Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

A Self-Check Model to Build Resiliency and Balance in Ministry Leaders

A Thesis Project Submitted to

the Faculty of Liberty University School of Divinity

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Ministry

By

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Thesis Project Approval Sheet

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT
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There is a significant problem with stress and burnout in ministry leaders. The purpose

of this study was to develop a self-check model for ministry leaders to help them with life-

balance and resiliency. To have and know peace in one's life is to draw close to God and live by

His design. Loving God with all one's heart, mind, soul, strength and loving one's neighbor as

one's self is critical for a healthy, well-balanced life and ministry. The researcher introduced a

simple self-check model to enable ministry leaders to develop balance and resilience in their

lives called the Star Model. The researcher sampled ministry leaders, who are defined as

clergy, staff members, and volunteers who oversee programs, people, or ministries in churches or

Christian organizations. The study participants interacted with a virtual seminar where the Star

Model was introduced. Participants also completed a pre- and post-seminar survey based on the

Likert scale. The results of the study confirmed the problem of stress and burnout in ministry

leaders as well as validated the Star Model as a useful self-check model for the development of

balance and resilience in ministry leaders. David Kolb's experiential learning theory and Jack

Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory were useful instruments in the presentation and

interaction with the Star Model seminar. This thesis project made a model available to ministry

leaders to aid in their own self-care and wellness.

Keywords: Christian leadership, leadership, stress, burnout, balance, resilience, wellness

Contents

Abbreviations

DMIN *Doctor of Ministry*

ESV *English Standard Version*

GRR *generalized resistance resources*

LUSOD *Liberty University School of Divinity*

NIV *New International Version*

SOC *Sense of Coherence*

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of the elements necessary to develop a proper understanding of the project. The question of how to live life to its fullest is almost as old as time. The answer to that question depends on what "fullest" means. More specifically, what does life look like for a ministry leader? Life to the fullest does not mean God's followers are exempt from troubles or hard times, nor does it mean life to the fullest requires sacrifice and servitude to the point of an absence of joy and purpose.

The ministry context will help the reader understand the context from which a discussion on balance and resiliency may occur. The problem statement summarizes the conditions seen in the ministry context and further highlights why an analysis of the topic is necessary. The purpose statement zeroes in on the problem and more fully explains the focus for this research project.

The discussion and research, however, are not held in a vacuum. Therefore, the researcher will outline the underlying assumptions that govern and guide the paper. A section devoted to the definition of terms follows the assumptions. The definition of terms brings clarity and commonality to the terms used in the research. In like manner, it is necessary to devote a section of this chapter to limitations and delimitations so that internal and external imposed constraints are made clear. The chapter concludes with the thesis statement for the project.

Ministry Context

As a chaplain in the United States Air Force, this writer has worked, primarily, in multi-denominational settings. In the capacity of an Air Force chaplain, chaplains from many different religions and denominations work to provide for the free exercise of religion. The denominational requirements of each chaplain are what guide his or her ministry. The chaplain is

never required to perform any ministry which contradicts his or her denominational guidelines or conscience. This ministry provides an extraordinary amount of diversity from one assignment to another. Each assignment offers an opportunity for experiential learning.

Conversations with other chaplains have shown a trend in that many do not feel adequately prepared for ministry leadership. Various studies, such as The Barna Group's pastoral leadership survey on pastors[1] or Richard Krejcir's study on pastors,[2] validate this experiential truth. These studies examine the extent to which members of the clergy feel their seminary training prepared them for ministry. In each one, the majority of respondents indicated they did not feel seminary taught them to be effective leaders.

As a hospital chaplain, care for patients and hospital staff members necessitates twenty-four hour availability as well as a close and vulnerable working relationship with chapel staff members and volunteers. As a workplace chaplain, in a variety of settings from the missile fields of North Dakota to classified locations, the ability to connect with others and provide counseling and guidance is essential. As a chaplain on the base chapel ministry team, the duties are pastoral in nature, similar to a local church. These settings provide a broad perspective from which to view ministry leaders, both professional and lay, in many different capacities.

Ministry leaders struggle to ensure their focus is primarily on God and not on their perceived ministerial and personal effectiveness. The ministry leader's ministry should flow from their focus on God. Peter Scazzero calls this "loving union." Here, a loving union is necessary for the leader. This loving union is the allowance for God's will to have access to and

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[1] Barna Group, *The State of Pastors: How Today's Faith Leaders are Navigating Life and Leadership in an Age of Complexity* (Ventura: Barna Publishing, 2017).

[2] Richard Krejcir, *Statistics on Pastors* (Pasadena: Schaeffer Institute of Leadership Development, 2016) Accessed April 12, 2010: https://files.stablerack.com/webfiles/71795/pastorsstatWP2016.pdf.

inhabit every area of one's life, which includes leadership.[3] Though each ministry setting may be different, there should be a constant for which ministry leaders strive: life and leadership must be set apart for God. Unfortunately, that is not always what happens.

As noted above, at some assignments the primary duty of this chaplain was to serve as a pastor for chapel services and ministries. The chapel services are non-denominational in the Protestant tradition. They function similarly to a local church with responsibilities to preach, pastor, lead programs and ministries, oversee staff, and provide leadership to laity and volunteers. There is a senior chaplain, much like a senior pastor, staff members, and volunteers. A need to cast vision, lead, serve, and motivate the community is shared with civilian churches of all denominations.

When not in an assignment with pastoral duties or Sunday responsibilities, this chaplain had opportunities to attend local churches off-base. This duty assignment enables the chaplain to be a parishioner at a local church without pastoral responsibilities. Rather than see the ministry from the pastoral perspective, this chaplain experienced the church in the same way as other congregants. Involvement in small groups, participation in worship and church ministries, and connections with others in the local church are all accomplished from a volunteer/lay perspective.

Regardless of the ministry setting, an observed theme emerged in various interactions with Christians who are in service and leadership. There is a likelihood for ministry leaders to feel burned out. This state of burnout became so prevalent it was not a question of "if" it would happen, but "when." The explanation for "burned out" may not be meant as a psychiatric

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[3] Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Leader* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), 23.

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definition or term[4] but rather as a colloquialism, which may also mean out of balance or a lack of resiliency.

To put it simply, the vast majority of observed ministry leaders struggle to maintain a healthy life balance. There seems to be a trade-off or balancing act when it comes to lifestyle, boundaries, wellness, and ministry leadership. This balancing act becomes sacrificial as important areas of health and resiliency decrease in favor of "ministry." Ministry service and leadership, then, become more about sacrifice and loss than it does health and resiliency.

Through the writer's observations and dialogue with ministry leaders, three persons stand out as typical and illustrative of this principle. Ministry leader "A" is a results-oriented pastor who likes to make things happen. Ministry leader "B" is a chaplain who believes leadership is primarily about influence. Ministry leader "C" is a lay leader/volunteer who takes servant-leadership to heart. No matter the leadership style, each of these three has struggled in ministry and felt burned out. Each believes this burned out feeling is part and parcel of leading in the church. An unbalanced life and ministry are not, however, God's design for ministry. While these examples are anecdotal, many Christian authors, such as Bruce Epperly, take note of this tendency in Christian service and the need for better self-care.[5]

Ministry leader "A," for example, likes to make things happen, but it may sometimes come at the cost of other things. If "A" is not receiving the results he wants, he believes he has to work harder and do more, and the results will follow. He is the person who puts the round pegs in the square holes. If it means he must put other things aside, such as a healthy life balance, he will. "A" quit going to the gym and exercising because he believed he did not have enough time.

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[4] Rodney J. Hunter and Nancy J. Ramsay, *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 4.

[5] Bruce Epperly, *A Center in the Cyclone: Twenty-First Century Clergy Self-Care* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 16.

His commitment to ministry leadership presupposed a priority of ministry programs even over self-care.

Ministry leader "B" read the latest books and trends in secular leadership. For him, the church does leadership poorly. Much may be learned from secular models and understandings of leadership. Minister "B" strongly believed leadership is influence. He spent his time developing connections with others that he may influence them to accomplish his vision. Sooner or later, two things happened: First, "B" spent so much time trying to influence others, as a sign of his leadership prowess, it slowly eroded his awareness of the influence of the Spirit in his life; Second, "B" developed a following of people in a personality-based ministry, but some felt his motives were disingenuous in how he related to them. Minister "B" felt alone and isolated in ministry.

Ministry leader "C" believes if no one else will do it, she must. For her, servant-leadership is about sacrifice. Leadership means doing the jobs no one else wants to do. She will serve and give until there is nothing left. If no one signed up for children's church, she will. If one more person is needed to serve on the planning committee, she will. The sacrifice may be family time, not allowing old programs to fail, or simply taking on more and more responsibilities because she cannot say "no."

This sacrifice happens even at the expense of her emotional health. She is the path of least resistance in the search for a leader who will do the job and stick it out. Her servant leadership model soon became one of the suffering servant. She will put up with the challenges and hurts of ministry because no one else will. For her, there is not much joy in leading a ministry, but there sure are a lot of struggles, hurts, and sacrifices.

Still, God wants each of his people to live balanced lives and to be resilient, to experience joy and purpose. Balance and resiliency are especially crucial for ministry leaders. Whether this comes from the establishment of boundaries as suggestd by Cloud and Townsend,[6] further defining self-care,[7] or more closely examining elements of Christian leadership,[8] ministry leaders A, B, and C would all benefit. Jesus said, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33, NIV). Each of these examples depicted leaders of ministries where they had troubles, but none of them took heart. Instead, their discouragement and dissatisfaction with their ministry caused them to rethink their calling.

The tendency for ministry leaders to feel out of balance significantly affects not just the ministry but the person as well. Effects are wide-ranging and stress the health of a person physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. This experiential and observational view of ministry leaders is both indicative and representative of what studies on leadership and burnout currently reveal. While these studies are wide-ranging and encompass both the secular and religious fields, this thesis will focus specifically on the context of ministry leadership.

Problem Presented

The majority of pastors who leave seminary do not feel prepared for ministry.[9] In fact, of 14,000 pastors surveyed in a Barna Group study, only 9% believe seminary did "very well" in preparing them to be effective church leaders.[10] While much has been written on leadership,

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[6] Henry Cloud and John Townsend, *Boundaries* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017).
[7] Michael Todd Wilson and Brad Hoffman, *Preventing Ministry Failure: A ShepherdCare Guide for Pastors, Ministers and Other Caregivers* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 145.
[8] Stanley E. Patterson, "Biblical Foundations of Christian Leadership, Part II," *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 80-94.
[9] Krejcir, *Statistics on Pastors*, 98.
[10] Barna Group, *The State of Pastors*, pg. 63.

recent research indicates 54% of pastors feel overworked, and 43% feel overstressed.[11] Something is not working.

There is no shortage of books on leadership. Books from successful business people, noted speakers, and prolific writers abound. Leadership styles divide into categories, such as authoritarian, transformational, and laissez-faire. Other types may include democratic, bureaucratic, and servant, with which the Church is well aware. A simple web search alone will return numerous books with topics such as transactional or coaching leadership styles. Many come with accompanying workbooks or videos accessible through social media sites. Why then, do ministry leaders struggle so significantly?

Burnout is a significant challenge for ministry leaders. Pastors at a high or medium risk of burnout exceed 33% of all pastors.[12] Additionally, 76% of clergy know at least one pastor whose ministry ended because of stress.[13] Studies have shown, however, that a ministry leader whose focus is on a holistic approach of self-care to build balance and resiliency will enable that leader to have a more fulfilling life.[14] The problem this project will address is that ministry leaders in all walks of church, parachurch, and volunteer ministries are reporting burnout and may lack a simple, self-check model to develop balance and resiliency.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Doctor of Ministry study is to create a simple, self-check model to help ministry leaders, whether they be in a church, parachurch, or volunteer role, develop balance and resiliency. The quality of a ministry leader's ministry is tied directly to the quality of

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[11] Krejcir, *Statistics on Pastors*, 2.
[12] Barna Group, *The State of Pastors*, 26.
[13] Ibid., 49.
[14] Bill Hull, *The Christian Leader: Rehabilitating our Addiction to Secular Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 32-33.

his or her life. Therefore, balance and resiliency are necessary for the health of the ministry leader and the ministry.[15] Balance will help ministry leaders maintain an ability to love God with all their heart, mind, soul, strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself (Luke 10:27). Resiliency will help ministry leaders who may feel hard-pressed, not to be crushed; who are perplexed, not be in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed (2 Corinthians 4:8-9, NIV).

Basic Assumptions

Basic assumptions are essential to this research project. For the purpose of this paper, the basic assumptions noted in this section are foundational points which will be generally accepted as true or valid. Toward that end, research will be conducted with the following premises.

Participants in this study are assumed to be willing volunteers. Participation is voluntary and no one will be coerced. Using volunteers presupposes a willingness at the outset to engage with the research and material. Additionally, participants will be attentive and involved in the presentation of the balance/resiliency model. The focused group is limited in scope, but the effectiveness of the self-care model may benefit a larger population of ministry leaders.

The participants' answers will be anonymous. The researcher assumes anonymous responses will provide more opportunities for an honest assessment and feedback. Because their answers will be anonymous, participants should feel more willing to respond to answers regarding facets of their life, well-being, and self-care. The research is not reliant on the participants' current level of self-care. Whether one currently practices excellent self-care or if a participant of the study identifies as out of balance will not skew the results.

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[15] Rick Luciotti, "Clergy Self-Care," *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy* 38, no. 2 (2019): 12-15.

The study presumes participants desire to live a healthy and balanced life. While participants may not be trained health professionals, they are able to recognize areas of stress or imbalance in their life when prompted. This recognition does not mean those involved in the study are able to or not able to solve these stressors, nor does it mean participants do or do not need clinical intervention. The research is merely a starting point to aid self-care toward the achievement of balance and resiliency.

An additional assumption is that all truth is God's truth. Therefore, as it relates to the research, it is expected that the health and wellness fields will mirror or complement what is seen through Scripture and theology.

Lastly, as this is research conducted for a Doctor of Ministry degree, it is assumed participants involved in Christian ministry adhere to a Christian worldview. While there may be differences in denominations or specific doctrines, all participants will fall under the umbrella of the Christian religion.

Definitions

Balance is defined and used in many ways. The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines work-life balance as: "the amount of time you spend doing your job compared with the amount of time you spend with your family and doing things you enjoy."[16] This definition is insufficient for two reasons. First, it presupposes work is not enjoyable. Second, it utilizes a see-saw measuring approach with a false dichotomy of work and not work. Life balance should be inclusive of work.

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[16] Cambridge Dictionaries, s.v. "work-life blance", accessed May 14,2020, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/work-life-balance.

Another definition of balance comes from *Merriam-Webster's* dictionary. Here, balance is "stability produced by even distribution of weight on each side of the vertical axis."[17] This definition is much closer to the projected usage of the word, except for a spatial dimension. For the purposes of this study, balance is the even distribution of areas of wellness.

Burnout is an oft used word. Definitions range from the clinical to colloquial, an ever-evolving term with no agreed-upon definition.[18] "Despite the societal importance and extensive use of the term burnout in everyday life, however, there is still heated debate among scientists and practitioners about what burnout actually is, what symptoms are associated with it, and whether or not the burnout syndrome is a distinct mental disorder."[19] Many times burnout refers to work-related stress.

Herbert Freudenberger coined the term "burnout" in the early 1970s. Freudenberger defined burned out as a workplace state of "becoming exhausted by making excessive demands on energy, strength, or resources."[20] In 1980 Freudenberger would further refine that definition as: "A state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward."[21] At odds in the discussion of burnout are the scientific community and society, et al.

Burnout is not a diagnosis in the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of mental Disorders (DSM V)*, the most recent; yet one can walk into almost any place of business and hear about employees or acquaintances who are burned out. For these reasons, this paper

[17] Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, s.v. "balance", accessed May 14, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/balance.

[18] InformedHealth.org "Depression: What is burnout?" *Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care* (Dec 2012), https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK279286.

[19] Linda Heinemann and Torsten Heinemann, "Burnout Research: Emergence and Scientific Investigation of a Contested Diagnosis" *SAGE Open*, Jan-Mar (2017): 1-12.

[20] H.J. Freudenberger, "Staff burn-out" *Journal of Social Issues* 30 (1974): 159-165.

[21] H.J. Freudenberger, *Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement* (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 13.

will use a colloquial definition of burnout, modified from Freudenberger. A working definition for burnout will refer to a generalized state of fatigue or frustration that blunts health and wellness, which results in difficulty in coping and impairs resiliency. Burnout may not happen solely in the workplace. One can be burned out in various facets of life.

Coherence is "a feeling of confidence that one's internal and external environments are predictable and that there is a high probability that things will work out as well as can reasonably be expected."[22] This term, used by Aaron Antonovsky, will be used similarly for this paper but in a more proactive sense. Coherence, then, is a state for which one should strive, similar to balance. The elements of the definition most applicable for this research are the understanding that both internal and external environments should be managed proactively. Furthermore, conceptually, coherence is where, as Antonovsky wrote, "…things will work out as well as can reasonably be expected."[23]

Coping – Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman defined coping as "changing cognitive and behavioral efforts developed for managing the specific external and/or internal demands just as exceeding or surpassing the individual's own resources."[24] Their book is multidisciplinary and examined psychological stress theory and coping skills.[25] Also of note are *coping skills* or *coping strategies* which are, "a set of adaptive tools that we proactively administer to avoid burnout. These tools can be our thoughts, emotions, and actions and are dependent on our personality patterns."[26]

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[22] Aaron Antonovsky, *Health, Stress and Coping* (London: Jossey-Bass, 1979), 123.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Michael St. Pierre, Gesine Hofinger, and Cornelius Buerschaper, *Crisis Management in Acute Care Settings: Human Factors and Team Psychology in a High Stakes Environment* (New York: Springer, 2008), 112.
[25] Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman, *Stress, Appraisal and Coping* (New York: Springer, 1984).
[26] Madhuleena Ropy Chowdbury, "What is Coping Theory?," accessed May 14, 2020, https://positivepsychology.com/coping-theory.

Decision making is "defined as thoughts and behaviors used for evaluating and choosing courses of action to solve a problem or reach a goal."[27] The researcher will apply this definition of decision making for the current research.

Fitness is another term that requires definition. The understanding of fitness is wide and varied, requiring context. For instance, it may be said of someone just leaving the gym that he or she is serious about his or her fitness. Though it seems odd, the same may be said for someone reading a book or attending a small group.

Toward the goal of a working definition of "fitness," it is helpful to examine a variety of sources on the subject. The military defines psychological fitness, for instance, as "the integration and optimization of mental, emotional, and behavioral abilities and capacities to optimize performance and strengthen the resilience of warfighters."[28] In other contexts, fitness implies physicality: "The set of attributes a person has that enables them to carry out daily tasks and perform physical work."[29] Still, another example of fitness is defined as "the quality or state of being fit" or "the capacity of an organism to survive and transmit its genotype to reproductive offspring as compared to competing organisms."[30]

While there may be a variety of definitions for fitness, a common theme is an ability or capacity that enables one to do something. Therefore, a working definition of fitness for this paper will be: *Fitness is the optimization of the ability or capacity to do the best one can, with who they are and what they have.* For instance, a multiple amputee war veteran may lose mobility but is still able to optimize his physical fitness. A person born with down's syndrome is still able to be mentally fit. That fitness may take on a different look from person to person. The

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[27] Mark Bates, et al., "Psychological Fitness" *Military Medicine*, 175, August Supplement (2010), 30.
[28] Ibid, 21.
[29] Psychology Dictionary, s.v. "fitness," accessed May 15, 2020, https://psychologydictionary.org/fitness.
[30] Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, s.v. "fitness", accessed May 15, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fitness.

overriding fitness principle is no matter the person or ability; each is able to optimize their own level of fitness.

Health – The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as more than merely not sick. Health is "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."[31] The WHO recognizes health relates to more than one area of wellness.

Holistic means to focus on all aspects of a person's health and wellness.[32] A holistic approach to wellness will take into account the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions.[33]

Resilience is derived from the Latin verb *resilire*. In the 1640s, resilient meant "springing back." By the 1800s, usage of the word resilient became more common in reference to people groups.[34] The military defines resilience as "the ability to withstand, recover, grow, and adapt."[35] The definition of resilience most appropriate for this study is: "Able to recover quickly from misfortune; able to return to original form after being bent, compressed, or stretched out of shape. A human ability to recover quickly from disruptive change, or misfortune without being overwhelmed or acting in dysfunctional or harmful ways."[36] The military definition would also work well. This definition falls short only in that their definition does not recognize the ability to return to an original shape, which will be relevant to the model.

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[31] World Health Organization, "Constitution," May 15, 2020, https://www.who.int/about/who-we-are/constitution.

[32] Joshua Freeman, "Towards a definition of holism" *The British Journal of General Practice: The journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners*, 55, no. 522 (2005): 154-155.

[33] Ibid

[34] "Resilience," accessed May 15, 2020, http://www.macmillandictionaryblog.com/resilient.

[35] Bates, et al., "Psychological Fitness," 21.

[36] Al Siebert Resiliency Center, "Resiliency Definitions," accessed May 15, 2020, https://resiliencycenter.com/resiliency-definitions.

Salutogenesis is a model for health and wellness developed by Antonovsky in the 70s. Salutogenesis is "an approach to human health that examines the factors contributing to the promotion and maintenance of physical and mental well-being rather than disease with particular emphasis on the coping mechanisms of individuals which help preserve health despite stressful conditions."[37]

Self-care requires a dualism in its definition. William Self defines self-care as, "not destructive self-indulgence, but rather it is being a steward of some rather special gifts-the human body and soul…."[38] This definition of self-care is neither primarily clinical nor academic, but theological. Self-care, then, is a form of stewardship where an individual cares for his or her body, mind, and spirit. Self-care is theological in nature but still refers to someone taking care of his or herself. The motivation for self-care is stewardship; however, there is still a need to define the act. Self-care may also be "the practice of taking action to preserve or improve one's own health."[39] Self-care, appropriately defined, will use the *Oxford* definition as it relates to the "how" and to Self's definition regarding the "why."

Stress – "In a medical or biological context stress is a physical, mental, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension."[40] For the purposes of this research, the working definition for stress is as defined here.

Wellness is a key term for the research and therefore must be properly defined. Wellness "is a term that refers to an optimum level of health and fitness that allows an individual to

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[37] Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, s.v. "salutogenesis", accessed June 1, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/salutogenesis

[38] William Self, *Surviving the Stained Glass Window* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2011), 44.

[39] Oxford Dictionaries, s.v. "self-care", accessed May 15,2020, https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/self-care.

[40] William C. Shielf Jr., "Medical Definition of Stress," accessed May 15, 2020, https://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=20104.

function actively and fully over the full range of life activities; physical, emotional, spiritual, social, intellectual, and environmental."[41]

Limitations

The accessibility of ministry leaders is largely dependent on organizations. As an Air Force chaplain, this researcher does not have his own congregation and will therefore turn to outside churches and ministries within thirty miles of his base of assignment. Three organizations, each with five or more participating ministry leaders, will provide a random sampling of churches and ministries. The research, therefore, must work with the organizations to seek participating ministries and volunteers.

The reporting methodology for those involved in the research will be self-reporting. Respondents' answers are anonymous to mitigate social pressure or self-inflation of wellness. Still, it is expected there may be a tendency for some who participate in the study to self-report a lifestyle and level of self-care they feel makes them look more favorable to wellness, balance, and resiliency. This reporting must be considered in how the research is conducted.

Delimitations

The population for this project will be limited in scope to ministry leaders, whether professional or lay. There is not an age, gender, or time in ministry requirement. A professional ministry leader is someone in part or full-time employment as chaplain, clergy, or organization staff member. A lay ministry leader is a person responsible for, or who oversees, programs or ministries. By this definition, a small group leader may qualify as a ministry leader provided there are requirements and expectations built into the volunteer position.

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[41] Alleydog.com, s.v. "wellness", accessed May 19, 2020, https://www.alleydog.com/glossary/definition-cit.php?term=Wellness

There is no denominational requirement, however, the focus of the study is on ministry leaders in the Christian church. The researcher will not question faith commitments. The researcher expects this model may be of use outside of the target population, but that will not be considered for this study. This research will limit itself to no less than three organizations of five ministry leaders or more.

This study will not try and diagnose clinical issues nor provide recommendations for professional intervention. This research is not meant as a clinical study. The researcher expects participants' increased self-awareness of balance and resiliency may, however, lead them to seek some form of help or intervention. The model is meant to bring awareness, and that awareness is expected to lead to next steps. Their journey toward balance and resiliency will not be tracked outside of their interaction with the model.

Several of the terms used in this study have multiple meanings or not a generally accepted definition. Because there may be various understandings of terms, such as burned out, fitness, or wellness, the study will limit itself to usage as outlined in the definition of terms.

Thesis Statement

If a simple, self-check model to help ministry leaders develop balance and resiliency is created, then their awareness will require an action. Self-care begins with the self. A simple model to help ministry leaders identify the areas for a holistic approach will provide a starting point. The model should not merely provide awareness, but also clarity on how to get started toward building balance and resiliency. In this way, the practice of self-care will bring glory to God and peace to the individual.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework

The literature review will focus on research and literature from overlapping fields. Leadership studies, psychology, theology, and sociology fields each contribute to a better understanding of holistic wellness. From these fields, a review of the literature will further develop emergent themes. Rather than a broad overview of stress in the workplace, the literature review explicates how leaders may achieve balance and resiliency through the use of a holistic approach to wellness. The theological foundations provide the foundation for the thesis and show the biblical precedence for the thesis. The theoretical foundations will provide an overview of research related to the thesis topic.

Literature Review

Ministry Leadership

Bill Hull defined Christian leadership as authentic living.[42] Hull's bottom line is Christian leadership has less to do with technique or methods and everything to do with accomplishing the mission God has given one to do. He calls this the singular motivation of Christian leadership. Stanley Patterson views leadership as a stewardship relationship between the leader and God.[43] He argues that character and competency are the essences of leadership.

Some, however, see leadership as a more practical application. Morris Thompson's discussion of a spiritual leader is someone who leads others to Christ. The difference, then, between a strong or weak spiritual leader is how connected they are to God.[44] Here, Thompson bases his leadership definition on results. William Self becomes even more practical with his

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[42] Hull, *The Christian Leader*, 176.
[43] Patterson, "Biblical Foundations of Christian Leadership, Part II," 80-94.
[44] Morris Thompson, "The Need for Spiritual Leadership," *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 11, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 78-82.

view of leadership. Self believes the primary role of a leader is to define the mission of the organization clearly, to set its goals, establish its priorities, and enforce its standards. To support his argument, Self cites Peter Drucker, who said a leader is someone who has followers.[45] In the same manner of a results-based leadership principle, Self goes on to say a leader is not someone who does a job better than anyone else; a leader is someone who enables followers to do work better than the leader can. His paradigm of leadership has, at its base, a dependence on interaction with others. For instance, Self proposed that leadership starts when the pastor first meets his new church.

Michale Ayers wrote a journal article on a theology of leadership which examined leadership from many perspectives.[46] Views on leadership may range from former US Secretary of State James Baker's view of leadership, which is knowing what needs to be done and getting it done, to Philip Lewis' understanding of transformational leadership that is the exertion of social influence.[47] Current leadership thought may fall into five broad categories: (1) Trait theory; (2) Great man theory; (3) Social theory; (4) Contingency theory, or (5)Transformational leadership. Ayers came to the conclusion that these categories are insufficient. There must be a connection between who a leader is and what a leader does. Leadership theory should not exist solely in the anthropological or sociological fields. Theology must also be brought into any leadership discussion. As an example, Ayers references Henry and Richard Blackaby, who wrote the more that the character of a leader reflects Christ, the larger their leadership quotient and the deeper their leadership character.[48]

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[45] Self, *Surviving the Stained Glass Window,* 84.
[46] Michale Ayers, "Toward a Theology of Leadership," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 1, no. 1 (Fall 2006): 3-27.
[47] Philip Lewis, *Transformational Leadership* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 61.
[48] Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2001).

A Barna Group study on pastoral leadership found that only 9% of pastors who graduate seminary said seminary does "very well" in preparing people to be effective church leaders. Fifty percent of pastors say seminary does "somewhat well," and 34% said seminary does "not too well" in preparing pastors for leadership.[49] In another study by the Francis Schaeffer Institute, 53% of pastors said seminary did not prepare them for ministry.[50] Understandings of leadership vary greatly.

<div align="center">Burnout</div>

The Barna Group study of ministry leaders showed an alarmingly high number of leaders struggling with burnout. In the study, the number of pastors at a high or medium risk of burnout exceeds 33% of all pastors. Of the 14,000 pastors interviewed, 76% know at least one pastor whose ministry ended because of stress. While only 5% of pastors are at high risk for spiritual difficulties, 61% fall into the medium-risk category. Furthermore, 24% of pastors experience a period in their ministry when they significantly doubt their faith.[51] When broken down into specific areas of wellness, the numbers are equally alarming.

Barna's study showed deficiencies in many areas. Physically, only 67% of pastors would say their physical well-being is excellent or good. Socially, 68% feel well-supported, and 60% feel energized by ministry work. Forty-three percent are at high or medium relational risk and experience challenges in their marriage and family or other close relationships. Twenty-six percent faced marital problems, and 27% faced parenting problems while in ministry. Only one-third of pastors express the strongest level of satisfaction with friendships. Emotionally, of the 14,000 pastors interviewed, one in five pastors experience mental health struggles.[52]

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[49] Barna Group, *The State of Pastors*, 65.
[50] Krejcir, *Statistics on Pastors*, 6.
[51] Barna Group, *The State of Pastors*, 11.
[52] Ibid.

The American Psychological Association performed a study of stress in America in 2014. The study showed the most common stressors in the general public of the United States: 64% of respondents noted money as a stressor, while 60% said work was a stressor. The economy, family responsibilities, and personal health followed with 49%, 47%, and 46%, respectively. Furthermore, 42% self-identified as having engaged in unhealthy behaviors because of stress.[53]

Jamie McClanahan provided a different, but complementary, study on burnout which reflects the above findings from a ministry leadership perspective. The majority of clergy described burnout as "hitting a wall." The problem of burnout in ministry does not seem to be relegated to any one denomination and is a problem throughout the Church. Fifty-four percent of Southern Baptist pastors feel their responsibilities are overwhelming. In the Anglican church, 58% of clergy feel drained by their ministry role. In a survey of 8,150 evangelical pastors, 54% of pastors feel overworked and 43% feel overstressed.[54]

Diane Chandler also established an argument regarding pastoral burnout. She cited research estimating pastors in the United States exit ministry at a rate of 1,500 per month. She did, however, observe further research is needed to address the causes of these premature departures.[55] This research would not only contribute to life-balance and well-being for the pastor, but would also contribute to the stability of the churches the pastors oversee.

Wide-spread ministerial burnout is no longer a question. There is still some discussion, however, on its cause. Wilmer Schaufeli, Michael Leiter, and Christina Maslach describe the

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[53] American Psychological Association "Stress in America," *Paying with Our Health* (Washington, D.C., 2015). (Is this a website, article, book? There is some missing information)

[54] Jamie McClanahan, "Pastoral Self-Care: Developing a Burnout-Resistant Approach to Life and Ministry" (DMin thesis, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018).

[55] Diane J. Chandler, "Pastoral Burnout and the Impact of Personal Spiritual Renewal, Rest-taking, and Support System Practices," *Pastoral Psychology*, 58, no. 3 (2009): 273-287.

cause of burnout as stress, not properly addressed.[56] Richard Swenson sees burnout as a lack of margin, which he describes as the difference between current level of functioning and full capacity.[57] Siang-Yang Tan discussed burnout from a stress perspective. Stress is transactional, influenced by both the individual and the environment. Burnout comes as stress taxes a person in a way that exceeds his or her own resources.[58]

Whole Person Concept

Michael Leiter points out that burnout is not simply related to work. Unsuccessful management of boundaries outside of work is also a contributor.[59] Gary Thomas continues this thought through an examination of the physical body and how its health or lack of health will influence every other area of life. The body does not simply carry a soul, the body also affects the soul.[60]

If one wants to have a healthy ministry, it is essential for the ministry leader to develop his or her character, lifestyle, and behavior. Epperly noted the importance of a holistic spirituality which includes body, mind, and spirit.[61] This concept of a holistic approach toward the ministry leader, or a whole-person concept, is seen throughout the literature review. John Ortberg goes so far as to say one should not measure one's devotion to God by having a devotional life. The main measure of devotion is simply one's life.[62]

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[56] Wilmar B. Schaufeli, Michael P. Leiter, and Christina Maslach, "Burnout: 35 years of Research and Practice" *Career Development International Journal*, 14, no. 3 (2009): 204-220.

[57] Richard Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2004), pg. 11.

[58] Siang-Yang Tan, *Rest: Experiencing God's Peace in a Restless World* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2000), 163.

[59] Michael P. Leiter, *Burnout at Work: A Psychological Perspective* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2014), 44.

[60] Gary Thomas, *Every Body Matters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 12.

[61] Epperly, *A Center in the Cyclone*, 61.

[62] John Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 51.

Paul Petit approaches the concept of salvation as holistic. An implication of salvation is spiritual formation that affects the whole life. The whole person concept is important due to the interconnectedness of the spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual. Petit believes one must become aware that, for instance, the state of one's emotional life will affect one's walk with God. The basis on which ministry leaders may apply their leadership is a proper understanding of calling.[63]

There are two types of call: primary and functional. The primary call is for all people to have a living and dynamic relationship with God. The functional call is how the primary call is lived out in daily life. The importance of the functional call is that it must not be viewed as to how one finds a job, career, or spouse. The role of the functional call is to serve the primary call. While functional calls may change and flex, the primary call never does. The implication for a leader is to keep the primary call primary.[64] To take this thought one step further, Patterson made the point that the goal of discipleship is to make a leader. He labels discipleship a leadership development process.[65]

<div align="center">Balance and Resiliency</div>

A critical theological point for Thomas is that Satan wants to distance people from God. Toward that end, he may suggest what may seem like acceptable behaviors, which, if abused or misused, can negatively affect health. As a result, one distances from God.[66] Charles Ryrie connects spiritual health to life balance: "There is nothing more devastating to the practice of

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[63] Paul Petit, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2008), 198-200.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Patterson, "Biblical Foundations of Christian Leadership, Part II," 80-94.
[66] Thomas, *Every Body Matters*, 145.

spiritual living than imbalance. An unbalanced application to biblical spirituality will result in an

unbalanced Christian life. Balance is the key to a wholesome Christian life."[67]

Richard Swenson also examines balance. For him, balance comes from God. Just as God

built limitations into us, He also built in the need for balance.[68] This concept of balance is not

limited to the field of theology. Maurice Mittelmark and George Bauer, in their book on

salutogenesis, use Antonovsky's term "coherence" instead of balance.[69] Coherence is "a feeling

of confidence that one's internal and external environments are predictable and that there is a

high probability that things will work out as well as can reasonably be expected."[70]

Hull wrote the challenge for the Christian leader is to follow Jesus and find the same type

of balance Jesus had. This balance enabled Jesus to have ambition and humility. His ambition

helped him to complete his mission, and his humility enabled him to stay in submission to the

Father.[71] Chandler's examination of Maslach's work on burnout highlights the importance and

the necessity of balance. In her journal article, Chandler makes the point that there is an inverse

relationship between healthy practices and burnout. An intentional focus on healthy practices

should renew depleted reserves.[72]

Wilson and Hoffmann's studies on stress and stressors of ministry asserted that to be an

effective leader, one should be transformative. An effective leader will be remade on an ongoing

basis, from within, through the Holy Spirit. This remaking does not mean there will be no stress,

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[67] Charles Ryrie, *Balancing the Christian Life: Biblical Principles for Wholesome Living* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1969), 9-10.

[68] Swenson, *Margin*, 191.

[69] Maurice Mittelmark and George Bauer, *The Handbook of Salutogenesis* (CH): Springer; 2017). Last Accessed April 15, 2010: ncbi.nlm.nih.gov: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK435854/

[70] Antonovsky, *Health, Stress and Coping*, 123.

[71] Hull, *The Christian Leader*, 35.

[72] Chandler, "Pastoral Burnout and the Impact of Personal Spiritual Renewal, Rest-taking, and Support System Practices," 274.

which is why stress-management skills are so essential. There is only so much stress a person believes they can manage. When stress exceeds the perceived amount, it leads to distress.[73]

When healthy habits do not entirely work, and one becomes out of balance, or moves from stress to distress, there is a need for resiliency. Joel Cocklin, in his DMIN work on pastoral resilience,[74] used a definition where resilience is the ability to be stretched, bent, or compressed, but also return to its original shape without acting in a dysfunctional or harmful manner. A resilient person is the one able to thrive in difficult situations. Cocklin prefers a resiliency-based approach over a stress management-based approach because he believes the quality of life for a resilient person will be higher than one who simply manages stress.

<div align="center">Managing Balance and Resiliency</div>

The need for balance and resiliency, how to manage stress, burnout, and live a healthy life, is not a problem in Christianity alone. The American Psychological Association found that grouping or demographics matter little when evaluating stress. All groups "struggle to achieve their health and lifestyle goals, and manage stress in ineffective ways."[75]

Mittelmark and Bauer's work continued Antonovsky's work on salutogenesis. This work provides a framework on which to build the concept of resilience. When a person becomes out of balance, the salutogenic model looks for areas of health, not the areas of disease. This type of positive psychology encourages the individual to focus on areas of health and work in that area, to foster growth, rather than simply manage unhealthy areas.[76]

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[73] Wilson and Hoffman, *Preventing Ministry Failure*, 221.

[74] Joel Cocklin, "Pastoral Resilience" (Dmin diss., Winebrenner Theological Seminary, 2013), 2.

[75] American Psychological Association, "Stress in America," *Paying With Our Health* (Washington, D.C., 2015), 9.

[76] Camelia Rohani, et al. "Sense of coherence as a mediator of health-related quality of life dimensions in patients with breast cancer: a longitudinal study with prospective design," *Health and quality of life outcomes* 13, no. 195 (2015): 1-9.

Ortberg examines this concept of resilience and wellness from the perspective of becoming one's best self. For Ortberg, God and his design define one's best self. The pathway toward becoming one's best self includes a focus in the areas of the spirit, mind, time, relationships, and experiences. While many people quantify a healthy devotion to God as a healthy devotional life, Ortberg would postulate that the primary measure of one's devotion is not a devotional life but one's entire life.[77]

Barna's study concludes the Christian community has, at times, misplaced its focus and sought to raise strong, heroic leaders. Ministry leaders of today must focus more on resilience. Ministry leaders who are resilient are able to accept hardships and difficulties and grow in and through them. A resilient leader: (1) prioritizes their own spiritual, emotional and physical needs; (2) views challenges realistically; (3) learns from their mistakes; (4) considers alternative perspectives and new processes, and; (5) expects that God is at work even in adverse situations.[78]

Rick Luciotti uses Williams Glasser's concept of "Total Behavior" to discuss self-care. Glasser defined Total Behavior as an integration of one's thinking, acting, feeling, and physiology. The development of healthy behavioral patterns and care of oneself will lead to an increase in overall health and well-being. The scriptural example for developing these behavioral patterns derives from Luke 10:27, where Jesus tells his followers to love God with heart, soul, strength, mind, and to love one's neighbor as oneself.[79]

The most efficient way to take care of others is first to take care of the self. The goal of self-care, then, becomes to live as Christ commanded as we focus on heart, mind, soul, strength, and neighbor. Clergy should assess these aspects of their lives and establish healthy habits. The

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[77] Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 51.
[78] Barna Group, *The State of Pastors*, 156.
[79] Rick Luciotti, "Clergy Self-Care." *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy* vol. 38(2) (2019): 12-15.

personal responsibility of clergy members is to assess who they are and what they need, accurately. This assessment is the first step toward self-care.[80]

Epperly came to the same conclusion: the Christian pastor must reconnect with the concept of self-care. Care for the body and mind enrich, complement, and energize one another. God is glorified when standards of conduct are emphasized in every facet of life. Maintenance of these standards at the highest quality is essential to developing boundaries. Boundaries are not restrictive in nature. Instead, they enable right relationships with self and others. This maintenance is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Epperly argued that most boundaries focus on external behavior rather than on character, emotions, maturity, and spiritual life.[81]

The literature related to self-care and leadership is vast. There is no shortage of books devoted to the topics, written from both a Christian and secular perspective, yet ministry leaders who lack balance or resiliency is born out in study after study. Mental health professionals and researchers both recognize the problem.[82] Some studies conservatively estimate burnout to be over 10% in some populations and as high as 69% in some occupations.[83] At odds with the almost universal recognition of the problem is a lack of a generally accepted solution or method for addressing the issue.

There appears to be a gap in the literature of any significant modeling or strategic discussion of balance and resiliency for a ministry leader. That conclusion follows from an evaluation of burnout and wellness in the academic and professional mental health fields. "The authors recognized valuable contributions in the existing literature, but found the amount of

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[80] Rick Luciotti, "Clergy Self-Care," *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy* 38, no. 2 (2019): 12-15.

[81] Epperly, *A Center in the Cyclone*, 16.

[82] Christina Maslach and Michael Leiter, "Understanding the Burnout Experience: Recent Research and Its Implications for Psychiatry," *World Psychiatry,* 15, no. 2 (2016): 103-111.

[83] Linda Heinemann and Torsten Heinemann, "Burnout Research: Emergence and Scientific Investigation of a Contested Diagnosis," *SAGE Open*, Jan-Mar (2017): 1-12.

intervention research, its scope, and experimental rigor to be inadequate to the task of developing, implementing, and evaluating methods for addressing stress and burnout."[84] If the professional literature and scope are inadequate, it seems the typical ministry leader would likely benefit from a model developed for addressing stress and burnout through balance and resiliency, or in this case, how to identify his or her needs and practice effective self-care.

Theological Foundations

The theological foundations for this research center on God's design for people, their purpose, and the implications for ministry leadership. The divine perspective is crucial to the understanding of what wellness looks like for a ministry leader. Thus, balance and resiliency are not goals, in and of themselves. The goal is to live as God designed while in a fallen world. Balance and resiliency are methods to achieve wellness. If humanity was created in God's image, as noted in Genesis 1:27, then a foundational truth of humanity is that each individual has worth, dignity, and value.[85]

Imago Dei

The *Journal of Christian Education* draws a significant, two-part conclusion from the concept of *Imago Dei.* First, *Imago Dei*, as previously noted, refers to the nature of man as created in the image of God. Humanity's worth is imputed as humanity is made in the image of God.[86] God gives everyone worth as Creator and Redeemer. This worth of the self is universal and present in everyone. An individual has worth even when in a state of sin and rebellion. Worth is not righteousness-dependent.

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[84] Leiter, *Burnout at Work*, 147.
[85] Author's Name? "The True Nature of Man." *Journal of Christian Education* os 53, no. 2 (September 2010): 35–52. doi:10.1177/002196571005300206.
[86] Ibid.

In John 3:16, one of the most well-known verses of Scripture, one may read of God's love, which was so great he gave his one and only Son. The Apostle Paul affirms the value of a person, even in his or her rebellious, sinful state: "You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6).[87] The ungodly, those made in the image of God, were worth enough for God to send his son and for Christ to die on the cross.

Christ's sacrifice does not require righteousness on the part of the individual. "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). Even now, those who have not given their life to Christ, and those who do, have value because each was created in the image of God. God's love, grace, and mercy persevere and pursue each person because He knows their needs. "Angels… are pure spirits without bodily needs, but men are not pure spirits. Men are combinations of body and mind and spirit, uniting in a working partnership both hand and brain. They thus have a variety of temptations and any valid religion will be frankly concerned with all of these."[88] God's love extends to the entire person.

The second conclusion from *The Journal of Christian Education* is that part of *Imago Dei* is not simply the worth one has as a created being, but also as a redeemed being.[89] "…The 'conformity' Image refers to the character or quality of life which results as man's attitude of rebellion against God is changed to one of allegiance and fellowship with Him, a change which leads to victory over sin and therefore to righteousness."[90] This change is complete, akin to a rebirth: "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to

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[87] Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in New International Version (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984).

[88] Thomas, *Every Body Matters*, 29.

[89] "The True Nature of Man." *Journal of Christian Education* os-53, no. 2 (September 2010): 35–52. doi:10.1177/002196571005300206.

[90] Ibid., 35.

become children of God- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God" (John 1:12-13).

This change in a person's life is what gives him or her the capacity to know peace, not as the world gives peace. This peace is what enables one to "… not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27). God's peace does not mean people will always be exempt from troubles; in fact, it is just the opposite. Jesus guarantees his followers will have trouble. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

In Craig Keener's commentary on the Gospel of John, "peace" references "a central motif in Jesus' last discourse, recognizing that after Jesus departed, the disciples would have to confront a hostile world."[91] Keener lists four themes of peace as: (1) applicable to war; (2) human relationships; (3) tranquility in the midst of hardship; or (4) to the bliss of the righteous after death.[92] This study will acknowledge peace as tranquility in the midst of hardship. These hardships may include hostility, war, and suffering or difficulty in human relationships. The emphasis is on the state of the person when under stress, or hardship. Peace yields the ability to take heart; that is wellness.

<center>Areas of Wellness</center>

As peace comes when one finds true rest in Christ, so does wellness. Wellness does not mean every circumstance will change, and there will be no more troubles. Wellness means how one responds to hardship and adversity will change in the light of Christ's mercy, love, and grace. Romans 8:28 is a natural extension of this peace. Here Paul wrote: "And we know that in

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[91] Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: 2 Volumes,* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 982.
[92] Ibid.

all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Rom 8:28). Whatever the situation, Paul assures the reader God is at work.

As God works in the Christian, through the power of his Spirit, Paul further explains what he meant by verse 28. One of the five undeniable affirmations in verses 29-30 is that Christians should be conformed to the likeness of Jesus.[93] "In the simplest possible terms, God's eternal purpose for his people is that we should become like Jesus. The transformation process begins here and now in our character and conduct, through the work of the Holy Spirit.…"[94] To be conformed to the likeness of Jesus brings peace and wellness to one's life. This conformation is God's will for his children.

Since the earliest of Bible times, God has made clear his will. In Deuteronomy 5, God, through Moses, gives the Ten Commandments to the nation of Israel. Deuteronomy 6:1-3 reiterates the giving of the Law. The commandments serve a purpose: "Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you…" (Deut. 6:3a). God wants what is best for his people and reveals his will to achieve that goal.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 is known as the *Shema*. The *Shema* is "…the heart of Israel's faith and confession, and the book of Deuteronomy itself.…"[95] Verse 5 issues a call to love God. This verse "is the appropriate response to all that verse 4 implies about the uniqueness of Yahweh himself, as this relates to Israel, both past, present and future."[96] This call for Israel to love God is the "first of its kind in the Pentateuch.…"[97] God's desire, and Israel's appropriate response,

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[93] John Stott, *The Message of Romans: God's Good News for the World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 241-248.

[94] Ibid., 174.

[95] Edward J. Woods, "Deuteronomy" *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol 5,* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 133.

[96] Ibid., 136.

[97] Ibid.

that they may enjoy a long life is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deut. 6:5).

Mark's account of the Transfiguration in chapter 9 makes special note of the voice from the cloud, which said, "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him" (Mark 9:7b)! This command, "Listen to him!" alludes back to Deuteronomy, after the giving of the law.[98] "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him" (Deut. 18:15). Later, in Mark 12, a teacher of the law has the opportunity to listen to Jesus.

Noticing that Jesus had answered well to previous questions, the teacher of the law asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important" (Mark 12:28b)? Jesus' response is to reiterate the *Shema*: "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:29-31, ESV).

If peace and wellness come from becoming more like Christ, and Jesus declared the two greatest commandments were to love God with heart, soul, mind, strength, and to love neighbor as self, then those who seek to conform to Christlikeness will love God and their neighbor as themselves.

In 2 Corinthians 3, Paul refers to Christ, who "…has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant…" (2 Cor. 3:6). These ministers who "with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is of the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:18). Chapter 4 begins with an affirmation that ministers do

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[98] Eckhard J. Schnabel, "Mark" *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 210-213.

not lose heart through God's mercy (2 Cor. 4:1). The ability to not lose heart reflects a life of balance as one loves God in each area of wellness per the two greatest commandments: physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual.

Additionally, resilience comes from God's light shining in his children that Christ may be displayed (2 Cor. 4: 6). Verses 7-9 describe resilience: "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor 4:7-9). With balance and resiliency, one may be a competent minister (2 Cor. 3:6).

A summary, to this point, on the theological basis for balance and resiliency in ministry leaders, is that the foundation for wellness begins with God's love, as seen in the two-fold nature of *Imago Dei.* God's love enables his children (John 1:12-13) to live at peace (John 14:27, 16:33). Peace comes from a love for God and conforming to his likeness (Rom. 8:29, 2 Cor. 3:18). As seen in Deuteronomy 6:5 and then reiterated by Jesus in Mark 12, one should love God with all one's heart (emotional), soul (spiritual), mind (intellectual), strength (physical), and love their neighbor as self (social). This love for God brings peace, which enables one to take heart in the midst of troubles (balance) and, when hard pressed on every side, not to be crushed or when perplexed not to be in despair, when persecuted, not to be abandoned and when struck down, not to be destroyed (resiliency).

In an examination of the areas of wellness, it may be helpful to revisit the definition of fitness, used in this research. Fitness is the optimization of the ability or capacity to do the best one can, with who one is and what one has. The Bible speaks not only of each area of wellness

but also to their interrelatedness. This section will identify Scripture verses and themes which support the greatest commandment.

Physical Fitness

The call to love God with all one's strength is the wellness area of physical fitness. Physical fitness is a part of healthy, balanced living. Fitness does not mean the body is free from disease or illness. What one eats, how one cares for one's body, one's physical habits and physical limitations or illnesses are a part of physical fitness. All aspects of physical fitness should be offered to God. Paul wrote, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God-this is your true and proper worship" (Rom, 12:1). Presenting our bodies to God is a form of worship.

The body is a gift from God. How one treats one's body is a way to honor God. "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Conforming to the likeness of Christ and the new birth in him should change how one sees the physical body. With that understanding, an action should result, such as to honor God with the body.

Paul writes to the church of Corinth to implore them to bring glory to God, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31, ESV). Earlier in the same letter, Paul reminded the Corinthians that they are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in them (1 Cor. 3:16). Because the body belongs to the Lord and Christians are called to honor God with their bodies, it is also necessary to understand that not to take care of the body is detrimental to the work of God. "Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God" (Rom.

14:20a, ESV). To care for the body and use it to honor God means one must focus on what is beneficial (1 Cor. 10:23). If it is not beneficial, it should be avoided (Eph. 5:18, 1 Cor. 3:16-17).

Physical wellness honors God, is a form of worship, and draws one close to him. "Indeed, God's realm is as near as your immune, circulatory, and cardiovascular systems. The nearness of God's realm challenges us to forsake unhealthy personal and professional habits, repent the harm they have caused ourselves and others, and embark on new pathways of personal and professional healing."[99] One who seeks peace and wellness should examine one's physical dimension of wellness to determine one's level of fitness, balance, and resiliency.

Social Fitness

The Christian life is not meant to be lived in a vacuum. God created people not to live in isolation but to be engaged and connected with one another (Rom. 12:4-5). This connection does not mean that all introverts must become extroverts. The connection means one is to honor God with the gifts one has been given (Rom. 12:6). In order to have fellowship with one another, social fitness is crucial. Fellowship with one another comes from living as God intended (1 John 1:7). The social area of wellness includes relationships. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines a relationship as "The way in which two or more concepts, objects, or people are connected, or the state of being connected."[100] This connection may be a relationship with others, relationship with finances, relationship with hobbies, relationship to work, or of various other connections. Succinctly, it is where one goes, what one does, and with whom one does it.

Christians are called to carry one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2), live in harmony with one another (Romans 12:16), love each other even at the expense of self-sacrifice (John 15:12-13),

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[99] Epperly, *A Center in the Cyclone*, 63.
[100] Oxford Dictionaries, s.v. "relationship", accessed May 20,2020, https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/relationship.

give to those in need (Acts 20:35), and be good stewards of finances (2 Cor. 9:6-7). The concept

of social fitness is prevalent throughout Scripture. The key to social fitness is that whatever the

relationship may be, it must be grounded in God. "Commit your work to the Lord, and your

plans will be established" (Prov. 16:3, ESV).

Just as a poor diet may erode physical health, so, too, will a lack of focus on God's

design for social wellness erode social fitness.

> Many pastors seem more stimulated by the next ministry vision or the next step in the
> strategic plan than by the stunning glory of the grand intervention of grace into sin-
> broken hearts. The glories of being right, successful, in control, esteemed, and secure
> often become more influential in the way that ministry is done than the awesome realities
> of the presence, sovereignty, power, and love of God. Many pastors have lost their awe
> and either don't know it or don't know how to get it back.[101]

Instead, Paul's call to ministry leaders is to connect with others in a way that honors God. "And

we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the

disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong

for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else" (1 Thess.

5:14). Social fitness seeks health in relationships.

Jesus clearly makes a point of the need for healthy relationships numerous times. On one

such occasion, Jesus draws a direct connection between how one takes care of others and a

relationship with him.

> Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or
> thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you
> in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to
> visit you?" The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of
> these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matt. 25: 37-40).

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[101] Paul David Tripp, *Dangerous Calling: Confronting the Unique Challenges of Pastoral Ministry* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 120.

Immediately after Jesus refers to his disciples as friends, no longer servants, he commands them to love each other (John 15:17). As his friends, Jesus appointed Christians to go and bear fruit (John 15: 9-16). Paul elaborates on what it means to bear fruit and love one another. Rom. 12:3-21 is a model for how to live in social fitness. Whether it is to share with those in need and practice hospitality (Rom. 12:13), rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn (Rom. 12:15), the goal is to "Live in harmony with one another…" (Rom. 12:16). Just a few verses later, Paul reiterates this call to social fitness: "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone" (Rom. 12:18). To live at peace with everyone is to conform to Christ in a social wellness context, which brings about the peace of God in one's life.

Emotional Fitness

Social fitness deals with one's relationships with others and with other things. Emotional fitness is about the relationship one has with oneself. Emotional fitness involves a self-awareness in, and healthy management of, emotions, feelings, and behaviors. The Bible has much to say regarding the area of emotional wellness. A biblical principle is that one cannot achieve emotional fitness apart from God (Psalm 34:17-20).

A key point for emphasis is that emotional fitness is effective management and not the absence of struggle or disease. For instance, someone who is clinically depressed or bipolar may benefit from medications. To use medication neither dishonors God nor indicates a doubt in his power. God uses natural revelation in science and medicine to promote wellness. To use emotional wellness healthily is to love God and follow his design.

Petit wrote, "By God's design, we are all emotional beings. The sooner we can acknowledge this basic fact of life, the sooner we can make significant headway toward growing

a tender heart that can listen to God and others."[102] One should not view emotions negatively. Jesus wept over the death of a friend (John 11:35). He was compassionate (Mark 6:34) and even showed anger (Mark 3:5).

Karen Horney identified three basic emotional tendencies in humanity: (1) An approach toward (participation and engagement with or toward a person, object or event); (2) An avoidance away from (moving away from, withdrawing, evading, dodging, escaping); or (3) Moving against (standing one's ground, defending, defeating).[103] There is nothing inherently wrong with any of these tendencies. Emotional fitness is a proper understanding of how they should be used. Emotions are how one may love God with all one's heart.

In Scripture, King David was neither exempt from emotions, nor their positive and negative attributes. He was able to lead from his emotions that God's purposes prevailed. His emotions distanced him from God, and his emotions drew him closer to God. In 1 Samuel 17, the Philistine champion, Goliath, stood in front of God's chosen people for forty days and challenged any of them to fight him. "On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified" (1 Sam. 17: 11). When David heard Goliath's taunts and challenges, he said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him" (1 Sam. 17:32). Here David's emotional tendency was to run toward something. He ran toward God.

David's emotional fitness was such that he was self-aware enough to know that he could not defeat Goliath on his own, but he did not have to. He did not give in to fear or despair. David understood that all battles belong first and foremost to the Lord. "David said to the Philistine, 'You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the

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[102] Petit, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation*, 130.
[103] Ibid., 135.

name of the Lord almighty…. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands" (1 Sam.17:45-47). David did not lose heart. Instead, he loved God with all his heart.

No one is perfect; all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), which includes David. When David became King, he allowed his emotional fitness to suffer and moved away from God. In a moment when his men were off to war, Israel's leader and most powerful man, David, saw another man's wife on a rooftop, Bathsheba, and took her (2 Sam. 11:4). The role of Bathsheba is essential to note in that nowhere in Scripture is she blamed.

David's lustful and envious actions displeased the Lord (2 Sam. 11:27). David then tried to cover up his wrongdoings through the murder of Bathsheba's husband, Uriah. Here the story of David illustrates a deficiency of emotional fitness. Instead of managing his emotions, David gave in to them, and in so doing, moved away from God.

Psalm 13 shows the full depth and range of David's emotions. In the first two verses, David cries out, "how long" four times (Psalm 13:1-2). "How long will his anguish last? The question exposes a lack of confidence that the time of sorrow will ever end, but also implies that God should make it stop."[104] David feels forgotten. To forget is not solely a cognitive act. In the Hebrew Scripture, "to forget is… to withhold help and comfort."[105] The point David wants to make is clear. He wrestles with the thoughts going through his head. David feels hurt, sorrowful, and forgotten by God. He may even feel that God has not treated him fairly.[106]

In verses three and four, David pleads for an answer. David appears almost ready to give up. If God does not do something, David feels the only other option is death. David is perplexed.

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[104] Tremper Longman III, *Psalms: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 96.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.

Nevertheless, David's emotional fitness allows him to stand his ground. Though he is perplexed, he does not despair.

David stands his ground in verses five and six. His description of his emotional state highlights the turmoil he feels, however, this is the one called a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14, Acts 13:22). Even in his hurt and pain, even in his struggles and desperation, David loves God with all his heart. He trusts in God's love. David rejoices in God's salvation. He sings God's praise (Psalm 13:5-6), and he does not allow his current emotional state to define him.

In Psalm 13, David displays emotional fitness. He is self-aware of his emotions and feelings, but rather than give in to despair, David practices healthy and effective management of his emotions and ends the psalm praising God and rejoicing. Jesus calls his followers to love God with all their hearts (Luke 10:27) and that love bears fruit, empowered by the Spirit. Paul assures his readers that "...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23, ESV).

Intellectual Fitness

Intellectual fitness is to love God with all one's mind. Intellectual fitness does not mean that the smarter people are, the closer they are to God. The meaning of intellectual fitness is to do the best one can with what one has. Intellectual fitness is the cognitive ability to think and process critically, make reasoned judgments, and think things through. Intellectual fitness may have a significant impact on overall health. Because intellectual health impacts overall health, fitness in this area is why one must love God with all of one's mind.

Paul clearly gives guidance toward intellectual fitness in his instruction to the church at Philippi. "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is

anything worthy of praise, think about these things" (Phil. 4:8, ESV). Christians can honor God with their thoughts. The way a Christian uses his or her mind is one way to show love for God.

In 2 Corinthians, Paul provides an example of the need for intellectual fitness in ministry as he defends his ministry leadership. In the church of Corinth, some Jewish Christians had infiltrated the church with their own theology and doctrine, which is contrary to what Paul preached. Because of this, the ability of people to lead effectively and minister in the church was at risk. As Paul re-established his authority in the church, "the infiltrators mounted their own frontal attack against the validity and integrity of Paul's apostolate."[107]

Paul responds to criticisms with intellectual arguments (2 Cor. 10). Indeed, Paul wrote, "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God." (2 Cor 10:5). Paul understood the necessity of intellectual fitness in ministry leadership. "His proclamation of the gospel, like our Lord's preaching of the kingdom, was not bare declaration, but involved reasoning and arguing with his hearers in an effort to remove barriers erected against the truth."[108] Reason and critical thinking are a part of God's plan for ministry.

Ministry leaders need to think about what they are thinking about. The goal should be to "present yourselves as workmen who do not need to be ashamed of their work and who correctly handles the Word of Truth" (2 Tim 2:15). This idea of wellness in the intellect is not found only in Paul's writings. Intellectual wellness is found in both the Old and New Testaments.

Proverbs is known as the book of wisdom. Proverbs is filled with wisdom instructions. "God has seen fit to include in Scripture these literary genres that express God-given insights developed over many years."[109] The inclusion of Proverbs in Scripture emphasizes the

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[107] Colin Kruse, *2 Corinthians* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 230.
[108] Ibid, 232.
[109] Lindsay Wilson, *Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 2.

importance of intellectual fitness. A proverb is an observation. "It is a generalization based on experience, or a distillation of knowledge gained by experience-it is not a revealed truth (although God may be behind the discernment process), or a law or a promise."[110]

Isaiah speaks of the importance of reason (Isa. 1:18), to God's provision, and the importance of a fit mind. "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you" (Isa. 26:3). Intellectual fitness provides the opportunity to reason and make judgments. True intellectual fitness begins with an understanding of how, as *Imago Dei*, it is necessary to love God and seek him. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8-9).

Joshua urged the nation of Israel to choose to serve the Lord (Josh. 24:15). Proverbs speaks plainly of how central thoughts are to a relationship with God, "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7a, ESV). Psalm 1 speaks of the man who is blessed. He does not take counsel from the wicked (1:1). He delights in God's law and meditates on it day and night (1:2).

In Romans 12:2, Paul further elaborates what one should do in view of God's mercies. "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2, ESV). Douglas Moo expands on Paul's teaching of how one may love God with one's whole mind: "We do it by avoiding the pattern of thinking and behaving that is characteristic of this world and by instead aligning ourselves with the values of the world to come."[111] An

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[110] Wilson*, Proverbs*, 5.
[111] Douglas Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans (Encountering Biblical Studies): A Theological Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 163

intellectually fit person uses his or her reason, thoughts, and decision-making processes for the glory of God.

Spiritual Fitness

God does not reside solely in the area of spiritual wellness. In truth, God inhabits all areas. Fitness in each area is an expression of love to and for God. Spiritual wellness is a direct connection to God in one's soul. Spiritual fitness incorporates faith, faith practices, and values. From the spiritual area of wellness, one derives morals, core values and beliefs, meaning, and purpose. One's spiritual fitness establishes one's worldview (1 Cor 2: 1-16).

Spiritual fitness is necessary for a close relationship with God. "The spiritual danger here is that when awe of God is absent, it is quickly replaced by our awe of ourselves. If you are not living for God, the only alternative is to live for yourself."[112] To have spiritual fitness, one must draw near to God (Jas. 4:8). Isaiah proclaims one must seek the Lord and call on him. God will have compassion and pardon (Isa. 55:6-7). Psalms assures that God is near to those who look to him (Psalm 145:18).

Jeremiah is an example of both the need for spiritual fitness and God's grace. Jeremiah struggled to understand God's plan. Challenges and pressures in his life affected his wellness and caused him to second-guess his role as a prophet.[113] His ministry was not easy; he is known as "the weeping prophet." Jeremiah was hard-pressed and persecuted emotionally and physically.[114] The book of Jeremiah, however, also provides hope: "Even more importantly, there is always hope, even through judgment, because God is a God of grace. That is the good news in the book

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[112] Tripp, *Dangerous Calling*, 118.
[113] Phyllis Ten Elshof, ed. "Jeremiah: Introduction" *Quest NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 1081.
[114] Daniel J. Hays, *Jeremiah and Lamentations* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016).

of Jeremiah. For people who have made a mess of their lives, there is a message of hope and forgiveness."[115]

Spiritual fitness is not about the absence of sin. In fact, it is sin which distances a person from God (Eph. 2:12). Implicit in the *Imago Dei* is the need for God. Jesus, as the Messiah, enables one to draw close to God (John 14:6). Jeremiah, however, did not have the full revelation of Christ as the Messiah. As a prophet, he was a messenger of God. If Jeremiah, called as a prophet and set apart prior to birth (Jer. 1:5), struggled in ministry, it might be expected that contemporary ministry leaders may as well.

As previously mentioned, while Jeremiah may be the weeping prophet, his message is not without hope. Jeremiah paves the way for spiritual fitness. While Jeremiah's message was to the nation of Israel, it is every bit as applicable today:

> "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back from captivity" (Jer. 29:11-14).

Spiritual fitness is neither the absence of sin nor the absence of struggle. An aspect is to seek God with all one's heart.

Paul told the church of Corinth to walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). To the church of Rome, Paul said, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17, ESV). Spiritual fitness is essential to love God with one's soul. Faith is requisite. The writer of Hebrews stated: "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

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[115] Hetty Lalleman and Winkel Lalleman-De, *Jeremiah and Lamentations* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 19-20.

Jesus came that his followers may have abundant life (John 10:10). Jesus then refers to himself as the good shepherd (John 10:14). As the good shepherd, Jesus knew and was known by his sheep. They recognized his voice (John 10: 14-16). Jesus wants his followers to be with him (John 17:20-16, John 14:1-3). All Scripture is in support of these simple truths.

In Mark 10:17-22, a rich man asked Jesus what he had to do to inherit eternal life. After a brief discussion, "Jesus looked at him and loved him. 'One thing you lack,' he said. 'Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me'" (Mark 10:21). Verse 22 records the man's response: "At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth." As previously mentioned, spiritual fitness incorporates faith, faith practices, and values. Here, the rich man chose the things of this world rather than Jesus. To love God with all one's soul is to seek him first. The primary influencer is God, and it is from Him one derives morals, core values and beliefs, meaning, and purpose.

<div align="center">Interrelatedness of Areas of Wellness</div>

Throughout the Bible, the understanding of holistic wellness includes the concept of the interrelatedness of each area. While "stressed spelled backwards is desserts" is not in Scripture, it is illustrative of a scriptural principle: a holistic approach to wellness must recognize that the areas of physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual are interrelated. An example from the Bible is in the book of James: "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead" (Jas. 2:26). Health in one area promotes health in the others. "In fact, in the yin and yang of ministerial self-care, care for the body and care for the mind enrich, complement, and energize one another."[116] In the same way, a lack of health in one area may hurt the fitness in other areas of wellness.

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[116] Epperly, *A Center in the Cyclone*, 84.

The concept of the interrelatedness of fitness areas in holistic wellness is a theme throughout Scripture, even if not explicit. "The term *spiritual formation* is not a biblical term, but then neither is the word trinity. Nevertheless, both are expressions we use in referring to important teachings."[117] Epperly used the concept of spiritual formation in the "context of forming, transforming, or conforming a person's life toward Christlikeness."[118]

The theme of the interrelatedness of areas of wellness, then, should be evident in Scripture. The Psalmist declares, "Delight yourself in the Lord [spiritual], and he will give you the desires of your heart" [emotional/intellectual] (Psalm 37:4, ESV) (brackets added). Proverbs points out, "without counsel plans fail [intellectual], but with many advisers, they succeed" [social] (Prov. 15:22, ESV) (emphasis added). Just a few verses later illustrate how a healthy spiritual and emotional life benefit the intellectual: "The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things" (Prov. 15:28., ESV).

An intentional focus on the development of balance and resiliency benefit the entire person in a holistic way. Proverbs 3 states one should trust in the Lord (spiritual), with all one's heart (emotional), not lean on one's own understanding (intellectual), acknowledge God in all of one's ways (social, spiritual, physical), and God will make one's paths straight (wellness) (Prov. 3:5-6). "Anxiety weighs down the heart (emotional) but a kind word cheers it up (social)" (Prov. 12:25) (emphasis added). Conversely, Proverbs also states, "Pride (a lack of emotional fitness) goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit (a lack of spiritual fitness) before a fall" (Prov. 16:18) (emphasis added).

Romans 1 provides additional examples of how a lack of fitness negatively impacts one's life. God's wrath is revealed (1:18) because the wicked suppressed God's truth (intellectual and

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[117] Petit, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation*, 51.
[118] Ibid.

spiritual). God created the world that his qualities may be seen and understood, so there is no excuse (intellectual, 1:20). Those people claimed to be wise but became fools (intellectual, 1:23). They did not serve God and instead served "created things" (spiritual, 1:25).

God then gave them over to their lust (emotional, 1:26), and men and women abandoned God's plan for sex (physical and social, 1:16-27). Because they did not retain the knowledge of God, God gave them over to a depraved mind (intellectual and emotional, 1:28), and so they did "what ought not to be done" (physical and social, 1:28). Wickedness filled these people.

Gossips, slanderers, and those disobedient to parents all reflect an aspect of a lack of social fitness (29-30). This lack of social fitness, though, comes from a lack of spiritual fitness. In the same way, their lack of understanding, inventing ways of doing evil, and approval of those who practice them shows a deficit in intellectual fitness. The disconnection is due to a misalignment of their hearts and souls with the world and not God (30-31). Their insolence and arrogance, envy, and greed (29-30) show such a lack of emotional wellness that they do not have understanding (intellectual), neither are they able to love and show mercy (emotional) (30-31).

Not having balance or fitness does not mean all is lost. Therein lies the need for resilience. The story of Elijah brings this theme of a holistic approach to wellness together. Stressors and difficulties may disrupt one's balance but may still bring honor and glory to God. In 1 Kings 18, Elijah, with the assurance that God lives, and it is He whom Elijah serves, presents himself to Ahab (1 Kings 18:15). What follows is one of the greatest displays of God's authenticity and power not seen since the days of Moses (23-46).

Despite Elijah's confidence in God and God's display of power, when Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say he was going to die, "Elijah was afraid and ran for his life" (1 Kings 19:3). Elijah's emotional fears and discouragement caused him to doubt God's provision and

faithfulness. "He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. 'I have had enough, Lord,' he said. 'Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors'" (1 Kings 19:4). He was so emotionally stressed that he became physically exhausted and fell asleep (19:5). Elijah's humanity is plain to see.

An angel of the Lord woke Elijah and told him to eat. He did this and then lay down again (19:6). Once again, the angel of the Lord, to prepare Elijah for the ensuing journey, told him to get up and eat (19:7). Strengthened by the food (19:8), Elijah traveled to Horeb and spent the night in a cave. Elijah was disappointed, discouraged, and felt all alone. He did not understand what was going on. Elijah had served as God's representative to Israel, but Israel rejected the covenant. Elijah believed that all God's prophets had been killed, that he was next and that he would soon join them (19:14).

Scripture clearly shows there are times when even God's prophets may get out of balance and struggle with fitness in the five areas of wellness; however, just because someone is out of balance does not mean they cannot be resilient. God told Elijah to go out to the mountain and stand in God's presence. A wind swept over the mountain, so powerful that rocks shattered, but the Bible says God was not in the wind. After the wind, came an earthquake, but God was not there, either (19:11). Next came a roaring fire, but still, God did not appear (19:12). "And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave" (1 Kings 19:14).

Perhaps Elijah wanted God to reveal himself and his power in a manner so amazing and glorious that Elijah would no longer doubt that God is in control. A divine show of force such as the wind, earthquake, or fire, would reflect the power of the Lord that destroyed the prophets of Baal, however, God was found in a gentle whisper. Elijah learned that sometimes God comes in

the ordinary. Because God comes to His people in the ordinary, He shows the ordinary may also be sacred and set apart for Him. For effective ministry, the ministry leader must see God even in the ordinary.

Sometimes a ministry leader must still him or herself to hear that whisper, but God always comes. Jesus said, "I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). To become like Jesus is nothing one may do on one's own. Becoming like Jesus requires following God as Creator and looking to him as Savior. The path to wellness is holistic. One must love God with all one's heart, soul, mind, and strength. One must love one's neighbor as oneself (Luke 10:27).

Leadership

Arguably, there was no more significant leader in the early church than the Apostle Paul. Paul told the church of Corinth to "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). The English Standard Version translates the verse as, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (ESV). Regardless of the translation used, Paul makes it clear he believes what he is doing is worthy of emulation. Derek Prime and Alistair Begg echo this concept: "Whatever else a shepherd and teacher provides for God's people, he is to give them an example to follow."[119] What was it then, about Paul's ministry leadership, that he felt was important enough others should replicate?

Paul's call to the church of Corinth was neither a power play to reestablish his authority over all sects, nor was it a display of pride. Paul desired for the church to focus on their

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[119] Derek J. Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor: Understanding Our Calling and Work* (Chicago: Moody, 2004), 36.

relationship with Christ, with their doctrine, and with their co-laborers.[120] In other words, Paul wanted early church Christians to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love their neighbors as themselves.

After leaving Corinth, issues arose regarding Paul's status and authority as a leader. The Corinthian church did not focus on holiness or righteousness. Sin had entered in and was running rampant. Divisions in the church were destroying ministry.[121] Though Paul founded the church, his leadership was no longer clear.[122] Paul sought to address these issues in 1 Corinthians. "You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? For when one says, 'I follow Paul,' and another, 'I follow Apollos,' are you not mere men" (1 Cor. 3: 4-5)?

Paul suffered for the gospel. He was beaten, imprisoned, shipwrecked, unfairly criticized, suffered through the elements, and went without food and water (2 Cor. 11:23-31). Despite the hardships, these seemingly insurmountable setbacks seemed to only move him forward in service to God. He exhibited balance and/or resiliency in all areas of wellness in his ministry throughout his sufferings and trials.

> One of the great interpretive hurdles for the 21st-century western commentator is to capture the full force of language written to churches whose normal life setting was one of personal harassment, societal marginalization, and material loss. The key to Paul's resilience, and that of the churches he planted, was a confidence in the divine purposes being worked out through their sufferents.[123]

The way he loved God with his heart, soul, mind, and strength, along with his love for the early church, enabled him to endure (2 Tim. 2:10).

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[120] Dustin W. Ellington, "Imitating Paul's Relationship to the Gospel: 1 Corinthians 8.1 – 11.1," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 33, no. 1 (2015): 303-315.

[121] Don Howell, *Servants of the Servant: A Biblical Theology of Leadership* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 260-268.

[122] Thomas R. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, ed. Eckhard J. Schnabel (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2018), 179-189.

[123] Howell, *Servants of the Servant*, 280.

First Corinthians 11:1 is more appropriately understood when seen as a part of Paul's train of thought in chapter ten. "These words more properly close the preceding chapter, than begin a new one…."[124] In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul calls the church of Corinth back to God and warns them against complacency in their relationship with God. Several key verses are an early expression and develop the thought of wellness.

Paul does not want them to be ignorant, emphasizing intellectual fitness (1 Cor. 10:1). Paul warns the Corinthians away from compromising physical fitness (1 Cor. 10:7-8). In verses 12-13, Paul promotes spiritual fitness. One who has social fitness will adhere to the call to love one's neighbor as oneself. Paul reminds the church of this call (1 Cor. 10:24). He "directs that all should be done to the glory of God, and without offence to any, as they had him for an example."[125] With this understanding, that all should be done for the glory of God, Paul states to imitate him as he imitates Christ.

As a leader who wanted to imitate Jesus, Paul sought to fulfill his calling and subordinate his motivations and desires for Christ: "On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ" (1 Cor. 9:12b). Ellington believes Paul's "I" references a need to imitate his relationship to the gospel.[126] This relationship is participatory. The call to a right relationship with Christ requires surrender to Christ and to do what is best for the salvation of others. Surrender to Christ yields an increase in unity. "When Paul calls the Corinthians to imitate him as he imitates Christ…He calls them to embrace this relationship to the Gospel, so that Christ's death for others, both its pattern and power, shapes the way these believers carry out

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[124] John Gill, "Commentary on 1 Corinthians 11:1," *The New John Gill Exposition of the Entire Bible*, 1999. https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/1-corinthians-11.html.

[125] Ibid..

[126] Ellington, "Imitating Paul's Relationship to the Gospel", 304-313.

their life together as a congregation."[127] Paul's answer to the struggles and controversy in the church of Corinth is to draw close to Christ and live a life of balance and resiliency, which reflects Jesus as Lord and Savior. Paul provides himself as a model.

Leon Morris' commentary on 1 Corinthians develops fresh insight and context into 1 Corinthians 11:1 and Paul's intent behind his call to imitate him. Morris notes that while Paul called the church of Corinth to follow him, he immediately redirected the church toward Christ.[128] Prior to 11:1, Morris notes Paul's urging for people to have concern for others, whether Greek or Jew. They are to be concerned with the glory of God above all else. This example of Paul is vital to an overall understanding of Paul's leadership and the challenges he faced. Character and wellness are necessary for an individual who wants to be a leader, and Paul exemplifies that character in his leadership by pointing others not to himself, but to God.

The context and analysis of 1 Corinthians 11:1 point to Paul's desire not to be imitated because he believes he is perfect and worthy of imitation, but that Paul believed he was called by God, set apart to deliver the gospel, and put Christ first in all things. Paul's call for the church of Corinth to imitate him is so that they may experience an authentic relationship with God and passion for one another. In other words, Paul wants the church to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, strength, and to love their neighbor as themselves. He did not call the church to imitate his specific leadership style or model, but his character, passion, and faith in Christ.

In Paul's letter to the church, he wrote what was most important and most significant. As a leader, he sought to share God's vision and implore the church to be partners in the mission.

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[127] Ellington, "Imitating Paul's Relationship to the Gospel, 304.
[128] Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians: an Introduction and Commentary* (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008), 147.

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The argument follows, then, that if this is what mattered most to Paul, it would be what Paul emphasized the most.

> It is striking that Paul's letters contain relatively little instruction on formal structures of church governance, and what there is seems more descriptive than prescriptive. His greatest concern is the spiritual maturity and emotional stability of those who are appointed to leadership. It is probably fair to say that Paul felt comfortable leaving the specifics of church government to the local leadership whom the Spirit of God was more than capable of guiding.[129]

Richard Pratt's commentary combines Paul's encouragement to imitate him as he imitates Christ with the preceding discussion on food and dietary restrictions. Pratt notes Paul's message to the church of Corinth was two-fold: first, Paul said whatever one was to do, it must be done for the glory of God; second, believers should live in a way where they do not cause others to stumble.[130]

In that vein, Pratt noted that Paul's desire in 1 Corinthians 11:1 was he wanted to please everyone he could in every way, but not at the expense of sin.[131] His service to others was for the good of many, not his own. He served that others may be saved. Paul's leadership imitated Christ, who gave himself up on the cross for others that they may be saved. Paul's leadership goal was to turn people directly to God, not toward him. He provided a practical and relational model through which it could happen.

Paul's call to imitate him as he imitates Christ is not solely applicable to the church of Corinth. There are definite conclusions that may be drawn from Paul's leadership, as reflected contextually in 1 Corinthians 11:1. 1 Corinthians 11:1 was the culmination of Paul's leadership guidance to a church engaged in struggles that are all too familiar to contemporary ministry

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[129] Howell, *Servants of the Servant*, 287.

[130] Richard L. Pratt, *Holman New Testament Commentary - 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2000), 161-163.

[131] Ibid.

leaders. Paul focused individually and collectively on what one should do with one's faith and where it leads.

No one definition accurately describes Paul's leadership. Paul's leadership would also be wrongly defined if one was to say that Paul's leadership equals, or focused on, influence. To influence was not Paul's goal. Influence is a by-product of living for God. Leadership is not influence; leadership is influential. Paul desired to serve and rightly represent Christ. A right relationship with Christ, which glorifies God and causes Christians to live authentically and together in community, was Paul's goal. Especially for the ministry leader, balance and resiliency are necessary for each area of wellness.

The desire to serve and glorify God is why Paul called the church to imitate or follow him, as he imitated, or followed, Christ. Jesus called his disciples: "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). How, then, may a leader lead in such a way they bring glory to the Father in heaven?

Leadership requires wellness. With wellness comes balance and resiliency that enable the leader to reach out to others. Paul wrote, "Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible…I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Cor. 9:23).

Don Howell developed six characteristics of Paul's leadership toward the church.

1. Authoritative - Demands conformity to the doctrinal and ethical teaching of the faithfully transmitted Gospel, and confronts, warns, and rebukes those who compromise its basic principles.
2. Exhortational - Appeals without coercion or pressure to the consciences and wills of believers to respond with wholehearted obedience to the manifold grace of God.

3. Accountable - Pursues first and foremost the divine approbation, while also maintaining a clear conscience before people, always conscious that a day is approaching when one's motives and actions will be assessed by the Lord, who is the righteous Judge.
4. Affirmatory - Takes the initiative at every opportunity to express sincere praise of and affection for one's brothers in Christ.
5. Sacrificial - Bears up under adversity and hardship with a buoyant resilience, with full awareness that such sufferings nurture humility, foster magnanimity, and deepen the level of one's fellowship with the suffering Servant.
6. Missional - Maintains a laser-like concentration on God's agenda, that is, the evangelization of the lost, the edification of the saints, and the establishment of vital churches.[132]

These leadership characteristics are tools of a good leader. Like any tool, these are only the means to an end.

While tools should be used in a Christ-like manner to bring glory to God, it does not always happen. Some leaders, who lack fitness, abuse their authority or take liberties that are not beneficial to an individual or the church. Paul sought to address these leaders in Corinthians. This possibility of corrupt leadership or ulterior motives illustrates why Paul's character and mindset are so important. Paul did not just say, "Imitate me." Paul said, "Imitate me, as I imitate Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). Implicit in that mandate is to follow Paul's leadership only in as much as Paul was following Christ. Today's ministry leaders should have that same goal. They should lead from a position of wellness for the sake of the gospel.

Ministry leaders must remember their primary and secondary call. Petit labels these as Primary and Functional calling.[133] Everyone's primary call is to live in relationship with Christ and pursue holiness and righteousness. The primary call is who a person is, not what they do. The functional calling is what one does, how he or she lives out that call. To perform their "calling," ministry leaders must first follow their "call." To imitate Paul's leadership, the

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[132] Howell, *Servants of the Servant*, 285.
[133] Pettit, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation*, 198-200.

ministry leader must be spiritually fit and care more about building God's kingdom than his or her own.

Paul sought a close connection with Christ and wanted the same to those whom he ministered and led. This desire for the Corinthians to follow Christ passionately, live at peace with one another, and make a difference with their lives in order to bring salvation to others led him to tell the Corinthians to imitate him as he imitates Christ. His call to the Corinthian church is the same for today's ministry leaders: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1, ESV). What was Christ's command to his followers? Love God with all one's heart, soul, mind, strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself (Luke 10:27).

Theoretical Foundations

Salutogenesis

Salutogenesis is a model for health and wellness developed by Antonovsky in the late 70s. His studies focused on the question as to what makes people healthy. Salutogenesis leads to a *sense of coherence*. The sense of coherence, as noted in the definitions, is "a feeling of confidence that one's internal and external environments are predictable and that there is a high probability that things will work out as well as can reasonably be expected."[134] There are three elements in the concept of sense of coherence, or SOC: (1) Comprehensibility – a belief that things happening in life are rational, predictable, and understandable; (2) Manageability – a belief that people have the ability and the resources necessary to take care of things, and that things are manageable and within their control; (3) Meaningfulness – a belief that things in life are worthwhile and that there is good reason to care about what happens.[135]

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[134] Antonovsky, *Health, Stress and Coping*, 123.
[135] Rohani, et al., "Sense of coherence as a mediator of health-related quality of life dimensions in patients with breast cancer," 1-9.

The focus of salutogenesis is on what will bring and promote health. The sense of coherence "is evidently more concentrated on factors promoting health, rather than factors causing particular diseases."[136] Antonovsky believed that "in general, a person with a strong SOC is more likely to feel less stress and tension, and to believe that he or she can meet demands."[137]

A sense of coherence, then, may help to manage stressors and assist in coping. Antonovsky went on to discuss generalized resistance resources (GRRs). GRRs "refer to a number of resources which are bound to the person, his/her capacity and his/her environment."[138] These GRRs may include life experiences, ego, identity, knowledge, intelligence, wealth, social support, cultural stability, and religion.[139] The salutogenesis model posits if GRRs are insufficient, the sense of coherence will not be strong; therefore, the person may not cope well.

Kolb's Experiential Learning

David Kolb developed an experiential learning theory. This four-stage model "is a simple description of a learning cycle that shows how experience is translated through reflection into concepts, which in turn are used as guides for active experimentation and the choice of new experiences."[140] For Kolb, one must engage in the learning process and, through it, be transformed. He defines learning as "…the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience."[141] Because this transformation is holistic and incorporates

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[136] Rohani, et al., "Sense of coherence as a mediator of health-related quality of life dimensions in patients with breast cancer," 2.

[137] Jane Collingwood, "Your Sense of Cohererence," accessed May 26, 2020, https://psychcentral.com/lib/your-sense-of-coherence.

[138] Rohani, "Sense of coherence as a mediator of health-related quality of life dimensions in patients with breast cancer," 2

[139] Ibid.

[140] Mick Healey and Alan Jenkins, "Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and its Application in Geography in Higher Education," *Journal of Geography* 99, no. 5 (2007), 185-195.

[141] David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 41.

experience, it becomes an ideal model to use as a foundation for a model of how to achieve

holistic wellness through balance and resiliency.

Kolb's experiential learning model is significant to this paper as it enables the learner to

take learning into his or her own hands. Kolb's learning model is preferred over other models in

that his six characteristics of experiential learning and the four states of the model fit in well with

the development of a model created for balance and resiliency in ministry leaders.

Kolb's six main characteristics are as follows:

1. Learning is best conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes.
2. Learning is a continuous process grounded in experience.
3. Learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world.
4. Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world.
5. Learning involves transactions between the person and the environment.
6. Learning is the process of creating knowledge that is the result of the transaction between social knowledge and personal knowledge.[142]

Because each person is unique and learning styles differ from one person to another,

Kolb's model provides opportunities for experience and reflection. The learning process has four

stages:

1. Concrete experience – learning from specific experiences and relating to people.
2. Reflective observation: Observing before making a judgment by viewing the environment from different perspectives. Look for the meaning of things.
3. Abstract conceptualization: Logical analysis of ideas and acting on an intellectual understanding of a situation.
4. Active experimentation: Ability to get things done by influencing people and events through action.[143]

Kolb, then, seeks for one to attain knowledge, but that knowledge comes through a

transformative process. An individual begins with his or her concrete experiences and then

reflects and observes what that means. Next, the individual conceptualizes through an analysis to

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[142] Kolb, *Experiential Learning*, 41.
[143] Don Clark, "Kolb's Learning Styles and Experiential Learning Model" Nwlink.com, accessed May 26, 2020, http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/kolb.html.

gain an understanding of the situation. Then, the person moves into active experimentation where decision making and problem-solving occur.

Kolb's comprehensive research, such as the two primary axes in the model, as well as the preferences a student may have for learning in a certain way, are outside the scope of this study as intended. For this paper, Kolb's model will focus on the six characteristics and the four stages of the learning process.

While the learning styles are undoubtedly important, the self-check model to be developed will touch on all four stages of learning. The concrete experience will come from their own lives and state of wellness. The consideration stage will provide an opportunity to reflect on the areas of wellness and how it relates to their experiences. The abstract conceptualization stage encourages one to interact with the model of balance and resiliency in a holistic way as to one's level of fitness. The active experimentation phase puts the knowledge into practice to develop a plan for balance and resiliency.

<center>Interrelatedness of Areas of Wellness</center>

The interrelatedness of areas of wellness is not solely a theological foundation but theoretical as well. This concept of interrelatedness is generally accepted, and the evidence has borne out in the medical and psychological fields. Studies show what happens in one wellness domain directly affects the others.

In the physical fitness domain, for example, Leiter, in his work on burnout, highlighted a direct relationship with the areas of wellness to include an overlap in physical illness and common mental disorders.[144] Physical fitness will enhance other areas of wellness. "Even people with mild clinical depression have reported elevation of their mood by adding a regular exercise

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[144] Leiter, *Burnout at Work*, 13.

regiment to their weekly routine."[145] Nick Yphantides, who was the chief medical officer for San Diego County in 2011, observed the interrelatedness of physical health and spiritual health.[146]

From a perspective of social fitness, the American Psychological Association's research showed how one manages finances directly affects the intellectual. "Research shows that financial struggles impair individuals' cognitive abilities, which could lead to poor decision-making and perpetuate their unfavorable financial and health situations."[147] Other studies show that those who are socially isolated or have few interpersonal interactions have a higher risk of dementia and cognitive decline.[148] In fact, a study performed by the European Society of Cardiology highlighted that this social deficit does not affect just the emotional or intellectual but the physical as well. They found, "loneliness is a strong predictor of premature death, worse mental health, and lower quality of life in patients with cardiovascular disease.…"[149]

<div align="center">Transformative Learning</div>

The goal of this research project is to produce a self-check model to build balance and resiliency in ministry leaders that, when used, will require action. In order to accomplish the goal, the model must help leaders identify where they are and what may need to happen next. Within that context, it is also a goal that the ministry leader, once he or she finds balance or becomes more resilient, does not go back to a place of imbalance or where he or she lacks resiliency. This process will require a transformation in his or her fitness in all areas of wellness. Toward that end, the Transformative Learning Theory will be a useful guide.

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[145] Wilson and Hoffman, *Preventing Ministry Failure*, 134.

[146] Thomas, *Every Body Matters*, 43.

[147] American Psychological Association, " Stress in America," 3.

[148] Rush University, "Loneliness and Alzheimer's," accessed May 26, 2020, https://www.rush.edu/health-wellness/discover-health/loneliness-and-alzheimers.

[149] European Society of Cardiology, "Loneliness is bad for the heart," *ScienceDaily*, accessed May 16, 2020, www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/06/180609124652.htm.

Transformative Learning is a theory developed by Jack Mezirow. Transformative Learning's focus is on adult learning. Mezirow's early influences came from Thomas Kuhn and Paulo Freire.[150] Kuhn conceptualized the understanding of a paradigm shift in the 60s. A paradigm shift occurs when another replaces one conceptual model.[151] In the early 70s, Freire criticized what he called the "banking model" of education. In his book, Freire postulated education was transactional in nature. The teacher would make "deposits" into the knowledge bank of students. He argued against this model and believed students should be actively engaged in the learning process.[152]

From a holistic perspective, a transformation in each area of wellness requires the person, not just the area, to transform. Transformative Learning is a change in perspective, which makes people become, "critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective; and, finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings."[153] Transformative Learning postulates each person's perspective is limited, and their limitations shape their beliefs. An expansion of one's perspective may transform the ways in which one acts, relates, and thinks.

Mezirow developed ten stages of transformative learning:

1. A disorienting dilemma.
2. Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame.
3. A critical assessment of assumptions.
4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared.
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions.
6. Planning a course of action.

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[150] Andrew Kitchenhan, "The Evolution of John Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory," *Journal of Transformative Education,* 6, no. 2 (2008): 104-123.

[151] Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

[152] Paulo Freire and Myra Bergman Ramos, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York; Herder and Herder, 1970), 72.

[153] Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), 167.

7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans.
8. Provisional trying of new roles.
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships.
10. A reintegration into one's life based on conditions dictated by one's new perspective.[154]

A ministry leader who is burned out, has a significant stressor, or lacks the fitness or ability to cope with whatever troubles he or she may have, in the context of this paper, serves as the disorienting dilemma. The "trigger" for this disorienting dilemma is "an activating event that typically exposes a discrepancy between what a person has always assumed to be true and what has just been experienced, heard, or read."[155] For instance, a ministry leader may realize it is acceptable to say "no," or family time is not "goofing off," or it is alright to have doubts or hurts, or that significant study should go into the preparation of a message. With stage ten as the end goal (a new perspective on wellness and a way to keep and achieve it), the theory provides checkpoints along the way toward transformation.

This paper will incorporate the above theoretical foundations. Salutogenesis and a sense of coherence point toward wellness, which comes from an emphasis on what builds health. This coherence is vital as each area of wellness affects the others. Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory will provide a foundation toward a model for self-care. Transformative Learning Theory exemplifies a goal to build balance and resiliency through the ten stages of Transformative Learning. The theory leads the learner from the initial stressor, which highlights a lack of balance, to the end goal of balance and resilience from a holistic perspective of fitness in each area of wellness.

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[154] Michael Christie, et al, "Putting Transformative Learning Theory Into Practice," *Australian Journal of Adult Learning,* 55, no. 1 (2015): 9-30.

[155] Stacy Katz, "Applying Transformative Learning Theory to Open Education Essays," *Journal of Transformative Learning,* 6, no. 2 (2019): 4.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Through the literature review, it is evident that burnout and stress significantly affect ministry leaders. The prevalence of stress and its mismanagement lead to a lack of balance and lack of resilience. Additionally, this stress may also negatively impact the leader's ministry, family, and overall wellness. The literature review also showed there is not currently a best practice for an intervention model to deal with the effects of burnout. God's design for a holistic approach to wellness and fitness in the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual areas will positively affect ministry leaders' lives.

The intervention plan for the thesis consisted of a seminar and two surveys. This seminar was approximately sixty to seventy-five minutes in length. In order to gain quantitative and some qualitative data for the research, the surveys took place pre- and post-seminar. The timeframe is inclusive of the surveys. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing requirements, the seminar was held virtually. This feature removed the opportunity for group discussions but all participants received an introduction of the model and an opportunity to perform a critical analysis of their own wellness.

The research conducted followed Action Research. From Ernest Stringer's book on Action Research, the role of the researcher is as follows:

A. To act as a catalyst;
B. To stimulate people to change by addressing issues that concern the now;
C. To focus on the process rather than results;
D. Enable people to develop their own analysis of their issues;
E. Start where people are, not where someone else thinks they are;
F. Help people analyze their situation, consider the findings, plan how to keep what they want, and change what they do not like; and
G. Enable people to examine several courses of action and the probable results.[156]

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[156] Ernest T. Stringer, *Action Research* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publishing, 2014), 20-21.

Because it is participatory, the members of the seminar became stakeholders as they engaged in the self-check model. In this way, the seminar incorporated elements of a focus group. Each member examined his or her state of wellness from a holistic point of view.

Using the Action Research model, there are several criteria for the evaluation of the seminar in order to see if the researcher's Star Model produced a successful outcome. First, there was a review of the plan. The plan includes goals, objectives, and tasks. Second, the effect of the introduction of the Star Model and the participants' understanding were evaluated. Lastly, the plan was revised as needed in order to produce results beneficial to the stakeholders.

The purpose of the intervention was to provide a self-check model for ministry leaders where their awareness leads to an action. Surveys, participant reflections and introspection within the seminar, and working with the Star Model to provide a self-check were considered successful outcomes. The surveys used a Likert-type scale, as well as open-ended discussion questions, to determine if the participants' understanding of the Star Model and their self-check brought an awareness of the need to perform an action. The pre- and post-seminar surveys tracked any changes in the participants' awareness and plans to increase fitness.

The goals, objectives, and tasks for the project were as follows:

Goal 1: Participants understand the need for balance and resiliency.
    Objective 1: Participants understand the theological foundation for the biblical understanding of wellness and how it relates to loving God. Participants will also gain familiarities with the terms used, such as balance, wellness, fitness, and resiliency.
        Task 1: Participants will interact with statistics, brainstorm causes of stress and coping strategies, and share anecdotal stories of stress in ministry.

Goal 2: Participants become stakeholders in the Star Model.
    Objective 2: Participants identify the areas of wellness as they relate to Jesus' two greatest commands in Mark 12:30-31.
        Task 2: Participants interact with the Star Model and review how the previous objective further enhances their understanding of Objective 2. Participants draw their own star by performing a self-check using the Star Model.

Goal 3: Stakeholders identify actions they may take to build balance and resiliency in their lives.

Objective 3: Stakeholders work with the Star Model, which represents balance and their own self-check results to bring an awareness of what is needed for fitness.

Task 3: Stakeholders use the results of Task 2, where they have performed their own self-check and develop ways to improve their fitness, which will lead to overall balance and resiliency and a greater capacity to know peace and glorify God.

The outcome statement identified the measurement for a successful outcome: By the end of the seminar participants will understand the importance of balance and resiliency in the lives of ministry leaders, will use the Star Model to perform a self-check of their own balance and resiliency, and determine if that awareness will cause them to identify areas where they may improve their fitness.

Intervention Design

The Star Model

The researcher's Star Model for balance and resilience was the focus of the seminar, which is introduced here, in a cursory manner. The Star Model is based on Jesus' commands to love God with all one's heart, soul, mind, strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself (Mark 12:29-31). These two commands highlight the need for physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual fitness. Through this theme, participants will have an opportunity to work with the model as it relates to them.

The goal, or desired state, for one who follows Christ is to have fitness in each area of wellness in the star. Each point of the star represents an area of wellness. Just as a star, in its ideal form, has balance, so, too, will a star be representative of a person who has balance in his or her life. When a star's points are not in balance, it is easily recognizable. In the same manner, one whose life is out of balance will reflect an imbalance in their own Star Model.

The following illustration depicts God's design for a person:
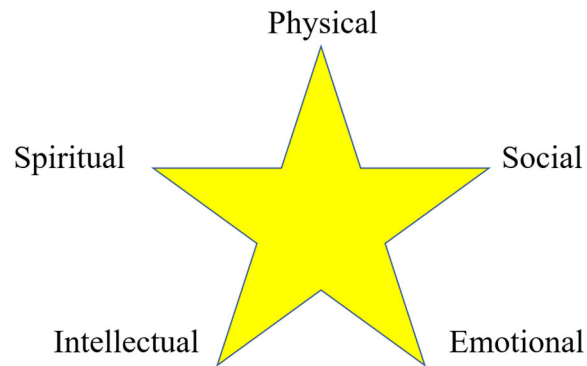

Illustration 1.

As previously stated, one who lives a balanced life is one who seeks to love God with all one's heart, soul, mind, strength, and neighbor as oneself. A balanced life does not mean he or she is without stress or troubles; it means he or she is managing them effectively. The whole self in the Star Model shows an interrelatedness of these areas of wellness.

When one area is stressed and not well-managed, it causes an imbalance to the star. Whether it is the stressors of life, burnout, a chronic disease, or something else, as one's life is stressed, so, too, is one's star stressed. The greater the stress in one area, the more it will affect the others.
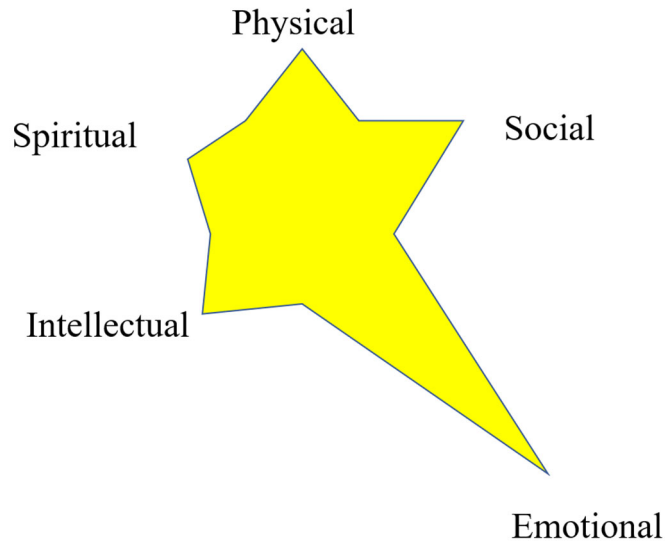
Illustration 2.

Stress or troubles not adequately managed affect the entire individual, not just one aspect of his or her life. The need for fitness in each area of wellness is essential to one's overall wellness. If an area of wellness is stressed, such as emotional fitness in Illustration 2, it causes other areas to shrink, and they become less fit.

For instance, someone who recently divorced may wonder where God is and if He really does have a plan for her, or if she is even worthy of love. At the same time, this depression, of sorts, may cause the person to eat and sleep poorly. She may withdraw from others and make poor decisions. The old expression of something "sucking the life out of you" applies in this case. An area of one's life that is stressed and troubled, to the point of a loss of balance, sucks the life (or wellness in this case) out of the other areas.

From a ministry leader perspective, the model becomes clear. Suppose the ministry leader concentrates on how many "likes" his posts and blogs get, or how many people come to his service, or how many views his televised sermons receive. The amount of emphasis and focus placed on the social dimension may cause an imbalance as well. No longer is the intellectual side developed through proper theology and exegesis in the sermons. Instead, the focus becomes what

story will excite the audience or what will not offend someone. The amount of work put into posts, tweets, blogs, and other forms of social media may limit the amount of time someone has to go to the gym or cause that person to place their value on the number of "thumbs up" received from people, rather than their spiritual fitness with God.

The key aspect of the Star Model, when an imbalance is found, is in how it is addressed. Many times, ministry leaders who are under stress in an area of their life seek to solve this imbalance by working harder or longer in that area. A tunnel vision, of sorts, is developed. Other areas of their lives are neglected or improperly managed. The person believes if he or she can just get this one area back in shape, everything else will follow. The Star Model, however, paints the opposite picture.

The Star Model recognizes that stressors and a lack of balance and resiliency may be common to all ministry leaders. The way back to balance then is to seek opportunities to develop fitness in the under-emphasized areas of wellness, the ones that have shrunk. As these areas become fit, they will grow. As the under-emphasized points grow, the areas of wellness begin to reshape the star, and the area which is most stressed will shrink and become more manageable, restoring wholeness.

Wholeness, or wellness, does not mean all problems are solved; the model provides an environment for fitness. Fitness, per the definitions section of the thesis, is *the optimization of the ability or capacity to do the best one can, with who one is and what one has.* For instance, a generally accepted principle for one who is undergoing emotional stress is that physical exercise, healthy eating, and trying to get a good night of sleep are helpful. In the same way, finding one's identity in Christ (working on spiritual fitness), not on the overly stressed issue, helps that issue become more manageable.

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The goals for the seminar came in two parts based on Action Research. Part 1 was to connect the participants with holistic wellness, understand the Star Model presentation, and identify their personal star (Illustration 1). Part 2 helped participants find their path for balance and resilience through their own review of their personal star, a reflection on the Star Model, and an opportunity to re-act, to modify their actions and goals as they seek balance and resilience (Illustration 2).[157]

These goals for Action Research paired well with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and the Transformative Learning Theory. Kolb's theory has four stages which take the learner from their own concrete experiences to an active experimentation with the Star Model:

1. Concrete experience: Learning from specific experiences and relating to people.
2. Reflective observation: Observing before making a judgment by viewing the environment from different perspectives. Look for the meaning of things.
3. Abstract conceptualization: Logical analysis of ideas and acting on an intellectual understanding of a situation.
4. Active experimentation: Ability to get things done by influencing people and events through action.[158]

The intervention plan describes, develops, and invites ministry leaders to implement the Star Model as a self-check model for balance and resiliency in their own lives.

<center>Introduction to the Seminar</center>

The seminar was held virtually and was expected to be sixty to seventy-five minutes in length, based on one's interaction with the Star Model. The seminar began with a pre-seminar survey to determine attitudes toward stress, troubles, burnout, and the participants' understanding of their current level of self-care. The survey used a five point Likert-type scale. The scale's options for answers were: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree, with five points for a Strongly Agree and one point for Strongly Disagree. The survey also had two

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[157] Stringer, *Action Research*, 9.
[158] Clark, "Kolb's Learning Styles and Experiential Learning Model."

optional qualitative questions. The pre- and post-seminar surveys are located in Appendix A. At the outset, participants were encouraged to think about some ideas for coping, managing stress, or dealing with burnout.

The introduction of the seminar turned to a discussion on how people, in general, cope and take care of themselves. Because this was a virtual seminar it was important that the attendee connected with this idea of coping and self-care. Following the discussion, the researcher provided an overview of the wellness areas and a definition of terms, such as fitness and burnout. This overview provided a foundational understanding of terms as the seminar moved into Part 1. The facilitator referred to these terms in Part 2, the fitness section.

Seminar Part 1

The goal of the first part of the seminar was to conceptualize the areas of wellness, using the Star Model, and to understand further what it means to be physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, or spiritually fit. The goal was accomplished as follows:

1. Introduced statistics for burnout and stress;
2. Discussed ministry leadership, what is needed, stressors, challenges;
3. Outlined the idea of holistic wellness, the areas of wellness and their interrelatedness, and their influence over each other;
4. Discussed stressors, the need for balance, healthy vs. unhealthy coping, the need for boundaries;
5. Introduced the concept of *Imago Dei*, Mark 12:29-31, the idea of peace, balance, and resiliency, as seen in the thesis' theological framework;
6. Using Mark 12:29-31, introduced the Star Model with the fitness areas; and
7. Provided opportunities for each participant to identify their own level of self-care and draw their own star reflecting areas of stress, burnout, or troubles.

Seminar Part 2

Part 2 of the seminar's goal was for participants to work with the model, find where they may be out of balance, and develop a plan to increase the fitness levels of the star's smaller points. This interaction was done, as mentioned above, through a review of their own star, a

reflection on the Star Model, and an opportunity to react: to modify their actions and goals. An emphasis on Transformative Learning encouraged a transformation holistically, rather than simply trying to "fix" the area of struggle. Essential elements of Part 2 are:

1. A review of the star they created after their first self-check;
2. A discussion on ways each area of fitness may be strengthened and the importance of doing so. This discussion also included an emphasis on the correct understanding of each area;
3. There was an additional opportunity to create a star that shows balance, as in Figure 1. The participants determined how to integrate their new understanding of the model to move from imbalance or a lack of resilience to a balanced and resilient life, and
4. Participants were challenged to embrace fitness in all areas as a way to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself.

Seminar Conclusion

The entire seminar sought for each participant to undergo the elements of Transformative Learning as follows:

1. A disorienting dilemma (Stressors and troubles);
2. Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame (Stories of people overstressed or burned out);
3. A critical assessment of assumptions (Defining areas of wellness);
4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared (Introduction of the Star Model);
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions (The interrelatedness of the areas of wellness);
6. Planning a course of action (Reacting to the individual star and determining its current shape);
7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans (What is needed to promote balance and resilience);
8. Provisional trying of new roles; (What are first steps that can be done in each area to gain fitness);
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships (Confidence will come through the fitness planning); and
10. A reintegration into one's life based on conditions dictated by one's new perspective[159] (Implementation of the Star Model in ministry leaders' lives).

A second survey was created for the participants to fill out at the end of the seminar. This survey provided an opportunity for participants to compare their awareness of self-care,

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[159] Christie, et al, "Putting Transformative Learning Theory Into Practice," 9-30.

how self-care ties in with Scripture, and if the model was effective in providing a way to self-check their balance and resilience. The survey asked the participants if their awareness of the Star Model caused them to think of an action, or something they may do, to build balance and resilience. Lastly, it ended with optional qualitative questions where the participants were free to share their feedback.

The intervention provided feedback in key areas that may make a change in the problem. The participating ministry leaders may report, through the survey, they do not have any stressors or see the need for balance and resilience in their lives. Despite the significant research and statistics, each individual is unique and approached the topic of self-care in their own way. Additionally, participants may have felt that a virtual seminar model is not the most effective way to introduce the Star Model.

<center>Permissions and Approvals</center>

Because the researcher is a military chaplain, in a special duty assignment, whose duties do not currently include a chapel community or church responsibilities, and the researcher's current COVID restrictions prevent in-person seminars, this seminar took take place virtually. Due to the location being a virtual environment there was no need to secure a seminar location.

The participants were clergy, staff members or lay volunteers eighteen years of age or older. There was no restriction on gender or ministry position. A ministry leader is someone who oversees programs or people in the execution of a ministry. There was not a "who is a ministry leader" vetting process. The ministry leaders were contacted by the researcher via email. A consent form directed the ministry leaders to the pre-survey, seminar, and post-survey virtual links.

The seminar and research information were conveyed via email to the participants. The email had an introduction to the research topic, an overview of the seminar, and the necessary release of information before participation. The researcher's name, phone number, and email were provided in the email, along with the organization's point of contact in case there are any questions.

Due to the nature of the virtual seminar, there was no specific location requirement for the participants. The researcher did need to secure a location large enough to record the seminar and procure the necessary audio-visual equipment. The seminar was recorded in the researcher's own residence. Participants needed something to write with and blank paper. A dry-erase board and markers were necessary for the facilitator to introduce the model.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

There were several layers of approval required for the research project. Approval was sought first from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Liberty University and then from the participants. The researcher completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative and submitted the IRB application. Upon receipt of the permission for the research to commence, the project began within two weeks.

The researcher received the participants' consent before their interaction with the seminar. The initial consent was given in response to an email. This early consent was to clearly articulate the requirements for attendance in the seminar as well as to give the participants an opportunity to opt-out of the seminar. The next level of consent was a virtual consent form which participants needed to read. If they wished to continue, they were directed to a pre-seminar survey.

Timetable

The initial estimate of the period for the research aspect of the project was six to eight weeks. Due to the shift to a virtual seminar, the timeline was adjusted for the convenience of the participants. The project timeline was as follows:

Day 1: Planning – After approval to begin the project, the planning started on Day 1. The initial planning ensured completion of all necessary paperwork and permission forms, develop the Likert-type surveys, and formalized the seminar. The researcher had already developed the self-check model to address the need for balance and resiliency in ministry leaders and evaluate its effectiveness. With the approval secured, the researcher implemented the project.

Day 7: The researcher began to record and edit the seminar and prepared the virtual interaction through a website portal. During the research, the researcher served as an active duty chaplain in the Air Force with a special duty assignment to the Department of Defense. Due to the nature of this assignment, the researcher had chaplain duties but did not have chapel and pastoral responsibilities. The COVID-19 restrictions prevented an in-person seminar. As such the program was moved to a virtual environment. The problem identified in the ministry setting existed at all of the researcher's duty assignments, churches attended, and is validated through studies and the literature review.

The researcher reached out directly to potential candidates for the seminar via the above mentioned email. The researcher did not use an organization that he pastored and, instead, used ministry leaders from other churches and organizations. The lack of a named organization neither implies a lack of specificity in the research nor in the organization(s) to be used. Once approval was received, the researcher reached out to Christian ministry leaders in churches and Christian organizations with whom the researcher is familiar.

The specific participants were Christian ministry leaders eighteen years of age or older and who currently oversaw a program, class, or ministry. The researcher targeted his own denomination, churches, chapels in the military community, and churches where the researcher already has a ministerial leader as a contact.

Day 14: Reach out to participants – The researcher reached out to potential participants through an email. The email explained the seminar, its purpose, and provided details in order to participate, web links, and participant information. Because this was a virtual seminar, the participants attended at a time convenient for them.

Days 21-60: Reminder email – The researcher sent out a reminder email approximately two to three weeks after the participants have been identified and informed of the seminar details. An additional email was sent out three weeks prior to the close of the seminar to remind participants to complete all aspects.

The total amount of time projected for the seminar to take place after receipt of the necessary consent was two to four weeks. The researcher made an adjustment to the timetable due to the virtual nature of the seminar. While the seminar was only sixty to seventy-five minutes in length, each participant engaged with it individually. Not all participants were able to log on in the same week to complete the seminar and surveys. Because the individuals' timeframes differed, the researcher extended the time for completion to four to eight weeks.

Upon the conclusion of participants' post-seminar surveys, it took an additional two to three weeks to gather data from the intervention evaluation and to compile the research. Next, the compilation and evaluation of the overall results from all seminars and completed surveys took an additional two to three weeks.

The initial seminar took eight weeks and the evaluation of the research and its conclusion took another four weeks. The total time for the research project was sixteen weeks. The rest of the research consisted of working with the researcher's mentor, rewriting, and editing in preparation for the thesis defense.

<center>Evaluation Criteria</center>

Using the Action Research model, there were several criteria for the evaluation of the seminar in order to see if the Star Model produces a successful outcome. First, there was a review of the plan. The plan included goals, objectives, and tasks. Second, the effect of the introduction of the Star Model and the participants' understanding were evaluated. Lastly, the plan was revised as needed in order to produce results beneficial to the stakeholders.

Surveys, participant engagements within the seminar, and working with the Star Model to provide a self-check were successful outcomes of the intervention. The surveys used the Likert-type scale as well as discussion questions to determine if the participants' understanding of the Star Model, and their self-check brought an awareness of the need to perform an action. The surveys were given pre- and post-seminar to examine experiences with stress, self-care, and interactions with the Star Model. The questionnaires used to deliver the survey did include open-ended questions to record participants' comments.

As noted earlier, the purpose of the intervention was to provide a self-check model for ministry leaders where their awareness leads to an action. The goals, objectives, and tasks for the project were as mentioned on pages 63-64. The outcome statement identified the measurement for a successful outcome: By the end of the seminar participants would understand the importance of balance and resiliency in the lives of ministry leaders, would use the Star Model to

perform a self-check of their own balance and resiliency, and determine if that awareness caused them to identify areas where they may improve their fitness.

There were several areas for comparison to determine how the new approach toward self-care in ministry leaders, using the Star Model, differs from a prior understanding. The comparison areas included the theological understanding and paradigm of the need for self-care, the ability of a participant to perform a simple self-check of their level of balance and resiliency, and whether or not that awareness caused an action. The effectiveness of the new approach should incorporate an aspect of transformational learning where the participants performed a self-assessment, critically interacted with the new model, and planned a new course of action.

Surveys and interaction with the Star Model itself were ways in which the old and new approaches were compared. The purpose of the intervention was not to determine how one has previously coped with burnout, stress, troubles, or fatigue in the past; rather, the purpose was to determine the effectiveness of the new approach using the Star Model.

Surveys, in the form of questionnaires, were used pre-and post-seminar. These surveys provided relevant feedback and data to the researcher. Interactions within the seminar and exercises to facilitate the use of the Star Model provided opportunities for the participants to test the new approach versus the old approach. The opportunity for the participants to demonstrate ownership of the Star Model to include any new insights or actions required also helped the researcher better understand the results.

The researcher was not able to use his own observations and notes to provide relevant feedback due to the virtual nature of the seminar. Post-seminar surveys, further identified and highlighted the participants' view on the new approach using the Star Model versus their previous approach toward balance and resiliency.

To ensure the credibility of the project using Action Research, the researcher used several elements suggested by Stringer. The researcher's notes and reflections were evaluated through the use of the recorded presentation. Persistent observation included the conscious observation and notetaking of the seminar to determine what is "actually happening, rather than describing it from memory or from an interpretation of what people 'think' happened."[160] This phenomenon was reflected in the pre and post-seminar surveys as well as any interactions between the participant and researcher.

The concept of diverse case analysis also brought credibility to the research process. Through diverse case analysis, each stakeholder's perspective and experiences were incorporated into their own interactions with the Star Model. While each stakeholder attended the seminar, the results were different for each person based on their own perspectives. Each participant had a chance to share those perspectives through feedback.

Lastly, the research provided an opportunity for the participants to share, anecdotally, their own experiences and observations as well as discuss the concepts using their own terminology. In such a way, the idea of referential adequacy will reflect the "experiences and perspectives of participating stakeholders, rather than be interpreted according to schema emerging from a theoretical or professional body of knowledge."[161] Through these elements of Action Research, the implementation and collection of data enhanced the credibility of the project.

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[160] Stringer, Action Research, 92-93.
[161] Ibid, 93.

Chapter 4

Overview

Chapters 1-3 of this thesis set up the thesis problem and outlined how the research was conducted. Chapter four discusses the results. Remember, from Chapter 1, the thesis problem is that ministry leaders in all walks of ministry, church, parachurch, and volunteer ministries are reporting burnout and may lack a simple, self-check model to develop balance and resiliency. The purpose of this study was to create a simple, self-check model to help ministry leaders, whether they be in a church, parachurch, or volunteer role, develop balance and resiliency. If then, a simple, self-check model to help ministry leaders develop balance and resiliency is created, then their awareness will require an action.

This chapter will examine the research results and focus on the research participants' personal experiences and understandings of burnout and resilience. Specifically: (1) their personal experiences of burnout and lack of resiliency in ministry, (2) their interaction with the Star Model for balance and resiliency, and (3) if their interaction with the model did, indeed, lead to an increased awareness which required an action on their part.

Demographics and Data Compilation

The COVID-19 Pandemic, the shut-down of public gatherings, and social distance requirements dictated the seminar be held virtually. This shift did not change the research's content, only the method of presentation. The researcher recorded the seminar and hosted it on YouTube. An invitation to take part in the research study went out to 40+ potential participants. These ministry leaders were ordained clergy, paid staff members, or volunteers who oversee groups or ministries in churches. One of the recipients asked if that person was able to share the

seminar with staff members. Twenty-nine of the forty-five potential participants responded, qualified, and received the consent form.

The researcher collected data from October to December 2020. Because the seminar was virtual, the participants could view the seminar video and complete the surveys at a place and time of their convenience. At the close of the research timeline, eighteen participants had become involved in the study through the pre-seminar survey and the seminar's viewing. Due to the study's anonymous nature, reminders were sent to all participants to complete the seminar in November and December. Four participants did not complete the post-seminar survey before its close.

Due to the pre- and post-seminar surveys' design, the numerical difference between the pre-and post-seminar did not influence the study results. The pre-seminar study evaluated experiences and views on balance and resiliency, while the post-seminar survey evaluated direct interaction with the Star Model. Both of the surveys and each individual's answer are helpful as they corroborate data for the thesis. The pre-seminar questions of one's experiences with stress and burnout confirmed the researcher's observations and research. The post-seminar questions examined the Star Model interaction, if it helped balance and resiliency, and if it caused the respondent to take an action.

The seminar invitation began with an introductory webpage with a link to the pre-seminar survey hosted on SurveyMonkey. At the end of the survey, participants were linked to the seminar video, hosted on YouTube, as a private video. The seminar video itself was sixty minutes in length. There were an additional five to fifteen minutes for participants to pause the video and interact with the Star Model. As previously noted, the participants were able to

become stakeholders in their balance and resiliency following Stringer's Action Research. The

researcher's role in the seminar was to:

A. To act as a catalyst;
B. To stimulate people to change by addressing issues that concern the now;
C. To focus on the process rather than results;
D. Enable people to develop their own analysis of their issues;
E. Start where people are, not where someone else thinks they are;
F. Help people analyze their situation, consider the findings, plan how to keep what they want, and change what they do not like; and
G. Enable people to examine several courses of action and the probable results.[162]

The surveys had both qualitative and quantitative questions. The survey's quantitative

responses acted as a catalyst to get participants thinking about burnout, stress, balance, and

resiliency. They also provided a safe way for participants to analyze their well-being.

The qualitative responses offer an opportunity to ensure people can start where they are,

analyze their situation, and identify courses of action. The respondents provided meaningful data

and findings that substantiated the researcher's identification of the problem and thesis.

Data Analysis and Findings

Pre-Seminar Survey

The purpose of the pre-seminar survey is to gauge participants' personal experiences of

burnout, stress, and fitness levels prior to the seminar and the introduction of the Star Model. The

first question on both surveys asked the participants to create a unique number. This question

was for participant use only and not evaluated in the results. The results of the pre-seminar

survey should validate the research in Chapter 1. Succinctly put, the thesis problem is burnout.

Ministry leaders are stressed, burned out, and may not be practicing self-care. Of the

eighteen survey participants, not a single respondent said they had not observed burn-out in

ministry leaders. In fact, 16% identified burnout in 16+ ministry leaders with whom they

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[162] Stringer, *Action Research*, 20-21.

interacted. Over 72% stated they observed burnout in at least six different ministry leaders. The

survey participants' answers in question 2 confirmed the researcher's observational, experiential,

and research findings.

Question 2: How many ministry leaders have you known (volunteer or paid, lay or clergy) who

have experienced high levels of stress and/or burnout in their work or personal life?

Results:
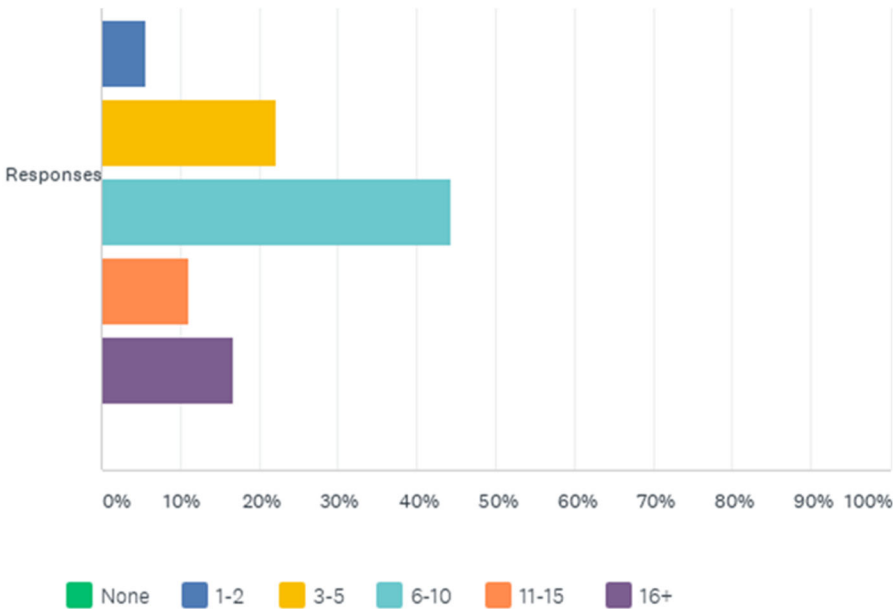
	NONE	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-15	16+	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Responses	0.00% 0	5.56% 1	22.22% 4	44.44% 8	11.11% 2	16.67% 3	18	3.11

The participants' responses recorded that they witnessed burnout or high-stress levels in

other ministry leaders and confirmed their own ministry struggles. Question 3 revealed 100% of

participants experienced high levels of stress/burnout. Forty-four percent experienced burnout at

some point in their life, 56% experienced high levels of stress within the last five years, and 39%

in the past twelve months. Whether observationally or experientially, every respondent not only

witnessed ministry leaders with severe stress or burnout in ministry, they experienced it themselves.

Studies have shown that high levels of stress and burnout reduce one's ability to perform well in all areas of life. From Chapter 1's research on burnout, the cause may be described differently, but the point is clear. Schaufeli, Leiter, and Maslach described burnout as improperly managed stress.[163] Swenson understands burnout as a lack of margin, the difference between the current level of functioning and full capacity.[164] Tan examined burnout from a stress perspective and determined burnout comes as stress taxes a person in a way that exceeds his or her own resources.[165] No matter the approach or understanding of the cause of burnout, its effects are evident. The Star Model showed how one might be affected in all areas of one's life: physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual. Ministry leaders were not endowed with superpowers that make them immune from burnout.
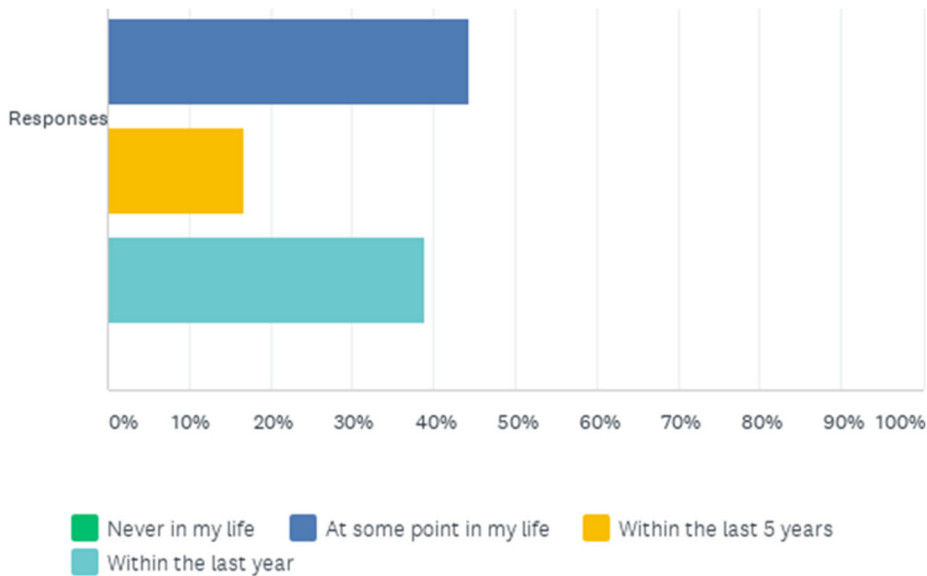
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[163] Schaufeli, Leiter and Maslach, "Burnout," 204-220.
[164] Swenson, *Margin*, 48-50.
[165] Tan, *Rest*, pg. 163.

Question 3: Have you ever experienced high levels of stress and/or burnout?

Results:

	NEVER IN MY LIFE	AT SOME POINT IN MY LIFE	WITHIN THE LAST 5 YEARS	WITHIN THE LAST YEAR	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Responses	0.00% 0	44.44% 8	16.67% 3	38.89% 7	18	1.94

There is an interesting contrast to note between question 3, if one has experienced burnout, with question 5, how prepared is the respondent to avoid high levels of stress or burnout. One hundred percent of responses in question 3 experienced high levels of stress and burnout. Fifty-five percent answered the stress or burnout was within the last five years; however, in question 4, 61% of respondents stated they felt mostly or well prepared to avoid high-stress levels and burnout. Thirty-three percent felt somewhat prepared. Only one person felt not prepared to deal with burnout.

If such a significant percentage of respondents feel prepared to avoid burnout, why do they experience it? To explore the disparity between the two questions is beyond the scope of this research. Beyond the scope does not mean, however, that an inference cannot be drawn. For

now, it is vital to highlight the imbalance between these two answers as the responses to question 7 may shed additional light on the cause and effect.

The importance of question 5 shows even those who feel prepared to avoid burnout still experience it in their lives. An oft-heard expression is, "You don't know what you don't know." In this case, the results are clear. While one may think one is prepared to avoid stress and burnout, it still happens. This burnout is a clear indicator that a simple, self-check model to help build balance and resiliency would benefit the respondents. What they are currently using clearly does not work.

Question 5: How prepared do you feel to avoid high levels of stress and/or burnout?
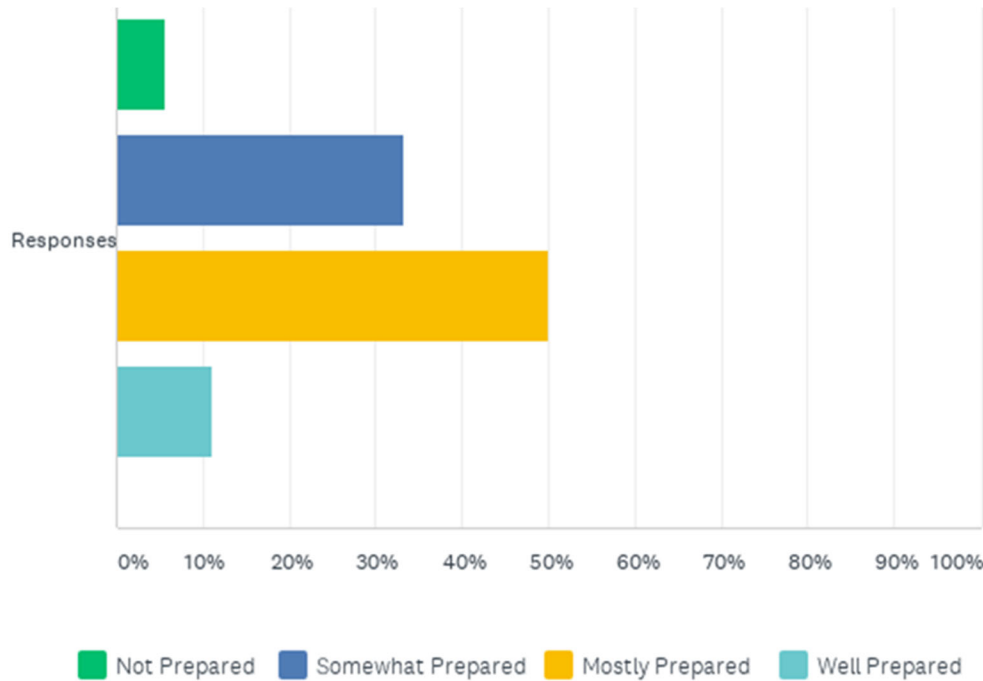
Results:

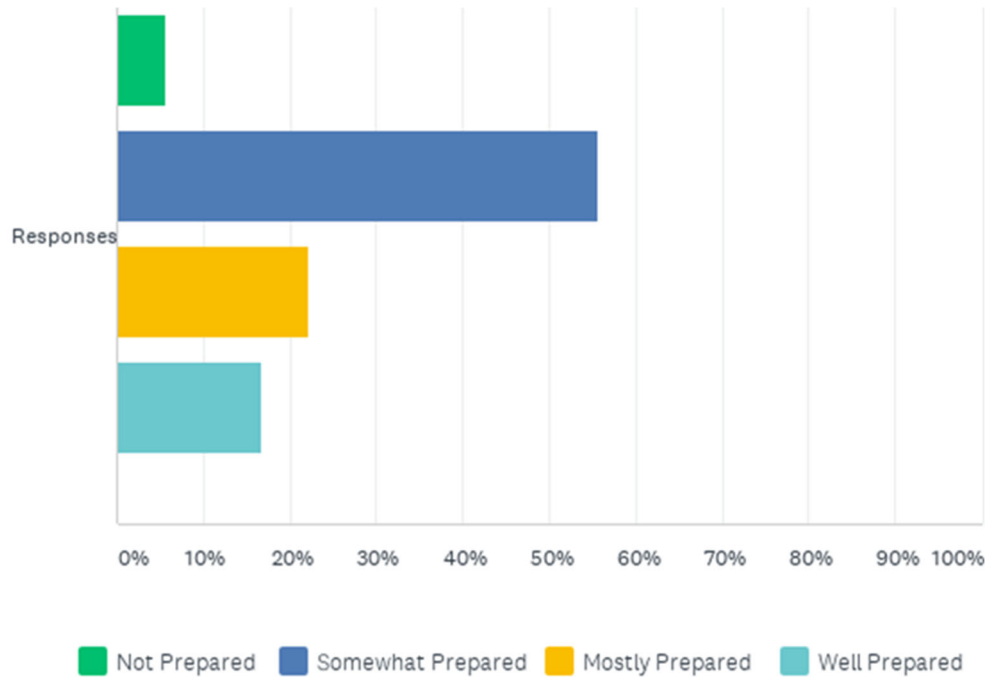|	NOT PREPARED	SOMEWHAT PREPARED	MOSTLY PREPARED	WELL PREPARED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Responses	5.56% 1	33.33% 6	50.00% 9	11.11% 2	18	2.67

Question 5 shows even those who feel prepared to deal with burnout still experience it. There is a distinction, then, between prepared and equipped. One may feel ready and prepared to deal with burnout, but unless one is equipped with the necessary skill or training, preparedness gives way to life stressors. If one has not been equipped, one may not be prepared. Even those who feel they are prepared for burnout find themselves ill-equipped to avoid it. The pre-seminar survey reveals a definite need not just for a model to help one build balance and resilience but also to help restore them in one's life.

This researcher describes a person with burnout and high-stress levels as out of balance and not at peace. Loving God with all one's heart, soul, mind, strength, and loving one's neighbor as oneself is the clear biblical model for peace. One who is properly equipped to follow this Greatest Commandment is one equipped to experience peace and balance. The Star Model does not focus solely on avoiding a significant imbalance that leads to burnout and high levels of stress through the Great Commandment; it also seeks to help those achieve, or regain, balance and peace when not currently experienced.

Question 5 asked the research participants how equipped they felt to bring their lives back into balance after experiencing high stress and burnout levels. Thirty-nine percent of respondents felt mostly or well prepared. Fifty-five percent felt somewhat prepared, and one person felt not prepared. At first glance, all but one respondent believed they had some level of preparation to bring themselves back into balance after experiencing burnout. In question 8, however, 94% of participants welcomed a simple, self-check model to help them achieve balance and resiliency.

Question 6: After experiencing high levels of stress and/or burnout, how equipped do you feel to bring your life into balance?

Results:

	NOT PREPARED	SOMEWHAT PREPARED	MOSTLY PREPARED	WELL PREPARED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Responses	5.56% 1	55.56% 10	22.22% 4	16.67% 3	18	2.50

Suppose burnout and high levels of stress negatively impact one's life and ministry. In that case, it is vital for one to be able to bounce back (resilience) or to avoid burnout altogether (balance). The pre-seminar survey sets up the Star Model categories by asking participants where they currently struggle to find balance in their lives. Question 7 defines the categories of physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual. The question asked participants to look at the categories and their definitions and choose which their most significant area of concern was currently. This question did not allow for multiple answers, forcing the participants to stratify the

categories and pick whichever one they identified as their biggest concern. This researcher was

surprised by the answers.

Question 7: In looking at these categories:

> **Physical – Health, physical habits, limitations, sleep, diet, exercise, disease**
> **Social – Relationships with others, social media, finances, hobbies, etc.**
> **Emotional – self-awareness in, and management of emotions, feelings, and behaviors**
> **Intellectual – Exercising the brain, focus given to thinking and processing critically, make reasoned judgments, think things through, set goals**
> **Spiritual – Faith, faith practices, values, beliefs, meaning, and purpose**

Which do you perceive, currently, to be your most significant need/concern?

Results:
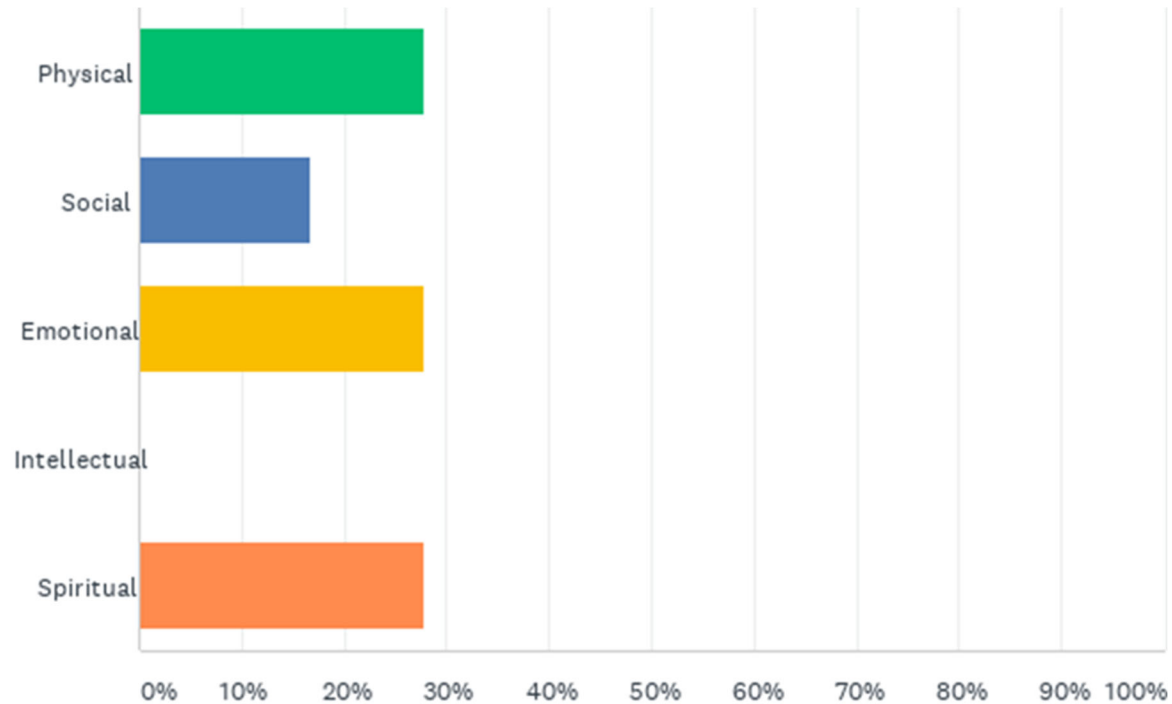
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Physical	27.78%	5
Social	16.67%	3
Emotional	27.78%	5
Intellectual	0.00%	0
Spiritual	27.78%	5
TOTAL		18

Three of the categories in this question tied for first place. Nearly 28%, or five people, each chose physical, emotional, or spiritual as their most significant area of concern. Sixteen percent (three people) of respondents chose social. Mostly, there was an even distribution amongst participants as to which area of their life was their source of most concern. As alluded to, there were a few notable results.

The first was out of the eighteen participants who answered this question; not a single person chose intellectual as their greatest need/area of concern. Intellectual involves exercising the brain, giving focus to thinking and processing critically, making reasoned judgments, thinking things through, and setting goals. The discussion in question 5 surrounded a high percentage of participants who felt prepared to deal with burnout and the contrast to question 3, where all said they had experienced high levels of burnout. This researcher introduced the familiar aphorism, "You don't know what you don't know."

From these three questions, the pre-seminar survey revealed that (1) Most felt prepared to deal with stress, (2) despite that feeling, every participant dealt with high levels of stress and burnout, and now, (3) not a single person felt the intellectual part of one's life where analysis and judgment play the greatest role was a significant need. The question then becomes, how effective is one's judgment of oneself? Here, the answers to questions 9 and 10 are important to the overall study and its results.

Another notable result of this pre-seminar survey is in the area of spiritual wellness as the self-identified most significant area concern. The spiritual area is defined as faith, faith practices, values, beliefs, meaning, and purpose. Twenty-eight percent of participants felt their primary area of concern was spiritual. The responses may be interpreted in two ways: (1) respondents struggled in this area, and (2) respondents placed a higher priority on this area than all others. Both of these responses may be problematic.

Each person who took this seminar was a ministry leader: someone in part or full-time employment as chaplain, clergy, organization staff member, or a lay volunteer who oversees groups or ministries. One's capacity to minister is much like a battery. There is a significant draw on that battery, and unless it is recharged, it goes "dead" and is rendered useless. When ministry leaders struggle spiritually, it is a significant drain on their well-being. If their spiritual battery is not recharged, it hampers their ability to lead and serve in a godly and Christ-like manner. They may also question their meaning and purpose. In Chapter 1, the referenced Barna study revealed 24% of pastors experience a period in their ministry when they significantly doubt their faith.[166] Chandler cited research estimating pastors in the United States exit ministry at a rate of 1,500 per month.[167]

What about those who may view the spiritual area of wellness as the single highest priority and therefore chose spiritual with that in mind? Referencing earlier sections in this thesis, *Imago Dei* and the Greatest Commandment are crucial elements for wellness and balance. The initial research confirms there is a danger in this train of thought. Ortberg wrote one should not measure one's devotion to God by having a devotional life. The primary measure of devotion

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[166] Barna Group, *The State of Pastors*, 11.
[167] Chandler, "Pastoral Burnout and the Impact of Personal Spiritual Renewal, Rest-taking, and Support System Practices," 273-287.

is simply one's life.[168] Epperly noted the importance of a holistic spirituality which includes body, mind, and spirit.[169] Elevating one's spiritual wellness over all other parts of one's life creates an imbalance and eschews a holistic approach to loving God and one's own wellness.

Question 8 is helpful to understand where the participants view themselves. The question does not, however, provide answers or solutions. For instance, 28% of respondents felt they were mostly out of balance in the area of social wellness. The pre-seminar survey had not yet introduced the Star Model. Therefore, this imbalance may be an area that is emphasized too much and sucks the life out of other areas, or it may be the area most affected by the over-emphasis of another.

Nonetheless, respondents began to think about their own areas of wellness and their fitness level. This mindset prepares the participant to interact with the Star Model when introduced more fully. Additionally, 22% answered physical is the most out of balance, 11% emotional, and 33% spiritual. Whereas in question 7, not one person answered intellectual was their greatest area of concern, here one person identified intellectual as the most out of balance.

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[168] Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be*, 51.
[169] Epperly, *A Center in the Cyclone*, 47.

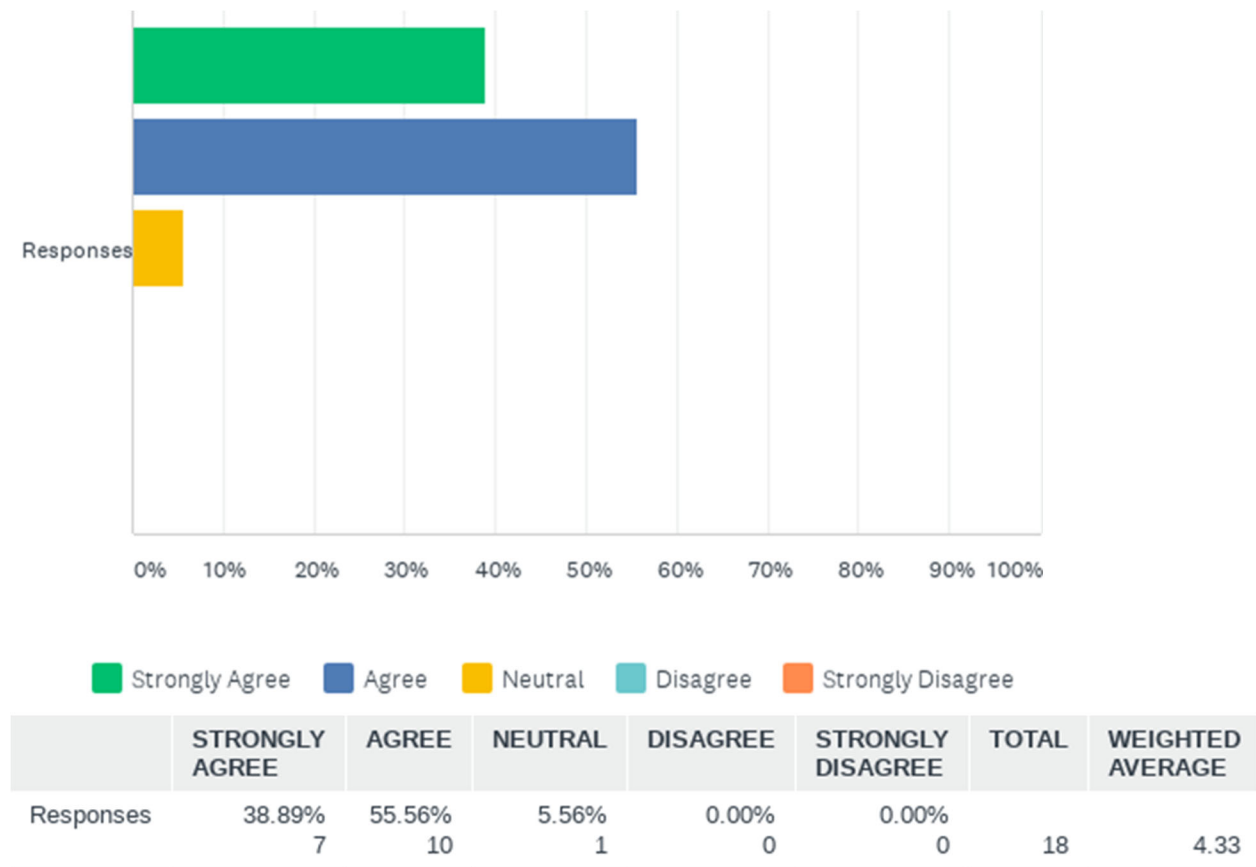**Question 8: Which do you perceive, currently, to be most out of balance?**

Results:
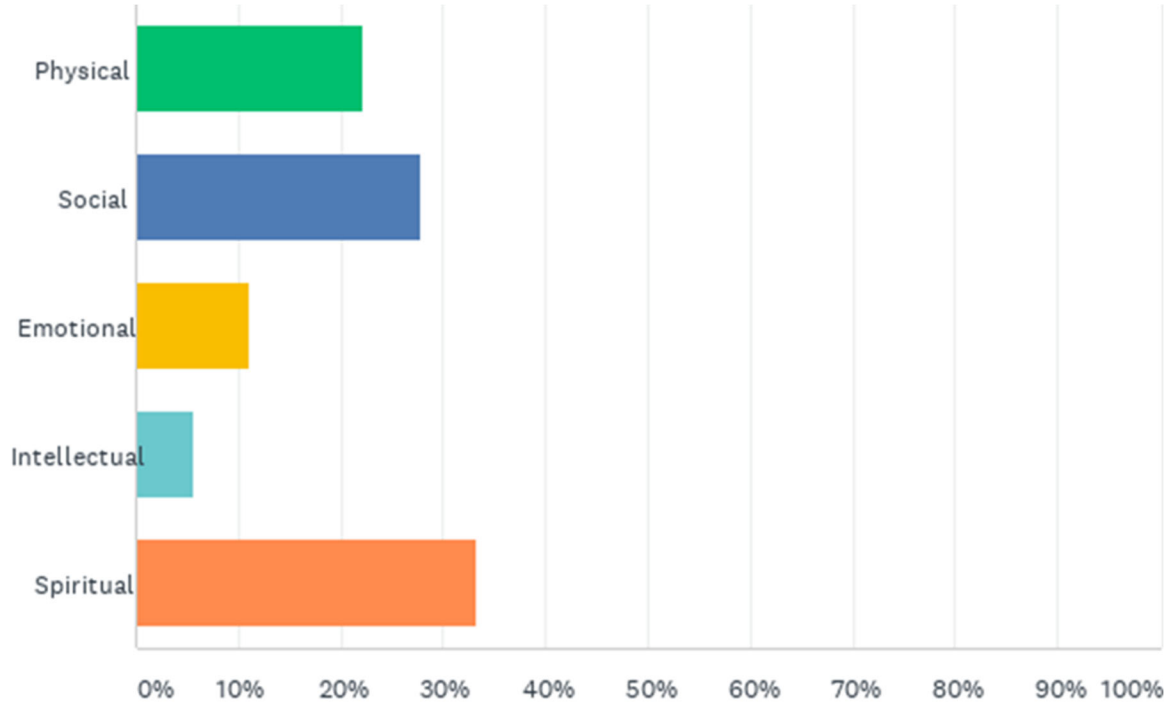
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Physical	22.22%	4
Social	27.78%	5
Emotional	11.11%	2
Intellectual	5.56%	1
Spiritual	33.33%	6
TOTAL		18

The pre-seminar survey addressed the validity of the assumptions and research conducted

for this thesis. The pre-seminar survey found: (1) Burnout is a problem, (2) even those who feel

prepared still experience it, and (3) now in question 8, there is great interest in a model that will

help people improve life balance and resiliency. When participants were asked if they would

have interest in a self-check model developed to help improve life balance and resiliency, 94%
answered in the affirmative. Thirty-nine percent strongly agreed to the question. Fifty-six percent
agreed they would be interested. Only one participant remained neutral, and none disagreed.

**Question 9: If a simple self-check model were developed to help improve my life balance
and resiliency, that would be of interest to me.**

Results:

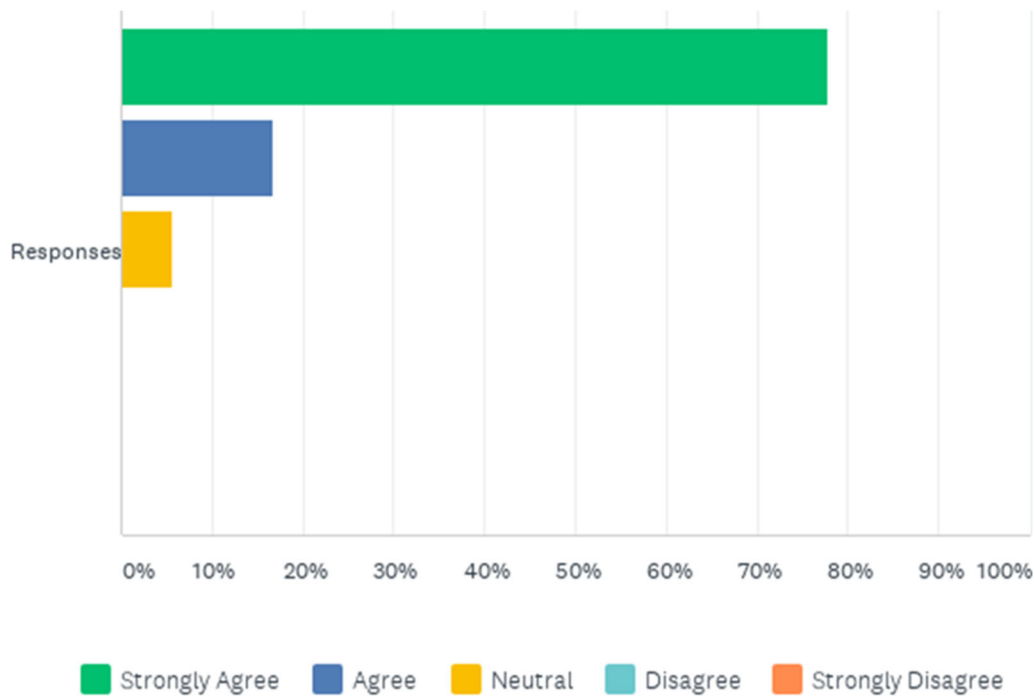|	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Responses	38.89% 7	55.56% 10	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	18	4.33

In like manner, when asked if that self-check model would also enhance one's
relationship with God, 94% stated they would be interested. This time, those who strongly
agreed were in the significant majority. Seventy-eight percent strongly agreed, and 17% agreed.
As was the case in question 8, one person remained neutral. The researcher is puzzled by this
answer. A ministry leader is offered a model that would enhance his or her relationship with

God. The participant was neutral about whether or not he or she would be interested. This question did not critique the Star Model or ask if it was beneficial; it solely asked if something were to be created which would help that person draw close to God, would the participant be interested. The answer was neutral, which leads the researcher to infer that perhaps this person is already burned out.

Question 10: If that simple, self-check model also enhanced my relationship with God, self, and others, that would be of interest to me.

Results:

Strongly Agree ▪ Agree ▪ Neutral ▪ Disagree ▪ Strongly Disagree

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Responses	77.78% 14	16.67% 3	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	18	4.72

Questions 11 and 12 were qualitative answers where the response was optional. Participants could choose to skip these questions, but none did. Respondents discussed how they

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currently evaluated their balance and resiliency as well as how they practiced self-care. The

participants' answers regarding how they evaluate balance and resiliency show their process is

mostly subjective, with many answers based on feeling. Regarding how the participants currently

practice self-care, none seemed to use a holistic approach to wellness and responded mostly in

subjective ways.

Question 11: How do you currently evaluate your balance and resiliency?

Results:

- I feel more balanced and resilient than I have ever felt before.

- Time spent with the Lord, time in service, over levels of joy and contentment.

- I evaluate it based off of how I'm feeling, such as how often I feel like crying, how tired I am, how excited I am for the day, etc.

- I use my physical and emotional abnormalities as an "indicator light" to make some changes to the current balance in my life.

- Typically according to my emotions and how productive I am.

- somewhat stable, score 7

- Pay attention to my physical and emotional responses to situations, my desire to practice my faith, my desire to do things I once enjoyed, and listen when my family expresses concern about my stress level.

- Strong due to dependency on my relationship with God

- Above average

- Time spent reading scripture, getting in runs and other workouts, maintaining calm.

- Above average

- This is more difficult, my husband passed away in May, he was the one who would help me stay on track, or help me see when I was drifting off a bit. So, for now, I practice self evaluation, mostly stimulated by reading the Scripture and prayer.

- Self-monitor. Social aspect is out of balance currently due to COVID. Can't attend church so fellowship with other believers is minimal. We stream church services.

- Quite balanced

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- I believe I have strong balance and resiliency. This year has definitely stressed it out though with lockdowns and such.

- By being aware of my response to others and evaluating my physical health. Spiritually I am acutely aware of when I'm not spending enough time with the Lord, I can get further out of balance in every other area.

- Consistency in time with God. Re-energizing through social interactions that are not related to ministry. Physical activity levels.

- By the number of things that I forget to do or missed in my day.

Question 12: How do you currently practice self-care?

Results:

- My self-care is more intentional, integrated, and effective than ever before. I sleep more than 7 hours per night on average, consume a moderately balanced diet, and exercise no less than 5 days per week. I am present and meaningfully engaged in my most important relationships. I have regular check-ins with my covenant group. While the pandemic has disrupted my public worship of God, my personal practice of spiritual disciplines is stronger than it has been since seminary.

- Pay close attention to what I do and how I feel.

- I try to follow daily disciplines of reading the Bible, basic self-care (eating well & personal hygiene), and doing something I enjoy like watching TV or talking to friends.

- Personal boundaries. Time with the Lord. Time spent in meaningful community.

- Not regularly. Often just in dire circumstances.

- Exercise, adequate sleep,

- Currently my only outlet is physical exercise and talking to my spouse.

- Prayer, Bible study & review, going back to the basics as well as to what has helped in the past

- Spend time with family, hobbies, listen to books, experiences nature, spiritual practices, socialize with co-workers

- Read Scripture in addition to preparing Sunday Message, Read for enjoyment, spend time with Spouse and Children, Run, Cross Fit, and hike.

- Spend time with family, hobbies, listen to books, experiences nature, spiritual practices, socialize with co-workers

- Right now about the only thing I'm doing is quiet time with God. I also try to take a few days away once a year for a personal retreat. I know I need to do better with nutrition and exercise, but I don't have the energy to work on that.

- Walk 3-4 miles a day. Morning scripture reading and prayer. Monitor thinking and dismiss negative thoughts.

- Love is balance. Self-care is God care. Service to others can create secondary trauma in life, so Love God first, then he will balance you to continue to love and help others.

- I try to make time for myself and family.

- I rest and step away from unnecessary activities, say no to more service opportunities, read the Bible mostly the Psalms And talk with my closest friends and Pastor seeking guidance and direction.

- Not well. I used to spend time with my dog, but I had to have her euthanize on 4 November. She was a comfort and support. Most of all, she made me feel important. To paraphrase what was said of David and Jonathan, "her love was better than the love of a woman." I can't share that with anyone, because people don't understand the value she made me feel. My wife knows my deep sorrow and obsession. She feels some of it also, but I wouldn't want to hurt her by sharing how deeply I am broken. I normally go hiking, fishing, hunting or endurance inline skating. Winter is here, so I mostly play video games, which creates more isolation. I will try to fish today if I can get free. I must complete two classes to maintain my Emergency Medical Responder class. I am also going through a graduate level class for Advanced Officer training. I have already been promoted, but I cannot pin on my new rank until I finish the class. I cannot participate in many sports, because of tendon issues and four back surgeries. Ripping both of my arches prior to a 57 mile inline skate event, and refusing to withdraw created permanent arch issues. I have had to have tendons cut from my elbows because of overuse, so I had to stop lifting weights. There is no pool close, or I would take up swimming. Covid has put a clamp on some self-care. I like to hang out with the older men in my church and drink coffee. We may talk about spiritual matters, but they aren't trying to suck me dry. They build me up. It is like a mini vacation to be with them. We still meet in a large garage on occasions, but it is less frequent. Covid had been difficult for extroverts.

- I schedule time for myself into my calendar.

Post-Seminar Survey

The pre-seminar survey gauged participants' personal experiences of burnout, stress, and fitness levels prior to the seminar and the Star Model's introduction. The post-seminar survey required interaction and evaluation of the Star Model itself. As previously stated, eighteen participants completed the pre-seminar survey. Fourteen participants completed the post-seminar

survey. The disparity of participants does not affect the research outcomes as each survey dealt with different aspects of the research.

The researcher chose a hard cutoff date for the surveys and closed them before four participants completed the post-seminar survey. This closure was necessary to continue the thesis research and evaluate results. Because the participants are anonymous, the researcher could not reach out directly to the four who did not complete the post-seminar survey. Instead, in November and December, the researcher sent out several reminder emails to all participants to complete the survey. The survey closed on 1 January 2021.

As with the pre-seminar survey, the first question was a control question for the participants and had no bearing on the research. The post-seminar survey totaled sixteen questions. Like the pre-seminar survey, there were both qualitative and quantitative questions. Questions 15 and 16 were optional. The post-seminar survey's goal was to test the thesis that if a simple, self-check model for balance and resiliency were created, then their awareness will require an action. Ministry has unique challenges and stressors; therefore, a ministry leader must be very self-aware about self-care.

The Star Model intends to create a simple, self-check model to help ministry leaders. The seminar itself seeks to help leaders with the quality of their life. Whether ministry leaders are in a church, parachurch, or volunteer role, they must develop balance and resiliency. The quality of a ministry leader's ministry is tied directly to the quality of their lives. The Star Seminar discussed (1) Balance: ministry leaders maintain an ability to love God with all their heart, mind, soul, strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself (Luke 10:27), and (2) resiliency, which will help ministry leaders who may feel hard-pressed, not to be crushed; who are perplexed, not be in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed (2 Cor. 4:8-9, NIV).

For ministry leaders who interact with the Star Model seminar, identifying their own personal star begins the process of understanding their own level of wellness and self-care. Once they are made aware of their star through a self-check process, that awareness should lead to an action. The two aspects of the thesis studied through the post-seminar survey are if the Star Model gave them an awareness and if that awareness led them to an action. Following the ministry leaders' progress after the seminar is outside the scope of this survey.

For question 2 of the post-seminar survey, participants were asked if the Star Model had a practical use in their personal life. Eighty-six percent responded they either strongly agreed or agreed that the Star is a useful model in their personal lives. Fifty-seven percent strongly agreed that it did. Twenty-nine percent agreed. There was one neutral and one who strongly disagreed.

The participant who strongly disagreed caught the researcher by surprise. The study is anonymous, but the researcher can sort answers by the respondent. While the participant strongly disagreed, it had a practical use in his or her life; he or she strongly agreed the model led to an awareness in his or her life that required an action. The researcher will spend time discussing this person's answers more in-depth later in the chapter.

Question 2: This Star Model has practical use in my personal life

Results:
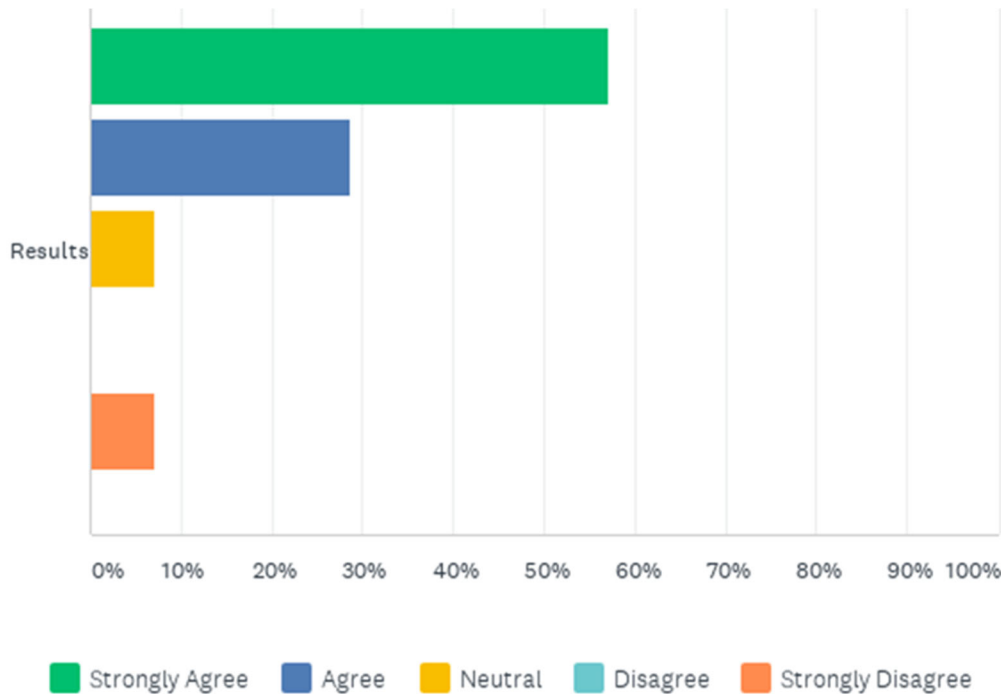
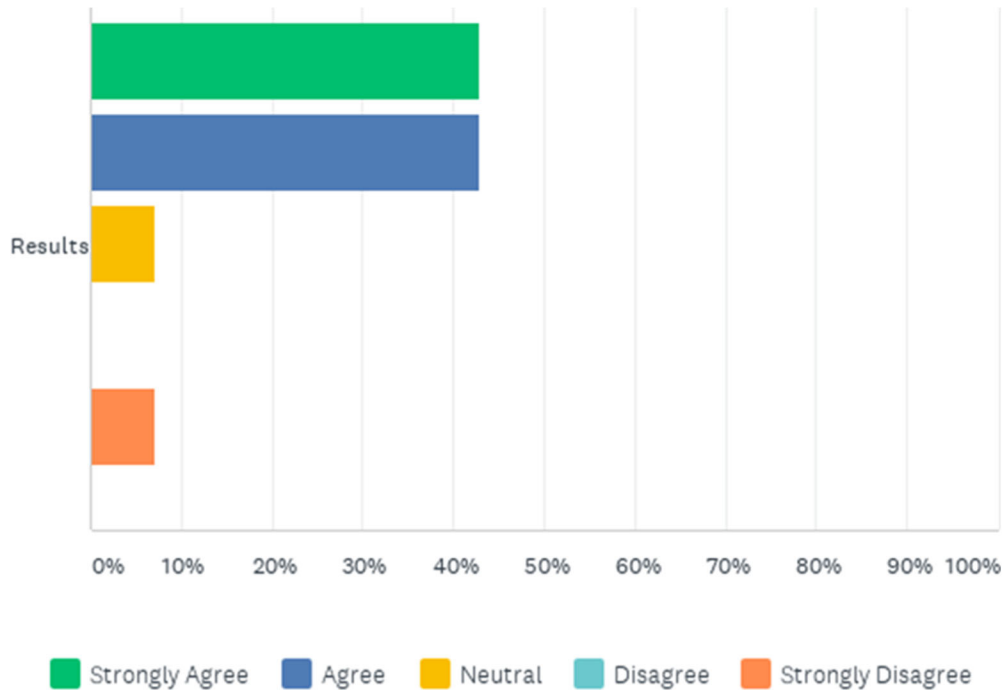|	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	57.14% 8	28.57% 4	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	14	4.29

In a manner similar to question 2, question 3 was about the Star Model's relevance in the participants' lives. Only this time, the question shifted the focus from one's personal life to one's work life. Overall, the percentage of participants who strongly agreed or agreed stayed high at 86%. One was neutral, and one strongly disagreed.

Regardless of from where life stressors come, work or personal life, it is assured that they will come. The participants overwhelmingly believed that the Star Model is useful in both areas of their lives. In Chapter 1, the researcher noted the concept of a work/life balance might not be the most accurate of expressions. Life is life. Whether one is at work or home, ministry leaders

should practice self-care and focus on their areas of wellness. The Star Model can help the research participants do just that.

Question 3: This Star Model has practical use in my work life

Results:

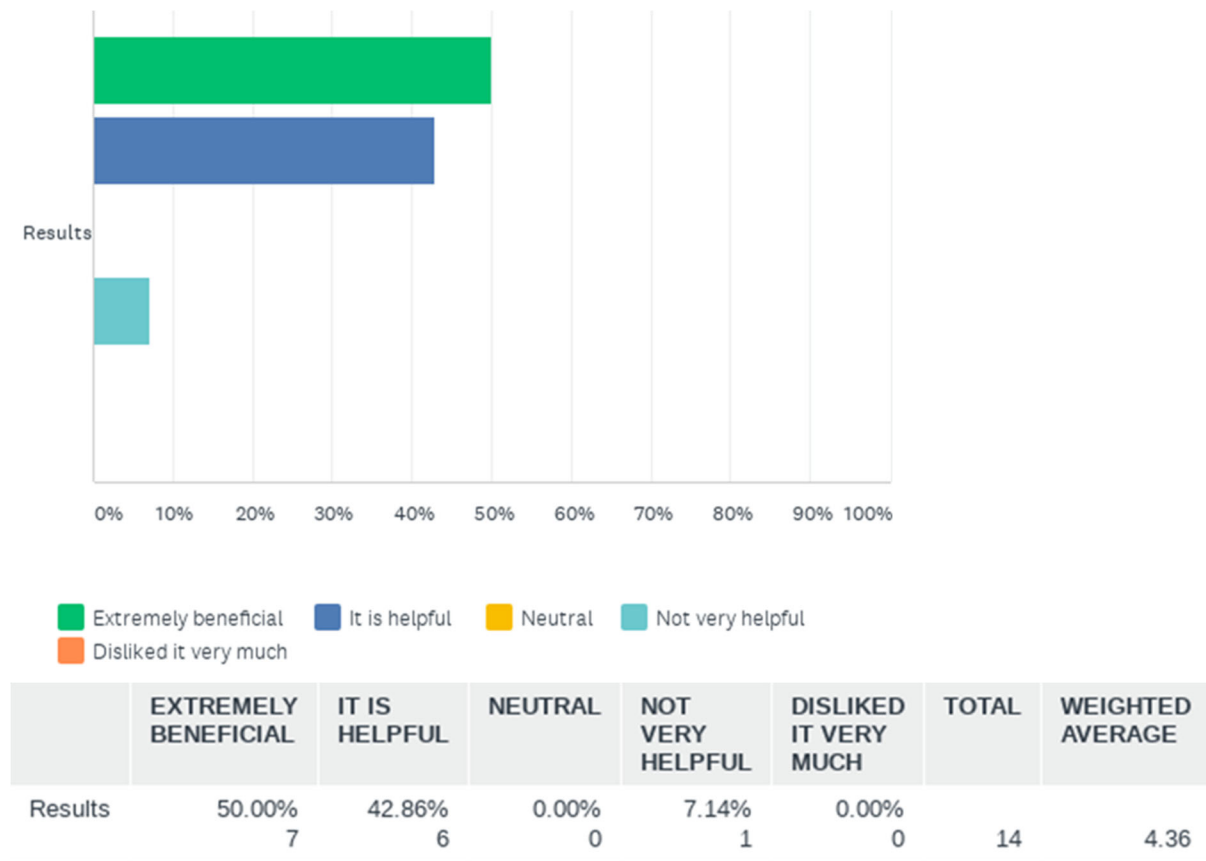|	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	42.86% 6	42.86% 6	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	14	4.14

A goal of the Star Model is to be useful. This model should not be a theoretical exercise as to how one may love God more or experience more peace. The Star Model must be practically applied in a way that benefits the ministry leader. Question 4 asked the participants to rate the model based on this idea. Half of all participants found it extremely beneficial. Another 43% found it helpful. One person stated it was not very helpful. The "not very helpful" answer may be because that person already practices self-care, or he or she would prefer a different model.

Comparing question 4 to questions 2 and 3 shows a 7% increase in satisfaction from the model's usefulness in work and personal life (86%) to how beneficial it is overall (93%). One

person found it not to be beneficial. This person may be the same one who found it not to be of practical value in his or her life. Regarding the Star Model's goal to be beneficial for those who are introduced to it, the results of this study show it was beneficial for almost all ministry leaders.

Question 4: How would you rate this Star Model?

Results:

	EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL	IT IS HELPFUL	NEUTRAL	NOT VERY HELPFUL	DISLIKED IT VERY MUCH	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	50.00% 7	42.86% 6	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	14	4.36

Question 4 answered the question of the participants who found the Star Model to be beneficial. The pre-seminar survey revealed that 100% of participants experienced burnout and that 100% of participants knew ministry leaders who suffered high burnout levels. Question 5 asked the participants to think about other ministry leaders. Would the participants in this seminar recommend this Star Model to others? Ninety-three percent, or all but one person, said

they would recommend it to others. Seventy-one percent responded definitely, and 21%

responded yes.

Question 5: Would you recommend this Star Model to others?

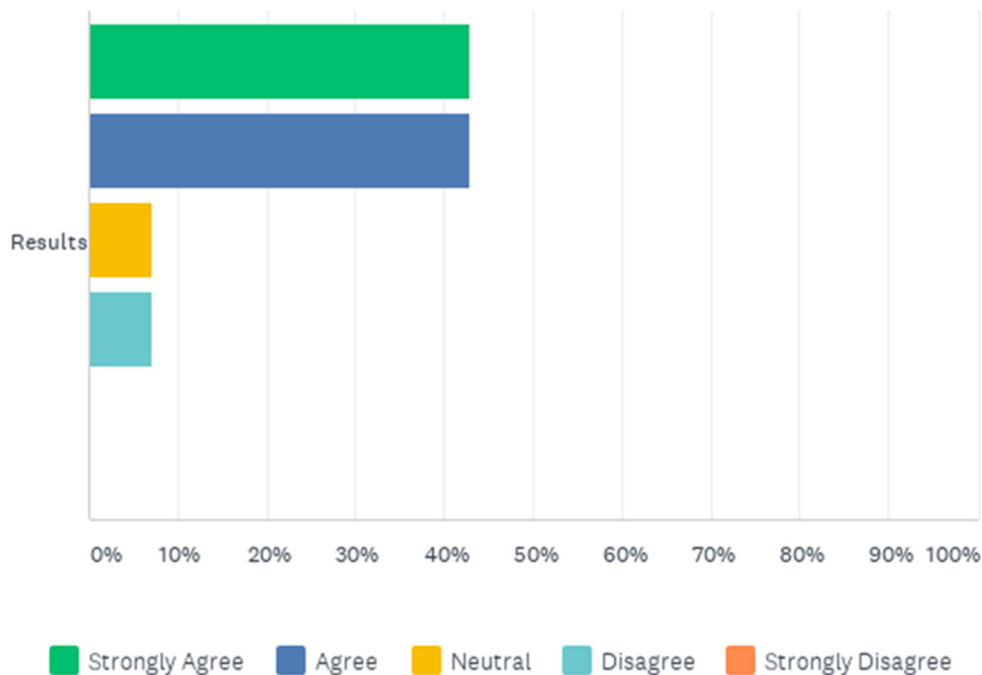**Results:**
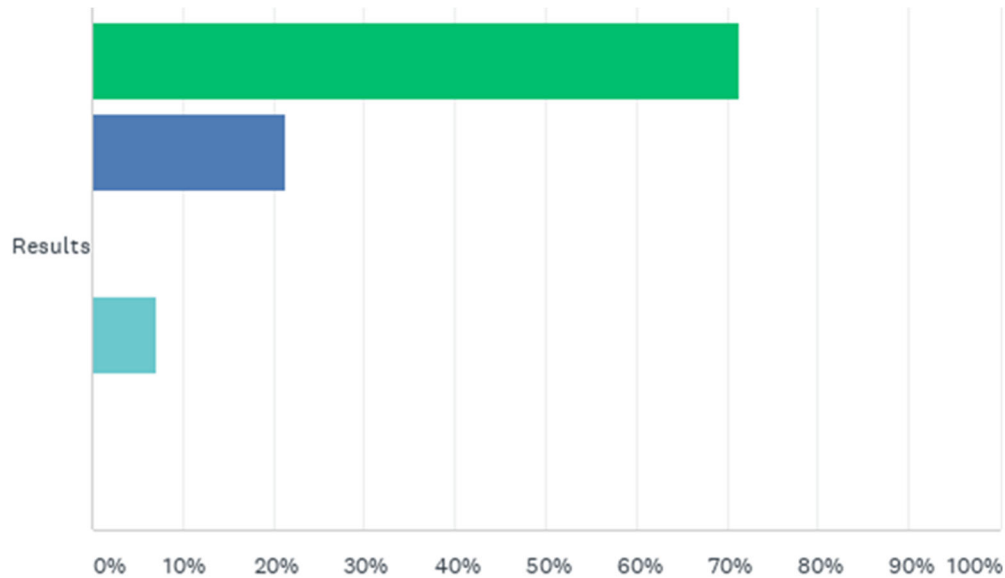
	DEFINITELY YES	YES	NEUTRAL	NO	DEFINITELY NOT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	71.43% 10	21.43% 3	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	14	4.57

The theological foundation on which this thesis rests is the call for men and women to

live by God's design. The thesis starts with the concept of *Imago Dei*. To be made in the image

of God is to have imputed value as well as to be conformed to Christlikeness. A ministry leader

should follow the greatest commandment to love God and, the second, to love one's neighbor.

Question 6 is critical to establish the effectiveness of the Star Model. The question is whether or

not the Star Model helped one develop a better understanding of what it means to love God and

love one's neighbor as it relates to ministry and wellness.

Eighty-four percent of seminar participants answered the Star seminar does give them a better understanding. Forty-three percent strongly agreed to a better understanding, and 43% agreed. One person was neutral, and one disagreed. The high number of those who strongly agreed/agreed is significant. Whether ordained, staff, or lay, the ministry leaders make up the core of a local church or organization. For the purposes of this study, the researcher assumed these leaders already have an understanding of Scripture and discipleship. Despite the ministry leaders' studies and discipleship, the Star Model approached the areas of balance and resiliency in a way that speaks to participants. The Star Model helped them connect more deeply with the concept of how to love God with all one's heart, mind, soul, strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself.

Question 6: I have a better understanding of the importance of Mark 12:29-31 (Loving God with heart, soul, mind, strength, and neighbor as self) as it relates to my ministry and wellness.
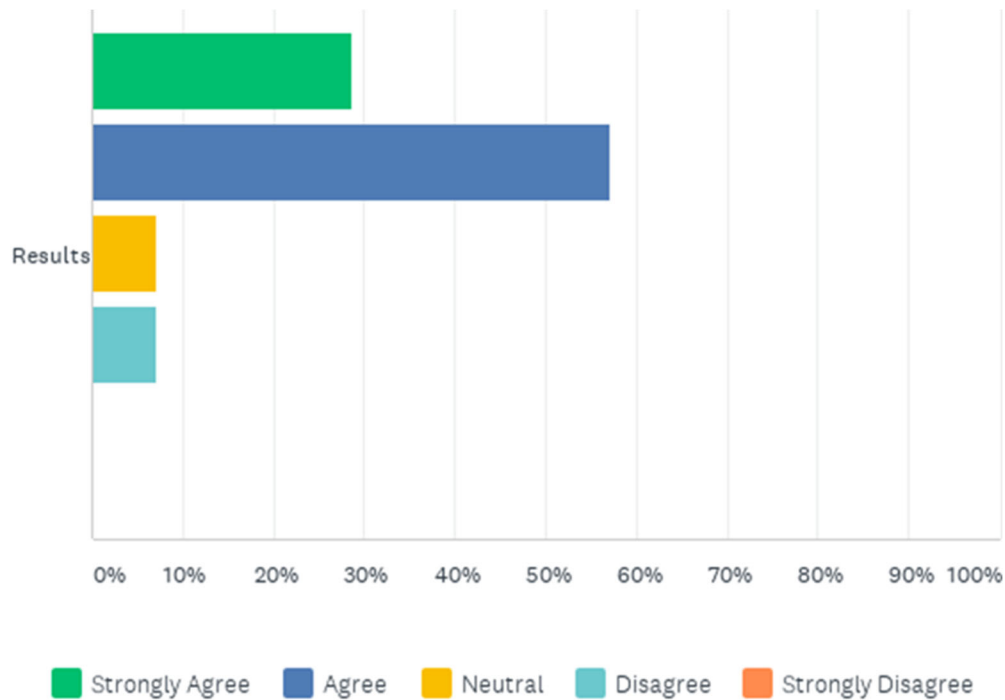
Results:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	42.86% 6	42.86% 6	7.14% 1	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	14	4.21

This thesis promotes the concept that balance and resiliency connect directly to wellness and well-being. One whose focus is on one's well-being must focus on one's balance. One who is burned out or suffering from high levels of stress that impair one's wellness areas must focus on resiliency. Question 7 asked if participants, after interacting with the Star Model, better understood how to connect balance and resiliency with their overall wellness. Eighty-five percent of respondents affirmed a better understanding. Of the 8%, 29% strongly agreed, and 57% agreed. Seven percent were neutral, and 7% disagreed.

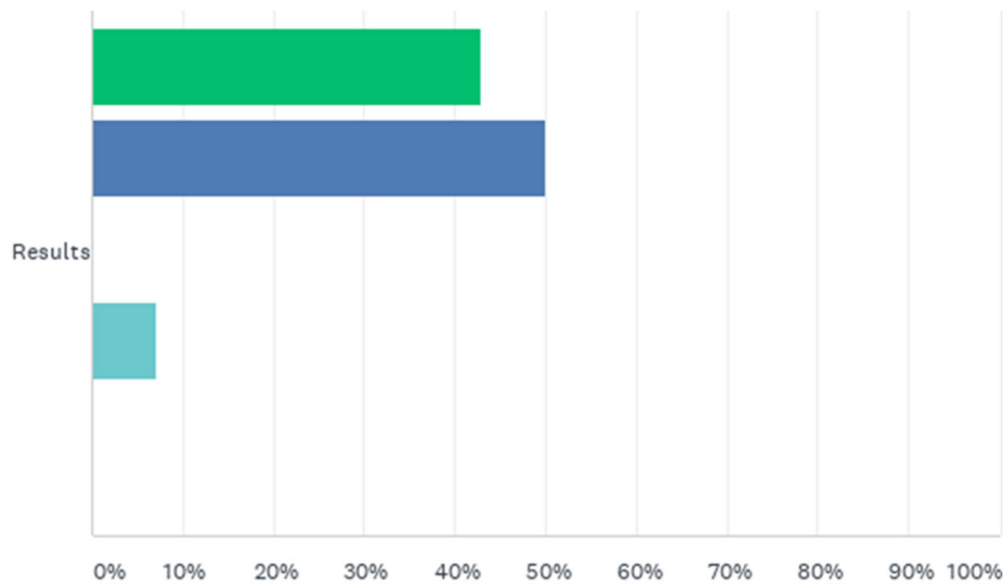**Question 7: I better understand how to connect balance and resiliency with my overall wellness**

Results:

Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	28.57% 4	57.14% 8	7.14% 1	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	14	4.07

Question 6 asked participants if they had a better understanding of Mark 12:29-31 and what it means to love God and neighbor. Question 7 asked if participants better understood how to connect balance and resiliency to wellness. Question 8 takes the analysis one step further and combines the two previous questions. This question got to the heart of the thesis and asked the ministry leaders if the Star Model helped them better understand how health in the areas of wellness connects to loving God. The overwhelming response was in the affirmative.

Ninety-three percent of seminar participants felt the Star Model helped them connect wellness and loving God. Of the 93%, 43% strongly agreed, and 50% agreed. In like manner of the previous questions, there was one person who disagreed. An analysis of the one who disagreed may have disagreed for different reasons: (1) The person did not care for or understand the Star Model, (2) this person already felt they practiced good self-care and was connected to God.

Question 8: I better understand how the areas of wellness connect to loving God

Results:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	42.86% 6	50.00% 7	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	14	4.29

Questions 9 and 12 of the post-seminar survey speak directly to the thesis statement, which is: If a simple, self-check model to help ministry leaders develop balance and resiliency is created, then their awareness will require an action. By this time, respondents participated in the seminar, interacted with the Star Model, and reflected on their wellness and self-care. These two questions test the thesis statement from slightly differently worded questions. Question 9 asked the participants whether they could identify one or more areas where an action on their part could improve their balance and resiliency. Question 12 asked if the participant felt the Star Model provided an awareness of their part that helped him or her decide to take an action.

For question 9, 100% of participants were able to identify an action they could take to improve their balance and resilience. Ninety-three percent strongly agreed, and 7% agreed. This question was the highest scored answer in the survey and was unanimous in their response where an awareness helped participants identify an action. Also of note is that in the post-seminar survey, there was an individual who answered the previous questions with a negative response or opinion. Here, even that person felt the Star Model was useful to identify an action he or she could take to improve his or her balance and resilience.

Question 9: I was able to identify one or more areas where an action on my part could improve my balance and resiliency.
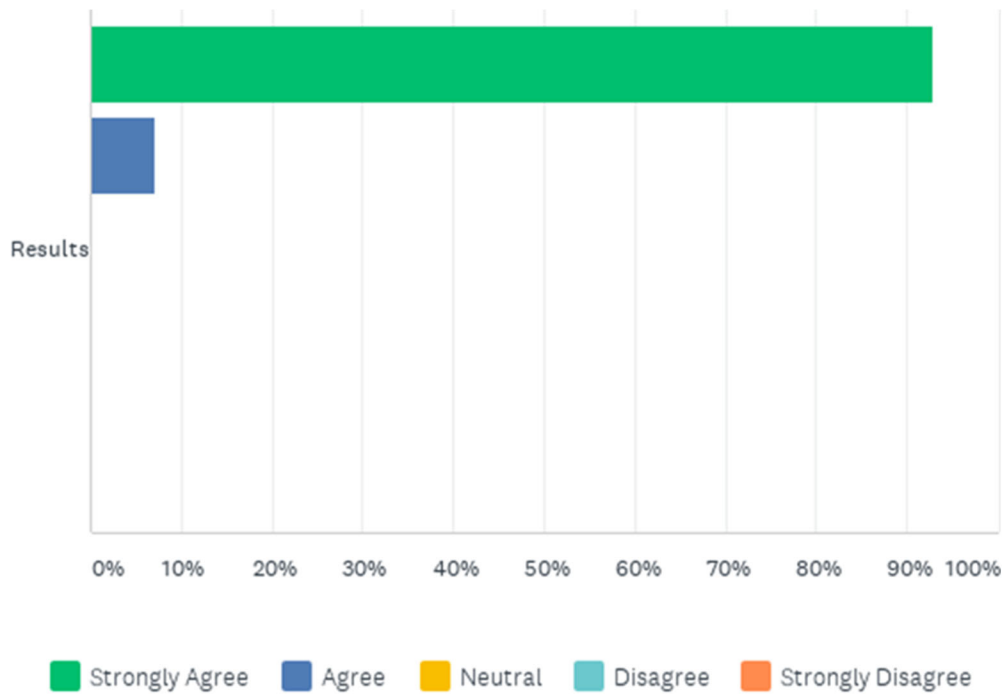
Results:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	92.86% 13	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14	4.93

Unlike question 9, question 12 did not specify the action would improve balance and resilience. Here the question, for the most part, mirrored the thesis statement. After interacting with the Star Model, did it provide an awareness on the participants' part that helped them decide to take an action? This wording is important as it did not ask if the participants were able to identify an action. The question asked if respondents decided to take an action.

From Chapter 3, a vital element of the seminar was to incorporate transformative learning, a reintegration into one's life based on conditions dictated by one's new perspective.[170] The seminar sought to introduce participants to the Star Model and, in so doing, would help participants experience transformative learning and decide to take an action. The awareness of the Star Model brought a new perspective to participants in the seminar, who then reintegrated this new perspective into their life and decided to act upon it.

Eighty-six percent of all seminar participants experienced transformative learning where each person decided to take an action. Fourteen percent of respondents were neutral. Those who were neutral may require more reflection and are not yet sure what action they need to take or are already emphasizing balance and resiliency in their life and therefore have already established a self-care plan. No participants disagreed with the question. Twenty-one percent strongly agreed they decided to take an action, and 64% agreed that the awareness helped them decide to take an action. Question 12 is listed out of order and immediately below for a direct comparison.

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[170] Christie, et al, "Putting Transformative Learning Theory Into Practice," 9-30.

Question 12: I feel the Star Model provided an awareness on my part that helped me decide to take an action.

Results:
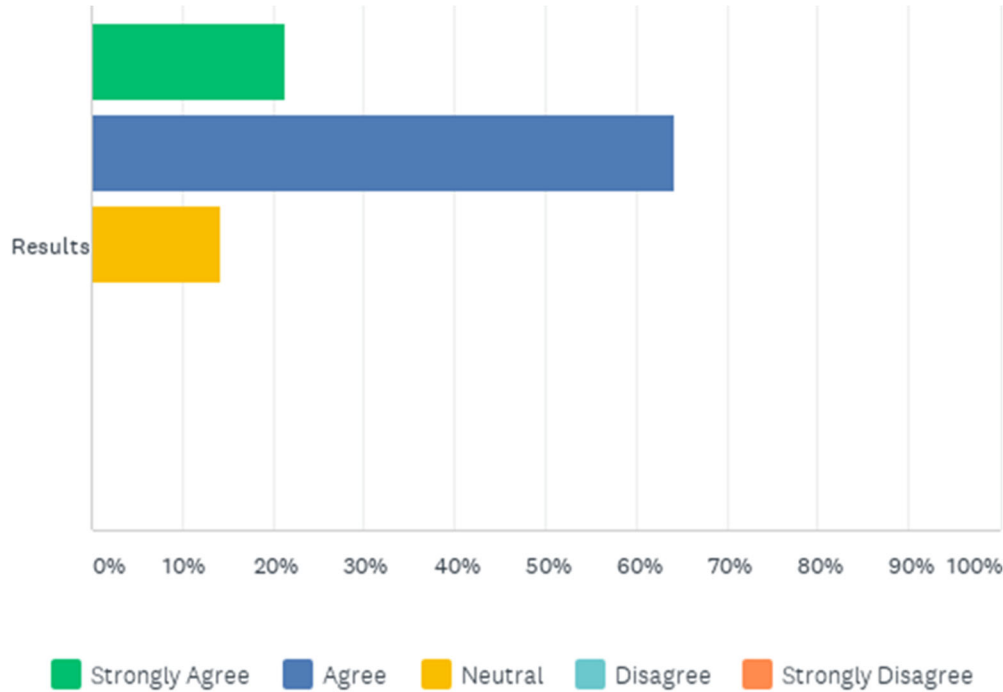
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	21.43% 3	64.29% 9	14.29% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14	4.07

Participants' resolve to take action based on the awareness which comes from exposure to the Star Model is certainly the desired end state. The "why" is foundational to the entire seminar. The reason *why* participants decide to take an action must center on who they are as a child of God. Paul exhorted the Colossians to: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving" (Col 3:23-24). One's relationship with God must be the single most important thing in one's life.

Question 10 seeks to help the researcher understand if the desired end state, which is for participants to resolve to act, is based on their understanding of their need for God. Balance and resilience come not because a system works; they work because it is a model centered in Christ's greatest commandment. Here, again, 100% of participants who took the Star seminar responded they felt equipped to understand how crucial overall fitness is in one's relationship with God. To that question, 57% strongly agreed, and 43% agreed.

Question 10: I feel equipped with an understanding of how important overall fitness is in my relationship with God.
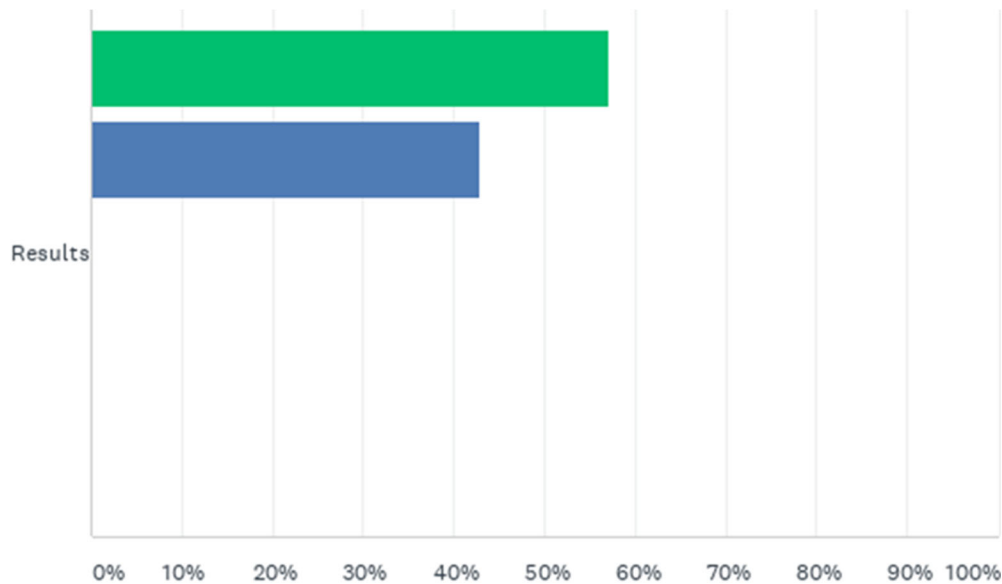
Results:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	57.14% 8	42.86% 6	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14	4.57

Because this research is geared toward ministry leaders, it is understood that many mature Christians will already understand how important it is to love God with all one's heart,

mind, soul, and strength and love one's neighbor as oneself. Question 10 asked the ministry leaders if they felt equipped with an understanding of how important their overall fitness is to love God. The understanding of fitness may not have come from the Star Model at all.

Question 11 sought to build on question 10 to provide a deeper analysis of the research. This question's goal is to determine if those who feel equipped with this understanding had it all along or if the Star Model and seminar benefitted them. After all, a ministry leader should have a good understanding of how to love self. Jesus called his disciples to love their neighbors as their selves. If one does not love self, how can one love one's neighbor?

Toward that end, question 11 asks the question explicitly if the Star Model training enhanced or better equipped the participant to understand how important overall fitness is in one's relationship with God. Ninety-three percent of respondents agreed the Star Model did, in fact, enhance or better equip them with a better understanding. Seven percent responded neutrally to the question. None disagreed that the Star Model enhanced or better equipped their understanding.

Question 11: This Star Model training has enhanced/better equipped me with an understanding of how important overall fitness is in my relationship with God. Results:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	28.57% 4	64.29% 9	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14	4.21
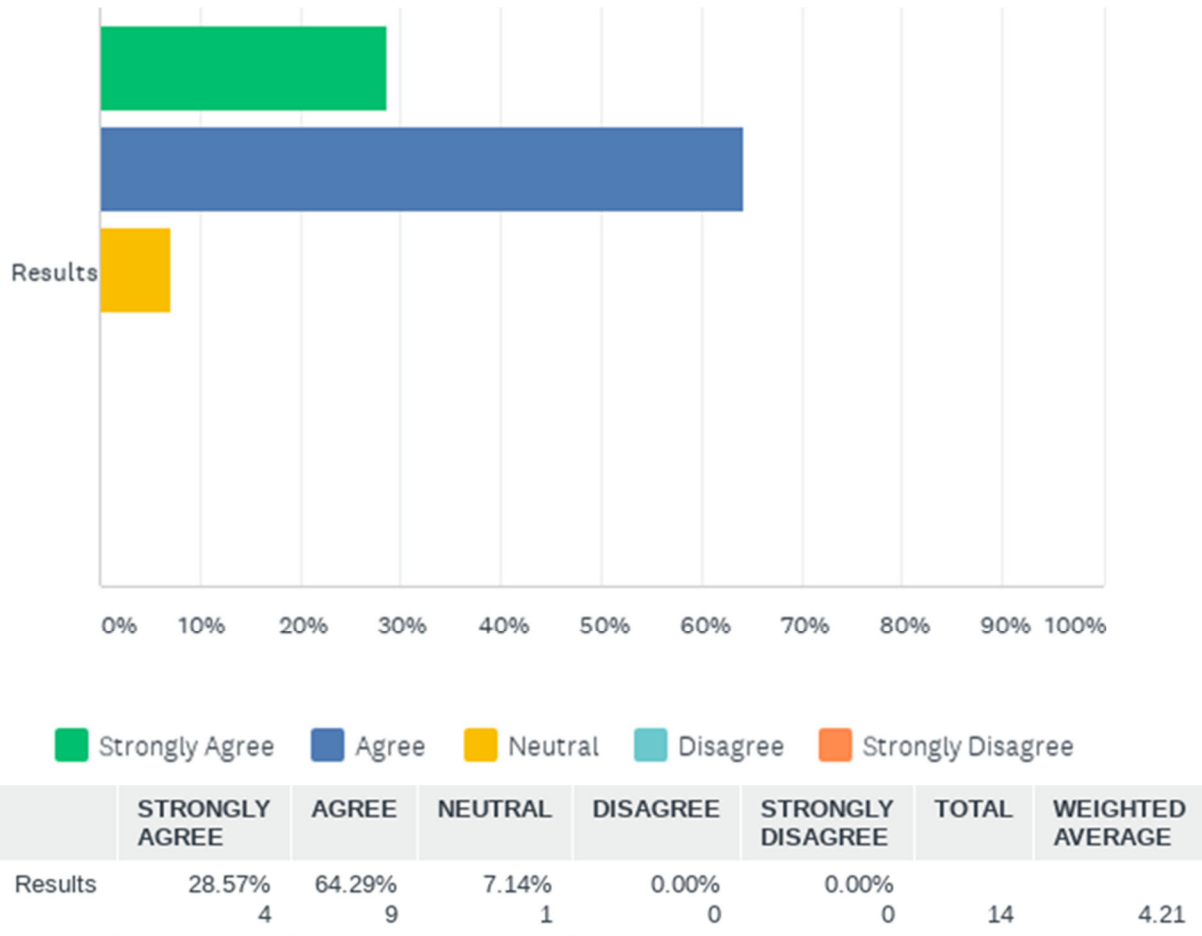
Questions 13 and 14 did not specifically intend to address the thesis but instead helped the researcher gain information regarding the Star Model itself. Participants have already answered the questions about whether or not the model was beneficial to them and if they were able to increase their understanding and determination to act. Does it also equip ministry leaders to help others in their discipleship with God through an examination of their own lives?

In the pre-seminar survey, 100% of ministry leaders affirmed they knew other ministry leaders who suffered from burnout or high stress. Question 13 asked ministry leaders in the

seminar if they felt competent to help others move toward balance and resilience. Ninety-three percent of respondents answered they did believe they could help out others who are stressed out or burned out. Forty-three percent strongly agreed they could, and 50% agreed. Seven percent were neutral. The overwhelming majority of ministry leaders in the seminar felt equipped to help others.

Question 13: If I encounter someone who is stressed out or burned out, I would be able to help them move toward balance and resiliency.

Results:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	42.86% 6	50.00% 7	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14	4.36
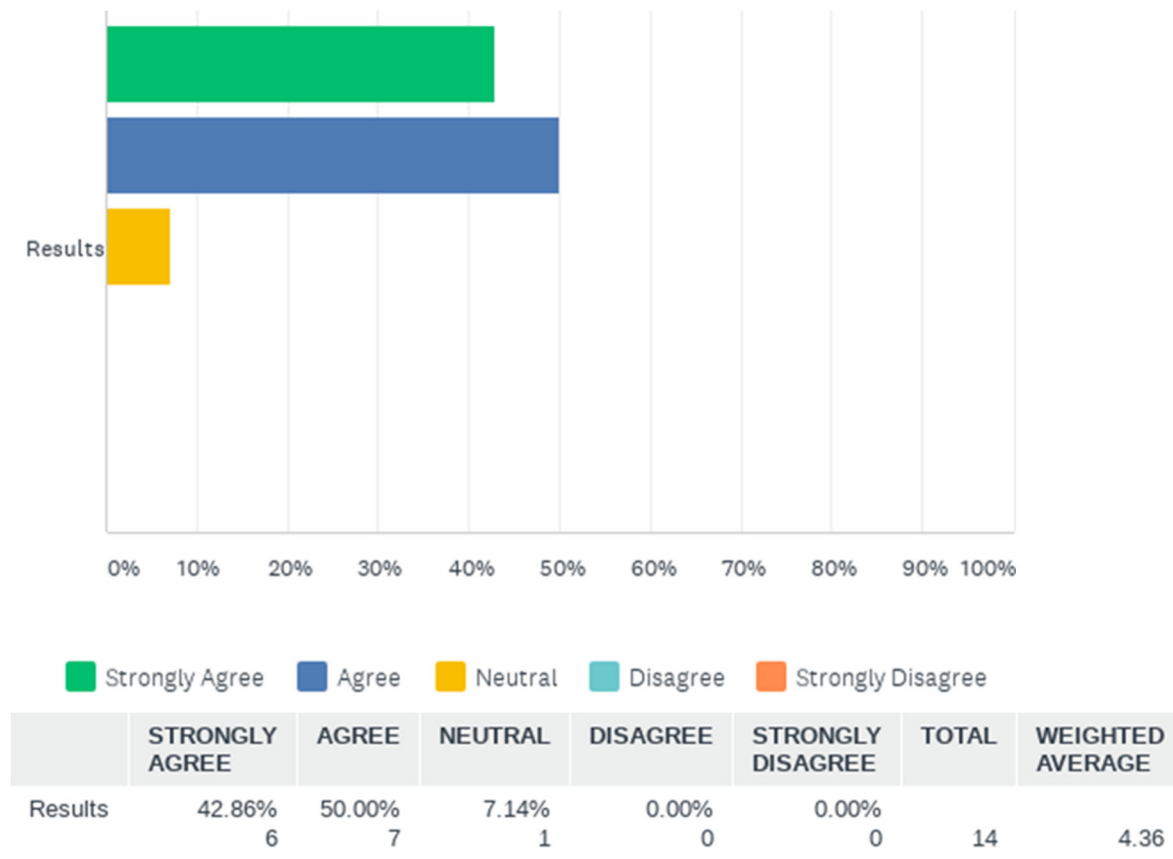
Of the seminar participants, an affirmative response of 93% of ministry leaders who say they feel equipped to help others is certainly noteworthy. The high percentage of affirmative responses does not mean, however, that the Star Model was the reason why. Certainly, ministry

leaders, some of whom do not practice self-care very well, can help others in need. Question 13 asked if they felt they could help others move toward balance and resilience.
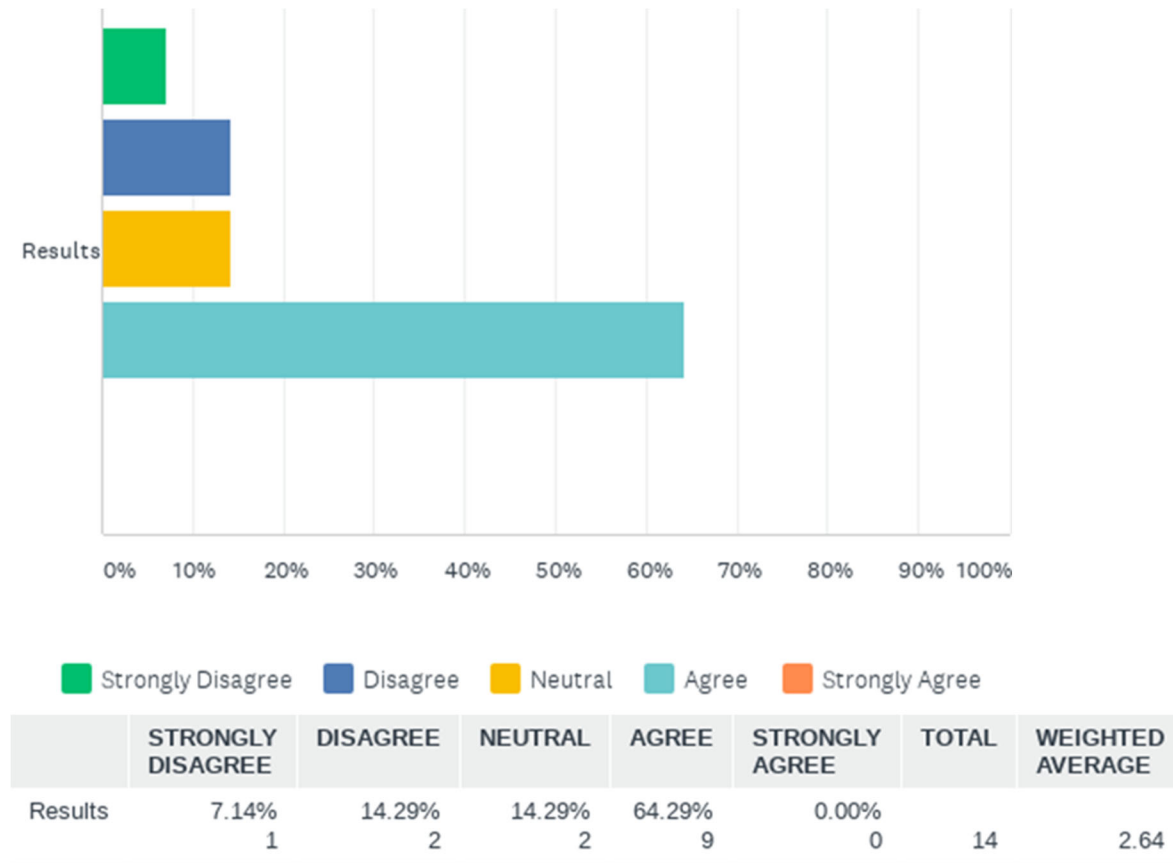
Question 14 brought the Star Model into the equation and asked participants if the Star Model was beneficial toward enabling them to help others. This question compared how participants felt before exposure to the Star Model and compared it with their feelings after their exposure to the seminar. Before the Star seminar, those who felt they were able to help others struggling with high levels of stress and burnout were as follows: 7% strongly disagreed they would be able to help, 14% disagreed they would be able to help, 14% were neutral, and 64% agreed. None strongly agreed.

A comparison of questions 13 and 14 highlights the benefit of the Star Model and its ease of use. The Star Model enabled participants to feel better equipped to help others. As a ministry leader, this is significant. The Star Model brought participants from a confidence level where none would strongly agree they could help others prior to the seminar to six who strongly agreed after the seminar. Before the seminar, nine agreed they could help others, and after the seminar, the number was six. This change of value should not be seen as a decrease as it is most likely that some who agreed they could help before the seminar strongly agreed they could help after the seminar.

While two people felt neutral on if they could help others struggling with burnout and high levels of stress before the seminar, only one felt neutral afterward. Most significant, one participant strongly disagreed they could help someone, and two people disagreed they could help someone. After the seminar, not a single person disagreed as to whether or not they would be able to help someone. Clearly, the Star Model is useful not just in its ability to help ministry leaders but also to equip them to help others.

Question 14: Before this Star training, my answer to #13 would have been:

Results:

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Results	7.14% 1	14.29% 2	14.29% 2	64.29% 9	0.00% 0	14	2.64

Questions 15 and 16 were qualitative questions that gave seminar participants a chance to share any thoughts or feedback. Their responses are listed below.

Question 15: Did you have any new understandings or significant thoughts during the seminar? If so, what?

Results: Answered: 12 Skipped: 2

- The definitions given for "balance," "fitness," and "holistic wellness" were helpful in better understanding what they could look like in my life. The Star Model itself was extremely helpful in identifying what areas of my life could use some growth. I was really glad he made the comment that if one area is not where it needs to be, the answer is not to focus on that area. The answer is to focus on the center (Christ). As he said, this is not only a tool to better self-regulate and prevent burnout, but to help identify how I can love God better. I wish all of my pastors and friends could watch this video in order to become healthier and more Christlike!

- I appreciated the clarification that the Star Model helps us understand how to love God better, and how it is a form of stewardship that allows us to give ourselves wholly to God.

- I really like how the 5 points of the star were applied to Mark 12. It made that scripture more meaningful and applicable.

- I identified the area I allow to be out of balance when stressed. I have not given physical fitness the focus it needs. Today my emotional balance is precarious but my spiritual and intellectual fitness is keeping it in check. I plan to do stretching exercises and walk even if indoors during breaks. I plan to not ignore people trying to reach out to me and not pretend everything is okay emotionally. I continue to read God's word and verbalize my spiritual fitness and intellectual fitness by speaking God's Character and my TRUST in my relationship with Jesus. All the while remembering I am created in the image of God.

- Not really. There wasn't anything new from what I've already heard in the past.

- The idea (and visual) about how focusing on one area too much can take us farther from God, even when it is an area you feel is important to ministry.

- No

- The balance of the elements that make up the model and seeing visually what happens when not in balance.

- The Star Model is a great metaphor for visualizing life in balance and out of balance. Identifying where one needs to address issues.

- Good reminder that when I am burned out, I am generally serving in the flesh rather than the spirit.

- Systems are excellent to follow! This is a well designed system to follow.

- Yes, I am focusing on the negative event in my life to the detriment of the other areas of my life.

Question 16: Please write any additional comments you may have about the Star seminar or clarify any of your responses

Results: Answered: 10 Skipped: 4

- Thank you for all your hard work! This is extremely beneficial to so many.

- This Star Model is fascinating, and I have a couple questions to better understand it: - How do we factor in people's unique natures into creating balance? For instance, if someone is naturally more emotional than others, then should they devote more energy into the other areas if being emotional is simply related to their nature? - Is there a danger in seeking to focus on other areas becoming a form of escapism? Thank you so much for this helpful Star Model; I enjoyed watching!

- It is an easy and useful model to understand and explain to others. It makes sense and something everyone can relate to but perhaps has never been explained in this way. It is also easy to remember as it correlates to 5 points in a star.

- The Star seminar is a good reminder of things that some of us have been taught in resiliency training. Where the basic premise is something that I already knew, I really appreciate the connection to Mark 12:29-31.

- I am a veteran Army Chaplain and presently a state correctional chaplain. I see great value in using this Star seminar teachings with the incarcerated women I counsel as well as in my own life especially today and also with my "neighbors". Thank you for the opportunity to participate. The seminar illustrations may seem simplistic but do help to understand and emphasize the points.

- Being able to see my personal balance (or lack there of) on paper definitely helps me identify where the areas are that I'm lacking in and where I should focus more. I can easily identify where I focus too much. Seeing where I am not was very helpful.

- New Army FM on Holistic Fitness filled with information you can use. Some are starting to use "transformation" in place of "resilience". Your object lessons added value and helped me to stay focused on the message.

- This model goes with the FMCUSA emphasis upon developing the "heart, head and hands" in their pastoral leaders.

- This was great information. Working with many broken list children of God in addiction, human trafficking and homelessness over the years I have often had bouts with secondary trauma. I believe in your system and Love and Service. Keep up the fight my brother...

- I believe this is an affective model and teaching tool to assist stressed out pastors. I also am aware that there are times when someone needs to step away from ministry to focus on other areas of fitness. That is very difficult, because many ministers feel trapped. They have never done anything other than be a pastor. They don't know what type of employment to look for. They may be at an age that limits their options.

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A review of the seminar responses showed several questions where the response is negative. The survey is anonymous; however, the researcher can call up all answers from a participant. The researcher was able to track the negative responses to an individual. As can be seen from the individual's answers below, the Star seminar, for the most part, was a model all participants found to be helpful, with this person as the one exception.

This person's survey responses are as follows:

- Q2: This Star Model has practical use in my personal life
- Neutral

- Q3: This Star Model has practical use in my work life
- Neutral

- Q4: How would you rate this Star Model?
- Not very helpful

- Q5: Would you recommend this Star Model to others?
- No

- Q6: I have a better understanding of the importance of Mark 12:29-31 (Loving God with heart, soul, mind, strength, and neighbor as self) as it relates to my ministry and wellness.
- Disagree

- Q7: I better understand how to connect balance and resiliency with my overall wellness
- Disagree

- Q8: I better understand how the areas of wellness connect to loving God
- Disagree

- Q9: I was able to identify one or more areas where an action on my part could improve my balance and resiliency.
- Strongly Agree

- Q10: I feel equipped with an understanding of how important overall fitness is in my relationship with God.
- Agree

- Q11: This Star Model training has enhanced/better equipped me with an understanding of how important overall fitness is in my relationship with God.
- Neutral

- Q12: I feel the Star Model provided an awareness on my part that helped me decide to take an action.

- Neutral

- Q13: If I encounter someone who is stressed out or burned out, I would be able to help them move toward balance and resiliency.
- Agree

- Q14: Before this Star training, my answer to #13 would have been:
- Agree

- Q15: Did you have any new understandings or significant thoughts during the seminar? If so, what?
- Not really. There wasn't anything new from what I've already heard in the past.
- Q16: Please write any additional comments you may have about the Star seminar or clarify any of your responses
- Respondent skipped this question

The participant's response for question 9, which is "I was able to identify one or more areas where an action on my part could improve my balance and resiliency," was: Strongly Agree. This researcher's thesis that the Star Model would bring an awareness that would lead to an action appears to be validated. Even the most negative respondent strongly agreed the Star Model helped him or her identify an action to improve his or her balance and resilience.

Evaluation of the Research Design

The intervention plan yielded results that supported the thesis statement as well as confirmed the preliminary research and literature review. Chapter 1 presented the problem of burnout and high-stress levels in ministry leaders. This burnout causes significant problems and challenges in ministry as indicated in the research: 54% of pastors feel overworked, and 43% feel overstressed.[171] The research for this seminar found 100% of all participants knew several ministry leaders who suffered from burnout, and all suffered from burnout themselves.

Chapter three explained the goals for the research. These goals were: (1) Connect the participants with holistic wellness, understand the Star Model presentation, and identify their

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[171] Krejcir, *Statistics on Pastors*, 24.

personal star and (2) help participants find their path for balance and resilience through their own review of their personal star, a reflection on the Star Model, and an opportunity to re-act, to modify their actions and goals as they seek balance and resilience. Again, 100% of all participants stated, in the post-seminar survey, they were able to identify an action that would lead them to a more balanced and resilient life.

Design Strengths

The research design had several strengths. Quantitative research accomplished in the surveys enabled the researcher to capture a wide range of data from the participants. The seminar's unexpected move to a virtual environment allowed the participants to take the seminar at their convenience. The utilization of Kolb's Experiential learning theory and Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory in the seminar guided the Star Model's implementation. The targeted sample set ensured the research was relevant to leaders in ministries.

With the inability to sit down and interact with participants in groups or one on one, the researcher's quantitative data was critical to the research. In the pre-seminar survey, participants were asked to evaluate their experiences with stress or burnout in others and themselves. Participants were also asked to identify specific areas of concern. Here the researcher defined terms and questions targeted to the research conducted. The Likert-type scale answers helped the researcher gather objective data in an area where feelings and experiences may not be easily compared from one participant to another.

A virtual seminar had many benefits. Participants were able to take the seminar at their convenience. Those in the seminar did not have child-care concerns or did not have to travel to a different location. Additionally, participants could pause the seminar video and interact with the Star Model or review a specific area where it was unclear. Lastly, the move to a virtual seminar

significantly increased the number of participants who may be involved. While the targeted participants for this research study were small, the researcher believes a virtual seminar can reach many more ministry leaders.

The purpose of the Star Model is to help ministry leaders. The seminar was not designed to convey information merely. Instead, the seminar intended participants to interact with the Star Model, deepen their awareness of their need for balance and resilience in their walk with God and experience a transformation where they respond to a call to action. These are the strengths of the elements of Experiential Learning Theory and Transformational Learning Theory. The learning theories were both used in the seminar and enabled 100% of all participants to identify an area where, if they acted, they would increase their wellness through balance and resilience.

Another strength of the research design is the sample set. Here, the researcher sought to have actual ministry leaders interact with the Star Model. The participants were all people who have given their lives to God and committed themselves to His service. None were exempt from stressors, and all had both seen and experienced burnout or high levels of stress in their respective ministries. While not the same as a clinical trial or study, the sample set did allow the researcher to test the Star Model with real-world ministry leaders to gauge its effectiveness.

<center>Design Weaknesses</center>

There were some weaknesses in the design. The move to a virtual seminar did not allow for triangulation as initially intended. The research's small sample size made the study results hard to extrapolate results to a larger community. Several survey questions that included a possible response of "neutral" made it unclear what the respondent indicated. While these weaknesses are not major defects in the study, they are mentioned here as areas of improvement.

The virtual seminar had many strengths but also had some weaknesses. A strength of the seminar was convenience, but it may be that convenience contributed to a lower participation rate. Of the 30 ministry leaders who signed up for the seminar, only half made it through the post-seminar survey. The researcher believes that a specific appointment time at a specified location may have provided additional accountability for participants. Instead, ministry leaders who signed up for the seminar may have pushed back starting or finishing the seminar waiting for a more convenient time. Because the researcher had to make a hard cut-off date for the seminar to evaluate the research and results, it is possible well-intentioned participants just never found the time to finish the seminar, or with the conditions of the pandemic, were unable to.

With the sample size of participants, it is inappropriate for the researcher to extrapolate this study's conclusions and apply them to ministry leaders as a whole demographic. The research results showed the Star Model was very effective in helping the ministry leaders who took the seminar, but that does not mean the Star Model would be very effective for all ministry leaders. The researcher believes the Star Model may be applicable to and beneficial for all ministry leaders but lacks the sample size to conclude.

Several questions on the Likert-type scale included a Neutral response, along with Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The researcher felt, in some questions, the Neutral answer did not provide significant data. For instance, in the post-seminar survey, question 6, participants were asked if they better understood the importance of Mark 12:29-31 after the seminar. One respondent answered, "Neutral." This answer left the researcher to wonder what the respondent meant by "Neutral" and did not advance the research. In like manner, question 12 asked participants if the Star Model provided an awareness that helped them decide to take an action. Two people answered, "Neutral." Again, that left the researcher to explore

possible meanings of neutral. If the option for a neutral response were not there, the participants' options would have been "Strongly Agree/Agree" or "Strongly Disagree/Disagree," which would have provided clearer feedback to the researcher.

The following chapter reviews the initial research and the purpose of the study. The chapter also discusses the research findings based on the outcome statement and goals for the seminar. Next, the researcher will examine the study's application and limitations, as well as suggestions for further research. Finally, in Chapter 5, the researcher will provide his concluding remarks.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Research Purpose

This thesis began by asking a simple question: "What does life look like for a ministry leader?" Research into existing literature and previous studies showed life could take its toll on a ministry leader's well-being. Studies geared toward the Christian community and studies in the secular world tell the same tale. High levels of stress and burnout are prevalent both in and out of the church. This researcher's studies, observations, and experiences in the Christian community echo the research.

Ministry leaders have access to Scripture, books and videos, training, and advanced degrees. Resources geared toward helping ministry leaders grow and connect with God and others are plentiful. Despite all of the resources, ministry leaders still suffer. Moreover, when a leader suffers, his or her ministry suffers as well. Something is not working.

Remember, of the 14,000 pastors surveyed in a Barna Group study, only 9% believe seminary did "very well" in preparing them to be effective church leaders.[172] Fifty-four percent of pastors feel overworked, and 43% feel overstressed.[173] Pastors at a high or medium risk of burnout exceed 33% of all pastors.[174] Seventy-six percent of clergy know at least one pastor whose ministry ended because of stress.[175] Despite these statistics, there is good news. Studies have shown that a ministry leader whose focus is on a holistic approach of self-care to build balance and resiliency will enable that leader to have a more fulfilling life.[176]

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[172] Barna Group. *The State of Pastor*, 63.
[173] Krejcir, *Statistics on Pastors*, 1.
[174] Barna Group, *The State of Pastors*, 11.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Hull, *The Christian Leader*, 32-33.

The purpose of this research was to create a simple, self-check model to help ministry leaders, whether they be in a church, parachurch, or volunteer role, develop balance and resiliency. This holistic understanding of what it means to serve in a ministerial leadership role is of the highest value. This study concludes: "What does life look like for a ministry leader?" and "What can life look like for a ministry leader?" are not always the same. The Psalmist wrote, "Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God" (Psalm 43:5). No matter where a ministry leader finds himself or herself regarding wellness, balance, and resilience, there is always hope.

The theological foundations of *Imago Dei*, leadership, and the Areas of Wellness highlighted the need for a Christ-centric life. Two thousand years ago, Paul exhorted the Church to follow him as he followed Christ. The call is as vital today as it was then. To follow Christ is to become more Christ-like. This becoming starts with loving God with all one's heart, mind, soul, strength, and loving one's neighbor as oneself. To help ministry leaders with this call, the researcher developed a simple, self-check model for ministry leaders. One's awareness of the model and the self-check would then lead to an action.

Research Conclusion, Application, and Findings

This study's outcome statement identified the measurement for a successful outcome: By the end of the seminar, participants will understand the importance of balance and resiliency in the lives of ministry leaders, will use the Star Model to perform a self-check of their own balance and resiliency, and determine if that awareness will cause them to identify areas where they may improve their fitness.

Several intentional steps were used to determine how the new approach toward self-care in ministry leaders, using the Star Model, differed from a prior understanding:

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1. The pre-and post-seminar surveys enabled the researcher to gather clear data on the Star Model's effectiveness as well as the validity of prior research.
2. The theological understanding of Jesus' statement to love God and others set the foundation for a paradigm that included holistic wellness.
3. A successful self-check using the Star Model should help participants identify their balance and resilience in the five areas of wellness.
4. The awareness brought on through the Star Model's self-check should lead to an action on the participant's part.

The researcher used each of the above steps to determine the Star Model's effectiveness for ministry leaders. If the new approach is successful, it should incorporate aspects of experiential and transformational learning. Here, the participants who performed a self-assessment would critically interact with the new model to bring an awareness of their own current state of wellness. Following the self-assessment, participants would take ownership of their wellness, understand the need to live as God designed, and plan a new course of action.

The seminar's purpose was to provide a self-check model for ministry leaders whose awareness led to an action. The researcher divided the seminar into two parts. The first part of the seminar gave the foundational reasons for holistic wellness and brought awareness to the Star Model. The second part of the seminar helped the participants determine if an action was needed to develop balance and/or resilience. Participants could re-act to their self-care and modify their actions with holistic wellness as the goal.

The findings of the research study concurred with previous research and the literature review. The studies listed above revealed the widespread problem of stress and burnout in ministry. High stress is not relegated to ministry leadership positions. The cited American Psychological Association's study identified money, work, family, and health as top stressors.

The study found 42% of respondents stated they engaged in unhealthy behaviors due to the stress in their lives.[177]

In the researcher's pre-seminar survey, 100% of all respondents experienced high levels of stress or burnout. Thirty-nine percent of participants experienced burnout within the last year. Not only did the seminar attendees experience burnout in their own lives, but they also witnessed it in other ministry leaders. One hundred percent of all participants knew other ministry leaders who suffered from stress/burnout. Of the 100%, 17% of participants knew sixteen or more ministry leaders who suffered from burnout. Fifty-six percent knew between six and fifteen ministry leaders who dealt with burnout. Whether in previous studies researched for this thesis or the researcher's own study, high levels of stress and burnout are significant problems for ministry leaders.

The researcher's expected outcome was validated, and the outcome statement was successful. The desired outcome was for seminar participants to understand the importance of balance and resiliency and how it connects to God, increase their awareness of their own wellness through the Star Model, perform a self-check, and identify an action they could take to improve their fitness. Chapter 4 discussed the seminar results in depth.

Of the seminar participants who completed the post-seminar survey before the researcher closed the survey, 86% of ministry leaders had a better understanding of what it means to love God with all of one's heart, soul, mind, strength, and love one's neighbor as oneself. Ninety-three percent better understood how the areas of wellness connected to loving God. Ninety-three percent of respondents strongly agreed they were able to identify one or more areas where an action on their part could improve their balance and resiliency. Thirty-six percent agreed or

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[177] American Psychological Association, "Stress in America," *Paying with Our Health* (Washington, D.C., 2015), 10.

strongly agreed that the Star Model provided an awareness that helped them decide to take an action. Fourteen percent of participants were neutral to the question, and none disagreed.

The seminar accomplished its goals. The first goal was for participants to understand the need for balance and resiliency. The seminar began with the researcher citing statistics and real-life examples of ministry leaders who were not practicing self-care and whose wellness suffered. The researcher then spoke of Imago Dei and Christ's call to love God. The Star Model introduced the areas of wellness and the concept of the Star Model to the participants. In question 10 of the post-seminar survey, 100% of participants answered they felt equipped to understand better how vital overall fitness is in their relationship with God. Ninety-three percent answered the Star Model enhanced or better equipped them with an understanding of how crucial overall fitness is in their relationship with God.

The second goal was for participants to become stakeholders in the Star Model. Here, a stakeholder is someone who took ownership of the model or one who is involved or affected by it. Three questions, in particular, in the post-seminar survey provided data for the researcher to gauge if participants became stakeholders. The second and third questions were interrelated. Question 13 asked participants if they encountered someone who is stressed or burned out, would they be able to help that person more toward balance and resilience. Forty-three percent strongly agreed they would be able to, 50% agreed they could, while 7% remained neutral.

Question 14 provided additional clarification. This question asked what the answer to question 13 would have been before the Star Model seminar. Of the responses, none strongly agreed they could, 64% agreed they could, 14% were neutral, 14% disagreed, and 7% strongly disagreed. The significant change in the number of participants who stated they could help others with burnout to those who felt they could help others with burnout after the Star Model

highlights its effectiveness. The participants developed an awareness of the need for holistic wellness as a ministry leader, worked with the Star Model in their own lives, and felt that model make them more capable of helping someone else.

On the post-seminar survey, questions 15 and 16 were more qualitative answers which the seminar participants could choose to skip. The answers from questions 15 and 16 showed a deep appreciation for the model and how the Star seminar benefitted the participants. The respondents took ownership of the Star Model and could share it, thus becoming stakeholders. From the survey answers and participant comments, the researcher concluded the Star Model positively affected the participants.

The third goal was for stakeholders to identify actions they might take to build balance and resiliency in their lives. A prior discussion on the participants' answers and reactions to the Star Model verified each person identified actions to build balance and resilience. Each ministry leader who participated used a simple, self-check model to develop an awareness of balance and resilience, which caused each participant to determine to take an action. Additional benefits for the stakeholders are their increased awareness of how important their fitness is to their relationship with God and their increased competency to help others.

<div align="center">Research Limitations</div>

A limitation of the research is the sample size for the seminar. The move to a virtual seminar potentially increased the number of ministry leaders who could take it. At the same time, the researcher believes an in-person seminar sometimes provides more accountability to the people who signed-up. Of the participants, four people started the seminar but did not complete it within the research window time frame. An additional fifteen to twenty people to whom the invitation to attend the seminar was offered did not respond.

The researcher would have liked to see an increased sample-set for the seminar but took into consideration variables over which he had no control. The volatile election season, the global pandemic, and the target group of ministry leaders, who research shows are already stressed and burned out, may have led to a decreased participation level. The ministry leaders on whom the researcher focused were known to him. With the move to a virtual seminar, had the researcher expanded the number of people he contacted, he would have needed additional IRB approval. His application stated the pool of participants would be those he knew or those with whom he was acquainted.

While the sample set is small, the researcher can make some assumptions about how the results may be applied in other settings. First, from the research data and cited studies, the researcher can assume most ministry leaders have experienced high levels of stress and burnout in their ministries. Second, ministry leaders' hearts are geared toward service to God, but some may not perform optimally due to their current fitness level from a holistic perspective. Third, the Star Model may benefit a larger population of ministry leaders than the researched sample set. These, however, are only assumptions. Further research would need to occur in order to draw conclusions.

The Star Model may occur in a physical or virtual venue. This venue option expands the number of ministry leaders who could become involved, the only limitations being scheduling and internet access. The results of this research may not be replicated precisely in other settings, but the researcher believes the results would be similar. The theological concepts hold true no matter where one is. The Star Model is a model which may potentially help ministry leaders. The Star is not the model.

Another limitation of this research is the lack of follow-up. Because this is an anonymous study with a specific beginning and end, the researcher did not continue to stay connected with the research participants. All participants identified areas in their lives where an action would increase their balance and resilience. Ninety-three percent of participants decided to take an action. The researcher has no way of knowing if the participants will take the actions now that they are more fully aware and better prepared to live a holistic life.

Further Research

Based on the results of this study, some opportunities merit future research. Increased sampling of ministry leaders may confirm the results of the current research sample-set. An expansion of the target group to include Christians, not necessarily in a ministry leadership position, may benefit from the Star Model as well. Because stress and burnout are so prevalent throughout society, the researcher would be interested in seeing how nominal Christians, or those not in the Christian faith, would react.

To further validate the Star Model's use as an aid for ministry leaders to achieve balance and resilience in their life, the study could expand to include a greater number of participants. Additional research on how additional ministry leaders react and respond to the Star Model could be formal or informal. An informal study may simply be to use the Star Model in a small group, a Christian study group, or in a larger seminar or congregation. Because of the informal nature of the study, the results may be anecdotal. A more formal study would repeat the first seminar, surveys, and methods. This expanded study's data points could confirm the results of the initial seminar.

From the research, it has been made evident that high levels of stress and burnout do not reside solely in a ministry leader's realm. Both those within and those outside the Christian faith

share stress, burnout, and its symptoms. A study that targets Christians who may not be in a ministry leader position may benefit the participants. The theological truths and the approach to holistic wellness should have value for all believers. Christ's call to love God with all one's heart, soul, mind, strength, and love one's neighbor as oneself is not valid only for the church professionals and key volunteers, but also to all who follow Him.

In fact, Jesus expanded his purpose as Messiah far beyond anything the ministry leaders of the day could grasp. Mark chapter two records the story of Jesus, who had dinner at Levi's house. As he ate with tax collectors and sinners, the Pharisees "saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: 'Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners'" (Mark 2:16)? Jesus overheard this conversation and said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17).

People from all walks of life suffer from hurts, high levels of stress in their lives, and burnout. Many do not know where to turn. Could not the good news of *Imago Dei* and the peace that passes all understanding be made available to those outside the local church? The Star Model is not what people most need to hear. What most people need to hear is the news that there is a God who loves them, who gives them value, and calls them to Him that they may know true peace and love that people need to hear. The Star Model is simply a vehicle.

Those whom the world has torn down need to hear that Christ died for them and then overcame death. Not only can those who experience stressors and trials know God, they can also love Him with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. Maybe this is how one loves one's neighbor as oneself: by entering into their hurts and troubles and showing them a God who has overcome the world. A God who can give them rest… even amid troubles.

Concluding Remarks

This researcher learned the problem of burnout and self-care in ministry leaders is critically high. Whether through a review of previous studies, the researcher's observations, or the participants' responses in the pre-seminar survey, no one seems to remain untouched by the unique stressors of serving in ministry leadership. There appears to be a significant need for a simple, self-check model that will help leaders gauge their current level of self-care and help move them toward balance and resilience in their wellness areas. When a ministry leader is out of balance, it not only impairs their ability to perform the Lord's work, it hampers their ability to live at peace, whether that is with God, self, or others.

Jesus' commands to love God with all one's heart, mind, soul, strength, and love one's neighbor as oneself are not just exhortations given to guide his disciples into future ministry leadership roles. These commands are a guide for how to live a holistic life that honors God. Jesus told his disciples they would have troubles in this world. He also told them, however, to take heart. If ministry leaders evaluate their current level of self-care and seek balance and resilience in their lives, it makes it much easier to take heart. All ministry leaders may struggle with what life throws at them, whether professional or personal. Nevertheless, all ministry leaders may take heart and have hope that there is a God who knows them and who is for them: they who are made in His image.

APPENDIX A

PRE-SEMINAR SURVEY

Star Model Pre-Seminar Survey
This is an online questionnaire and may be viewed at:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TW79CRJ

1. How many ministry leaders have you known (volunteer or paid, lay or clergy) who have experienced high levels of stress and/or burnout in their work or personal life?
____ None
____ 1-2
____ 3-5
____ 6-10
____ 11-15
____ 16+

2. Have you ever experienced high levels of stress and/or burnout?
____ Never in my life
____ At some point in my life
____ Within the last 5 years
____ Within the last year
____ Experiencing it now

3, How prepared do you feel to help someone who is experiencing high levels of stress and/or burnout?
____ Not prepared
____ Somewhat prepared
____ Mostly prepared
____ Well prepared

4. How prepared do you feel to avoid high levels of stress and/or burnout?
____ Not prepared
____ Somewhat prepared
____ Mostly prepared
____ Well prepared

5. After experiencing high levels of stress and/or burnout, how equipped do you feel to bring your life into balance?
____ Not prepared
____ Somewhat prepared
____ Mostly prepared
____ Well prepared

6. In looking at these categories:
    - **Physical** – Health, physical habits, limitations, sleep, diet, exercise, disease
    - **Social** – Relationships with others, social media, finances, hobbies, etc.
    - **Emotional** – self-awareness in, and management of emotions, feelings, and behaviors
    - **Intellectual** – Exercising the brain, focus given to thinking and processing critically, make reasoned judgments, think things through, set goals
    - **Spiritual** – Faith, faith practices, values, beliefs, meaning, and purpose

Which do you perceive, currently, to be your most significant need/concern?
____ Physical
____ Social
____ Emotional
____ Intellectual
____ Spiritual

7. Which do you perceive to be most out of balance?
____ Physical
____ Social
____ Emotional
____ Intellectual
____ Spiritual

8. If a simple self-check model were developed to help improve my life balance and resiliency, that would be of interest to me.
____ Strongly Agree
____ Agree
____ Neutral
____ Disagree
____ Strongly Disagree

9. If that simple, self-check model also enhanced my relationship with God, self, and others, that would be of interest to me.
____ Strongly Agree
____ Agree
____ Neutral
____ Disagree
____ Strongly Disagree

10. How do you currently practice self-care?

11. How do you currently evaluate your balance and resiliency?

POST-SEMINAR SURVEY

Star Model Post-Seminar Survey
This is an online questionnaire and may be viewed at:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TJLJ2P7

1. This Star Model has practical use in my personal life.
   ____ Strongly Agree
   ____ Agree
   ____ Neutral
   ____ Disagree
   ____ Strongly Disagree

2. This Star Model has practical use in my work life.
   ____ Strongly Agree
   ____ Agree
   ____ Neutral
   ____ Disagree
   ____ Strongly Disagree

3. How would you rate this Star Model?
   ____ Extremely beneficial
   ____ It is helpful
   ____ Neutral
   ____ Not very helpful
   ____ Disliked it very much

4. Would you would recommend this Star Model to others?
   ____ Defnitely yes
   ____ Yes
   ____ Neutral
   ____ No
   ____ Definitely not

5. I have a better understanding of the importance of Mark 12:29-31 (Loving God with
   heart, soul, mind, strength, and neighbor as self) as it relates to my ministry and wellness.
   ____ Strongly Agree
   ____ Agree
   ____ Neutral
   ____ Disagree
   ____ Strongly Disagree

6. I better understand how to connect balance and resiliency with my overall wellness.
____ Strongly Agree
____ Agree
____ Neutral
____ Disagree
____ Strongly Disagree

7. I better understand how the areas of wellness connect to loving God.
____ Strongly Agree
____ Agree
____ Neutral
____ Disagree
____ Strongly Disagree

8. I was able to identify one or more areas where an action on my part could improve my balance and resiliency.
____ Strongly Agree
____ Agree
____ Neutral
____ Disagree
____ Strongly Disagree

9. I feel equipped with an understanding of how important overall fitness is in my relationship with God.
____ Strongly Agree
____ Agree
____ Neutral
____ Disagree
____ Strongly Disagree

10. This Star Model training has enhanced/better equipped me with an understanding of how important overall fitness is in my relationship with God..
____ Strongly Agree
____ Agree
____ Neutral
____ Disaree
____ Strongly Disagree

11. I feel the Star Model provided an awareness on my part that helped me decide to take an action.
____ Strongly Agree
____ Agree
____ Neutral
____ Disagree
____ Strongly Disagree

12. If I encounter someone who is stressed out or burned out, I would be able to help them move toward balance and resiliency.
    ____ Strongly Agree
    ____ Agree
    ____ Neutral
    ____ Disagree
    ____ Strongly Disagree

13. Before this Star training, my answer to #12 would have been:
    ____ Strongly Disagree
    ____ Disagree
    ____ Neutral
    ____ Agree
    ____ Strongly Agree

14. Did you have any new understandings or significant thoughts during the seminar? If so, what?

15. Please write any additional comments you may have about the Star seminar or clarify any of your responses

CONSENT LETTER

Title of the Project: A Self-Check Model to Build Resiliency and Balance in Ministry Leaders
Principal Investigator: Mark Williams, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be 18 or older and a Christian ministry leader in your local church/chapel setting. A ministry leader is a person who is responsible for executing plans and programs or overseeing or leading a group or class. A ministry leader may be a volunteer or a staff member. There are no ecclesiastical credentials required. The ministry leader must have access to the internet and be willing to commit 75 minutes to the study. The ministry leader should also have a pen or pencil and paper to take notes. The ministry leader will complete a pre- and post-seminar survey and spend approximately 60 minutes engaged in an online presentation. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to introduce ministry leaders to a self-check model for building resiliency and balance. The feedback of the ministry leader will aid in understanding the model's effectiveness. The study aims to enhance the ministry leader's wellbeing or to help the ministry leader who is dealing with high stress and burnout develop a plan to become more resilient and/or balanced.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
1. Fill out the pre-seminar survey. This should take approximately 5 minutes. The responses are anonymous.
2. Watch the Star Model seminar presentation (available online) and interact with the model. This should take approximately 60 minutes. During the video there will be opportunities to interact with the model. Note taking is encouraged.
3. Fill out the post-seminar survey. This should take approximately 5-10 minutes. Responses are anonymous

How could you or others benefit from this study?

The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study are an increased awareness and understanding of how special they are to God and how to live for Him and experience peace. The Star Model may also bring clarity, or a paradigm, shift in how to love God more on a day to day basis. It may also increase the understanding of the need for balance and resiliency in one's life and how that may be accomplished. The Star Model may help one identify ways to reduce stress, anxiety, and burnout and enhance balance and resiliency.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

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

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be anonymous.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether 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.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please inform the researcher that you wish to discontinue your participation, and do not submit your study materials. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Mark Williams. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at 321-604-9295 and/or chmarkwilliams@gmail.com. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Morris Baker, at mlbaker2@liberty.edu.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

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

Your Consent

By proceeding to the surveys and seminar, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you begin. If you have any questions about the study, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

When you are ready to begin, please click here: www.willmark.org

IRB APPROVAL

Please see the following letter of approval from the Institutional Review Board.

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

November 2, 2020

Mark Williams
Morris Baker

Re: IRB Exemption – IRB-FY20-21-133 A Self-Check Model to Build Resiliency and Balance in Ministry Leaders

Dear Mark Williams, Morris Baker:

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) 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 the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46: 101(b):

Category 2.(i). 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).
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.

Your stamped consent form can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications 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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