

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

MINISTERS OF EDUCATION 50 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER: CHANGING
TITLES, POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

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LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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ABSTRACT

MINISTERS OF EDUCATION 50 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER: CHANGING TITLES, POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

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Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010

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The traditional role of the Minister of Education in many Southern Baptist Churches appears to be changing. For those Ministers of Education who are 50 years of age or older, there is a need to understand what is taking place so that they can continue to use the skills, gifts, and experiences obtained in years of service. The purpose of this thesis is to study what is taking place across the Southern Baptist Convention and provide help for Ministers of Education who may be exploring vocational shifts in ministry. Also, this thesis hopes to provide help for churches in how to best use the experience of the Minister of Education 50 years of age or older.

Abstract length: 116 words

DEDICATION

There are many people I would like to dedicate this thesis to. First of all, I need to thank my wife, Carol, who encouraged me throughout this work. Without her, this would have never taken place. I thank my children, Ashley and David, who always give me their support.

I also want to thank Dr. Michael Curry who encouraged me to “go for it.” Dr. Gary Burden was my reader for this paper and I appreciate being part of the ministry he had at Bethany Place Baptist Church and his encouragement and diligence throughout the thesis process. I also appreciate the members of Bethany Place Baptist Church who gave me encouragement and prayed for me throughout. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Frank Schmitt who has been a great encourager, teacher, mentor, and friend throughout.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

From the 2008 annual church profile of Southern Baptist Churches (SBC), there are 8430 Ministers of Education in the Southern Baptist Convention (includes all churches that listed a name and information about someone who is considered Minister of Education – this does not mean they are vocational or full-time).¹ Ministers of Education even have a representative at Lifeway (the publishing arm of the Southern Baptist Convention) that serves as a point person for issues with Ministers of Education. From this large number of Ministers of Education in the SBC and the point person connection with LifeWay, it is obvious that Southern Baptist churches put some importance in this ministry position. Even in other denominations, where there are similar Christian education staff positions, it is clear that this position is important. For instance, in the Lutheran Church, Missouri synod (LCMS), there is the Director of Christian Education (DCE) position. Some latest figures show that in the LCMS, there are 657 DCE's in their parish ministry with a total number of 992 in all LCMS ministries.²

What is a Minister of Education? How did this ministry position begin and why? In Ephesians 4:11-13, we are told “And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets,

¹ Paula Hancock, Lifeway Christian Resources, 2008 Annual Church Profile, e-mail message to Ben Haygood, December 10, 2009.

² Director of Congregational Services, David L. Weidner, LCMS, Florida-Georgia District, DCE Graduates, e-mail message to author, March 1, 2010.

and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.”³ From these verses, we see that there are different offices of the church given to help equip the saints. Part of the role of most Ministers of Education is to help in “equipping those in his congregation (the saints)” through teaching them to witness, minister, disciple and carry out other functions in the church.

Wayne Jones writes the following explanation for the role of the ministry of Christian education from a biblical perspective using the Ephesians 4:11-13 passage:

Defining Christian education from this perspective means the ministry of Christian education is to help people become believers and all believers discover their spiritual gifts, place of ministry, and calling to the point that they become mature in Christ and do their part to help the body grow ‘as each part does its work’ (Ephesians 4:16 NIV). Such a process, as Paul suggested, is always relevant. The church and its members are never fully mature. Becoming mature as a Christian is an ongoing process that requires time.⁴

Thus the term Minister of Education should hold within it the idea that the person in this role is responsible for the Christian education responsibilities of the church. This should mean that through the Minister of Education, members are taught about Christianity. From this teaching should come how to become a Christian, how to grow as a Christian, how to tell others how to become a Christian, and how to continue that process.

³ All Scripture references taken from the *New American Standard Bible* (LaHabra, Ca: The Lockman Foundation, 1995) unless otherwise noted.

⁴ R. Wayne Jones, *Facing Critical Issues in Christian Education*, ed. Ronald M. Pratt (Nashville: Convention Press, 1995), 13.

Jerry Stubblefield shares his definition of a Minister of Education in *The Effective Minister of Education*: “A Minister of education is a person called of God, trained as a Christian educator, called by a local church to provide leadership to the educational aspects of the church’s total program, the church, and regarded as one who stands beside the senior minister as a professional member of the church staff.”⁵

Jerry Stubblefield also makes the following observation in reference to the biblical antecedent for the office of the Minister of Education (ME):

The position and function of the ME has biblical antecedents. In the early church the teaching ministry was well-established, meeting the need to provide instruction for new converts. Whether they were paid ministers or mature Christians in the congregation did not negate the necessary function they served in the life of the church. Those given the spiritual gift to serve as teachers were encouraged to exercise the gift to the fullest without any reservation. The New Testament church recognized the validity and the necessity of the teaching ministry. Today’s educational minister can proudly point back to biblical models for the ministry that God and the church have called them to do. Scripture does not prove that the ME existed in the New Testament, but the work of educational ministry has biblical foundations and roots.”⁶

So even though the term Minister of Education cannot be found in the New Testament, the function of teaching new converts how to be established in their faith and grow spiritually was there. In Paul’s epistles we find references of those he sent to churches to encourage them.

Jerry Stubblefield shares the following historical data in regards to the establishment of the modern day Minister of Education,

The professional ME is a happening of the twentieth century. It began with the Religious Education Association and the Hartford School of Religious Education in 1903. The Chair of Sunday School Pedagogy at the Southern Baptist

⁵ Jerry Stubblefield, *The Effective Minister of Education* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1993), IV.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky was established in 1906. As early as 1907 several persons served as paid Sunday School Superintendents in local churches. They were the forerunners of the educational minister. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas began a School of Religious Education in 1916.⁷

Stubblefield further states that the profession of the Director of Religious Education or DRE, grew from ten in 1910 (in all denominations) to 800 in 1926, mostly to help the promotion, organization, and growth of the Sunday School program.⁸ Between the years of 1945 – 1965, the profession of religious educator saw a growth of more than 11,000 persons serving.⁹ From 1965 to the present, the profession saw changes that sought to advance the setting of standards and certification in many denominations. According to Stubblefield, in 1975 there were 5128 persons functioning as ministers of education (these numbers were from 7 denominations and members of the National Association of Directors of Christian Education) and in the late 1980's this number grew to approximately 12,700 persons serving as ME's.¹⁰

As a 54 year old Minister of Education who has served in a combination ministry position (Minister of Education and Youth, Associate Pastor of Education and Administration) for most of his career, this author has realized that there are areas which he prefers to concentrate on more than others but is unable to due to the generalization of the position. For those who serve in the role of a Minister of Education and are over 50 years of age, it can be somewhat upsetting to realize that they may now be closing in on

⁷ Ibid., 23.

⁸ Ibid., 28-30.

⁹ Ibid., 31.

¹⁰ Ibid., 34.

finishing up their career and have not been able to do what they feel called to do. This feeling that they may never be able to carry out their calling adds to the frustration.

Statement of Purpose

This thesis will discover what is happening with the roles of Ministers of Education 50 years of age or older and provide a plan for those in this capacity who may wish to move to “non-traditional” roles in their churches. The development of this plan will be assisted by investigating if Ministers of Education are exploring the potential of moving toward another direction in ministry, what those roles might be, and the reason behind it. In addition to helping the Minister of Education, the research will provide a resource to churches who are struggling with this issue.

Questions will be asked of Ministers of Education 50 years of age or older such as: Has their position changed? Are they satisfied with their current role in the church? If they could make a change, what would it be? If their position has changed, what are the changes? Did they instigate the change? If they did instigate the change, how did this come about and why?

By answering these previous questions, this thesis will provide help for churches that want to make sure they are making the best use of the skills and gifts of those who are called to serve in their church. Additionally, this research will help the Minister of Education 50 years of age or older be more effective by helping him use his strengths and skills in the areas he feels called to.

There was a time when this author thought that he was the only Minister of Education who was frustrated with the wide open responsibilities of his position. During the weekend of July 13 – 16, 2001, Bill Taylor, who at that time was over the Sunday

School division of Lifeway, spoke at a Sunday School conference at the Ridgecrest Conference Center near Asheville, North Carolina. Bill had been a Minister of Education most of his life with his last position being at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, TX. Bill shared how he knew that many Ministers of Education get stuck with responsibilities that keep them from the most important things they are called to do. This was the first time this author had heard someone in a position of major responsibility share the same frustrations he had experienced. Bill knew the aggravation of getting pulled in too many directions and leaving the important things of ministry on hold while other “urgent” things got in the way. Dealing with toilet issues on Sundays and Wednesdays, getting awakened in the middle of the night from a call because the alarm had gone off again, and being constantly tracked down on Sundays because it is too cold/too hot (all in the same room and on the same day) are just a handful of the “urgent” issues that get pushed to many Ministers of Education. Bill exhorted all Senior Pastors who were there at the conference to try to limit delegating these “urgent” demands to their Minister of Education.

Tony Morgan calls the previous frustration in pastor’s lives as “killing cockroaches.” The definition he uses is “responding to the urgent stuff in our lives that keeps us from doing the important stuff in our lives.”¹¹ Tony goes on to explain more of what he means: “You get to decide where your time goes. You can spend it moving forward, or you can spend it putting out fires. You decide. And if you don’t decide,

¹¹ Tony Morgan, *Killing Cockroaches* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2009), 3.

others will decide for you. Then you, too, will be stuck reacting to the urgent.”¹² This is exactly what this writer does not want to happen in his life - to look back on his life after responding just to the urgent stuff that really was not that important and wondering where the time went.

Limitations

The title of Minister of Education in some respects is a generic one. Although many staff members in churches are considered the Minister of Education, many churches do not use that exact title. For instance this author now has carried the title of Associate Pastor of Education and Administration in two churches and the title of Minister of Youth and Education in another, but has been considered the “Minister of Education” in all three churches. Since the Minister of Education role varies from church to church and even the title may change (although the job responsibilities are similar), this thesis will deal only with Southern Baptist Convention church staff members who deal specifically with the area of Sunday School and/or Small Group Ministry. The responsibility of the Sunday School and/or Small Group Ministry seems to be the common factor for this particular staff member with whom this thesis is dealing with.

Also, research for this thesis will try to be limited to what other titles or positions Ministers of Education have taken on inside the church and will not proceed into secular jobs into which some may have gone as a result of leaving the ministry. There may be some broadening of scope to include areas outside the church such as parachurch organizations, Bible College teaching professions, or other general positions that still

¹² Ibid., 7.

maintain a connection in some way with the church.

Theoretical Basis

There are some who maintain that this position of Minister of Education is related to the idea of elder. In *Effective Ministry as an Associate Pastor: Making Beautiful Music as a Ministry Team*, Robert Radcliffe asserts that the Associate Pastor position could be related to that of a biblical elder. Radcliffe writes that “the term elder comes from the Greek word presbuteros. The term can have different meanings. The final meaning refers to a group of men who were appointed to hold an office in the early church for the purpose of exercising spiritual oversight. The term elder seems to be used interchangeably with the term for bishop, with elder referring to the person and bishop (or overseer) emphasizing what the elder does.”¹³

Radcliffe goes on to write:

“I believe there is sufficient biblical evidence that multiple elders did serve the early church, especially assisting in the ministry of Paul. Paul had many associates, and many, if not all, could be considered part of a multiple-elder team that served in various places. The reference in Philippians 4:3 to ‘my true comrade’ (NASB) or ‘loyal yokefellow’ (NIV) is from the Greek word *suzugos*, which the Analytical Greek Lexicon translates ‘associate’ or ‘fellow-laborer.’ Even if the proper-name view is used for the meaning of *suzugos*, the fact that Paul was referring to a fellow worker or associate cannot be denied.”¹⁴

Radcliffe continues by writing:

“Another source for the idea of multiple elders in the early church grew out of the Greek title *episkopos*, often translated Bishop. The instructions in I Peter 5:1-3

¹³ Robert Radcliffe, *Effective Ministry as an Associate Pastor: Making Beautiful Music as a Ministry Team* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1988), 14-15.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

refer to the functions and character of the elder serving as pastor, but does not limit the function to one person in each congregation. In fact, the passage begins by addressing a plurality of elders. Is there more clear support for multiple elders and thus for associate pastors in one congregation? It appears that the pastor role (Acts 11:26) included a team of at least two teaching elders. Who performed what role is irrelevant; the point is that they both served as pastors in the same church.”¹⁵

This thesis contends that there is some biblical precedent for associate roles in churches where the gifts of the different pastors are used to help the church fulfill its mission. In some churches a pastor might be gifted better in the area of preaching, while another pastor may be gifted better in the area of administration and training volunteers. In many churches one of these associates is usually considered the Minister of Education because he finds himself directly responsible for the ministry of Sunday School and/or Small Groups.

Brad Smith in his dissertation work at Fuller Seminary found that associate titles and responsibilities vary greatly. The list of Associate titles he found included:

Associate Minister
 Associate Minister (Small Group Director)
 Associate Minister (Small Groups and Adult Education)
 Associate Minister – Involvement and Adult Ministries
 Associate of Christian Education, Music, Youth
 Associate Pastor
 Associate Pastor – College and Christian Education
 Associate Pastor – Music and Administration
 Associate Pastor – Music and Senior Adult Ministry
 Associate Pastor of Christian Education
 Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Spiritual Growth
 Associate Pastor of Education/Evangelism
 Associate Pastor of Equipping
 Associate Pastor of Evangelism
 Associate Pastor of Music and Family Life Ministries
 Associate Pastor of Pastoral Care
 Associate Pastor of Youth/Young Adults/Evangelism

¹⁵ Ibid., 16.

Executive Pastor
Intern Associate Pastor
Minister of Music and Senior Adults
Minister to Senior Adults
Pastor of Administration
Pastoral Associate
Pastoral Counselor/Associate Pastor
Senior Associate Pastor¹⁶

While Brad Smith was not using data from Southern Baptist churches, it is comparable to the many titles this author has seen through surveying hundreds of websites from Southern Baptist churches.

There is also the issue of “is it reasonable for a staff person to be open to change titles and roles?” The question comes that if a person is truly called to a particular position, why would they consider leaving that position or want to change roles? From this author’s reasoning, striving to continue to seek and fulfill what each person believes God’s purpose for them is can be an acceptable justification to change titles and roles. For many, there is a deep restlessness when there is something that is not fulfilled in that person’s life in regards to ministry. It is a longing, a passion to be where God wants that person to be. For some, this may just come from the church developing poorly defined job descriptions for the Minister of Education.

But the fact remains that we are all called to fulfill whatever purpose God has called us to. We may serve faithfully for years in some type of ministry that might not be the main purpose for our lives but can serve as a catalyst to take us to God’s ultimate purpose. Take for instance, Joseph in the Old Testament. It took Joseph much of his life to finally come to what God’s ultimate purpose was for him – to save the Jewish people

¹⁶ Brad Smith, "Issues in Ministry Effectiveness for the Associate Pastor" (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, 1996), 28-29.

from annihilation.

We are called to continue to strive forward as to what God calls us to do. Change is always the “word” in the Christian life. We should be willing to step out of our comfort zone and continually be willing to move into whatever role God may have for us, no matter the age. All we have to do is look at the disciples – they moved from their roll as fishermen to reach the world with the gospel.

People in all walks of life find the Lord moving them to the place where He can better use their gifts and abilities. One such couple has been Dave and Mary Hall. Both of these, in their 50’s and in established careers, felt the call of God to follow Him into something that at their age may sound unusual. But God was using them to reach internationals. This couple began with an ESL ministry at their church, Bethany Place Baptist Church. This further flamed the passion to serve God somehow in international missions. In their 50’s, they applied to the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, were accepted and now serve in an area of Asia that most people would not want to visit. Why? Because there was a passion to do what they felt God had put on their heart.

This author believes the same passion exists in many Ministers of Education although it may or may not be international missions. This passion could just be to concentrate his or her emphasis on one component of the job description they have. Sometimes this need to concentrate more on the area a staff member feels stronger in may mean leaving his or her current position.

In *Leading from the Second Chair*, authors Mike Bonem and Roger Patterson share this information about the option of a staff member leaving their present place of service:

If you are in a position where you consistently are stymied in using the gifts God has given you, then it is impossible for you to be a good steward. Before you resign, however, distinguish between ‘not fully using your gifts at this time’ and ‘having little prospect for ever using your gifts.’ You may need to improve communication and exercise more patience. Perhaps you and your first chair have never had a serious discussion about your gifts and how you might use them more effectively. Perhaps your first chair is well aware of your gifts but is moving on a different timeline to develop and employ them. But perhaps the role or relationship is such that your gifts are not going to be used. If this is the case, it may be a clear sign that you should leave your chair.¹⁷

Martin Hawkins in *The Associate Pastor: Second Chair, Not Second Best*, echo’s Bonem’s and Patterson’s writing. Hawkins shares this:

Kevin Lawson performed a study in 1997 of the associate pastor’s ability to survive and thrive in his role. Based on his survey of 418 associate ministers across denominational lines, the factor most selected as affecting associate staff longevity and satisfaction in ministry was ‘a sense of fulfillment that comes from using my gifts/abilities in this way.’ Thus for many, the staying power for a ‘second chair’ staff member is finding that fulfillment where he is serving. If that does not appear to be happening and options to allow that cannot be worked out, then that staff member’s longevity is at risk.¹⁸

Review of Literature

There are not really any books that are available that spell out the issue this thesis is concerned with. The specificity of this work requires much interpretation from items such as surveys of Ministers of Education. But there are works available that give some insight into what many that have been in the role of Minister of Education and/or Associate Pastor positions are thinking in regards to making sure they are using their gifts and talents. There are a number of books written that look at the idea of the staff position whether it is called Associate Pastor or Minister of Education as a “Second Chair”

¹⁷ Bonem, *Leading*, 157-158.

¹⁸ Hawkins, *The Associate Pastor*, 65.

position. The analogy is that of the second chair in an orchestra.

One such book that forwards the premise of the second chair is *Leading From the Second Chair* by Mike Bonem and Roger Patterson. The subtitle to this book, “Serving Your Church, Fulfilling Your Role, and Realizing Your Dreams,” basically describes the content of the book. The authors of this book write that those in the second, third, or even fourth chair roles “should be deep in their experience but wide in perspective. And they must be content in their jobs yet remain enthusiastic about their dreams for the future.”¹⁹ Thus to this writer is the paradox of the Minister of Education. This staff person in most cases defers to the leadership of the First Chair even though he may feel better qualified in some respects, remains content about his job even though he may not be doing what he believes he is ultimately called to do, all the while being enthusiastic about his dreams for the future.

Robert Radcliffe in *Effective Ministry as an Associate Pastor* begins this book with much background on what he feels is the biblical background on the office of an associate pastor. This book continues with the major areas of the life of someone in the role of Associate, such as the expectations of the church, relationships in the church, and practical lessons learned from others.²⁰

Facing Critical Issues in Christian Education, compiled by Ronald M. Pratt, is a book that gives perspective from a number of Ministers of Education on various issues this staff position must face.²¹ This book is particularly helpful in that it deals with some

¹⁹ Bonem, *Leading*, I.

²⁰ Radcliffe, *Effective Ministry*.

²¹ R. Wayne Jones, Tommy Teague, Paul Williams, Edward H. Hammett, Bob Pierce, Bo Prosser, Mike Shepherd,, *Facing Critical Issues in Christian Education*, ed.

specific areas of Christian Education that should make up the essence of the Minister of Education. Although the book was written in 1995 and some issues in Christian Education may have changed, the overall content of the book in helping a Minister of Education grow in his profession is good. It is also helpful in that this author has had several occasions to meet with and use the author in training events. So there is a confidence in knowing that Ron Pratt has a heart for the Minister of Education and wanted this book to be of help to that staff position.

In The Effective Minister of Education, Jerry Stubblefield provides a comprehensive guide for those who are considering that calling or are already in it. Stubblefield begins by giving the history of the position of the Minister of Education, and then continues by laying out as comprehensively as possible the responsibilities and roles of that position.²²

Leadership Journal is a periodical published by *Christianity Today*. In the Fall, 1998 edition, an article by Lyle Schaller on “9 Changes in Church Staffs” is found. This article shares various ways how the roles of church staff are changing.²³

Also in *Leadership Journal*, Chris Smith writes about “Sweet Music From a Second Fiddle.” In this article, Chris gives a down to earth look at how an Associate Pastor can look at his position.²⁴

Ronald M. Pratt (Nashville: Convention Press, 1995).

²² Stubblefield, *The Effective Minister*.

²³ Lyle Schaller, "9 Changes In Church Staffs," *Leadership Journal.net*, 10/01/1998, 1998, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/1998/fall/814011.html>. (accessed December 16, 2009).

²⁴ Chris Smith, "Sweet Music From A Second Fiddle," *Leadership Journal.net*, October 1, 1990, 1990, <http://www.ctlibray.com/le/1990/fall/9014066.html>. (accessed December 16, 2009).

Kevin Lawson in *How to Thrive in Associate Staff Ministry* takes a look at eight major aspects of life that influence an associate's sense of personal and vocational fulfillment. This was the culmination of an extensive survey and study that identifies the best practices of those who thrive in associate staff ministry.²⁵

In the *Christian Education Journal*, there are a number of articles that pertain to the position of Minister of Education. One such article is, "Job Factors As Satisfiers and Dissatisfiers of Members of the National Association of Directors of Christian Education." Even though this article was published 20 years ago, some of the factors seem to be consistent with today. In this article, the author investigates 18 areas that contribute to the sense of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the Christian Educators job.²⁶

Another article in *Christian Education Journal* is one by Kevin E. Lawson entitled, "Former Directors of Christian Education – Why They Left: Implications for the Profession." In this article, Lawson tries to formulate whether Directors of Christian Education is a troubled profession and if so, why? The author looks at the high turnover rate in this profession and tries to determine whether people are actually leaving the profession or just moving from one ministry position to another.²⁷

Kevin E. Lawson also writes a three part article in the *Christian Education*

²⁵ Kevin Lawson, *How to Thrive in Associate Staff Ministry* (Herndon, Virginia: Alban Institute, 2000).

²⁶ Curtis L. Congo, "Job Factors As Satisfiers of Members of the National Association of Directors of Christian Education," *Christian Education Journal* IX, no. 3 (Spring 1989).

²⁷ Kevin Lawson, "Former Directors of Christian Education - Why They Left: Implications for the Profession," *Christian Education Journal* XIV, no. 2 (Winter 1994).

Journal. The first in the series is “The Current State of the Educational Ministry Profession Part One: Perspective from the Frontlines.” This article is concerned with the attrition rate of church educational ministry staff. The author bases some of his thoughts on studies that have been done with churches in as many as ten denominations in the U.S. and Canada.²⁸

Kevin Lawson follows up the previous article with one entitled “The State of the Educational Ministry Profession in Evangelical Churches Part 2: The Different Experiences of Men and Women in Ministry.” In this article, he deals more specifically with the differences in the responsibilities, experiences and concerns of men and women employed in Christian Education ministries and how these differences affect their development and effectiveness.²⁹

In “The State of the Educational Ministry Profession in Evangelical Churches, Part 3: Advice for Future Staff and the Schools that Prepare Them,” in *The Christian Education Journal*, Lawson examines what current and former educational ministry staff shared in a 1994 study in 10 denominational groups in the U.S.A. and Canada. This article is the third part in a series. This specific article shares what these educational staff members think future educational staff need to know and what colleges and seminaries preparing future staff need to be teaching them.³⁰

²⁸ Kevin E. Lawson, "The Current State of the Educational Ministry Profession Part One: Perspectives from the Frontlines," *Christian Education Journal* XVI, no. 1 (Fall 1995)

²⁹ Kevin E. Lawson, "The State of the Educational Ministry Profession in Evangelical Churches, Part 2: The Different Experiences of Men and Women in Ministry," *Christian Education Journal* XVI, no. 2 (Winter 1996).

³⁰ Kevin E. Lawson, "The State of the Educational Ministry Profession in Evangelical Churches, Part 3: Advice for Future Staff and the Schools that Prepare

Tony Morgan's book, *Killing Cockroaches*, is not the typical book one would expect to gain insight for a Minister of Education. This book does give some great perspective into the day to day musings of a fellow Pastor who has held various "associate" positions in churches. As Tony states in his book, *Killing Cockroaches* is "some of my favorite blog posts, magazine articles, and Web columns."³¹

Statement of Methodology

Much of the answers to questions this thesis will look at will come from questions and a survey of Ministers of Education, both 50 years of age and older plus those under 50 years of age. From this survey, the thesis will extrapolate what is going on with the Minister of Education 50 years of age and over.

The chapters that will make up this study are as follows:

Chapter Two will take a look at what is happening in the Southern Baptist Convention regarding overall role changes in the Minister of Education position. With the rise in more "Community" churches in the Southern Baptist Convention, has the traditional "Minister of Education" title gone away? Has the responsibility stayed the same and just the title has changed? Or with the move in many new churches to a Small Group format instead of the traditional Sunday School format, has the role of the Minister of Education changed completely? This author remembers the classes he took in seminary (1983 – 1988) that were to prepare him for the role of a Minister of Education. Much of the curriculum in Education classes was to show the pupil the traditional

Them," *Christian Education Journal* XVI, no. 3 (Spring 1996).

³¹ Morgan, *Killing Cockroaches*, 2.

material being used in Southern Baptist churches. For instance, material for Sunday School was from the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, material on Missions education was from the WMU and the Brotherhood, and material for Training Union/Discipleship Training was from the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. These materials were the ones that were expected to be used by Ministers of Education in churches. That was a time when a Southern Baptist could move his or her membership from one Southern Baptist church to another and see the same programs in place. Today, this is not the case.

Chapter Three will deal with the question, “Are Ministers of Education 50 years of age or older desiring to change positions and/or roles and why?” This chapter will take an in-depth look at what is happening across the board and look at the data that is provided from this author’s own survey of Ministers of Education and those who hold similar positions in Southern Baptist churches. Also data from other surveys this author has obtained will be included and evaluated. Comparisons from data of Ministers of Education under 50 years of age and those 50 years of age or older will be used to attempt to evaluate what is happening.

Chapter Four will look at what roles have Ministers of Education changed to and did they or the church establish the role and/or initiate the change. This chapter will try to answer the question, “Did Ministers of Education know why it was time to change?” The question, “Have Ministers of Education 50 years of age or older found a ‘comfortable’ spot to stay in and have resisted the need or request to change?” will be looked at and evaluated. Data on changes to Ministers of Education under 50 years of age and changes to Ministers of Education 50 years of age or older will be compared.

Chapter Five will deal with “Is it okay to leave your current church and how do

you know it is time to leave?” This chapter will get into the overall idea of “the call.” If someone was “called” to a specific ministry, can one be “called out” of that ministry? What factors led to the staff person leaving? Research from others who have studied the patterns and factors of what helps an Associate Pastor/Minister of Education stay at a church will be shared.

Chapter Six will share what churches can learn from this study. Suggestions on how churches can best use the skills and gifts of those Ministers of Education 50 years of age or older will be given. Also the author will share his thoughts on what positions can be designed to better use the 50 years of age or older Minister of Education’s experience.

CHAPTER 2

CURRENT PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION IN THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

There seems to be a trend in Southern Baptist churches away from the traditional title and role of the Minister of Education. In this author's opinion, the Minister of Education title has gone away specifically in the new SBC "community" type churches.¹ This revelation has come about due to extensive research done in looking at as many as 800 different websites from SBC churches in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Florida, Georgia, and Alabama. From these websites involving what appear to be churches that are more "community" type, there are no traditional Minister of Education positions. Some positions noticed by surveying websites are: Minister of Spiritual Development; Cell Supervisor; Small Groups Ministries Director; Pastor in Integration; Discipleship Pastor; Spiritual Formation Team; Life Development and Small Groups; Pastor of Community Life; Small Groups Pastor; Administrative/Discipleship Pastor; Executive Leader for Spiritual Development and Discipleship; Pastor of Guest Experiences and Connections (one of this author's favorites from Awestruck Church, North Carolina); Pastor of Theological Development; Adult Life Groups and Staff Development.

¹ The author uses this term to refer to Southern Baptist churches that have moved almost completely away from a traditional Southern Baptist church model and may have even dropped 'Baptist' from their name.

Even in traditional churches, this author, through surveying websites of 800 + churches, found titles such as Minister of Christian Formation, Discipleship; Missions and Adult Minister; Associate Pastor of Discipleship Ministries; Pastor of Family Ministries; Minister of Spiritual Development; Administration/Leadership; Associate Pastor of Adult Ministries; Education Coordinator and Evangelism; Sr. Associate Pastor of Education & Family; Minister of Missions and Faith Development; Spiritual Formation and Assimilation Pastor; Associate Pastor of Church Development; Associate Pastor, Family Life Ministries; Executive Pastor of Missions/Lifegroups; Associate Pastor Ministry Programming; Associate Pastor of Church Growth; Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Evangelism; Minister of Spiritual Development/Care; Director of Christian Development; Associate Pastor of Ministry and Facilities. So even in these traditional type Southern Baptist Churches, there appears to be some shifts from the Minister of Education title.

Further proof of the demise of the Minister of Education title and position is shared by a number of people who either work with Ministers of Education through LifeWay Christian Resources, teach in our SBC seminaries, work for a state convention agency, or from a Minister of Education in a large SBC church who speaks at Minister of Education conferences or hosts them at his church. This author posed four questions to a group of these individuals. The four questions were:

- #1 “With the rise of more ‘community’ type churches in the SBC, has the traditional ‘Minister of Education’ title gone away?”
- #2 “Has the responsibility stayed the same and just the title has changed?”
- #3 “With the move in many churches to a Small Group format instead of the

traditional Sunday School format, has the role of the Minister of Education changed completely?”

#4 “There was a time when a Southern Baptist could move his or her membership from one Southern Baptist church to another and see the same programs in place. Today, this is not the case. With that in mind, in your opinion (and from what you know) how have our seminaries responded in their approach to teaching students in Christian Education?”

Replies to Question #1 “With the rise of more ‘community’ type churches in the SBC, has the traditional ‘Minister of Education’ title gone away?”

Bruce Railey, Director Leadership and Evangelism Training and Events, LifeWay Christian Resources, answered this way: “There seems to be no unified title any longer. I often hear the following: Minister of Education, Minister of Spiritual Development, Minister of Discipleship, Minister of Assimilation, Associate Pastor, Teaching Pastor, Executive Pastor.”²

Bruce is right in his assessment. There is no unified title anymore for the position that is over the Sunday morning Bible Study ministry of the church. Even though this position has been transitioning for some time in the larger churches where only specific age graded positions are present, now it seems that even medium size to smaller churches might be moving toward more age specific staffing. There also may be found in some churches where their primary emphasis is the worship experience, off campus small groups as an add-on. In these churches there may not even be age specific staffing, but

² Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Bruce Railey, January 13, 2010.

there may be a person who is responsible for off campus adult small groups.

Ron Pratt, National Event Planner at LifeWay Christian Resources and former LifeWay Minister of Education support person, gave this answer to question number one: “Short answer, yes. The title Minister of Education seems to be going away in more than just the non-traditional churches. Even traditional churches have changed the name to more accurately reflect their vision or mission statement of the core values of the church. They have changed staff titles to reflect. Titles such as Minister of Assimilation, Minister of Discipleship, Associate Executive Pastor or even Executive Pastor and there are others.”³

Here Ron has seen churches that have firmly established a vision that incorporates specific tasks and these tasks get assigned to specific staffing; staffing such as Assimilation Pastor where the task is to make sure new members are taught about the church’s vision then the new member is helped to find a place of service in the church. Or possibly it is staffing such as Minister of Spiritual Formation, where members are coached in developing their walk with the Lord. Each task helps members in the discipleship process instead of having a Minister of Education who is suppose to help members at each step along the discipleship path. It seems that some churches are going from generalists to specialists. These specialists sometimes don’t come from a seminary or another church, but from within the existing church.

Dr. Chris Shirley, Assistant Professor of Adult Ministry – School of Church and Family Ministries, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, answered this way to

³ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Ron Pratt, National Event Planner at Lifeway Christian Resources, January 19, 2010.

question number one:

Yes, we are seeing the Minister of Education title and role changing dramatically. In fact, our School of Education just changed to the School of Church and Family Ministries. From my observation, more traditional churches are holding onto the idea, but even some of them are changing, especially those who are large enough to have an 'Adult' minister of some type. The traditional role of the ME has been given over to the Executive Pastor. At Wedgwood (Baptist Church), we have an Associate Pastor for Ministry Leadership.⁴

Obviously Dr. Shirley and Southwestern Seminary may only be delivering what churches are calling for. As a result, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has changed its direction from what it was when this author was a student there. As was stated previously, much of this author's education was to carry on the existing programs established by the Southern Baptist Convention. When a graduate of Southwestern Seminary went into most SBC churches, he could expect to produce an SBC type program. On the website of Southwestern Seminary, the following describes the School of Church and Family Ministry (which used to be the School of Christian Education),

The purpose of the School of Church and Family Ministries is to develop spiritual leaders who will fulfill the Great Commission by equipping and mobilizing people to worship, evangelize, disciple and minister through the educational ministries of the church. The school finds its charge in Ephesians 4:11: 'It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up.' Christian education is equipping and mobilizing God's people to serve Him.⁵

From the above meaning, it appears that Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has become more general in its role of educating the student. Instead of

⁴ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Dr. Chris Shirley, Assistant Professor of Adult Ministry - School of Church and Family Ministries, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, January 20, 2010.

⁵ *Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*, "The School Of Church And Family Ministry," <http://www.swbts.edu/education/> (accessed February 2, 2010).

emphasizing programs, the school now seems to emphasize concepts for the student to incorporate in his or her ministry. Since churches may be different, it is necessary to prepare the student to provide training specific to the church in order to help members be ready for works of service.

Allan Taylor, Minister of Education, First Baptist Church Woodstock, Georgia, gave this answer to question number one: “More and more we are seeing titles change. The title ‘Minister of Education’ is still the most recognizable. Even churches that keep ‘Baptist’ in their name are drifting away from the traditional ‘Minister of Education’ title.”⁶

Allan seems to be saying that although titles are changing, the Minister of Education title still seems to be the most familiar. This writer agrees with Allan. At least the title of Minister of Education seems to be somewhat universal for most SBC churches. Some of the titles this author has seen on church websites make you wonder exactly what the person is up to. The title “Pastor of Guest Experiences and Connections” found on a North Carolina church’s website makes a person wonder what type of experiences this pastor is providing for the guest and exactly what are the guests connecting to? So maybe we as a convention have gone overboard on titles. Have we tried to get too specific?

Steve Bradshaw, Director of Maturing Churches for the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, shared these insights on the first question: “The title may have gone, but the function and purpose is still there and that is Discipleship. Whether it is

⁶ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Allan Taylor, Minister of Education, First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Georgia,

through traditional Sunday School, which is the original small groups, cell or community groups – the purpose is Discipleship.”⁷

Although Steve is correct that the concept of the Minister of Education is to promote discipleship, from this writer’s experience it seems to be more about programming and taking care of things that don’t have any application to discipleship. Even though the title may be universal and understood, it doesn’t mean the church pays any attention to it. And sometimes, just changing the title doesn’t mean the purpose and/or function changes.

Dr. Ed Buchanan, Emeritus Professor Christian Education, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, shared the following: “There are certainly far fewer traditional positions for the ‘Minister of Education’ today than there were 20 years ago. I am not sure that the need is any less, however. Consider the high rate of biblical illiteracy among Southern Baptists.”⁸

Dr. Buchanan definitely has the experience from which to judge the question “With the rise of more ‘community’ type churches in the SBC, has the traditional ‘Minister of Education’ title gone away.” With 17 years experience at a Southern Baptist Seminary and 41 years experience overall teaching at seminary levels, this professor has a larger perspective from which to answer. He would agree though that the

January 22, 2010, 2010.

⁷ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Steve Bradshaw, Director of Maturing Churches, Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, January 27, 2010.

⁸ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Dr. Ed Buchanan, Emeritus Professor Christian Education, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, February 13, 2010.

Minister of Education position has been declining in churches. Even though this staff position may be facing its demise, Dr. Buchanan says he is not sure the need is any less. Basically all you have to do is look at what he calls the “biblical illiteracy” among Southern Baptists. This author, from his experience, would have to agree. There is a trend to streamline our schedules and to cater to the overburdened schedules of today’s families. Thus the Sunday night Discipleship Training has given way in lots of SBC churches along with the traditional Sunday night worship service. So where are the times we can train our members in doctrine or teach them about church history, or how to effectively share their faith?

Replies to Question #2: “Has the responsibility stayed the same and just the title has changed?”

Bruce Railey answered this way: “Churches view the position in a number of ways. Some still see the position as overall education leader, while others have moved the position to more of an adult minister position. There seems to be a growing trend for churches in the 800 to 1500 range to have an Executive Pastor (type) position, which is comparable to the Minister of Education and Administration position often seen in the 70’s and 80’s. Same type responsibility, yet new title.”⁹

In this author’s opinion, Bruce is correct here. From present day experience, this author has been in a Minister of Education position, but for the last seven years has functioned more as an Adult Minister. Unfortunately, the title never changed and today, this position has reverted back to the original makeup after the present church has

⁹ Ben Haygood, Questions Regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Bruce Railey.

declined in numbers. This author has sensed from many Ministers of Education that the draw for them is toward adult education. If the church does not have a paid staff position for preschool and/or children plus one for youth, then the Minister of Education usually enlists volunteers to coordinate those areas while he coordinates the adult area.

Ron Pratt shares his insights to question two:

“I believe that for the most part, the responsibilities have stayed the same, even though there are some that have made some minor adjustments. The part that is the same is that someone has to manage, lead, direct, give oversight to the entire educational process/system. In some churches, there was an effort to move away from the minister of education and give each age group staff member (i.e. minister of preschool, children, youth or adult) the responsibility for their own areas. However, time has shown that this model often creates 'turf-dom' within the overall educational ministry. There is a need for clear direction and that leadership has to come from someone other than an age group or age division staff member.”¹⁰

From experience this writer has seen what Ron states. If there are in the church age group staff members and there is no one to coordinate and/or manage these staff, then “turf-doms” do exist. And if the Minister of Education is not given the authority to coordinate the age group staff and the Sr. Pastor does not do this, then there can become a fight for resources and time on calendars.

Chris Shirley shared this to question two: “The responsibilities haven’t changed much for leaders in medium to small churches. In larger ones, the ME (Minister of Education) role is now a second in command, with primary supervision over the age-group staff. Churches still have to accomplish the same tasks, but we have just re-packaged them with new names, or expanded certain ministry areas that used to be

¹⁰ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Ron Pratt.

“behind the scenes” (assimilation, leadership development, first impression ministry).”¹¹

Dr. Shirley seems to be onto something here, although there may be a reality change in many churches. People like Rick Warren have influenced a new perspective on church membership which has given way even in our traditional churches with new tasks for our staff to accomplish. These new tasks may either be updates of what was tried in the past or simply additions to the Education staff member’s job description. Many churches have discovered that if they do not accomplish certain tasks with their members such as new member training, then church membership has little value. Churches have seen their rolls bulge with names, yet many of these names are no where to be seen except on Easter and Christmas. As a result, many congregations today are attempting new approaches to try and engage their people to become better church members. Also, churches have found that if they get to new members quickly and train them as to what church membership is about, then perhaps the “back door” can be closed.

Allan Taylor gave these insights to question two:

The Minister of Education is often the ‘catch all’ guy on staff. The pastor's role is clearly defined. The Minister of Music's role is clearly defined. The Student Pastor's role is clearly defined. The Minister of Education handles everything from Sunday School, discipleship, weekday childcare, copy machines, computers/computer programs, Wednesday night meals, facility maintenance, etc. Because of this, the real work of ‘equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry’ is greatly diluted and the main work of the church slips into oblivion. The title has changed and so has the responsibility - to the detriment of the church. The Minister of Education must now give his energies to the urgent and not the ultimate!¹²

¹¹ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Dr. Chris Shirley.

¹² Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Allan Taylor.

Allan Taylor is an advocate for the Minister of Education. He has talked with many Ministers of Education, including this author, who have expressed dismay in their job structure. For some reason and in this author's biased opinion, the Minister of Education usually gets the items pushed to him that do not fit neatly in someone's job description. Even if the Minister of Education title gets an overhaul, it appears from what Allan writes that this action of delegating the hard to match items goes once again to the staff member that takes on the responsibility of Christian Education.

Steve Bradshaw wrote this in response to question two: "Responsibility the same, titles today are simple and to the point. 'Minister of Discipleship'"¹³

Obviously with so many title changes, there has to be some responsibility changes. With the change from Small Group ministry and the need for more specialization in many churches (for instance, more deliberate and specific programming for Preschoolers and Children), the responsibilities are having to change. Whereas Sunday School involved Adult classes, Youth classes, Children classes, & Preschool classes all on Sunday morning – for some Small Group ministries, meeting times vary during the week and it is up to the adult groups to take care of the needs of preschoolers, children, and youth within the group. This has the staff person over the Small Group ministry seeking out host homes (and trying to determine any strategic areas for the groups), providing leaders for the groups, training the group leaders, helping form the groups, and selecting/providing curriculum for the groups that fits the purpose of the Small Group ministry determined by the church.

¹³ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Steve Bradshaw.

Dr. Buchanan adds this to question two:

The responsibility has remained similar, even though the title has changed. The need is extensive. There is a great deal of documentation to support biblical illiteracy. I think that one of the major problems is that we are now employing ministers to carry out the educational responsibilities who have never studied Christian education and do not have a great deal of knowledge about what educates and what does not educate effectively. They must rely upon the denominational programs through LifeWay, etc. Incidentally, there is no venue presently in which to teach ethics, church history, denominational history, etc. Most of our people do not even know why they are Baptists. That is probably one of the reasons why we are moving to "community" churches, etc.¹⁴

Again, Dr. Buchanan takes a broader perspective on a problem we may be facing in our churches. Here is a position in churches (the Minister of Education) that typically has been responsible for leading the charge to disciple members. Even though the title has changed in churches, there still is a responsibility to provide the discipling umbrella. This discipling umbrella needs to include things Dr. Buchanan has mentioned such as ethics, church history, denominational history, etc. Not only have the "community" SBC churches dropped the Baptist name, but some have even failed to teach what Baptists believe. Thus there is still the responsibility even though the title has changed. But in changing the title, is anyone really picking up the responsibility?

Replies to Question #3: "With the move in many churches to a Small Group format instead of the traditional Sunday School format, has the role of the Minister of Education changed completely?"

Bruce Railey shared this:

"Yes. It seems this role is more of a coach, manager than minister position. Small group churches have leaders that manage the process. Often called Small Group Pastors, they coordinate the small group ministry. Such work includes: development of new leaders, overseeing curriculum choices, reporting

¹⁴ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Dr. Ed Buchanan.

management, etc. Whereas the traditional ME had responsibility over Sunday School, Discipleship, Outreach, etc....the small group pastor has the singular role.”¹⁵

From experience, this writer believes that just because a strategy for adult Bible study changes, the Minister of Education, even if he is called a Small Group Pastor, still maintains the same roles as the traditional Minister of Education. Of course this may depend on how the church structures itself. If the church is just trying to transition from a traditional program format to a more purpose driven format or for some a simpler church format, then there may be some true changes in the responsibilities of the staff person who has been over the Christian education for the church. But if the church is just adding on a Small Group ministry, the Minister of Education, even if his title does change, will probably only have tacked on more responsibility, i.e. adult small groups.

Ron Pratt shares these thoughts to question three: “I believe it has changed some, but not completely. As I said before, there still needs to be someone giving overall leadership to the educational ministry of the church. The advent of small groups, especially those that meet off-campus, create different logistical issues for the educator, but the basic tasks still remain the same.”¹⁶

Chris Shirley shares these comments to question three:

I think this has been part of the major change going on. Small groups require a whole new set of skills and organization. The nature of off-campus groups require the ME role to be more of a leader trainer, recruiter, organizer, administrator, rather than a ‘professional educator.’ Of late, we have not been teaching these skills in seminary. However, the time has come and we are trying to meet the

¹⁵ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Bruce Railey.

¹⁶ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Ron Pratt.

need. But, the same goals are in mind whether you are doing small groups or Sunday School: Bible study, building relationships, assimilating new members, reaching lost people, etc. However, these two models emphasize the goals in different measure.¹⁷

Allan Taylor writes these comments to question three:

Many small group churches provide no small group for children. Thus, the role of the traditional Minister of Education is changed because there are no children classes to staff. Furthermore, it seems that many small group churches have no established curriculum. The main purpose of Sunday School has traditionally been evangelism and discipleship. For many small group churches their focus is on relationships and support. Therefore, a 'pastoral care' type minister is needed to work with these groups versus a Christian Educator.¹⁸

Steve Bradshaw adds these thoughts to question three: "No - same role, different venue. Maybe more innovation is required, more coordination and training with facilitators."¹⁹

This author has also found that in larger churches that may have Sunday School and Small Groups, there may be a split between the two different positions. Another issue was found that if a large church decides to begin a new satellite campus, the format may change from a traditional Sunday School format to an off campus small group format which then changes the role of the "Education" person in the new church.

Dr. Buchanan gave these ideas to question three: "To further elaborate on the educational responsibilities above, many of our counseling graduates cannot find positions for counseling, so they are employed as educators, but under another title,

¹⁷ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Dr. Chris Shirley.

¹⁸ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Allan Taylor.

¹⁹ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Steve Bradshaw.

"Associate Pastor", etc. They do not have any educational background from which to do their educational work. They tend to fill vacant volunteer positions, echo the denominational emphases, etc., but fail to educate, because they don't know how."²⁰

One can hear from Dr. Buchanan a frustration in that we just seem to have gone off in a direction where we are staffing positions in some churches with those who really don't have the background to fulfill the real Christian education needs of the church. The question then becomes a larger one in asking "Are the dynamics of the Small Group format such that will accommodate a true discipleship umbrella?" From this author's study, experience, and in his opinion, many churches have the Small Group format that may accentuate development of relationships with others in the group more than a person's walk with the Lord, or as Allan Taylor mentioned in his answer, many Small Group formats emphasize relationships and support.

In Ed Stetzer's book *Lost and Found*, he shares that churches, in order to reach the unchurched, must move from a behave/believe/belong ministry toward a belong/believe/become model. In other words, churches have long functioned toward the unchurched with the premise of "our openness to the unchurched (is often) based more on the outward 'acceptable' behaviors rather than our call to reach them. We too often focus on moralizing the unconverted rather than reaching those who need Christ."²¹ "After discovering a person's behavior, the church then explored the individual's beliefs. Only after a person's behaviors and beliefs were accepted was the door to belonging finally

²⁰ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Dr. Ed Buchanan.

²¹ Ed Stetzer, *Lost And Found* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2009), 84.

opened. Sadly, until that point, community was not made available.”²² Stetzer goes on to write that “we must move toward a belong/believe/become model. What this means is that an unchurched individual is immediately welcomed into the community with other Christians.” Then Stetzer continues by writing, “As we establish loving relationships and gain relational equity with the unchurched, then we are afforded the opportunity to teach them God’s Word and to allow it to infiltrate what they believe.”²³

While this author agrees wholeheartedly with Stetzer in his premise of reaching the lost and first trying to establish relationships, there may be an unintentional shift in churches in putting so much emphasis on “community” that the larger issue of discipleship may be getting the short end of the stick. Here is where Dr. Buchanan’s thoughts weigh in that we may be producing biblically illiterate members.

Replies to Question #4: “There was a time when a Southern Baptist could move his or her membership from one Southern Baptist church to another and see the same programs in place. Today, this is not the case. With that in mind, in your opinion (and from what you know) how have our seminaries responded in their approach to teaching students in Christian Education?” (Please note that some did not answer this question because they did not feel qualified to do so)

Dr. Shirley answered this way:

We are undergoing a seismic shift in education at our seminaries. Southwestern is the only school left that has a comprehensive educational focus. Most other SBC schools have some classes, but no real emphasis. Consequently, we don’t see ME’s pouring out the seminaries. In addition, like you said, the churches are so

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

different and their programs are so diverse, that we don't have a one-size-fits-all model any more. Every church seems to organize according to their needs (or the preference of the pastor) rather than following an SBC-led pattern of organization. That makes it more difficult for us to know what direction we should go. For example, right now we see Family Ministry as the cutting edge issue and we have responded with a new concentration and a re-orientation of the philosophy of our school. But, we need to be careful that we don't just follow every trend. I believe that our greatest need is to produce leaders who can facilitate effective discipleship (whether across generations or within a particular age group).²⁴

From Dr. Shirley's comments, it is easy to see that our seminaries have a dilemma on their hands. Do they retool every time a new trend comes along? Or do seminaries, as Dr. Shirley shared, try as best as they can to produce leaders who will engage people in discipleship in various situations? It seems from this author's perspective that our seminaries need to be specific and general at the same time. The idea of specific would be to teach specific education methods and philosophies, and yet in general, how they can apply to various situations or age groups.

Allan Taylor shares these thoughts on question four:

"I can only answer this by saying that Christian Education students that I talk to feel extremely ill-equipped to function in a local church. Regardless of the different type/styles of churches, we still need Christian Educators who can properly enlist workers, equip others, run a worker's meeting, etc. These are basic regardless of style. I do not think Christian Education is the priority it should be on our seminary campuses."²⁵

Allan is a nuts and bolts type of person. From his perspective there are still some things that won't change no matter what. There still needs to be a staff member who can enlist volunteers, help equip them to teach, and know how to lead.

²⁴ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Dr. Chris Shirley.

²⁵ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Allan Taylor.

Steve Bradshaw gave these thoughts to question four: “They are probably a bit behind because one size no longer fits all. There are more curriculums and on line resources available. The seminaries have to be careful to teach ministers to get to know their people, discover the needs and implement what will motivate and be most effective where they are. Therefore, no two churches are alike.”²⁶

Dr. Buchanan shared these words for question four: “You are quite correct that the programs change significantly from one church to another. The seminaries have responded with leadership programs which tend not to be education-oriented.”²⁷

In this author’s summation, seminaries might not be prepared to know how to respond today. Since churches are so different, how do seminaries respond to the need? This author likes the way Steve Bradshaw put it: “one size no longer fits all.”²⁸ So do our seminaries operate in a time vacuum and ignore the changes in churches or do they acknowledge what churches are doing and try to respond the best they can? In all this, where does the role of the Minister of Education fall?

If a person is a Minister of Education 50 years of age or older these days, their need is to stay current and to re-educate themselves to be more of a specialist in some area or plan to adjust to the needs of their specific church. Then the problem arises when

²⁶ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Steve Bradshaw.

²⁷ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Dr. Ed Buchanan.

²⁸ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Steve Bradshaw.

a person wants to move to another church since each church is different in focus. What a person may be doing at one church may not fit with other churches. Or it may just be more time consuming to find another church that mirrors the type of skills a person has developed to accomplish their tasks where they are. In other words, things are a lot more complex these days.

From this author's assessment, it appears that the type of churches in the SBC continues to evolve and this is giving way to the type of staffing the church requires. A more traditional style of church with a traditional Sunday School format and a program driven menu will then accommodate a Minister of Education, because the Minister of Education is needed to be the "Manager" of the programs. From this author's research, it does not appear that this "traditional" style of church is what Southern Baptists are now "planting."

If the style of church takes the form of more a "community" type church, then Small Groups that meet off campus appear to be the norm. As Allan Taylor commented, there seems to be a need for more of a "pastoral care" type minister since the emphasis seems to be more on relationships and support. From this writer's own experience in his church, small groups do take on more of a relationships building model, but there still needs to be someone who "manages" the establishment of the groups and their growth.

If a Minister of Education is 50 years of age or older and has not followed and studied the trends in churches, he may not be very accommodating to change. In *The Issachar Factor*, the authors share, "We do live in changing times and, for better or worse, church ministry isn't what it used to be. Dramatic changes in our society are forcing us to re-examine how we do ministry. In bygone eras we conducted ministry in

one basic way; today, it's literally a whole new ball game."²⁹ If staff members just bury their heads in the sand and continue as if it is still 1950, then they may miss the opportunity to minister to and reach a generation that they may very well be out of touch with.

Change seems to be the word for today. In an on-line news article from as far back as April 2000, there can be found the move in a number of churches to respond to the changes in culture through making a church name change. For many churches this involves dropping the denominational tag for their church. The article states it this way,

There is even a trend among new and some older SBC churches to drop the name Baptist. 'A century ago, the church that most Americans attended was virtually arranged for them at birth. Most people went to the church of their parents,' says one Barna research report. 'Although Americans do not change churches as regularly as they change the brand of gasoline they use, church loyalty is a modern casualty. More than one out of seven adults change their church each year.'³⁰

²⁹ Glen Martin and Gary McIntosh, *The Issachar Factor* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1993), 8.

³⁰ David Crumm, "Call To Worship Starts With A New Church Name," *Detroit Free Press*, http://www.freep.com/news/religion/god3_20000403.htm. (accessed February 1, 2010).

CHAPTER 3

WHAT ARE THOSE OVER THE EDUCATION MINISTRIES IN SBC CHURCHES CONSIDERING VOACATIONALLY

As someone who has been an Associate Pastor of Education and Administration for about 18 years and am now 55, this writer has often wondered if this vocation was where God intended him to remain for the rest of his ministry. There have been times of frustration and times of rejoicing. Through all the highs and lows in this position, there remains the desire to use one's gifts and skills to the maximum and not waste what precious time is left doing jobs that don't seem to make kingdom difference.

In *Masterlife 1*, the author writes these words,

We search for time and yearn for more. Time has become our most cherished possession. Our world focuses on the race against time, and the clock dictates the tempo of our lives. Time is God's gift to us. The art of having time occurs when we live according to God's purposes. We are responsible to Him for every minute He gives us. If we listen to Him more carefully, our life is more harmonious. When we treat time as a gift from God, we spend this time in ways that are more consistent with His purposes. We then become good stewards of our time. We find that the events of our lives flow together more smoothly and that we have more time to do the things that need to be done.¹

Ephesians 5:15-16 tells us, "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil."

With these above words from the Apostle Paul in mind, seeking the Lord in how

¹ Jr. Avery Willis and Kay Moore, *MasterLife, The Disciple's Cross* (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 1996), 84. Reprinted and used by permission.

to best use a person's time should be the endeavor of every minister of the gospel. This chapter will take an in-depth look at what those who are over the Education ministries in their SBC churches are considering vocationally to make sure their time is well spent. Specifically, the question, "Are Ministers of Education, or those over the Education ministries of their church, who are 50 years of age or older desiring to change positions and/or roles and why?" will be considered.

This chapter will use data obtained from a survey offered to 634 individuals this author found to be over the education ministries of their church. The information on the individuals was obtained from different sources such as friends in the ministry or through research done by observing the websites of SBC churches in seven different states. Eleven different states were represented in all the survey results. Two hundred and thirty-three responded to the request via e-mail to take the survey which was done through an on-line service. All responses to the survey were anonymous.

The only published surveys this author has found that give insights to the vocational issues of those responsible for church educational ministries were done by Kevin Lawson and the results of the studies published in the *Christian Education Journal* with dates of 1994, 1995, and 1996. These studies by Kevin Lawson only included data from American Baptist Churches.

Appendix A contains a document with the complete 25 questions of the survey and the total replies to the survey. Appendix B breaks down the survey into only the responses of those 50 years of age or older. The questions were broken into eleven yes/no questions, nine multiple choice questions, and five completion questions. Seven questions were only to be completed by those who responded "yes" to the question, "Has

your title changed since being at your current church?”

For purposes of this chapter and for continuity, the results will be examined based on those who responded and are 50 years of age or older and those who responded and are 49 years of age and younger. Comparisons will be generated between the two groups.

Deciphering this data is the difficult part. A quick glance at what was obtained seems to show that the majority of those over the Education ministries of their church are quite happy where they are, don't want to change, and have no intention of moving anywhere if given the opportunity to stay.

Responses from Those 50 Years of Age or Older

Out of the 108 who answered the survey and were 50 years of age or older, 82 or 75.9 % are ages 50 – 59. As a matter of fact, in looking at the overall 233 respondents, 82 or 35.3% (the biggest category percentage) were in the age range of 50 – 59.

When asked “How long have you served at your current church” 49.1% of the 108 respondents indicated over eight years and 30.6% indicated four to eight years. To the author, this shows that this age group has found some stability where they are serving, or maybe are not looking for any change at this point in their life, or have found satisfaction in this place of service, or maybe all of the above.

When the survey question of “How long have you served at your current church” is broken down according to the specific age ranges, it is found that thirty-nine who are 50-59 served over eight years in their church and fourteen ages 60-69 served over eight years. This shows that less than half (38 of 82) of the 50-59 group had served over eight years at their church. This could imply that there is not a majority (in the 50 – 59 age

range) of what this author would feel are settling to stay at their current church (or are entrenched), although this implication does go against the overall feeling of the data obtained.

Fourteen of the 25 who are sixty to sixty-nine years of age had been at their church over eight years. This group is over half of those who responded. For this group, it would be hard to imagine anyone moving to another church that late in one's ministry. So there is little surprise here.

A sizeable sampling did indicate they were over the Education ministries of their church. The number who indicated they were not currently over the Education ministries of the church may have been at one time. Out of the total of 634 who received survey requests there were at least 20 who did respond back that they were not over the Education ministries and were not taking the survey. Compiling the list of e-mail addresses took a number of weeks of research. Unfortunately, by the time this author was able to send the e-mail requests out, some of the e-mail addresses did not seem to be valid any longer. Various reasons could be proposed for this happening such as mistyping the address into the database, the address given to the author was wrong to begin with, the staff member had moved from the time the e-mail address was gotten till the time the actual survey request was e-mailed out, the e-mail address at the church for the respondent had changed, etc. There were approximately 50 e-mail addresses that came back as undeliverable.

When asked "Has your title changed since being at your current church" out of 106 in the 50 years or older group who answered the question, 35.8% indicated yes (64.2% indicated no). Obviously the majority did not indicate a title change, but over a

third did, which this author feels is a sizeable amount. The question of why any in this 35.8% may have felt a need to change titles will be investigated later in this chapter.

A person could use the 64.2% figure plus other survey factors to be explained later as an indicator that most of those who are over the Education Ministries of the church and are 50 years of age or older are positive about their position, responsibilities, and amount of responsibilities. Even those who had the change initiated by someone else seemed to be positive about the change.

This author had some personal e-mails regarding the experiences of some who took the survey and for reasons of confidentiality, no names are given. One respondent to the survey e-mailed that their church of over 5000 had dwindled down to 1000 in attendance, many staff had left, and those staff that were still there were now wearing multiple hats. Even though the congregation had shrunk, the responsibilities for the staff had not. There was a sense the frustration from this person although in the end, he admitted the Lord was in control. As in this instance, extra responsibilities had been added to the respondent's position, even though they did not indicate a title change.

When the group whose title did change was asked the question "When your title changed, did your responsibilities change also," 75% of the 40 respondents indicated yes. The next question asked "If your responsibilities changed, did they increase, decrease, or remain about the same?" The response to this question was that 62.5% of the 40 respondents indicated that the responsibilities increased. It could be surmised from combining the responses to these two questions that the respondents may have been looking to change in order to take an increased leadership role in their church. Sometimes as churches grow, the education person may take on more supervisory roles

of other staff. Or if one takes the opposite view, as churches decline, the education person may have to actually take on a role of a staff person or volunteer who has left the church.

The next question may help to “muddy” the answer to why a staff person changed positions. This question asked “Did your responsibilities become more focused to a specific area of ministry?” From this author’s desire, the opportunity to throw off anything that does not apply to the education area of ministry would be optimal, and from conversations with other education staff from other churches, the same desire exists. The answers to this question indicated that of the 41 who replied to this question, 58.5% replied that their responsibilities did not become more focused to a specific area of ministry. To the author, it appears that responsibilities which may be out of scope of the initial calling of most of the staff people answering this question have now been added for various reasons. So it may appear that it was not the desire of the staff person to take on the extra responsibilities.

The next two questions seem to confirm that the added responsibilities for most of the 40 to 41 respondents were out of their hands. When asked “Was the change due to your initiative” 55% of the 40 respondents indicated “no.” So it appears that the best answer to the question of “Are those 50 years of age and older desiring to change positions” is “no.” When the numbers are boiled down, the survey shows that only 18 of the 108 respondents 50 years of age and older had a change that they actually initiated.

The next question “If not, who initiated the change? Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee, Deacons, other” shows who initiated the change if it was not the actual staff person. The person who seemed to initiate the change most often was the Sr. Pastor.

This is not a surprise and should not, from the author's perspective, be a negative. The Sr. Pastor should be the person initiating changes and from this author's point of view is a healthy indicator for the church. Obviously as responsibilities increase or change in a church, the Sr. Pastor has to make sure that these needs are taken by someone.

Even though for most of the 40 respondents who answered the five questions regarding the change of their title and replied that the change was not due to their initiative, a resounding 92.5% felt the change had been positive for them. So even though most did not seek a change, they still felt positive about what had happened. To the author, the response shows a maturity and willingness from the respondents to do whatever needs to be done even though it may not neatly fit into their role.

The next question asked "Are you satisfied with the current position?" The response here was greatly positive with 86.8% out of 106 who answered this question indicating "yes." This is one more indicator to the author that most who are 50 years of age or older are not desiring to change positions. The next question, "Are you considering moving to another church to obtain a position and title you feel more suited for" gave an almost identical reply of 86% out of 107 who indicated "no" to the question. This confirms that those responding seem to be satisfied where they are and are not thinking about leaving their church or position. To add another confirmation to this thought, when asked "Have you moved from one church to another to obtain the ministry title that you now have?" a similar response of 86.9% out of 107 respondents indicated "no." This reply along with the others makes it plain that most over the education ministries of their churches are not actively seeking role or responsibility changes in their church or moving around to find different roles.

Again, this survey tried to get to the “why” of any desire for those over the education ministry of their church who might desire a position and/or role change through the next question, number 20. This question asked, “What reason(s) may have added to your consideration of a title, position, job responsibility change? Check one or more of the following: Went back to school and changed my ministry emphasis; wanted to better use my gifts; developed some lifestyle limitations (physical limitations, age limitations); someone left the position I now hold; was a better fit for my family; not applicable; other.” The biggest response was “wanted to better use my gifts” at 46.3% or 38 responses (with this question, 82 responded in some way out of the 108) although a large percentage, 40.2% indicated that the question was “not applicable” to them. The question used the phrase “consideration of a title, position, job responsibility change” to get a feel how many might have even thought about a change even though they might not have pursued it. So it appears that 46.3% (38 respondents) did feel that a change may help them better use their gifts and this would give a “why” as to a desire to change positions and/or roles.

There were 25 who gave specific responses to question number 20 and they can be seen in Appendix 2. Of the specific responses, most all of them carry what this author feels are positive tones from the respondents. There appear to be seven responses that do carry possible negative tones. The positive tones indicate that the respondent was okay with the change while the negative tones indicates that the respondent was not altogether positive and did not want what happened.

Question 21 asked “Do you anticipate staying in your current position for the rest of your ministry.” Out of the 103 who responded to this question, 70.9% indicated “yes.”

The replies to this question show that while 86.8% out of 106 respondents are satisfied with their current position and 86% out of 107 respondents are not considering moving to another church to obtain a position and title they feel more suited for, there is a small percentage that may have given some consideration to a new ministry in the future. So for most, what they are doing currently is what they anticipate doing into the future, but there is about a third of the respondents who think in the future they may change. This thought for the almost 30 % may just be the desire to be open to whatever God wants them to do or may just be a reality check for some that with age may come a need to change responsibilities.

When considering the answer to the question number 23 “Do you feel your current ministry position is rewarding” there did seem to be a considerable agreement (96.3% said yes) that their position was rewarding. It seems that no matter what kind of issues may be present in their ministry, at the end of the day, ministry for these respondents was fulfilling. To this author, this means that most of the respondents had a healthy perspective on things or were in a healthy ministry situation. There were only four that indicated that their ministry was not rewarding. The four who indicated they did not feel their ministry was rewarding could be suffering from any number of situations.

Regarding the overall response to the question number 22, “If you had your ideal position, what would the title be,” the most responses indicated the ideal position would be the same position they already had (22 responses). The next closest answer given was the position of Executive Pastor (ten answers given). Appendix 2 gives the complete response to this question by the respondents, but it appears that 24% of those who responded to this question in their minds already had the ideal position. While there were

lots of other answers, not many were duplicated. So there does not seem to be any overwhelming agreement among the 50 and above group for any one ideal position.

When the entire 50 and above group answered “In the past three years, have you given serious consideration to changing positions and becoming: A Senior Pastor, An Executive Pastor, A Christian Education Professor in college or seminary, a denominational employee, a para-church organization staff member, I have not considered changing positions,” the answer that got the most responses was “I have not considered changing positions” (52.9 %). This overall response again indicates that a majority of Education staff members are not thinking about changing positions and are satisfied where they currently are.

The last question on the survey gave this author some information regarding the great number of different titles that are out there for staff members who hold the position over the education aspects of their church. Oddly enough, the ones who responded to this question gave the answer, “Minister of Education” the most times (19 responses) as a ministry title that they were aware of that others have who are responsible for education ministries in churches. This may be a reflection of those the 50 and above group have contact with. In other words, the title Minister of Education may be on its way out in some arenas but not with the 50 and above group.

For the 50 years of age and up group again it seems safe to assume that most are satisfied and have no intention of changing titles or even churches at this point if given the option. For those who may have a desire to change, the reasons are as different as there are stars in the sky, although “the desire to better use one’s gifts” seems to be the best reason.

Comparative Responses from Those 49 Years of Age and Under

The number of respondents to the survey who were 49 years of age and younger was 124. The breakdown of respondents according to gender went like this: male: 117; female: five; and one skipped the question. Of the total number of respondents, the largest percentage was in the 40-49 age range (75 or 60.5%). The 30-39 age range had 43 respondents (34.7%) and the 21-29 range had six respondents (4.8%). The survey did not obtain who was in their late 40's, but with this many in the 40 to 49 range, it is probable that a third of that total could be close to the late 40's and may have some similar thoughts in regards to vocational issues as one at 50 – 59 years of age.

The largest number of respondents (47 or 37.9%) was from churches that averaged 201 – 499 in Sunday School and/or Small Group attendance. This is very close to the same percentage of the 50 and up group (37%). The next largest group (22 or 17.7%) was from churches that averaged 500-799 in Sunday School and/or Small Group attendance. Again, this is similar to the 50 and up group.

Of the 49 and under respondents, 95.2% were full-time and 111 (91%) indicated that they were responsible for the education ministries (Sunday School and/or Small Groups) of their church. The e-mail asking people to respond to this survey indicated that even if they were not currently serving in a position over the education ministries of their church but had in the past, to reply to the survey.

In the 50 and up group, there was a smaller percentage of full-time (90.7%). Could this be possibly related to some Education Staff that might be semi-retired? In cross-tabbing the numbers, it was found that seven part-time education staff were in the

50-59 range, three in the 60-69 range, and zero in the 70-up range. So it doesn't appear that retirement had that much to do with the part-time status.

The respondents indicated that 41 (33.3%) had served in their church over eight years, which was the largest group. The other years served received these responses: four to eight years (37 or 29.3%); one to three years (36 or 29.3 %); and less than one year (nine or 7.3 %). In looking at the 50 and above group, the biggest percentage had served over eight years also, but the percentage was even higher (49.1%). The next biggest group for the 50 and above group was four to eight years (30.6%) which was almost the same percentage of the 49 and under group. Going to the one to three years and less than one year, the percentage differences widen again. The 49 and under group have larger percentages in these last two groups than does the 50 and above group. But for this author there should not be a surprise here since the 50 and above group has obviously had more time to serve.

It is good to see that a sizeable number of those over the Education ministries of their churches are staying longer in a church. It is commonly known that longevity can usually help effectiveness in a church for a staff member. The staff member has time to build relationships, time to build different ministries, gets a chance to make changes where necessary to ministries, has an affect on building leaders, and helps keep the church from starting all over again with new staff.

Overall, the entire group of those 49 years of age and under, was satisfied with their current position (86.9 or 106 responded positively – Question 17). Here the 50 and above group was similar again (86.7%).

Of the 49 and under group, 81.8% responded in the negative when they were

asked in Question 18, “Are you considering moving to another church to obtain a position and title you feel more suited for?” Only 18.2% (22) indicated they were considering this and two skipped the question. Moving to obtain a position did not seem to be the consideration for most because when asked in Question 19 if they moved from one church to another to obtain the ministry title they now have, only 30 (24.6%) indicated they had.

Similarities between the 49 and under group and the 50 and above group are here again on Question 18 where 85.5 % of the 50 and above group indicated that they were not considering moving to another church. There is found some discrepancy when the answers from Question 18 are compared to the answers from Question 19 which asks “Have you moved from one church to another to obtain the ministry title you now have?” Only 13.3 % of the 50 and above group indicated they had moved to obtain the position they now have compared to the 24.6% of respondents in the 49 and under group. This could again be explained with the age factor. As one gets older there seems to be less willingness to move, especially if the staff person has a family with kids who are middle to high school age range. For this author, that was a consideration at times in regards to moving.

When asked in Question 20 “What reasons may have added to their consideration of a title, position, or job responsibility change?” the top response (56.9%) was “wanted to better use my gifts.” In comparison, the 50 and above group had a 46.3% response in Question 20 to “wanted to better use my gifts.” There was a slight difference here. In looking at the answer, “was a better fit for my family,” 16.8 % gave this response from the 49 and under group, while only 4.9% gave this as an answered for the 50 and above

group. Also, regarding the answer, “Went back to school,” 12.1% from the 49 and under group gave this answer as a response, while only 4.9% of the 50 and above group gave this as a response.

What conclusion if any can be made from the above question? Understandably, the younger the respondent, the more concern there is for family and education. There is a less likelihood that one 50 and above may have school as a reason.

In the 49 and under group, there were only 25.7% that indicated that Question 20 was not applicable compared to 40.2% of the 50 and above group. This could have to do with stage of life. Many in the 50 and above group are not considering a new title, position or job responsibility. This indicates again a satisfaction for many in the 50 and above group with their current position. The 49 and under group have another perspective. Only a few in this group seem completely satisfied, and if asked in the right way, would share that there may be a consideration at some point of a title, position, and/or job responsibility change.

Twenty-nine in the 49 and under group gave specific responses to the question “What reason(s) may have added to your consideration of a title, position, job responsibility change?” The following are their replies:

- Determining whether God wanted to use me in a different way...
- My gifts and passions align with the vision and direction of our church
- Wanted more responsibility and influence
- Had trouble balancing "old school" SS outreach and structure paradigms with changing cultural norms
- Work of God in heart
- Church grew, job description grew
- Relationship with staff members at current church
- Transitioned from Student Ministry to Education Ministry when I moved to my current position 10 years ago
- The leading of the Holy Spirit - "a God thing"
- New position created by church and I fit the picture of the position

- Church growth required an Associate Pastor
- Church Growth
- God's leading
- Called to this church
- Many reasons
- Responding to the needs of a growing church family and staff
- Shift focus from Spiritual Growth to Spiritual Formation. Missions person left and I gained her role which suited my gifts too
- True calling
- Better match with skills & gifts of Senior Pastor
- Hurricane Katrina
- I have a very diverse background and want to use my unique background, education, and giftedness in a more encompassing role
- Working smarter, also worked for a pastor that was a poor leader
- God's continued leading in my life and ministry
- God prepared me and moved me to the position. My knowledge of the church and the people over the years helped me grow into this role
- With the addition of another minister on staff, we changed the associates' titles to "Associate Pastor" and "Associate Pastor of . . . "
- Had previous experience in education (taught in Public schools before coming on staff)
- Moved from pastorate to associate position in order to learn a while and spend more time with family

Question #21 which states, “Do you anticipate staying in your current position for the rest of your ministry?” received 65 “No” responses and 59 “Yes” responses from the 49 and under group. This was not a large surprise for this author because historically there seems to be lots of movement of staff early in ministry. This is compared to the 50 and above group where the opposite response can be found: out of 103 responses (five skipped this), 73 agreed that they anticipated staying in their current position for the rest of their ministry while only 30 indicated “No.” Obviously in the 50 and above group, change is not as readily accepted. This seems to not be a surprise.

“Do you feel your current ministry position is rewarding?” (Question 23) received an overwhelming 95.9% “yes” response from the 49 and under group. This response shows that even though some are not tied to a particular church, they do like

what they are doing. The 50 and above group gave a similar response (96.3%). For the 49 and under group, in spite of potentially wanting to change their position, there still was a feeling of reward in what they are doing.

When asked in Question 24, “In the past three years, have you given serious consideration to changing positions and becoming: A Senior Pastor; An Executive Pastor; A Christian Education Professor in college or seminary; a denominational employee; a para-church organization staff member; I have not considered changing positions; other (please specify)?” the top response went to “I have not considered changing positions” (42.2%). In comparison, 52.9% of the 50 and above group indicated that they had not considered changing positions. Again, this verifies that a slight majority of those 50 and above are more comfortable where they are compared to there 49 and under counterparts.

For the 49 and under group, the largest percentage of those considering seriously changing positions, most chose changing to a Senior Pastor (31%). This is compared to only 18.6% of the 50 and over group who chose changing to a Senior Pastor. Changing to an Executive Pastor received the same amount of respondents as did the Senior Pastor for this 50 and over group.

Obviously, for the 49 and under group, there was a good percentage that may see the Education position as a stepping stone to becoming a Senior Pastor while those 50 and over do not. For those in the 50 and over group, they have settled into the Education ministry.

For the specific responses to Question 24, “In the past three years, have you given serious consideration to changing positions and becoming: A Senior Pastor; An Executive Pastor; A Christian Education Professor in college or seminary; A

denominational employee; A para-church organization staff member; I have not considered changing positions; Other (please specify)?” the 49 and under group gave these specific responses:

- Pastor of Education
- Public School Teacher, Social Worker
- I sense God's calling to help make disciples - "position" irrelevant
- More specific position, current responsibility too much
- Minister of Education & Discipleship
- Professor
- Non-church ministry
- Career Missionary
- Church Plant
- Feel a sense of calling to pastor in the future
- More on-mission with the position I currently have
- Have considered leaving the ministry or getting a ministry position outside of the church
- Mission Minister
- Associational missionary
- Possibly an Education Ministry Consultant for a Master Plan Building firm
- Chaplaincy is a consideration in about 5 years because of age
- Have considered initiating a ministry to a unique niche of young leaders
- IMB missionary
- Curriculum writer

What final conclusions can we learn from this survey in regards to “are Ministers of Education 50 years of age or older desiring to change positions and/or roles and why?”

- #1 As people get older, they are less likely to change. This conclusion is not earth shattering, but it shows that even Ministers of Education or those over the education ministries of their church can become comfortable or less willing to change.
- #2 If they are changing, the role of Executive Pastor or Senior Pastor would be the one most sought after.

- #3 Of those whose titles had changed, most whose responsibilities had also changed was not due to their initiative but most of the time due to the Senior Pastor's initiative.
- #4 Most were not considering changing churches to obtain a title or position they wanted.
- #5 Of those who might consider a title change, the biggest reason was to better use their gifts.

CHAPTER 4

ROLES THOSE OVER THE EDUCATION MINISTRIES OF SBC CHURCHES HAVE CHANGED TO AND WHY THEY CHANGED

There is a statistic that indicates Ministers of Youth only stay at churches on average 18 months.¹ This author has not seen a similar statistic for Ministers of Education, but since there are some common ties in these positions, could it be possible that Ministers of Education may have similar lengths of stay at churches? Or do those over the education ministries of their churches fall into a totally different statistical pattern? As those over the educational ministries of churches leave their churches, why are they leaving and what positions are they taking?

This chapter will examine data obtained from a survey of 233 Southern Baptist Convention church staff members who indicated they were over the education ministries of their churches. From the data, the following questions will be examined: #1 what roles have those over the Education ministries of their church changed to and did they or the church establish the role and/or initiate the change, #2 did those over the Education ministries of their church know why it was time to change, and #3 have those over the Education ministries of their church who are 50 years of age or older found a comfortable spot to stay in and resisted the need or request to change. As was done in Chapter 3, this

¹ Dan Haugh, "Youth Ministry ... In It For The Long Haul?" National Network Of Youth Ministries Blog, entry posted December 8, 2009, <http://www.youthworkers.net/index.cfm/fuseaction/blog.view/BlogID/120/> (accessed July 12, 2010).

chapter will also follow the comparison of the 50 years of age and above group with the 49 years of age and under group to specific questions.

50 Years of Age and Above Group

#1 What roles have those over the Education ministries of their church changed to and did they or the church establish the role and/or initiate the change?

From the survey that those over the Education ministries of their church responded to, of the 108 that were 50 years of age or older, 64.2 % indicated that their title had not changed since being at their current church, 35.8% indicated it had, and two skipped the question (Question 9, results from Appendix 2). The consideration behind this question was to get a sense of satisfaction of that person's ministry position at his church. Although other factors could be at play here, an assumption could be made that there was some satisfaction among most respondents 50 years of age or older with what they are currently doing.

How about those whose title did change? Seventy-five percent of those whose titles did change indicated that their responsibilities changed as well (Question 11, results from Appendix 2). This question was used to try and find out if there was just a name change for the position or did this person actually change roles and/or responsibilities in the church. Along with the actual responsibility change, 62.5% said the responsibilities increased as well (Question 12, results from Appendix 2). This may mean that some may have just added another title to their position which actually added another ministry/role to what the staff person was already doing. This could be backed up by the results where 58.5% indicated "No" to Question 13 (results from Appendix 2) "Did your responsibilities become more focused to a specific area of ministry?" In other words, the

respondents appeared to have more to do that did not have any connection to the ministry they began with.

The next question (Question 14) answers the inquiry if this change was at their initiative or someone else's. Fifty-five percent (results from Appendix 2) who had a responsibility change indicated it was not at their initiative. It appears that less than half seemed to really want the change. So who was responsible for this change? If the respondent did not initiate the change the one person who more than any other initiated the change for the staff person was the Sr. Pastor (91.3%, Question 15, results from Appendix 2). Even though for many, the change did not come at their initiative, they still were positive about the change (92.5%, Question 16, results from Appendix 2)). Someone could point the finger at the Sr. Pastor and accuse him of just trying to delegate the responsibility away without asking the staff person's input, but what seems to be happening is that most of the staff were very positive about the change in responsibilities and there seems to have been consideration given to the staff person in regards to the added responsibilities. Only one respondent was not satisfied with the change nor was he positive about the new position. This particular person indicated that he did not initiate the change.

The chart below gives the specifics as to what the respondents' (50 years of age and over) current positions are, what their former titles were, and who initiated the change.

Current Title	Former Title(s)	Who Initiated Change
1. Associate Pastor	Min. of Ed & Youth	Respondent
2. Executive Pastor	Minister of Education, Administrative Pastor	Respondent
3. Dir of Education/ Outreach/Sr. Care	SS. Director or Administrator	Respondent

Ministry		
4. Associate Pastor Administration	Minister of Education	Personnel Committee
5. Associate Pastor	Administration/ Family Ministries	Sr. Pastor
6. Minister of Education/ Outreach	Minister of Education/ Outreach/Administration	Sr. Pastor
7. Minister of Spiritual Formation	Visitation Minister	Respondent
8. Pastor of Adult Ministries	Women's Pastor	Respondent
9. Minister of Christian Education	Minister of Adults	Sr. Pastor
10. Minister with Adults and their Families	Minister with Children	Respondent
11. Minister of Connect Groups	No title change but added responsibilities	Sr. Pastor
12. Minister of Education/ Church Administration	Minister of Education	Pastor, Personnel Committee Deacons, Adult Advisory Committee
13. Associate Pastor	Minister of Education & Missions	Sr. Pastor, Personnel
14. Executive Pastor	Administrative Pastor	Sr. Pastor
15. Associate Pastor for Adults	Community Outreach was added	Sr. Pastor
16. Minister of Adult Discipleship	Minister of Youth, Minister of Youth and Children	Respondent
17. Executive Pastor	Associate Pastor Adult Education	Sr. Pastor
18. Pastor of Discipleship and Administration	Pastor of Administration	Respondent
19. Minister of Music and Education	Minister of Music	Respondent
20. Minister to Adults	Minister of Education and Senior Adults	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee
21. Associate Pastor	Minister of Education; Coordinator of Ministries	Personnel Committee
22. Christian Formation	Christian Education	Sr. Pastor
23. Associate Pastor for Adult	Evangelism Ministries & Education Coordinator	Sr. Pastor - added another staff member who received evangelism piece
24. Elder/Pastor	Executive Pastor	Respondent
25. Sr. Associate Pastor, Executive Pastor	Minister of Education	Sr. Pastor

26. Minister for Adult Education Committee	Minister of Education	Sr. Pastor, Personnel
27. Minister of Christian Education (Associate Pastor)	Minister of Youth	Respondent
28. Associate Pastor	Singles Minister	Respondent
29. Associate Pastor Education & Administration	Associate Pastor Education & Adult	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee Ministry
30. Associate Pastor of Education & Outreach	Associate Pastor	Respondent
31. Minister of Discipleship and Congregational Ministries	Minister of Education & Administration	Sr. Pastor
32. Senior Associate Pastor & Administration	Minister of Education	Respondent
33. Discipleship & Missions	Education & Youth/ Education & Administration	Church Growth - staff increase
34. Executive Pastor	Minister of Education	Sr. Pastor
35. Senior Associate Pastor	Minister of Education/ Staff Coordinator/ Program Coordinator	Respondent
36. Executive Pastor	Minister of Education	Respondent
37. Executive Pastor of Education & Administration	Associate Pastor of Education & Administration	Sr. Pastor
38. Associate Pastor of Education	Minister of Education	Sr. Pastor
39. Minister of Education	Singles Minister, Minister of Pastoral Care, Outreach Minister, Sr. Adult Minister	Respondent

In looking at the changes, it appears that most changes could be broken down into three categories: #1 the change gave the person more specific responsibilities, #2 the change gave the person broader responsibilities, or #3 there appeared to be a total change of responsibilities. From this author's opinion, it looks as if 24 respondents got broader responsibilities, eight got more specific responsibilities, six received a total change of responsibilities, and one got what seemed to be both a total change of responsibilities and

broader responsibilities. Most of those who had title changes received broader responsibilities in these changes. Of course, it does become very speculative in how one looks at a title. For instance the title Associate Pastor could mean different things in different churches, but from this author's experience, Associate Pastors' responsibilities usually seem to be very broad in nature. As Robert Radcliffe puts it in his book, *Effective Ministry as an Associate Pastor*, "The general title, Associate Pastor, is a catchall term that encompasses any and all expectations from the senior pastor and the congregation."²

Another observation for the above chart shows that seven of the respondents changed to an Executive Pastor position (two had additional roles added in the title). This does follow a trend where 18 of those 50 years and older indicated that their ideal title would be Executive Pastor to the question # 22 on the survey. It is also backed up by the responses from question number 24 where 18.6% of respondents indicated that in the past three years they had given serious consideration to changing positions and becoming an Executive Pastor (this did tie for the top chosen position with Senior Pastor).

One other observation from the above chart shows that 15 of the respondents changed to an Associate Pastor position. Some of the Associate Pastor positions did add specific areas of ministry in the title. From this author's experience, some Senior Pastors like the church to remember that those who serve alongside the Senior Pastor are also Pastors but with different responsibilities, thus the addition of the title Associate Pastor in the title. Whether this is the reasoning on all the titles is not conclusive, but at least this has been the experience of the author.

² Radcliffe, *Effective Ministry*, 57-58.

#2 “Did those over the Education ministries of their church know why it was time to change?”

To further illustrate the fact that most like what they are doing, when all of the 50 and over age group were asked if they were satisfied with their current position, a resounding 86.8% answered “Yes” (Question 17, results in Appendix 2). Only 13.2% said “No.” To probe even deeper, when asked if they were considering moving to another church to obtain a position and title they felt more suited for, 86% said “No” (Question 18, results in Appendix 2). There seems to be a very close indication of satisfaction of the position and responsibilities at the specific church for most respondents. Only a few admitted that they were not satisfied with their position. There were ten who indicated that they were not satisfied with their current position that also indicated that they were considering moving to another church to obtain a position and title they felt more suited for. Four who said they were not satisfied with their current position did not consider moving to another church.

When those 50 years of age and over who said “they were not satisfied with their current position” (there were fourteen who responded this way in Question 17, results in Appendix 2) were cross-tabbed with the question “what reason (s) may have added to your consideration of a title, position, job responsibility change?” (Question 20, results in Appendix 2), the most often answer chosen was “wanted to better use my gifts” (nine responses out of the fourteen). In using the same cross tab filter, there were three specific answers given to the question as to what may have added to their consideration of a title, position, or job responsibility change:

1. Calling
2. I am considering a change, of what type I am not sure. This is a small

congregation and the need for this position is rapidly changing. If I leave this position, I may leave ministry altogether.

3. Latest change due to consolidating position by adding administration due to my business background and church finances. I have what were two full time positions; too much!

Obviously there were some who were willing to share their specific frustrations from their position. The author wonders if there were others who just did not feel comfortable or did not to take the time to also do this. The three specific answers indicate a struggle with what the respondents are currently doing and makes this author believe these individuals may not be at that particular church much longer.

In taking off the cross tab question filter of “Are you satisfied with their current position?” there were 22 other specific responses to the question “What reason (s) may have added to your consideration of a title, position, job, responsibility change?”

1. Was pastor for 20 plus years and the Lord moved me to this church in this capacity. I did not seek it nor did I need to change from my last church ministry. In other words, I was at peace where I was but the Lord unsettled that peace and now that peace resides in this current ministry endeavor.
2. Retirement from Associational Ministry (DOM)
3. I like my job. My function is very broad.
4. Did not fill a vacant position at the church - added to my responsibilities with my full approval
5. Our church needed to specifically focus on children's and adult ministry
6. I was also Chief of staff and the new senior pastor did not need one, he is good with folks
7. Questions about where we are being led as a church
8. Simply a God-call change in ministry
9. Better fit within whole staff
10. God called me to minister in this church. (I was an elementary music teacher in Chesapeake and my husband's job brought us to the Richmond area.)
11. Position/Locale fit me/my family
12. I left academic teaching to return to congregational ministry
13. Allowed me to focus on adults after 25+ years as a minister of education with few educational staff

14. God's leading!
15. It is an interim position for two years
16. Led where no one was leading - took responsibility
17. Budget issues and shortfalls at the last church
18. Experience - more oversight to other staff
19. Questions about where we are being led as a church
20. New Pastor's Request
21. No position change...just title change
22. God told me I had a new work to do

It is obvious to see that these specific answers varied. There was only one answer that was given twice. Overall, there appeared to be only three answers given that gave any sign of negativity from the respondents. In other words, most of the specific responses gave the impression that the change was okay. The mostly positive answers toward the question by the majority of the respondents indicates to the author that the attitude toward the question was one of acceptance of whatever change was necessary to accomplish God's will.

So, why did they know it was time to change? For some, it appears that they had been taken out of their area of calling. For a few it appears that a "satisfaction quotient" had something to do with the "why of change." This loss of satisfaction seemed to come from burnout, overwhelming responsibilities, change of calling, a question of where the church is going, and budget issues within the church. Any of these can cause one to reevaluate where they are serving. For others the why seemed to come from just listening to God and understanding that it was time to change. The person changing did so because it was what God was leading them to do at that time and was not due to any negative issues going on, and this change seemed to be the biggest "why" of change.

#3 “Have those over the Education ministries of their church who are 50 years of age or older found a ‘comfortable’ spot to stay in and have resisted the need or request to change?”

When this group of the 50 years of age and older answered the question “Do you anticipate staying in your current position for the rest of your ministry?” (Question 21, results in Appendix 2), nine out of the fourteen who also said they were not satisfied with their current position also answered “no” to this question. Answering “No” to this question would seem to be the assumed response from someone who was not satisfied with their position. What about the remaining five of the fourteen who indicated that they anticipated staying in their current position for the rest of their ministry? Why would someone consider staying in a position the rest of their ministry when they were not satisfied with it? The author could only surmise that perhaps those in this situation were hoping that things might change, or that perhaps there was a supervisor they did not get along with that they were hoping may leave, or even there were some changes taking place in the church that the person was having a hard time dealing with just at that current moment. The reason could also be that they had just resigned themselves to the idea that there was nothing they could do to change things and they might as well just stick it out. This resignation to the situation is not the same as becoming comfortable with the position, but it has the same affect in a person’s motivation in ministry; and in this author’s opinion, the motivation would be low.

Following the above question was one that asked (Question 22, results in Appendix 2) , “If you had the ideal position, what would the title be?” All but one of the fourteen (again, these were ones who responded that they were not satisfied with their position) indicated a response to this question. The answers varied like this:

1. What it finally is now is best it will be
2. family counseling
3. I'm not sure
4. Executive Pastor
5. Minister of Education
6. Pastor
7. Not sure at present
8. This job is ideal for me, it is just that the position itself may be transitioning to something else because the church is declining
9. Outreach
10. Sr. Pastor
11. Associate Pastor Education Ministry
12. Executive Pastor
13. Either Lead Pastor or Senior Pastor

Most of the answers given seemed to have a specific direction except for a few. Five out of the thirteen seemed to want a position that gave more authority, such as Executive Pastor or Senior Pastor. Two out of the thirteen wanted more specialization in things such as outreach or family counseling. Three out of the thirteen seemed to want to stay in the education ministry area, two out of the thirteen just were not sure, and one gave the air of being resigned to the fact that things were not going to change. The first answer which gave that air of resignation seemed to be saying this person either had no control over the situation they were in or they were just too frustrated to find an alternative. This type of individual does not appear to be “comfortable” in their position, but actually has a sense of remorse in that nothing is going to change and feels hopeless. This person sounds like those who worked in the coal mines, paid to live in company houses, shopped at the company store, and basically at the end of the day were in debt to the company and could not get out of the vicious cycle they were in. To this person, nothing was ever going to change no matter what they did.

Oddly enough, when the group of fourteen answered Question 23 (results in

Appendix 2), “do you feel your current ministry position is rewarding?” Eleven answered “Yes” while three answered “No.” So it seems that while they may not be satisfied with their current position, overall, they feel it is rewarding. How can this be? This author knows that the idea of “calling” is important. Just having a place to serve in the ministry for many is enough to give a sense of reward because it is the Lord we serve.

When the entire 50 and above group answered (Question 24, result in Appendix 2), “In the past three years, have you given serious consideration to changing positions and becoming: A Senior Pastor, An Executive Pastor, A Christian Education Professor in college or seminary, a denominational employee, a para-church organization staff member, I have not considered changing positions?” the answer that got the most responses was “I have not considered changing positions” (52.9 %). This overall response again indicates that a majority of Education staff members are not thinking about changing positions and are satisfied where they currently are. Becoming a Senior Pastor or an Executive Pastor were the next two that tied with the same number of responses (18.6%). Even though they both were considerably away from the top response, it is interesting to see that perhaps some are not comfortable where they are and if given the opportunity may change to either a Senior Pastor or Executive Pastor.

The one person who indicated “What it finally is now is best it will be” to the question “If you had the ideal position, what would the title be?” gave another unfortunate answer here. This person responded: “Being female has a great limitation in changing jobs. I agree Southern Baptist do not ordain women, but what I have to offer is significant in caring for people's educational and spiritual needs.”

This thesis is not about the issue of women in the Southern Baptist Convention,

but this person highlighted a broader issue within the convention of how does one who has been gifted in certain areas get the opportunity to find the appropriate place of ministry in a denomination that has no unified structure of placement.

It is hard to establish if the 52.9% who indicated “I have not considered changing positions” to the question “In the past three years, have you given serious consideration to changing positions?” were just comfortable where they are or honestly believe this is where God has called them to for the rest of their ministry. This author can only surmise that there may be some who are just comfortable where they are, but hopefully most are continuing to follow God’s call in staying put until God calls them elsewhere.

Age 49 and Under Group

#1 What roles have those over the Education ministries of their church changed to and did they or the church establish the role and/or initiate the change?

When asked of the 49 and under group if their title had changed since being at their church (Question 9), less than half indicated that it had (52 or 43.7%), but this was a larger percentage than the 50 and over group (35.8%) for the same question. Sixty-seven (56.3%) of the 49 and under group indicated that their title had not changed, while five skipped the question. For the 50 and over group, 68 (or 64.2%) said the title had not changed while two skipped the question. This slight decrease for the 50 and above group of those who said their title had not changed could easily be explained simply by age. Obviously the 50 and above group has had more time to get established in a position than the 49 and under group.

Of those who indicated that their title had changed in the age 49 and under group, 52 (92.9%) indicated that their responsibilities changed as well (Question 11). This is a big

jump from the 50 and above group where only 75% of the respondents indicated that their responsibilities changed. Could this difference be explained as an age issue and possibly one of experience? The 50 and above group has obviously had more time to find the place of ministry where they may be more effective, so this author believes that age and experience is the answer.

A large percentage (44 or 80%) indicated that when these responsibilities changed, they also increased (Question 12). Here again, we find that the 50 and above group had a smaller percentage (62.5%) who indicated that their responsibilities increased. There is no obvious reason for this difference.

In regards to the responsibilities, 49.1 % indicated that they did not become more focused to a specific area of ministry (Question 13). The differences get less far apart at this point between the ages. Here the 50 and above group had 58.5% who indicated that their responsibilities did not get more focused. So it seems logical to say, when the responsibilities increase in Education ministry many of those responsibilities get broader which could, in the author's opinion, dilute the effectiveness of the education person.

For the most part (57.1% of responses), the responsibility change did not come from the respondents' initiative (Question 14), but most of the time (93.9%) from the Senior Pastor (when someone else initiated the change, Question 15)). This response is also similar to the 50 and above group where 55% indicated that they did not initiate the change, while 91.3% responded that the change came from the Sr. Pastor. The only alternatives here would have been from a Personnel Committee, Deacons, or other team/committee. Since the Senior Pastor in most churches is given the responsibility of oversight for the staff, this is probably a good thing and shows that the Senior Pastors are

doing what need to be done.

So, what roles did those 49 years of age and under change to? The following chart shows for those whose titles changed what their current title is, what their former title was, and who initiated the change.

Current Title	Former Title	Who Initiated Change
1. Minister of Music & Education	Music & Children	Respondent
2. Minister of Education	Minister of Activities	Sr. Pastor, Staff Realignment
3. Associate Pastor	Minister of Family Enrichment	Sr. Pastor, Deacons
4. Groups Pastor	Assimilation/Evangelism Pastor, Adult Education Pastor	Respondent
5. Minister to Adults	Minister to College and Singles	Sr. Pastor, Associate Pastor
6. Associate Pastor in Education & Outreach	Minister of Youth and Recreation	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee
7. Minister of Education	Minister of Recreation; Minister of Median Adults and Discipleship	Sr. Pastor, Executive Pastor
8. Minister of Education	Not available	
9. Executive Pastor	Associate student minister/ Discipleship Minister	Respondent
10. Adult Education Pastor	Children's Pastor	Sr. Pastor, Executive Pastor
11. Associate/Youth Pastor	Associate/Education Pastor	Respondent
12. Minister of Youth, Education, & Outreach	Minister of Youth & Children	Respondent
13. Adult Discipleship & Leadership	Minister to College & Single Adults	Executive Pastor, Minister of Education & Evangelism
14. Education & Missions Pastor	Student Pastor	Sr. Pastor
15. Associate Pastor	Minister of Music and Education	Respondent
16. Associate Pastor	Minister of Youth & Children	Respondent
17. Minister of Spiritual Growth	Minister to Children	Sr. Pastor, Personnel

		Committee, staff member terminated
18. Executive Pastor	Administrative Pastor	Respondent
19. Associate Pastor/Minister of Education	Interim Music minister	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee
20. Adult Education, Evangelism, Assimilation	Adult Education was added	Respondent
21. Minister of Adults/Church Administrator	Minister of Adults	Personnel Committee
22. Minister of Discipleship & Missions	Student Minister	Respondent
23. Associate Pastor for Spiritual Formation, Missions & Single Adults	Associate Pastor for Spiritual Growth and Single Adults	Respondent
24. Associate Pastor/Discipleship	Missions, Evangelism, and Discipleship Pastor	Respondent
25. Associate Pastor of Administration and Adult Ministries	Pastoral Intern	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee
26. Educations, Missions, Discipleship, Students	Student ministry	Respondent
27. Associate Pastor for Students and Discipleship	Full time Minister of Youth	Sr. Pastor
28. Executive Pastor & Director of Church Planting	Outreach Pastor to Executive Pastor to church planting	Respondent
29. Minister of Education	Pastoral Assistant; Minister of Recreation and Discipleship	Sr. Pastor
30. Associate Pastor	Youth Pastor	Sr. Pastor
31. Pastor of Spiritual Development	Small Groups Pastor	Respondent
32. Commissioned Minister	Pastor	Sr. Pastor
33. Minister of Missions & Faith Development	Minster to Students	Respondent
34. Minister of Education & Students	Youth Minister	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee, Deacons
35. Minister of Education	Minister of Youth and Education	Respondent
36. Minister of Education/Children/Preschool	Minister of Youth and Children	Respondent
37. Pastor of Education	Family Pastor	Sr. Pastor
38. Associate Pastor, Minister of Education	Added Associate Pastor	Sr. Pastor
39. Minister of Administration & Education	Treasurer, Volunteer Administrator	Sr. Pastor, Personnel

40. Executive Pastor	Associate Pastor	Committee Respondent
41. Pastor of Family & Community Life	Minister of Family Life	Personnel Committee
42. Pastor of Discipleship	Student Pastor	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee
43. Associate Pastor – Education & Discipleship	Associate Pastor of Students	Respondent
44. Associate Pastor – Minister to Families	Minister of Education	Respondent
45. Minister of Education & Family Life	Youth Minister	Respondent
46. Associate Pastor – Education/ Discipleship	Associate Pastor--Students	Sr. Pastor
47. Associate Pastor of Spiritual Formation	Associate Pastor of Youth	Respondent
48. Executive Pastor of Ministries	Minister of Education	Sr. Pastor
49. Marriage & Family Minister	Associate Pastor	Respondent
50. Executive Pastor	Associate Pastor, Outreach Minister	Sr. Pastor
51. Associate Pastor/Minister of Education	Minister of Education	Respondent
52. Associate Pastor – Small Groups, Discipleship, Family Ministry	Associate Pastor – Students	Sr. Pastor
53. Education Pastor	Pastor to Young Married Adults	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee
54. Executive Pastor	Education Pastor	Sr. Pastor
55. Campus Pastor	Young Adult Pastor	Sr. Pastor

As with the breakdown from the 50 years and above chart, there appeared to be three groups that these changes fell into: #1 the change gave the person more specific responsibilities, #2 the change gave the person broader responsibilities, and #3 there was a total change of responsibilities. From this author's opinion, the categories fall like this: 32 who got broader responsibilities, 16 who got a total change of responsibilities, and six who got more specific responsibilities. Of course, this is only the author's best guess and titles can mean different things to different churches.

Another observation shows that there were seven who changed titles to Executive

Pastor (some also had an additional title added). The same number came from the 50 and above group (but a smaller sampling). The author has seen a growing trend in churches toward the position of Executive Pastor and wonders if this will continue. From observing those who indicated they were Executive Pastors in the survey, the size of the church does not appear to matter to this position. From the survey results, there were more Executive Pastors in churches 1000 and above in attendance, but even some churches fewer than 300 in attendance had Executive Pastors. It appears that those over the Education ministries of their churches are the main staff who transition to the Executive Pastor position.

One final observation shows that eighteen either changed to the Associate Pastor title or either continued with the title but changed responsibilities of the Associate Pastor title. For instance, one may have been an Associate Pastor of Students, but changed to an Associate Pastor of Education and Discipleship. As the author mentioned of those in the 50 and above group, the Associate Pastor title may just help to declare to the church that each of the people serving alongside of the Sr. Pastor are also Pastors as well. Of course the Associate Pastor title can also mean added responsibilities to the position.

So what does this all mean? It appears that of these respondents, when there was a change, most times this included broader responsibilities (keeping the role the same, but just adding more things to it). This seems to be the same situation as with the 50 years and above group.

#2 “Did those over the Education ministries of their church know why it was time to change?”

Of those whose responsibilities changed, for the most part, they were positive for

the person (94.6% , Question 16). There was a similar response from the 50 and above group (92.5%).

When asked what reasons may have added to their consideration of a title, position, or job responsibility change, the top response (56.9%, Question 20) was “Wanted to better use my gifts.” The other choices were: “went back to school and changed my ministry,” “developed some lifestyle limitations,” “someone left the position I now hold,” “was a better fit for my family,” “not applicable,” and “other (please specify).”

In comparison, the 50 and above group had a 46.3% response to “Wanted to better use my gifts.” There was a slight difference here. In looking at the answer: “Was a better fit for my family,” 16.8 % gave this response from the 49 and under group, while only 4.9% gave this as an answered for the 50 and above group. Also, regarding the answer, “Went back to school,” 12.1% from the 49 and under group gave this answer as a response, while only 4.9% of the 50 and above group gave this as a response. The most telling answer to this question came for the response given of “Not Applicable.” While only 26.2% of the 49 and under group indicated that this question was “not applicable,” 40.7 % of the 50 and over group indicated that it was “not applicable.” This shows that the 50 and above group is not as concerned about title, position, or responsibility changes as the 49 and under group. This may show that while the 49 and under group are concerned about “going to the next level,” many in the 50 and above group may already be at the position that the 49 and under group seeks. So it may be an obvious conclusion that many of those who are 50 and above are satisfied where they are positionally.

Twenty-seven in the 49 and under group gave specific responses to the question “What reason(s) may have added to your consideration of a title, position, job

responsibility change?" The following are their replies:

1. Determining whether God wanted to use me in a different way...
2. My gifts and passions align with the vision and direction of our church.
3. Wanted more responsibility and influence
4. Had trouble balancing "old school" Sunday School outreach and structure paradigms with changing cultural norms.
5. Work of God in heart
6. Church grew, job description grew
7. Relationship with staff members at current church
8. Transitioned from Student Ministry to Education Ministry when I moved to my current position 10 years ago.
9. The leading of the Holy Spirit - "a God thing"
10. New position created by church and I fit the picture of the position
11. Church growth required an Associate Pastor.
12. Church Growth
13. God's leading
14. Called to this church
15. Many reasons
16. Responding to the needs of a growing church family and staff.
17. Shift focus from Spiritual Growth to Spiritual Formation. Mission person left and I gained her role which suited my gifts too.
18. True calling
19. Better match with skills & gifts of Senior Pastor
20. Hurricane Katrina
21. I have a very diverse background and want to use my unique background, education, and giftedness in a more encompassing role.
22. Working smarter, also worked for a pastor that was a poor leader.
23. God's continued leading in my life and ministry
24. God prepared me and moved me to the position. My knowledge of the church and the people over the years helped me grow into this role
25. With the addition of another minister on staff, we changed the associates' titles to "Associate Pastor" and "Associate Pastor of . . ."
26. Had previous experience in education (taught in Public schools before coming on staff)
27. Moved from pastorate to associate position in order to learn a while and spend more time with family.

These specific responses vary. Out of the 27 responses, the author sees five answers that have negative reasons for considering a change. Most all of the negative responses the respondents gave were ones they had no control over, especially the one involving Hurricane Katrina. Answer number 27 was to this author an unexpected

answer, but one that shows a willingness of the person to consider going in the background for a time to learn more and take care of his family. From the above specific answers, most all of them seemed to indicate a positive nature to the reason for change.

When asked in Question 24, “In the past three years, have you given serious consideration to changing positions and becoming: A Senior Pastor, An Executive Pastor A Christian Education Professor in college or seminary, a denominational employee a Para-church organization staff member, I have not considered changing positions, other (please specify),” the top response went to “I have not considered changing positions” (42.2%). In comparison, 52.9% of the 50 and above group indicated that they had not considered changing positions. Again, this verifies that a slight majority of those 50 and above are more comfortable where they are compared to there 49 and under counterparts.

The largest percentage that were seriously considering changing positions in the 49 and under group chose becoming a Senior Pastor (31%). This is compared to only 18.6% of the 50 and over group who chose changing to a Senior Pastor. Changing to an Executive Pastor received the same amount of respondents as did the Sr. Pastor for this 50 and over group.

Obviously, for the 49 and under group, there was a good percentage that may see the Education position as a stepping stone to becoming a Senior Pastor while those 50 and over do not. For those in the 50 and over group, they have settled into the Education ministry.

For the specific responses to the question, “In the past three years, have you given serious consideration to changing positions and becoming: A Senior Pastor; An Executive Pastor; A Christian Education Professor in college or seminary; A

denominational employee; A para-church organization staff member; I have not considered changing positions; Other (please specify);” the 49 and under group gave these specific responses:

1. Pastor of Education
2. Public School Teacher, Social Worker
3. I sense God's calling to help make disciples - "position" irrelevant
4. More specific position, current responsibility too much
5. Minister of Education & Discipleship
6. Professor
7. Non-church ministry
8. Career Missionary
9. Church Plant
10. Feel a sense of calling to pastor in the future
11. More on-mission with the position I currently have
12. Have considered leaving the ministry or getting a ministry position outside of the church.
13. Mission Minister
14. Associational missionary
15. Possibly an Education Ministry Consultant for a Master Plan Building firm
16. Chaplaincy is a consideration in about 5 years because of age.
17. Have considered initiating a ministry to a unique niche of young leaders
18. IMB missionary
19. Curriculum writer

In deciphering the above 19 specific answers, it appears that a little less than half have considered leaving the ministry although some did want to still have an attachment. There were three that indicated a move more toward mission involvement either as Associational Missions or other. So out of 19 specific responses there are eleven that seem to want to get out of the church, although some would still have some type of attachment.

What does this indicate in regards to them knowing why it was time to change? It is hard to know each specific reason for considering the change, but from this response sampling the author can surmise a few things: #1 it does appear there is not a contentment of staying in the church and thus they realize it is time to leave, #2 God may

be moving many of them to a new place of ministry outside the church and they are sensing it is time to leave, and #3 disillusionment may have set in with some of the respondents and they know for them, it may be time to leave.

How do the above compare with the 50 years of age and older group? Here are the specific answers for the same question:

1. Being female has a great limitation in changing jobs. I agree Southern Baptist do not ordain women, but what I have to offer is significant in caring for people's educational and spiritual needs.
2. Out of ministry
3. College chaplain
4. Secular
5. My current position
6. No
7. Foreign Missionary
8. Associate Pastor
9. Worship Leader / Music Ministry Only
10. My husband and I are considering the international mission field.
11. Self-Employed Consultant
12. Chaplaincy, senior position in human capital arena
13. Adjunct professor in college or seminary (not necessarily CE)
14. I moved to this position less than three years ago.
15. Yes focusing on older adults
16. Age limits me to pursue other options, but contentment does too
17. Minister of education

Out of the 17 responses above, there is an almost similar response compared to the 49 and under group. With the 50 and above group, there is a little less than half of the responses that indicate a desire to leave the church setting. Some of the responses seemed to be out of frustration. There were a couple of responses that indicated the desire to go into mission work. In regards to those who considered pursuing an occupation outside of the church, the answers settled on things such as consulting, chaplaincy, and teaching. These three occupations were similar for the 49 and under group. So for both groups, the why of changing positions for most going out of the

church setting seemed to be that there was still a passion for ministry, but in a setting away from the traditional church setting.

#3 “Have those over the Education ministries of their church who are 50 years of age or older found a ‘comfortable’ spot to stay in and have resisted the need or request to change?”

Obviously this question pertains to the 50 years of age and above group, but it is interesting to take a look for comparison’s sake at some responses from the 49 and under group. When the 49 and under group were asked if they intended to stay in their current position for the rest of their ministry (Question 21), the majority of the respondents (52.4% out of 124 respondents) indicated no. This is compared to 70.9 % out of 103 respondents to the question from the 50 and above group that gave an opposite reply.

The obvious response to this comparison is that the 49 and under group have a longer time for ministry and realize that over time, they will probably change positions. So this comparison is not a surprise. What is the surprise is that from the 50 and above group, there is still a sizeable group (almost 30% out of 103 responses) that is considering a change. This could be because some of the respondents realize that possibly someone younger could handle the position better than they could or that they are looking for a new challenge. That does not mean those who responded that they anticipate staying in their current position for the rest of their ministry aren’t looking for a challenge especially since being in the ministry is usually challenge enough.

Conclusion

This chapter now will look at some conclusions to the three main questions it has

asked. To the first question, “What roles have those over the Education ministries of their church changed to and did they or the church establish the role and/or initiate the change?” we found that 64.2% of the 50 years and older respondents had not had a title change since being at their current church. Of those who did have a responsibility change, 55% of the 50 and over respondents indicated that the change was not at their initiative. The good thing about the change was that 92.5% of the respondents who had a change felt positive in regards to the change. Most of the changes could be broken down into three categories: #1 the change gave the person more specific responsibilities, #2 the change gave the person broader responsibilities, or #3 there appeared to be a total change of responsibilities. When the 50 years and above group was asked what their ideal title would be, it seems that the title that most would consider changing to was either that of Senior Pastor or Executive Pastor.

To the second question, “Did those over the Education ministries of their church know why it was time to change?” most of the 50 years and above respondents (86.6%) seemed to be satisfied with their current position. When asked why they would consider changing positions, the biggest answer chosen was “wanted to better use my gifts.” This appears to be the biggest motivation for changing positions and tells this author that the respondents would know it was time to change when they felt their gifts were not being used at their current position.

To the final question, “Have those over the Education ministries of their church who are 50 years or older found a ‘comfortable’ spot to stay in and have resisted the need or request to change?” it appears that 52.9% indicated that they had not considered changing positions in the last three years. Without more data, it is hard to tell if these

52.9% have just found a cozy spot or believe that where they are is God's direction for them at this present time. From this author's assumption, it is hard to imagine that anyone in an Education ministry position has a cozy position or is comfortable. From just the nature of the position, this author has found there is more to do than one can find time in the day to complete, and becoming bored, comfortable, and cozy is never usually an issue. But even with the amount of responsibilities, a person can become so use to the position that they may not be available to God to be used elsewhere if He so chooses.

CHAPTER 5

THE CALL TO MINISTRY FOR THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

This chapter will explore the overall idea of “the call.” Knowing that a staff member’s work is more than just a job or that his church simply “hired” him is very important. Those in the ministry need to be sure that their arrival on the church field is not just some random act, but something in which God was divinely active. When hard times come while serving, and they will, it is necessary to know that God had his hand in bringing a staff member to that place of ministry. This almost is akin to arguments this author has heard in the Evolution vs. Creationism debate. The argument goes like this: in evolution, some say human beings are just a creation by chance, but in creationism God was involved in human formation and we are not an accident. The call should be a reassurance that the place of service the staff member finds himself is not by accident, but is divinely caused.

Calling is an essential ingredient in ministry. Without a call, what those in the ministry are doing essentially has the affect of just doing a job; there is no divine purpose. In *How to Thrive in Associate Staff Ministry* we find this statement about why a calling is so important: “Having a strong, clear sense of calling helps give associate staff members peace of mind and confidence that this work is what they should be doing. It is important to know yourself, how God has gifted you and called you. This kind of knowledge can help associate staff members find contentment in ministry. For some who do leave vocational ministry, the call from God is so clear that they experience a lack of

peace away from it and eventually return.”¹

Reggie McNeal says the following in relationship to what being called means:

The sense of being called to spiritual leadership is not to be confused with the more general sense of a calling. Christian theology maintains that all believers are called to serve others and to serve God. This kind of calling can be lived out in any station. Spiritual leaders, on the other hand, describe their whole lives in terms of the call. It involves much more than a vocational expression or function. It goes to the very core of one’s being. It is the pivotal and life-defining decision.”² McNeal goes on to say why a call is so important: “The point is this: it is tough enough to serve as a Christian leader *with* a call. Without it, the choice constitutes cruel and unusual self-punishment.”³

Realizing that God called a staff person to their place of service is of utmost importance. So what is the definition of this “call”?

Jerry Stubblefield says “Calling is the response of a person to the leadership of God to accept a special ministry.”⁴ Martin Hawkins says this: “A calling is an individual divine passion to be led of God and to know him through his leading. It requires a person to recognize with certainty that God has a larger purpose for his life. God then chooses to fulfill an individual’s calling by drafting that person to play a specific part in his divine plan.”⁵ Reggie McNeal says this about the call, “This call is a divinely orchestrated setting apart of the leader for some special task.”⁶ So how does one know if he or she is “called”?

¹ Lawson, *How to Thrive*, 13.

² McNeal, *A Work of Heart*, 95.

³ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁴ Stubblefield, *The Effective Minister*, 14-15.

⁵ Hawkins, *The Associate Pastor*, 64.

⁶ McNeal, *A Work of Heart*, 95.

Knowing how one is called is an extremely basic question, but first let's go to an even more basic question that Kevin Lawson asks in *How to Thrive in Associate Staff Ministry*: "But what about associate staff members? Does God 'call' them to ministry as well? Do they need a sense of calling from God to enable them to experience satisfaction and fulfillment in the face of their ministry? Do they need a calling to thrive in associate staff ministry?"⁷ When Lawson asked this question to associate staff members in a study he conducted, the vast majority (92%) said yes.⁸ In other words, it was greatly important for these Associate Staff members to know that God was an active player in bringing them to their place of service. They were not a lone ranger, but were following the Lord's guidance and believed that God had His hand in this endeavor. This author would echo the same need for Ministers of Education or others who are over education ministries of the church if they are not also considered Associate Staff.

In discovering how one is called, Kevin Lawson uses four aspects of calling to vocational ministry from Richard Niebuhr that provide a good framework for assessing one's own calling as an associate staff member:

#1 The Common Call – this is extended to all Christians to use his or her gifts and abilities in ministry to others; #2 The Secret Call – an inner urgency to serve God vocationally – for some this is specific in nature and for others it is a general call to serve the church; #3 The Providential Call – this guides a person through life in a way that he or she gains the experiences and gifts needed for vocational ministry; and #4 The Ecclesiastical Call - a congregation affirms an individual's gifts and calling and invites

⁷ Lawson, *How to Thrive*, 11.

⁸ Ibid.

that person into a leadership role. John Calvin spoke of this act as a corporate call; recognition by the church of the person's gifts and God's calling for ministry, and then a setting apart of the individual for a particular service. Calvin stressed that the individual's "secret call" experience and the corporate call of the church serve a complementary function, confirming the call to vocational ministry.⁹

Thus, as Calvin admits in the above reference, a "call" comes from an inward prompting (the author calls this the Holy Spirit) which is then supported or confirmed by others, i.e. the church. For this writer, the call to ministry came through reading the Bible, through talking with other mature believers, and through an almost audible answer by God of an objection this author had to the call. The author's experience of confirmation came through various means. The first means was through the confirmation of being accepted on staff of Campus Crusade for Christ and later through being licensed to the Gospel Ministry by his home church and through being ordained by a church this author served in.

In an article in the *Christian Education Journal* entitled, "Former Directors of Christian Education – Why They Left: Implications for the Profession," we find the following insight regarding how to help those going into the ministry confirm in their hearts this "calling":

Churches and schools need to develop means for future DCE's to confirm their "calling" to educational ministry. This sense of Divine calling has an impact on career persistence. As a subjective experience it can benefit from opportunities of testing (e.g., student teaching, internships) and the evaluation of others (e.g., pastor, congregational lay leaders, professors). These experiences can confirm or disconfirm one's sense of calling, assist in identifying needed preparation, and

⁹ Lawson, *How to Thrive*, 11-13.

help denominations and local churches in more effective recruitment.¹⁰

This article which was published in 1994 revolved around a study that was done in 1990 of Directors of Christian Education in the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A.¹¹ Even though the title, Director of Christian Education (DCE) is different from Minister of Education, the job description appears to be the same and although this may be a different denomination with a different church government system, there are still enough similarities in the positions to consider the findings in the study.

From this writer's experience in seminary, he can conclude that seminary was just as much about determining one's calling through the trials of seminary life as it was about learning in class. There were quite a few students who dropped out of seminary after only a short while as they sensed through different means that God was not calling them to full-time Christian ministry. So it takes more than just an inward nudge to define if one is "called."

Gordon MacDonald, in *Ordering Your Private World*, indicates that sometimes there could be confusion between someone who is called and someone who is driven. MacDonald shares what the difference is: "Driven people often project a bravado of confidence as they forge ahead with their achievement-oriented life plan. But often, at the moment when it is least expected, adversaries and obstructions conspire, and there can be personal collapse. Called people, on the other hand, possess strength from within, a quality of perseverance and power that are impervious to the blows from without."¹²

¹⁰ Lawson, "Former Directors of Christian Education," 58.

¹¹ Ibid., 46.

¹² Gordon MacDonald, *Ordering Your Private World* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 58.

So from MacDonald's perspective, it could be possible to misconstrue a person's strong will for being called. This author has known people who when they made their mind up about something, plunged ahead with it regardless of what counsel the person received. So being called sometimes involves just being quiet long enough to really hear God. For some, being quiet before God never takes place.

The following is what MacDonald writes that distinguishes a called person from just a driven person:

#1 Called people understand stewardship

Driven people consider things such as careers; assets; natural and spiritual gifts; and health as things they own while called people do not. "When driven people lose those things, it is a major crisis. When called people lose them, nothing of substance has changed. The private world remains the same, perhaps even stronger."¹³

#2 Called People Know Exactly Who They Are

"A second quality of calledness is seen in John the Baptist's certainty of his own identity. Let me paraphrase his remarks. You will remember that he said to his visitors that I've told you often who I am not; namely, the Christ. Knowing who he was not was the beginning of knowing who he was. And John had no illusions as to his personal identity. That had already been established in his interior, private world."¹⁴

#3 Called People Possess an Unwavering Sense of Purpose

John the Baptist for instance understood his purpose as a forerunner to Christ. He understood that he was only "best man and nothing else. That was his purpose that

¹³ Ibid., 61-62.

¹⁴ Ibid.

flowed from his call, and he had no desire to aspire to anything beyond.”¹⁵

#4 Called People Practice Unswerving Commitment

“John’s comment, ‘He must increase, but I must decrease’ (John 3:30), spoken to those who had queried him about his attitude, illustrates the principle of planned release. A called person – because he is a steward, because he knows who he is, because he is purposeful – anticipates the day when it is time to step back and let go.”¹⁶ John was committed to the purpose he had been called to and unmoved from that call.

MacDonald sums these four qualities of the called person using John the Baptist in this way: “John’s sense of stewardship, his awareness of his identity, his perspective about his role, and his commitment to the principles of release – that mark a called person. And they are the characteristics of a person who builds first in the interior or private world so that out of it will flow fountains of life.”¹⁷ Another interpretation could be: hold onto things loosely, know inwardly who one is (and is not), know what one is called to and not called to, and don’t jettison the task no matter the cost. Thus, being called to the ministry is not an easy vocation.

This discussion leads to the question, if a person is called into a particular ministry, can they be called away? And if they can be called away, how does a person know it is time to leave? The remainder of this chapter will explore this question.

In *Leading from the Second Chair*, authors Mike Bonem and Roger Patterson explore the issue of how to know it is time to leave through some practical questions and

¹⁵ Ibid., 64.

¹⁶ Ibid., 66.

¹⁷ Ibid., 67.

statements:

#1 “If your role is not continuing to offer growth, challenge, and significant opportunities to make a difference in the organization, it may be time for a change.”¹⁸

#2 If the staff member’s skills no longer seem to match the church’s needs and the staff member feels stagnant for an extended time, it may be time to leave.¹⁹

#3 A staff member may just stay at a place for a long time because they feel comfortable. At that point, they need to ask themselves, ““What is my motivation for staying? Am I here to fulfill all that God has put in my heart, or am I just comfortable with my surroundings and enjoying the ride?” If a staff person just “slips into cruise control” then they have lost their edge and may consider moving on.²⁰

Sometimes God does speak to us through others or just through our everyday activities. As the authors of *Leading from the Second Chair* illustrate, the realization that it is time to leave may just come from asking some tough questions such as “am I just taking up space or am I really being used of God to make a difference?” Or it may be that the staff member’s skill set now is not what the church needs. These are all tough questions that staff need to honestly deal with.

In today’s changing church structure and demands, those particularly in this author’s age range (50’s and above) should heed some advice from Reggie McNeal:

Young people who are still immersed in the church culture may be contemplating a call to minister in a world that simply will not exist in only a few years. What then for them? This situation is not hypothetical. Thousands of church leaders in their late 50’s experience this reality. They have been hit hardest by the tectonic

¹⁸ Bonem, *Leading*, 155.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

shifts in the culture both inside and outside the church in the past 15 years. The world in which they entered the ministry has passed away in many respects. Their ministry experience seems ill suited to take them to the future. The trip they prepared for has been canceled. Many of these leaders have the internal drive and determination to retool, but many more do not. Fearful and anxious, those in the latter category are trying to hang on until the pension can rescue them. Many are not finishing well.²¹

This author believes that Reggie is trying to make the point to all that even though a person is called, it does not give them the permission to lose touch with the real needs of today. A calling on a person's life for ministry should propel them into keeping fresh and sharp and making sure they are doing everything needed to be done in order to minister well. So it is up to the staff person as the "called" to not only maintain but to continue to grow. If a staff person does not wish to grow or possibly is not in the position to grow to make a difference, then maybe they are making the decision themselves to be called away from their present place of service. Or it may be God telling them it is time for someone else to take the reigns.

As the authors in *Leading from the Second Chair* state, "Ultimately the decision to leave is also a decision to be a good steward of your gifts."²² The authors go on to write:

If you are in a position where you consistently are stymied in using the gifts God has given you, then it is impossible for you to be a good steward. Before you resign, however, distinguish between 'not fully using your gifts at this time' and 'having little prospect for ever using your gifts.' You may need to improve communication and exercise more patience. Perhaps you and your first chair have never had a serious discussion about your gifts and how you might use them more effectively. Perhaps your first chair is well aware of your gifts but is moving on a different timeline to develop and employ them. But perhaps the role or relationship is such that your gifts are not going to be used. If this is the case, it may be a clear sign that you should leave your chair. The corollary to this

²¹ McNeal, *A Work of Heart*, 100.

²² Bonem, *Leading*, 157.

stewardship lesson, however, is that you should not hurry to leave a position where your gifts are being used.²³

Again, from what the authors of *Leading from the Second Chair* have shown, there is a decision that has to be made. Is the staff member effectively being able to use the gifts and skills God has given them to minister where they are? Are they being good stewards of what God has placed in them? If they are not, then the decision to leave, to seek God for other avenues of service, may need to take place. The call to ministry is still there, but perhaps God is putting a restlessness in their heart to have their gifts used more completely elsewhere. This restlessness may be making that staff person available to be called to a new place of service.

Sometimes God may keep a staff member in a place where they might be restless, but God is using the circumstances to rough out some tough edges in their life that He needs to work on. This author has served in his present church for thirteen years, but during these years he has not always felt his gifts were used in the most complete way. Because of this, opportunities for service elsewhere have been considered and in some instances even almost accepted. But there never was a complete certainty that God was in the move. So this author has stayed where God called him years ago. Through this process, there have been times of growth and times of reflection. Hopefully, there have been times of effectiveness in ministry.

Authors Mike Bonem and Roger Patterson write about being content where a staff member is:

Contentment in the second chair is your choice to stay and grow and excel, for a season, regardless of current circumstances. The foremost part of this definition

²³ Ibid., 157-158.

is that contentment is a choice. Joseph consistently made the choice to be content, whatever the circumstances. He excelled in slavery, in prison, and Pharaoh's service because he chose to make the most of his time and energy. No matter the situation, position, or responsibility, Joseph chose contentment and made the most of every situation in which he found himself. Contentment is possible if you choose to understand that something more is always at work in your experiences, beyond your needs, expectations, and frustrations.²⁴

So not fully using one's gifts may be a reason for leaving a place a person has been called to, but the person needs to take the time to allow God to show this to them. What then are potential reasons a person should not consider in regards to leaving a place of ministry? Robert Radcliffe, in *Effective Ministry as an Associate Pastor*, gives a number of reasons he considers as insufficient to an Associate Pastor to move on:

#1 Criticism

Radcliffe writes:

If you want to avoid criticism, do nothing. Of course, that will not work either, because then you'll be condemned for being lazy. Criticism comes to everyone who does something, and it seems to be unavoidable. If you allow what someone else says to discourage or disappoint you, you will do nothing. Focus on the positive in people's lives that result from events, activities, and programs.²⁵

#2 Interpersonal Conflict

Radcliffe writes, "With any two people, it should be expected that there will be varying points of view on ministry issues." The author continues, "Know what an important issue is and where to take a stand."²⁶

#3 Family Issues

Radcliffe states that there are family issues that might present themselves as a

²⁴ Ibid., 124.

²⁵ Radcliffe, *Effective Ministry*, 170.

²⁶ Ibid., 171.

basis for possible resignation, such as illness or injury or personal health problems.

Radcliffe writes, “If the associate feels he or she must resign to relieve the church of the financial burden placed on them by the illness or injury, it is best to let the church determine this.”²⁷

#4 Broken Promises

“Promises made during the interview period to the associate may or may not be kept.” As Radcliffe states, what a staff member may consider was a promise made to them, may not be something the church considered as a promise. That is why it is always good to get things in writing. As someone once shared with this author, “Paper is cheaper than memory.” The best rule of thumb is that if something is important to the staff person, then get it on paper and make it specific. Don’t hope that someone will remember it, for in the end, their lack of memory may cost you dearly.²⁸

Radcliffe goes on to write that there are significant reasons a staff person should consider as reasons to leave his present place of ministry:

#1 Heresy

Radcliffe believes that the best place to start to determine if there is heresy or just a difference in doctrinal positions is to look at the church’s statement of faith. If the staff member determines that there is significant deviation from this statement and that nothing is being done to correct it, then this may be sufficient reason for a staff member to leave.²⁹

²⁷ Ibid., 172.

²⁸ Ibid., 172-173.

²⁹ Ibid., 173-174.

#2 The Staff Person is Voted Out

Obviously, if a staff member is voted out by a church, then leaving is the only option. Radcliffe shares that prior to that type of church action, it would be worthwhile for the staff member to resign if there is a sense that the vote would be overwhelmingly against him. Hopefully the staff member would engage church leadership prior to any action to determine if there has just been miscommunication or a misunderstanding that can be rectified.³⁰

#3 Lack of Support

In Effective Ministry as an Associate Pastor, we find this statement, “One reason to say yes to resignation could be the lack of support for the associate’s ministry. This kind of no support is a direct statement from the senior pastor or from the official church board, or both, that the associate’s ministry cannot continue and the associate’s services are no longer wanted.”³¹ It is very difficult to serve in any location if you feel the support from church members and especially church leaders is not there. In his first church, this author served as a Minister of Education and Youth. While the Education part of the position was going okay, the Youth part was not. To put it bluntly, the feeling from this author was that the youth were trying to run him off and unfortunately were gaining the support of their parents. The former Youth Director had served in the church for a few years, had formed some very close bonds with the youth, was living in the area, and was still in contact with a good number of the youth. The author was told that many of the youth members had even voted against him in order to try and keep the former

³⁰ Ibid., 174-175.

³¹ Ibid., 175.

Youth Director. In this climate of questionable support, this author began praying about leaving the church and even had placed his resume out. It took encouragement, guidance, and intervention from the Senior Pastor for this author not to leave and/or be dismissed along with some help and support from the parents that up to that point had been missing.

#4 Hypocrisy or Deceit

Radcliffe states, “Another reason for resignation is the existence of hypocrisy or deceit on the part of those who supervise you. This is not poor communication based on simple misunderstanding but the repeated stating of something that is contradicted by words or actions.”³²

Fortunately for this author, hypocrisy or deceit on the part of his supervisor toward him has never been an issue in any church he has served, although he has been aware of this happening in other churches. The Bible is very clear that this is not something God approves. In Proverbs 6:16-17 we find that God even hates this, “Here are six things God hates, and one more that he loathes with a passion: eyes that are arrogant, a tongue that lies, hands that murder the innocent.” This author believes lying is part of hypocrisy and deceit, which God not only disapproves, He hates.

#5 Spouse Unsupportive

Unfortunately, some statistics show that many wives might lean toward being unsupportive. In *Crushed: The Perilous Side of Ministry*, Gary Pinson shares some startling statistics in regards to Pastor’s spouses. Pinson shares that a survey of 100,000 parish pastors found that “80% of pastor’s spouses wish their spouse would choose

³² Ibid., 176.

another profession.”³³ Another statistic Pinson shares is, “The majority of pastor’s wives surveyed said that the most destructive event that has occurred in their marriage and family was the day they entered the ministry.”³⁴ Stubblefield qualifies what he means by an unsupportive wife when he writes, “What I mean by an unsupportive spouse is one who questions the basic assumption that the associate should be in ministry at all.”³⁵ If Pinion and Stubblefield were to compare notes here, it may look as if most pastors (this author does not know if associates were included in this survey) may need to leave the ministry. This author agrees that there needs to be support from the spouse in ministry because of the nature of the vocation, but sometimes people go into the ministry with rose colored glasses thinking that church is going to be perfect. When the first issue comes up, the spouse or staff person can get disillusioned because their picture of the perfect church has been dashed and they may decide to leave. Sometimes just by staying the course, the staff member and his spouse can work through difficulties, but as Stubblefield puts it, “If the spouse continually affirms that the ministry should never have been entered, then the associate should seriously consider resigning. Any associate who has a spouse who does not want him or her in the ministry would have sufficient reason to resign.”³⁶

What are some reasons that others in the calling of Christian Education have shared as reasons they left a particular ministry? Kevin Lawson shares some insightful

³³ Gary Pinson, *Crushed: The Perilous Side of Ministry* (Springfield, Missouri: 21st Century Press, 2008), 58.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁵ Radcliffe, *Effective Ministry*, 177.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

information in the article referenced earlier titled “Former Directors of Christian Education – Why They Left: Implications for the Profession.”³⁷

In this article, Lawson examines the profession of Directors of Christian Education. Here he looks at data from past studies and then shares data from a study he had worked on in 1992. In the previous studies he examined data from as early as 1964 and as late as 1992, and found a number of factors that led to job turnover. These factors were: unclear job expectations; lack of committed lay leadership; changing vocational goals; lack of recognition or appreciation for their work; the lack of a sense of achievement; poor church management policies; the opportunity to use one’s best abilities; low salary; job security.³⁸

From Kevin Lawson’s 1992 study, he found the following common influences that led DCE’s to leave: problems in their work relationship with the senior pastor; conflicting expectations, whether with the pastor or the congregation; a strong pull to move to a position where there was a greater opportunity for successful work; the need for a better support system as a relatively powerful influence; the difficulty of the job; the inadequacy of their pay; the difficulty of locating adequate lay leadership for the church’s educational work; stress of the job as being so great that they wanted out.³⁹

From the information of the different studies, it appears that there are things that churches, denominations, seminaries, and ultimately the staff person can do that will help insure someone doesn’t leave a ministry position for the wrong reasons. The next part of

³⁷ Lawson, "Former Directors of Christian Education," 46-62.

³⁸ Ibid., 46.

³⁹ Ibid., 55.

this thesis will take a look at some ideas that can be provided to help staff make informed decisions about their vocation.

In going back to the article from Kevin Lawson entitled “Former Directors of Christian Education – Why They Left,” there is not only the basic issue of “calling” at play here, but some practical ideas in how to insure the longevity of the staff member. Again, here is what Lawson wrote, “Churches and schools need to develop means for future DCE’s to confirm their ‘calling’ to educational ministry. This sense of Divine calling has an impact on career persistence. As a subjective experience it can benefit from opportunities of testing (e.g., student teaching, internships) and the evaluation of others (e.g., pastor, congregational lay leaders, professors). These experiences can confirm or disconfirm one’s sense of calling, assist in identifying needed preparation, and help denominations and local churches in more effective recruitment.”⁴⁰

Lawson seems to imply that there needs to be some accountability method associated with a potential staff member’s preparation into the ministry. This accountability method could be through internships or even part-time staff positions.

From this author’s experience, internships should be a minimal accountability method for preparing one for ministry. In many seminaries, it is difficult to find employment in churches due to the concentrated number of seminary students available for the few number of staff positions in nearby churches. So that leaves the need for at least some type of internship positions in churches. This internship should be set up so a seminary student should have not only a seminary professor as an accountability person, but also a church staff member as an accountability person who reports to the professor.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 58.

Unfortunately, that means there needs to be enough churches that have staff members in them who are willing to take the time to work with seminary students. This author was fortunate enough to find a church in his seminary city that offered a year-long internship in his area of ministry. This internship allowed the author to be directly involved in many aspects of ministry that he would either be responsible for and/or oversee in a church. Also, a professor at the author's seminary helped to oversee the internship. Not only did the internship help prepare this author, but it also gave encouragement that he indeed was called to a specific area of ministry.

Lawson shares the following from the article, "Former Directors of Christian Education – Why They Left: Implications for the Profession," regarding what seminaries and denominations can do to help better prepare the future staff member: "Christian graduate schools and seminaries need to be sure that those seeking to serve churches as DCE's can acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience to be successful in their work."⁴¹ Lawson goes on to say, "Denominations need to provide continuing education experiences to help DCE's in their churches acquire skills on the job that will make them more effective in their work."⁴² The need for seminaries to provide the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience also for Ministers of Education or others over various education ministries in their churches along with denominations offering support is necessary.

In an interview the author had with Dr. Chris Shirley, Associate Professor of Adult Ministry/School of Church and Family Ministries at Southwestern Baptist

⁴¹ Ibid., 58.

⁴² Ibid., 59.

Theological Seminary, he made the following comment regarding how hard it is for seminaries to know how to prepare future Ministers of Education,

We are undergoing a seismic shift in education at our seminaries. Southwestern is the only school left that has a comprehensive educational focus. Most other SBC schools have some classes, but no real emphasis. Consequently, we don't see ME's pouring out of the seminaries. In addition, like you said, the churches are so different and their programs are so diverse, that we don't have a one-size-fits-all model any more. Every church seems to organize according to their needs (or the preference of the pastor) rather than following an SBC-led pattern of organization. That makes it more difficult for us to know what direction we should go.⁴³

So, for Southern Baptist seminaries there is a difficulty in knowing exactly which courses need to be taught to help prepare future staff members for ministry. This dilemma seems to emanate from the independent nature of each SBC church. Since each SBC church is free to set parameters on what each staff member does, since and each church can have an entirely different focus (although in agreement theologically with the SBC), it is hard for seminaries to get a grip on overall course design to prepare future staff. What may work for one style of church may not work for another style of church. So a future Education Pastor graduating from seminary may find himself immersed in lots of "On the Job Training" at the church he is called to. For most new staff there is some getting use to a new church. If this new staff member has none of the basic training for the actual position in that new church and has to be trained by that church for the position, in essence he may have wasted his or her time in seminary. This may be why some churches today are recruiting from within.

For the denomination, and especially those state denominational offices, it

⁴³ Ben Haygood, Questions regarding Ministers of Education, e-mail message to Dr. Chris Shirley, Assistant Professor of Adult Ministry - School of Church and Family Ministries, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, January 20, 2010.

becomes a game of discovery in what to provide churches to help with this “On the Job Training” for churches. For many Minister of Education types, there is at least some degree of commonality in that most churches either have a traditional Sunday School structure or Small Group structure. The denominational office can help the churches’ Education Pastors get specific training at least in organization and follow-through of Bible study ministries. This needed support will in turn allow the staff member to be more effective in his work and thus give a greater feeling of overall accomplishment and a greater sense of calling.

Kevin Lawson again gives us insight into what may lead a staff member to leave a church in the article “Former Directors of Christian Education – Why They Left: Implications for the Profession.” In Lawson’s study, he discovered the following: “Before a church looks for someone to fill the role of DCE, it needs to clarify what it is expecting the DCE to do. If the church can clearly identify and communicate to the candidate what it needs the DCE to do, how to do it, and with what support, it can reduce misunderstandings that can lead to discouragement, stress, and high turnover on the job.”⁴⁴ Here Lawson again finds a practical way to help provide longevity for a staff member. Simply by explaining to the staff member what the church is expecting, then how to go about doing it, and what tools are available to help get the job done, the success rate for the staff member could go up.

Part of this may just be in a well defined job description, good supervision, and an adequate support mechanism. If proper guidance and support are left out, then someone could become discouraged and as a result question their calling and leave their church.

⁴⁴ Lawson, "Former Directors of Christian Education," 59.

Kevin Lawson shares his agreement with this assessment when he writes: “The factors with the strongest impact (in regards to longevity – author’s insert) were conflicts with superiors, inadequate feedback or recognition, the need for a better support system, inadequate lay leadership for the church’s educational ministry, and the need for more independent control over one’s work.”⁴⁵ If the staff member feels he is constantly butting heads with his supervisor and given responsibility with no authority, then frustration sets in and the staff member may feel “what’s the use.” This too can lead to the questioning of one’s calling.

Southern Baptist churches (this author’s denomination) today can be as different as night and day. That is why it is so important that clear descriptions of what is expected of a staff member are necessary. Terminology can even be different between churches and misunderstandings can arise for a person who may feel he is called to a church based on what he understands the church to be like only to discover after coming on staff that the church meant something else.

At this author’s first church out of seminary, there were some things that the church assumed he knew. In most SBC churches this author had either volunteered in or interned with, the children’s missions programs were year round. But when this author came to the first summer of ministry as the Minister of Education and Youth in his first church, he was surprised to discover that the preschool and children’s missions programs at this church took a summer break and he was responsible for providing a different program for the summer. The church assumed most SBC churches had their preschool and children missions program take a summer break and that this new Minister of

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Education and Youth was ready to provide alternate summer programming.

The above example of differences in churches is only minor to what is happening today. Some SBC churches have Sunday School as their major Bible teaching and reaching ministry while others may use Home Small Groups to help build relationships between members while providing Bible study and a way to reach out to the community. If a staff member is coming from a church that emphasizes Sunday School and is coming to a church that emphasizes Home Small Groups, and if for some reason the new staff person was not fully aware of this, then there could be great despair on the part of the staff member responsible.

Although, there seem to be fewer women in staff positions in SBC churches, it is interesting to take a look at some data taken in regards to any differences between men and women who served in the Educational Ministry of 10 different denominations regarding reasons for job changes. In an article from the *Christian Education Journal* entitled, "Christian Education Journal, The State of the Educational Ministry Profession in Evangelical Churches, Part II, The Different Experiences of Men and Women in Ministry," Kevin Lawson found information regarding reasons for job changes from those he interviewed that were currently in Education Ministry or were formerly in Education Ministry. This study was done in 1994. What he found was: "Most of the reasons for changes from one educational ministry position to another are similar for men and women. There were only three reasons identified by the men that were significantly more influential for them than for women. The similar reasons revolved around job factors and unresolved conflict situations. They included: insufficient budget/resources to do 'my work,' lack of adequate lay leadership for educational work, and conflicts with specific church members. There was only one reason identified by women that was

significantly more influential for them for the men: personal needs going unmet.”⁴⁶

Thus it appears that both men and women in the same position had almost similar issues in the vocation. Can any of these issues be dealt with from a church level that would help the longevity of the staff member at the church? Let’s take a brief look at each of these.

One of the reasons, insufficient budget/resources to do “my work,” could contain lots of different variables. Budgets differ greatly between churches. Obviously, budgets will differ depending on the size of the church. When this author moved from Florida to Virginia to take on the Educational Ministries in a church, there was a bigger budget from which to draw from in the Virginia church. As a result, some of the training this author could not afford to do at his church in Florida was now available due to an increased Education budget. Also, there became a better choice of curriculum available because the budget was bigger. In some instances, the resources in question could just be the issue of limited space. Oddly enough, this author’s former church in Florida had better space resources for Education ministries than did his new and bigger church in Virginia. That was because the Florida church had put more money into the educational space than into the Worship space. So it was less difficult to provide space for new classes in Florida than in Virginia. The resource issue in some cases has to do with the emphasis the church wants to place on the Education ministries. Perhaps the church does not see the advantages of Sunday School or Small Groups but is more engaged in the ministry of Worship. If this is the case, the resources of the church may be more slanted toward the

⁴⁶ Lawson, "The State of the Educational Ministry Profession in Evangelical Churches, Part 2," 57.

Worship ministry and the Education ministry may get a smaller portion of the resources. This could set up tension between staff members and cause frustration for the Education staff person.

A second reason in Lawson's study regarding job changes had to do with lack of adequate lay leadership for educational work. This seems simply to do with enlisting volunteers to carry out the work of the ministry. The area of enlisting volunteers is probably the hardest issue for Education staff to deal with and is one that everyone deals with no matter the size of the church. This author has never had enough volunteers to help in the Education ministries in his churches. Finding volunteers is a universal problem for churches and one that is always has "the grass is greener" perspective.

The third common factor for job changes was conflict with specific church members. Let's face it, not all staff members have good people skills. This author has been around a few that seemed to have more of a problem than most other staff members in causing conflicts. The issue of developing good people skills is something that seminaries cannot teach. Seminaries can teach why it is good to develop healthy relationships with members, but for most staff members, it seems it is up to them to develop those people skills. If the staff member does not develop good people skills, he can be almost guaranteed a difficult time. Not having good people skills is essential to the ministry, because church staff members are in the people business. If a church staff member does not have these skills and does not want to change, then finding a different vocation may be necessary.

Of course, there are those cases where specific church members seem to make it their job to make life difficult for staff. In one church this author had served, he was told of a former staff member who got into a very heated argument that almost went to blows

with a church member after a business meeting. This church member, this author was told, happened to be one that was continually fussing about the salaries of the staff and remembered the old days (this obviously was before this author's time) when church staff members were not paid. When there is an unreasonable person in your church who is vocal, in a leadership position, cannot be reasoned with, and is not going anywhere, then ministry can be difficult. Unfortunately, this type of church member has probably done harm in the lives of other staff members and the church has not been willing to deal with them in a biblical manner as Matthew 18:15 – 17 shows us. If the church is unwilling to deal with the church member, there may not be any recourse for the staff member but to look elsewhere especially if it involves being able to provide for his family.

This chapter has presented a full range of thoughts from how a person realizes if he is called to a specific place of full-time ministry to how to determine when it is time to leave that ministry. Some concluding remarks are necessary here to help tie thoughts together.

To begin with, it is good to go back to examine one's calling. This chapter determined that having a strong and clear calling is essential to a staff member. It would be good for the person to review how God brought them to this place of ministry. Sometimes those in ministry get so caught up in the "urgent" that they forget what God has done in their life. For that reason, it may be necessary for the staff member to take some time away just to reflect and renew. It is not unusual for pastors to be constantly giving out and neglect the real source of their strength which is time with the Lord. The pressures of ministry and time requirements press so much that the things that should be the most important to a pastor gets squeezed out.

Next, after a person has reviewed his call to a specific place of ministry, how does

he determine if it is time to leave? This chapter cited from Robert Radcliffe's book a few issues in a person's ministry that seem to speak loudly that it is time to leave.⁴⁷ These issues are:

- #1 Heresy
- #2 The Staff Person is asked to leave
- #3 Lack of Support
- #4 Hypocrisy or deceit on the part of the staff person's supervisor.
- #5 Spouse Unsupportive

Any one of the above mentioned points is enough to make a case to leave a specific place of ministry. There could be instances where more than one of the above come to play at one time which could make an even bigger case to leave. Other than being forced to leave, all of the above reasons still leave it up to the staff person to make the decision to stay or move on. But the reasons seem to be closer to black and white issues as well and may make it clearer in the staff person's mind about the need to pursue other avenues of ministry.

The author determined from Bonem and Patterson's book that there were other issues which may be more "gray" in nature that could be looked at in determining if it was time to leave, but these needed to be scrutinized more closely:⁴⁸

- #1 Lack of challenge, growth, or opportunities to make a difference from the current position.
- #2 Skills of staff member don't seem to match church's needs any longer.

⁴⁷ Radcliffe, *Effective Ministry*, 173-176.

⁴⁸ Bonem, *Leading*, 155.

#3 The staff member has slipped into “cruise control” and is just enjoying the ride.

All of the above issues need to provide input to the staff person from those individuals he trusts. Each issue can potentially be the staff person’s opinion and may not be accurate. All people see things from different perspectives and the staff person may just not have the best vantage point of determining if what he is seeing is correct. So, counsel from friends in the ministry is good and in some instances even professional counseling may need to be sought.

Of course, all of these reasons need to be put in the context of seeking God through His Word and prayer. There are not many times when decisions need to be made immediately. Often, clarity comes with time. Also, emotions play a part with staff, and given enough time, emotions can cool down and allow more clear thinking.

CHAPTER 6

USING THE SKILLS AND GIFTS OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION 50 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER

In this chapter, there are three issues that will be examined: (1) suggestions on how churches can best use the skills and gifts of Ministers of Education 50 years of age and over, (2) what churches can learn from this study, and (3) the author's thoughts on what positions can be designed to better use the experience of the Minister of Education who is 50 years of age and older.

There is a hope by this author that research discovered through this thesis will help not only the Minister of Education (ME), but churches as well. The role of the Minister of Education can be one that will greatly assist a church in health and growth. If the Minister of Education (or whatever title is given to the staff person over the education ministries of his church) and the church can work together to make sure the role is defined well, then years of effective service can be obtained and both the church and the Minister of Education will greatly benefit.

Suggestions on How Churches Can Best Use the Skills of Ministers of Education 50 Years of Age and Older

There are a number of those either serving as Ministers of Education themselves and those who have served in that role and are now either consultants, denominational leaders, or professional teachers who have written articles on how to best help the Minister of Education excel in his role. Kevin Lawson is one of those authors who served

in an Educational role and now teaches at Biola University. In an article in the *Christian Education Journal*, he gives ideas that could give both churches and denominational leaders advice on what can be done to help all Ministers of Education. This advice is not limited to just those Ministers of Education (ME's) 50 years of age and older, but this advice can certainly be used to help these ME's.

Lawson shares that denominational leaders need to affirm and elevate the educational ministry staff positions within the denomination through such things as conferences for educational ministry staff, credentialing (possibly ordination), and affirming educational ministry as more than a stepping stone to pastoral ministry.¹ Lawson goes on to share the specific lists of ideas to help develop support and communication networks of those over the Education Ministries of churches:

1. Develop a network among the Christian Education people in the denomination for mutual support, prayer, sharing of ideas and information, and retreats together.
2. Don't leave the support these staff receive to their senior pastors. That is not enough. Denominational leaders need to make personal contact with them for support and encouragement. Educational ministry staff want to feel that they are part of the denomination, and are respected, valued, and cared for in the same way as pastors.
3. Need for denominations to provide better support for women who are in ministry.
4. Help educational ministry staff members identify and acquire good curriculum and other resources, possibly through a newsletter that also addresses networking needs.²

¹ Lawson, "The State of the Educational Ministry Profession in Evangelical Churches, Part 3," 108.

² Ibid.

The use of skills by the ME 50 years of age and older can best be used to counsel and train younger ME's. Many times the younger ME gets into a church and feels isolated with no one to turn to for help. He wants to minister well, but finds himself in situations that seminary may not have prepared him for. That is where the experience of older ME's come into place. Not all state conventions or associations of churches have the man-power to assist in this. This author was able to talk to one ME in a church in Florida who has been allowed by his church to mentor ME's who are just starting out. If churches will allow their more mature ME's the flexibility to provide this mentoring, it will not only provide help for other churches, but will also allow an outlet for the ME who is 50 years of age or older to share his experiences.

Lawson alludes to these previous comments in number one in the list above when he talks about a network of Christian Education people. The state convention this author is part of has tried to establish a network like this and offer a training day each year for ME's and a separate time at the state convention where ME's can meet together. Unfortunately, this author has found that the ME's that need this training and time together the most are usually the ones that are unable to make these meetings because of finances or because of not being able to get the time off.

In number two above, Lawson hits on an issue that the author has had to deal with. There have been times in this author's ministry where he felt like a second class staff member in regards to the denomination he served in. Usually the Sr. Pastor is allowed to go to the state and national conventions, but for many ME's, there is usually no encouragement by the church or the Sr. Pastor for the ME to attend. In former churches this ME served, in order to attend a national convention or state convention, he

had to personally pay to get to it, pay his own housing, and provide for his own meals while the church covered all the Sr. Pastor and family's expenses. In some cases, this ME was told that he could not go because it was his job to cover for the Sr. Pastor while he was able to attend and take his family with him. This regrettably causes the ME to lose touch with the denomination and continues to give the impression that the leadership of the denomination is not the place for ME's. Changes need to be made to heal this perception. It helps the convention to use the skills and gifts of the experienced ME. The ME 50 years of age and older can use his experience to help lead training events for the state convention or be used for consulting purposes in other churches. This author has had the opportunity to have other ME's come into his church to provide some needed consultation and training for his members.

Another thought that Lawson brings is the need for denominations to provide better support for women. This thesis is not about women in the ministry (as has been stated in an earlier chapter) but there does need to be a better support system for women in the ministry. As was recognized by a survey statement of a female staff person, it appears that women who are in the ministry in some SBC churches feel unusable. This could be helped by getting female staff members 50 years of age and above involved in the lives of younger female staff members. Mentoring relationships could be set up here and the 50 and above staff person could use their experience greatly. Also a great support network would be helpful.

In number four above, Lawson suggests that there be a network of ME's that can help identify and acquire good curriculum. From experience, this ME has found that it is helpful to call upon other ME's as to what curriculum they are using. Churches can also use the experience of the 50 and above ME to possibly help write the church's own

curriculum. At this author's own church, a decision was made to try to develop adult curriculum for the church. Part of this was the result of budget constraints and part came about due to the desire to provide a more detailed systematic study for the adult classes.

Lawson also mentions that denominations need to consider providing staff development opportunities. He shares the following points:

1. Some denominations need to provide better educational ministry training at their denominational colleges and seminaries.
2. Denominational leaders need to provide training opportunities for those in educational ministries (e.g., conferences, seminars, retreats) and/or financial assistance for taking advantage of continuing education events provided by others.
3. Since so much of the educational ministry staff members' success in ministry depends on their working relationship with their pastors, denominations need to help senior pastors in multiple-staff situations develop better leadership, supervision, and management skills, and develop a team ministry philosophy.³

Why not use the experience of the older ME in the classrooms of seminaries and colleges? At the seminary this author is attending, active staff members are being used at different levels for classes. It would also be good for seminaries to set up mentoring relationships with ME's to help those in class. That way, the older ME can pass along some of the knowledge and experience he has obtained and hear some new ideas from the younger ME which may help the older ones.

Lawson shares in number two above the need for denominations to provide training opportunities for those in the Education ministry. He also mentions that financial

³ Ibid.

assistance needs to come into play to help those staff people that need support. This author would never have been able to complete a terminal degree if not for the assistance of his church toward a scholarship fund. Churches and denominations need to continue providing assistance for the Education staff people in their churches. This assistance can help the ME get better at what he does and potentially help the church and the denomination. The older ME who has had the experience of going through the process of finding the needed financial support through his church or other means for school could help younger ME's with this information. This information could be shared through a blog or simply through an e-mail network that could be provided with help through the state convention.

Finally, Lawson states that denominations need to assist the Sr. Pastor in how to be a better leader of his staff team. This would be a big help toward the ME. From the survey this author has done and from practical experience, many of the reasons ME's leave their church is the inability of the staff to get along. This does not always mean it is the Sr. Pastor who is at fault, but there are times it is. Training in how to better supervise, manage, and lead a team of staff would help many Sr. Pastors which could ultimately help that older ME stay at his church longer and provide a lasting ministry.

In the survey shared in Chapters 3 and 4, the following was discovered in regards to what titles/positions those 50 years of age and older had changed to since being at their current church. The chart below shows their current title, their former title(s) and who actually initiated the change:

<u>Current Title</u>	<u>Former Title(s)</u>	<u>Who Initiated Change</u>
1. Associate Pastor	Min. of Ed & Youth	Respondent
2. Executive Pastor	Minister of Education, Administrative Pastor	Respondent
3. Dir of Education/	SS. Director or	Respondent

	Outreach/Sr. Care Ministry	Administrator	
4.	Associate Pastor Administration	Minister of Education	Personnel Committee
5.	Associate Pastor	Administration/ Family Ministries	Sr. Pastor
6.	Minister of Education/ Outreach	Minister of Education/ Outreach/Administration	Sr. Pastor
7.	Minister of Spiritual Formation	Visitation Minister	Respondent
8.	Pastor of Adult Ministries	Women's Pastor	Respondent
9.	Minister of Christian Education	Minister of Adults	Sr. Pastor
10.	Minister with Adults and their Families	Minister with Children	Respondent
11.	Minister of Connect Groups	No title change but added responsibilities	Sr. Pastor
12.	Minister of Education/ Church Administration	Minister of Education	Pastor, Personnel Committee Deacons, Adult Advisory Committee
13.	Associate Pastor	Minister of Education & Missions	Sr. Pastor, Personnel
14.	Executive Pastor	Administrative Pastor	Sr. Pastor
15.	Associate Pastor for Adults	Community Outreach was added	Sr. Pastor
16.	Minister of Adult Discipleship	Minister of Youth, Minister of Youth and Children	Respondent
17.	Executive Pastor	Associate Pastor Adult Education	Sr. Pastor
18.	Pastor of Discipleship and Administration	Pastor of Administration	Respondent
19.	Minister of Music and Education	Minister of Music	Respondent
20.	Minister to Adults	Minister of Education and Senior Adults	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee
21.	Associate Pastor	Minister of Education; Coordinator of Ministries	Personnel Committee
22.	Christian Formation	Christian Education	Sr. Pastor
23.	Associate Pastor for Adult	Evangelism Ministries & Education Coordinator	Sr. Pastor - added another staff member who received evangelism piece
24.	Elder/Pastor	Executive Pastor	Respondent
25.	Sr. Associate Pastor, Executive Pastor	Minister of Education	Sr. Pastor
26.	Minister for Adult	Minister of Education	Sr. Pastor, Personnel

Education		Committee
27. Minister of Christian Education (Associate Pastor)	Minister of Youth	Respondent
28. Associate Pastor	Singles Minister	Respondent
29. Associate Pastor Education & Administration	Associate Pastor Education & Adult	Sr. Pastor, Personnel Committee Ministry
30. Associate Pastor of Education & Outreach	Associate Pastor	Respondent
31. Minister of Discipleship and Congregational Ministries	Minister of Education & Administration	Sr. Pastor
32. Senior Associate Pastor & Administration	Minister of Education	Respondent
33. Discipleship & Missions	Education & Youth/ Education & Administration	Church Growth - staff increase
34. Executive Pastor	Minister of Education	Sr. Pastor
35. Senior Associate Pastor	Minister of Education/ Staff Coordinator/ Program Coordinator	Respondent
36. Executive Pastor	Minister of Education	Respondent
37. Executive Pastor of Education & Administration	Associate Pastor of Education & Administration	Sr. Pastor
38. Associate Pastor of Education	Minister of Education	Sr. Pastor
39. Minister of Education	Singles Minister, Minister of Pastoral Care, Outreach Minister, Sr. Adult Minister	Respondent

In looking at the answers, there were five who changed titles to that of Associate Pastor (there were other Associate Pastors, but the others included specific ministries with the title). This title of Associate Pastor is very broad and even the titles that include a specific ministry with it can be misleading at times because that specific ministry can just be the major part of the title with other ministries included. Many Ministers of Education carry the title of Associate Pastor also, as does this author, and the Associate Pastor title brings with it more responsibility than just the education area.

Dr. Martin Hawkins served as Associate Pastor for 25 years at Oak Cliff Bible

Fellowship in Dallas, Texas where Dr. Tony Evans is the Senior Pastor. In his book, *The Associate Pastor, Second Chair, Not Second Best*, he tries to explain the perspective associate staff members need to have:

Assistants and associates will never find the fulfillment of purpose God intended for them if they continue to think of themselves as playing second violin to the pastor. They are not second fiddle; they are second chair.

And I've got to tell you, I thought this part in the orchestra was the best place in the world. I had many opportunities to preach, but I didn't *have* to preach. I had authority, but the buck didn't always stop with me. I had freedom and responsibility to mentor others, yet I also had Dr. Evans right there mentoring me. I didn't have to go outside our church to find that – or to keep from being lonely at the top like senior pastors must. Dr. Evan's vision took me farther than I ever thought I would go, yet I found room for my vision within his.

God designed me for that place, that position, that orchestra. Where God takes you – the place that he designs you for – that's the best place, whether it's at a megachurch or a rural country church, or any other assignment; it's his place for you.

My expectations were to lead by pasturing in the head role, but my calling was to follow. So I had to follow my calling. And as I did, I found, to quote Jesse Jackson, 'I am somebody.' I was not second best; I was the best God had to offer for that second position. Following God's lead is all that matters.⁴

The person who is an ME or an Associate or anyone over the Education ministries of their church can find satisfaction in their place of ministry as long as they realize that where they are is where God has designed them to be and placed them. Those who are ME's may have to fight the idea that they are not important and what they do does not count. As Martin Hawkins indicated though, we get our worthiness from the realization that God has placed us where we are and He is the one we ultimately serve. The older ME who has had the opportunity to work through issues of self-worth in his role can help out younger ME's. This too could be worked through mentoring relationships. This is

⁴ Hawkins, *The Associate Pastor*, 190-191.

where a state convention could help set up a network of older ME's who could take on a younger ME.

Of course, there is also the other side of the coin where sometimes an ME may fight with the struggle of thinking they may know more than their Sr. Pastor, thinking they may be a better leader than their Sr. Pastor, or thinking they may even have more respect from the congregation than the Sr. Pastor. But at the end of the day, the ME's role is to serve alongside that Sr. Pastor and realize the calling for them is important and their responsibility is to support that person they are serving with. A mentoring relationship of a younger ME with an older ME who has worked through developing a healthy relationship with his Sr. Pastor would provide excellent benefits for the church.

Jerry Stubblefield writes the following in *The Effective Minister of Education* in regards to how to use an experienced staff member to their greatest potential:

Duke K. McCall wrote in *The Tie* that after a minister has been in a church five to ten years, a covenant with the church leaders needs to be renegotiated. He feels the original goals have probably been realized after serving that number of years, and new goals need setting. This is good advice for every minister and church to practice. I tried to do this but was unsuccessful. I could continue to do what I was doing, but felt status quo was not as challenging as I desired or needed. Although there were other educational challenges and work to be done, I felt I had done what I would be permitted to do.⁵

From Jerry Stubblefield's perspective, it would be good for churches and ME's to sit down together to look at expectations of the position. Perhaps the original expectations have been met, or perhaps the expectations were never clearly explained and need to be redefined, or maybe the entire direction of the church has changed and the ME is struggling as to where he now fits with the direction and expectations for his position.

⁵ Stubblefield, *The Effective Minister*, 245.

Doing this would help the church better use the skills and gifts of the ME and help the ME not be frustrated as to where he is to place his aim. If the ME feels he is floundering and his expectations are very unclear, then it only takes a matter of time for that person to want to seek a place of service that he feels is better suited for his skills and gifts.

What Can Churches Learn from This Study?

In *Effective Ministry as an Associate Pastor*, Robert Radcliffe gives a checklist for Associates when considering a change. In reviewing this checklist, this author realized that churches would benefit greatly by asking themselves the same questions to help make sure they are utilizing the staff person to the highest of their potential. This would ensure the staff person doesn't leave over an issue that can be corrected while helping the church continue to get the benefit of the experience this staff person has at their church. Below are some of the items Radcliffe asks staff members to consider before leaving a church along with comments by this author:

1. What impact is my ministry having in people's lives now compared to when I first began here? How do I know if there is an increase or decrease in impact?⁶

Sometimes staff members can become discouraged due to a decrease in what they perceive as effectiveness in ministry. It is not hard to look at other churches and compare attendance numbers and growth statistics. For this author, his church has been through enormous change over the years. The church now has its third pastor in 14 years (one of the pastors was a Transitional Pastor that served for a little over two years) and now the

⁶ Radcliffe, *Effective Ministry*, 189.

third pastor has resigned. Each pastor has had his own vision for the church and made some changes to the focus and atmosphere of the church. Due to conflicts which arose from decisions made about the direction of the church, the move of members to communities farther away from the church, and the current economy which has caused some members to relocate to different cities, the membership of the church has declined significantly. At this point, the author now finds himself in the smallest church he has ever served in over his 22 plus years of ministry. It would be easy to become discouraged and say at this point, the impact that this author has had is dismal.

About seven years ago, during a conference the author organized for his church, another ME from a church nearby made a statement that helped put some things in perspective. The other ME, whose church had been the recipient of many of the author's church's members, said that he did not know what was going on at the church for people to leave, but he did know that the members who had settled at their church came already trained to begin ministry. In other words, he was saying that in spite of whatever was causing members to leave, our church seemed to be doing a good job with training members.

So before a staff member begins to evaluate his/her ministry, he/she needs to be sure to first put things in proper perspective. This is where the Lead Pastor and the church can help. Sometimes staff members are harder on themselves than the church in evaluations. So, it would be good for the Lead Pastor to take some time to give another point of view to help the staff member.

2. Do I see more people excited about getting involved in my area of ministry because of my contribution to their lives, or are there fewer people?⁷

It would be helpful if a church could free up the ME to be able to mentor other younger staff or key leaders in the church. There are many who could benefit from the invaluable experience of the older ME. Personally, this author has been trying to mentor at least two people a year for the last three or four years at his church. One of the men became the church's Youth Pastor, and two of the other men have now become deacons in the church. This takes time and initiative on the part of the ME and the willingness of the church or Sr. Pastor to allow the ME to carve out time to be able to do this.

3. Are my spiritual gifts being utilized in the best way through my current ministry or is there some way that a change in ministry focus would correct that?⁸

A church needs to provide access for the ME to get some gift evaluation. Churches can check with the State Convention as to the best place this could take place. In the area the author lives, there is a counseling service that does this for pastors. There may be other avenues that churches can use for the ME.

4. Am I aware of how my spiritual gifts have been affirmed by those I have served in my current ministry? If yes, give examples. If no, why have my spiritual gifts not been confirmed?⁹

Sometimes associate staff members are not the ones who get recognized. Usually those in ministry are not in it for the recognition of people, but it doesn't hurt for

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

someone to tell the staff member honestly how they have made a difference in their life. The Sr. Pastor is the one who usually takes the heat for all decisions made by staff members and is under undue pressure. As a result he does deserve all the encouragement he can get, and he needs it. But for the Associate to consistently be left out of any encouragement by a church provides a source for unhealthy staff relations. A church needs to be aware that the associate staff are not robots and do have feelings as well. While the associate staff are not in it for the recognition of people, it does not hurt to give words of encouragement or recognition to the Associate Pastor or staff.

5. Do my natural talents lend themselves to application in the role of the associate pastor? Am I doing what I generally like to do and am gifted to do? Is my ministry basically enjoyable, or do I dread it?¹⁰

There needs to be allowance for honest dialogue with the Associate. Sometimes ME's feel like they are just dumping grounds for those things that others do not want to do. What they were called to do just gets crowded out by urgent matters or those things that are not really important. The church needs to make sure the ME has a clearly defined job description and few surprise additions.

Churches should help the ME implement a strategy (and help him stick to it) such as one that Stephen Covey suggests in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. Covey uses a Time Management Matrix that helps people identify how to best use their time. Covey says that there are four quadrants that we can categorize activities: (1) Urgent and Important, (2) Not Urgent but Important, (3) Urgent and Not Important, and (4) Not Urgent and Not Important. Covey indicates that there are people who “spend

¹⁰ Ibid.

most of their time reacting to things that are urgent, assuming they are also important. But the reality is that the urgency of these matters is often based on the priorities and expectations of others.”¹¹ The church should try to help the ME make the most effective use of his time by categorizing what he is doing. Sometimes this means the ME needs to be given the authority to say no.

Robert Radcliffe gives more questions an ME or an Associate Pastor should be asking before deciding to leave a church. A church could come alongside the ME and honestly help him evaluate himself with these questions:

1. Has my ministry run its course, or is there more that needs to be done?
2. Do I have a long-term ministry plan that would be abbreviated if I left now?
3. What affect would my departure have on individuals in each area of my ministry?
4. If the vision of my church is clearly stated, is it one with which I can still agree and feel excited about? Or do I feel the church’s vision is impossible to achieve (unrealistic), out of date (stale), or missing the point entirely (wrong)? What can be done about it?¹²

A church needs to help the ME evaluate the ministries he has been given. Maybe there are things that he can work toward to make it better. Perhaps because other things have gotten in the way, some ministries have not been kept up to date in regards to effectiveness or just keeping up with the times. Possibly this would be the time the ME takes someone under his wings to mentor to take over a particular ministry.

Some suggestions this author has for churches to help the ME based on

¹¹ Stephen Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York: Free Press, 1989), 151-152.

¹² Radcliffe, *Effective Ministry*, 189-190.

Radcliffe's list above include:

1. Ask the ME what the future plans are for the ministries he is over.
2. A church may need to take the time to sit down with him so that he can share those future plans with the church.
3. Have the ME ask himself, "If I was not here, who would take over this ministry and am I mentoring someone to do that?"
4. Allow the ME to openly share how he feels the direction of the church is going without fear of being terminated. This ME usually has had years of experience and vision that may help.

Radcliffe also gives the following questions an ME or Associate should ask regarding his potential at his current church. These should be questions the church needs to take the initiative to ask in order to help the ME who is 50 years of age and older better use his experience:

1. Am I allowing an obstacle to block what God wants to do in this ministry in and through me? What might that obstacle be? What can be done to remove it?¹³

Again, allow the ME to be honest about what may be keeping him back from performing his ministry to the top level. Perhaps an ongoing responsibility was given to the ME that was underestimated in regards to the time it would take to accomplish it. The responsibility either may need to be reassigned, eliminated, or reduced.

2. Is someone else better suited to do what I have been attempting to do in my ministry?¹⁴

¹³ Ibid., 190.

¹⁴ Ibid.

This answer could follow number one. Perhaps there is a responsibility that was assigned to the ME that is either too time consuming or outside the ME's gifts or skills.

Allow the ME to be honest about this.

3. Should I consider shifting to another aspect of ministry, either here or at another place? What might the reason(s) be?¹⁵

Allow the ME to make suggestions in regards to reassigning ministry areas in the church. Perhaps the ME has been trying to do a task but is afraid to acknowledge he either cannot accomplish it or that it is requiring more time than he has available and is cutting into his other ministry areas.

One last area that Radcliffe covers in regards to ME's or Associates who are considering leaving a church has to do with communication. This is an area that again the church needs to make sure is happening with all staff.

1. Are the channels of communication open between me and others on the staff, especially between me and the senior pastor? What evidence can I cite to answer yes or no?¹⁶

Sr. Pastors may need to take the initiative to sit down with the ME. This author has found from experience, the Sr. Pastor can get consumed with many aspects of church life and unintentionally neglect time with staff members. The time with the ME may get left out so the Sr. Pastor may need to set a standing appointment each week with the ME.

2. Is something "eating me up" and am I hiding it from those I minister with? Is that why I feel so uneasy about staying in my present ministry?¹⁷

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

The church needs to make sure it provides open discussion times for staff with no reprisals. In many churches where no open discussion is encouraged in staff meetings, the staff may take discussion away from the staff meeting and talk about things without the presence of the Sr. Pastor.

Perhaps there have been people in the church that have become an undue hindrance to the ministry of the staff person and someone else needs to take that person on. There may be a benevolence situation that has gotten out of hand and the person has latched onto the staff person. The staff person may feel guilty if they do not provide ministry and now does not know how to say no.

This author has personally encountered staff that left churches because of a situation with a church member that could not be resolved. This author is currently dealing with a situation in his church that causes him to take time away from important ministry because he has been made the responsible party for the issue and now does not see an end in sight for the situation.

3. Do I feel that decisions are made in my area of responsibility without my input? If my input is requested for a decision in my area, is it followed? If it is not followed, are the reasons for taking another route reasonable or arbitrary? Do I feel I have been given the “run around”?¹⁸

The church needs to have discussions with the ME to make sure that his voice is being heard. Ask if there are any issues that are unsettled in his ministry that need to be

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

corrected. Allow the ME to evaluate, without reprisal, the ministries in the church.

One of the things that can depress church staff is the inability to hope for something better; either with church growth or seeing advancement for their staff role or position. Mike Bonem and Roger Patterson share the following in regards to how this lack of hope or what they call dreams affects the second chair leader in the church:

Vocational second chair leaders often think they are not allowed to dream big dreams. We have a sense of purpose found in our calling, but unfortunately it stops there. We never take the next step of contemplating where this might lead. We graduate from seminary and to our first church, with our mind full of lofty goals. As we begin to pursue our ideals, frustration sets in because no one seems to be listening and changes are taking too long. Instead of continuing to dream big dreams, we walk away with our head hung low because too many hurdles are in the way. Eventually, we stop challenging the process. We adjust and acclimate to a new reality, one that does not frustrate us because it does not involve any of our dreams. We grow numb with doubt or uncertainty and wait for a neon sign to point us in the right direction.¹⁹

From what this author knows of those who serve in the educational roles in churches, there is a resolve for most to finish well. For many this may involve being allowed to dream at their present church; to be able to set some great goals. This author saw a sign recently in a store on some artwork. The sign read, “You’re never too old to dream a dream.” The older ME should never put down that hope to dream big dreams and see them come to fruition. The question comes to this: “When was the last time you took a break from the rush of your everyday priorities and reflected on the dreams God has placed in your heart?”²⁰

The church should encourage the ME to dream. This may be something this person has not had time to do because of the urgent things that keep coming up at church.

¹⁹ Bonem, *Leading*, 136.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 137.

Giving that ME time away from the urgent may help him get a better handle on his skills and gifts which in turn may help the church.

Bo Prosser continues this thought of allowing the ME to dream and gives some specific questions to ask oneself. Bo suggests that the ME ask himself the following,

As you think of mission, what are the guiding thoughts that form the foundation of which you are as an educator and what you want to do? What is your dream for ministry? Write one statement that puts your spiritual insights into focus that defines your main purpose for being.

As you think of vision, what ways can you use to accomplish your mission? What gifts have you been given to help you make your vision a reality? How will you fulfill your dream? Write one statement that puts your abilities to work, that describes your spiritual gifts in balance with your spiritual insights.”²¹

Prosser goes to the heart of the matter and tells ME’s to search themselves to see what it is that they believe they are called to do. This obviously takes time with the Lord and time to write down what God has put on the person’s heart. Some ME’s may have never been given that opportunity to dream. This again is where the church needs to step in and encourage this to happen.

The author asked a number of ME’s who have some national prominence in the SBC to give him help with a questionnaire (see Appendix 3 for a list of questions). One of the questions that was asked of the ME’s was what issues had they heard that might warrant ME’s to change positions. The answers could be summed up in seven areas: (1) they want to have a clear understanding of the direction in which their church is moving, (2) they want to end well or to make a difference, (3) they do not feel challenged and/or desire a new challenge, (4) they do not feel appreciated, (5) they outgrew the position, (6)

²¹ Ronald W. Pratt, comp., *Facing Critical Issues in Christian Education*, by Bo Prosser (Nashville: Convention Press, 1995), 124-125.

there is a lack of connection with the Senior Pastor, (7) the church changes Senior Pastors, (8) the church drifted from its vision.

Each of the above statements are areas in which churches could provide help for the M.E. In looking at number one above, each staff person wants to know where their church is headed; this is only natural. Not knowing the direction of the church leaves a staff member in limbo and can cause frustration because the staff member is not sure how to direct the ministries he is responsible for.

The number two response above shows that most ME's fifty years of age and older want to leave a lasting difference in their church; they want to end well. To do this, the church and the M.E. need to communicate effectively. The M.E. needs to make sure he lets the church know his direction and possibly what he would like to see ultimately accomplished. Whether the church can accommodate this is another question, but it is necessary for the M.E. to at least make sure the church understands his desire. This is helpful for all involved.

In response to number three, it can be seen that most ME's not only want to make a difference but desire a challenge in their ministry. It is not hard to get into cruise control. We all can become busy, but sometimes that busyness just becomes a monotonous roar of things we have done over and over again. Each M.E. needs new challenges. Churches need to encourage ME's to broaden their horizons and ask them directly, "What are the things they would like to do?" This can only happen if the church and the M.E. take the initiative.

In number four the response acknowledges that being told you are appreciated is a normal human need. No one works well in an environment that shows no appreciation. In most churches, the associate staff, ME, or support staff, are just seen as subordinates to

the Sr. Pastor. Although the Sr. Pastor deserves all the encouragement he can get, it is helpful for churches to recognize how the ministries of the other staff have helped the church. There does need to be some shared appreciation for all staff in the church. This helps alleviate any form of jealousy or rivalry of staff. ME's usually serve in the background and will not get the recognition of the Sr. Pastor or the Music Pastor or even the Youth Pastor. So the church should make the effort to show some form of appreciation for the ME.

The fifth response shows how some ME's have come to a point where they just outgrew the position. In some cases the ME has come to the realization that he accomplished all he can in that position. This author felt this realization in one of his churches and God used that knowledge to move him to another church. ME's may need to be open and honest with their Sr. Pastor in this regards. The Sr. Pastor must also not be fearful when this happens and should not seek to create a tough environment for the ME.

The sixth response indicates that being able to connect with the Senior Pastor is essential for the ministry of the ME. In many churches the ME and the Senior Pastor are the positions that share the most time together. If an ME does not connect with the Senior Pastor, this can present a very lonely existence for the ME.

The seventh response points to the fact that when a church changes Sr. Pastors, there is usually a fear on the part of the remaining church staff as to what this may mean for their position. This author has been in the position on three occasions where the church changed Sr. Pastors. He is currently in between Sr. Pastors waiting on his third Sr. Pastor. For most staff, the fear of the unknown usually translates in the ME looking for a new position in another church.

The eighth response shows how vision is crucial for any church. For an ME to grow, he must know and support the vision of the church. So when a church begins to drift from its vision, it can be discouraging for the ME. There is no surprise that this can also lead an ME to look for another position.

The author also asked this group of nationally known ME's their thoughts on how churches can best use the experience of Ministers of Education 50 years of age and older. The answers were in five categories: (1) use them to recruit and train workers (2) use them to build relationships (3) use them to build Bible Studies to reach, teach, and disciple (4) use them to equip younger ME's and (5) use them to train young pastors.

Each church should realize that for the ME, recruiting and training workers is almost second nature. The church should capitalize on this desire and talent. To instead waste the time of the ME in areas that do not make eternal significance is, to this author, incredibly ignorant of the church. Too many times this author has heard from ME's who were given tasks that a volunteer could do, but instead the ME was forced to take on the task because no one else would do it.

Churches should take the opportunity to use ME's in building relationships in order to mentor others. This author has tried to use relationships he has built in order to mentor men in his church. Many times people in a church might confide more in the ME than the Sr. Pastor simply because they think the Sr. Pastor does not have the time. ME's and churches should take advantage of this by allowing the ME to tap into those relationships in order to mentor those people.

Another natural area for the ME who is 50 years of age or older to be used by their church is in the area of building Bible studies to reach, teach, and disciple. One might think that this is a given. But for many ME's they might find themselves tied up in

too many administrative issues to allow them to use that experience of how to build Bible Study units. Churches need to seek ways to make sure the ME does not get tied up in areas he needs to give over to volunteers to do. Sr. Pastors and church leaders should seek to help the ME make sure he is free to build the Sunday School or Small Group ministry of the church and that it is not just left up to chance. The ME should weekly be asked how this is happening and if it is not, what is keeping him from helping the Sunday School or Small Group ministry from growing.

The two last thoughts that were shared with this author by the nationally recognized ME's were in the areas of training younger ME's and younger pastors. Obviously there is a connection between the ME who is 50 years of age and older with a younger ME. In this relationship, a church must be willing to allow its experienced ME to take some time to help the younger ME get established. This will encourage that younger ME to one day do the same for another ME. What is the connection between an experienced ME and a younger Sr. Pastor? For many younger Sr. Pastors, they are serving in churches where they are the only staff member. The experienced ME can come alongside this younger Pastor and help him know how to build a Sunday School and Small Group ministry. There may also be a situation where the experienced ME finds himself in a situation where he is older than the Sr. Pastor. The experienced ME must agree mutually on how this relationship will work. If the younger Sr. Pastor is wise, he will ask the experienced ME's advice on critical issues before progressing. If the experienced ME has been at the church for a while prior to the younger Sr. Pastor coming, then there is much the experienced ME can share with the younger Sr. Pastor to help him avoid pitfalls.

To conclude this section, the author would like to give some summary thoughts

from the survey he has conducted with the 233 staff over the educational ministries of their church:

1. ME's seem to want long-term associations with the church they serve.
2. Most ME's seem to be satisfied with where they are serving.
3. The positions most sought by ME's 50 years of age and older to move toward are those of Executive Pastor and Sr. Pastor.
4. There are lots of titles for the position of the person who is over the education ministries of the church. So don't worry about choosing a wrong title.
5. In the newer SBC churches, the title of ME seems to be going away. But for most established churches the title is still viable.
6. Seminaries seem to be struggling with how to prepare the person who is the ME.
7. In spite of what one calls the position of the person over the education program of the church, there needs to be someone to emphasize teaching doctrine, church history, and evangelism training.
8. For those ME's who have had responsibility changes, the changes did not help them become more focused to a specific area of ministry. It appears that they just got broader.
9. Most ME's are not considering changing positions.
10. For those who had responsibility changes, it was not at their initiative but they did not mind the change.
11. Churches seem to like the title of Associate Pastor of
12. There is some dissatisfaction in the ministry, but the reasons vary greatly.

13. Some research done says that the main dissatisfaction factor is not getting along with the Sr. Pastor.
14. There is just as much significance in the calling of an ME as there is for a Sr. Pastor.
15. A calling to the ministry is important.
16. All ME's need to stay fresh in their area of ministry.
17. The ME must establish open communication with the Sr. Pastor and the congregation.

Thoughts from the Author on What Positions Can be Designed to Better Use the 50 Years of Age and Older Minister of Education's Experience

Most ME's 50 years of age and older have a great deal of experience and could be used in lots of different situations. Unfortunately this experience and use of a utility person in churches could present problems for the ME. The author has served in almost every position imaginable in churches with the exception of playing a musical instrument or singing (thank goodness that never happened). As a result, a staff member like the author may get pulled in lots of different directions and not be able to accomplish the tasks he feels called to unless the church allows the ME to find a role that best fits the strengths and experience he possesses.

For the ME 50 years of age and older to even consider acquiring a position where he can better use his experience, he needs to discover where he excels. Bo Prosser shares the following insights as to how the ME can begin getting to the place of finding that position,

What is your strongest spiritual gift? Do some self-examination and develop that gift into a specialty. Become an expert. Becoming an expert, a 'specialist' will add to your self-esteem and to your credibility among your colleagues and

congregation.

Pick the area of specialty in which you are gifted, and develop that gift to the fullest. Network with other experts in your city. Read all you can about the field. Write articles about your knowledge. Lead conferences and teach classes about your area of expertise. Being recognized as a specialist will help you approach thriving.²²

This author agrees with Prosser in that the ME 50 years of age and older needs to take the time to examine himself. Then take that area which he feels he excels in and make it a specialty. The ME then should get to know everything possible about that area and make himself available to other churches to be used as a resource. Or if his church is willing and can budget for it, work to design a ministry role that can better use a specialty area of the ME.

Areas such as leadership training, witness training, counseling, church budget design, use of building space, curriculum writing and design, and the role of an interim/transitional pastor are all areas this author has heard ME's take part in. This ME has served in six of these roles himself, feels quite capable to lead in any of these, and has found other former ME's who found one of the listed areas to be a specialty for them, then made that specialty their staff position.

One position that seems to fit the ME who is 50 years of age and older and can be designed to especially use his experience is that of an Executive Pastor. Most ME's who have served for some time have gained enormous experience in a number of different areas of the church. Many ME's also find themselves "in charge" when the Senior Pastor is gone. This author has been the "second in command" in three different churches he has served in. Each time the Senior Pastor was unavailable, the person the church

²² Ibid., 129.

expected to take over was the ME. Thus it seems to be a clear indicator that when the ME 50 years of age and older considers what is next for him in regards to role changes, the position that can best use that experience may be that of an Executive Pastor.

In the questionnaire this author sent to nationally known ME's, a question was posed of the respondents regarding what positions, titles, and/or responsibility changes they had seen Ministers of Education change to mostly. There were two responses given to this question: Executive Pastor and Sr. Pastor. These answers follow the survey results this author obtained from an earlier survey done with 233 other ME's across the country.

From the survey of 233 ME's, the positions most respondents considered moving to were either that of an Executive Pastor or that of a Sr. Pastor. It seems reasonable that if these positions are what many ME's 50 years of age or older may be seeking, then those churches with this type of ME may want to ask them if they too desire to move into one of those positions. This discussion must be done under conditions that the ME can be completely honest and the church wants to help the ME in whatever way it can. Of course, if the church already has a Sr. Pastor, then the discussion for the church is a mute point, but this may help the ME realize he may need to move on. If the ME truly wishes to move toward some type of Executive Pastor Position, the exact description of the job must first be known and the church and the ME must then see if the details can be worked out.

In looking at the role of the Executive Pastor, the Job Description can differ from church to church, but the idea behind the position is similar. David Fletcher in his Doctor of Ministry thesis, states this in regards to how the idea of Executive Pastor evolved,

The term *Executive Pastor* was fully developed by 1999. Dave Travis, after

convening a group of Senior Pastors and Executive Pastors in 1999 under the auspices of Leadership Network, concluded that a church is ready for an Executive Pastor when it realizes that the items previously discussed in this section are not sufficient.

What's driving this issue at your church? At the root, there are two basic, interwoven answers. Growth and/or pain. The system has outgrown the team as it is currently structured and gifted. Staff, whether Senior Pastor or other team members, is feeling the stress. Often the board makes note of this and wonders: Is there another way? Also, it is usually a Senior Pastor's initiative to seek a solution such as an Executive Pastor.

The literature shows difficulty at first identifying the Executive Pastor function. As time progressed, the term and role became clearer, especially as the large church and megachurch became commonplace.²³

From Fletcher's research, it seems that the Executive Pastor position grew through megachurches that had staff which became overstressed. Other research was done by Wes Kiel on the topic of the Executive Pastor. Fletcher quotes Kiel in regards to this research:

From his research of more than sixty churches in fifteen states, Wes Kiel expands this concept:

'My research would indicate that, as a general rule, the churches that have implemented this position in the last 10 or 15 years have done so when the staff of the church has reached six to ten full time positions or the equivalent in part time and full time staff persons. It is therefore the size of the staff (and the program) more than the size of the congregation which most directly leads to the establishment of the role or hiring of the person to fill it.'²⁴

From this author's research, a similar finding has come out. The results of the survey this author conducted with 233 staff members who have served over the education ministries of their churches found that those who moved into the title of Executive Pastor, the sizes of their churches varied from 1000's to as little as 200's. Obviously there had to

²³ David R. Fletcher, "Case-Studies of Policy and Vision Implementation by the Executive Pastor" (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas, 2004), 48.

²⁴ Ibid., 51.

be great differences in the responsibilities in churches of difference sizes, but the concept of the position may be the same.

So exactly what does an Executive Pastor do? John Piper says this about the Executive Pastor position at his church,

The Executive Pastor differs from the Senior Pastor in that he gives more immediate oversight to organization: planning, directing and evaluating the ministries of the church. He is the human nerve-center for the creation, development, staffing, coordinating, and direction of ministries in the church. He sees that these things get done, so that communication, harmony and faithfulness to the vision prevail. Most immediately he relates directly to the staff as the central sprocket that all their cogs fit into. He serves them by seeing that their efforts cohere with the mission of the church and the other areas of ministry, and that they have the share of resources they need.²⁵

McKinney Church in Ft. Worth, Texas recently posted the following on an online service for the position of Executive Pastor for their church. It reads,

The Executive Pastor's primary role is to partner with the Senior Pastor as the primary strategic implementer of our church-wide pursuit to develop Christ-centered people who make a difference. At a general level, this means that the Executive Pastor is responsible for translating the vision of the Elders and Senior Pastor into measurable goals and for creating and sustaining systems and environments that will help our staff team succeed.²⁶

Obviously, from what John Piper wrote and from the Job Description of the Executive Pastor position of McKinney Church, the position's function seems to serve to help take administrative issues off the Sr. Pastor. Of course, how many of the functions and what kind will differ according to the size of the church and the Sr. Pastor's wishes.

For some experienced ME's, the church has allowed some flexibility. One ME

²⁵ John Piper, "Executive Pastor: What And Why?," *Desiring God*, 1997, http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/TasteAndSee/ByDate/1997/3068_Executive_Pastor_What_And_Why// (accessed August 28, 2010).

²⁶ *Churchstaff.com*, August 28, 2005, <http://www.churchstaffing.com/job/27426//> (accessed August 28, 2010).

this author corresponded with indicated that his church allows great flexibility for him to use his experience and gifts in lots of ways. For instance, he shared that he has been able to organize and lead mission trips to various places. Also, he has had the opportunity to preach at his church and others as well. From this ME's correspondence, it sounded as if he was very satisfied with what the church has allowed him to do with his experience.

There are many ways churches can use the ME 50 years of age and older. There may be a formal position such as Executive Pastor that the church can establish which will help take better advantage of all the skills and gifts the ME has, or the church may just informally allow the ME some flexibility to go after areas he feels will allow his experience be of better use.

If a church chooses to informally allow the ME to expand his role into different ministries, the ME needs to be very careful that he does not get stretched too far. There has to be some type of agreement between the church and the ME that although the ME is taking on some extra roles, this is only informal and should not be considered part of his job description unless the ME and the church decide to change the ME's role.

There are so many different roles the ME 50 years of age and older can take on. It is up to the church and the ME to make this happen. For this to come about there has to be an open dialogue between the Senior Pastor, the church, and the ME. Also, the ME has to feel there is freedom for him to share his desire. Obviously, the wishes of the ME can be constrained by many different issues such as church budget and the actual needs of the church. But if none of these are an issue, then the possibilities can be endless for the ME who is 50 years of age or older, or actually for any ME.

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APPENDIX 1

MINISTER OF EDUCATION SURVEY – TOTAL RESPONDANTS

(Responses are indicated in percentages followed by the exact number who responded)

1. Gender

- Male: 91.8%, 213
- Female: 8.2%, 19

answered question: 232

skipped question: 1

2. Age

- 21-29: 2.6%, 6
- 30-39: 18.5%, 43
- 40-49: 32.3%, 75
- 50-59: 35.3%, 82
- 60-69: 10.8%, 25
- 70-up: 0.4%, 1

answered question: 232

skipped question: 1

3. Which state is your ministry located in?

- Alabama - 48
- Arkansas - 1
- Florida - 18
- Georgia - 15
- Missouri - 1
- North Carolina - 67
- Oklahoma - 2
- South Carolina - 10
- Tennessee - 29
- Texas - 16
- Virginia - 30

answered question: 233

skipped question: 0

4. Size of your church (average Sunday School and/or Small Group attendance):

- less than or equal to 200: 8.2%, 19
- 201 to 499 37.8%, 88

- 500 to 799 17.2%, 40
- 800 to 999 11.6%, 27
- 1000 to 1499 9.0%, 21
- 1500 to 1999 5.2%, 12
- 2000 + 11.2%, 26

answered question: 233

skipped question: 0

5. What is your current Ministry title?

(For simplicity purposes, the author has attempted to group these according to ministry areas. The number after a title indicates how many used that specific title. The last grouping is one in which the remainder of titles did not seem to conveniently fit into a grouping.)

- Executive Pastor - 19
- Executive Pastor & Director of Church Planting
- Executive Pastor of Ministries
- Executive Pastor of Education & Administration
- Minister of Education - 28
- Minister of Christian Education - 2
- Minister of Christian Education (Associate Pastor)
- Education Pastor - 4
- Pastor of Education - 2
- Associate Pastor of Education - 5
- Associate Pastor - Minister of Education - 8
- Associate Pastor in Christian Education
- Minister of Education/Administration - 10
- Minister of Administration & Education
- Associate Pastor Education & Administration - 3
- Director of Christian Education and Administration
- Associate Pastor of Administration & Education
- Pastor of Education and Administration
- Associate Pastor – 18
- Senior Associate Pastor - 3
- Minister of Education and Senior Adults -4
- Minister of Music & Education - 4
- Minister of Worship and Education
- Associate Pastor Music/Education
- Pastor of Worship and Education
- Music/Education/Associate Pastor
- Associate Pastor in Education and Outreach
- Pastor of Education and Evangelism
- Minister of Education/Outreach
- Associate Pastor of Education and Outreach
- Education and Outreach Pastor

- Associate Pastor for Outreach and Education
- Associate Pastor of Education & Outreach
- Education & Missions Pastor
- Minister of Education/Missions
- Pastor of Education & Missions
- Minister to/with Adults - 5
- Adult Education Pastor
- Adult Discipleship & Leadership
- Associate Pastor – Adults
- Director of Adult Ministries
- Minister of Adult Education
- Pastor of Adult Ministries
- Associate Pastor for Adults
- Minister of Adult Discipleship
- Pastor of Adult Education
- Associate Pastor of Married Adults
- Minister of Adult Learning
- Minister to Young Adults
- Minister for Adult Education
- Adult Ministries Pastor
- Pastor of Adult Ministries
- Associate Pastor for Adult Ministries & Education Coordinator
- Minister of Young Adults and Discipleship
- Associate Pastor of Disciplemaking and Pastoral Ministry
- Associate Pastor for Education and Discipleship
- Associate Pastor / Discipleship
- Associate Pastor Of Discipleship
- Discipleship & Family Pastor
- Minister of Education and Discipleship
- Pastor of Discipleship and Administration
- Discipleship Minister - 2
- Pastor for Discipleship
- Associate Pastor - Education and Discipleship -2
- Associate Pastor of Discipleship
- Associate Pastor for Discipleship Ministries
- Discipleship Pastor
- Minister of Discipleship and Congregational Ministries
- Minister of Education & Discipleship
- Discipleship & Missions
- Minister of Discipleship & Missions
- Minister of Spiritual Formation - 3
- Minister of Spiritual Growth
- Pastor of Spiritual Development
- Christian Formation

- Pastor for Spiritual Formation and Mission Engagement
- Minister for Spiritual Development
- Minister of Missions and Faith Development
- Associate Pastor of Spiritual Formation
- Associate Pastor for Spiritual Maturity
- Pastor of Small Groups
- Groups Pastor
- Home Group Pastor
- Minister of Connect Groups
- Small Groups Pastor
- LifeGroup Pastor
- Associate Pastor - Small Groups, Discipleship, Family Ministry
- Community Life Shepherd
- Missions and LifeGroup pastor
- Teaching Pastor
- Senior Pastor
- Pastor
- Campus Pastor
- Elder/Pastor
- Associate Pastor/Student Pastor
- Associate/youth Pastor
- Minister of Youth, Education & Outreach
- Minister of Education and Youth - 2
- Education, Missions, Discipleship, Students
- Associate Pastor for Students and Discipleship
- Assoc Pastor Education and Youth
- Minister for Education and Students
- Minister of Education and Children (all)
- Minister of Education and Children
- Children's Pastor
- Minister of Education/Children/Preschool
- Ministry Director for Children and Discipleship
- Associate Pastor to Families
- Pastor of Family & Community Life
- Associate Pastor: Minister to Families
- Minister of Education and Family
- Minister of Education & Family Life
- Marriage and Family Minister
- Minister of Adults/Church Administrator
- Associate Pastor of Administration and Adult Ministries
- Minister of Evangelism, Education, and Administration
- Director of Education/Outreach/Senior Care Ministry
- Minister of Education and Missions, Adults
- Adult Education, Evangelism and Assimilation

- Associate Pastor for Spiritual Formation, Missions and Single Adults
- Associate Pastor - Missions, Median and Senior Adults - 2
- Pastor of Church Growth
- Commissioned minister
- Senior Associate Pastor, Executive Pastor
- Associate Pastor - Education/Program Ministries
- Connection Pastor

answered question: 33

skipped question: 0

6. Are you considered:

- Full Time: 93.1%, 217
- Part Time: 6.9%, 16

answered question: 233

skipped question: 0

7. Are you primarily responsible for the education ministries (such as Sunday School, Small Groups, Discipleship Training) of your church?

- Yes: 91.3%, 209
- No: 8.7%, 20

answered question: 229

skipped question: 4

8. How long have you served at your current church?

- Less than 1 year: 5.6%, 13
- 1 to 3 years: 23.3%, 54
- 4 to 8 years: 30.2%, 70
- Over 8 years: 40.9%, 95

answered question: 232

skipped question: 1

9. Has your title changed since being at your current church? If "No" skip to #17.

- Yes: 40.3%, 91
- No: 59.7%, 135

answered question: 226

skipped question: 7

10. If your title has changed, what was (were) the other title(s)?

1. Music & Children
2. Min. of Youth and Education
3. Minister of Activities
4. Minister of Family Enrichment
5. Assimilation/Evangelism Pastor, Adult Education Pastor
6. Minister to College and Singles
7. Minister of Youth and Recreation

8. Minister of Education, Administrative Pastor
9. Sunday School Director or Administrator or Administrative Assistant
10. Minister of Recreation; Minister of Median Adults and Discipleship
11. Minister of Education/Administration
12. na
13. Associate Student Minister/ Discipleship Minister
14. Children's Pastor
15. Associate/Education Pastor
16. Minister of Youth & Children
17. Minister to College & Single Adults
18. Administration/ Family Ministries
19. Student Pastor
20. Minister of Education/Outreach/Admin
21. Minister of Music and Education
22. Special Projects Coordinator, Dir. of College Ministries
23. Visitation Minister
24. Minister of Youth & Children
25. Minister to Children
26. Women's Pastor
27. Minister of Adults
28. Administrative Pastor
29. Minister with Children and Their Families
30. No title change but added responsibilities
31. Minister of Education
32. Interim Music minister
33. Minister of Education & Missions
34. Administrative Pastor
35. Adult Ed was added
36. Minister of Adults
37. Student Minister
38. Assoc Pastor for Spiritual Growth and Single Adults
39. Missions, Evangelism, and Discipleship Pastor
40. Community Outreach was added
41. Pastoral Intern
42. Minister of Youth, Minister of Youth and Children
43. Student ministry
44. Associate Pastor Adult Education
45. Full time Minister of Youth
46. Pastor of Administration
47. Minister of Music
48. Outreach pastor to Executive pastor to church planting
49. Minister of Education and Senior Adults
50. Pastoral Assistant; Minister of Recreation and Discipleship
51. Youth Pastor
52. Small Groups Pastor
53. Pastor

54. Minister of Education; Coordinator of Ministries
55. Minister to Students
56. Youth Minister
57. Minister of Youth and Education
58. Christian Education
59. Minister of Youth and Children
60. Family Pastor
61. Evangelism
62. added Associate Pastor
63. Treasurer, Volunteer Administrator
64. Associate Pastor
65. Minister of Family Life
66. Executive Pastor
67. Minister of education
68. Minister of Education
69. Student Pastor
70. Associate Pastor of Students
71. Minister of Education
72. Minister of Youth
73. Singles Minister
74. Youth Minister
75. Associate Pastor--Students
76. Associate Pastor Education & Adult Ministry Associate Pastor Education
77. Associate Pastor
78. Associate Pastor of Youth
79. Minister of Education and Administration
80. Minister of Education
81. Associate Pastor
82. Associate Pastor, Outreach Minister
83. Minister of Education & Administration
84. Education & Youth/Education & Administration
85. Minister of Education
86. Minister of Education
87. Minister of Education/Staff Coordinator/Program Coordinator
88. Associate Pastor - Students
89. Minister of Education
90. Pastor to Young Married Adults
91. Education Pastor
92. Associate Pastor of Education & Administration
93. Minister of Education
94. Young Adult Pastor
95. Singles Minister, Minister of Pastoral Care, Outreach Minister, Sr. Adult Minister

answered question 95

skipped question 138

11. When your title changed, did your responsibilities change also?

- Yes: 85.6%, 83
- No: 14.4%, 14

answered question: 97

skipped question: 136

12. If your responsibilities changed, did they increase, decrease, or remain about the same?

- Increase: 72.9%, 70
- Decrease 4.2%, 4
- Remain about the same: 22.9%, 22

answered question: 96

skipped question: 137

13. Did your responsibilities become more focused to a specific area of ministry?

- Yes: 46.4%, 45
- No: 53.6%, 52

answered question: 97

skipped question: 136

14. Was the change due to your initiative?

- Yes: 44.3%, 43
- No: 55.7%, 54

answered question: 97

skipped question: 136

15. If not, who initiated the change? (answer all that apply)

- Sr. Pastor: 92.9%, 52
- Personnel Committee: 33.9%, 19
- Deacons: 5.4%, 3
- Other (please specify): 13

answered question: 56

skipped question: 177

16. Has the change been positive for you?

Yes: 93.8%, 91

No: 6.2%, 6

answered question: 97

skipped question: 136

17. Are you satisfied with the current position?

Yes: 87.0%, 200

No: 13.0%, 30

answered question: 230

skipped question: 3

18. Are you considering moving to another church to obtain a position and title you feel more suited for?

Yes: 16.1%, 37

No: 83.9%, 193

answered question: 230

skipped question: 3

19. Have you moved from one church to another to obtain the ministry title that you now have?

Yes: 19.5%, 45

No: 80.5%, 186

answered question: 231

skipped question: 2

20. What reason(s) may have added to your consideration of a title, position, job responsibility change? Check one or more of the following:

- Went back to school and changed my ministry emphasis: 8.9%, 17
- Wanted to better use my gifts: 52.1%, 100
- Developed some lifestyle limitations (physical limitations, age limitations): 3.6%, 7
- Someone left the position I now hold: 17.7%, 34
- Was a better fit for my family: 11.5%, 22
- Not Applicable: 32.3%, 62
- Other (please specify): 53

1. Moved from pastorate to associate position in order to learn a while and spend more time with family.

2. Had previous experience in education (taught in Public schools before coming on staff)

3. With the addition of another minister on staff, we changed the associates' titles to "Associate Pastor" and "Associate Pastor of . . ."

4. God prepared me and moved me to the position. My knowledge of the church and the people over the years helped me grow into this role

5. God's continued leading in my life and ministry

6. I do not understand the question - see #19

7. Working smarter, also worked for a pastor that was a poor leader.

8. I have a very diverse background and want to use my unique background, education, and giftedness in a more encompassing role.

9. Was pastor for 20 plus years and the Lord moved me to this church in this capacity. I did not seek it nor was I needing to change from my last church ministry. In other words, I was at peace where I was but the Lord unsettled that peace and now that peace resides in this current ministry endeavor.

10. Hurricane Katrina

11. Calling

12. Retirement from Associational Ministry (DOM)

13. I am considering a change, of what type I am not sure. This is a small congregation and the need for this position is rapidly changing. If I leave this

position I may leave ministry all together.

14. Better match with skills & gifts of Senior Pastor

15. I like my job. My function is very broad.

16. Did not fill a vacant position at the church - added to my responsibilities with my full approval

17. True calling

18. Shift focus from Sp Growth to Sp Formation. Missions person left and I gained her role which suited my gifts too.

19. Responding to the needs of a growing church family and staff.

20. Our church needed to specifically focus on children's and adult ministry

21. Many Reasons

22. Called to this church

23. God's leading

24. I was also Chief of staff and the new senior pastor did not need one, he is good with folks.

25. Questions about where we are being led as a church.

26. Simply a God-call change in ministry

27. Better fit within whole staff

28. God called me to minister in this church. (I was an elementary music teacher in Chesapeake and my husband's job brought us to the Richmond area.)

29. Church Growth

30. Church growth required an Associate Pastor.

31. New position created by church and I fit the picture of the position

32. The leading of the Holy Spirit - "a God thing"

33. Transitioned from Student Ministry to Education Ministry when I moved to my current position 10 years ago.

34. Relationship with staff members at current church

35. Position/Locale fit me/my family

36. I left academic teaching to return to congregational ministry.

37. Allowed me to focus on adults after 25+ years as a minister of education with few educational staff

38. Church grew, job description grew

39. Work of God in heart

40. Had trouble balancing "old school" SS outreach and structure paradigms with changing cultural norms.

41. God's leading!

42. It is an interim position for 2 years

43. Led where no one was leading - took responsibility

44. Latest change due to consolidating position by adding administration due to my Business background and church finances. I have what was two full time positions, too much!

45. Budget issues and shortfalls at the last church

46. Wanted more responsibility and influence

47. Experience - more oversight to other staff

48. Questions about where we are being led as a church.

49. New Pastor's Request

50. No position change...just title change.

51. My gifts and passions align with the vision and direction of our church.

52. Determining whether God was wanting to use me in a different way...

53. God told me I had a new work to do

answered question: 192

skipped question: 41

21. Do you anticipate staying in your current position for the rest of your ministry?

Yes: 58.3%, 133

No: 41.7%, 95

answered question: 228

skipped question: 5

22. If you had your ideal position, what would the title be?

(For purposes of reference, the author has divided the positions into 21 groups that seem to come close to a similar idea. Numbers after a title show how many gave this title. The last two groups are those that are catch all groups – those answers that did not seem to fit anywhere.)

- Pastor - 7
- Senior Pastor - 16
- Executive Pastor - 21
- Minister of Education - 17
- Minister of Christian Education
- Associate Pastor Education Ministry
- Associate Pastor - 9
- Education / Administration - 2
- Education Pastor – 6
- Minister of Education & Discipleship - 2
- Church administrator - 2
- Have it - 24
- Not - sure - 2
- Missionary - 4
- Associational missionary
- Executive Pastor for Ministries
- Executive Pastor Emeritus
- Executive Pastor with Missions involvement
- Executive Pastor of Ministry
- Similar - with executive pastor responsibilities
- Lead Pastor - 2
- Teaching Pastor - 11
- Senior Minister
- Preaching Pastor
- Teaching Pastor, Staff Coordinator
- Solely teach/preach
- Groups Pastor

- Pastor of Spiritual Formation
- Pastor of Missional Living
- Pastor of Discipleship and Missions
- Pastor of Spiritual Development
- Pastor of Ministries
- LifeGroup Pastor
- May include spiritual formation
- It's semantics but "pastor of Spiritual Development"
- Minister of Spiritual Maturity
- Spiritual Director
- Christian Development or Spiritual Maturity Pastor
- Disciple Maker
- Discipleship Pastor with limited volunteer direct reports.
- Minister of Discipleship & Missions
- Minister of Discipling and Maturity
- Minister of Discipleship - 2
- Current position - Discipleship & Missions
- Small Group Discipleship
- Family counseling
- Pastoral Counseling
- Pastoral Counselor
- Family Pastor - 2
- Minister of Faith and Family Formation
- Minister of Family and other Learning Communities
- Pastor of Family Ministry
- Family Life Minister
- Marriage & Family Life Pastor
- Marriage and Family Minister
- Minister of Worship
- Worship Leader
- Music and Senior Adults
- Music Ministry / Worship / Arts
- Worship Pastor
- College professor
- College/Seminary Professor
- Seminary or college professor
- Minister of Pastoral Care
- Pastoral Care
- Present position but w/ more orientation to pastoral ministry
- Minister of Missions/Missions Pastor
- Missions/ Admin
- Minister of Missions
- Outreach
- Minister of Evangelism

- Minister to Youth and Children
- Minister of Youth and Missions
- Minister of Senior Adults/Administration
- In a few years associate pastor for senior adults 55+
- Men's Pastor
- Senior Associate Pastor
- Church Planter
- Minister
- Outreach, Missions, Education, Admin
- Minister of Evangelism, Education, and Administration
- It would not be a dual role in Children's ministry and Educational ministry.
- Faith and Personal Development Coach and Teaching Pastor
- Associate Pastor of Equipping
- Generations Pastor
- Cruise Ship Chaplain
- Titles really do not matter to me.
- What it finally is now is best it will be
- Title irrelevant - effective in reaching and building believers for the kingdom
- This answers #21... I don't know. Am under the persuasion that until the Lord moves, remain at your post!
- Really don't know - open to God moving me
- Title does not matter to me
- Not sure
- Am not hung up on titles. I have carried an Associate Pastor title for most of my ministry.
- n/a
- doesn't matter
- Titles do not matter to me.
- title doesn't affect me
- No idea
- A Disciple of Christ
- This job is ideal for me, it is just that the position itself may be transitioning to something else because the church is declining.
- Minister of Kingdom Growth - Ha -Minister of Education is fine
- I don't know ... God has given me a passion for small groups that he allowed me to use in student ministry and then transition into adult small groups. The job is very similar, just with a different demographic of people.
- Title the same but more responsible for other age group ministers.

answered question: 198

skipped question: 35

23. Do you feel your current ministry position is rewarding?

Yes: 96.1%, 223

No: 3.9%, 9

answered question: 232

skipped question: 1

24. In the past 3 years, have you given serious consideration to changing positions and becoming (please check any that apply):

- A Senior Pastor: 25.1%, 55
- An Executive Pastor: 15.5%, 34
- A Christian Education Professor in college or seminary: 11.9%, 26
- A denominational employee: 9.1%, 20
- A Para-Church organization staff member: 4.6%, 10
- I have not considered changing positions: 47.0%, 103
- Other (please specify): 16.4%, 36
 1. Pastor of Education
 2. Public School Teacher, Social Worker
 3. Being female has a great limitation in changing jobs. I agree Southern Baptist do not ordain women, but what I have to offer is significant in caring for people's educational and spiritual needs.
 4. Out of ministry
 5. I sense God's calling to help make disciples - "position" irrelevant
 6. More specific position, current responsibility too much
 7. College chaplain
 8. Minister of Education & Discipleship
 9. Secular
 10. Professor
 11. Non-church ministry
 12. My current position
 13. No
 14. Foreign Missionary
 15. Career Missionary
 16. Associate Pastor
 17. Church Plant
 18. Worship Leader / Music Ministry Only
 19. Feel a sense of calling to pastor in the future
 20. More on-mission with the position I currently have
 21. Have considered leaving the ministry or getting a ministry position outside of the church.
 22. Mission Minister
 23. My husband and I are considering the international mission field.
 24. Associational missionary
 25. Self-Employed Consultant
 26. Chaplaincy, senior position in human capital arena
 27. Possibly an Education Ministry Consultant for a Master Plan Building firm.
 28. Chaplaincy is a consideration in about 5 years because of age.
 29. Adjunct professor in college or seminary (not necessarily CE)
 30. I moved to this position less than three years ago.

31. Yes focusing on older adults
32. Have considered initiating a ministry to a unique niche of young leaders
33. IMB missionary
34. Age limits me to pursue other options, but contentment does too
35. Curriculum writer
36. Min of education

answered question: 219

skipped question: 14

25. What ministry titles are you aware of that others have who are responsible for education ministries in churches?

(Due to the enormous number of different titles given, the list has been alphabetized with numbers after some titles indicating the number of times that title was used. Some respondents gave examples of multiple titles)

- Administration
- Administration, Missions, Outreach
- Administrative Pastor
- Administrator
- Adult Minister
- Adult Ministries Pastor
- Adult Pastor
- Adult Sunday School Pastor
- Assimilation - 2
- Assistant Pastor of Small Groups
- Associate
- Associate Pastor of Education - 8
- Associate Pastor – 24
- Associate Pastor Administration
- Associate Pastor- Education
- Associate Pastor for Education - 2
- Associate Pastor for Spiritual Formation
- Associate Pastor of Discipleship
- Associate Pastor of Education/Administration
- Associate Pastor of Education/Music
- Associate Pastor of Education/Youth
- Associate Pastor of Spiritual Maturity
- Associate Pastor/Education - 2
- Bible Study Leader
- Body Life Coordinator
- Chief of Staff
- Children and Youth minister
- Children's Minister
- Children's Pastor - 2
- Christian Education Ministries
- Christian Education Pastor - 2

- Christian Formation - 2
- Church Development Pastor
- Community Pastor
- Congregational Care
- Connection Pastor
- Connections Pastor - 2
- Director of Education Ministries
- Director of Ministries
- Director of Small Group Ministries
- Director of Spiritual Formation - 3
- Disciple Maker
- Disciple Making Pastor
- Discipleship
- Discipleship director - 2
- Discipleship Minister
- Discipleship Pastor - 18
- Discipleship/education Minister
- Discipleship/Families
- Education - 2
- Education Director - 3
- Education Minister - 2
- Education Pastor - 10
- Education/Administration -2
- Education/Music
- Education/Outreach
- Education/Youth
- Equipping Pastor
- Executive Pastor - 9
- Executive Pastor of Education
- Executive Teaching
- Family Life Minister
- Family Life Pastor - 2
- Family Minister - 2
- Family Ministries Pastor - 2
- Family Ministry/ Family Ministry Pastor -2
- Family Pastor - 5
- Formations Pastor
- Growth Group leader
- Lay person (Volunteer)
- Lead Pastor
- Life formations Minister
- Life Group Pastor - 3
- Life Minister
- Life Ministries Pastor

- Marriage and Family Minister
- Maturity Pastor
- Minister of Adult and Family Life
- Minister of Adult Discipleship
- Minister of Assimilation
- Minister of Body Life
- Minister of Christian Development
- Minister of Christian Discipleship
- Minister of Christian Formation
- Minister of Discipleship – 21
- Minister of Discipleship - 5
- Minister of Education - 43
- Minister of Education & Youth
- Minister of Equipping - 2
- Minister of Faith Foundations
- Minister of Life Groups
- Minister of Maturation
- Minister of Maturity - 6
- Minister of Miscellaneous
- Minister of Pastoral Care
- Minister of Small Groups - 3
- Minister of Spiritual Formation - 15
- Minister of Spiritual Maturity
- Minister of Students and Education
- Minister of Students and Outreach
- Minister to Adults - 2
- Minister to Families - 2
- Minister to Small Groups
- Minister to Students and their families
- Ministries Pastor
- Ministry Life Pastor
- Ministry of etc.
- Missions, Music, Students, Administration
- MRE
- Music Pastor
- Music Minister - 2
- Next Generations Pastor
- Overseer of Educational Ministries
- Pastor
- Pastor for Christian Formations
- Pastor for Discipleship -5
- Pastor of Adult Education
- Pastor of Biblical Foundations
- Pastor of Discipleship and Outreach

- Pastor of Equipping and Discipleship
- Pastor of Family Discipleship
- Pastor of Family Ministries
- Pastor of Life Development
- Pastor of Maturity
- Pastor of Ministries
- Pastor of Spiritual Development - 2
- Pastor of Spiritual Growth/Discipleship
- Pastor of Spiritual Maturity
- Pastor to (age-group specific)
- Pastor to Adults
- Pastor, "age-graded positions"
- Pastor/Associate Pastor of Spiritual Formation - 2
- Pastor/Minister of Educational Ministries
- Pastor/Minister/Associate Pastor/Church Growth - 5
- Personal Growth Pastor
- Preschool Pastor
- Senior Adults
- Senior Educator
- Senior Executive Pastor
- Small Group Coordinator
- Small Group Director
- Small Group leader - 2
- Small Group Minister
- Small Group(s) Pastor - 20
- Small Groups Coordinator
- Small Groups Minister
- Spiritual development, education
- Spiritual Formation - 6
- Sr. Adult Pastor
- Student Minister
- Sunday school Director - 3
- Superintendent of Sunday School
- Teaching pastor - 2
- Training and Equipping
- Training Pastor
- Women's minister
- Youth and Education - 2
- Youth Pastor - 3

answered question: 179

skipped question: 54

APPENDIX 2

MINISTER OF EDUCATION SURVEY – AGES 50 AND ABOVE RESPONDANTS

(Responses are indicated in percentages followed by the exact number who responded)

1. Gender

- Male: 88%, 95
- Female: 12%, 13

answered question: 108

2. Age

- 50-59: 75.9%, 82
- 60-69: 23.1%, 25
- 70-up: 0.9 %, 1

answered question: 108

3. Which state is your ministry located in?

- Alabama - 21
- Florida - 8
- Georgia - 6
- Missouri 1
- North Carolina - 29
- Oklahoma - 1
- South Carolina - 3
- Tennessee - 12
- Texas - 10
- Virginia - 16

answered question: 107

4. Size of your church (average Sunday School and/or Small Group attendance):

- less than or equal to 200: 4.6%, 5
- 201 to 499: 37%, 40
- 500 to 799: 16.7%, 18
- 800 to 999: 15.7%, 17
- 1000 to 1499: 8.3%, 9
- 1500 to 1999: 5.6%, 6
- 2000 +: 12%, 13

answered question: 108

5. What is your current Ministry title?

(For simplicity purposes, the author has attempted to group these according to ministry areas. The number after a title indicates how many used that specific title. The last grouping is one in which the remainder of titles did not seem to conveniently fit into a grouping.)

- Executive Pastor - 9
- Executive Pastor of Education & Administration
- Minister of Education - 10
- Associate Pastor - Minister of Education - 4
- Minister of Christian Education
- Education Pastor
- Associate Pastor of/for Education - 2
- Minister of Christian Education
- Minister of Christian Education (Associate Pastor)
- Associate Pastor - 11
- Minister of Education and Administration - 6
- Associate Pastor in Education/Administration
- Minister of Education/Church Administrator
- Associate Pastor of Administration & Education
- Associate Pastor Education & Administration
- Pastor of education and Administration
- Director of Christian Education and Administration
- Minister to/with Adults - 4
- Minister of/for Adult Education - 2
- Associate Pastor - Adults
- Pastor of Adult Ministries
- Associate Pastor for Adults
- Minister of Adult Learning
- Adult Ministries Pastor
- Pastor of Adult Ministries
- Minister of Adult Discipleship
- Associate Pastor for Adult Ministries & Education Coordinator
- Minister of Spiritual Formation - 3
- Christian Formation
- Minister for spiritual development
- Associate Pastor for Spiritual Maturity
- Pastor for Spiritual Formation and Mission Engagement
- Associate Pastor of Discipleship - 2
- Minister of Education & Discipleship
- Pastor of Discipleship and Administration
- Discipleship & Missions
- Minister of Discipleship and Congregational Ministries
- Senior Associate Pastor - 2
- Senior Associate Pastor, Executive Pastor

- Pastor of Small Groups
- Home Group Pastor
- Community Life shepherd
- Minister of Connect Groups
- Connection Pastor
- Minister of Education/Outreach
- Associate Pastor for Outreach and Education
- Associate Pastor of Education & Outreach
- Minister of Education and Senior Adults - 4
- Director of Education/Outreach/Senior Care Ministry
- Minister of Education and Missions, Adults
- Minister of Music & Education - 2
- Music/Education/Associate Pastor
- Pastor of Worship and Education
- Pastor
- Elder/Pastor
- Minister of Education/Missions
- Assoc. Pastor - Missions, Median and Senior Adults
- Ministry Director for Children and Discipleship
- Assoc. Pastor - Missions, Median and Senior Adults
- Associate Pastor - Education/Program Ministries

answered question: 108

6. Are you considered:

- Full Time: 90.7%, 98
- Part Time: 9.3%, 10

answered question 108

7. Are you primarily responsible for the education ministries (such as Sunday School, Small Groups, Discipleship Training) of your church?

- Yes: 91.5%, 97
- No: 8.5%, 9

answered question: 106

skipped question: 2

8. How long have you served at your current church?

- Less than 1 year: 3.7%, 4
- 1 to 3 years: 16.7%, 18
- 4 to 8 years: 30.6%, 33
- Over 8 years: 49.1% , 53

answered question 108

9. Has your title changed since being at your current church? If "No" skip to #17.

- Yes: 35.8%, 38
- No: 64.2%, 68

answered question: 106

skipped question: 2

10. If your title has changed, what was (were) the other title(s)?

1. Minister of Youth and Education
2. Minister of Education, Administrative Pastor
3. Sunday School Director or Administrator or Administrative Assistant
4. Minister of Education/Administration
5. Administration/ Family Ministries
6. Minister of Education/Outreach/Admin
7. Visitation Minister
8. Women's Pastor
9. Minister of Adults
10. Minister with Children and Their Families
11. No title change but added responsibilities
12. Minister of Education
13. Minister of Education & Missions
14. Administrative Pastor
15. Community Outreach was added
16. Minister of Youth, Minister of Youth and Children
17. Associate Pastor Adult Education
18. Pastor of Administration
19. Minister of Music
20. Minister of Education and Senior Adults
21. Minister of Education; Coordinator of Ministries
22. Christian Education
23. Evangelism
24. Executive Pastor
25. Minister of education
26. Minister of Education
27. Minister of Youth
28. Singles Minister
29. Associate Pastor Education & Adult Ministry
30. Associate Pastor
31. Minister of Education and Administration
32. Minister of Education & Administration
33. Education & Youth/Education & Administration
34. Minister of Education
35. Minister of Education/Staff Coordinator/Program Coordinator
36. Minister of Education
37. Associate Pastor of Education & Administration
38. Minister of Education
39. Singles Minister, Minister of Pastoral Care, Outreach Minister, Sr. Adult Minister

answered question: 39

skipped question: 69

11. When your title changed, did your responsibilities change also?

- Yes: 75%, 30
- No: 25%, 10

answered question: 40

skipped question: 68

12. If your responsibilities changed, did they increase, decrease, or remain about the same?

- Increase: 62.5%, 25
- Decrease: 2.5%, 1
- Remain about the same: 35%, 14

answered question: 40

skipped question: 68

13. Did your responsibilities become more focused to a specific area of ministry?

- Yes: 41.5%, 17
- No: 58.5%, 24

answered question: 41

skipped question: 67

14. Was the change due to your initiative?

- Yes: 45%, 18
- No: 55%, 22

answered question: 40

skipped question: 68

15. If not, who initiated the change? (answer all that apply)

- Sr. Pastor: 91.3%, 21
- Personnel Committee: 34.8%, 8
- Deacons: 4.3%, 1
- Other (please specify): 4

answered question: 23

skipped question: 85

16. Has the change been positive for you?

Yes: 92.5%, 37

No: 7.5%, 3

answered question: 40

skipped question: 68

17. Are you satisfied with the current position?

Yes: 86.8%, 92

No: 13.2%, 14

answered question: 106

skipped question: 2

18. Are you considering moving to another church to obtain a position and title you feel more suited for?

Yes: 14%, 15

No: 86%, 92

answered question: 107

skipped question: 1

19. Have you moved from one church to another to obtain the ministry title that you now have?

Yes: 13.1%, 14

No: 86.9%, 93

answered question: 107

skipped question: 1

20. What reason(s) may have added to your consideration of a title, position, job responsibility change? Check one or more of the following:

- Went back to school and changed my ministry emphasis: 4.9%, 4
- Wanted to better use my gifts: 46.3%, 38
- Developed some lifestyle limitations (physical limitations, age limitations): 1.2%, 1
- Someone left the position I now hold: 19.5%, 16
- Was a better fit for my family: 4.9%, 4
- Not Applicable: 40.2%, 33
- Other (please specify): 25
 1. Was pastor for 20 plus years and the Lord moved me to this church in this capacity. I did not seek it nor was I needing to change from my last church ministry. In other words, I was at peace where I was but the Lord unsettled that peace and now that peace resides in this current ministry endeavor.
 2. Calling
 3. Retirement from Associational Ministry (DOM)
 4. I am considering a change, of what type I am not sure. This is a small congregation and the need for this position is rapidly changing. If I leave this position I may leave ministry all together.
 5. I like my job. My function is very broad.
 6. Did not fill a vacant position at the church - added to my responsibilities with my full approval
 7. Our church needed to specifically focus on children's and adult ministry
 8. I was also Chief of staff and the new senior pastor did not need one, he is good with folks
 9. Questions about where we are being led as a church
 10. Simply a God-call change in ministry
 11. Better fit within whole staff
 12. God called me to minister in this church. (I was an elementary music teacher in Chesapeake and my husband's job brought us to the Richmond area.)
 13. Position/Locale fit me/my family
 14. I left academic teaching to return to congregational ministry.

15. Allowed me to focus on adults after 25+ years as a minister of education with few ed. staff
16. God's leading!
17. It is an interim position for 2 years
18. Latest change due to consolidating position by adding administration due to my Business background and church finances. I have what were two full time positions, too much!
19. Led where no one was leading - took responsibility
20. Budget issues and shortfalls at the last church
21. Experience - more oversight to other staff
22. Questions about where we are being led as a church
23. New Pastor's Request
24. No position change...just title change.
25. God told me I had a new work to do

answered question: 82

skipped question: 26

21. Do you anticipate staying in your current position for the rest of your ministry?

Yes: 70.9%, 73

No: 29.1%, 30

answered question: 103

skipped question: 5

22. If you had your ideal position, what would the title be?

(The answers have been grouped into 7 different categories for easier referencing with numbers next to some titles indicating how many (if more than one) indicated that specific title. The last category is a catch all for numerous answers that did not seem to fit into any of the other categories.)

- Executive Pastor for Ministries
- Executive Pastor Emeritus
- Executive Pastor – 10
- Executive Pastor with Missions Involvement
- Education/Administration – 1
- Minister of Education – 5
- Associate Pastor Education Ministry
- Minister of Christian Education
- Associate Pastor/Minister of Education
- Education Pastor or Teaching Pastor
- It would be a dual role in Children's ministry and Educational ministry
- Minister of Discipling and Maturity
- Discipleship & Missions
- Associate Pastor of Equipping
- Minister of Discipleship – 2\
- Small Group Discipleship

- Groups pastor
- Pastor of Spiritual Formation
- Pastor/Sr. Pastor/Lead Pastor – 4
- Pastoral Care
- Associate Pastor – 3
- Present position but with more orientation to pastoral ministry
- Pastor of Ministries
- Minister of Pastoral Care
- Worship Pastor
- Music Ministry/Worship Arts
- In a few years associate pastor for senior adults 55+
- Minister of Sr. Adults/Administration
- Minister of Family and other Learning Communities
- Family Pastor
- Marriage and Family Pastor
- Generations Pastor
- Outreach
- Administrator
- Family Counseling
- Foreign Missionary
- Cruise Ship Chaplain
- Minister
- Minister of Kingdom Growth – Ha – Minister of Education is fine
- Same as the one they currently have – 22
- Not sure – 2
- I don't know. Am under the persuasion that until the Lord moves, remain at your post!
- This job is ideal for me, it is just that the position itself may be transitioning to something else because the church is declining
- Really don't know – open to God moving me
- Doesn't matter – 2
- Title doesn't affect me

answered question: 90

skipped question: 18

23. Do you feel your current ministry position is rewarding?

Yes: 96.3%, 104

No: 3.7%, 4

answered question: 108

24. In the past 3 years, have you given serious consideration to changing positions and becoming (please check any that apply):

- A Senior Pastor: 18.6%, 19

- An Executive Pastor: 18.6%, 19
- A Christian Education Professor in college or seminary: 8.8%, 9
- A denominational employee: 6.9%, 7
- A Para-Church organization staff member: 2%, 2
- I have not considered changing positions: 52.9%, 54
- Other (please specify): 16.7%, 17
 1. Being female has a great limitation in changing jobs. I agree Southern Baptist do not ordain women, but what I have to offer is significant in caring for people's educational and spiritual needs.
 2. Out of ministry
 3. College chaplain
 4. Secular
 5. My current position
 6. No
 7. Foreign Missionary
 8. Associate Pastor
 9. Worship Leader / Music Ministry Only
 10. My husband and I are considering the international mission field.
 11. Self-Employed Consultant
 12. Chaplaincy, senior position in human capital arena
 13. Adjunct professor in college or seminary (not necessarily CE)
 14. I moved to this position less than three years ago.
 15. Yes focusing on older adults
 16. Age limits me to pursue other options, but contentment does too
 17. Minister of education

answered question: 102

skipped question: 6

25. What ministry titles are you aware of that others have who are responsible for education ministries in churches?

(To coordinate with the first Chart, this list has been alphabetized with numbers after titles indicated the number of times that title was given. Some respondents gave multiple titles in their reply.)

- Administration - 2
- Administrative Pastor
- Adult Pastor
- Adult Sunday School Pastor
- Assimilation
- Assistant Pastor of Small Groups
- Associate Pastor - 9
- Associate Pastor of Education - 7
- Associate Pastor of Spiritual Maturity
- Bible study Leader
- Body Life Coordinator
- Chief of Staff

- Children and Youth Ministers
- Children's Pastor
- Christian Education Ministries
- Christian Education Pastor
- Christian Education Pastor
- Christian Formations
- Church Development Pastor
- Church Growth
- Congregational Care
- Director of Ministries
- Discipleship - 2
- Discipleship director
- Discipleship Minister,
- Discipleship Pastor - 2
- Discipleship/Small Group
- Education Director
- Education Director
- Education Minister
- Education Pastor - 2
- Education/Administration
- Education/Administration
- Education/Family Pastor
- Education/Music
- Education/Outreach
- Education/Youth
- Educational Pastor
- Equipping Pastor
- Executive
- Executive Pastor - 6
- Executive Pastor of Education
- Family Life Pastor
- Family Minister - 2
- Family Ministries
- Family Ministry Pastor
- Formations Pastor
- Lead Pastor
- Life Group Pastor
- Maturity
- Minister of Adult Discipleship
- Minister of Body Life
- Minister of Christian Discipleship
- Minister of Christian Formation
- Minister of Discipleship - 2
- Minister of Education - 19

- Minister of Equipping
 - Minister of Maturity - 3
 - Minister of Miscellaneous
 - Minister of Pastoral Care
 - Minister of Spiritual Formation - 8
 - Minister of Students and Outreach
 - Minister to Adults
 - Minister to Families
 - Minister to/of Small Groups - 3
 - Ministries Pastor
 - Ministry Life Pastor
 - MRE
 - Pastor
 - Pastor for Christian formations
 - Pastor of Biblical Foundations
 - Pastor of Discipleship
 - Pastor of Discipleship
 - Pastor of Discipleship and Outreach
 - Pastor of Education
 - Pastor of Equipping and Discipleship
 - Pastor of Family Discipleship
 - Pastor of Ministries
 - Personal Growth Pastor
 - Preschool Pastor
 - Senior Adult Pastor
 - Senior Executive Pastor
 - Small Group Coordinator
 - Small group Leader
 - Small Group Minister
 - Small Group Pastor - 5
 - Small Groups
 - Small Groups Coordinator
 - Small Groups Minister
 - Spiritual Formation(s) - 3
 - Sunday School Director - 3
 - Teaching
 - Teaching Pastor - 2
 - Women's Minister
 - Youth Pastor
- answered question: 82
skipped question: 26

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

The following questions pertain to Ministers of Education 50 years of age or older. Understanding that not everyone divulges their age, please use your best judgment in determining a person's age in answering these questions. The title Minister of Education may not be used by every church. In these questions, please consider anyone who is the responsible party in the church for the Sunday School and/or Small Group ministry as the "Minister of Education."

1. Have you had conversations with any Ministers of Education who you think to be 50 years of age and older who have expressed ongoing struggles with their current position? How many would you estimate have come to you?
2. What issues have you seen that may warrant them to desire to change positions?
3. What issues have you seen that may have caused them to consider leaving the ministry?
4. Are you aware of any (estimate) who have indicated they want to move from their current church?
5. Are you aware of any (estimate) who have indicated they want to change positions and leave their current church?
6. Are you aware of any (estimate) who have left their current church and found a new position?
7. What positions, titles, and/or responsibility changes have you seen Ministers of Education change to mostly?
8. Do you see a trend in the Southern Baptist Convention of title changes from the traditional Minister of Education title?
9. Do you see a trend in the Southern Baptist Convention of responsibility changes from the traditional Minister of Education?

10. What in your opinion can churches do to best use the experience of Ministers of Education 50 years of age and older?
11. Do you think that churches consider age a factor when calling a Minister of Education?
12. What age range do you think is the optimum age range churches consider in calling a Minister of Education:
20 – 29, 30 – 39, 40 – 49, 50 – 59, 60 – up.

VITA

Benjamin F. Haygood

PERSONAL

Born: May 14, 1955

Married: Carol E. Beam, April 25, 1981

Children: Ashley Elizabeth, born October 10, 1982

David Benjamin, born September 27, 1984

EDUCATIONAL

B.S., Georgia Southern College, 1977

M.A.R.E., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988

MINISTERIAL

Licensed: 1987, Calvary Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tennessee

Ordained: 1992, Countryside Baptist Church, Clearwater, Florida

PROFESSIONAL

Campus Staff, Campus Crusade for Christ, 1978 – 1981

Minister of Education and Youth, First Baptist Church, Greenbrier, Tennessee,
1988 - 1992Minister of Education and Administration, Countryside Baptist Church,
Clearwater, Florida, 1992 - 1997Minister of Education and Administration, Bethany Place Baptist Church, 1997 -
present