real-life experiences of living in the valley of dry bones, walking through the desert, and surviving the storms of trials and tribulations, accumulating a real authentic road map for life that will be beneficial for anyone who enters the Christian church and seeks inspirational spiritual counseling help.

Again, men who simply wake up one day and stick a pastoral label on their forehead and say in an unhealthy fashion, “Hey! I’m a pastor,” or, “Hey! I’m a church leader,” or “Hey! I can get a lot of money from those people without the spiritual background and the payment of authentic life dues,” these men are simply “unqualified” for authentic healthy Christian church leadership.

⁹ Hammer, 4.

Church Politics

Furthermore, people who have been given a position via politics in the Christian church simply because they knew somebody or a situation of grave nepotism is also “Unqualified.” Being the relative of someone in the church does not make one qualified to counsel, preach, teach, evangelize, or lead in an authentic Christian church. “Everyone” is called to minister the gospel of Jesus Christ the world over, but everyone is not anointed, called, or chosen by God to go into authentic Christian ministry.

Simply put, you just cannot stick the label of “pastor” or “church leader” on your forehead and think you are qualified to be a real spiritual leader in a real authentic Christian church. The workings of God’s house is a serious kingdom business! As the saints know, Jesus Christ was furious with anger over those misusing God’s temple as a vile market place.

The Age Quantifier

FYI! This is reality! There are no twenty or thirty-something individual without God’s anointing, calling, and being chosen by Him, without the academic seminary credentials, and without real-life experiences who are qualified to counsel anyone who is twice their age; highly educated or not, and who have themselves gone through real-life experiences being deep in the valley of dry bones enduring the severe trials and tribulations, while going through the vicissitudes and the fire of life, while going up the rough side of the mountain disqualifies them from speaking to those who are ahead in life.

The Christian church, in general, really looks foolish for placing these immature, unqualified, and inexperienced twenty to thirty-something individuals in positions of serious counseling leadership. The Christian church is asking for problems in a major way by creating these unhealthy scenarios.

But yet, many of our Christian churches are following this new age religious standard where immature wet behind the ears unqualified men are placed in mature positions of church leadership. This leadership decision making on behalf of the Pastor/Overseer is hurting the Christian church at-large, and the Holy Spirit is “Missing in Action.” This type of behavior is even hurting many corporations in the secular world, thus causing these secular corporations to have to hire highly educated “change agents” to come in and try to fix this dilemma in the name of diversity.

Now, the researcher can just hear those out there who might misconstrue what he is saying. For the record, he understands the New Testament areas of the Bible very well and what God’s Word says to the Apostle Paul’s protégé in 1 Timothy 3:6, 1 Timothy 3:10, and 1 Timothy 4:11-16. There is a whole lot of meaning in these Scriptures penned through the Apostle Paul’s letter to Timothy.

Older Men Doing the Wrong Things over Time

Furthermore, at the opposite end of the spectrum, when churches have older men who have been in the church for many years doing the “wrong things,” this also hurts the Christian church and makes the leadership in general look unqualified.

Granted, the saints as God’s children are physically in this world, but they are not of this world, therefore in the researcher's opinion, Christian churches should have the same protocol as state licensing agencies when looking for healthy qualified pastoral counselors (disregarding the rhetoric around the separation of church and state). Jesus Christ even said Himself, “Give Caesar what belongs to him and give God what belongs to God.” In fact, for Scriptural accuracy Mark 12:17 states in part, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s. And they marveled at Him.”

Continuing Christian Seminary Education Credit

Just as importantly, all of those in authentic Christian church leadership positions should be acquiring seminary academic education (Continuing Christian Seminary Education Credit) every six months or so to maintain their leadership position(s) in the church. No one should remain in church leadership who does not acquire such continuing Christian seminary education credit(s).

Obviously, there are various ways of obtaining these credits, such as taking online seminary courses through an accredited theological seminary, attending local seminars offered by visiting theological experts, or receiving one-on-one mentoring by an authentic qualified senior pastor who has retired from the pulpit but is available to offer intermittent leadership guidance, wisdom, and advice, etc.

At the same token, this is a great way to show God that church leadership takes the work of His kingdom seriously. And, that the authentic pastoral leadership adheres to 1 Timothy 4:15-16, which states, “Meditate on these things, give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this, you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” And, then in 1 Timothy 3:10, it states in part, “But let these also first be tested.”

Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church

Interestingly, the researcher knows a senior pastor today who worked in his father’s church as the maintenance and video guy. He never did one evangelistic sermon anywhere, nor does he have the theological academic seminary credentials, and he was never in personal physical need of anything in his whole life (He grew up with a silver spoon in his mouth). As far as the researcher knows, he never went through any real-life trials, tribulations, or severe

hardships prior to the nepotism. He most certainly did not have to go up the rough side of the mountain. Nevertheless, when his father was done preaching, the pulpit was handed over to his son right away.

So one must ask the questions, who in the pews can this preacher's son relate to outside of other wealthy people? And, how is he qualified to spiritually counsel anybody in the church, let alone be the senior pastor and lead a Christian church congregation as if he was anointed, called, and chosen by God? And, sure enough, unhealthy leadership affected his church with apostasy in a major way on his watch with him allowing one of his pastors to infiltrate the sanctuary with bold public adultery in abomination Sunday, after Sunday after Sunday until the exposure really became public outside of the church and an embarrassment for this church overall.

The Assistant(s)

Ironically, on any sports team, there is the head coach and the assistant coach(s). In any major corporation, there is the CEO, president, and vice-president. In the Old Testament of the Holy Bible, Moses had Joshua and Caleb, Elijah had Elisha. And, in the New Testament, Jesus Christ had His twelve disciples (team Jesus) with Peter, James, and John being His top 3-assistants. Furthermore, the Apostle Paul had Barnabas, Luke, Mark, and Timothy. In each example, there is a direct line of apprenticeship.

The Buddy, Buddy System

In different circumstances, this issue of Pastors always hiring people they know or people they can control like robots and puppets, minimizing/downplaying the people's spiritual gifts and talents around them, is coming full circle as we tackle the issues of "Unqualified Leadership" in the Christian church.

Pastors/Overseers who only hire from within their limited circle show signs of unhealthiness in the realm of “insecurity,” “tunnel vision,” and “limited real faith, if any.” The majority of authentic Christian churches flourish when “qualified” anointed, called, and chosen by God “outside” help is welcomed into God’s house without the inherent religious biases. Now, do not forget that God rebukes Christian churches with serious consequences in real-time, who turn away His chosen messengers. All you have to do is look around the church, and you will see God’s hand moving. Look at Acts 13:50-51, Luke 9:4-5, and Matthew 10:14-15. God’s Word is very clear.

Unfortunately, the statistics are staggering as to what is happening to the Christian church as a whole, here in the 21st century, as the saints look ahead towards the future. And, the responsibility is being aimed at the unhealthy Christian church leadership. So, the saints, as informed children of God, need to look at the “Whole” picture in a panoramic view and stop looking at what just entertains them as an obvious smokescreen to satisfy the saints “feel good” emotional feelings.

The Mega-Churches

With that being said, the small percentage of large successful mega-churches do not represent the percentages of the actual Christian churches that fail, do not do so well, or are imploding from the inside out. The over-exposure of the few successful Christian mega-churches takes the focus off of the other Christian churches that really need genuine help, including the facilitation of real QCCC in the name of healthiness.

Last but not least, this thesis project will also look at the “Unsuspecting Sheep / Milky Christian spouses who never spiritually mature in general,” therefore unable to grow in spiritual

discernment as a measure to assess the vulnerability opportunity that “unqualified pastors/false teachers/unhealthy leaders/charlatans” exploit.

Impostors in the Pulpit - Questions

If a man is not really anointed with the Holy Spirit, called, and chosen by God, can he really preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in the sacred space called “the Pulpit?” Or, if a man does not have the necessary qualifications, is he impersonating a real pastor and church Overseer?

God is amazing. Yet, here again, as we look at one of the other problems concerning “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A study of the Divorce rate,” God is sending the Christian church at-large a huge message in the area of exposure through this thesis project.

At the same token, the researcher feels like God’s hand is controlling the writing hand. He blessed him with as if God is physically writing this thesis project Himself. Oh! But by the grace of Jesus Christ, the researcher has been given this opportunity to share with the world what saith the Lord. However, before he gets started with this area, let him give you the evangelical theological definition by Walter Elwell of what a real pastor or preacher is: In the New Testament, a preacher is a person who has the inner call from the Holy Spirit and the external call from the church and has been duly set apart to proclaim the gospel. The preacher’s task is to speak as a personal witness to God’s revelation, interpreting it, explaining it, and applying it to the needs of the people. The preacher is one who tells forth the message which has been received from God. In one of the Yale lectures on preaching, one lecturer said, “Every living preacher must receive his communication directly from God, and the constant purpose of his life must be to receive it uncorrupted and to deliver it without addition or subtraction.”¹⁰

¹⁰ Elwell, Walter. “*Evangelical Dictionary Of Theology: Second Edition. Grand Rapids, MI. Baker Book House Company.*” 2001, p. 948.

The Overseer / Senior Pastor

When the researcher thinks about the role(s) of the senior pastor, he often looks to God's word to get clarity about what he is supposed to see in the pulpit and witness around the church campus. In fact, 1 Timothy 3:2-7 states:

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Questions

Furthermore, there are some additional questions one must ask, for example, are the saints supposed to be like Jesus Christ (Imitation)? Are the saints supposed to be like the acts of men (Imitation)? Do large congregations, big churches, or small churches mean that the person standing in the pulpit is anointed, called, and "chosen" by God to be an Overseer? And, is this person chosen to preach and given the title of "pastor" by the politics of ungodly men in an unhealthy church?

Pastoral Holiness

Contrarily, just anybody is not supposed to preach or carry the holy title of the pastor. It is really a holy spiritual position, and not simply a job or vocation. Real pastors and preachers should have "a spirit of holiness" about them, where ushering in the revelation from God is so obvious. Therefore one can sense God's presence beaming from the pulpit, or while standing in their presence being in close proximity to him, one can say, "There is something special about that pastor." God's Word says in Hebrews 12:14, "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness,

without which no man shall see the Lord.” (*KJV*) Then in 1 Peter 1:16 it states, “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (*KJV*)

Make no mistake about it; the Old Testament priests, prophets, and pastors were most certainly holy. For example, Enoch, the great, great, great, great-grandson of Adam, walked with God, so much so that he never died in a formal burial, and was instead called up to heaven by God (Genesis 5:24). Not only that, but God called the men born through Adam’s bloodline, “Wise, mighty men of renown” (Genesis 6:4). And, Noah, who “found grace in the eyes of God” (Genesis 6:8), was called a “Preacher of Righteousness.” “Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God” (Genesis 6:9), whom God established a great covenant with.

Abram / Abraham was called, “A Great Man of Faith and Righteousness,” whom God established a great covenant with (Genesis 15:4-7, & 17:1-11.). Then there was Moses, “God’s Law-Giver,” whom God “called” into holy service (Exodus 3:4, 3:10, & 3:13).

Interestingly, what the researcher of this thesis project found coincidental concerning being “called” by God, is when God called Moses, he said from a bright burning bush, “Moses, Moses.” And, then bridging over into the New Testament when God “called” Saul of Tarsus from a bright light, He said, “Saul, Saul.”

There are no coincidences in the Lord, so there is the significance here that needs to be fleshed out and noted. In the Old Testament, Moses was “God’s Law-Giver,” and in the New Testament, Saul of Tarsus was a “Prosecutor of God’s Law.” Furthermore, in Matthew 5:17, Jesus Christ stated, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” Just as importantly, with regards to pastoral holiness while going back to the Old Testament, there was Elijah who was God’s “Warring Prophet,” who never died in a

formal burial either and instead, like Enoch, was instantly called up to heaven by God (2 Kings 2:11).

Furthermore, with regards to pastoral holiness, in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul was called “The Holiest of the Holy Apostles,” who may have even been a widower who lost his wife at some point while he was Saul of Tarsus. In fact, right behind Paul was the holy Apostle Peter, who was filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:8). According to the researcher, when the Holy Spirit is present in the church sanctuary, you can sense the message from the pulpit when it is real and authentic, opposed to just hearing lip service on a stage that tickles your ears and excites your emotional feelings. Just as importantly, the Holy Spirit will also show those in the congregation without blinders on when a man is truthful or when a man is lying to them when he says, “God told me...,” or, “God showed me...”

A Red Herring

Truthfully, it is a red herring. Well, what is a red herring? According to Wikipedia, a red herring is, “A figurative expression referring to a logical fallacy in which a clue or piece of information is or is intended to be misleading, or distracting from the actual question.”

Technically, it is very easy to see “impostors in the pulpit.” Those who are in this world but are not of this world are influenced by the Holy Spirit. Secular “Out of the Spirit Entertainers” can be seen a mile away. It is like the circus is coming to town and the church advertising preceded its arrival. How does that slogan go? “The circus is coming to town. The circus is coming to town. This is the greatest show on earth.” Or, better yet, the evil spirit of the historical German folk story about the “Pied Piper of Hamelin” is recreating itself in real-time here in the 21st century.

Nonetheless, the researcher can profess that this is true from experience because many times, after visiting certain churches, he felt like he was watching circus clowns and puppet master is saying, “*The show must go on.*” He can completely understand how some of God’s people get exploited by “imposters in the pulpit,” the charlatans of the 21st century. In fact, when talking to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11:20-21, “For you put up with it if one brings you into bondage, if one devours you, if one takes *from* you, if one exalts himself, if one strikes you on the face. To *our* shame I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold—I speak foolishly—I am bold also.”

You know, the researcher is not surprised as he writes this area because the “impostors in the pulpit,” their game is such a racket. They are the charlatans of the 21st century. And, God has given the saints ample warning to beware. As God’s children, the saints are not supposed to just sit in the pews in a trance, eating their flavored popcorn, and enjoying the show. Basically, that is not being a good steward of what God gives the saints in the human body God’s spirit lives in. The human body is “God’s Temple.”

The Great Fish Stories

The researcher here is touching on the lack of authenticity. To him, this issue reminds him of the “great fish stories” that these “impostors in the pulpit” tell. You know, how that great fish they had on the line that got away. And, then, to keep you further on the fabricated line, they say, “*Trust me, this is a true story.*” This is unhealthy Christian church leadership.

Technically, when a story is true, you do not have to qualify it as a convincing measure at all. The Holy Spirit will move the congregation in such a way that the truth is automatically received or revealed through the “Holy Spirit Hotline.” You never have to convince anyone about reality; it is what it is, real. Remember, the researcher cannot speak about the world, but

he can speak about the Christian church. The saints as humans are engineered and designed by God to relate to reality, mentally, emotionally, physically, and Spiritually.

Then, distinctively, “imposters in the pulpit” reminds the researcher of those guys who buy inexpensive cars and place a whole lot of noise-making gadgets on them, to then hit the accelerator, making it “appear” that they are going fast. However, instead, they are really going slow.

All they are doing is disturbing the neighborhood and making a whole lot of unnecessary noise. At the same token, this is a very serious issue concerning the Christian church with regards to unhealthy leadership and the church's marital divorce rate. The researcher of this thesis project has been in Christian ministry more than 22+years in one capacity or another, and at this point, he is simply tired of seeing families hurt, damaged, or destroyed by these “Impostors in the Pulpit,” the charlatans of the 21st century.

Furthermore, the researcher is tired of seeing marriages go down because of false preaching and unqualified teaching by church “Charlatans” passing along greasy cheap grace misinterpreting God’s Word concerning certain sins in marriage like divorce, adultery, financially stealing from the other spouse, abortion, “You shall not murder,” (Exodus 20:13), marital separation, and unbiblical remarriages under the evil spirit of apostasy.

False Testimonies

“Impostors in the Pulpit” are incredulous and go as far as to preach about their “false testimonies” to fool people that goes way beyond some simple embellishment for a little color in a story. Interestingly, the researcher heard one authentic famous Christian musician call it “Stacking Testimonies.”

At any rate, these “preaching imposter’s” will say something to the effect concerning their great trial(s) that is supposed to be relative to the congregation simply as a blanket statement, “*Trust me I’ve been there. I know what it’s like to suffer. God brought me through the valley.*” But, then they do not give any “deep” detail or specific elements that are “real” of those supposed trials and tribulations of suffering. What does that cliché say? “Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt.” (*Abraham Lincoln*)

You see, they have to keep it basic, so their cover is not blown. There is a philosophy out there that says, “*Keep it simple stupid.*” If they say too much, then people can figure them out, so they say as little as possible about the alleged suffered adversity, trial, or supposed walk through the valley of dry bones.

You know, when the researcher heard these “preaching impostors” right away, the Holy Spirit nudged him to ask the questions to himself concerning them, such as, why are you trustworthy? Where have you been with regard to the Christian mission field? How have you struggled and suffered? Where are the real details of this valley you were in? Do you have any healed spiritual wounds? And, where are your physical scars from being on the real battlefield?

Talk to him about that. Remember, in the Old Testament, Jacob physically wrestled with an angel in a man’s body under the authority of God and had his hip physically dislocated (Genesis 32:24-32). Talk to the researcher about how you made it over by the skin of your teeth. Show the researcher with authenticity, how God covered you in the wilderness, in the valley, in the desert, in hell or high water, or going up the rough side of the mountain. The holiest of the holy apostles, the apostle Paul, gave grand physical details about his personal testimonies. He was most certainly real and authentic (2 Corinthians 11:23-29).

As a matter of fact, many people who have really suffered through great trials and tribulations know when someone is real or not. There is an automatic spiritual connection that joins similar testimonies like neurons in the brain. “Impostors in the pulpit” cannot “manufacture” or create that spiritual connection, so they come across as cold, false, stoic, plastic, and shallow, or they appear to be trying too hard, so they come across as uncomfortable appearing to be out of place and unnatural in general.

The Silver Spoon

Then, you have those “impostors in the pulpit” who grew up with both parents as an intact family with silver spoons on the table. The researcher does not want you to misunderstand; there is nothing wrong with having both loving parents together in the home being successful.

Families should be made up of a father and a mother. However, for some reason, “the impostor in the pulpit” who was never anointed, called, or chosen by God to go into the ministry of Jesus Christ all of a sudden labels himself a “Pastor.” Then he uses daddy and mommy’s money and opens up a church, and the unhealthy leadership becomes magnified on a false stage.

For the most part, the “impostors in the Pulpit” has never missed a meal due to poverty or scarcity. They have never broken a bone in their body or physically stepped on a nail to experience the excruciating pain from that. Nor have they ever really been sick enough to spend days in a hospital. Alternatively, they had to physically fight with their fists to defend their life or someone else’s life for survival. Or, have they ever been so broken down in general that they had to call on the name of Jesus for help saying, “Oh! God, get me out of here.”

Yet they stand on a stage and preach about being a “survivor” and how the Lord healed them. The devil is a liar! It is true, the Lord is a great healer, but the “impostors in the pulpit” do not know anything about it. How can you know how God heals if you have never been sick in

that area? Luke 4:23 states, “And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.” (*KJV*)

You better believe that there is a reason why God allowed “suffering” as the main characteristic of following Jesus Christ, and a prerequisite for “real” pastoral leadership over people, the saints, who enter the church. Obviously, Jesus suffered the most of any man, and He set the greatest example for the world to follow. However, He also commissioned Saul of Tarsus, who became the Apostle Paul, the second greatest preacher in the New Testament when Jesus said in Acts 9:16, “For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.”

Many Women

Here Jesus made suffering a prerequisite to preaching His gospel in a major way with no room for fiction, fairytales, fish stories, false testimonies, or ridiculous embellishments. Let the researcher go off the record here for a minute and say that many women qualify a real man by the fact that he has accumulated some war wounds and scars, and that he has been around the block in “real” time.

Some women feel confident in the relationship that he can handle some stuff and that he can take a licking and keep on ticking. He does not put his tail between his legs and hide behind the woman when the going gets rough. He is tough enough to stand. Moreover, I do not necessarily mean physically per se, but tough enough mentally and spiritually to stand. Remember, in Romans 5:3-4 it states, “And not only that but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.”

So now ask yourself the questions, if the “impostors in the pulpit” never really suffered anything, how much perseverance do they have? How much real hope do they have? And, how much authentic character do they possess?”

The Apostle Paul’s Authentic Testimony

At this point, one could quickly ascertain that once the going gets rough, the “impostors in the pulpit” get going. Jesus Christ made sure the apostle Paul set a new example for authentic pastors and preachers to follow and understand in 2 Corinthians 11:23-29, which states:

Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I *am* more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; *in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn *with indignation*?

With that being said, “impostors in the pulpit” who are not really anointed, called, or chosen by God to preach who are standing on a stage talking, are doing exactly that, just talking.

In the real world, they are called “talking heads,” falsely claiming God has spoken to them. How does that saying go to the church? “Fake it until you make it.”

The 1st Church Visit

In a relevant story here, the Holy Spirit reminded the researcher of a former visitation to a church back in 1999 that was hosting a so-called traveling “prophet.” As the researcher’s ex-wife and he were sitting in the middle of the sanctuary, this man looked over the sanctuary for someone to prophesy about. Low and behold, he picked the researcher. When the false prophet came over to the researcher, he asked him what his profession was. When the researcher told him that he was a professional basketball player, he prophesied that the researcher would be in

the middle of two important contracts sometime soon. A few seconds later, he said some other words and then turned away.

At that time, the researcher had a smirk on his face because this guy's spirit just did not seem authentic. The fact of the matter is that the researcher's spiritual gifts of discernment and wisdom picked up on this so-called prophets "false spirit" as he approached them, and it gave the researcher internal spiritual and mental confirmation. The fact of the matter is that the researcher has never been in between two important contracts at the same time during his whole former pro basketball career. In fact, he was trying to get the best "single" contract had always been through intense negotiations over the "one" contract.

So this "false prophets" prophecy was not real, and it did not come from God, because what he prophesied did not come to pass in real-time. Prophetic utterances are supposed to come to pass at some point in time because God Himself delivered them through a chosen vessel. Remember, God cannot lie, and He does not lie.

The 2nd Church Visit

The researcher even remembers when he was at another church that also had unhealthy leadership in place, and they had invited a "false prophet" in to speak to the congregation. This is another funny situation because this particular guy was straight out of the circus in real-time. So in the interim, this guy chose a guy from the congregation who had back problems and told him that his back is healed. Unfortunately, this guy's back never healed, and he had to contemplate having serious back surgery anyway eventually.

Again, what this "false prophet" prophesied, never ever came true. So his words were not the words from God. These were words from a charlatan. Technically, this was just another 21st-century circus act trying to deceive people in the Christian church. The deception in God's

house is even more bold and blazing than in the past due to the unhealthy leadership in the Christian church, allowing such heresy and apostasy to gain a more significant foothold.

God Does not Lie

The next two Scriptures are very important. God is not a liar. In fact, God cannot lie. Technically, Satan, the fallen angel, is the master of lies. Therefore, Numbers 23:19 states, “God *is* not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (*KJV*) And, then Matthew 24:11 states, “Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.”

The Definition of a Prophet

According to the Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, the definition of prophet is, “The one who speaks before in the sense of proclaiming, or the one who speaks for, i.e., in the name of (God). He is under divine constraint. It is God who invites, summons, and impels him. By inspiration, God speaks to the nabi, who has to transmit exactly what he receives.”¹¹

This is really a spiritual matter through the researcher’s gifts of discernment and wisdom that God has commissioned him to tackle because He has given the researcher a radical personal testimony with spiritual insight that he has comforted people with all over the world. Therefore, the researcher is under divine constraint, and he has been invited, summoned, and impelled by God on this heavenly assignment.

A Solution

As a matter of fact, those in the congregation should not just go with the flow and wear Christian blinders. More importantly, they really need to take the time to care for their spiritual health is on the line. An authentic real-life does matter here on earth and up in heaven.

¹¹ Elwell, Walter. “*Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: Second Edition.*” Grand Rapids, MI. Baker Book House Company. 2001, p. 960.

Furthermore, caring congregants who are skeptical of their so-called pastors should *protest* their church leadership to hire qualified authentic pastors and preachers who are anointed, called, and chosen by God, and not chosen by the wiles of the devil (the crafty clicky politics of men).

Therefore, simply being satisfied with mediocrity defies God's order for excellence in the pulpit, the heart, and the Central Processing Unit (CPU) of the Christian church. At the same token, when the "title" of pastor is given to unqualified men, this makes those men a "watered-down version" of what an authentic pastor stands for, and a weak example of leadership for the congregation in the church to follow. Obviously, these kinds of men have no "spirit of holiness." How does that slogan go? "You get what you pay for."

The Definition of a Preacher

So, with that being said, the researcher believes that the reason so many "impostors in the pulpit" are able to fool so many people is because many Christian congregants do not even know what to look for or what a real pastor/preacher is, and what his responsibility in the church is supposed to be according to God's holy word. Elwell states:

In the New Testament, a preacher is a person who has the inner call from the Holy Spirit and the external call from the church and has been duly set apart to proclaim the gospel. The preacher's task is to speak as a personal witness to God's revelation, interpreting it, explaining it, and applying it to the needs of the people. The preacher is one who tells forth the message which has been received from God.¹²

The Litmus Test

Unfortunately, so many unspiritual non-God chosen men in our churches today are given the "holy" title of the pastor, and they just do not qualify or fit the description regardless of who places them in the position. If you do not believe the researcher, then take the litmus test. Ask someone or a couple of people at random, "What constitutes a pastor or a preacher?" And, see

¹² Elwell, Walter. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: Second Edition.* Grand Rapids, MI. Baker Book House Company. 2001, p.948

what they say. The researcher is willing to bet you their answer does not fit the evangelical theological definition he stated a few moments ago.

The Christian church, God's house, should not just be a place to go for a couple of hours out of guilt or for the cool entertainment show on stage. The saint's goal for going to church is obviously multifaceted. However, one of the goals for going to church should be to hear a heavenly word and to receive a spiritual revelation from the Almighty Father God in heaven that can change their life through an authentic pastor's message.

The Rootless Journey

The fact of the matter is one of the reasons some churches have revolving doors, and their recidivism rate is out of control is because of their "impostors in the pulpit" that are hired as church leadership. Therefore, creating "rootless" journey-men, rootless journey-women, and rootless journey-children who go from church to church (church hopping) trying to find the "real" Spirit of God.

The Love of Money

Technically, there is so much to be extrapolated from God's holy word concerning "impostors in the pulpit" that there needs to be a thorough uncovering of the biblical Scriptures. Obviously, as a form of cowardice, unhealthy church leadership tip-toe around controversial issues, which in essence, are really doing the Christian church a major disservice. "For the love of money is the root of all evil." (*emphasis mine*) Money in and of itself is not evil; it is what people feel about it and do with the money that makes it evil. The Apostle Paul was crystal clear when he said in Galatians 6:7 in part, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked." And, then, he was crystal clear when he said to the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 in part, "Let no one deceive you by any means."

You know, life is too short to just meander through it with regards to going to church. However, it is true that God can and will show up anywhere. However, God's main presence is in His own house, the fundamental Christian church, and His temple inside the human body. All of which, as He also resides in heaven on His mighty throne overseeing His vast kingdom.

Bottleneck Leadership

At the same token, the position of pastor/preacher should never be taken lightly and just given to "talking heads" who are not anointed, called, or chosen by God to preach. Furthermore, the biased and, in some cases, discriminatory fickle senior pastors who are spiritually weak, intimidated easily, or threatened by authentic anointed, called, and chosen by God preachers, do their church a disservice by not hiring the authentic real preachers to work in their church.

"The fake character always has a problem when an authentic person shows up." The senior pastor's "unwarranted" fear that the real pastors/preacher(s) applying for the open job will take their thunder is utterly ridiculous, selfish, and extremely shallow. So, in an unhealthy fashion, they instead surround themselves with unqualified unholy men; in that way, God's house is all about them. This is called "The bottleneck type of leadership."

Furthermore, this also reminds the researcher of the church leader who may be smart or intelligent in some way, but only surrounds himself with people who are less intelligent than he is so he can feel more important. Unfortunately, he will never surround himself with people who are just as smart or even smarter than he is. Therefore, this shallow behavior definitely mirrors some self-esteem issues presenting themselves when this happens.

A Social Pyramid Scheme

In reality, when this happens in the Christian church, this almost sounds like a social pyramid scheme, if that is even possible to say, where the majority of the in-church house kudos

and church success go to the top of the church leadership (the Senior Pastor and his favorite “Yes” men in leadership). The other pastors on the totem pole become invisible figuratively speaking.

At the same token, when it comes to excellence, common sense states that great teams of any sort are filled with multiple great players or team members. Championships and great victories are accomplished with various great pieces contributing. Jesus Christ had various great preachers around him, whom He made holy. And, the early Christian church itself was stacked with all-stars like John, “the Baptist,” Peter, James “the Just” (the brother of Jesus), Stephen, Barnabas, his cousin Mark, and John “The Beloved” apostle.

Therefore, the congregant’s tithes and offerings (church employee wages) get wasted in this area of the church time and time again. But, not only that, even though the saints know there is no such thing as a perfect Christian church, maybe some of the problems that occur in their churches would not happen if they had the real anointed, holy, called, and chosen by God preachers, other authentic ministry leaders, and some chosen by God authentic volunteer leaders in place all in the name of “authenticity.”

The truth of the matter is that God has commissioned real authentic pastors and preachers, but some senior pastors hinder the move of God in God’s house because of their personal baggage and pharisaical legalistic point-of-views, thus bringing into question their own pastoral calling. Remember, in (Matthew 13:58) Jesus chose not to do any mighty works due to the unbelief amongst those in His own country.

In many of today’s Christian churches, all you have to do is look around, “impostors in the pulpits” are everywhere. Again, it is a spiritual thing. It’s an apostasy thing. And, church exploitation is at an all-time high here in the 21st century.

A Lack of Respect

Disparately, in today's current time as well the Christian church overall is going through a low period with everything immoral that is going on in our society along with the low point of having "impostors in the pulpit," where many people in other religions have lost and are losing historical respect for the real Christian church.

Technically, historically speaking, the Christian church has always been on a huge roller coaster ride in general. Some periods of history, the church is up, and revivals are plentiful, and then at other times in church history, the Christian church is down, and the saints see a lot of "false prophets" and "impostors in the pulpit." For example, the U.S. Christian church has been very similar to the U.S. stock market, sometimes it is up, and sometimes it is down.

Another example with regards to Christian church history states that since the death of the apostles and their fellow workers, there was a decline in preaching all the way up and through the Reformation where preaching was on a high level. Unfortunately, after the Reformation, real preaching started to go down again. Elwell's *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* states, "With the fracturing of the visible church, preaching is marked by diversity as it spreads from country to country and denomination to denomination. Each country, and each denomination, has its peaks of power in preaching."¹³

God's Light

Low and behold, the researcher began writing this part of the thesis without any light made by men, but he began writing this area with the bright moonlight made by God streaming through his window. Without a doubt, God is amazing! He is the Light of the world. So, on this particular early morning, of which in all of the places in the Holy Bible to turn to, the researcher inadvertently opened his Bible to 2 Peter 2:3, which states in part, "By covetousness, they will

¹³ *Elwell, Walter*

exploit you with deceptive words.” But the researcher also loves what the King James Version says here, “And covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.” (*KJV*)

These are “impostors in the pulpit” who are making merchandise out of the congregation. So the researcher asked the Holy Spirit, “Where are you taking me with this particular area?” The Holy Spirit responded with, “I want you to use your voice here. Let My people know about the false teachers and the impostors in the pulpit. I will point you to My Holy Word for guidance.” Interestingly, all of 2 Peter Chapter 2 is dedicated to false teachers and their destruction. In fact, in the New King James Version of the Bible, 2 Peter 2 is titled “Destructive Doctrines.”

Then again, in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit pointed the researcher to the book of 1 Timothy. Now, remember, at this point, the researcher is still trying to clear his head and completely awaken in this early morning hour, but the Holy Spirit wanted him and the Apostle Paul’s first letter to Timothy to become acquainted again. You know some re-familiarity. So in 1 Timothy 1:6-7 it states, “From which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.”

An Imposter

The impostor is in the pulpit with fake stories, and exaggerated testimonies come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and cultures. The Merriam Dictionary defines an impostor as “A person who deceives others by pretending to be someone else.” It goes on to say that an impostor is “One that assumes false identity or title for the purpose of deception.”

Obviously, when it comes to the best illustration of an impostor, God's word is the best, so below, the researcher will list some of God’s Scriptures as the authority. Therefore, by the

time you have finished reading these Scriptures, you will most certainly understand. In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, the Bible states in part under the “Great Apostasy, “Let no one deceive you by any means.” The *KJV* says it like this, “Let no man deceive you by any means.” Furthermore, the Apostle Paul gets right to it again in Colossians 2:8 when he stated, “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”

Then, Paul says in Colossians 2:18, “Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.” Last but not least, the holiest of the holy Apostles stated in Colossians 2:23, “These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.”

The False Smiles

Interestingly, with this self-imposed worship & false humility, a couple of other questions arise, such as, how many false smiles do you see in your church by so-called pastors with this false humility? How many so-called pastors do you know that are as shallow as a 2-ft pond, that when you look into their eyes and shake their hands, you can see right through them and read their whole life story?

The Handshake

Ironically, the researcher remembers one time during a church service, he shook the lead pastor's hand with a firm handshake and this particular pastor literally folded. He said with his Australian accent, “Ouch! Man! This guy has a strong handshake.”

Unfortunately, this particular physically fit pastor who claimed himself to have had close encounters with great white sharks while swimming in the ocean water off Sydney, Australia,

had a very weak handshake, and it was very clear that he had a weak backbone as a man. Again, this is spiritual discernment and wisdom. It is internal intuition provided by the Lord that is right on the money (knowing how to read people accurately). However, you do not know this particular spiritually unhealthy pastor got right into the pulpit and told his false stories, fables, and adventurous tales about being strong and courageous. This was a typical story of unhealthy leadership in the Christian church trying to fool the congregation.

As a matter of fact, in a business environment, it is taught that upon meeting someone, especially when there is a man meeting a man, you are supposed to have a firm handshake. Obviously, there is a lot of meaning in a firm handshake in general. In fact, Speechmastery.com states that “What is for certain and what really matters, people will judge you by your handshake. There is an etiquette for shaking hands that need to be followed to advance your career.” And that, “So what of a handshake? Well, if a person does not know how to give one properly, it speaks of their business etiquette and acumen. It says they may not have taken the time for self-growth.”¹⁴

Praise & Worship Music

Meanwhile, with regard to unhealthy leadership in the Christian church, God also wants the researcher to intellectualize about the area of “praise and worship” ministry in this thesis project. However, God is talking about some of the “praise and musical worship” that goes on in some of these Christian churches.

So right away, you have to look at where the praise and musical worship began from a spiritual standpoint. All of the different types of angels in heaven with various responsibilities praised and worshiped God. In Isaiah 6:3 it states in part, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts:

¹⁴ Jonathan Steele, Hand Shake, accessed on January 23, 2019, <https://www.speechmastery.com/handshake.html>.

the whole earth is full of His glory.” (KJV) And then in Revelation 15:3, it states, “And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying “Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.” (KJV)

Remember, Satan was the lead cherub angel in charge of the musical instrumental (noise) in heaven, a specific department. He was just the anointed cherub. Ezekiel 28:13(KJV) states in part, “The workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.” And then in Isaiah 14:11(KJV), it states in part, “Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols.”

Satan

One could surmise that Satan was the instrumental conductor/sound director, if you will, in heaven as the lead cherub angel before being expelled from God’s kingdom. Since Satan was made up of instruments that made “noise,” he was only “a part” of the musical section in heaven, similar to an orchestra.

Technically, it was the seraphim angels who provided the voices to the noise seeing that they were the ones singing praises to God 24/7. So together, “all” of the angels made heavenly music. Satan only had a part in it.

Unfortunately, many uninformed pastors have preached that Satan was the sole musical director in heaven. But that is just not true. In fact, it is giving more credit to Satan than he actually deserves.

You also have to realize that there were various angels in heaven (celestial hierarchy) with various responsibilities. Satan was not the CEO of “all” the angels in heaven. He was

simply the anointed cherub angel, categorically speaking, representing the cherub angels in a singular category.

The Other Angels

Just as importantly, the cherub angels were the protectors of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden, and as a protective barrier for the throne of God, the seraphim angels sang praises to God 24/7, and there were the angels who could take human form in Genesis 19:1 and Genesis 32:24-32. Then there was Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel (Daniel 8:16 and 9:21), and the seven angels in Revelation 15. There were also throne angels, dominion angels, principality angels, and power angels (Colossians 1:16). Simply put, the angels were innumerable. In the book of Hebrews in Hebrews 12:22, it states in part, “An innumerable company of angels.”

At the same token, there was heaven’s military general, the archangel Michael the head (the arch) of “all” the angels together, who was simply disgusted with Satan. According to Guide Bible Studies, an archangel means, “A chief angel; First in political rank and power; Reign and rule over; and Intermediaries between God and man.”¹⁵ 1 Thessalonians 4:16 states, “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” (*KJV*) In fact, when referring to the archangel Michael, Jude 9 states, “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.” (*KJV*)

In the interim, Michael was simply disgusted with Satan during their argument and decided to brush off the dispute at that particular time. You see, God dislikes complaining so much so that it greatly angers Him (Numbers 11:1). So Michael knew not to complain to God about something that God was already going to take care of anyway. Interestingly, Michael

¹⁵ Guide Bible Tools. <http://www.guidedbiblestudies.com/topics/cherubim.htm> (no longer available)

would soon get his orders and opportunity to deal with Satan accordingly soon enough as Revelation 12:7-11 describes.

What is also interesting here as well is that God did not use any other cherub angel to cast Satan out of heaven, nor did He use any of the other angels like the seraphim's. Common sense would tell us that all of the cherub angels were equal in might and stature. Satan was simply a favored one. So, why wouldn't God use another cherub angel to cast Satan out of heaven? Surely there was another cherub angel who disagreed with Satan and his foolishness. Just like there were angels who decided to join Satan and rebel against God in "The Great Rebellion." Instead, God used Michael, His most powerful and faithful angel in heaven. Daniel 10:13 states in part when referring to Jesus Christ, "But, lo Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me." (*KJV*)

Michael is considered a chief in heavenly angelic leadership. Then in Daniel 10:21, the Holy Bible (*KJV*) states in part, "There is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince." Furthermore, in Daniel 12:1 it states, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people." (*KJV*)

So, since Satan cannot play his noise in heaven anymore, he is down here on earth looking for ways to exploit and manipulate the Christian church, God's house, with all kinds of deceptive "noise" instead of wooing unhealthy leaders. Again, this reminds the researcher of the German "Pied Piper of Hamelin" folk character who went into the city of Hamelin playing his musical pipe while luring 130-children out of the town to their supposed destruction. In fact, 2 Corinthians 11:14 states, "And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light."

Musical Impostors in the Pulpit

So, those with the ears to hear and the gifts of discernment and wisdom should be able to hear the differences in the various styles of music being called Christian music within its various genres. For the most part, it is not only the Christian words that are spoken, but it is also in the sound of the instruments and the computer-generated auto tunes. It is really crystal clear to hear. There was a time when there was no such thing as auto tunes. Singers and musicians had authentic talent, skills, and abilities that did not need to be enhanced or generated by a computer. With that being said, there was an article that quoted a former Christian band leader for 12-years who no longer followed Jesus Christ. The article would go onto state in parts: He realized that a number of bands that professed to be Christians were faking their faith just as he was.” “We toured with more ‘Christian bands’ who actually aren’t Christians than bands that are.” “I would say maybe one in 10 Christian bands we toured with were actually Christian bands.” And, “It duped fans into believing that they were Christian in order to sell their music.”

Fake Christian Bands

The researcher even read somewhere in another article where someone kept an actual count of fake Christian bands out there with a number somewhere around 2,100. There are still a whole lot of “Musical Impostors” exploiting the Christian church scene in their journey to become secular rock stars under the “guise” of the Christian church. It is sort of like going in through the back door.

At the same token, this illusion also so often comes with “musical worship imposters” acting like “pastors” in the pulpit. Again, here the saints can see another unhealthy form of “impostors in the pulpit.” The researcher once heard someone say, “Just because you can sing doesn’t mean you have something to say.” Now, the researcher knows this statement is focused

on political things when there are secular musicians/singers who say ridiculous things because of their uninformed points of view. However, the same application applies here in the Christian church when there are fake worship leaders trying to minister biblical principles.

Nonetheless, it is still a powerful statement any way you look at it. In reality, just because someone has the gift of voice, it does not mean God has chosen them to speak His revelation through them in the spirit of preaching as an Overseer in the time designated for the pulpit. The pulpit is holy. One does not automatically beget the other.

Interestingly enough, the researcher remembers hearing about a pastoral impostor in a former community he lived in who was trying to be a secular country music artist with a guitar. He tried everything he could to make it in country music because that is where his heart was, but things did not turn out the way he had hoped for. Plus, he had gone to Las Vegas, NV, and to Nashville, TN, to get into the music scenes there. This guy even had a song, or two played on Christian radio stations.

Christian Church Exploitation

Ironically, as an exploitative notion, whether someone is a follower of Jesus Christ or not, when the secular world does not work anymore, then musical worship impostors go into the Christian church where blind congregations will believe anything, right? And that is exactly what this guy did; he went into the Christian church with his fraudulent guitar musical act, very similar to the German “Pied Piper of Hamelin” character, who went into the city of Hamelin playing his musical pipe while luring 130-children out of the town to their supposed destruction.

Unfortunately, the man with the guitar in the researcher’s story was able to fool many people to the point that one particular sizeable Christian church hired him as their worship leader, and then eventually as a pastor at one of the church campuses. Nevertheless, this pulpit

impostor even stood on the stage with big named people pretending to be a real pastor. Yet, he was an admitted child molester in some familiar Christian circles after confessing that during the night hours, he snuck in a bedroom while crawling on the floor and improperly touched another pastors' daughter where he should not have while she was sleeping in her bed.

Sadly, the people he was on stage with were oblivious to this wolf in sheep's clothing in their presence. Low and behold, in grand unhealthiness, this married "musical pastoral impostor" became a dangerous adulterer who ushered in apostasy and who borrowed a page from Judas Iscariot and used various churches treasury accounts as his own personal bank account, therefore committing the other abomination of stealing (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Unfortunately, here again in the 21st-century, the Christian church has become a place where many secular musicians who did not or cannot make it in the secular markets for whatever reason, had come into the church to act as if they were anointed, called, and chosen by God to sing His praises in His house. This is church exploitation at its best, infiltrating the modes of authentic Christian church worship. "Buyer Beware."

The Unsaved Leader

David Washington, from the Berean Home Fellowship said something that also rings a true bell in his article called "*Unqualified Church Leaders*." He states that "You would think that this would be a given, but there are many pastors who are not even saved. They don't live in accordance with the Scriptures, counsel others wrongly and in opposition to them, and have never called on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in order that they may be saved. They are tares among the wheat."¹⁶

¹⁶ David Washington, "Unqualified Church Leadership." Berean Home Fellowship, accessed on January 25, 2019, <http://bereanhomechurch.org/2011/12/31/unqualified-church-leaders/>.

Fake It Until You Make It

At the same token, the researcher thought about the secular community, whereas it is against the law to impersonate a police officer, a doctor, a lawyer, someone in the military, a federal postal worker, or even a federal agent of some sort. Technically, there should be a secular law in place that says it is against the law to impersonate a real pastor or an official member of the clergy, due to the grave spiritual and physical harm that is done to so many people in the Christian church by the “impostors in the pulpit.”

Ironically, like the researcher stated earlier in this thesis project, there is a saying that gets tossed around in the church that says, “*Fake it until you make it.*” Well, apparently that is what “impostors in the pulpit,” snake oil salesmen, and greasy cheap grace preachers do, they fake it until they make it.

Psychological Implications

What then happens is when the ruse has gone on long enough, the “impostors” begin to mentally believe in the falsity themselves, further compounding and driving the “fiction” into Christian ministry creating a false unhealthy spiritual environment in the sanctuary, and in the whole church in general, affecting other staff members. Is this real holiness? “Our calling is central to who we are. While all Christians are called to minister, relatively few are called into the ministry.”¹⁷ The authors go onto state that, “Unfortunately, some in the ministry today serve under a false calling. It is extremely important to be certain our calling is from God and not by some other means.”¹⁸

¹⁷ Wilson, Michael and Hoffman, Brad. “*Preventing Ministry Failure: A Shepherd Care Guide for Pastors, Ministers and Other Caregivers.*” (Downers Grove, Illinois. InterVarsity Press, 2007), 27.

¹⁸ Ibid.

“Impostors in the pulpit” are surely those who were not officially called and chosen by God into the Christian ministry, and most certainly are those serving under a false calling by Satan, the devil, the enemy. At this juncture, the researcher just wants to ask the questions, “Why can’t the leadership in the Christian church just keep it real?” and, “Is it their sin that breeds no authenticity?”

The Imposter Syndrome

Daniel Im, the Director of Lifeway Christian Resources, gives us a great perspective concerning the “impostors in the pulpit.” His article is called “The Imposter Syndrome and Pastoral Ministry.”¹⁹ This phenomenon affects many, and pastors may be particularly susceptible. In it, he starts out by saying, “You’re a fraud.” “Everyone is going to find out....eventually.” “Just stop, it’s not worth it.” “What difference do you think you’re actually going to make?”

He goes onto say that, “In 1978, researchers Pauline Rose Clance and Suzanne Imes coined the phrase—the Imposter Phenomenon.” Furthermore, he continued to say how this particular study was based on high achieving women in the pre-internet and pre-social media world, and how this syndrome now affects everyone. Then Daniel Im’s article tells us about the “Imposter Syndrome,” that according to the research, “It’s often unintentionally or unconsciously nurtured from a young age.” At the same token, what really caught the researcher's attention in this article was the 3-areas he stated that directly affects the state of pastors here in the 21st century. He states that:

- **One**, “The Imposter Syndrome is influencing pastors towards an unhealthy obsession with achievement.”

¹⁹ Daniel Im, “The Imposter Syndrome and Pastoral Ministry: This Phenomenon Affects Many, and Pastors May be Particularly Susceptible.” Christianity Today, accessed on February 11, 2019, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2019/february/imposter-syndrome-and-pastoral-ministry.html>.

- **Two** “The Imposter Syndrome is influencing pastors towards unhealthy obsession for the platform.”
- **Three** “The Imposter Syndrome is influencing pastors toward an unhealthy obsession for networking.”

With all that has been said in this area of this thesis project, apostate pastors who perform marriages with unbiblically divorced adulterous spouses create "serial adulterers," which by all intents and purposes is an abomination to God; thus, these type of pastors bring on a consequential curse into the church. God does not bless "adultery" no matter how much "cheap greasy grace" is given by these type of apostate pastors. Make no mistake about it; this is spiritually unhealthy Christian church leadership with serious spiritual consequences to follow in real-time.

The Evil Spirit of “Rebellion” in Marriage

Satan wants to destroy God’s holy covenant that God established and establishes in authentic marriages. Now that the researcher has looked at many of the problems with regards to the unhealthy leadership in the Christian church, it is time now to get into one of the main problems when it comes to marriage in general, especially when it comes to marriages within the Christian church amongst the born again saints.

With that being said, God gave His children the short book of Malachi at the end of the Old Testament and right before the New Testament begins where Jesus Christ began His ministry. Let the researcher ask you a question, “Isn’t it interesting that of all the subject matter God could have ended the Old Testament with in His Holy Word, He spoke about the specific areas of polluted offerings, corrupt priests, the treachery of infidelity, the coming Messenger, do not rob God, complaining people, and the great day of God? Think about that!” Malachi 2:16 states, “For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one’s garments with

violence, says the Lord of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.” (underscore *emphasis mine*)

Satan, the devil, the enemy

Let me first start out by saying that “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion” is of the devil. Satan and his following minions rebelled against God in heaven, and after being thrown out of heaven, Satan, the Devil, the Enemy (The Old Serpent) wants everyone on earth to rebel against God as well. 1 Peter 5:8 states, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”

Saints in the world the battle is real. Interestingly, this specific attack on marriages keeps coming up over and over, and over again. The news of so many failed marriages is everywhere you turn on the television, social media, other places on the internet, grocery store magazines, newspapers, and within the Christian church itself here in this 21st century modern society. Unfortunately, this news has become the norm.

The “Holy Covenant Marriages” that resisted the wiles of Satan and stood the test of time are now the “minority,” and the few and far between. The family structure in the Christian church has been greatly weakened and tremendously damaged by all of the “unbiblical” divorces and the unhealthy church leadership who support them.

With that being said, God kept sending the researcher messages about this issue to hopefully change someone’s heart, transform someone’s mind, save someone’s biblical marriage, plant the seed of the true Salvation in Jesus Christ, or help put someone’s damaged family back together. Therefore, now is the moment. “The rubber has met the road,” and it is time to get to the “nitty-gritty” and discuss the “filet mignon” of God’s Holy Word. At the same token, as spiritual confirmation for this thesis project assignment from heaven, the researcher

speaks from authentic experience having dealt with this particular “evil spirit of rebellion” personally while being previously married to two different women for a total of 15-years. While ministering in the Christian church for more than 22 years, in one capacity or another, the researcher has seen enough of the “greasy grace” that is without any moral, biblical accountability. Therefore, watching divorce, after divorce, take place with an unbiblical divorce pass from pastors who do not “pastor” or “lead” their flock according to God’s holy word.

Remember in Mark 9:28-29, the disciples were perplexed as to why they could not cast out this particular devil, so they inquired of Jesus, and He said to them, “This kind can come out only by nothing but prayer and fasting.” Plain and simple, the saints are dealing with a particular evil spirit here. Now do not forget in the Garden of Gethsemane, when the Apostle Peter cut off the high priest servant’s ear, Jesus rebuked Satan working through Peter and said in John 18:10 in part with authority, “Put your sword into the sheath.”

And, then in Matthew 16:23 and in Mark 8:33, when Peter was abhorred that Jesus Christ was talking about His impending death, burial, and His being raised from the dead on the third day, Jesus said to Peter with an authoritative rebuke, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

Rebellion

But, in fact, remember Jesus was not rebuking Peter the man himself; He was rebuking Satan, the devil, the enemy for using Peter and spiritually encouraging him to act. So, in this thesis project, do not misinterpret the move of God taking place. The researcher is standing in the gap in authenticity and authority while exposing this particular “evil spirit” by its name called “Rebellion.” Rebellion is surely of Satan, the devil, the enemy. Rebellion and Stubbornness are two keywords here. In fact, in 1 Samuel 15:23 in the Old Testament it states in

part, “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord.”

Who Is Filing For Divorce?

In recent years the researcher has been made aware of a few major secular studies that have been conducted concerning this issue of marriage, specifically in the year 2013 with regards to Christian and non-Christians alike. Interestingly, the women are the ones filing for divorce at an alarming rate of 70% out of all divorces. So why is that?

According to the Huffington Post, “The proportion of divorces initiated by women ranged around 60% for most of the 20th century, and climbed to more than 70% in the late 1960s when ‘no-fault divorce’ was introduced.” The way the evidence has lined up is that this 70% statistic elevated during the 1960’s women’s liberation movement when the “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” found a window of opportunity to move into certain women’s spirit in replacement like a tidal wave.

The article went onto say that “In addition to women filing for divorce twice as often, they are more likely to instigate separations and marriage break ups.”²⁰ Then, in another article by the Huffington Post in August of 2015, the sub-title stated, “There’s Something about Marriage That Makes Women Want to Leave.” A few paragraphs down, quoting a Stanford University professor, the article states, “When it came to divorce, wives initiated 69% of the splits.” Furthermore, the professor adds that “Not only are women more inclined to end a marriage, but they’re also less satisfied while married, reporting lower levels of relationship quality.”

²⁰ Block, Lee. “*Who Files For Divorce? Men vs. Women,*” The Huffington Post, accessed on September 19, 2013, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lee-block/you-arent-meeting-my-need_b_1271669.html.

So, in February 2017, author Suzanne Venker “The Feminist Fixer,” who refers to the 2015 Stanford University study on this issue in her new book called, “The Alpha Female’s Guide to Men and Marriage: How Love Works,” said on a news network, “Women today are groomed to lead and insist on being in charge, which could affect their relationships with their husbands.”

The Slippery Slide of the Christian Church

Unfortunately, the Christian church in general side steps this major family issue in the congregation. Therefore, many pastors render “greasy grace,” and some pastors avoid the topic altogether, while others downplay the Scriptures abominations about divorce and God’s consequences concerning areas such as lying, stealing, adultery, fornication, separation, divorce, and blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

With that being said, the statistics are very clear in the majority of respects. And, today in the 21st century, the percentage now is well above 70% that many women are just as educated as men, and in some areas, are more educated than men. This would also include those marriages where the man and woman are still married, but living in a state of spiritual, mental, and emotional divorce behind the scenes. You judge a tree by its fruit in the open public and private quarters.

Women Filing for Divorce

In 1975 the percentage of women divorcing men was at 72%. The researcher has never heard a sermon in church preached about this major family reality concerning marriage in general, especially concerning marriage in the Christian church all his years on his ministerial watch. Well, someone would say, why not pastor? Or, why did and why do some Christian pastors avoid this reality? These are great questions. In fact, “According to a study published in

the American Law and Economics Review, there is evidence that women are filing for divorce in 90% of the cases among college-educated couples. It is a staggering imbalance.”²¹

What can be said about that number of 90%? Wouldn't you think that a college-educated Christian woman would adhere to God's Holy instructions where marriage is concerned, while at the same time finding herself being noble like a Proverbs 31:10 woman? This ungodly percentage of 90% is clearly the work of "The Evil Spirit of Rebellion" in these particular types of women, who have no fear of God. Obviously, a man doesn't stand a chance.

Unfortunately, the false reality that "The grass is greener on the other side" seems to be expedited amongst college-educated women as opposed to non-college-educated women. Again, why is that? Well, there was one interesting comment made by an anonymous gentleman in one of the researched articles for this thesis project stated that:

Women have bought into the lies of this society 'that you can have it all' career, and move up the ladder....etc....Then when women look around and are childless by 30 or 40 years of age and never married. She will use the blame game by stating, 'There are no men on my level. Then comes the so-called studies that never, never get to the root of the cause.

The root of the cause of the problem is "The Evil Spirit of Rebellion." As history has illustrated, some women have always wanted to rule over men; they simply could not accept the responding role of (Help meet) that God gave them to play as a woman. And, so they rebelled against anything masculine. For the sake of holy spiritual ministry here in Luke 10:41, Jesus said to Martha, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

²¹ Luzzo and Revelli. "Why Women Are Filing For Divorce More Often Than Men," accessed on September 19, 2013, <http://revellilaw.com/2013/01/why-women-are-filing-for-divorce-more-often-than-men/>

The Millennial Generation

Therefore, even our young people, the millennials, in general, are continuously being negatively affected by “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion.” Moreover, some of our little girls are now growing up with the wrong social attitudes, and in many respects, will grow up to be relationship anti-social with regards to male / female dating relationships and male/female marriages.

This is such an informational aspect of the divorce rate the researcher had to add a gold nugget from Bettenson & Maunder who state that:

The emerging feminist paradigm trying to make sense of biblical and theological truth claims is that of authority as a partnership. In this view, reality is interpreted in the form of a circle of interdependence. Order is explored through inclusion of diversity in a rainbow spectrum that does not require that persons submit to the ‘top’ but, rather, that they participate in the common task of creating an interdependent community of humanity and nature.²²

In fact, here is an easy example that qualifies this fact to a “T.” There is a new song out by a musician from New Zealand nicknamed “Lorde” who was born in 1996. According to Wikipedia, this teenage singer stated that she is “A self-identified feminist.” Furthermore, Wikipedia stated that “Lorde's stage name bears her fascination with "royals and aristocracy" she added an "e" after the name Lord, which she felt was too masculine, to make it more feminine.” (Wiki/Lorde)

Obviously, there is nothing feminine about God, and there is nothing feminine about His Son Jesus Christ. God is the Almighty Father God, the creator of the heavens and earth. And, Jesus Christ is the strong authoritative masculine Son of God.

Furthermore, according to Metrolyrics.com, this particular female singer came out with a song called “Royals.” In the song, there are some lyrics pertaining to men that say, “That kind of

²² Bettenson, Henry & Maunder, *Chris*. “*Documents of the Christian Church: Fourth Edition*.” New York, New York. Oxford University Press, Inc. 2011.

lux just ain't for us, we crave a different kind of buzz. Let me be your ruler (ruler). You can call me Queen Bee And baby, I'll rule, I'll rule, I'll rule, I'll rule Let me live that fantasy.” (Metro Lyrics/Royal/Lorde)

In the Holy Bible, when God punished Eve in the Garden of Eden for her part of the rebellion in the “Fall of Man,” He stated in Genesis 3:16 in part, “To the woman He said, “Your desire *shall* be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.” Yet, our young females are listening to different people in our society, telling them about ruling over men. The devil is a liar! “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion” is at play here. This is another window of opportunity for Satan, the devil, the enemy to sneak in. God’s Word was crystal clear to Eve.

In fact, according to Martin R. De Haan in the Discovery Series booklet called, “What Does God Expect of a Woman?” In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul went on to say, “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (Ephesians 5:22-24)” De Haan continues with, “From God’s point of view, this kind of submission is not a negotiable issue. The Word of God says unmistakably that a wife is to follow the lead of her husband just as her husband is responsible to love her as Christ loved the church. Obedience and recognition of a husband’s leadership come with the territory of being a Christian wife.” (*1 Corinthians 22:1-3*)²³

²³ De Haan, Martin. Discovery Series. “*What Does God Expect Of A Woman?*” RBC Ministries. Grand Rapids, MI. Thomas Nelson, Inc. 1989, p.1.1

A Solution

Unfortunately, some major Christian pastors preach that the breakdown of a marriage is all the man's fault as if he was in the marriage all by himself and the responsibility of the success of the marriage is his alone. This is ungodly false teaching and definitely not biblical either. When "The Evil Spirit of Rebellion" is in the home affecting the wife, there is nothing spiritual the husband can do about it except pray fervently to God for a move on His behalf, seek qualified spiritually healthy eldership marital counseling with experience in this area dealing with "Marital Rebellion," and try to set healthy marital boundaries in the home if at all possible.

These same egalitarian greasy grace Christian pastors cater and pander to the divorce trigger happy women, which ultimately ostracizes many men in the Christian church. Some men in the 21st-century Christian church, in turn, feel like they do not have a voice anymore and decide not to mentally, spiritually, emotionally, or physically fight for their marriages. Could you imagine if both men and women went to the legislatures in all the states that support this assault on God's families to fight to have "irreconcilable differences" removed from the divorce proceedings? How would the divorce rate change then, better or worse?

The Voice of the Husband and Father

At the same time, due to this lack of a valid voice, some men do not even fight for their "Father's Rights" share of joint custody and visitation if there are any children involved after a damaging separation and divorce have occurred. As the researcher stated previously, "Some Christian fathers in the church don't even try to fight spiritually or otherwise for their marriages at all." In fact, in the husband's defense in Proverbs 21:9, the Holy Bible states, "Better to dwell in the corner of a housetop. Than in a house shared with a contentious woman." Then in Proverbs 21:19, it states, "Better to dwell in the wilderness. Than with a contentious and angry

woman.” Furthermore, in Proverbs 27:15-16 it states, “A continual dripping on a very rainy day
And a contentious woman are alike; whoever restrains her restrains the wind, And grasps oil with
his right hand.”

Importantly, there is something symbolic about the husband’s right hand that God chooses over the left hand when it comes to grasping oil when dealing with a contentious woman. The Huffington Post article states in a general sense, “There’s Something About Marriage That Makes Women Want To Leave.” Now, on the other hand, the researcher often hears the “evangelical feminists” one-sided phrase restated through some of the “cheap, greasy grace” Christian pastors who say, “Remember, Happy Wife, Happy Life.”

In today’s secular society, men in general are continuously being denigrated by feministic women and the men who support them. And, within the Christian church, men are also being denigrated by evangelistic feminist women with a secular spin on their denigration and the men who support them within the Christian church, as if the majority of men have not improved substantially over the years. Now, mind you, the small pockets out there where some men are not living up to what God called them to be in their families; they are of the minority now, here in the 21st century. “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage is of Satan, the devil, the enemy looking to destroy the real families of God. There is another article that states, “Men are tired. Tired of being told there’s something fundamentally wrong with them. Tired of being told that if women aren’t happy, it’s men’s fault.” This comes from a publication entitled, White, Hilary. *“Young Men Giving Up On Marriage: Women Aren’t Women Anymore.”*²⁴

²⁴ Hillary White, Lifesite, “Young Men Giving up on Marriage: ‘Women Aren’t Women Anymore,’” January 15, 2013, www.lifesitenews.com/news/young-men-giving-up-on-marriage/.

The Garden of Eden

At this time, the researcher wants to lay a foundation for where the earthly rebellion came from concerning some women. “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion” on behalf of some women started from the very beginning in the book of Genesis in the Garden of Eden, obviously. When Adam was done naming his new wife and “helpmeet,” he simply went back to naming the other cattle, livestock, birds of the air, and the beasts of the field that he did not name prior to being put asleep by God while his wife was being created from his rib. For some more clarity here, can you imagine just how many cattle, livestock, birds of the air, and beasts of the field there were that needed to be named before God put Adam asleep and after God awakened him?

Meanwhile, Adam’s new wife (Woman/Eve) saw just how busy Adam was in one part of the Garden of Eden, and she decided (made a conscientious choice) to wander off and explore the other part of the garden that was partially off-limits. Eve chose to sightsee (rebel) instead of helping Adam attend to God’s Holy Garden as his helpmeet in a responding role.

Remember, Woman/Eve was created to be Adam's “helpmeet.” She could have and should have been helping Adam create different names. But instead, right away, just as soon as she was created, she wandered off away from her husband. We know Eve wandered off because in 1 Timothy 2:14 it states, “And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into the transgression.”

As soon as Woman/Eve was created, she was influenced by “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion” and allowed it to take root in her own spirit through her own choice(s). Shortly thereafter, as human history began to propagate itself through Woman / Eve, many women in general throughout biblical history began to do their own thing and commit their own rebellion against God’s will for their life with regards to their responding “role” in marriage to their

husbands. In Genesis 2:24, the Holy Bible states, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.” (*KJV*)

Then, in the last book of the Old Testament as an affirmation and confirmation according to His will, God states in Malachi 2:16, “I hate divorce says the Lord God of Israel.” (*KJV*) The New King James Version states, “For the Lord God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one’s garment with violence,” Says the Lord of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously.”

The Rebellious Married Women in the Bible

Interestingly, to put these “ungodly” divorce rates into a little more perspective with regards to this ‘Evil Spirit of Rebellion’ in marriage on a wife’s behalf, let me mention some of the rebellious women in marriage the holy Bible talks about. You can almost see a historical pattern that validates this problematic “reality” that has traveled into the 21st century, thus giving us the shameful numbers of broken marital relationships and their families through unbiblical legal separations and the unbiblical divorces in Caesar’s courts by the reported 69% of women and more.

Eve & Lot’s Wife

Adam’s wife, Woman/Eve, began the rebellion against God with her behavior and chose not to listen to God as the first biblical example for married women. Then in the book of Genesis again in Genesis 19:26 where it talks about Abrams (Abraham’s) nephew Lot and his wife leaving Sodom and Gomorrah due to God’s judgment on the cities. Lot’s wife refused to listen to God’s warning through two of His angels. The Scripture states with regards to her rebellion, “But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.” The Evil Spirit of Rebellion was clear here. Lot’s wife just had to turn around to see what she “thought” she

was missing. Even in Luke 17:32, he states, referring to Jesus saying, “Remember Lot’s wife.” So, the example of her Old Testament marital rebellion is even used in the New Testament with regards to “This Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ simply bridged His two Testaments together for clarity. Interestingly, in one recent biblical movie called, “The Bible: The Epic Miniseries,” when portraying this particular area of the family dynamic between Abraham and his nephew Lot, it paints a clear picture by showing Lot’s wife going (rebellious) against Abraham to separate from Abraham’s family. Abraham wanted Lot’s family and his own family to stay together in the same territory, but Lot’s wife kept pressuring Lot with an ungodly rebellious attitude to separate and move towards Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot’s wife wanted family division and separation. In Psalm 68:6 it states in part with the word “*land*” italicized, “But the rebellious dwell in a dry *land*.” So God is making a major point of emphasis here.

Rebellion & Stubbornness

Here again, the researcher believes these following Scriptures are relevant for teaching in this thesis project, therefore in Psalm 78:8, the Holy Bible says in part, “A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that did not set its heart aright, And whose spirit was not faithful to God.” And, then in 1 Samuel 15:23, it states in part, “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord.”

Interestingly, in both Scriptures of Psalm 78:8 and 1 Samuel 15:23, the two themes are “rebellion” and “stubbornness.” So, this “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage gets in through the window of these women’s attitude in their motivation to rebel and to simply be stubborn towards the holy marital principles that God had established, simply because God allows it and

gives them the ability to choose obedience from disobedience. Again, can anyone answer the question of “Why” women are the majority at 69% + filing for divorce here in the 21st-century when the old marital troubles of greatly improved men literally do not exist anymore?

Rebekah

At the same token, a huge example of marital rebellion is told in the story of Isaac and his wife, Rebekah, concerning their two twin sons Esau and Jacob. Isaac favored Esau and Rebekah favored Jacob. Isaac wanted Esau to receive his anointed blessing as the older twin son, but Rebekah, in a deceitful, rebellious, and impatient manner, wanted to go against God’s plan and her husband’s wishes, and instead did the disobedient thing by influencing the situation that gave Isaac’s blessing to Jacob. “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion” was surely at play here.

Here is a classic example of a wife trying to usurp Isaac’s authority as the “priest” of his home in a deceitful manner, clearly showing this “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in their marriage. Rebekah tricked her own husband Isaac without a blink of an eye or any hesitation, to then influence their twin son Jacob the younger of the two, to tell *multiple lies* to Isaac his father. Look at the spiritual dishonor by Satan, the devil, the enemy that entered this marriage.

This “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage was huge here. The multiple lies Jacob told his father was, lie (One) “I am Esau, your firstborn.” Lie (Two) “The Lord gave me success.” And, then, when Isaac asked Jacob, “Are you really my son Esau?” Lie (Three) Jacob said, “I am.” Jacob lied 3-straight times to his father’s face. In fact, Genesis 27:5-10 states it this way with regards to this “Evil Spirit of Rebellion.”

And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them

savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death. (KJV)

Finally, in Genesis 27:13, in part with great intent Rebekah owns her selfish “marital rebellion” by saying to her younger son Jacob, “Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get *them* for me.” This “Evil Spirit of Marital Rebellion” is furthered when Isaac says to his oldest twin son Esau in Genesis 27:35 in part, “Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing.”

Michal

When the saints look at the story of King David, the son of Jesse, his first wife Michal (Mee-hel / gargling sound) who was the daughter of King Saul, ultimately had a horrible rebellious attitude and clearly allowed this “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage to enter her heart. In fact, in 2 Samuel 6:16, the Holy Bible states, “Now as the ark of the Lord came into the City of David, Michal, Saul’s daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the Lord, and she despised him in her heart.”

So, let the researcher ask a few more questions here, why was Michal’s attitude so bad over her husband the King giving praise and honor to God, of all people? Why would Michal despise her own husband in her heart for it? What kind of internal character flaws did she possess? And, isn’t her attitude a little too strong for the circumstances when she should have been praising God herself in an authentic spirit of joy and jubilation with her husband celebrating a major move of God retrieving the Ark of the covenant?

This “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage had entered Michal’s heart. According to The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, “*despise*” means, “To look down on with contempt. To disdain or detest. To regard as worthless or distasteful.” So, in essence, Michal detested her husband and thought her husband, the King, was “Worthless.” Now, what happened to Michal being “in-

love” with King David like she was when David was working for her father, King Saul, at the time? Now, you know beyond a reasonable doubt that this was “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage in full play here. And, God dealt with her evil rebellion by allowing her to remain barren, giving birth to no children in all the days of her life. In 2 Samuel 6:23, it states, “Therefore, Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no children to the day of her death.”

Job’s Wife

Furthermore, as the researcher moves through the Old Testament into the book of Job, it is shown that Job’s wife rebelled against God by badgering Job and being a contentious wife during their marital trials and tribulations, while Satan and his “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage was attacking their family and saying in Job 2:9-10 in part, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die.”

Now, what kind of wife was this who was willing to curse her creator, the Almighty Father God, the creator of the heaven’s and earth and all that dwells within it, to then wish death upon her own husband at such a time of great trial and tribulation in their marriage? Obviously, Job’s wife had no fear of God, therefore disrespecting God and her husband in the worst way.

“God is not mocked.” However, Satan and his “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage were causing major problems for Job, his wife, and their children. In Isaiah 30:1 it states, “Woe to the rebellious children,’ says the Lord, Who take counsel, but not of Me, and who devise plans, but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin.”

And, then in the same chapter in Isaiah 30:9, the Holy Bible says, “That this is a rebellious people, Lying children, Children *who* will not hear the law of the Lord.” These Scriptures are even applicable to the “lack of marital submission” God stipulates in the New Testament through the Apostle Paul’s ministry. Now, what is interesting here as the researcher

looks at some of the reasons why 69% + women file for divorce, that according to the recent statistics, the old traditional reasons women file for divorce are not the same reasons anymore. This is regardless of how the “men haters,” both particular men and women, continue to denigrate men in general and deny the truth in the facts. And, regardless of the female programs on television and social media videos and verbal commentary that irresponsibly place men in general in a “negative” light year after year after year.

Jesus Christ Never Divorced the Church

Ironically, before the researcher gets into the stated reasons, let him say that from a biblical standpoint that Jesus Christ never divorced the church even when those who were not apart of the church violently crucified Him. What is important here is that throughout all of the painful turmoil leading up to being placed on the Cross at Calvary, Jesus found “no reason” to divorce His Bride, the Christian church. Simply put, marriage is a holy “*covenant*” with the Almighty Father God. Make no mistake about it, making a spiritual agreement with our holy God is a reality that comes with serious consequences if the “*covenant*” is broken. Mark 10:9 states Jesus saying, “Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

Just as importantly, here is a note to self, “God means what He says whether someone believes He will punish them or not.”

Domestic Violence Is Not a Factor

According to the recent research that covered 46,000 divorce cases in the states of Connecticut, Virginia, Montana, and Oregon, real “domestic violence” is not a factor. In fact, it goes onto say that, “Contrary to expectations, divorcing in order to escape domestic violence was not prevalent. For example, in the state of Virginia, only 6% of the divorce cases showed

violence as a cause for divorce.”²⁵ Furthermore, the researcher will speculate with a hypothesis that the 6% is an overall national average, higher in some industrial cities where the income is lower, and the family stress and anxiety is higher than the national average.

Infidelity Was Not a Factor

Also, “infidelity” was not a major factor either. The 46,000 cases from the four American states that keep statistics also found that “Adultery on the part of the husband was also not a major cause of divorces filed by wives against husbands. Infidelity, in general, was not an issue.”²⁶

As authentic pastors and ministers of God’s holy Word, the researcher and the saints must deal with the reality of divorce within their congregations and ministries, and not sugar coat the issues for the “love of money,” and safeguarding through “cheap greasy grace” many of the regular tithers and financial providers who just so happen to be some women in general. The Christian churches' families are at stake, and the next generation of saints needs to be built on a solid biblical foundation in order to prosper God’s way and continue His holy work.

Unfortunately, marriage in this country between a man (husband) and a woman (wife) is suffering from an over 50% divorce rate in general, and over 70% of those filing for divorce are women. Not to mention that of the 70% of those women filing for divorce, the majority of them are college-educated. So, if the two major issues or reasons (domestic abuse & infidelity) for women filing for divorce are off the table for the most part, then what are some of the reasons that over 70% of women in 50% of the divorce cases file for divorce? God’s holy word says in Malachi 2:16 at the end of the Old Testament as His final Word about marriage, “For the Lord

²⁵ Myers J., “*Why Do Women Initiate Divorce?*” September 19, 2013, [Livestrong.com](http://www.livestrong.com/article/146100-why-do-women-initiate-divorce/).
www.livestrong.com/article/146100-why-do-women-initiate-divorce/.

²⁶ Ibid.

God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the Lord of hosts." In Matthew 5:32, Jesus teaches very clearly, "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for that cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." (*KJV*) Furthermore, in Mark 10:12, he states, "And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." In fact, how many women of this 69% who filed for divorce committed the sinful abomination of "adultery" solidifying the curse in Mark 10:12?

Hosea and Gomer

Nevertheless, here is an eye-opening story in the Holy Bible about Hosea and his wife, Gomer. God goes above and beyond to allow any reason to validate the divorce He hates. In the book of Hosea, God shows the saints the forgiveness seen in Hosea 3:1, "Go again, love a woman *who* is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel, who took to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans."

Here God dispels this "Evil Spirit of Rebellion" in marriage. Interestingly, with regards to both Christian male and female spouses in the church that without "infidelity or adultery" and the "hardening of their hearts during the time of Moses," today, there are no other grounds that God gives for filing for the divorce that He hates. The Holy Bible is very clear, and it is God's authority on marriage

A Holy Marriage

Just as importantly, "biblical holy marriage" is serious business, and it is not a game you just pick up at a store, and when you are bored with that "marriage game," you just go buy another "marriage game" because you like the colors better or the money aspect is what you love more. Thus, forming a biblical marital covenant with God is a lifelong decision. Biblical spouses

have to walk it out according to their biblical “holy covenant” with the Almighty Father God in heaven. Let the researcher also clarify that he is talking about biblical holy marriages that are not based on adultery or any of the other abominable sins.

For example, marriages that are derived from adultery and the adulterous spouse filed for divorce and then married someone else who is divorced, thus creating “serial adultery,” that particular marriage is not a biblical holy marriage. In fact, it is a cursed marriage that will be judged by God either in real-time in the current day, or upon the passing of either spouse, when God’s decision about the abomination includes whether these particular spouses go to heaven or hell. Deuteronomy 7:26 states, “Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, for it is an accursed thing.”

God has already said that adulterers do not make it into heaven (His Kingdom). So, according to God in the New Testament, adulterers are going to hell. Ironically, in the very beginning of Jesus Christ ministry in the New Testament book of Matthew, He discussed adultery (Matthew 5:27) and how marriage is sacred and binding (Matthew 5:31-32), out of all of the issues He could have discussed at the beginning of His ministry. He chose those issues amongst just a couple of others. Importantly, one has to look at Jesus Christ's order of ministry. It means something that God wants the saints to be aware of and pay attention to. So, make no mistake about it, God’s holy marriage, adultery, and divorce are paramount issues to God.

Sin and Consequences

Furthermore, keep in mind, in Matthew 5:17, Jesus Christ stated, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” The Old Testament and The New Testament go together like ink on paper. You cannot deny the one in

favor of the other, and vice versa. So, this immediately takes the researcher back to the book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament with regards to “Sin and Consequences.” In the Holman New King James Version Study Bible commentary on the book of Deuteronomy, it states: Sin is presented in the context of the covenant. Failure to follow God’s commands would disrupt the covenant relationship, affecting its purity, unity, and witness. Disobedience would lead to God’s cursing. Deuteronomy 27-28 gives strong words about what would happen if the people failed to keep their part of the covenant. The consequences included the loss of the gift of land. Idolatry would lead to death. The nation as a whole would suffer for their disobedience and apostasy. Their history shows that God carried through with the consequences about which He warned Israel.

News flash Again! God hates divorce, and adultery is a stench in His nostrils. You just cannot sweep your former filed unbiblical divorce under the carpet in the dark and think God gave you a free hallway pass with a blessing into your unbiblical “adulterous” new marriage. “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage is a liar! Satan is the master of lies! And, greasy grace by preaching charlatans cannot prevent God’s judgment and consequences either.

Apparently, some husbands in The United States of America, according to the recent statistics, have become like a woman’s stiletto shoes. When the shoes get used up, they simply get replaced with another pair of shoes. Because many women in this 69% divorce statistic are now capable and can afford to buy a new pair of stilettos outside of being a good steward of the man or men, God initially gave them. Unfortunately, some husbands have simply become “disposable.”

This was not and is not God’s plan for real biblical holy marriages between a male husband and a female wife, with families being damaged or destroyed. In the beginning, the

Holy Bible states in Genesis 2:24, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” Furthermore, let the researcher state that there are a plethora of reasons in general why women file for divorce. However, without further ado, according to [Livestrong.com](https://www.livestrong.com), quoting the 2013 study of 46,000 divorce cases in four states, here are some of the reasons women are filing for divorce at over 70% of the divorce cases filed.²⁷

Some Unbiblical Reasons Women File for Divorce

So, here are some other unbiblical reasons women file for divorce such as “Exploitation” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), because “I’ve out Grown Him” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), because “I Don’t Need Him” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), and because “I Will Win” [Referring to Family Court Proceedings] (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*).

Now, according to Cathy Meyer, a certified divorce coach at [About.com](https://www.about.com), her article is called, “Why Are Most Divorces Filed By Women?” These are some other reasons women file for divorce. Meanwhile, remember, in general, “infidelity, adultery, and domestic violence is off the table for most men. So, here are some of Meyers reasons why women file for divorce such as, “Seeking Relief from a Bad Marriage” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Fewer Women Are Financially Dependent on a Husband” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Women Wanting More Out of Marriage” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), and “Women Losing Their Identity” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*).²⁸

²⁷ Myers, “Why Do Women Initiate Divorce?”

²⁸ Cathy Myers, “One Study Reveals These Reasons Why Women File For Divorce More Often,” Updated March 02, 2020, <https://www.liveabout.com/reasons-most-divorces-are-filed-by-women-1102909>.

The researcher has accumulated some other reasons women file for unbiblical divorces, but by no means is this list exhaustive. As you can see, there are a plethora of reasons why women file for divorce; many of the reasons are open and displayed outwardly, but there are many reasons that women keep hidden, and they present themselves later. This is very similar to a woman being officially married to a man but having an unmarried spirit. The same goes for some men out there on a lower scale, but this section “Some Unbiblical Reasons Women File for Divorce” is about women in and outside the Christian church.

Therefore, here are some more of those reasons women file divorce such as “Marital Laziness” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Midlife Crisis” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Economic Inequality” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Parental Leverage” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Perceived Greener Grass” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*),

“Family Indifferences” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Health Issues” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Male Infertility” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Personal Mental Health Issues” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “The End of a Marital Fad” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Unwilling To Be Submissive” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Fallen Out Of Love” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), “Marital Boredom” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*), and “A Lack of Education on the Part of the Husband” (*No Biblical Grounds for Divorce according To God*). Meanwhile, Alice Robb chimes in with her piece, “Why Women are More Likely than Men to Initiate Divorce.”²⁹ Robb’s states that:

²⁹ Robb, Alice. “Why Women are more likely than Men to Initiate Divorce.” *Women in the World*. August 16, 2019, <https://womenintheworld.com/2015/08/24/why-women-are-more-likely-than-men-to-initiate-a-divorce/>.

In 1956, sociologist William Goode discovered that, among couples in Detroit who'd gotten divorced in the 1940s, the wife had instigated about two-thirds of the breakups. Since then — in spite of shifts in gender relations, advances in women's rights and profound changes in our attitude towards marriage itself — that finding has been replicated repeatedly, in different contexts and cultures; researchers have found the same pattern to be true in Europe and Australia. (There's some evidence that men are beginning to catch up in the U.K., where women's rates of divorce initiation have fallen from 72 percent in the early 1990s to 69 percent in 2001 and 66 percent in 2011.)

Interestingly, in this same article Robb mentions Michael Rosenfeld, "Rosenfeld, an associate professor at Stanford University, presented his findings on Saturday at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in Chicago." She further states that "Rosenfeld's findings on divorce were consistent with previous research: women were the initiators 69 percent of the time, and both men and women usually agreed that it was the woman who wanted to call it quits."

Besides, even Candice Coleman states, "What may be most surprising about getting a divorce is the inequality of it; the vast majority of divorces and separations are initiated by women."³⁰ So, what does the Christian church do about it? Then, according to Sue Schlesman, in her article "20-Reasons Marriages Fail (Christian Marriages, Too)," she lists her 20-reasons below.³¹ Again, what does the Christian church do about it?

1. An Unforgiving Spirit	11. Grief & Depression
2. Financial Pressure	12. Greed
3. Infidelity	13. Shame
4. Insecurity & Worry	14. Anger

³⁰ Candice Coleman, "Why Do Women Initiate Divorce?" How to (Adult), accessed on August 16, 2019, <https://howtoadult.com/why-do-women-initiate-divorce-5068016.html>.

³¹ Sue Schlesman, Crosswalk.com Contributing Writer, 12 Jul 2019, <https://www.crosswalk.com/family/marriage/20-reasons-marriages-fail-even-christian-marriages.html>

5. Secret Sins	15. Dishonesty
6. Parenting Differences	16. Worldliness
7. Interference from Others	17. Pride
8. Selfishness	18. Disappointment
9. Entitlement	19. Different priorities
10. Spiritual & Emotional Immaturity	20. Self-Image

Now, none of those divorcing reasons above hold biblical grounds for filing for a divorce with regards to God’s word, but the “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage creates confusion for that 69% + of women who file for the unbiblical divorces. Remember, when Satan got kicked out of heaven, he took with him other spiritually disgraced angels, and one of those main spiritually disgraced angels is the “Evil Spirit of Rebellion,” which at times operates in tandem with the “Evil Jezebel Spirit.” Last but not least, Dr. Douglas Labier comes into the conversation and says that “The study, based on a survey of over 2000 heterosexual couples, found that women initiated nearly 70 percent of all divorces.”³²

Marital Submission

Just as importantly, to switch gears just a little to Dr. Thomas Schreiner, Associate Dean of Scripture and Interpretation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, who states, “The Scriptures never call on husbands to submit to their wives, but they consistently summon wives to submit to their husbands.”³³ Right away, someone out there who might have a problem with this might say, “Well, what about Ephesians 5:21, which states in part, “Submitting to one

³² Douglas Labier, “Women Initiate Divorce Much More Than Men, Here’s Why: Wives report more dissatisfaction with their marriages than their husbands,” Psychology Today.

³³ Gundry, Stanley and Beck, James. “Two Views on Women in Ministry.” Grand Rapids, MI. Zondervan. 2005.

another in the fear of God.” Well, for some quick clarity and proper biblical interpretation, Ephesians 5 is a split chapter that discusses the corporate church body and marriage between a husband and a wife.

In Ephesians 5:21, the Apostle Paul was referring to the corporate church body. He was referring to the Christian saints. For example, the Holy Bible separates Ephesians 5:21 from Ephesians 5:22 to clearly illustrate that these are two different Scriptures referring to two different areas of the Ephesian Christian community. One area is during the worship services in the church, and the other area refers to marriage between a husband and a wife. In fact, Dr. Schreiner further discusses what Ephesians 5:21 means with regard to “mutual submission.” He states that:

Paul may have in mind the relationship we have with one another in the church (see Ephesians 5:19-21), one in which believers mutually submit to one another. These words cannot be imposed on the marriage relationship but refer instead to a corporate setting in which believers praise God in song and submit to one another in the community.³⁴

Satan, the devil, the enemy, Rebellion, Evil Jezebel Spirit

Obviously, Satan does not want God’s biblical holy marriage of a husband and a wife to be successful, so he is using any means necessary like his “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage to try and destroy what God has joined together. Again, Mark 10:9 states, “Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

This also includes “Let Satan not separate.” Again, Satan is using his “Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage within some women to carry out his plan of family destruction and disobedience, especially within the Christian church. The recent statistical percentages of 69% + of the women filing for divorce highlights a big part of Satan’s plan. Let us not forget what

³⁴ Gundry, et al., *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, 300.

Satan's goal is. In 1 Peter 5:8 it states in part, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

Also, keep in mind that Satan has a "legion" of evil spirits and the devil to use in order to try and thwart God's holy plan for God's family here on earth. Remember, the "Gerasene Demoniac" by the other side of the seashore. This is where Jesus was met immediately by the screaming man from the tombs with an unclean spirit in him. This is also where no one was strong enough or able to bind him anymore, even with a physical chain and shackles on his ankles. In Mark 5:8-9, he states Jesus Christ as saying with authority, "Come out of the man, unclean spirit! What is your name?" The "unclean spirit" inside the man then answered Jesus, saying, "My name is Legion, for we are many."

Again, "The Evil Spirit of Rebellion" in marriage is just one of the evil spirits like one of the many inside the "Gerasene Demoniac" in the enemy's camp, and similar to "Legion" that Satan uses at his disposal to spiritually attack certain women who have easy places of spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental access. "Rebellion" is a very active intentional "evil spirit" in its own category with the responsibility to attack Christian marriages, but with the responsibility to attack all marriages in general, because there is a universal worldwide attack on marriages that are created by God's holy natural design between a man and a woman. Even in the Old Testament, God gives the saints another history on this particular "evil spirit" called, "Rebellion." 1 Samuel 15:23 in the Old Testament states in part, "For Rebellion *is* as the sin of witchcraft."

"Rebellion" is singular here as its own sin and is compared to the conjuring up of "evil spirits" that go down in the practice of witchcraft. Well, what exactly is witchcraft? According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "Witchcraft is the communication with the devil or with a

familiar connection.” Therefore, the evil spirit of “Rebellion” communicates directly with Satan, the devil, the enemy concerning vulnerable unstable marriages between a man and a woman.

The Apostle Paul states as a holy “Command” from God in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, in the category of keeping the biblical marriage vows (referring to those in a biblical holy marriage), he states, “Now to the married I command, *yet* not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to *her* husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.” In fact, in the Old Testament, if a wife divorced her husband, “Guilty wives, however, were not morally free to remarry. The fruit of their repentance was to put away (divorce) their subsequent partners (new husband) and return to their rightful spouse (the first husband). Thus, a re-establishment of the broken marriage may be presumed to be the proper way to rectify the sin of divorce.”³⁵ So, 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 makes even more sense, and one can see why the Apostle Paul wrote this Scripture because he was an anointed and highly trained expert in God’s Law as a former high ranking Pharisee (A Jewish Prosecutor).

Three Other Reason’s Marriages Fail in the Christian Church: Adultery / Being Unequally Yoked / Disobedience to God

Think in the essence of what is holy and what is unholy to God when it comes to the study of the divorce rate in the Christian church. The ultimate reason marriages fail is obviously due to sexual adultery. You see, in the situation of sexual adultery, regardless of which spouse commits it and the spouse who committed the adultery then divorces and remarries someone else, that second marriage is “unholy,” unequally yoked, and void in the eyes of God regardless of the excuses in favor of it. The grave sin of adultery is an abomination to God, and the

³⁵ Luck, William. “5. Summary of Old Testament Teachings on Divorce and Re-Marriage.” Bible.org. December 9, 2018, <https://bible.org/seriespage/5-summary-old-testament-teachings-divorce-and-re-marriage>.

destruction of the initial marital covenant in divorce is something that God hates (2 Corinthians 6:14; Malachi 2:16; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 5:9 & 5:11).

Furthermore, another reason marriages fail in the Christian church is when a spouse commits adultery and divorces his/her spouse and then unbiblically remarries someone else, he/she is now living in a continuous state of “disobedience.” Disobedience is likened to witchcraft, and witchcraft is of Satan, the devil, the enemy. Therefore, all in all, the abomination of adultery in marriage is an assault on God’s families by the kingdom of evil to disobey God, and try to disrupt and destroy God’s holy covenant for marriage as God traditionally designed it.

So, with regards to unhealthy leadership in the Christian church, there is nothing “greasy grace theology” can do to change the holy Word of God. Unfortunately, there are many Christian churches with unhealthy leadership who perform, accept and look past adulterous marriages that were put together based on false teaching and heresy, which spiritually sets up couples to fail spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically due to the “disobedience” (Ephesians 5:5-6) to God and the “unrepentance” (Ezekiel 16:38) of everyone involved. Remember, the researcher is talking about “holiness” and being spiritually holy. 1 Peter 1:16 states, “Because it is written, *Be holy, for I am holy.*” Many spouses wake up in the morning, look at themselves in the bathroom mirror, and falsely tell themselves that God blessed them and put their “unbiblical remarriage” together. They are living under a curse from God, as stated above, and they do not even realize it.

Make no mistake about it there will be grave consequences for the rebellious, disobedient adulterers in divorce and otherwise, and the spiritually unhealthy church leadership who help facilitate this kind of evil disobedience in God’s house, whether it is in the human body, God’s Temple, or in the Christian church. The book of Revelation is clear concerning the apostasy

churches, those being the “Loveless Church,” the “Compromising Church,” the “Corrupt Church,” the Dead Church,” and the “Lukewarm Church.” The wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.” (Ephesians 5:5-6) In fact, Lea Bronwyn says:

While research shows that marriage between actively practicing believers fare significantly better than others, the divorce rate within the church is still alarmingly high. Plus our deeply held belief that “it takes two” to make a marriage work mistakenly translates into a belief that “it takes two” to break a marriage up. We subconsciously assign blame accordingly. However, the truth is that it only takes one to wreck a covenant.³⁶

Purpose Statement

This thesis project is directly related to the critical problem of divorce within the Christian church, pertaining to spiritually unhealthy leadership and removing the veil of secrecy regarding marriage, unbiblical divorces, and unbiblical remarriages that end in divorce. Just as importantly, as a full explanation, the researcher wanted to focus this thesis research project on the problem and these critical issues in the church because he has personal experience and authentic knowledge within this ministry context that makes him very credible. With that being said, the researcher personally witnessed spiritually unhealthy leadership in the Christian church in general for many years. As a matter of fact, the researcher has since gone through a major unbiblical divorce that was facilitated by his ex-wife and the spiritually unhealthy leadership in the church, where one of the spiritually unhealthy and unqualified so-called pastors officially married his adulterous ex-wife to another man who was also divorced all under the spiritual cover of the church, and its public name with the actual marriage ceremony taking place outside of the church at a designated home with unsuspecting residents in a nearby city. Thus, creating

³⁶ Lea Bronwyn, “*What God Teaches Us About Broken Marriage Vows.*” Christianity Today, February 2014, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/women/2014/february/what-god-teaches-us-about-broken-marriage-vows.html>.

an abomination of disobedient, rebellious “serial adulterers” in grave adultery under the curse of God parading around in the “churches sanctuary” (i.e. inviting in the evil spirit of apostasy inside the Corrupt Church, Revelation 2:18).

Unfortunately, this “pastoral malpractice” on behalf of spiritually unhealthy leadership in the Christian church within this ministry context has created many problems for the researcher's family. This has left both of his children living in fear due to his ex-wife’s new husband, whom the researcher had to file a child abuse/child molestation report against with the local authorities because he physically abused his 6½-year-old son on 3-different occasions and he touched his 6½-year-old daughter’s private area in an elongated fashion in the bathroom under the cover of taking a bath. This was a place this grown man should have never been in, near, or around to begin with when the researcher's kids were in the bathroom clothed or naked. Because, obviously, this guy is of no blood relationship to the researcher's kids whatsoever. This then led to an official investigation by the police authorities and (CPS) Child Protective Services. Again, through the various forms of evidence, the researcher’s ex-wife was introduced to this guy during their marriage by a spiritually unhealthy and unqualified so-called pastor and his wife in the same Christian church. This occurred with the other unhealthy so-called pastor’s on paid staff in the church clique standing by watching it all unfold in retaliation against the researcher in the “church sanctuary,” via pastoral malpractice, neglect, tortious interference of contract (the legal marriage contract), greasy grace, rebellion, and the disobedience to God.

This section is very important and very critical to the foundation of this thesis project because it lends sincere, authentic credibility as a researching authority on this critical subject matter called “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate.” In fact, Pat Thomson states, “The personal narrative is intended to locate the researcher, the

personal narrative is intended to show how the research question arises from the personal life or professional work experience of the researcher, and the personal narrative is intended to lay the groundwork for a claim for professional knowledge.”

Then, according to Ezy Edit, the article called, “Combining Dissertation Writing with your Personal Life” states that, “Dissertations are usually of a subject that is very personal to the writer, and they do their research intensely. A common thing to do with the Thesis is to write about something that is very personal to the writer. Their own personal experiences play a huge part in pushing their points. They pull from their lives, things that may be lacking in research.”

Last but not least, the holiest of the holy apostles, the Apostle Paul, an astute intellectual, theological thesis project writer himself coming in second place after Jesus Christ’s own life testimony and intellectual gospel. The Apostle Paul gave us another quintessential life experience and testimony as a research authority in 2 Corinthians 11:23-29, which states: Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I *am* more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; *in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn *with indignation?*

Other Significance of the Study

The other benefit for everyone directly related to this critical ministry context will be a clearer understanding of God's word concerning healthy and unhealthy church leadership, biblical and unbiblical marriage, and biblical and unbiblical divorce, while at the same time gaining a realistic perspective about marriage ministry in the Christian church in many areas throughout Orange County California. Furthermore, this thesis project will impact the Christian church at-large in a way that will encourage Christian churches to look at healthy qualified authentic pastoral leadership that will actually deal with the unbiblical divorce rate in their churches, as opposed to simply facilitating outcome-driven preachers who only care about the numeric size of the church, instead of caring about actually saving biblical marriages and God's design for His traditional families through authentic Christ-centered ministry.

Definition of Key Terms

Pastoral / Clergy Malpractice: "A breach of the duty owed by a member of the clergy (e.g., trust, loyalty, confidentiality, guidance) that results in harm or loss to his parishioner. A claim for clergy malpractice asserts that a member of the clergy should be held liable for professional misconduct or an unreasonable lack of competence in his capacity as a religious leader and counselor."³⁷

Spiritual Malpractice: "When we don't confront sin, in others and in ourselves, we commit spiritual malpractice."³⁸

Imposter Syndrome: This term was coined by researchers and psychologists Dr. Pauline

³⁷ Legal Dictionary, Clergy Malpractice, accessed January 23, 2019, <https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Clergy+Malpractice>.

³⁸ Scott Sauls, "A Caution to 'Nice' Christians: When We Don't Confront Sin, in Others and in Ourselves, We Commit Spiritual Malpractice," Christianity Today, accessed on February 15, 2019, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2019/march/scott-sauls-irresistible-faith-caution-nice-christians.html>.

Rose Clance and Dr. Suzanne Imes in 1978. “The Imposter Phenomenon is an experience that negatively affects one's self-concept and self-esteem. A person suffering from the Imposter Phenomenon believes that even though they are successful, they believe that their accomplishments were the result of luck or some external circumstance.”³⁹

Apostasy: “An act of refusing to continue to follow, obey, or recognize a religious faith.”⁴⁰

“A falling away, a withdrawal, a defection, the historical tendency to defection from the religion of Yahweh, blaspheming the name of Christ, or moral and spiritual defection.”⁴¹

“Apostasy can also be considered abandonment or defiance of what was previously held to be true and practiced and rebelling against those same beliefs and practices. Someone or some group who does this is considered an apostate.”⁴²

Marriage: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” (*Genesis 2:24*)

Divorce: “The action or an instance of legally dissolving a marriage. Separate or severance.”⁴³

Statement of Limitations and Delimitations

This thesis project is not designed to simply provide raw data and numbers. It is designed to show how properly interpreted biblical direction, and a solution(s) in the marriage

³⁹ California State University / fullerton.edu

⁴⁰ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Apostasy, accessed January 23, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/apostasy>.

⁴¹ (ISBV)

⁴² Jack Wellman, “*What Is Apostasy? A Biblical Definition.*” Christian Crier, accessed on August 15, 2019, <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2015/05/21/what-is-apostasy-a-biblical-definition-of-apostasy/>.

⁴³ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Divorce, accessed January 23, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/divorce>.

and divorce ministry will shed light on some of the main problems that are destroying many marriages in the Christian church and causing emotional damage to children and families.

All in all, there will be a limited demographic due to the unlikelihood of traveling to all 50-state family courthouses to speak with each Clerk of Court about the divorce statistics and its rates of occurrence for Christian and non-Christian marriages. Therefore, I will be limited to the Southern California demographic in Orange County. Also, this thesis project will be limited to only those on the internet through social media who voluntarily take the online survey that will be facilitated through the social media platform Facebook, Survey Monkey, and to the recalled history of a previous church marriage ministry that the researcher was a part of.

Now, here is another example of a limitation. Recently, the researcher was at an outdoor gathering, and he was telling a married couple of 38-years that his thesis project subject was called “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate.” Right away, the husband raised his eyebrows with surprise, and his wife got quiet and sort of shrunk her demeanor in because she was a former divorcee and probably after all of the years that had gone by, she still had some type of guilt or shame on how her previous marriage ended in divorce. Needless to say, this particular couple would not humor the researcher and comment on the subject matter. So, the conversation took a weird turn. Therefore, the limitation here is guilt and shame. So, any proffered up interview questions would not get answered honestly amongst a broader sample base in person.

Furthermore, there is one delimitation that concerns a constraint imposed on the researcher by someone external to the study, is the simple fact that most senior pastors within many Orange County, California, Christian churches will not open up their marriage ministries in general to someone who is not a member of their church to be studied, surveyed, or

interviewed for fear of something questionable in the marriage ministries being uncovered on their watch.

But then, oppositely, as a sampling restriction, some senior pastors may have allowed limited access to certain paid church staff members and/or general church members for a limited amount of time concerning their marriage ministries.

Thesis Statement

What is unhealthy leadership in the Christian church? For that matter, what is healthy leadership in the Christian church? And, how does it affect the divorce rate in the church? This thesis project thus far has dealt with and will deal with some very important issues with regards to spiritual unhealthiness amongst leaders in the Christian church, who help pander the divorce rate amongst some of the people who are a part of the church. For example, this thesis project has dealt with unhealthy leadership in the Christian church, impostors in the pulpit, unqualified leadership, unsaved leadership, the evil spirit of rebellion in marriage, the statistics concerning the current divorce rate in general (secular & in the church), some of the reasons marriages fail, and some of the reasons women file for divorce. Therefore, the Christian church at-large needs a wakeup call and a solution.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Every single literature item listed below is relevant to the topic called “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate.” Therefore, they are self-explanatory. On the other hand, the biblical Scriptures needed to be explained with some detail, but they are also right on point with regards to “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church.”

Akerlof, George & Yellen, Janet. “*An Analysis of Out-of-Wedlock births in the United States.*”⁴⁴ This particular literature is relevant to show the facts concerning the fornication that occurs with an unhealthy church when it comes to unholy relationships amongst the church body.

Askins, Allen. “*Paul’s Defense of His Apostolic Authority to the Galatians.*”⁴⁵ The Apostle Paul’s defending his pastoral authority is relevant to the topic by illustrating what a healthy leader does and how he is to represent the house of God.

A Wild Voice. “*Is Remarriage an Abomination to God?*”⁴⁶ The current divorce rate in the Christian church involves the unbiblical remarriage rate as well. This also involves the unhealthy aspect of church leadership due to unqualified pastors marrying adultery in the church, which surely places a tangible curse over the churches that do that.

⁴⁴ Akerlof, George & Yellen, Janet. “*An Analysis of Out-of-Wedlock births in the United States.*” Brookings.edu, accessed on January 23, 2019, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/12/22/less-than-half-of-u-s-kids-today-live-in-a-traditional-family/>.

⁴⁵ Askins, Allen. “*Paul’s Defense of His Apostolic Authority to the Galatians.*” *Conservative Theological Journal*. CTJ 02:6 (Sep 1998).

⁴⁶ A Wild Voice. “*Is Remarriage an Abomination to God?*” A Wild Voice, accessed on January 26, 2019, <https://awildvoice.wordpress.com/2010/03/12/is-remarriage-an-abomination-to-god/>.

Berlin, Gordon. “*The Effects of Marriage and Divorce on Families and Children.*”⁴⁷

The bottom line is that divorce is a spiritual division, and divorce is a real death in the family in the same way as losing someone to the grave, and its emotional effect on children is irreversible. Unfortunately, this adds to the unhealthiness of the Christian churches that go through this.

Brown, Greg. “*16. Characteristics of Healthy Churches (1 Peter 5:1-5).*”⁴⁸ Obviously, if we are talking about unhealthiness in the Christian church, then we also have to talk about the healthiness in the Christian church.

Bruce, F.F. “*Paul And Jerusalem.*”⁴⁹ This is a very interesting journal article because it describes Saul of Tarsus' upbringing in Jerusalem that developed his internal foundation as a man, which by all intents and purposes, was the foundation of his older character. It is relevant to my topic because unhealthiness in a particular church leader most definitely stems from who that leader is and where that particular leader came from.

Bruce, F.F. “*Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free.*”⁵⁰ This book is relevant to my topic by one very theological and ethical distinction. “It is sometimes said that Christ is the end of the ceremonial law (including sacrificial cultus, circumcision, and the observance of the sacred calendar) but not the moral law.” With regard to healthiness amongst church leadership, there is a holy responsibility that God requires that we see in 1 Samuel 3:13 concerning Eli, the priest,

⁴⁷ Gordon Berlin, “*The Effects of Marriage and Divorce on Families and Children,*” MDRC Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation Testimony, accessed on January 23, 2019, <https://www.mdrc.org/publication/effects-marriage-and-divorce-families-and-children>.

⁴⁸ Greg Brown, “*16. Characteristics of Healthy Churches (1 Peter 5:1-5).*” Bible.org, accessed on January 23, 2019, <https://bible.org/seriespage/16-characteristics-healthy-churches-1-peter-51-5>.

⁴⁹ F.F Bruce, “*Paul And Jerusalem,*” Tyndale Bulletin, TYNBUL 19:1 (1968).

⁵⁰ F.F Bruce, “*Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free.*” Carlisle Cumbria, UK. The Patteroster Press Ltd., (1977).

and his two corrupt sons. Jesus Christ stated in Matthew 5:17, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”

Carson, D. “*When Is Spirituality Spiritual? Reflections on Some Problems Old Definition.*”⁵¹ This journal is relevant to my topic because it is talking about the spirit of a person, which applies to some of the unhealthy aspects of leaders in the Christian church. Which kind of spirit is an unhealthy leader carrying?

Chafin, Kenneth. “*Free to Lead.*”⁵² This journal goes right to the point and is very relevant to my topic concerning unhealthy leadership when it talks about the Apostle Paul’s feelings towards his own personal leadership role and how he did not abuse his power when he could have, and how he did not refuse to be an authentic leader in general. The Christian church today needs healthy pastoral leaders to help guide healthy families, especially to lead the way like a lighthouse for marital stability in the Christian church.

Christopherson, Jeff. “*Kingdom First: Starting Churches that Shape Movements.*”⁵³ This book is very relevant to my topic because it discusses the sin of the unhealthy leader. (The sin of Sensuality-License) and (The sin of Pride-Legalism).

DeFranza, Megan. “*The Proverbs 31 Woman of Strength: An Argument for A Primary Sense Translation.*”⁵⁴ This journal article is relevant to my topic because it discusses a wife’s role in her marriage that is supposed to help safeguard her marriage from being destroyed by the

⁵¹ D. Carson, “*When Is Spirituality Spiritual? Reflections on Some Problems Old Definition,*” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society. JETS 37:3 (September 1994).

⁵² Kenneth Chafin, “*Free to Lead,*” Faith and Mission. FM 09:1 (Fall 1991).

⁵³ Jeff Christopherson, “*Kingdom First: Starting Churches that Shape Movements,*” Nashville, TN. B & H Publishing Group, 2015.

⁵⁴ Megan DeFranza, “*The Proverbs 31 Woman of Strength: An Argument for A Primary Sense Translation,*” Pricilla Papers. PP 25:1 (Winter 2011).

enemy, which could be moving through unhealthy church leadership with false marriage theology.

Demarest, Bruce. “*Seasons of the Soul: Stages of Spiritual Development.*”⁵⁵ Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church with regards to divorce has everything to do with the stages of spiritual development in both the pastor and the spouse(s) in the congregation because unhealthiness in a leader and divorce are grave spiritual manipulations by Satan, the Devil, the Enemy. And depending on the degree of the wrong spiritual influence in the church sanctuary, the Holy Spirit will not show up anyway and leave the sanctuary for the kingdom of evil, which I call “The Den of Demons.”

Detwiler, David. “*Paul’s Approach to the Great Commission in Acts 14:21-23.*”⁵⁶

This article is relevant to my topic because it discusses Paul’s goal to plant churches that could provide ongoing nurture through qualified leaders. Paul was very specific about who he chose as a healthy leader.

Epperly, Bruce. “*A Center in The Cyclone: Twenty-First Century Clergy Self-Care.*”⁵⁷

This book is self-explanatory with regards to many health issues; healthy and unhealthy, concerning church leadership.

Esau, David. “*Remarriage After Divorce in Today’s Church—Summary Notes.*”⁵⁸ This article is relevant to my topic because it asks some pretty good questions that I can use to help flesh out some of the divorce statistics with regards to second marriages.

⁵⁵ Bruce Demarest, “*Seasons of the Soul: Stages of Spiritual Development,*” Intervarsity Press. 2009.

⁵⁶ David Detwiler, “*Paul’s Approach to the Great Commission in Acts 14:21-23,*” Bibliotheca Sacra. BSAC 152:605 (January 1995).

⁵⁷ Bruce Epperly, “*A Center in The Cyclone: Twenty-First Century Clergy Self-Care,*” Lanham, Maryland. Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.

Fee, Gordon. “*Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God.*”⁵⁹ The Apostle Paul has a lot of answers and ministry that is relevant to my topic. This book brings light to the awareness about the Holy Spirit as Person, which speaks about the Holy Spirit being the agent of God. Qualified pastoral leaders are supposed to be anointed with the presence of the Holy Spirit. But if the church leadership is unhealthy, the Holy Spirit is nowhere around.

Fleming, Archibald. “*The Church Essentially Spiritual.*”⁶⁰ There are only two realms in this world, good and evil. If a church leader is not doing good, then he is doing evil. This article is very relevant to my topic by talking about the spiritual aspect of the body of Christ.

Fleming, Kenneth. “*Missionary Service in the Life of Paul.*”⁶¹ The narrative of Paul’s missionary life makes it clear that he realized the importance of well-taught disciples. He knew that without adequate training, the believers could not stand in a secular world, the churches would not be able to continue, and the whole Christian movement would falter. Well taught and trained believers were vital to the life of the early church. The importance of teaching cannot be overemphasized. God designed it as something essential to the believer’s spiritual development and service.

⁵⁸ David Esau, “*Remarriage After Divorce in Today’s Church—Summary Notes,*” Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship Church in Canada, accessed on January 23, 2019, https://www.erbf.com/df_media/W1siZiIsIjIwMTcvMDIvMjMvMTUvNTQvNTkvMGEzNjM5OGItZGJmNC00ZmVmLTkxN2QtZjlyNjY0ZjZkMGFjL0Rpdm9yY2UgXHUwMDI2IFJlbWFycmlhZ2UgQm9vayBTdW1tYXJ5IEdlYW1lbnBkZiJdXQ/Divorce%20%26%20Remarriage%20Book%20Summary%20Guide.pdf?sha=e6450d937eae3d8a.

⁵⁹ Gordon Fee, “*Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God,*” Grand Rapids, MI. Baker Academic, 1996.

⁶⁰ Archibald Fleming, “*The Church Essentially Spiritual,*” *Bibliotheca Sacra*. BSAC 012:48 (October 1855).

⁶¹ Kenneth Fleming, “*Missionary Service in the Life of Paul,*” *Emmaus Journal*. EMJ 01:3 (Winter 1992).

Gangel, Kenneth. “*Marks of a Healthy Church.*”⁶² This journal is relevant to my topic by discussing how a church operates. Therefore, this information describing the spiritual healthiness or the lack of spiritual healthiness concerning leaders in the Christian church.

Gasser, William. “*What Is A Healthy Church?*”⁶³ This journal is self-explanatory and very relevant to my topic because it discusses what makes a healthy church. Again, if my topic is about unhealthy leadership in the Christian church, then I have to talk about healthy leadership in the Christian church in order to bring conversational balance.

Scriptures

Genesis 2:24 “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Unfortunately, this particular Scripture gets quoted in the church, but it is rarely carried out with the seriousness God applied to it. The divorce rate is so high in the Christian church because so many unhealthy leaders do not have the courage to drive God’s intentions home, so married spouses understand that divorce does not set the stage for a simple “do-over.” Marriage is a one-time deal until death do us apart (outside of death and adultery).

At the same token, one other unhealthy measure is that when an unhealthy leader has been divorced himself without the biblical interpretation and understanding of marriage, he is more than likely ready to pass on some cheap and greasy grace and allow an unbiblical divorce to take place to then allow an unbiblical remarriage.

⁶² Kenneth Gangel, “*Marks of a Healthy Church,*” *Bibliotheca Sacra*. BSAC 158:632 (October 2001).

⁶³ William Gasser, “*What Is A Healthy Church?*” *Journal of Ministry and Theology*. JMAT 06:1 (Spring 2002).

1 Samuel 3:13 “For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.” With regard to unhealthy leadership in the Christian church, a big part of it stems from some senior pastors render out “greasy grace, cheap grace, or no grace at all and simply avoid problems and/or conflict and never deal with it leaving the church in a spiritual mess.

2 Peter 2:4-22 Talks about the Destructive Doctrines with the “Doom of False Teachers,” the “Depravity of False Teachers,” and The “Deceptions of False Teachers.” This all goes along with the unhealthy leadership in the Christian church.

1 Timothy 3:2-7 (*NIV*) “Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.”

Hebrews 12:14 (*KJV*) “Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” Again, God is talking about holiness here. Unhealthy church leadership who has not healed from within, nine times out of ten are not following peace with all men and therefore is not in a position to make healthy decisions when it comes to the hurting families in the church when marital issues are at stake.

1 Peter 1:16 (*KJV*) “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” This Scripture is self-explanatory as well. Obviously, unhealthy church leadership is not holy, nor do the leaders

embody holiness individually. Qualified Pastoral leadership is supposed to be holy. It is a command from God. He's not asking anyone. He is telling everyone to be holy. With that being said, when spouses file unbiblical divorces in the Christian church they are breaking God's holy covenant for marriage, thus rendering them unholy. This angers God greatly.

2 Corinthians 11:20-21 "For you put up with it if one brings you into bondage, if one devours you, if one takes *from* you, if one exalts himself, if one strikes you on the face. To *our* shame I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold—I speak foolishly—I am bold also." The "impostors in the pulpit's" game is such a racket. And God has given us ample warning to beware. As God's children, we are not supposed to just sit in the pews in a trance. Again, this all goes towards the character of the unhealthy leadership.

Luke 4:23 (KJV) "And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country." You better believe that there is a reason why God "allowed suffering" being a main characteristic of following Jesus Christ and a prerequisite for "real" pastoral leadership over people who enter the church.

2 Corinthians 11:23-29, Jesus Christ made sure the apostle Paul set a new example for real pastoral leaders and preachers to follow and understand in which states in part:

I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipped wrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea. I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea, and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. (NIV)

Numbers 23:19 (*KJV*) “God *is* not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” Christian church leaders need to have integrity, honesty and stop pandering the lies saying that God told them something that was not and is not true just to seem like they are holy. This is clear unhealthiness that can be spiritually felt by the authentic church body.

Matthew 24:11 “Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.” According to the Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, the definition of prophet is, “The one who speaks before in the sense of proclaim, or the one who speaks for, i.e., in the name of (God). He is under divine constraint. It is God who invites, summons, and impels him. By inspiration, God speaks to the nabi, who has to transmit exactly what he receives.”⁶⁴

Galatians 6:7 “Do not be deceived. God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” This particular Scripture goes towards the “Church Apostasy.” Unhealthy preachers trying to mock God is clearly being done when parishioners are allowed to file unbiblical divorces with no church discipline. Again, certain kinds of pastors who pass on “Cheap Grace” are trying to mock God with the enabling of the destruction of families.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 “Let no one deceive you by any means.” You know life is too short to just meander through it with regards to going to church. However, it is true God can and will show up anywhere. But God’s main presence is in His own house, the fundamental Christian church, and His temple inside the human body. Therefore, it important for the leadership to be healthy as opposed to being unhealthy.

2 Peter 2:3 in part (*NIV*) “In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up.” This Scripture is self-explanatory. Obviously, this is clear unhealthiness on

⁶⁴ Walter Elwell, “Evangelical Dictionary Of Theology: Second Edition,” Grand Rapids, MI. Baker Book House Company. 2001, 960.

behalf of leaders within the Christian church. “For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.”

1 Timothy 1:6-7 (NIV) “Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. They want to be the teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.” Unhealthy leadership in the Christian church with fake stories and exaggerated testimonies flows along the lines of unhealthy leadership handing out “cheap grace” when it comes to sins and abominations like adultery or divorce amongst the congregation.

Colossians 2:23 (NIV) “Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom with their self-imposed worship, their false humility, and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.” These are unhealthy characteristics that pertain to many church leaders who give a pass for parishioners who commit adultery and/or who may carry out multiple unbiblical divorces.

Galatians 5:10 (NIV) “I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view. The one who is throwing you into confusion will pay the penalty, whoever he may be.” Unhealthy leadership in the Christian church most certainly deals with the internal spirits of the leaders. In many cases, the so-called leaders don’t even know the proper interpretation of God’s word, so in their leadership, they misquote Scripture and lead the sheep astray in confusion. In some respects, there is this “Fake it until you make it mentality.” The apostle Paul is calling this deception, which is clear unhealthiness.

Theological Foundation

Initially, with this thesis topic called “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A

Study of the Divorce Rate,” the greatest element of the theological foundation is God’s Word, His Holy Bible. Everything else with regards to research materials and other authorities is simply add-ons for theological commentary. Therefore, there are many Scriptures included in this thesis project where God is talking about marriage, unbiblical separation, unbiblical divorce, and unbiblical remarriage to a different person in the abomination of serial adultery.

Therefore, with regards to other authorities and theological commentary, the researcher would like to tap into William Lawrence’s journal called, “Distinctives of Christian Leadership.” He believes that a thorough assessment of what Christian leadership actually is should undergird the theological foundation at the start. Lawrence goes on to state that, “The chief characteristic of a Christian leader must be submission to Christ and that this submission is the key to power.”⁶⁵ He further says that “Christian leadership is a crown of thorns as an authoritative leader.” He goes on to give us a few solid distinctives defining Christian leadership such as:

- Christian Leadership is the ability to show others which way the leader is going.
- The purpose of each Christian leader should be to guide others in following Christ.
- Christian leadership requires Christian character.
- Christian leadership requires authenticity and authority.
- Christian leadership is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Now, what William Lawrence says is apropos and right on point. Unhealthy leadership in the Christian church is the exact opposite. In fact, unhealthy leadership in the Christian

church is as follows:

⁶⁵ Lawrence, William. “*Distinctives of Christian Leadership.*” *Bibliotheca Sacra*. BSAC 144:575 (July 1987)

- Unhealthy Christian leadership is not the ability to show others the right way the leader is going.
- Unhealthy Christian leadership guides others to follow Satan, the devil, the enemy.
- Unhealthy Christian leadership does not display biblical Christian character.
- Unhealthy Christian leadership is not authentic and is under the wrong authority (the kingdom of Satan)
- Unhealthy Christian leadership is not empowered by the Holy Spirit.

With that being said, “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church” is a critical issue and many lives are at stake concerning the saints. As the researcher looked around, he came across an article written by Richard Krejcir entitled, “What Makes a Church Healthy or Unhealthy.” In this article, he lists many, many things that are right on point as well. He states, “This comes from a big problem we have in most churches today, that is the tendency of leaders not effectually growing in the Lord and thus do not practice their faith, and this dispenses down to the congregation. And the outcome is a church that has missed its point and reason for being.”⁶⁶

Therefore, a church that has missed its mark exposes its unhealthy leadership automatically. This is not just a big problem; it is a major problem that has dire consequences both for the church and for its congregants. Remember this, when someone has prayed and gone to a medical doctor and received no help, and that person has prayed and gone to particular psychologists and received no help there either, their last resort is to pray to God and seek the help of pastoral leadership in the Christian church. When their efforts seeking out unhealthy

⁶⁶ Krejcir, Richard. “*What Makes a Church Healthy or Unhealthy?*” Churchleadership.org, Frances Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership. (Accessed on January 23, 2019)

pastoral leadership in the church fails them, they find themselves in a very vulnerable place spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically. Krejcir chimes in and states that:

- Unhealthy churches tend to have leadership that is prideful and builds their church on the foundation of their legacy or personality.
- Unhealthy churches tend not to be focused on prayer, and they seek what they want, ignoring what God and His Word have for them.
- Unhealthy churches tend not to be interested or centered upon the Lordship and centrality of Christ. They are places of personality, leadership in control for personal agendas, and/or seeking trends contrary to the agenda or call of God's Word.
- Unhealthy churches only desire to produce what the leaders want.
- Unhealthy churches tend to see their people as consumers, not participants.
- Unhealthy churches tend to coerce and manipulate or micromanage their people, which does not build a healthy community.

Interestingly, when the researcher thinks about “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church,” he can’t help but think about the holiest of the holy apostles, the Apostle Paul and what he says about a Christian leader. Edmond Hiebert gets into it here when he talks about the qualifications for leadership positions in the Christian church in his journal called, “Pauline Images of a Christian leader.”

“When seeking to trace the biblical portrayal of the qualities of Christian leadership, one’s thoughts naturally turn to the Apostle Paul, one of the most effective leaders in the entire

history of the Christian church.”⁶⁷ So he states Paul’s seven images of the Christian leader being as follows:

- A Teacher (2 Timothy 2:2)
- A Soldier (2 Timothy 2:3-4)
- An Athlete (2 Timothy 2:5)
- A Farmer (2 Timothy 2:6)
- A Workman (2 Timothy 2:15)
- A Vessel (2 Timothy 2:21)
- A Slave (2 Timothy 2:24-25)

At the same token, the researcher just wants to solidify what a healthy Christian church leader is so there is clarity and an accurate assessment as to what an unhealthy leader in the Christian church is for a thorough theological foundation. With that being said, the researcher wants to talk about the “The Emotionally Healthy Leader.” This is a book that was written by Peter Scazzero called, “The Emotionally Healthy Leader: How transforming your inner life will deeply transform your church, team, and the world.” He states in one area that, “Learning to be an Emotionally Healthy Leader Takes Time.” (Scazzero, Peter)

This particular tree concept that Scazzero uses is called, “The Outer Life / Inner Life,” which seems fitting to identify the “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church,” as it talks about the deep roots of the tree all the way up to the outer branches of the tree, because what starts out on the inside plays itself out on the outside. “You can judge a tree by its fruit.”

(Matthew 7:20 & Luke 6:43-45)

Scazzero goes onto say that, “To be an emotionally healthy leader we must drive certain

⁶⁷ Hiebert, Edmond. “*Pauline Images of a Christian Leader.*” *Bibliotheca Sacra*. BSAC 133:531 (July 1976)

practices deep into our inner life if we are to build well.” Then he says, “I want to shift from the image of a skyscraper to the ancient imagery of a large fruit-bearing tree. It captures more clearly the inseparable organic connection between the roots (our inner life) and the branches producing fruit (our outer life).” Just as importantly, Bruce Epperly makes a good point also when he stated, “Excellent, effective, and spiritually centered pastors share a commitment to prayer, study, continuing education, psychological maturity, self-reflection, compassionate listening, visionary thinking, and justice seeking.”⁶⁸

Meanwhile, the other segment that is connected to “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church” is “A Study of the Divorce Rate.” Right away as a theological foundation God jumps all over this in the Old Testament in the beginning with (Genesis 2:24) as He establishes authentic marriage in covenant between His holiness, a man, and a woman. And then in the Old Testament at the end of it with (Malachi 2:16) God makes it clear what He feels about divorce between a man and a woman.

In “God’s View of Divorce, Part 1” John MacArthur states on p.3, “And as Christians we should also hate divorce because it destroys the perfect design of God for marriage.” Then, on p. 6 John MacArthur states, “And what Deuteronomy 24 is showing is if somebody does get a divorce they really are in a serious condition because if they make another marriage, that marriage constitutes adultery. And, we all know how adultery should be dealt with.”⁶⁹

What MacArthur says here is so important, because the unhealthy leadership in a Christian church who just may be an impostor in the pulpit will officially perform a marriage between a man and a woman, where the woman un-biblically divorced her 1st husband and to

⁶⁸ Epperly, Bruce. *A Center in the Cyclone: Twenty-First Century Clergy Self-Care.* Lanham, Maryland. Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.

⁶⁹ (MacArthur, John)

marry another man. This has then created “serial adultery” that was instigated by the Christian church. How many spouses in the Christian church are living in an adulterous marriage reaping the “ire” from God unbeknownst to them? Remember, “You reap what you sow.”

Ashley Moor came out with an interesting perspective in her article called, “This Is How Likely You Are to Get a Divorce in Your Lifetime.” She states, “As of 2018, between 42 and 45 percent of all marriages in America end in divorce.” And that, “You 40 percent more likely to seek a divorce from your partner if you witnessed the divorce of your own parents. And, if a parent (or two) married someone else after attaining a divorce, your 91% percent more likely to get a divorce.” Then she states, “You are more likely to get divorced at least one time throughout your life if you’re an evangelical Christian.”⁷⁰

Technically, when the saints think about the divorce rate in general, be it in the Christian church or in the world they rarely think necessarily about the different age groups getting the many divorces. According to the research many people generally think about the gender aspects of divorce between men and women.

Well, according to an article by Bloomberg called, “Millennials Are Causing the U.S. Divorce Rate to Plummet.” Ben Steverman stated, “According to Bowling Green’s National Center for Family and Marriage Research, the divorce rate doubled for people aged 55 to 64, and even tripled for Americans 65 and older. Cohen’s results suggest this trend, called “grey divorce,” may have leveled out in the past decade.”⁷¹

⁷⁰ Moor, Ashley. “*This Is How Likely You Are to Get a Divorce in Your Lifetime.*” Best Life. <https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/likely-divorce-lifetime-181500018.html>. (Accessed on December 28, 2018)

⁷¹ Steverman, Ben. “*Millennials Are Causing the U.S. Divorce Rate to Plummet.*” Bloomberg. (Accessed on September 25, 2018)

Chapter 3

Statement of Methodology

In this part of the thesis project, what materials were produced to facilitate the research? Below are the research materials used. Right away, the researcher started with his personal experience in a particular marriage ministry that was a part of his ministry context. Then, he used the 2013 U.S. Census Bureau's Orange County, CA demographics as a baseline for which cultures the divorces are happening in Orange County, CA. At the same token, he used various authors and other authorities to validate this critical issue of unhealthy leadership in the Christian church. Furthermore, he used an online marriage questionnaire to come up with certain data to fortify the results that identify certain aspects of the divorce rate in the Christian church.

2013 Orange County, CA Demographics According to the U.S. Census Bureau:

Caucasian	74%	People per square mile
Hispanic	34%	3,805
Asian	19%	
Some other Race	14%	
African American	2%	
OC Population	3,114,363 People	
African American	62,287 People	
Caucasian	1,852,969 People	
Hispanic	994,279 People	
Asian	532,499 People	
Some other Race	445,801 People	

African American's In the City of Irvine	3,718
African American Males	1,817
African American Females	1,901
Median Age of African Americans	31 yrs. of age

Ministry Settings

Meanwhile, as a ministry setting, the researcher used his personal knowledge of various mega-churches and their marriage ministries in the Orange County, CA region that facilitate their churches on the internet through social media platforms, including his own church's marital counseling ministry. Furthermore, the researcher used previously preached sermons he did where the research was already done of various lengths about “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: The Study of the Divorce Rate,” therefore data from those sermons was already available. It simply needed to be imputed into this critical thesis project.

How will the researcher establish a baseline for measuring change? In the outset, an initial baseline of measuring change starts when the Christian church at-large has qualified healthy leadership in place. When a church starts with qualified, healthy leadership, a solid foundation is laid. It would then be more than likely that the proper interpretation of God's word would be facilitated in the area of marriage and divorce, that would save many marriages and put up a great fight against the “Evil Spirit of Divorce” in the effort of helping the original families (biblical families) stay together and flourish in the fear of God while honoring God's holy marital covenants.

Therefore, after which, the change will be an event by the number of marriages that are saved and that do not divorce while offering up quantifiable “praise reports” in the church of the families' relational successes. That's right, periodically throughout the year, there should be a

physical tally of the marriages that were going up the rough side of the mountain, going through hell and high water, and going through the valley of dry bones, after being on the rocky road in the same way that church attendance is evaluated periodically throughout the year. Can you imagine how much moral support spouses would receive from their fellow saints knowing that they made it over and held their marriage together? That is exactly the kind of moral support unstable marriages need. The marriage ministry in the Christian church should be one of the biggest, if not the biggest ministry it has. Therefore, the church should hold regular congregational celebrations of its success as public notice, in the same way, member baptisms are done publicly in front of the congregation.

With that being said, to also quantify the effective change as a means of spiritual and physical intervention, each Christian church should have an official “marriage survey” that is circulated two or three times per year amongst the saints/congregation to be honestly answered by those who are married to find out anonymously how many marriages are doing well and how many marriages are in trouble. In either scenario, it is then the responsibility of the qualified, healthy senior pastor to preach biblically sound messages to help continue those marriages that are doing the right things to stay together, and/or to preach biblically sound messages to those marriages that are going up the rough side of the mountain, through hell and high water, living in the valley if dry bones, after being on the rocky road.

Furthermore, there needs to be consistent follow-up and follow through with solid marriage ministries that are led by other qualified, healthy leadership who will take a hands-on approach in God’s house, facilitating success in this area. Again, the marriage ministry should be just as big or bigger than any other ministry in the church because the essence of family is

generational, hence the continuation of the Christian church generation after generation after generation.

Technically, this is the same thing as “Medical Preventative Care” (MPC) that goes on in the medical field. So, for the sake of this critical issue in the Christian church, let us call the marriage ministry “Divorce Preventative Care” (DPC) as another baseline for measuring change?

Chapter 4

Online Marriage Questionnaire

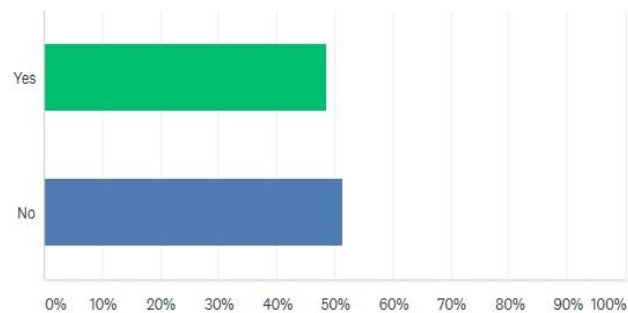
Results & Data

The results and data are derived from an online questionnaire conducted by Survey Monkey. The online marriage questionnaire/survey asked Christian participants 50-questions dealing with the Christian church, leaders in the church, and questions about marriage and divorce. At the outset, there were 102 responses in total. There were 88.24% of respondents who agreed or consented to participate in this study, leaving only 11.76% of participants who did not agree to participate in this study

Now, to gather a baseline concerning marriage in general, the researcher asked the question as the second question to start the questionnaire off in the marital direction, he asked, “Are you married?” This particular question will show the disparity between those who are married and between those who are not married, single, or divorced.

Are you married?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 37



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	48.53% 33
No	51.47% 35
TOTAL	68

Figure 1. Current Marital Status

As can be seen in Figure. 1, 68 out of those 68 participants responded. There were 48.53% (33 participants) of those who were married and 51.47% (35 participants) of those who were not married. And, there were 37-participants who skipped this question. Interestingly, for those who chose to answer this question, there was practically a 50/50 split. What makes this even more interesting is that a random anonymous questionnaire of this sort fits the national standard for the general divorce rate, which states that for every 2-adults you meet that have been married, one of them is going to be divorced.

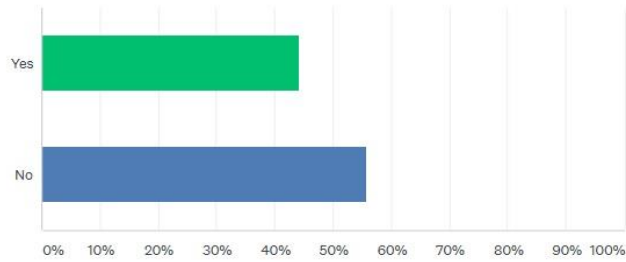
Case in point, the researcher, asked another question that stated, “Are you divorced?” Sure enough, out of the 68-participants who responded, 44.12% (30-participants) said, “Yes.” So, the marriage rate to the divorce rate is almost a 50/50 split in this particular sample group. Therefore, if we divide the number of those who were married (48.53%) by the number of those who are divorced (44.12%) we get the number of 1.099, which is a little more than 50% of those getting a divorce.

At the same token, if the researcher took the number of participants who were married (33) and divided it by the number of participants who are divorced (30), the balance is 1.1, respectively. In fact, Dr. David Popenoe, co-director of the National Marriage Project at Rutgers University, stated, “An individual's chances of divorce over a lifetime are 40 to 50 percent.”⁷²

⁷² Christine Wicker, “Dumbfounded by Divorce: Survey Inspires Debate over Why Faith Isn’t a Bigger Factor in Marriage.” The Dallas Morning News, accessed on September 22, 2019, https://www.adherents.com/largecom/baptist_divorce.html.

Are you divorced?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 37



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	44.12%	30
No	55.88%	38
TOTAL		68

Figure 2. History of Divorce

This particular online Christian questionnaire does not specifically break down the various divorce percentages amongst the different denominations a part of the Christian religion. However, the Barna Research Group does break down those percentages stated in the diagram below (Figure. 3). It shows the controversial divorce rate amongst the non-denominational church being 34%, Baptist 29%, Episcopal 28%, Pentecostal 28%, Methodist 26%, Presbyterian 23%, Catholic 21%, and Lutheran 21%.

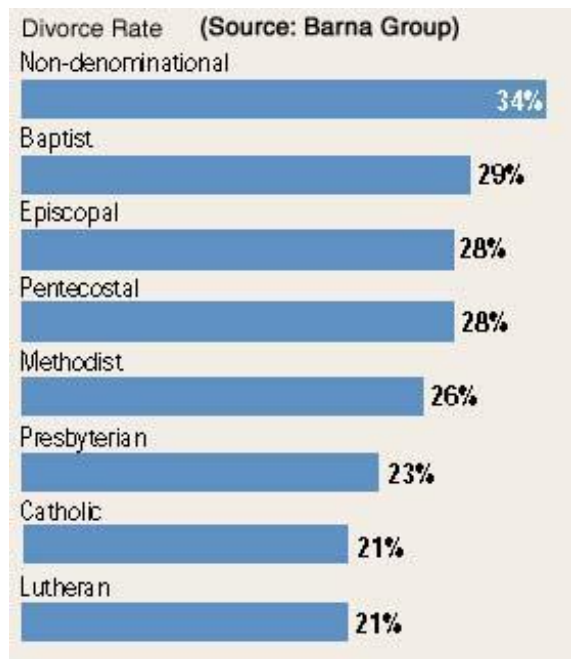


Figure 3. Christian Divorce Rate

What is disheartening at this point in the study of the divorce rate is that the Christian church has a divorce rate in general, regardless of the percentages. The Christian church is supposed to be the biblical marital example for the rest of the world to follow. So, obviously, something is wrong with this marital picture. Moreover, just looking at the Barna Research Group numbers clearly shows that something is very wrong within the Christian church. Is it the churches' unhealthy leadership? Is it unhealthy congregants? Or is it both?

Also, do keep in mind that of the divorces that are filed, 70% of these divorces are filed by women with unbiblical reasons for doing so. George Barna states that:

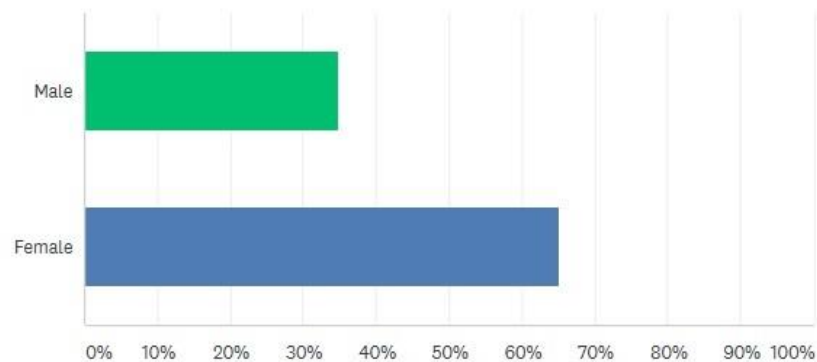
Americans have grown comfortable with divorce as a natural part of life. There no longer seems to be much of a stigma attached to divorce; it is now seen as an unavoidable rite of passage, the research indicated. Interviews with young adults suggest that they want their initial marriage to last, but are not particularly optimistic about that possibility. There is also evidence that many young people are moving toward embracing the idea of serial

marriage, in which a person gets married two or three times, seeking a different partner for each phase of their adult life.⁷³

Furthermore, the Pew Research Center has its own percentages concerning those who call themselves Protestants. It states that “The Pew Research Center found Protestant individuals (anyone who identified themselves as non-Catholic, but Christian) had a divorce rate of approximately 51 percent out of a sampling of 4,752 individuals.”⁷⁴

Are you male or female?

Answered: 63 Skipped: 42



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Male	34.92%	22
▼ Female	65.08%	41
TOTAL		63

Figure 4. Sex of Respondents

Ironically, this questionnaire was responded to by a majority of women; there are 65.08% (41) female participants to just 34.92% (22) male participants (Fig. 4). This small sample size mirrors the general Christian church attendance rates with there being more women attending church, then there are men. In fact, Dalia Fahmy’s Pew Research Center article stated that: In

⁷³ Barna. “*New Marriage and Divorce Statistics Released.*” Barna Research Group, accessed on September 22, 2019, <http://www.barna.com/research/new-marriage-and-divorce-statistics-released/>,

⁷⁴ Betts, Jennifer. “*Divorce Statistics by Religion.*” Love to Know, accessed on September 22, 2019, https://divorce.lovetoknow.com/divorce_statistics_by-religion_

the United States, where seven-in-ten adults are Christian, this religion gender gap is actually more significant than that in a number of other developed nations, including Canada, the UK, Germany, and France.

More than seven-in-ten U.S. Christian women (72%) say religion is “very important” in their lives, compared with 62% of the country’s Christian men, according to Pew Research Center’s 2014 U.S. Religious Landscape Study. Roughly eight-in-ten Christian women also say they are absolutely certain God exists and that the Bible is the word of God, compared with about seven-in-ten men who say this. A similar dynamic is evident when it comes to church attendance. Christian women say they attend religious services at higher rates than Christian men.⁷⁵

In comparing the religiosity of men and women, Dr. Phil Zuckerman states that “On just about whatever measures one uses to assess religiosity – frequency of prayer, belief in God, church attendance, or self-identification – women are more likely than men in the United States to be religious.”⁷⁶ Dr. Zuckerman continues by quoting Professor Tiina Mahlamaki by stating that: “Statistics conducted in countries all over the world, for as long as statistics on religion have been collected, confirm that women are more religious than men.” This is a concern for every dimension of religion. Women participate in religious ceremonies more often than men; women pray more often than men; they more likely than men to believe in God, a Spirit, or Life Force; they hold matters of faith and religion more important than men do.

⁷⁵ Fahmy, Dalia. “*Christian women in the U.S. are more religious than their male counterparts*,” Pew Research Center, accessed on September 22, 2019, www.pewresearch.org/facts-tank/2018/04/06/christian-women-in-the-u-s-are-more-religious-than-their-male-counterparts/.

⁷⁶ Zuckerman, Phil. “*Why Are Women More Religious Than Men?*” Psychology Today, accessed on September 23, 2019, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/th-secular-life/201409/why-are-women-more-religious-men/>

Women are more committed than men to their religious communities and are less willing to resign from them. Although older women are more religious than young ones, women of all ages are more religious than coeval men are. Women are members of both traditional religious communities and new religious movements more often than men. Young, urban men are the least religious of all groups.⁷⁷

Questions

So, if what Dr. Zuckerman and Professor Mahlamaki say is true, then why is the U.S. divorce rate so high with so many women being the ones filing for unbiblical divorces that are destroying their marriages, families, and emotionally damaging their children, amongst other things? Why does being religious, going to church, having genuine fear, and faith in God not minimize the U.S. divorce rate and the family problems that go with it?

The Answer

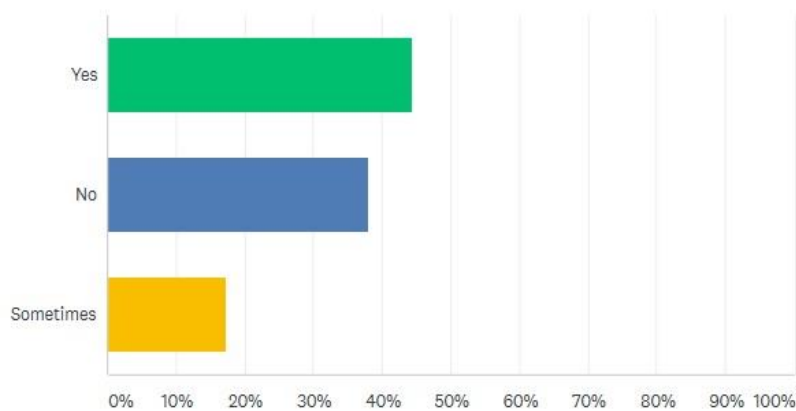
The answer to the above questions is uncovered in the Christian church's sanctuary. Since the majority of congregants are women, there is a huge disconnect that occurs from the pulpit on a stage and the actual biblical interpretation of God's holy Word. This clearly leads to "Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church." The proper interpretation of God's Word concerning divorce, separation, biblical accountability to God, *the fear of God*, and the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical consequences stemming from the great sin of divorce is not preached accordingly by the paid pastor(s) on staff in church leadership. Plain and simple, in the Christian church today, there is a lack of real "fear" towards the Almighty Father God in heaven, as if He will not punish someone for doing the things that are abominations to Him. For doing the things He hates, such as carrying out unbiblical "divorce(s)." In fact, in this questionnaire,

⁷⁷ Tiina Mahlamäki, "Religion and Atheism from a Gender Perspective," *Approaching Religion* 2(1), June 2012. DOI: 10.30664/ar.67492

the researcher asked the question, “Do you fear God?”(Fig. 5) And, 44.44% (28-participants) of Christians said, “Yes.” And, 38.10 % (24-participants) said, “No.” And, 17.46% (11-participants) said, “Sometimes.” What is alarming here is that 38.10% of Christians said, “No.” How can someone claim to believe in God, go to church and sit in the pews and hear Scriptures from the Bible, and yet have “no fear” of God, if they are real authentic Christian saints?

Do you fear God?

Answered: 63 Skipped: 42



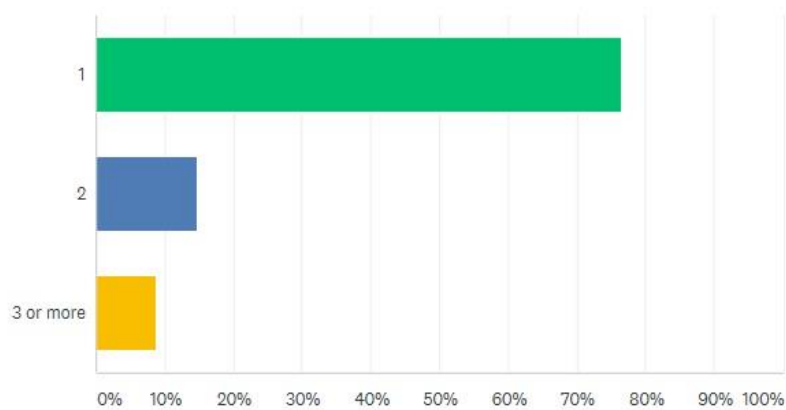
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	44.44%	28
▼ No	38.10%	24
▼ Sometimes	17.46%	11
TOTAL		63

Figure 5. God Fearing

Furthermore, in this online Christian questionnaire, the researcher asked the question, “How many times have you been divorced?” There was 76.47% (52-participants) who stated at least 1-time. And, there was 14.71% (10-participants) who stated at least 2-times. And, there was 8.82% (6-participants) who stated they have been divorced 3 or more times. Meanwhile, remember this questionnaire was taken by church-going Christians. Take a look at Figure. 6 below.

How many times have you been divorced?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 37



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
1	76.47% 52
2	14.71% 10
3 or more	8.82% 6
TOTAL	68

Figure 6. Divorce Frequency

Interestingly, when the researcher looked at this study on the divorce rate in the Christian church, the researcher asked the participants a question concerning their parent's marital history, such as “Has your parent(s) ever divorced?” You see, in this area of marriage that God hates, there is a high likelihood that divorcees come from parents who were or are still divorced currently. And, low and behold, there is still a high percentage of parental divorce, according to the participants. In fact, 45.31% (29-participants) stated, “Yes,” who have divorced parent(s).

Again, this is nearly 50% of the parent(s) who has been divorced. Is there a biological and generational effect here? Does the fallen apple stay close to the tree even with regards to marriage and divorce?

Conversely, just for some more critical thinking and controversy concerning which divorce percentages are accurate, George Barna has done the research that talks about the

divorce rate in the Christian church or the divorce rate amongst those who call themselves “born-again Christians.” He goes onto say that:

While it may be alarming to discover that born again Christians are more likely than others to experience a divorce, that pattern has been in place for quite some time. Even more disturbing, perhaps, is that when those individuals experience a divorce, many of them feel their community of faith provides rejection rather than support and healing. But the research also raises questions regarding the effectiveness of how churches minister to families. The ultimate responsibility for a marriage belongs to the husband and wife, but the high incidence of divorce within the Christian community challenges the idea that churches provide truly practical and life-changing support for marriages.⁷⁸ (*emphasis mine*)

Meanwhile, the Associated Press(AP) researched their own statistics utilizing the U.S. Census Bureau’s numbers and stated that “They found that Massachusetts had the lowest divorce rate in the U.S. at 2.4 per 1,000 population. Texas had the highest rate at 4.1 per 1,000. They found that the highest divorce rates are found in the "Bible Belt." Then, the Boston Globe weighs in with their own statistics and state with regards to the (AP Reported) numbers that:

The AP report stated that 'the divorce rates in these conservative states are roughly 50 percent above the national average of 4.2 per thousand people.' The 10 Southern states with some of the highest divorce rates were Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas. By comparison, nine states in the Northeast were among those with the lowest divorce rates: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

One reason for the higher divorce rates in the Bible Belt may be the lower percentage of Roman Catholics in the South. Their denomination does not recognize divorce. Other reasons could be related more to culture than religion, such as couples in the South enter their first marriages at a younger age, family incomes in the South are lower, and educational attainment is lower in the South. However, one in three Massachusetts residents has completed college, while only 23% of Texans have. (*Robins, B.A.*)

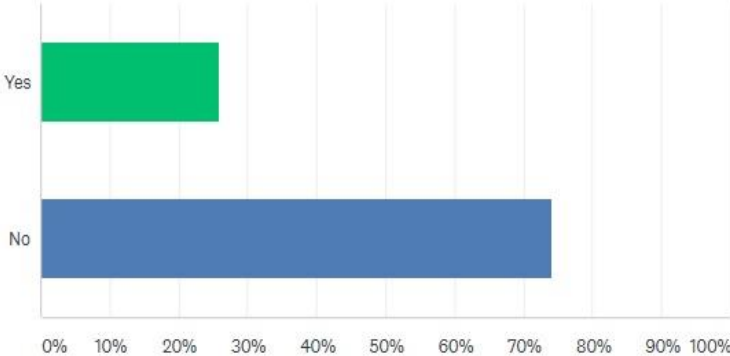
⁷⁸ Robins, B.A. “*U.S. divorce rates for various faith groups, age groups, & geographic areas.*” Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance. www.religioustolerance.org/chr_dira.htm (Accessed on September 22, 2019)

By the looks of everyone's approach to try and ascertain the accurate numbers for the U.S. divorce rate in the Christian church, it is clear that we have a major, grave, and critical problem amongst God's people in the United States of America concerning God's holy covenant of marriage. Let us also keep in mind that there is a whole segment in the Christian church that is considered "silent." These are the spouses who remain quiet about their internal divorce(s) that they have carried around inside their minds, emotions, and spirit for years in a marital shell.

Now, with all of these statistics concerning Christian divorces, where does the "unhealthy leadership in the Christian church" play its destructive role in these divorces? Well, the introduction to this thesis project describes in grand detail what the problems are with regard to unhealthy leadership in the church. With that being said, the researcher asked the question in this online questionnaire that stated, "Have you ever questioned any pastor on staff in your home church about something you thought was not ethical or biblical in general?" And, 25.86% (15 participants) said, "Yes." But, then, 74.14% (43 participants) said, "No." What would possibly be the reason(s) that so many so-called Christians would refrain from disclosing or exposing something that goes against the Word of God? Secondly, are they in fear of "man" as opposed to fearing the Almighty Father God, the One who created them and the heavens and the earth?" The figures below are self-explanatory:

Have you ever questioned any pastor on staff in your home church about something you thought wasn't ethical or Biblical in general?

Answered: 58 Skipped: 47

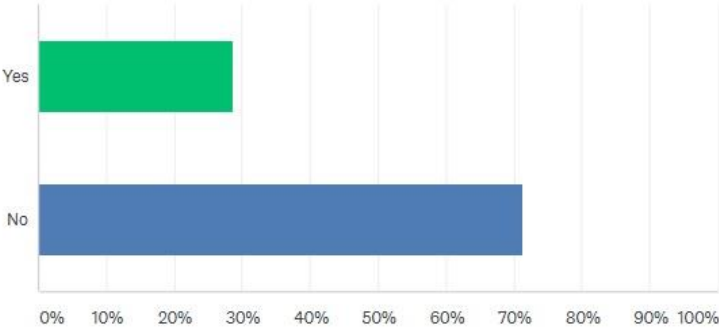


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	25.86%	15
▼ No	74.14%	43
TOTAL		58

Figure 7. Questioning the Pastor on Ethical or Biblical Matters

Have you ever heard your senior pastor preach a message that just didn't feel right in your spirit?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 49

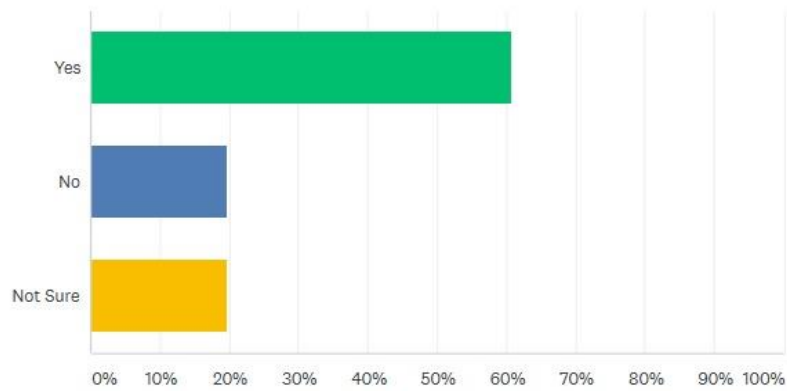


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	28.57%	16
▼ No	71.43%	40
TOTAL		56

Figure 8. Senior Pastor Preaching Spiritually Dissonant

Does the pastor (s) in your church preach authentic repentance and confession of sin with regards to asking God for His forgiveness in general?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 49

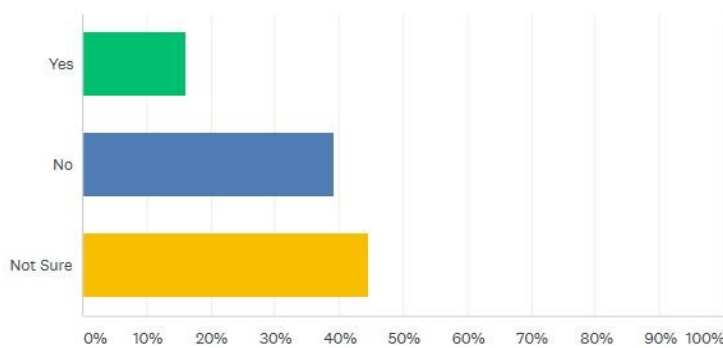


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	60.71%	34
▼ No	19.64%	11
▼ Not Sure	19.64%	11
TOTAL		56

Figure 9. Preaching Authentic Repentance and Confession of Sin

Is there an "evil spirit of gossip" in your church that you are aware of?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 49

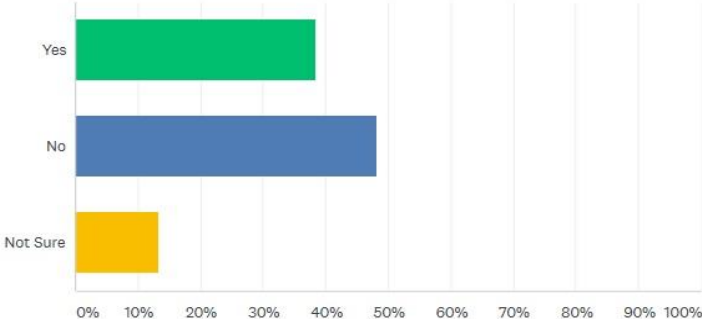


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	16.07%	9
▼ No	39.29%	22
▼ Not Sure	44.64%	25
TOTAL		56

Figure 10. Presence of the Evil Spirit of Gossip

Have you ever overlooked some type of questionable behavior in your church (ie, a rude usher, a rude pastor, a rude parking lot volunteer, etc) without informing someone on the pastoral staff?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 53

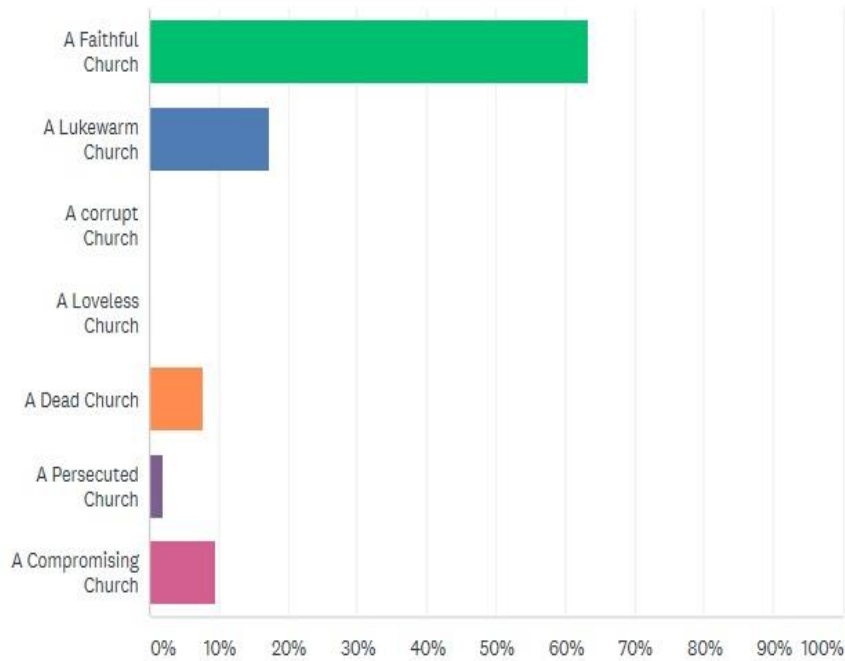


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	38.46% 20
No	48.08% 25
Not Sure	13.46% 7
TOTAL	52

Figure 11. Overlooking Questionable Behavior in Church

Would you consider your church a lukewarm church, a faithful church, a persecuted church, a loveless church, a compromising church, a corrupt church, or a dead church?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 53

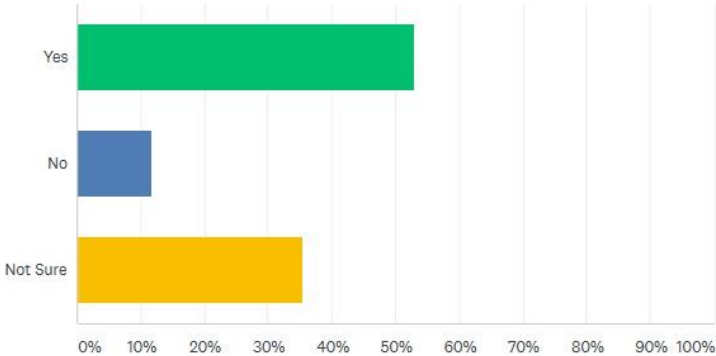


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ A Faithful Church	63.46% 33
▼ A Lukewarm Church	17.31% 9
▼ A corrupt Church	0.00% 0
▼ A Loveless Church	0.00% 0
▼ A Dead Church	7.69% 4
▼ A Persecuted Church	1.92% 1
▼ A Compromising Church	9.62% 5
TOTAL	52

Figure 12. Character of Church

Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about God's moral accountability?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 54

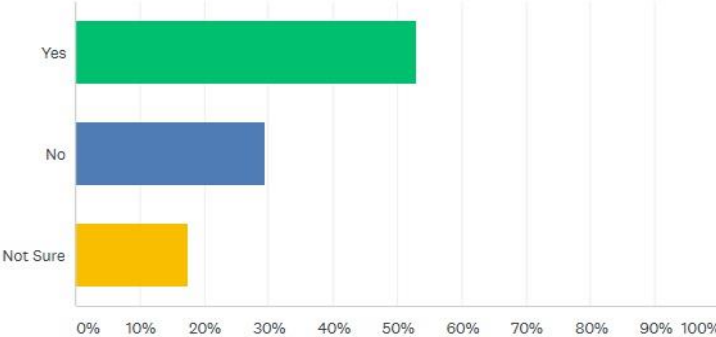


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	52.94%	27
▼ No	11.76%	6
▼ Not Sure	35.29%	18
TOTAL		51

Figure 13. Messages on God’s Moral Accountability

Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about open confession of sin?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 54

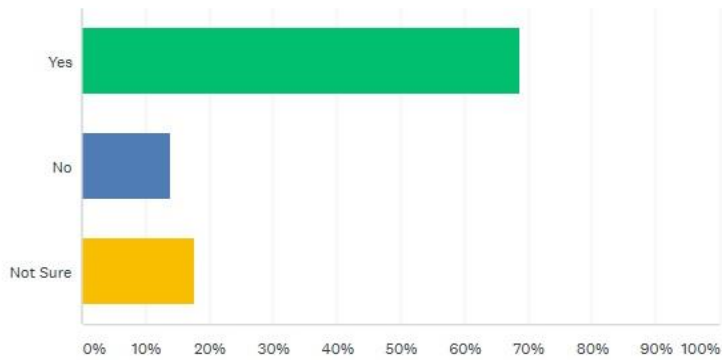


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	52.94%	27
▼ No	29.41%	15
▼ Not Sure	17.65%	9
TOTAL		51

Figure 14. Messages on Open Confession of Sin

Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about repentance of sin?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 54

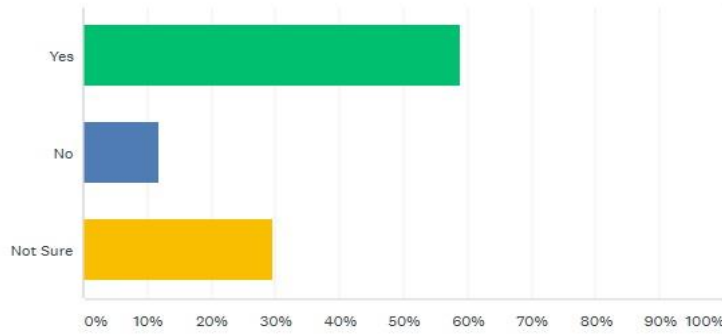


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	68.63%	35
▼ No	13.73%	7
▼ Not Sure	17.65%	9
TOTAL		51

Figure 15. Messages on Repentance of Sin

Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about God's present judgment concerning sin?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 54

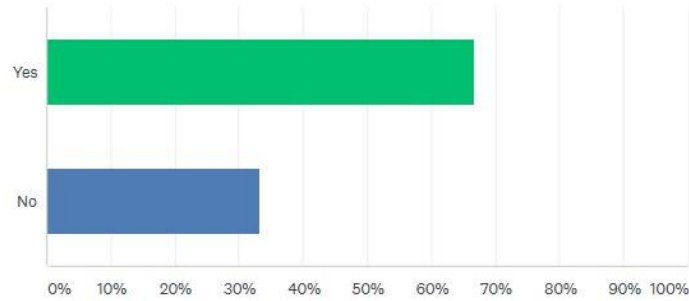


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	58.82%	30
▼ No	11.76%	6
▼ Not Sure	29.41%	15
TOTAL		51

Figure 16. Messages on God's Present Judgment on Sin

Does the pastoral staff at your church represent the culture similar to the members of the community your church is physically located in?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 54

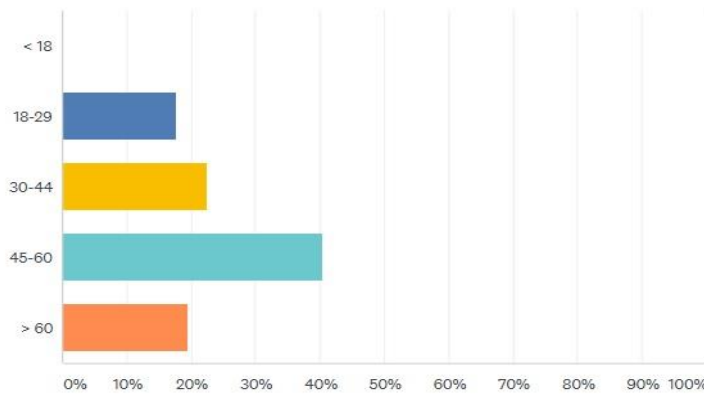


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	66.67%	34
▼ No	33.33%	17
TOTAL		51

Figure 17. Church Culture Representing Community Culture

Age

Answered: 62 Skipped: 43

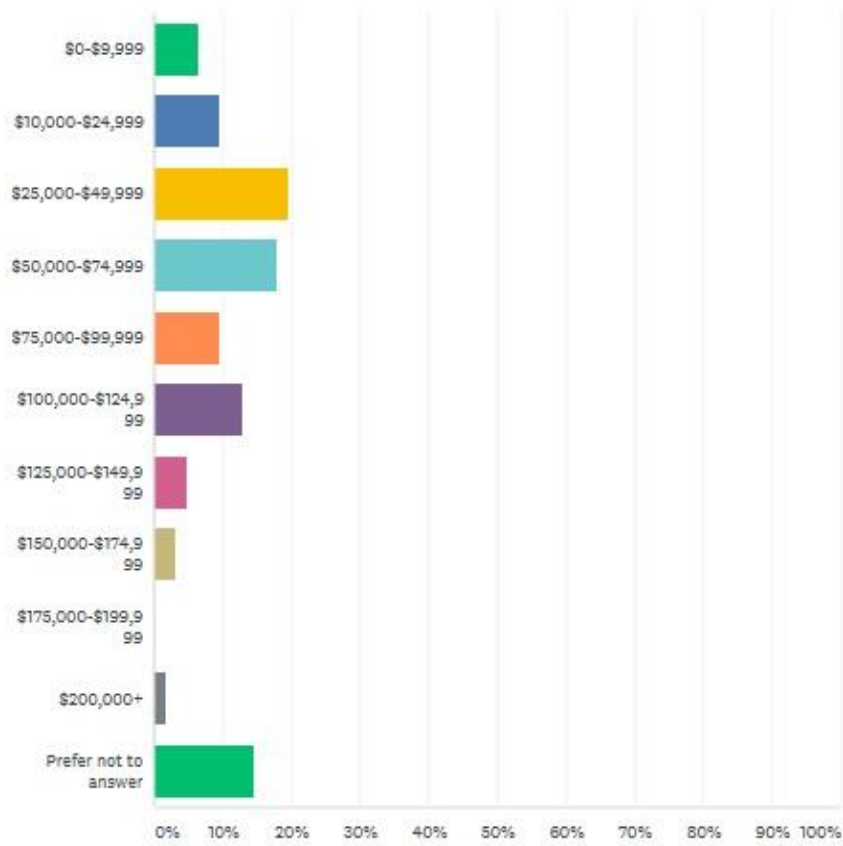


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ < 18	0.00%	0
▼ 18-29	17.74%	11
▼ 30-44	22.58%	14
▼ 45-60	40.32%	25
▼ > 60	19.35%	12
TOTAL		62

Figure 18. Age of Respondents

Household Income

Answered: 62 Skipped: 43

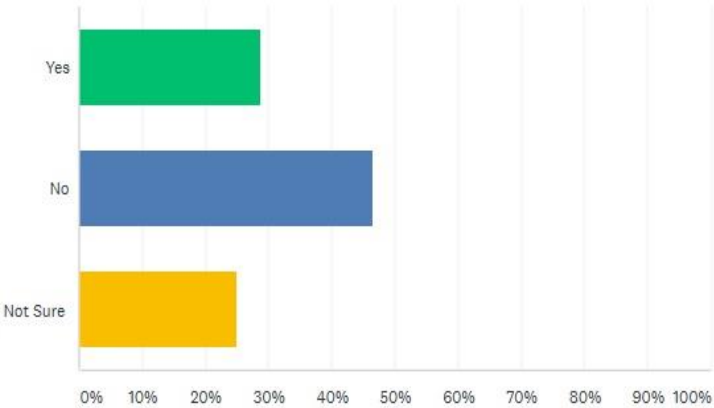


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ \$0-\$9,999	6.45% 4
▼ \$10,000-\$24,999	9.68% 6
▼ \$25,000-\$49,999	19.35% 12
▼ \$50,000-\$74,999	17.74% 11
▼ \$75,000-\$99,999	9.68% 6
▼ \$100,000-\$124,999	12.90% 8
▼ \$125,000-\$149,999	4.84% 3
▼ \$150,000-\$174,999	3.23% 2
▼ \$175,000-\$199,999	0.00% 0
▼ \$200,000+	1.61% 1
▼ Prefer not to answer	14.52% 9
TOTAL	62

Figure 19. Household Income of Respondents

Have you ever heard your senior pastor preach Biblical principles concerning divorce?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 49



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	28.57% 16
No	46.43% 26
Not Sure	25.00% 14
TOTAL	56

Figure 20. Messages on Biblical Principles of Divorce

Now, this particular question in Figure. 20 is very important, and it is probably one of the most important questions in this whole online Christian questionnaire concerning “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate.” You see, this illustration shows in part why the divorce rate in the Christian church is so high. When the people who sit in the pews do not get the proper biblical teaching from the pulpit leadership concerning divorce, certain individuals believe without the proper interpretation of God's holy Word, that he or she can simply file for a divorce under unbiblical circumstances.

In this particular illustration, 28.57% (16-participants) said, “Yes” to them hearing their senior pastor preach biblical principles concerning divorce. However, the alarming number is 44.43% (26 participants), who said “No” to ever hearing their senior pastor preach the biblical

principles concerning divorce. And, the 25.00% (14-participants) who said they were not sure to ever hearing their senior pastor preach principles concerning divorce. When you add up the two percentages together, you get 69.43% (40-participants out of 56-participants) that will leave the Christian church sanctuary without the proper biblical guidance from God's holy word concerning marriages and divorces. How is that possible if the Word of God is preached by healthy leadership accordingly?

With that being said, one can surmise that the Christian church and its unhealthy leadership is greatly responsible and complicit for so many divorce trigger happy Christian women believing that they can divorce their husbands for the plethora of unbiblical reasons that have and are destroying families and emotionally damaging their children. Let us not forget that out of the 50% plus of divorces being filed today; women file 70% of those divorces. Therefore, why is the proper interpretation of the Word of God concerning divorce, its many consequences, the judgment of God and His biblical curses, not being preached to women and men from the pulpits of the small, medium, and large mega-churches? Technically, the fear of God should be preached regularly from all Christian church pulpits in general.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

What is unhealthy leadership in the Christian church? And, how does it affect the divorce rate in the church? These questions and many more were answered in this thesis project. This thesis project dealt with some very important issues with regards to spiritual unhealthiness amongst leaders in the Christian church who help pander the divorce rate amongst some of the people who are a part of the church.

For example, this thesis project dealt with unhealthy leadership in the Christian church, impostors in the pulpit, unqualified leadership, unsaved leadership, the evil spirit of rebellion in marriage, the statistics concerning the current divorce rate in general (secular & in the church), some of the reasons marriages fail, and some of the reason's women file for unbiblical divorces, etc. Also, this thesis project dealt with other important areas that are listed below, such as:

- Older Men Doing the Wrong Things Over Time
- The Age Quantifier
- Church Politics
- Real Life Trials and Tribulations
- The Legal Risks
- A Master's Degree
- Pro Bono Work
- God's Spiritual Gifts
- Six Reason's for Failure
- Qualified Christian Church Counselors (QCCC)
- The Lack of Healthy Qualified Christian Church Counseling
- (DPC) Divorce Preventative Care
- Marital Submission
- The Evil Spirit of Rebellion
- Satan, the devil, the enemy
- Some Unbiblical Reason's Women File for Divorce
- Some of the Rebellious Wives in the Bible
- The % of Women Filing for Divorce
- Jesus Christ Never Divorced the Church
- A Holy Marriage
- The Voice of the Husband and Father

- The Millennial Generation
- The Slippery Slope of the Christian Church
- The Imposter Syndrome
- Psychological Implications
- The Unserved Leader
- Satan
- Christian Church Exploitation
- Fake Christian Bands
- Musical Impostor's in the Pulpit
- The Other Angel's
- God's Light
- A Lack of Respect
- A Social Pyramid Scheme
- Bottleneck Leadership
- The Litmus Test
- The Definition of a Preacher
- The Definition of a Prophet
- The Apostle Paul's Authentic Testimony
- The Silver Spoon
- False Testimonies from Church Leadership
- The Great Fish Stories
- A Red Herring
- Pastoral Holiness
- The Buddy, Buddy System
- The Assistant
- The Fear of God
- Two Holy Covenants in Marriage

Just as importantly, this thesis project illustrated the depth of the problem(s) the Christian church faces when it comes to its leadership, whether the leadership are pastors on paid staff or volunteer leaders serving in other areas in the church. Leadership is leadership, any way you slice it. Therefore, the Christian church at-large needs a wake-up call and some effective solutions.

First Solution

Interestingly, some major Christian pastors preach that the breakdown of a marriage between a man and a woman is all the man's fault as if he was in the marriage all by himself and the responsibility of the "success" of the marriage is his alone. Although it is true that one

person can completely destroy a marriage. Nonetheless, the latter is egalitarian false teaching and definitely not biblical either.

When “The Evil Spirit of Rebellion” in marriage is in the home affecting the wife, there is nothing physical or tangible the husband can do about it except pray fervently to God for a move on His behalf. Therefore, with regards to marriage and divorce, a man cannot make a woman sincerely love him and vice versa. There is nothing “greasy grace / cheap grace” can do here.

Next, seek healthy qualified eldership marital counselor(s) who have experience in this area dealing with “Marital Rebellion” (Someone being married but having an unmarried spirit). It does not do anyone any good to go to a medical doctor for a head cold when they have a broken bone somewhere. So divorce ministry leadership needs to be properly assigned. Thirdly, at least try to set healthy godly marital boundaries in the home, and the same goes for the husband if/when the roles are reversed. The spirit of divorce(s) starts outside of the church long before it ever enters the church to be mishandled by unhealthy leadership in the Christian church.

Second Solution

With all that has been said in this thesis project called, “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate,” understanding the divorce rate in the Christian church has to happen after understanding what authentic marriage is supposed to be according to God’s will, which in essence would prevent the majority of divorces from happening in the Christian church. Just look at marriages before the 1950s.

There are two holy covenants in marriage between a man and a woman, and the solution here is for a man and a woman in holy matrimony to sincerely invite the holy spirit into their marriage right from the very beginning to be the glue that seals them to God’s covenant, so He

can cover them as the third fold in the threefold cord which is not quickly broken (Ecclesiastes 4:12). This will give them a spiritual barrier, a spiritual shield, and a spiritual force field if you will, against the spirit of divorce being sent by Satan, the devil, the enemy through every little inch to get in.

The First Covenant

The “first” holy covenant in marriage between a man and a woman is the covenant that each spouse, as an individual, has or should have with God. This “first” covenant has nothing to do with the other spouse. This covenant is one spouse’s loving, intimate relationship with God that is confined within the deepest part of the spouse’s soul that supersedes any other relationship anywhere. Remember, Abraham was a great man of faith, and King David was a man after God’s own heart. And, Hanna had a great personal relationship with God through her prayers.

The Fear of God

In this “first” holy covenant, there is a commitment to God in His order and in His commandments in obedience. There is a sincere trust in God Himself. There is a sincere conscious and subconscious belief in God that relinquishes any doubt whatsoever. And, there is a deep-seated/rooted “fear” of God that underscores everything else. Psalm 61:5 states, “For You, O God, have heard my vows; You have given me the heritage of those who fear Your name.” (NKJV)

So, in this “first” holy covenant, the “fear” of God is the hinge that everything else swings on. One of the main problems in Christian marriages today is the lack of “fear” in God by one or both spouses as if God will not meet out severe consequences for sin in real-time. In general, the Almighty Father God in heaven is being taken for granted by the spouse(s).

Therefore, many unwise and ungodly decisions are made in marriage due to having no “fear” of God. So, as another solution, the wise thing to do is to sincerely “fear” God. Psalm 86:11 states, “Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.” And, then Psalm 103:17-18 states, “But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting. On those who fear Him. And His righteousness to children’s children, To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.” When you “fear” God and honor this “first” covenant in marriage between a man and a woman there is no unhealthy leadership in the Christian church who can cause or influence you to do the wrong or unrighteous thing(s) under heaven knowing God is watching.

Here’s An Example

The researcher remembers that the same honor was given to an earthly parent(s) when sin was going to take place in their house by one of the children. The child in question would say, “I’m not doing that, not in my parent’s house. My father or mother would kill me if they ever found out I did something like that under their roof.”

Well, just consider the skies of heaven as God’s roof, and you are under it in His house. (The Reverence of God) So as God’s children here on earth, heaven is our rooftop in the same way the rooftop on an earthly house covers the saints. Therefore, when there is a real “fear” of God, the saints will say with conviction and confidence with regards to divorce: “I’m not doing that, not in my Father’s house. My Father in heaven will kill me if I disobey Him or break His covenant.”

At the same token, the “fear” someone has for their earthly parent(s) is exponentially increased when it comes to the “fear” of the Almighty Father God in heaven, because God is ultimately responsible for our destiny in this earthly life and after it. God alone controls the clock

everyone lives by. He can turn the lights out (at a snap of His finger) just like that. The “fear” of God better be more than shallow lip service.

Now, when this “first” covenant is sealed with sincerity in the heart, mind, and soul, the particular spouse(s) is now ready to enter into the “second” covenant in marriage between a man and a woman. Now, before we move on, understand this; each spouse on his and her own recognizance has an “individual” responsibility in holy covenant to really “fear” God.

The Second Covenant

Includes 3-Levels

Now that we understand the “first” covenant in marriage between a man and a woman being the individual spouses “Fear of God,” the second (2nd) covenant in marriage between a man and a woman is on three different levels and is incredibly strong. Each level strengthens one another in the deepest way possible, spiritually connecting with the Almighty Father God in heaven that cannot be seen from the surface.

Level 1 - The Spiritual Soul Call

The 2nd covenant, level 1, is made with an internal “soul call” up to heaven. First, you fear God in the 1st covenant with Him, and then you call God up spiritually and say to Him that you have biblically chosen your spouse to marry. Therefore, you purposed your intentions through the capacity of the spirit in the depths of your soul. This is not a modality of superficial infatuation channeled through emotional lip service. You see, emotional lip service does not hold a marriage together for a lifetime.

This technically forms and is the foundation of the 2nd covenant with God. You say to Him spiritually, maybe even in prayer, in traditional biblical order if you are a man that “This is the woman I have chosen to be with for the rest of my life.” It is important to be authentic and

honest, because God is watching everything, and He will remember the spiritual lies that are told if there are any, and later expose them at some point during the marriage. Therefore, you say to God spiritually, maybe even in prayer, in traditional biblical order if you are a woman that “This is the man I have chosen to be with for the rest of my life.”

Level 2 - The Confession

Now, the 2nd covenant, level 2, is made with your mouth through your actual verbal marriage vows. This is how spiritually deep it gets, so it is important to be authentic, real, and sincere. When you verbally state your marital vows to your biblical spouse and to any witnesses under heaven, it is very similar to being baptized in the Holy Spirit, where you testify in front of any witnesses under heaven about why you are coming under the covering of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, each biblical spouse is verbally prophesying to God through their own vows (self-admission), further “fortifying” this 2nd covenant that they promise and make with God to love each other through sickness and in health, through good times and in bad times, for richer or for poorer, and for better or worse until death do them apart. This is a very big deal, and the consequences are life-altering when this covenant is broken.

Your verbal marital vows (self-admission) both enrich and fortify this 2nd covenant with God on the 2nd level. Remember, in Luke 6:45, it states in part, “For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” Just as importantly, when God remembers the lie(s) that we are told, and they are exposed during the marriage, many spouses blame God for the exposure of the lie(s), when, in essence, he or she needs to blame themselves for telling a lie(s) to begin with and place the blame where it goes, in the effort of transparency.

Level 3 - The Sexual Consummation

Now, in the 2nd covenant, level 3, is the consummation of the marriage where the union between a man and a woman is physically “sealed” together in a biblical manner. This is where a man and a woman’s internal spirits bond with the spirit of God in holy matrimony.

Genesis 2:24 states, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” And, then in Ecclesiastes 4:12, it states in part, “A threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

As you can see, this 2nd covenant with God is extremely strong spiritually and physically with its three levels altogether. The real essence of God’s holy matrimony in covenant with Him is supposed to be “unbreakable” for the “committed” biblical spouses' natural lives here on earth. So, in summation and conclusion of this thesis project, let us put this section altogether.

There is the first (1st) covenant with God being the demonstrated “fear of God” by each individual biblical spouse. Then, there is the second (2nd) covenant with God consisting of the three strong levels (The Spiritual Soul Call, The Confession, & The Sexual Consummation).

Combine them all together, and this is the spiritual and physical depth of what God expects for His holy matrimony, within the body of Christ (the saints) as the Christian church encompassing the fear of God, the spiritual soul call, the stated marital vows, and the physical consummation (holy sexual intercourse), as another solution to the unbiblical divorce rate in the Christian church. Ecclesiastes 4:12 states in part, “A threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

Five Questions

1. Where should research regarding this critical problem, “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate,” go from here?

The researcher believes that due to the significance of the Christian church, the Christian church should be treated like any secular corporation in this regard concerning “change agents.” In major secular corporations, when they have issues/problems amongst leadership subordinates and other employees, in many instances, these corporations hire “diversity change agents” to come into the corporation, and in essence, clean house in order to help bring cohesion amongst the different employees.

In like manner, the Christian church should do the exact same thing when it comes to leadership issues/problems amongst unhealthy subordinates and other church employees, volunteer leaders, and some people in the congregation. Just as importantly, with regard to the Christian church, these “ministry change agents’(MCA’s) are sent into the church as messengers from God. Therefore, these MCAs should be hired to go into the Christian church and clean house according to the Holy Bible, in order to help bring cohesion amongst all employees on staff, the volunteers, and particular people in the active congregation.

2. How do the results of this research project compare to the information gleaned from previous studies or the published work analyzed in the literature review?

Technically, regarding healthy and unhealthy leadership in the Christian church, the results show the church is more worse off today than leadership in the Christian church was just 20-years ago. Basically, due to so many unqualified, unhealthy Christian church leaders blending the world with the church, thus blurring the lines between darkness and light, good and

evil, it is hard to recognize an authentic house of God at times. Not only that, but the divorce rate in the Christian church is as high as that of the world.

3. What did the researcher learn implementing this thesis project?

Interestingly, God had placed this thesis project down in his spirit many years ago, and then all along the way, He gave him the real-life experiences in Christian church leadership, in marriage, and divorce. So, in essence, God allowed the researcher to be trained in real-time to write this thesis project, in the mind-set of on-the-job training.

Just as importantly, another concept the researcher learned is that this critical church issue of “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate” is the most detrimental problem facing the Christian church today in the 21st century because it encompasses many facets of family. Furthermore, this critical problem is making its way into the future that affects the millennial generation. Basically, the “fear of God” has left the Christian church and, the community of Satan has an easier go at it. You see, in the past, Satan, the devil, the enemy had to work harder to steal, kill, and destroy in order to devour the disobedient and rebellious folk in the church. But, as a future forecast, it appears that the community of Satan has a smorgasbord of souls to look forward to.

4. How might the results apply in other settings?

Leadership is leadership, and unhealthy leadership applies to all ministries within the Christian church. Plain and simple, without healthy leadership in the Christian church, the body of Christ (the saints) will continue to suffer, and the church will continue to splinter and implode, regardless of the sound stage, like entertainment that is being called “worship.” Meanwhile, without successful biblical marriages, the institution of the family will become nomadic, simply

wandering around no man's land looking for a place to plant roots. This issue is a hotbed for Satan, the devil, the enemy because it is another avenue for him to disobey God.

5. Did anything emerge during this thesis project that merits future research?

Let the researcher restate that this critical issue of "Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate," is the most detrimental problem facing the Christian church today here in the 21st century. And, again, it is making its way into the future that is now affecting the millennial generation. Make no mistake about it; it will affect the next generation after it, and the next as well. The "fear of God" has left the Christian church. So, this most certainly merits future research in perpetuity in what to do with the human soul with regard to this particular grave sin on all levels.

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VITA

Curtis W. Carter

PERSONAL

Born: December 9, 1969

Marriage: Not Married

Children: Christian William Carter, born October 7, 2012

Kennedy Lynne Carter, born October 7, 2012

EDUCATIONAL

B.S., Chancellor University, 1999

M.A., Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity, 2013

G.C., Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity, 2015

M.A.R., Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity, 2015

PROFESSIONAL

Senior Pastor, The International eChurch of Orange County, 2017-Present

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

Lifetime Member, The Honor Society for Collegiate Leadership & Achievement,
2018- Present

Appendix A

Consent Form

Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate

Curtis W. Carter

Liberty University

Department of Theology/School of Divinity

You are invited to be in a research study on “Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church,” regarding marriage and the divorce rate in the body of Christ. You were selected as a possible participant because you are currently married or have been divorced. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Curtis W. Carter, a Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Theology/School of Divinity at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: This specific research will look at the divorce rate partly in the secular community, but predominantly focus on the divorce rate in the Christian church.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Anonymously answer 54-questions on a questionnaire. This should take approximately 20-30 minutes.

Risks: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits:

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from participating in this research.

Benefits to society may include a new awakening or a new revival in the area of the marriage and divorce rate within the Christian church with the uncovering of the hidden spiritual unhealthiness within the church leadership specifically that pertains to the whole body of Christ. This thesis project will be a published work for the Christian church to reference.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- I will store the questionnaires through the Survey Monkey secure online platform.
- Data/Questionnaires may be used in future reports. But, after three years, all physical information pertaining to this research project (i.e., Questionnaires) will be shredded.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time, prior to submitting the survey, without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Curtis W. Carter. You may ask any questions you have now at email: Info@matthewtwentyeight16.org. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact his faculty mentor, Dr. Fernando Abella, at frabell@liberty.edu

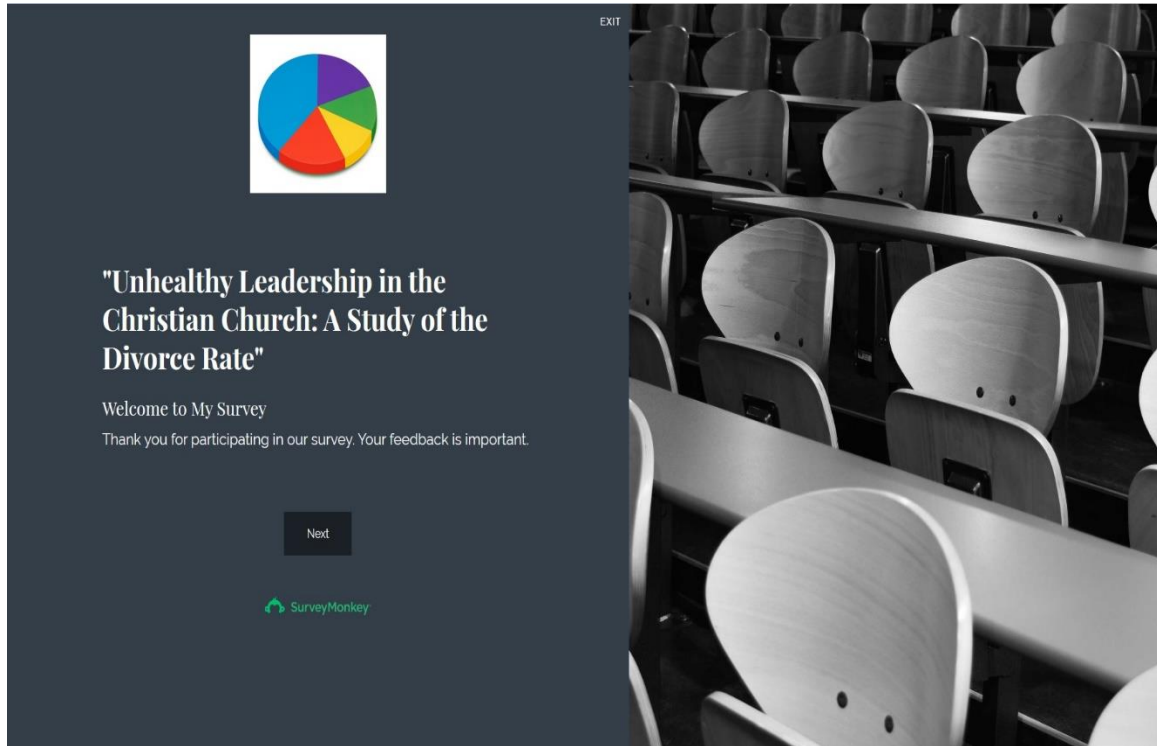
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Appendix B

Survey



“Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate”

1. Are you married?

Yes

No

2. How many times have you been married?

1

2

3 or more

3. Are you divorced?

Yes

No

4. How many times have you been divorced?

1

2

3 or more

5. Do you have any children?

Yes

No

6. How many children do you have?

1

2

3 or more

7. Are your parent (s) married?

Yes

No

8. Has your parent (s) ever divorced?

Yes

No

9. What culture do you represent?

Caucasian

Black

Asian

Hispanic

Other

10. Are you male or female?

Male

Female

11. Are you a born-again Christian?

Yes

No

Searching

12. Do you fear God?

Yes

No

13. Do you pray regularly?

Yes

No

Sometimes

14. Do you study God's Word regularly?

Yes

No

Sometimes

15. Do you lead an integrous life in general?

Yes

No

Choose not to answer

16. Do you have a home church that you attend regularly?

Yes

No

Searching

17. Do you attend church regularly?

Yes

No

Searching

18. Do you get involved in church activities through volunteering?

Yes

No

Would like to

19. Is your senior pastor married?

Yes

No

Not sure

20. Is your senior pastor divorced?

Yes

No

Not sure 21. Are any of the other pastors married that you know of?

Yes

No

Not Sure

22. Are any of the other pastors divorced that you know of?

Yes

No

Not Sure

23. Are you aware of any other congregants in your church who are divorced?

Yes

No

24. Do you know how many other congregants in your church who are divorced?

1

2

3 or more

No one is divorced

25. Have you ever gone to premarital counseling at your church?

Yes

No

26. And if so, what was premarital counseling like in your experience?

Good

Bad

Indifferent

Not Sure

27. Have you ever gone to marital counseling in your church?

Yes

No

28. If so, what was marital counseling like in your experience?

Good

Bad

Indifferent

Not Sure

Not Applicable

29. Have you ever sought marital counseling help at another church that wasn't your home church?

Yes

No

30. Have you ever questioned any pastor on staff in your home church about something you thought wasn't ethical or Biblical in general?

Yes

No

31. If so, what was the response you received from that pastor, if any?

Good Congregational Service

Bad Congregational Service

Indifferent Congregational Service

Not Sure

Not Applicable

32. Have you ever heard your senior pastor preach a message that just didn't feel right in your spirit?

Yes

No

33. Have you ever heard your senior pastor preach something that didn't match God's holy Word when it came to God's principles concerning marriage between a man and a woman?

Yes

No

34. Have you ever heard your senior pastor preach Biblical principles concerning divorce?

Yes

No

Not Sure

35. Have you ever heard your senior pastor preach Biblical principles concerning remarriage?

Yes

No

Not Sure

36. Does the pastor (s) in your church preach authentic repentance and confession of sin with regards to asking God for His forgiveness in general?

Yes

No

Not Sure

37. Is there an "evil spirit of gossip" in your church that you are aware of?

Yes

No

Not Sure

38. Have you ever overlooked some type of questionable behavior in your church (ie, a rude usher, a rude pastor, a rude parking lot volunteer, etc.) without informing someone on the pastoral staff?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

39. What is the overall spiritual climate in your church?

- Holy Spiritual
- Absence of Spirituality
- Not Sure

40. Would you consider your church a lukewarm church, a faithful church, a persecuted church, a loveless church, a compromising church, a corrupt church, or a dead church?

- A Faithful Church
- A Lukewarm Church
- A Corrupt Church
- A Loveless Church
- A Dead Church
- A Persecuted Church
- A Compromising Church

41. Does your church focus a lot on tithes and offerings or does it focus more on spiritual things?

- Tithes & Offerings
- Spiritual Things

42. Does your pastor (s) predominantly preach messages about love and grace?

Yes

No

Not Sure

43. Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about God's moral accountability?

Yes

No

Not Sure

44. Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about Biblical accountability?

Yes

No

Not Sure

45. Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about ethical responsibility in general?

Yes

No

Not Sure

46. Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about God's present judgment concerning sin?

Yes

No

Not Sure

47. Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about the repentance of sin?

Yes

No

Not Sure

48. Does your pastor (s) ever preach messages about the open confession of sin?

Yes

No

Not Sure

49. Does the pastoral staff at your church represent the culture similar to the members of the community your church is physically located in?

Yes

No

50. Does your church have a congregant service (customer service) ministry leader or pastor whom is available for any question (s) and/or church issues that a regular church member or attendee may have?

Yes

No

Not Sure

51. To your knowledge does your church pastoral staff sweep church problems under the carpet without dealing with them, or do they deal with them in a professional manner?

Deal with them in a professional manner

Sweep problems under the carpet

Not Sure

52. To your knowledge is there a veil of secrecy amongst pastoral staff in your church that you are aware of?

Yes

No

Not Sure

53. Does your church network with other churches in your community on a regular basis with real time activities and congregational fellowship amongst the different congregations?

Yes

No

Not Sure

54. Does your church have a successful marriage ministry?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Appendix C

IRB Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

April 18, 2019

Curtis W. Carter

IRB Exemption 3666.041819: Unhealthy Leadership in the Christian Church: A Study of the Divorce Rate

Dear Curtis W. Carter,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

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