

ABSTRACT

RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH AND CLERGY WITHIN THE WESLEYAN CHURCH

by

Brian Voyght Bradford

In many large churches (over one thousand in weekend worship attendance) today, a vast relational disconnect exists between senior pastors and pastoral staff team members. As a result, many staff pastors feel unsatisfied in their team roles and relationships as well as feeling devalued as leader. This relational deficiency frequently results in a lack of communication, trust, and belief in and with the senior leader. The staff pastor's productivity decreases and the church ceases to be what God designed it to be—a place of relational and social connection.

The purpose of this study was to determine characteristics of relational leadership and utilize these traits to assess the relational and leadership health of the top twenty flagship churches of the Wesleyan Church of North America. The assessment was completed using two instruments: the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) and the Relational Support Scale (RSS). The OLA measured the organizational health of the churches using six servant leadership characteristics. The RSS measured church health in regards to four relational leadership characteristics. Semi-structured senior pastor interviews were also utilized as a supplementary measure.

This explanatory, non-experimental, mixed-design study used standardized, Web-based surveys, phone calls, and e-mails to gather the necessary data.

An analysis of the findings suggests that senior pastors tend to view their relational leadership performance and ability in a more positive manner than do their pastoral staff members or key lay leaders.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Introduction

After graduating seminary, the young pastor is eager to join the staff team of a church that averages over twelve hundred attendees at their weekend services. In doing so, the minister feels a certain level of accomplishment. By simply being offered the position, the emerging pastor feels a sense of privilege. Many other qualified candidates applied for the job, yet the senior pastor, staff, and board members chose this specific minister. Also, the *Lone Ranger* pastor stereotype was never appealing to this recent graduate, who is full of ideas and ideals. The upstart young clergyperson resists serving God's sheep alone, instead opting for a ministry model that incorporates other ministers who possess like passion and zeal for service and people?

Among the many possible benefits of working on a church staff, mentoring is a key advantage. The assistant pastor frequently dreams of the senior leader seeking him or her out to have coffee and solve all of the church's issues. This new clergy assumed that his or her weekly routine would likely incorporate extensive deliberations with his or her ministerial supervisor regarding contemporary theological issues and ministry-specific quandaries. However, reality soon provides a sad wake-up call. In five years of full-time ministry, only a few times could the assistant pastor ever remember the senior minister inviting him or her to connect relationally or talk about much of anything related to his or her personal life or ministry in a one-on-one setting.

This account seems, sadly enough, to be standard in today's larger churches with multiple staff members. An associate can rarely find time to connect with the senior

pastor, much less have the senior leader purposely invest in his or her personal life or ministry. Even though the assistant pastor may crave added investment, lead pastors are often unable or unwilling to oblige the request for more time. Time is already a precious commodity in the professional world of large church ministry. According to Robert B. McKenna and Paul R. Yost, “Pastors face extreme work pressure because of the daily confrontations with not only personal and personnel problems, but also the confrontations in the church...” (180). Although shepherding a church requires significant skill in relationships, team members regularly fail to live out healthy relationships among themselves. Essentially, “leadership is a relationship” (Wright 2). Apart from God and family, the senior leader’s most important relationship must be with staff members if the church and church leaders are to experience relational and spiritual vitality.

A small amount of investment into a leadership relationship can pay immense dividends. As one pastor shares about a key mentoring relationship, “I will never forget the first time I heard a person say to me that he was going to prayerfully invest in my growth as a leader in women’s ministries” (Lennartson 15). A relational connection from the leader to the follower forever changed this minister’s life. If made a priority, all pastors possess the same potential to influence another up-and-coming minister for the kingdom.

The relationship formed between a senior church leader and his or her staff must be paramount, second only to the leader’s fellowship with God and family, yet many lead pastors are out of touch with the personal lives, and even ministries, of their subordinates. True relational leaders should never allow such a disconnect to transpire: “Resonant

leaders are in tune with those around them” (Boyatzis and McKee 4). Senior pastors must be counted in the number of leaders that are “in tune” with their pastoral staff members.

Purpose

Using the Organizational Leadership Assessment and the Relational Support Scale, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the relational leadership characteristics and the subsequent relational health that exists between the senior pastor, the full-time pastoral staff members, and lay leaders of the twenty largest (at least one thousand persons in weekend worship attendance) Wesleyan churches in North America.

Research Questions

The following three research questions helped to evaluate the research project.

Research Question #1

Using the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) and the Relational Support Scale (RSS), how did the Wesleyan senior pastors, staff pastors, and lay leaders rate according to the ten relational leadership characteristics?

Research Question #2

Using the findings of the OLA and the RSS, how did the perspectives of the senior pastors, pastoral staff pastors, and lay leaders differ and align in accordance with the relational leadership characteristics?

Research Question #3

What other characteristics and practices of relational health emerged as a result of this study, specifically the pastor’s and lay leader’s health in connection with relational leadership?

Definition of Terms

The following words are used as defined throughout the project.

Relational Leadership

Leadership expert Dr. John C. Maxwell succinctly defines leadership in his book *Leadership 101* as simply “influence” (61). However, I hold that leadership, especially relational leadership, is more than simply influence. Biblical, relational leadership is influencing others through Christ-centered relationships. In biblical, relational leadership, influence still exists; however, Christ is the focus, and the influencing occurs in and through a close personal relationship. Although leadership can and does still occur apart from an intimate, personal relationship, the Christlike picture of leadership is one of personal ties between leader and follower.

Health

Health is a commonly used term today. Most individuals automatically think of physical health when the term surfaces in conversation. Conversely, I used health in this study in reference to the relational health of a church staff. If the staff aligns closely with the ten themes (authenticity, valuing people, development, community, leadership, delegation, mentoring, coaching, collegial social, and collegial task) identified in the OLA and RSS tools, then they are considered healthy.

Ministry Intervention

I studied senior pastors, full-time pastoral staff members, and lay church leaders of large Wesleyan churches in North America in an attempt to gauge the relational health of the organization. Cross-sectional design surveys were sent out in an effort to gain a realistic picture of their relational vibrancy. Upon organizing and charting the results, I

compiled and analyzed the data. Using the results of the two surveys, I highlighted positive characteristics along with deficiencies. Overall, results were shared only with the senior pastor upon his or her request and only regarding his or her church. I specifically guarded the identity of the participants, even in the results offered to senior pastors, pertaining to their own church staffs and leadership teams. In addition, these individual church findings were revealed only after all of the participants completed the online surveys.

This study took place over the course of a nine-month period. I spent July through September 2010 sending out surveys and correspondingly gathering data. I spent October through December 2010 compiling the data into graphs, charts, and organizing the information into a user-friendly format for the pastors to read and study. January through March 2011 was the time for personal connection with the senior leaders in order to review their results and encourage what future actions were necessary for them and their pastoral staffs to exhibit more relational leadership characteristics.

Context

In order to address relational leadership adequately in the context of large Wesleyan churches, I examined the contexts of these corresponding churches.

Denominational Description

Before describing the individual churches, I must adequately portray the denomination. I derived the following denominational description from the official Wesleyan Church Web site:

The Wesleyan Church is an evangelical, Protestant denomination. We offer the good news that faith in Jesus Christ makes possible a wonderful personal relationship with God, a holy life empowered by His Holy Spirit for witness and service, and assurance of eternal life in heaven. Our

ministries emphasize practical Bible teaching, uplifting worship, and special programs to meet a variety of life needs. With World Headquarters in Fishers, Indiana, The Wesleyan Church has nearly 400,000 constituents in 5,000 churches and missions in 80 countries of the world. Formed in 1968 resulting from the mergers of several like-minded groups, dating back as far as 1843, The Wesleyan Church has its roots in John Wesley's Methodism. ("Who Are the Wesleyans?")

Even though the official description aids in understanding the Wesleyan Church as a whole, a more thorough and detailed depiction is necessary of the involved churches.

The context of this study is the Wesleyan Church of North America, and specifically their large churches. In order to be classified as a *large* church, weekend worship attendance must reach at least one thousand. At least twenty churches meet this criterion. These churches were geographically dispersed across the nation. For example, one was located in Buffalo, New York, and another in San Diego, California. Multiple full-time pastoral staff members are a guarantee in churches of this size, thus allowing me the ability to study staff and team relations thoroughly.

Church Descriptions

I surveyed numerous churches in this study. Table 1.1 lists the participating churches, detailing their location and the 2008 average weekly weekend worship attendance. I exchanged the actual church names with code names in order to protect the identity of those involved.

Table 1.1. Church Description Table

Church Name	Church Location	2008 Avg. Weekly Weekend Worship Attendance
1. Church T	Suburban Georgia	4609
2. Church E	Suburban Michigan	2762
3. Church N	Suburban Michigan	2637
4. Church H	Suburban New York	2545
5. Church L	Suburban California	2532
6. Church G	Urban Illinois	2502
7. Church S	Urban Michigan	2226
8. Church M	Suburban Maryland	2087
9. Church B	Suburban South Dakota	1843
10. Church Z	Suburban New York	1820
11. Church Q	Urban New Brunswick, Canada	1788
12. Church O	Suburban Ohio	1756
13. Church P	Urban Colorado	1519
14. Church A	Small town Maryland	1353
15. Church C	Small town New York	1346
16. Church D	Urban Indiana	1274
17. Church F	Suburban New York	1210
18. Church Y	Small town Michigan	1150
19. Church J	Small town Pennsylvania	1108
20. Church K	Urban Virginia	1105

Church T. Church T is located in suburban Georgia. The church has experienced significant growth over recent years, making it one of the largest Wesleyan congregations in North America. Church T also offers numerous worship options and two different campus locations in an effort to reach more persons for Christ. The founding and current senior pastor has served the people of Church T for over twenty years. Numerous pastors serve on staff to help the church fulfill its mission and shepherd current attendees.

Church E. Church E is located in a Michigan suburb, situated nearby a large metropolitan area. Its attendance totals in the thousands every weekend with people showing up from all across the city and the outlying areas. The church is over one hundred years old and began to grow tremendously under the leadership of its current senior pastor. The minister has been leading Church E for over thirty years and has guided the congregation through many physical, financial, and spiritual changes. This specific church continues to be a flagship church within the denomination.

Church N. Church N is a suburban congregation located in Michigan. The church is thirty years old and has a senior pastor that has served the church from its formation. Church N ministers to several thousand people on any given weekend and has a reputation for developing strong pastors and lay leaders. The church also plays a vital role within the district and denomination, as well as reaching out to its local community and other churches in the area.

Church H. Church H reaches out to several thousand people each weekend with their multiple service options. Located in upstate New York, the senior pastor has led the church for over twenty years. The church is well-known for its evangelistic fervor as it seeks to reach the lost with the good news.

Church L. Church L is located in a large suburb of California. Several thousand persons worship at the church on the weekend, attending any of their various service options. Its current senior pastor is only the third in the church's fifty-year history, and he has been their top leader for almost fifteen years. He is a prolific author, community advocate, and political activist. The church possesses a rich history of quality leadership and innovative ministry to their local community. Perennially, the senior leader of this

church also influences the greater Christian community, along with specifically equipping the local church pastor.

Church G. Church G is located in urban Illinois and hosts several thousand congregants every weekend at two different locations. Started over forty years ago, it has had the same senior pastor for thirty-five of those forty years. He has been, and still is, the instrumental leader in the church's numerical growth. The church is well-known for its emphasis on outreach and discipleship in the city and surrounding areas, as well as throughout the denomination.

Church S. Located in suburban Michigan, Church S averages over two thousand in weekend worship attendance. The church is over one hundred years old, and the current senior pastor has been leading the church for seven years. The staff and congregation commit themselves to reaching the lost in their surrounding community; thus, in recent years, significant numerical growth has occurred.

Church M. Church M is situated in a suburban area of Maryland. The current senior pastor is also the founding pastor, and he began the ministry twenty-three years ago. The church has experienced rapid growth, with worship service attendance now reaching over two thousand persons each week. The people recently built and occupied a new sanctuary that will hold approximately 2,500 persons. The church maintains an excellent reputation for Spirit-filled worship and biblical preaching.

Church B. Church B is only ten years old, yet it already averages close to two thousand persons in its weekend worship services. Regarding senior leadership, the senior pastor is also the founding pastor. Several families from a neighboring Wesleyan congregation planted the church, which is located in a growing urban area in South

Dakota. The church is aggressively evangelistic, especially reaching out to those in the twenties, thirties, and forties age range.

Church Z. Church Z is located in a suburban area of New York and has existed for over fifty years. The current senior pastor has ministered at the church for over thirty years. The congregation has recently completed the construction of several new buildings, completely debt free. The church reaches out to those locally and globally who are in need of physical and spiritual assistance.

Church Q. Church Q is located in a large, urban city in New Brunswick, Canada, and is over one hundred years old. The immediate area is growing rapidly, and the church has taken advantage of the population growth through its unashamedly evangelistic strategy and vision. The senior pastor has seen the church grow numerically from a small congregation of one hundred members to one that averages almost two thousand persons every weekend. The head minister also navigated the church through a transition from a traditional church to a more contemporary group of worshippers and worship style.

Church O. Church O has existed for ninety years, and the current senior pastor has served the church for eight of those years. The church is located in a suburban area of Ohio and hosts approximately 1,800 persons every weekend for worship. The ministerial leadership places a high emphasis on relationships and connecting, as their mission statement emphasizes a bond with God and others.

Church P. Located in a large town in Colorado, Church P averages over 1,500 worshippers at its two Sunday morning services. The church began almost sixty years ago and experienced its most significant time of growth under its current senior pastor, who has led the church for eighteen years. During his tenure, pastoral staff members have

been added and new facilities have been built. The church specializes in evangelism in its own community, as well as reaching out to unreached people groups around the globe.

Church A. Church A was established thirty-five years ago, and the current senior minister has served the congregation for the last ten years. The church has both rural and suburban congregants and averages over a thousand worshippers at its weekend worship services. Church A is a small town group of believers that is passionate about planting other churches, as it is close to starting its second plant in only a few years.

Church C. Church C is almost twenty-five years old and is located in a small town in the state of New York. The church averages close to 1,500 people at its weekend worship services, which is almost as many people as live in the town. Its worshippers are from varied religious backgrounds, including other Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church. Church C offers attendees excellent worship music and relevant Bible teaching, among other ministries in the church.

Church D. Church D is an urban church located in the Midwestern part of the United States. The church has existed for over 110 years and has recently seen tremendous growth in worship attendance. When combined, Church D's two main Sunday morning worship services average over one thousand congregants each week. The senior pastor has served the church over seven years, and he is an accomplished author, preacher, and sought-after speaker within the Wesleyan Church. In the last few years, he presided over a highly successful building campaign. Under the senior leader's supervision, the strategic initiative raised millions of dollars, and, with those funds, church leaders built a new worship facility. The church is presently continuing to

experience numerical growth and attempting to reach out to the community in innovative and effective ways.

Church F. Church F is a suburban church that is over 120 years old. Recently, the church has experienced significant growth, as they now average over 1,200 participants in their weekend worship services. Their current senior minister has led the church for a little over two years, and he regularly communicates the church's vision, which is "to lead people to Christ and into a growing relationship with Him" (Allison 1). The church specializes in offering high quality children's and students' ministries, as well as Christ-centered preaching and worship. Demographically, Church F has a healthy mixture of generations, as both young and old attend the church's weekly worship gatherings and involve themselves in the life of the church.

Church Y. Church Y is a small town church in Michigan that averages slightly over a thousand persons in weekend worship attendance. They minister to their local town as well as to several other surrounding cities and counties. In their fifty-year history, they have had only four senior pastors. The current senior pastor has been leading the church for two years after serving on the church staff for approximately ten years.

Church J. Church J is a Wesleyan congregation located in a small town in Pennsylvania. The church is almost one hundred years old and the current senior pastor has ministered at the church for twenty years. The church is passionate about sharing the light of Christ with all persons of the world. Church J also excels in its worship arts department, biblical teaching ministry, and discipleship program.

Church K. Church K is a Wesleyan congregation located in urban Virginia. Its senior pastor has led the church for twenty years and has been instrumental in its growth

and development. During his tenure, the pastoral staff has grown and facilities have been built, as the congregation has recently constructed and occupied a new church worship center. Under his leadership, worship attendance numbers have also increased from seventy-five in his first year to one thousand attendees today. Founded over eighty years ago, the local community knows Church K as a body of believers engaged in vibrant worship and offering biblical, relevant teaching.

Methodology

This work was an explanatory, non-experimental, mixed-method design study utilizing cross-sectional design type surveys and a qualitative supplementary measure. I used two standardized surveys to collect quantitative data, as well as semi-structured, follow-up interviews.

Participants

The participants were a selected sample of pastors and lay leaders of large Wesleyan churches in North America. I focused on three distinct leadership groups from each church throughout the study: five full-time pastoral staff members and two key church lay leaders from each church. The five pastors were comprised of the senior pastor and four members of the pastoral staff team. The key lay leaders were the head of the personnel committee and the vice chairperson of the local board of administration. I intentionally did not focus on support staff or part-time pastoral staff members simply in an effort to provide boundaries for the study. From each church, I hoped to retrieve data from these three unique leadership groups.

Instrumentation

I used two standardized instruments, along with semi-structured interviews, for collecting and recording data. Both instruments utilized Web-based surveys for data collection. The first specific survey tool was the Organizational Leadership Assessment. The OLA surveys/questionnaires were essentially the same, containing only minor semantic differences between the survey for the senior pastor and the survey for the pastoral staff and lay leaders. Second, I used the Relational Support Scale to retrieve additional data on the senior pastors, pastoral staff, and lay leaders. Minor word changes were also made to this instrument in order to adapt it the relevant leader.

Variables

The independent variable is the position of the people (e.g., senior pastors, assistant pastors, and lay leaders), and more specifically, the variable is an attribute independent variable. Age and years of experience regarding the pastors and leaders involved are the potential confounding variables in this case. The dependent variables are the relational strength of the senior pastor and the pastoral staff members as exhibited through their scores on the two specific instruments. The two surveys, which were administered to the senior pastors, pastoral staff teams, and lay leadership, were compared to each other. This comparison produced contextual data.

Data Collection

During the study, I administered two Web-based surveys and semi-structured interviews. The surveys were essentially the same, yet I altered some wording to accommodate for the participants, which were the senior pastors, the corresponding pastoral staff, and lay leaders. As a unique incentive for higher survey completion, I

offered a drawing for five Starbucks gift cards to any participant who completed both surveys, and I contacted senior pastors by phone or in person in order to solicit their support. By offering the gift of coffee and challenging them to support the completion of the surveys by their staff personally, I ensured a high completion rate.

Data Analysis

Based upon the data collected, the quantitative elements were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The numbers generated in the data collection process helped to describe the degree to which the churches and pastors exhibited relational leadership. Utilizing a computer and electronic spreadsheet, I tallied and charted the results of the standardized surveys and interview questions. I also garnered the services of a statistician consultant who ran the analyses using a standard statistics software program.

Generalizability

In scope, this study focused on relational church leadership within the twenty largest Wesleyan churches in North America. The study did not concentrate on churches with solo pastors or even churches with two or three pastors. Instead, multiple (more than three) pastors in leadership characterized each church. The study began in July 2009 and ended in March 2010. Even though I conducted this study within a certain denomination, I varied the churches enough (e.g., size, locale) so that the general process of examining a church's relational leadership health should be reproducible to the examination of any church of similar attendance and pastoral staff size.

Theological Foundation

The critical theological foundation of relational leadership is the doctrine of the Trinity. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit provide the ideal picture of

perfect relationships in the context of holy community. Each member encourages and intimately connects with the other as all three simultaneously work in ultimate harmony to accomplish the will of the Father. The Father desperately loves and leads the Son and Holy Spirit. The Son submits to the Father's desires. The Holy Spirit moves and works on behalf of the Father and Son. All three desire to exist together. Perfect community ceases if even one member disconnects from the group. Essentially, the basis for all relationships stems from the Holy Trinity.

An ideal, and personal, example of relational leadership is Jesus Christ. He embodied leadership perfection, and especially flawless relational leadership. Christ's ministry allowed for numerous types of relationships. The disciples were his obvious immediate circle of influence. Although twelve believers shadowed Jesus, he had three specific followers who composed his *inner circle*, yet the crowds were also a part of his leadership, as he often had *compassion* upon them and their spiritual and physical needs. No one was off-limits to Christ, even if he or she was bleeding or socially hated. He took time to build intentional relationships with the hope of influencing others for a lifetime. Effectively, Jesus of Nazareth lived the life of a true relational leader.

Moses and his relationship with his father-in-law, Jethro, also illustrate biblical relational leadership, as Moses began to move in a more relational direction regarding his oversight of God's chosen people. Exodus 18 highlights Moses' struggle to rule the Israelite people adequately. The problems were numerous, and Moses was simply one man. Therefore, his father-in-law stepped in and confronted Moses on his lack of delegation. This confrontation was possible because of his modeling of relational

leadership in Moses' life, always keeping God at the heart of their relationship. In Exodus 18:17b-19, Jethro confronted Moses, meanwhile keeping God central:

What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, *and may God be with you* [emphasis mine]. (NIV)

Jethro had a close relationship with Moses, so he possessed the ability to lead him in the development of his leadership and, more specifically, administrative skills.

Along with Christ in the New Testament, Paul provides a viable model of relational leadership. His relationships with his churches consisted of love and instruction, much like a father for a child. Often, readers find Paul challenging his parishioners to “live a life worthy of the calling they have received” (Eph. 4:1). He built a relationship with a church in order to lead them further in their knowledge and understanding of God and His love.

Similar to his churches, Paul exhibits an intimate relationship with certain individuals, of which Timothy is the most famous. The apostle utilized his relational influence to challenge and encourage Timothy in the faith and in dealings with his flock. Paul's last letter to Timothy shows his passion for God and his influence in Timothy's life: “Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction” (2 Tim. 4:2).

Like Christ and his disciples, Paul also spent vast amounts of time with his mentee, Timothy, and with his churches. By its very nature, relational leadership presupposes that quantity time, partnered with quality time, is of the essence. Without substantial amounts of time spent with his followers, Paul's relationships with them would have been superficial, causing his leadership in their lives to be minimal at best.

Just as the Holy Trinity, Jethro, Christ's earthly ministry, and Paul model relational leadership, church pastors today need to lead accordingly. Relational leadership lived out by these historical and biblical *pastors* provides a framework for ministers to follow and, in many ways, imitate. A thorough implementation of biblical relational leadership solves pastoral staff disconnectedness, among other ministerial issues pastors face today.

Overview

Chapter 2 reviews the literature associated with relational leadership, relational health, staff and team dynamics, and research methods. Chapter 3 involves discussion and explanation for the design of the study, research questions, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection, variables, and data analysis. Chapter 4 deals with the findings of the study. Chapter 5 offers a discussion of the conclusions derived from interpretation of the data, as well as practical applications of the conclusions and further study possibilities.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Introduction

A relational leadership void exists in many of today's churches. Associate, or assistant, pastors frequently feel disconnected from the senior minister on several different levels. Staff pastors sense a relational void with respect to their lead pastor's leadership due to a lack of ministerial support, personal investment, and overall deficiency of vision clarity. Church pastoral staff members needlessly suffer and become discouraged when ministers do not practice relational leadership.

Due to the relational leadership vacuum within the pastoral ranks, the aim of this study was to improve senior pastor's and staff minister's relational leadership capacity and execution of the concept. Because of this growth, the overall relational health of the church increases when church leaders practice relational leadership. Staff members discern a renewed sense of connectedness, not only to the senior leader but also to the overall vision of the church and the kingdom of God.

Relational Leadership—A Biblical Theology

God's Word is the basis for all healthy relationships, including leadership. All disciplines and social interactions begin and end with the Creator. The following pages of this study outline the bedrock for relational leadership within Scripture and church tradition.

Relational Leadership in the Holy Trinity

The central theological doctrine of relational leadership is the doctrine of the Trinity. At the heart of the Godhead, true communion exists. Brazilian theologian

Leonardo Boff suggests that from the very beginning of time, communion existed in the form of the Three-in-One (3). This intimate coexistence challenges all persons to live in the same manner since the Creator formed humanity in his image. Just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit love, give, and value each other, Christians must also understand relationships in light of this perfect communion.

Distinctions are not lost in true Trinitarian community, as each member of the Trinity is unique in his or her own manner (Girzone 42). God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all possess distinct functions, yet each are one and the same in nature. The first few verses of Scripture reveal this individuality of the Godhead. Genesis 1:26 says, “Then God said, ‘Let *us* [emphasis mine] make man in *our* [emphasis mine] image, in *our* [emphasis mine] likeness.’” God not only shows initially how unified the Trinity is, but he also alludes to each member’s unique nature (Murphree 22). Even though this reality perplexes scores of believers down through church history, the Holy Trinity shows how diversity can beautifully exist within the whole.

The Greek word *perichoresis* accurately depicts the distinctive, yet unified, nature of the Holy Trinity. John of Damascus, a seventh century theologian, was the first to describe the Three-in-One using the aforementioned term, which means, “circle dance” (Cladis 4). As leadership author George Cladis continues to describe *perichoresis* and the Divine Council, he records, “A *perichoretic* image of the Trinity is that of the three persons of God in constant movement in a circle that implies intimacy, equality, unity yet distinction, and love” (4). The unique nature of each member of the Trinity is not lost in the oneness of the Three. Instead, sameness exists amidst diversity. This *perichoretic*,

egalitarian model of the Godhead provides the perfect example of church leadership teams (Panther 31).

God is transcendent, yet imminent. The Apostle's Creed begins by stating belief in God the Father who made the heavens and the earth. He created the cosmos, yet he created humanity. The tension between infinite and the finite discloses a revealing truth about the Godhead. An all-powerful and all-knowing God designed the world and its contents; however, he still "has me in mind" (Peters 89). God not only has "me in mind" (89), but he also "cares for me." God's Son and the Holy Spirit are united here as well. Both beings seek to relate with humanity on a deep level. Ultimately, Jesus connected through the Incarnation, or through "Emmanuelism" (107) as highlighted in John 1:14 where the gospel writer states, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The Holy Spirit also connected (and seeks to connect still) with humanity, distinctly commencing with Pentecost. However, the Divine Spirit exhibits his own version of Emmanuelism through the "community of the church and especially in the sanctified life of the believer" (107). God tirelessly seeks to relate to his creation, and he does so using each member of the Trinity. As Ted Peters explains, "God is a being that exists in relationship, but it is an internal and immanent relationship. Within the divine reality itself there are sociality and community" (106). Any discussion of relationships is simply impossible without a careful examination of the example set forth by the Holy Trinity.

The interconnected, dynamic relationship exhibited by the members of the Trinity offers clear evidence as to the necessity of cooperative work efforts in leadership. God the Father creates all that exists along the space/time continuum, all the while being beyond time himself. The Son completely obeys the Father and relies on the Spirit for

guidance and assistance in all efforts. The Holy Spirit exists to empower and implement the will of the Father and Son.

With regards to the work of the Trinity, early Church father Gregory of Nyssa succinctly describes their functionality.

But in the case of the Divine nature we do not similarly learn that the Father does anything by Himself in which the Son does not work conjointly, or again that the Son has any special operation apart from the Holy Spirit; but every operation which extends from God to the Creation, and is named according to our variable conceptions of it, has its origin from the Father, and proceeds through the Son, and is perfected in the Holy Spirit. (qtd. in Schaff and Wace 334)

The Holy Trinity, yet again, models perfection in unity, service, and relational interconnectedness. The key for Gregory of Nyssa in highlighting the unity of the Trinity exists at the operational level, as shown in the quote by the recurrence of the term *operation*. Each member works together fluidly to create and minister as needed, and this operational unity requires a perfected degree of relational oneness.

Relationality within the Three-in-One depends upon each member's interaction with the other two entities. As Charles E. Gutenson states in regards to Wolfhart Pannenberg's theology, "The doctrine of the Trinity is what makes it possible to understand God as personal without the creation of the world, since the relationality essential to personhood is present in the inner-relations of the three Trinitarian persons" (286). Gutenson illustrates how inseparable *relationality* and personhood pertain to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Without a relation connection, the doctrine of the Trinity struggles to provide a viable foundation for relationships, community, and specifically relational leadership. Even with a further discussion by Gutenson regarding *absolute*

personhood and its corresponding emphasis on self (287), the relational component continues to be a mandatory element of a holistic understanding of the Holy Trinity.

Holy Trinity and Teams

As John D. Zizioulas holds, “Thus it is the ministry that more than anything else renders the Church a *relational* [original emphasis] reality, i.e. a mystery of love, reflecting here and now the very life of the Trinitarian God” (220). With this Trinitarian backdrop, relational leaders can understand the peculiar aspects of the ministry, and specifically their team, and come to appreciate and embrace these differences. Relational leadership seeks diversity on all levels, whether personality, ethnic, or socioeconomic. The relational leader does not esteem any one particular individual over another because all are unique and valued in light of the Godhead. Followers of relational leaders trust their leaders because their leaders first embrace who they are as distinct creations of God.

God’s Son, the second person of the Trinity and the ideal example of relational leadership, accomplished this feat with his selection of the twelve. This group of diverse individuals exhibited special traits and brought with them differing vocational résumés. Peter, James, and John were professional anglers (Luke 5:10), while Matthew was a tax collector (Matt. 10:3). Christ himself worked with his hands as a carpenter or contractor. Their personalities also varied person-to-person. Peter was open and outgoing, often speaking quickly as the representative for the group as a whole. Christ labeled James and John as the “Sons of Thunder” (Mark 3:17), potentially referring to their volatile personalities. Jesus’ disciples were diverse in almost every way, and relational leaders today must seek the same variety within their respective teams.

Ministry will be limited in scope and nature if all members are similar. Briefly referencing historical theology, John Wesley's class meetings, the precursors to modern-day small groups, beautifully illustrate the power of diversity within ministry. These small units of persons meeting for spiritual growth and accountability consisted of the wealthy, the destitute, the educated, and common laborers (Henderson 98). Wesley knew and understood the value of differences within ministry, and he even made room for diversity within his own leadership structure of the Methodist movement. In this way, Wesley mirrored what the Trinity still models today, an embracing of individuality within the group without compromising the message of God's love.

Holy Trinity Revisited

In spite of the differences, each member of the Trinity is dependent on the other for adoration. A Trinitarian view of community also recognizes that authentic community is possible only with actual persons operating by means of personal communication and connection (Boff 2). The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are in constant alignment and fellowship one with another. One party does not act outside of another, yet each member may be distinguished from the others. Each member accepts and encourages the others equally and sacrificially, genuinely looking to the interest of another.

Individual members of the Trinity act in accordance with the other two members. The three are one in pure existence *and* affiliation: "The Father, Son, and Spirit are not only of one metaphysical substance, but they are also *one in relationships* [original emphasis]" (Murphree 25). Scripture highlights in several locations how relationally connected Jesus was to the Father. Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father except

through me” (John 14:6b). These words paint a clear picture of how bonded the Son was to the Father. Any human who desires to reach the Father must do so through the Son.

In the same chapter of John’s gospel, Christ continued to offer deeper wisdom into his relational connectedness to the Father: “Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me” (v. 11a). In this verse, Jesus provided insight into the sheer depth of intimacy that resides in the Godhead. The Son shares the same essence within the person of the Father, and the Father shares the same fundamental nature as the Son. The two are plural, yet singular. As Jon Tal Murphree states, “Relational oneness implies that separate persons relate to one another” (26). Herein lies a key truth of relational leadership. A leader who seeks to influence others through the context of deep, committed relationships does so through embracing the team members’ diversity while encouraging their unity. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit supply the ideal model for the leader to follow.

As the fruit of the Triune relationship, love is the necessary component that allows for relational unity. As 1 John 4:8b holds, “God is love” in his very essence (Murphree 28). Without love, unity cannot exist and relationships break down. Each member of the Trinity loves equally and sacrifices uniformly; one does not wield authority over the next. All play equally important roles, and this equality and unity are only able to exist through the bond of love.

Using the Trinity as a backdrop, Jesus’ aforementioned words found in John 14 and John’s words in 1 John 4 offer definitive evidence for relational leadership in today’s church leadership structures. Now, perhaps more than ever before, senior pastors and church leaders must seek to incorporate this type of connectedness in their approach to

leading their pastoral staffs and church leadership teams. Senior leaders who are seeking to lead effectively in the twenty-first century may need initially to become introspective. They must determine whether they truly care and love their pastoral staffs, and even themselves.

First, the Holy Trinity necessitates interconnected relationships within church pastoral staffs. If these leadership groups are to reflect the nature of the God they serve, ministerial teams must consider the example set forth by the Holy Trinity. Although other team leaders may initiate group connectedness, senior leaders should be at the forefront of this bond. Whether by conversion, cooperation, or personal initiation, lead ministers frequently set the relational tone for the staff and laity. In the words of megachurch pastor and leadership expert Bill Hybels, “The speed of the leader [is] the speed of the team” (*Axiom* 94). In essence, the ability and initiative of the top leader will determine team members’ leadership potential.

Wherever the leader travels, team members follow. As the Apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” Paul did not command the Corinthians to follow the example of a group of leaders but simply that of himself and Christ. He instructed the church members to follow “my” example, not “our” example (Stanley, “State of the Art” 27). Ideally, the reality of team connectedness begins with the senior leaders honestly caring for those they lead on a regular basis. Therefore, in light of Trinitarian bonds, staff relational health and longevity require senior pastors to reexamine their passion level for their own leadership team constantly.

Secondly, relational senior leaders and pastors relentlessly need to examine their own desire to lead themselves. Without attending to their own maturation process and

setting proper boundaries, leaders fall short over the course of their ministerial lifespan: “To leave a legacy that goes beyond accomplishment alone, a leader must devote himself to matters of the heart” (Stanley, *Next Generation Leader* 152). Self-leadership is generally the most challenging for relational leaders because they are always concerned for the development of their followers and have a tendency to neglect their own growth (Hybels, “Art of Self Leadership” 86). As leaders watch over others, they frequently do so at the expense of their own relational health. This self-neglect is a distressing reality of many pastoral leaders and, combined with the rigors of typical church leadership, often contributes to ministerial burnout. When leaders lose confidence in their own leadership abilities and cease to lead themselves, their followers can become discouraged and detached. The cycle ends with senior leaders experiencing loneliness and frustration with themselves and their teams and ultimately produces personal and ministerial burnout (Ott 150).

The self-care previously discussed is a healthy self-care and is in no way narcissistic or egotistical. All relational leaders must possess a healthy sense of self and maintain an elevated sense of self-awareness. They must know who they are in Christ, along with who they are not. Looking to the Trinity, the Father is the Father, not the Son or the Spirit. The Father begets the Son and breathes the Spirit (Seamands 119). The Son possesses a different identity than the Spirit and the Father, and so forth. Therefore, the persons of the Trinity function from a realization of who they are and who they are not. The same must hold true for relational leaders. They must lead others, and themselves, out of their desire to connect with their staffs and achieve unity among diversity through the bond of love.

Senior church leaders also need to look beyond themselves and their teams to determine their level of love and heart for others. They must determine whether they care not only for themselves and their own team members but also for those whom they are desperately trying to reach with the gospel message. The relational leader and the corresponding pastoral team must never lose their heart for the lost. Even though every lead pastor will not possess the spiritual gifts/personal strength of evangelism or mercy, top church leaders still should seek to maintain a Trinitarian degree of love and compassion for team members.

With a solid foundation on the Three-in-One as a whole, relational leadership possesses even more of the Trinity's characteristics. Specifically, Trinitarian tensions characterize relational leadership. Like the Trinity, relational leadership is both/and, not either/or. Initially, leaders who lead through the context of relationships embrace the differences of their followers. Leaders admire, and even celebrate, individual nuances in personality and overall life history. However, relational leaders also understand the beauty and necessity of commonality. Loving the same God, pursuing the same goal(s), and serving alongside the same people are just a few of possible connections any given leadership team possesses. Any group, and specifically group leader, that does not encourage individuality while also promoting unity cannot demonstrate relational leadership. No team is perfect, however a relationally healthy leadership group will, at the least, show signs of these Trinitarian tensions. As Peter Scazzero illustrates regarding boundaries, church staff members should possess "respect in our togetherness yet separateness" (149). Like the Trinity, team members are one, yet they are many.

Essentially, the origin of all relationships and human bonding begins and ends with the Trinity. The Godhead existed long before human relationships came into being. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit provide the perfect model for longevity, harmony, and communion within familial and vocational relationships because they have always been and forever will be. This doctrine, which is suggested in Scripture after much textual mining by the early Church, provides a basis for the concept of relational leadership.

Humans exist for relationships. God formed them from the very beginning as communal beings. As pastoral theologian Dr. Stephen Seamands states, “[H]uman personhood, modeled after the Trinity, is essentially relational. To *be* is to *be in relationship* [original emphasis]” (121). Even in the current information age, the desire for social networking is as strong as ever. Entire companies devote their time and energy into connecting the disconnected. In fact, the Church faces the same challenge: to connect person to person and person to God. Church leaders are in the relational-connecting business.

Genesis 2:18 states, “The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone.’” Therefore, God created Eve to commune with Adam. God blessed Adam with a horizontal relational connection in Eve, and both Adam and Eve maintained their ongoing vertical relational connection with God. Herein, this three-part relationship reflects the Holy Trinity itself: three individuals all communicating together and living life as it was meant to be lived. Before the Fall, the Trinity, Adam, and Eve offer a beautiful snapshot of relational leadership: Adam leads Eve, Eve relates to Adam, and God directs both.

In summary, the Holy Trinity provides the ultimate doctrinal basis for relational leadership. The reason that the example set forth by the Triune God applies so much to relational leadership is the love, trust, and connectedness modeled by the three-in-one. The community that they exhibit models the ultimate giving and serving relationship. Without slipping into subordinationism, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit do have their own roles and yet give equally. Ultimately, they are one. Relational leaders are to strive for the same model, serving and relating uniformly while keeping their identities intact along the way. Church leaders must study and pray for help in order to lead and live like the Trinity. Apart from the Godhead, Scripture offers other backing for the concept of relational leadership.

Relational Leadership in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, several relational leadership examples exist; however, immediate attention is given to the Hebrew leader Moses. Many writers attempt to characterize Moses as a strong, individual leader who ventured alone up the mountain to hear from God. For most persons, “the name Moses usually evokes images of a lone figure towering over his flock, not quite a god but not merely mortal, either” (Baron 112). Those who subscribe to this perspective of Moses’ leadership are correct. He was a single, chosen man who achieved supernatural results through the leading of God the Father. However, this Hebrew deliverer, over time, moved in a relational direction in his approach to leadership. When he began his ministry, he was alone in the desert tending sheep, and God spoke. When he finished his ministry before the Lord, Moses was a leader who utilized a team of other leaders to help him minister to the people of God.

With God's leading, Moses allowed his leadership to morph, becoming the skilled leader God used mightily.

Pastors and church leaders must keep Moses' personal leadership journey in the forefront of their minds as an example of relational leadership growth and development. The type of leader one may be today, or is naturally, is not necessarily the type of leader God desires. God yearns for his shepherds to evolve and mature into leaders who dynamically influence others through the context of relationships. Like Moses, senior leaders and pastors can become more of a relational leader through listening intently to God's voice and allowing others to speak truth into their lives.

Initially, Moses was not a relational leader, especially early on in his career as the shepherd of Israel. He listened to God, and then he obeyed God. He rarely worried about others or his ability to relate to them. Nevertheless, Moses presents an ever-developing model of relational leadership lived out in the context of authentic community, especially towards the end of his life. His relational leadership development is best characterized as *becoming*, but not *arriving*. In the Old Testament, he *becomes* the starting point.

Early in his life, God prepared Moses for leadership. God allowed Moses to receive an excellent education, beginning when Pharaoh's daughter retrieved Moses from the Nile River after his mother purposely abandoned him. His mother forsook him in order for his life to be spared, as Pharaoh had issued imminent death threats to the Hebrew male offspring. After providentially growing up in Pharaoh's house, God called Moses to a relationship with him. God spoke to Moses in Exodus 3 from a bush burning in the desert. God even went so far as to say that he would "be with" Moses in his ministry to the Israelites (Exod. 3:12a).

Leaders who first desire to *be with* their followers are the heart of relational leadership. Leadership experts James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner affirm the importance of a leader's presence with their followers, as they assert, "The only way to truly show people you care and that you appreciate their efforts is to be out there with them. Because leadership is a relationship" (*Christian Reflections* 37). Moses knew that God would be with him, and this divine presence provided much-needed confidence in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. Later in this work, I examine more thoroughly the concept of presence ministry and leaders *being with* their followers, especially pertaining to the leadership of Christ with his disciples.

After receiving the call from God, Moses eventually surrounded himself with a team of qualified leaders to assist him in guiding the Israelites out of bondage and into the Promised Land. Members of this Mosaic team were as follows: his mother, Miriam, Aaron, Hur, Joshua, Jethro, his wife, Zipporah, and Bezalel, among others. His mother saved him from certain death. His sister, Miriam, was a leader of women and worship. As Exodus 15:20 states, "Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing." Aaron and Hur assisted in battle. Joshua became a successor for Moses. Jethro taught him administration. Zipporah saved Moses' life. Bezalel was the team artisan. Although Moses ministered on behalf of Yahweh, he did not do so alone. Numerous men and women comprised his leadership team, and he possessed a unique relationship with each team member (Baron 115).

Perhaps the most obvious leadership relationship that Moses developed was with his brother. As an ever-present help, Aaron assisted, served, and co-led whenever

possible. If Moses needed a mouthpiece, Aaron fulfilled the need (Exod. 4:13-15). When Moses left to receive God's word for the people, Aaron remained with the Israelites to help manage and lead in Moses' absence (Rendle and Beaumont 10). If Moses grew tired, Aaron assisted by holding up his hands (Exod. 17:8-13). In this particular account, Hur also physically assisted Moses. However, Aaron managed to be the main individual to whom Moses related. Moses entrusted leadership to Aaron, and Aaron led when necessary. At the same time, the two men were brothers and thus knew each other well. Their relationship, although initially connected by blood, became entrenched in the task of leadership.

Apart from Jethro, Aaron and others, God personally enabled Moses to move in a relational leadership direction. Numbers 11:16-17 records an instance where God intervened and delegated leadership to seventy elders.

The LORD said to Moses: "Bring me seventy of Israel's elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the Tent of Meeting, that they may stand there with you. I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them. They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone.

Scripture does not say whether this action was planned strategically with Moses' counsel or not. Either way, God initiated this solicitation of leadership assistance and, in the process, aided Moses' growth as a leader.

Relational Leadership in the Life and Ministry of Jesus

Even though Moses frequently led with God alone, he progressed in a more relational direction of leadership by the end of his life. Nevertheless, the New Testament offers the most complete picture of relational leadership embodied in one person. Jesus Christ provides a clear biblical example of relational leadership in the Scriptures. He

loved people with compassion and deeply desired relationships with them. In general, Jesus believed everyone is special and valued, refusing to subscribe to an abased view of humanity (Bell 134). Therefore, Christ would not simply wait for others to come to him for this connection. He esteemed personhood too much. Frequently, he was the first one to initiate contact: “He went where the people were” (Murdock 25). He proactively sought out those who needed guidance and spiritual direction in their lives. Jesus illustrated this best when he pursued those whom no one cared to pursue, especially in the case of his disciples.

Assertive, proactive behavior is a distinct characteristic of relational leadership. Unless the leader pursues the follower, the relationship will not develop. Daily activities and responsibilities frequently consume leaders to the degree that people are lost in the busyness of life and often taken for granted. Therefore, if the leader is not careful, the leader/follower relationship suffers: “As a leader it is easy to become very busy, so we must make appointments with people” (Birdsall 66). In this regard, Christ established the leadership standard. He did not passively relax and wait, for example, for his disciples to come to him. Instead, Jesus adamantly sought out his followers in their own environment. He made divine *appointments* with them. He visited their places of work and even their homes to seek them out for discipleship.

The twelve disciples were the first group of people whom Christ proactively pursued in order to establish a long-term, leadership relationship. In John 6:70, Jesus says, “Have I not chosen you, the Twelve?” These men were not ministers, as most were fishermen or men of average status and minimal schooling (Acts 4:13). However, Christ chased after them, calling them to fish for men (Mark 1:17). Similar to a church

ministerial setting, these men became his pastoral staff, and he became their unequivocal leader.

Even within this group of twelve, Jesus possessed a unique leadership relationship with three distinct individuals. Peter, James, and John comprised Jesus' inner circle of influence within the larger grouping (Coleman 24). These men always appeared wherever Jesus went, constantly desiring answers, guidance, and time with the Son of God. Because of their deep connection to Christ, Peter, James, and John continued to have a lasting impact on the New Testament world through their witness and writing even after Christ ascended to heaven.

Even among the three, Jesus loved John more than he loved any other disciple (John 13:23). Christ possessed an intimate relationship with John, which again shows the extent of personal investment Jesus made in the lives of his followers. He refused merely to lead by mandate or edict but instead to involve others in his redemption plan. Jesus grounded his mission and ministry in the very lives of those who sat under his tutelage, showing the meaning of leading through relating.

In fact, Christ's entire ministry consistently focused on people and his action on their behalf. Jesus' goal, which was "to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10), centered upon his ability to connect with humanity. People were Christ's priority, not programs or political power. In John 1:35-39, Jesus was traveling when two of his future disciples intercepted him. Christ invited the two men to follow him and see where he was staying. Eventually, the two men spent the night with Christ. The story communicates the nature of Jesus' leadership. At his core, Christ was relational. Every *interruption* of his

travels allowed him to establish a relationship in order to teach and invest in others (Birdsall 63).

In Luke 15:8-10, the parable of the lost coin exhibits Christ's ministerial emphasis on people and their value, and thus specifically relationships. He showed the importance of finding one lost coin among many (ten) lost coins. As Charles C. Manz states in relation to this parable, "He proclaims that not one person is to be cast aside as though they have no value. Each should be treated as though they were precious (every bit as precious as we ourselves are)" (91). The parable highlights Jesus' value for the individual person. Christ's relationship with even one wayward follower is vital enough for him to sacrifice his life. As one commentator states, "But to God, each person is worth the whole world, and one lost person is enough to set the wheels of redemptive grace into motion" (Heer 206). God's very nature is to pursue those who do not yet possess a relationship with him. When a leader places this type of value upon their followers and non-followers, all peoples will seek to follow them, and they will rarely lack for disciples.

The climax of this parable is in verse ten, which again offers insight into the nature of God as a relational leader. Luke 15:10 states, "In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." Verses 8 and 9 exist in the Greek language as one constant question. Therefore, the celebration that follows in verse ten is the apex of the story in which a woman finds her lost coin (Green 576). Rejoicing and celebration are the rule of the day.

God is one who celebrates his relationships with his followers. He relishes in a newfound leader-follower relationship, and this excitement offers clear evidence of his longing for this relationship with him to exist. God wants the opportunity to connect or

reconnect with those who are not currently following him. When this connection occurs, celebration is the by-product. This process of lost-found-rejoice shows the heart of God. He is by nature a compassionate, relational leader who is willing to throw a party when even one wayward follower is welcomed back onto the path of following him.

When the church's mission *and* people are top priorities, every individual within the organization feels valued and respected. In fact, group members exhibit reciprocity. They desire to give back independently, even when the giving is not a part of their regular duty. Jesus' disciples began their process of giving back primarily after the ascension. This group of twelve devoted their entire lives to the spreading of the gospel. The disciples ultimately died for the cause of Christ, exhibiting the greatest act of reciprocity in connection to what Christ did for them.

However, when leaders advertently or inadvertently devalue others, followers become discouraged and often cease to subscribe to the leader's vision. As Maxwell states, "It's one thing to communicate to people because you believe you have something of value to say. It's another to communicate with people because you believe they have value" (*21 Irrefutable Laws* 119). Jesus is the prime example of the leader who communicated with others because he believed they had value. As Luke 12:7 states, "Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows." Because of Christ's words regarding humankind's value to their Creator, all people are treasured and unique above other created beings. The biblical, relational leader must also understand this truth and come to plant this principle firmly within the DNA of his or her leadership.

Without valuing followers, leadership breaks down on every level for several reasons. Initially, followers can innately discern if the organization's leadership values them or not. Specifically in ministry settings, associate or assistant pastors easily perceive whether the senior leaders value their ministry within the overall church and even in the staff pastors' personal lives. Personal conversations, notes, and attendance at ministry events are a few ways that senior leaders show their care and concern for their staff. When these activities are absent, the relationship breaks down and devotees find themselves less and less compelled to adhere to the vision of the church and organization as a whole.

In addition, disciples gauge their worth to the leaders by how much the leaders invest in their lives and ministry on a personal and organizational level. Christ provided in every way for his disciples. He fed them (John 6:1-13), instructed them (Mark 11:20-25), and spent quantity and quality time with them. In today's modern ministerial context, many senior leaders simply cannot spend massive amounts of time with their pastoral staff. Sadly, because of modern-day demands on a leader's time, leaders often neglect this all-important time with their followers for tasks they deem more essential. However, biblical, relational leaders always find ways to lead through the context of relationships, just as Christ did. When leaders spend even the smallest amount of quality time investing in their followers, shepherds begin to lead like Christ.

As mentioned earlier, Christ specialized in pursuing those whom others neglected or deemed unworthy of relational investment. During these pursuits, he established divine appointments with these excluded individuals. During one such appointment with his disciples, he modeled the *be with* principle. Mark 3:14 states, "He appointed twelve—

designating them apostles—that they might *be with him* [emphasis mine] and that he might send them out to preach.” Just as God the Father desired to *be with* Moses (Exod. 3:12) in his ministry to the Israelites, Jesus truly wanted to *be with* his disciples. He desired time with his core team. Christ slowed down and spent quality time with those he intimately led. As Judson Birdsall states, “Jesus wanted to be with his disciples” (66). The ultimate compliment offered a pastoral leader is that the leader deeply desired to *be with* those being led. Any leader who simply does not desire to spend time with his or her followers is not a relational leader and cannot receive the ultimate production and devotion from his or her followers.

In Mark 3:14, fellowship with Christ occurs before ministry happens. Jesus appointed the disciples first to be with him. The order in which Christ appointed is critical, as the process offers insight into how he viewed his leadership of these followers. Jesus related before he challenged his disciples to minister. He knew the importance of relationship before apostleship. If these twelve individuals were to meet the needs of others, they were first to know the heart and mind of their leader. Followers of any leader, and especially of Christ, acquire this heart and head knowledge only by spending time with their leaders.

The fact that Christ desired to be with his disciples also offers clear evidence of his humanity. As mentioned previously, humans exist for relationships. Without healthy and intimate relational connections, humans develop both relational and even physical sickness. Emotional and psychological wounds also find deep healing within the context of relationships, an insight medical and mental health professionals clearly understand

(Murphree 16). The soul and spirit eternally connect to the body, and one always affects the other (Gushee 52).

Jesus' ministry specialized in healing the physically, spiritually, and relationally sick. In doing so, he highlighted his identification with the human race in his body and his longing for fellowship in spirit. By traveling and working with the twelve, he showed his humanness. Much like current pastors and leaders, Jesus also needed support.

According to renowned biblical scholar Dr. Ben Witherington, III, "He lives as a person in community, not as an isolated prophet" (151). He viewed his followers as friends and kingdom co-laborers, not as hired hands or slaves who were forced into following. The disciples needed Christ, but, in his humanity, Christ also needed the disciples.

The primary function of any leader is to *be with* his or her followers. Leaders must travel, work, and minister together in order to become a fully functioning team for the sake of the kingdom. The same principle held true for Jesus Christ as well. In Mark 3:14, the first purpose of the disciples was simply to *be with* Christ (Cole 136).

Throughout the rest of Mark's gospel, being *with Christ* comes to mean much more than just a physical location. Instead, the phrase *with Jesus* denotes a deep allegiance and commitment to the cause of Christ and his teachings. In fact, the main difference between Christ and other noted teachers of his day was the devotion that Christ required of his disciples. When Peter denied Christ three times, Mark records a simple statement uttered by a servant girl of the high priest. The gospel writer states in 14:67, "You also were *with* [emphasis mine] that Nazarene, Jesus." Here, a climax of devotion and *follower-ship* occurs. If Peter had acknowledged himself to be *with* Christ, he would have certainly faced grave consequences, potentially even the same fate as that of his leader.

When the disciples were *with* Jesus, the implications were more than simply social (Garland 129). Christ, as the perfect relational leader, demanded everything from his followers, including endurance of persecution, suffering, and even death. However, this devotion developed only after several years of following and listening to Christ and his teachings. The longer the disciples followed him, the clearer their mission became and the more intense their loyalty grew for their leader (Smith 45).

Christ being *with* his disciples illustrates how relational leadership produces loyalty, dedication, and intimate bonds. Leaders today cannot expect their followers to work their hardest, give their best, and endure hardship for the mission if the leader does not experience life with those who follow. All too often, senior pastors believe that a job description and weekly staff meeting is all that is required for their staff to be successful. However, Christ puts forth a far different model with his leadership. He showed the importance of influencing others through close, personal relationships. Jesus' personal presence offered his followers a degree of intimacy unparalleled in most leadership settings today, whether secular or Christian. This method created room for growth among the disciples and fostered fellowship that is unparalleled in most teams that have existed throughout history. Christ ultimately connected so well with his disciples and spoke truth into their lives so easily because he first included them in his work.

The heart of leaders being *with* their followers is inclusion. Jesus was an inclusive leader. He desired all to follow and know him as their personal spiritual leader and lord. Specifically, he included people on his ventures wherever he traveled. His disciples found themselves consistently at his side, and he allowed the crowds to follow freely and openly. Jesus offered good news that was open for anyone who would only believe. In

essence, any person at any time could follow the leading of Christ. Belief in him as the Son of God was the only requirement. Relational leaders will draw others who are resistant to close relationships, and, at the same time, they often surround themselves with others who desire intimate relationships as well. Social status, financial means, or intellectual capabilities provide no barrier to the message Christ offers.

The Son of God included any soul who was willing to forsake his or her old life for a new life with him as the leader. As C. Gene Wilkes states, “You will never be an effective leader until you include those you lead in what you do” (211). Biblical, relational leaders understand the necessity of including those they lead as much as possible in the mission of God. Because the disciples experienced firsthand life with the Master, productive ministry flowed from their lives and leadership even after Christ left this earth. They also included others in the work of Christ, so much so that today almost two billion persons are enlisted in the cause of Christ (Bowker 210). The present-day movement of Christ exists because Jesus first decided to include a few individuals in his ministry. Powerful and effective ministry and leadership flows first out of close-knit relationships with the few, not the many.

Problems arise when pastors realize that they simply do not wish to *be with* those they lead. Even in modern-day ministerial circles, this type of presence ministry is frequently, and sadly, a vocational hazard. As relationship expert Dr. Donald M. Joy states, “I worry about some professions which have traditional taboos against establishing any significant relationship with colleagues or clients” (13). Even though relationships and connecting are the heart of a pastoral leader’s job, many ministerial positions today call for more of a business-like approach to God’s work, not a pastoral shepherding

mentality. Christ was first a figurative shepherd to sheep. He longed to establish connections with his flock, especially those who traveled with him daily. If current church senior leaders cannot establish this type of Christlike connection, then priorities must be reevaluated and shifted to make room for relationships in church leadership.

Church leaders lack the desire to connect with their followers for various reasons such as personal insecurity or work demands. Few of these excuses are actually legitimate or biblical. Whatever the rationale, no valid substitute exists for quality time spent with followers by their corresponding leaders. Jesus set forth this model with his leadership; thus, today's church leaders must follow suit.

When a leader simply does not desire to spend time with those being led, followers sense this leadership predicament before leaders often have an opportunity to verbalize the dilemma. Group members are innately skilled in determining whether leaders want to spend time with them. The biblical, relational leader realizes that people are the goal and not a means to an end. Pastoral leaders in this relational predicament must discern the reason they are doing what they are doing. If a newfound passion for people cannot be located, pastors must seriously ponder leaving the ministry, either temporarily or permanently, in order to allow others to lead in their stead.

Because Christ lived daily and ministered regularly in the presence of his disciples, he naturally became their leader. The group of twelve, along with some women who followed as well, viewed Jesus as their unequivocal leader. Unlike the crowds, they did not follow because of the signs and wonders. As John 6:2 records, "a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick." Instead, the twelve knew he was the Son of God and the ultimate leader who cared

for and guided them into all truth. Granted, Christ did pursue them first and initially chose them (John 6:70); however, his followers freely chose to walk in his footsteps. By doing so, this group, led by Simon Peter, proclaimed that Jesus was indeed the one to whom they offered their allegiance.

Christ did not mandate obedience by wielding his omnipotence over his disciples or even over the ruler of this earth (Luke 4). In contrast, he led by attraction through his character and relationships with the disciples. When discussing Jesus and his leadership, Wilkes holds that Christ was able to lead effectively because his followers elected to follow him. “The mantle of leadership is bestowed on you by those who grasp your mission and choose to follow you.... You earn the place of a leader through authentic relationships and character” (27). Authentic relationships, when linked with character, are the keys to influencing others for the kingdom.

Christ possessed a plan for leadership, which centered on his desire for intimate relationships with his followers. He wanted to spread the message of the gospel throughout the world, and he chose to do so by influencing a small group of followers. In turn, these followers continued the work that their leader had begun, even after Christ’s ascension. In a sense, the disciples were Jesus’ *Plan A*. He desired to share himself with the world through personal interaction. In turn, his disciples would do the same. By relationally leading the twelve, Christ set a precedent for leadership and expansion of the gospel message.

This small group of followers was Jesus’ *Plan A*, and God’s Word offers no *Plan B*. John 6 contains the pivotal passage, where Christ turns to his disciples and asks them if they desire to leave him (v. 67) just as the crowds did (v. 66). Thankfully, Peter steps

up as the usual representative for the group and declares that they are not leaving the mission and cause of Christ (vv. 68-69). Their allegiance and devotion to him and to the work remains constant and sure. Jesus molded and shaped such a plan through his intimate approach to leadership through relationships (Robertson and Vermilion 22).

Relational Leadership in the Person of Paul

Similar to Christ, the Apostle Paul modeled relational leadership as well as any other leader in the New Testament. He accepted and understood the necessity of doing ministry with other trusted friends, colleagues, and mentees (McAlpine 101). For Paul, ministry meant unification through relationships for the purpose of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. He states in Galatians 1:2, “[A]nd all the brethren who are with me” (NASB). Paul loved people, and he closely endeared those he led.

Paul’s relationship with Timothy provides an exceptional example of relational leadership. Paul devoted two entire books of the New Testament to leading and relating to this dedicated young minister. In 1 Timothy 1:2, the Apostle addresses Timothy as “my true child in the faith.” Then again, in 2 Timothy 1:2, Paul calls the young pastor “my beloved son.” The author used familial language in both occurrences to describe the servant Timothy, thereby denoting Paul’s love and affection for this young man. In sum, Paul relationally connected with Timothy on a deep level.

Encouragement is an integral part of relational leadership, and Paul is Timothy’s primary supporter. In Paul’s last letter to Timothy, he is reminded of Timothy’s “sincere faith,” and he is thankful for his relationship with Timothy, praying, remembering, and longing for the emergent leader (1:3-5). The Apostle also discusses Timothy’s family, showing his care and concern for all areas of Timothy’s life. Among all of Paul’s

instructions to Timothy, he even invites Timothy to join with him in his suffering (1:8), here again showing his belief in and connection to his mentee. Paul and Timothy's spiritual, social, and vocational relationship offers an ideal picture of biblical, relational leadership.

Several traits of relational leadership emerged while conducting biblical and theological research. Initially, the Trinity highlighted numerous relational leadership characteristics, including equality among diversity, unity through love among perfect community, shared leadership, and personal and relational connection. Regarding specific biblical leaders, Moses illustrated the necessity of personal and vocational development with an emphasis on a team approach to leading. Without God developing Moses and Moses subsequently changing his leadership style in a relational direction, Israel would have suffered even more.

Jesus and Paul were two other biblical leaders that revealed more relational leadership characteristics. Through his leadership of the disciples, Christ illustrated the need for leaders to relate well, be personal and intimate, value, coach, mentor, and socially connect with those they lead. Jesus knew where he was going, and he intentionally took time to invest in his disciples' lives along the journey to Jerusalem. The Apostle Paul, especially with his relationship with Timothy, was another biblical figure that modeled relational leadership well. Paul highlighted the necessity of development, mentoring, and coaching for all relational leaders. By truly caring for and investing in the lives of future leaders and churches, this New Testament leader shows how a relational approach to leadership pays enormous dividends for the kingdom of God.

Pertinent Leadership Models

Leadership is a popular term. From schools to churches to corporations, every entity in the social sector claims that leadership is a priority for its group. Its common usage among such a diverse crowd begs the question, “What is leadership?” As stated previously in Chapter 1, leadership experts hold that it is *influence* (e.g., Maxwell *Leadership 101* 61). Other authorities believe leadership to be “a relationship—a relationship in which one person seeks to influence the thoughts, behaviours, beliefs or values of another person” (Wright 2). Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, and Dewey E. Johnson say leadership is when “one person attempts to influence the behavior of an individual or group, regardless of the reason” (9). A brief study of these definitions reveals one common theme: leadership closely connects influence and people.

Numerous leadership theories, models, and styles exist in today’s bifurcated society. This study endeavors only to assess the ones pertinent for this leadership examination. These unique models provide appropriate background for relational leadership and help in attaining a better understanding of what is meant by leading in the context of relationships.

Missional Leadership Model

Regarding the church, the missional leader is one who leads his or her congregation out of a deep commitment to missional church principles. Five terms best define these values, the missional church, and its ecclesiology: biblical, historical, contextual, eschatological, and practical (Guder 11). These missional qualities are drawn from the idea of *missio Dei* and one’s need to join God on mission. While incorporating

these traits, missional authors Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk explain in their text how to guide a church in a more missional direction.

Initially, Roxburgh and Romanuk hold that “a congregation can be transformed into a missional community. It doesn’t need to be stuck in a cycle of growth, plateau, and decline” (39). The authors continue by offering practical advice regarding the precise transformation of an existing church into a missional community, commencing the process with the senior leader: “The primary element in cultivating a missional congregation is the personal character of the leader...” (114). Missional leadership in the local church congregation must begin with the senior leader, or top-level leaders.

One of the primary tasks of missional church leaders is to invoke change within their congregations, transitioning them from traditional churches that have existed in America for decades to a missional church model. This innovative model makes room for unpredictable, discontinuous change happening in society and helps assess the local church body in light of this change. The three zone model of missional leadership offers a practical tool for use in evaluating the status of the local church and the leadership located in each zone (Roxburgh and Romanuk 41). Green, blue, and red zones characterize the model, and two types of leadership lie within these zones. The green zone is the ideal location for churches, allowing for much innovation, pioneering, and creativity. Performative and transitional leadership characterize the second zone, the blue zone, as leaders here execute a skilled production of normative patterns and habits. The red zone is the third zone, and the leadership here is reactive and bridging: “Maximum confusion and discouragement,” along with “instability and crisis” mark this church (54).

Churches need missional leaders in order to walk through these stages and finish the change process within the green zone.

Roxburgh and Romanuk also propose the missional change model (84). The missional change model includes five steps: awareness, understanding, evaluate, experiment, and commitment. These stages of missional change highlight the process by which “missional leaders can help a congregation move from a performative-reactive zone culture to one in the emergent zone” (84). The emergent, or green zone, is the goal of all churches who seek to become missional.

Ultimately, emergent leadership in the green zone focuses upon “a high level of social interaction in an environment where people are regularly involved in one another’s lives” (Roxburgh and Romanuk 44). Employees and pastors cannot wait for staff meeting and vision-sharing opportunities because much is new and fresh. Churches in the green zone allow every team member to have a voice in the leadership and direction of the ministry. Leader and member alike develop relationships in a personal manner, as the church continues to reinvent itself and its alignment with the mission of God. Indeed, relational avenues stimulate missional imagination.

Roxburgh and Romanuk also suggest practical ways for missional-minded pastors and leaders to transition their churches into becoming missional churches. The missional change model provides steps for ministers to take in the change process, and these stages are creating awareness, creating understanding, utilizing evaluations, creating experiments, and forging commitments. If missional leaders take their churches through these stages, then the result should be an authentic missional church.

Servant Leadership Model

The servant leadership model is an existing model popularized by Robert K. Greenleaf. In his book *The Power of Servant Leadership*, he discusses the concept of servant leadership:

If a better society is to be built, one more just and more caring and providing opportunity for people to grow, the most effective and economical way while supportive of the social order, is to raise the performance as servant of as many institutions as possible by new voluntary regenerative forces initiated within them by committed individuals: *servants* [original emphasis]. (17)

In summary, Greenleaf sees servant leaders as the answer to proper productivity within any organization, even the church. In regards to Greenleaf's writings, editor Larry C. Spears states in the book *The Servant-Leader Within* that ten characteristics define servant leadership. They are: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (16-19). Relational leadership further builds upon the necessary foundation provided by servant leadership.

Ultimately, the Bible offers the definitive grounding for the concept of servant leadership. As Greenleaf states, "The concordance to the Standard Revised Version of the Bible lists over 1,300 references to *servant* (including serve and service)" (*Power of Servant Leadership* 22). The ultimate servant was Jesus Christ, who emptied himself, succumbing to a painful and cruel death on a cross (Phil. 2:7-8). Paul states in verse seven that he took on the "very nature of a servant" (NIV). Even regarding the disciples, Jesus "saw himself primarily as a servant of God and then as their servant in the manner of a shepherd or leader" (Adair 142). Christ is the perfect model of a true and humble servant.

In modern society, servant leadership has become an invaluable model in the world of leadership paradigms ever since its introduction by Greenleaf in 1970 with his work *The Servant as Leader* (1). Using Google, the search engine returns almost one million hits on the term “Servant Leadership.” More specifically, an Amazon.com book search offers over four thousand listings pertaining to “Servant Leadership.” Leaders have established institutions in honor of Greenleaf and the servant leadership model. In short, servant leadership has developed into a national phenomenon in the realm of leadership and organizational management.

Servant leadership is a leadership style that provides an essential basis for relational leadership. The definitions of servant leadership vary by author. Walter C. Wright, Jr. defines servant leadership as community directed and as a model that focuses upon the growth of the followers and “the accomplishment of the shared mission of the community” (13). Greenleaf, a pioneer in the realm of servant leadership, holds that the desire of a person is first to serve and then to want to lead others in the process of serving all the while becoming more of the person he or she is intended to be (*Power of Servant Leadership* 1). Dr. James Alan Laub states, “Servant leadership is an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader” (*Assessing the Servant Organization* 81). The common assumption running throughout these explanations is that one cannot lead without first being willing to serve.

Without the model of servant leadership, the concept of relational leadership simply could not exist. By its nature, servant leadership is relational. True servant leaders must possess deep affection for, and admiration of, those being served. Servant leaders,

simply put, must truly care for their followers. If leaders do not value their followers, then they quickly stop serving due to a lack of motivation.

Servant versus Relational Leadership

In spite of their similarities, servant and relational leadership differ in several key areas. Initially, servant leadership has the potential to allow the followers' needs to be continually placed over and above those of the leader. Therefore, the leader can even lose track not only of his or her own needs but also of the overall vision of the organization when constantly serving their followers. George R. Goethals, Georgia Sorenson, and James MacGregor Burns comprehend the concept of caring appropriately for oneself when they state that "acting exclusively as an agent in service of the interest of others leaves no room for agency in the pursuit of one's own ends" (467). Self-care on the part of the leader is paramount to the success of the organization as a whole. When the leader ceases to look after his or her own needs in a healthy manner, the entire group suffers. Numerous leaders would profit from an increase in personal service to their followers; many more leaders are in danger of burnout today due to the lack of concern for their own welfare.

Indeed, Jesus spent his entire ministry serving others. This service eventually cost him his life. He truly gave everything for the betterment of humanity. However, he also spent time away from his followers and the crowds. Luke 5:16 states, "Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." With regards to self-care, a balance must exist between serving and preserving. Relational leaders serve but also take time to tend to their own needs in the process.

Ethically speaking, servant leadership is potentially *not* the ideal for cultures of the exploited and broken. Servant leadership “may be particularly out of place for members of oppressed communities in which serving and servility, not agency and self-respect, are the norm” (Goethals, Sorenson, and Burns 467). The servant leader who leads through service in these particular communities may not be utilizing the ideal form of leadership until different categories can be offered for who and what a servant leader is.

Resonant Leadership Model

The resonant leadership model is a paradigm for effective vocational and self-leadership. Leaders operating within this model are pioneering, purposeful, passionate, and ultimately in tune with those around them, leading to the assertion that “[g]reat leaders are resonant leaders” (Boyatzis and McKee 2). Mindfulness, hopefulness, and compassion characterize resonant leaders, with mindfulness leading the process. As the authors write regarding personal transformation, “On the path to resonance with self and with others, hope is the driver, compassion enables it, and mindfulness makes the path smoother and more understandable. Only with these elements can we sustain personal health, effectiveness, and resonant relationships” (Boyatzis and McKee 88). Resonant leaders are thoughtful, optimistic leaders.

In order to become a resonant leader, the leader must walk through several practical steps of change. These steps include locating the leader’s “*ideal self* [original emphasis]” and “*real self* [original emphasis],” capitalizing on strengths, “*experimenting with and practicing new habits* [original emphasis],” and “*developing and maintaining close, personal relationships* [original emphasis]—resonant relationships... (Boyatzis

and McKee 88). Trusting relationships lie at the heart of these steps to resonant change, as the relationships provide the framework for resonant change to occur. Social connections are vital to resonant leaders: “Resonant leaders live their values, and they truly care about people” (202). In sum, resonant leadership seeks to raise the effectiveness and health of all leaders in every organizational environment with personal relationships at the heart of the model.

Table 2.1 compares these four major leadership models in detail. Missional, servant, and resonant models all contribute to the concept of relational leadership.

Table 2.1 Pertinent Leadership Models Comparison Chart

	Type			
	Missional	Servant	Resonant	Relational
Characteristics	Biblical	Listening	Mindful	Values people
	Historical	Empathy	Hopeful	Develops people
	Contextual	Healing	Compassionate	Community
	Eschatological	Awareness		Authentic
	Practical	Persuasion		Leadership
	Awareness	Conceptualization		Delegation
	Understanding	Foresight		Coaching
	Evaluate	Stewardship		Mentoring
	Experiment	Growing people		Collegial social
	Commitment	Community		Collegial task

Relationships and Leadership

Relationships are an integral component of leadership. As Darrell L. Guder states, “Leadership can never be done in solo” (186). Without relationships, people live life in a social vacuum, void of personal interaction. However, God created humans to be social

beings, in spite of their personality or interpersonal communication skills. Maxwell writes regarding societal connection, “Sociologists tell us that even the most introverted individual will influence ten thousand other people during his or her lifetime” (*Developing the Leader 2*). The vital principle to remember is that every human influences other humans.

If leadership is essentially influence, then every person is a leader to a certain degree (Maxwell, *Leadership 101* 61). Relationships provide the grounding for this influence to occur, and working relationships are a part of this influencing process. Organizations provide numerous opportunities for work relationships to develop and for employees to influence other workers. When workers influence each other, they add to or subtract from what is referred to as the *relationship bank*.

The Relationship Bank

The relationship bank is a leadership concept whereby persons make relational *deposits* or *withdrawals* from a metaphorical bank (Hiebert and Klatt 363). Deposits occur when the leader spends time with the followers and is personable and encouraging towards them. A leader’s relational capital grows with each compounding deposit. Eventually, the leader makes a decision and the follower, or group of followers, agrees. These supporters concur with the leader’s decision because the leader first invested in their relationship. Although the formula certainly is not perfect, the principle provides significant relational leadership insight into the working relations of organizations.

The Necessity of Relationships

Numerous fields of study, including leadership, highlight the necessity of relationships. Non-relationally oriented areas of study, such as mathematics, even

acknowledge the primacy of relational issues in their discipline. Margaret J. Wheatley, an organizational theorist, holds that “leadership ... is now being examined for its relational aspects” (13). She continues by stating, “Few if any theorists ignore the complexity of relationships that contribute to a leader’s effectiveness” (13). Wheatley demonstrates how science, and especially ecology and physics, shows the necessity of healthy relationships among current and future generations. Relational issues are essentially no longer limited to ethical, moral, social, or theological discussions, as they are invading science, math, and leadership.

Leadership and relationships frequently unite to bring about personal and organization change, focusing on success within the group as a whole. Susan R. Komives, Nance Lucas, and Timothy R. McMahon define and subsequently explain leadership as that which frequently interweaves with relationships:

Leadership is a *relational* [emphasis mine] and ethical process of people together attempting to accomplish positive change. ... Relationships are key to leadership effectiveness. Because leadership is inherently relational, it is perhaps redundant to use the term *relational leadership* [original emphasis]. There is, however, strength in the affirmation of repetition. (29-30)

When leaders stress relationships as a part of their management style, both the staff and the senior executive reap the benefits organizationally.

Relational Health

Church leaders have been, and should always be, concerned about church health. In fact, increasing numbers of ecclesiastical leaders today seek to determine exactly how healthy their churches are (Barna, *Power 15*). This study focuses not simply on overall church health but more specifically on the relational health of church leadership.

A healthy church, and church leadership team, is one that focuses upon relationships. Author Stephen A. Macchia holds relationships as utterly essential to people's identity as humans when he states, "Relationships are everything. We are who we are and we will be who we will be as a result of the relationships in our lives" (185). Without vibrant work relationships, stress increases and overall productivity has been shown to decrease. The young adults in today's millennial generation need relationally healthy churches, and church leadership teams, if they are to serve in the churches that currently exist in today's culture, yet few church leadership teams offer a healthy work environment. As Cladis states, "In my experience, however, and that of many others, *healthy* [emphasis mine], teamlike conduct is not readily practiced on church staffs and other ministry groups" (39). The church institution, above any other, should model leadership health. Unfortunately, this healthy reality is not always the case.

The members of the current generation, those under thirty-five years old, desperately need improved social connections, as they regularly find themselves lonely and isolated. Author and psychologist Jean M. Twenge agrees:

More than four times as many Americans describe themselves as lonely now than in 1957.... It's almost as if we are starving for affection.... [W]e're malnourished from eating a junk-food diet of instant messages, e-mail, and phone calls, rather than the healthy food of live, in-person interaction. (110)

In spite of attempts to stay relationally connected using the Internet and other modern technologies, this generation suffers from an unhealthy relational environment. As one author writes regarding the overall void of vibrant relationships, "There is a kind of famine of warm interpersonal relations, of easy-to-reach neighbors, of encircling,

inclusive memberships, and of solid family life” (Lane 9). Overall, relationships need vitality.

Due to this lack of healthy relational interaction, a vast number of Americans experience depression and anxiety resulting from this loneliness and isolation (Twenge 115). In many ways, every person and leader shies away from true relational bonds:

[A]ll of us can relate to this tendency to avoid the potential risks associated with interdependence. When given the choice to stick it out through the tough times or to run, most of us would rather run from relationships, trying to find an easier way to get what we want. We tend to choose isolation over community. (Thrall, McNicol, and McElrath 45)

Sadly, this cultural and leadership reality also influences churches. Many congregants experience isolation and loneliness, and some delve into depression. Unfortunately, lay leaders, pastoral staff members, or senior pastors are not exempt from these conditions. Pastors are particularly susceptible to isolation and independence, as they fear actually having to depend upon others. Past hurts and pains may still influence their current relational health.

Emotional Intelligence and Relational Health

Emotional intelligence is a term developed to explain qualities such as “understanding one’s own feelings” and “empathy for the feelings of others” (Gibbs). Over time, the words have come to address the true meaning of intellect. Now, instead of intelligence quotient (IQ) characterizing a person’s ability, emotional quotient (EQ) has emerged as superior. An expert in the field asserts that “when it comes to predicting people’s success, brainpower as measured by IQ and standardized achievement tests may actually matter less than the qualities of mind once thought of as ‘character’ before the word began to sound quaint” (Gibbs). Thus, an individual’s emotional quotient is now

more pertinent than even his or her intellectual aptitude. If this conclusion is true, then emotional health should be valued over any other type of measurement category.

Emotional health directly connects with relational health. If the senior leader of a church is not emotionally healthy, the staff and entire church suffer:

Emotionally unhealthy leaders ... tend to be overly absorbed in themselves and have little left to give to others. Typically, they tend to be isolationist in terms of relationships. Their self-protecting mechanisms dominate their personal lives to the point that close relationships with others are infrequent, and, in some cases, impossible. The result is that these leaders constantly limp in terms of relationship wholeness. (Walls 73)

The last pastoral leader a congregation and church leaders need is one who is emotionally unhealthy and disconnected. The more senior church leaders can emotionally and relationally invest themselves, in healthy and appropriate ways, into the lives of their followers, the more health and positive spiritual and social growth the leader and church will enjoy.

Relational and emotional health is easily one of the most crucial pieces of success for the pastoral leader. Dr. Jim Jackson believes that “Emotional intelligence and people skills have more to do with effectiveness in ministry than I. Q. and technical proficiency” (2). Relationships with people are central to the mission of the pastor, and the pastor must know how to relate to others in an emotionally healthy manner. When high emotional and relational health exists in the lives of church leaders, a relationally healthy church is sure to follow.

The Leader’s Relationships and Health

Kouzes and Pozner attest to the direct link between healthy relationships and overall physical health:

All the evidence points in the same direction:... [T]he quality of our relationships has a protective effect. The more cohesive, supportive, and loving our relationships, the healthier our immune system is and the more resistant we are to disease.... You can have the best job in the world and make more money than Bill Gates, but if you lack close social ties you may not live to enjoy it. (*Encouraging the Heart* 120)

A relationally healthy staff benefits any organization, including the church. The organization's overall productivity increases when social interactions are healthy and vibrant.

Physiologically, relationships affect leaders and their respective teams. Daniel Goleman reaffirms the connection between leader's emotions and relationships:

The emotional system of the brain ... is designed to be regulated not just internally, but externally, *in our relationships with people* [emphasis mine].... The leader's fundamental task is an emotional one.... The leader in a group, more than anyone else, determines the consensual emotions, the shared emotions. So it is very important that the leader pay attention to the emotional reality of a team and take care of it. (1)

Social relationships influence the emotions of pastoral leaders and church leadership teams. If senior pastors are not in touch with their emotions and the emotions of their leaders through relational interactions, the overall health of the team suffers. Granted, relationships are not all that matter in leadership, yet they are a crucial statistical component of successful churches and organizations. Sadly, entities can grow numerically and still suffer internally when senior leaders are emotionally immature. However, organizational health can only be enhanced when relationships are healthy in every way, especially emotionally.

Relational Leadership Defined and Examined

Relational leadership is simply influencing others through authentic relationships. Relational leaders lead out of the context of deep social connections, within which those

being led truly know and accept the leader as their guide and as their friend. These leaders understand that, in order to lead, they must establish a relationship of influence before they can speak truth and offer direction.

Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman are some of the first authors to discuss the necessity of being relational within leadership. They offer a leadership model that is “relational, vision-driven and value-shaped” (Wright 29). The authors suggest that workplaces are filled with employees who are “emotional” and “seek transcendence” (Peters and Waterman 60). These workers long to participate in an organization that promotes *esprit de corps* en route to achieving stated goals successfully. Organizations and leaders, like the model and group just described, can and do exist, and the following ten relational leadership characteristics describe these groups, especially churches and church leadership teams.

Relational Leadership Characteristics

As stated previously, relational leadership encompasses the realm of servant leadership. Therefore, this list incorporates the six components of servant leadership: authenticity, valuing people, development, community, leadership, and delegation.

Mentoring. Mentoring is the personal investment of one life into the life of another. Jesus and his relationship with his disciples provide a perfect mentoring model. He spent vast amounts of time with them, helping them to understand who he was and who they should be and could be in him. Jesus pursued his followers. He initiated the relational connection that developed between his life and theirs. Like Christ’s disciples, many potential mentees will never seek out a mentor.

Another excellent example of mentoring is the apostle Paul's relationship with Timothy as outlined in the New Testament. This bond offers Christians, and especially pastors and church leaders, a firsthand look at true life investment. Paul did all he could possibly do for Timothy relationally, spiritually, and vocationally so that Timothy could succeed as a pastor and Christ follower.

Mentoring and relational leadership, for all their commonalities, do differ. Relational leadership is the overarching theme under which mentoring falls. Mentoring is more specific, normally pertaining to a one-on-one relationship between two parties.

Coaching. Coaching means being consistently involved in the development of those who are following one's leadership. Teaching, directing, encouraging, and correcting are all characteristics of coaches:

[Coaching is] a participative approach to leadership in which the leader sees him or herself as a member of the team, working for the good of the mission, serving the community. The leader is there for the people, not the people for the leader. (Wright 49)

Coaching is less directive, as the leader is more involved in the life of the follower. This aspect of relational leadership is also highly relational, as the subordinate leader becomes the primary recipient of time invested and growth expected.

Collegial social. Collegial social is another relational leadership characteristic, and pertains to the essential elements of trust, friendship, and fun within a team or staff. A church leadership staff or team should simply enjoy being together and having shared experiences be part of their group's life. As with community, collegial social describes fellowship. When staff members enjoy their jobs and other employees, productivity rises and longevity increases. A church should be the optimal place to work as a leader.

One of the hallmarks of this collegial social component is celebrations:

Through celebrating accomplishments, leaders help create these networks of relationships. As organizational members interact on more than just a professional level, their personal relationships are nurtured and they will grow in their love and caring for each other. Furthermore, without group celebrations, it is easy for individuals to believe that the organization revolves around their individual work. Thus, celebrations reinforce the truth that we are all dependent on, and responsible for, one other. (Webber)

The relational leader commemorates significant staff achievements and milestones, therein strengthening the collegial social aspect of the leadership team. When these vocational relationships grow stronger, trust develops and the workplace becomes more than simply a location to earn a living. The organization becomes an entity of eternal significance due to relational connectedness initiated by the senior leader's guidance.

Trust is the bedrock of the collegial social component. Without complete trust, the senior pastor will struggle to lead staff pastors and lay leaders:

When people trust you to be their leader, even in the limited arena of their work, they are trusting you with a part of their lives. The work relationship is strengthened if a relationship of trust is developed with them as people. (Wright 53)

The senior leader must exert effort towards the development of trust within his or her leadership team if he or she expects to have a vital and healthy staff.

In fact, a leader's love should precede trust on behalf of the followers. Writer Jan David Hettinga reinforces this love first/trust second sequence by stating, "The most intentional objective of the leadership team and the working nucleus of a church should be love. Where there is an adequate foundation of obedience and love, it is safe to trust" (227). God is love, and relationships characterize his leadership. Regarding God's leadership, "Its most visible and powerful form is always relational. God's leadership produces love! In a safe kingdom community, working at healthy relationships is a

given—and it’s not optional” (237). In order for leaders to enjoy leading and working for the organization’s cause, they must love and trust each other in the context of dynamic relationships, using God’s leadership as the model. Especially in churches, love and trust should define the lead team and result in a relationally focused approach to leadership and ministry. As a result, church leaders place a high value on people.

Management by walking around (MBWA) illustrates a practical principle of collegial social (Wright 53). The senior leader models this principle by simply spending time walking around the church, frequenting staff offices and communal areas. Although unsophisticated at first read, this action alone can have a profound impact on staff members. Similar to Wright’s explanation, Thomas J. Peters and Nancy K. Austin are the first to brand this method officially, as they originally labeled the action “management by wandering around” (31). They call it the “technology of the obvious”:

It is being in touch, with customers, suppliers, your people. It facilitates innovation, and makes possible the teaching values to every member of an organization. Listening, facilitating, and teaching and reinforcing values. What is this except leadership? Thus, MBWA is the technology of leadership. Leading is primarily paying attention. The masters of the use of attention are also not only master users of symbols, of drama, but master storytellers and myth builders. (31)

Whether the *W* in MBWA is defined as walking or wandering, the result is the same.

Senior pastors possess the ability to strengthen, teach, listen, and pay attention to their followers when they lead through spending time in their midst.

Abraham Lincoln modeled this principle during his time in Washington: “Lincoln was a natural wanderer” (Phillips 15). He would attempt to see as many of his officers and staff members as he could, perpetually maintaining an open-door policy. The former U. S. president knew that his livelihood and success depended upon correct information,

and his leaders held the facts. In order to have this current data, he needed to spend time with his people. He desired the relational, informal connection with those he led:

For Lincoln, casual contact with his subordinates was as important as formal gatherings, if not more so, and today's leaders should take note of this style. He preferred, whenever possible, to interact with people when they were in a more relaxed, less pressure-packed environment. (16)

Lincoln's personal, and relational, approach to leadership caused him to know and understand his leadership team and the people he governed. This method, though antiquated, is applicable and mandatory for current pastoral leaders who desire to guide and direct their leadership team relationally.

Collegial task. The last component of relational leadership is collegial task. For the purpose of this study, the definition of collegial task is to assist other coworkers authentically with organizational responsibilities for the greater good of the group, even if those assignments are not one's direct responsibility. In essence, collegial task means that all staff members are to be team oriented rather than self-oriented.

Herb Kelleher, former CEO of Southwest Airlines, expertly illustrates this collegial task aspect of relational leadership. He placed a high value on investing into the lives of his employees in several different ways. Kelleher would assist on a task when needed and even learn the names of his workers as often as possible. His relational leadership example garnered dramatic results:

Perhaps the most dramatic example of their [Southwest employees] commitment to their beloved leader occurred when they pooled their own money and ran a \$60,000 ad in *USA Today* recognizing him on Bosses' Day. In the ad they thanked Kelleher for being a friend, not just a boss. (Manz 74)

This example vividly illustrates how a senior level leader, through relationally investing in the jobs and lives of staff members, can have a profound impact on individuals *and* the

organization as a whole. The employees went so far as to view their top leader as not just a supervisor but as a friend. Collegial social and collegial task overlap in this story. By helping staff members with their tasks (though certainly not all sixty thousand personally), a senior leader became a friend to thousands of people. He was their relational leader.

Collegial task is more than work relationships formed only around assignments. In Patrick M. Lencioni's leadership fable on team dysfunctions, every team member shares personal information in a section entitled "Getting Naked" (52). When this sharing happened, group members felt a new connection with each other that extended beyond the office and into their personal lives. Macchia explains the concept of collegial task well:

So often in our ministry settings we have developed "functional" relationships on our teams. We tend to deal with one another from the context of how we interrelate to accomplish our stated task. By sharing our personal stories, we begin to get to know each other's joys and hurts, aspirations and fears, dreams and disappointments. The masks begin to disappear and we share our authentic selves. As a result, the team grows healthier as it becomes a group people assimilated by love and just a group brought together to perform a duty. (98)

Essentially, the collegial task aspect of relational leadership is about helping another staff member with his or her individual assignments out of a true relational connection with that person. When pastoral leaders work together out of loving relationships, the church leadership team becomes more than a group of workers; they become a strong, relational unit. While directing this leadership group, the senior leader must always keep in mind that a person's soul is ultimately more important than his or her task, and this concern for both person and job is the heart of collegial task (George and Krajewski 154).

Relational Leadership Further Examined

Relational leadership pursues. As Greenleaf states, “Leadership is initiating—going out ahead to show the way” (*Power of Servant Leadership* 32). Just as Christ sought out his disciples, pastors should also seek out those in need of relational connection. The job of senior leaders is to initiate investment toward staff ministers and not wait until those associates come to them. Often times, the staff pastor wants to initiate with the senior pastor but deems his or her time with the top leader as secondary to the mission of the church. Thus, the lead pastor must be the one to begin the initial connection time.

Relational leadership is not possible without the key leader loving and truly caring about other leaders within the organization. Macchia emphasizes the role of love within relational leadership when he states, “The primary motivation for serving in, through, and with the body—and in the context of a healthy ministry team—is genuine *love* [original emphasis]” (131). The leader simply must determine whether they possess a true heart for their followers. Selfish agendas will always negatively affect the relationships of leaders (Geoffrion 92). The spiritual leader must live in a continual state of self-examination, constantly attempting to eradicate any selfish ambitions in his or her life. Relational leadership occurs best when those being led understand that their leader is unequivocally devoted to God and to the follower’s own social, spiritual, and vocational well-being.

Relational leadership is about relationships. The most vital relationship any leader possesses is with Christ (Guder 186). The pastoral leader throws the spiritual baby out with the bathwater when this connection is lost. In line with Scripture (Luke 10:38-42), nurturing and protecting time with the Father cannot and must not be forsaken or

neglected due to earthly duties. God warrants and seeks his followers' complete and utter devotion, and this commitment manifests itself through time spent in communion with the Father.

The association with the assistant pastor(s) is the second most critical relationship for pastoral leaders, especially senior pastors. One author highlights the significance of this working relationship by stating: "There is no more important single human relationship for the effectiveness of the associate pastor than his relationship with the senior pastor" (Radcliffe 82). In many ways, the relational void that exists in churches today formed this entire study. Drawing on personal experience, senior pastors often busy themselves with other good and necessary pastoral duties and, in the process, neglect the relational bond with their associates. If this relational disconnect continues without improvement, then associates tend to transition quickly into another church situation, enroll in school, or shift vocations altogether.

In fact, research illustrates how staff pastors normally have a shorter tenure at a church than senior pastors. Across all Protestant denominations, the average stay at a preceding church of a non-senior pastor is forty-six months, in contrast to fifty-four months by the senior pastor. At their current church, non-senior ministers had been employed forty months, as opposed to fifty-eight months for senior pastors (Anthony and Boersma 14). To avoid these staff tenure issues, senior pastors must learn to make time for relational development with their pastoral leadership team.

The responsibility of relational leadership falls heavily on the role and person of the senior pastor. In general, all church leaders should model a relationally focused leadership strategy, but the senior leader must lead the way (Richards and Hoeldtke 226).

No pastoral task is more mission critical than relationally leading the church leaders since the leaders are to model relational connectedness for the congregation as a whole.

Regarding pastoral and lay church leadership, senior leaders should “begin to build into the experience of the leaders those relationships that Scripture says are to mark the congregation as a whole” (227). Thus, relational leadership in the church begins and ends with the leadership of the church and essentially the senior leader. If the leadership desires the congregants to live relational lives and experience true community and fellowship within the body of Christ, the social transformation first must commence with the leader, and leaders, of the church.

Relational leadership is ultimately about speaking the “language of relationships” (Kim). Bishop Sundo Kim is a legendary Methodist Bishop in South Korea who grew Kwanglim Methodist in Seoul from 125 members to over eighty thousand members during his years of leadership. In a lecture given in Seoul to Beeson Pastors from Asbury Theological Seminary, Dr. Kim stated that, after reflecting on fifty-two years of ministry, “relationships [in the ministry] are very important, especially [the pastor’s] relationship with God, people, and nature.” He continued by sharing that two types of languages exist in the world today: the language of words and the language of relationships. The more critical of these two in the world of pastoral ministry is the language of relationships: “If you have a good relationship with the congregation, then [the pastor’s] words are powerful” (Kim). In this lecture, the bishop asserted that no other task of pastoral ministry is more important than relationships.

If relationships are the main task for the pastor and church leader, then a primary objective for the senior leader must be his or her relationship with the church’s core

leadership team, which includes pastoral staff members and lay leaders. If the main leader does not foster and personally invest in these relationships, then the lack of relational leadership affects the congregation as well. Leadership author Greg Ogden speaks specifically to this unique connection between ecclesiastical leadership and church members when he writes, “Their relationship [between senior pastors and associate pastors] should be one of public unity and private disagreement, since congregations are infected by the spirit they see modeled in staff relationships” (187). Relational disharmony among church leadership also influences the church members, and thus the overall health of the church. In order to avoid such pitfalls, the senior pastor must lead out of close, personal relationships with associate pastors and lay church leadership.

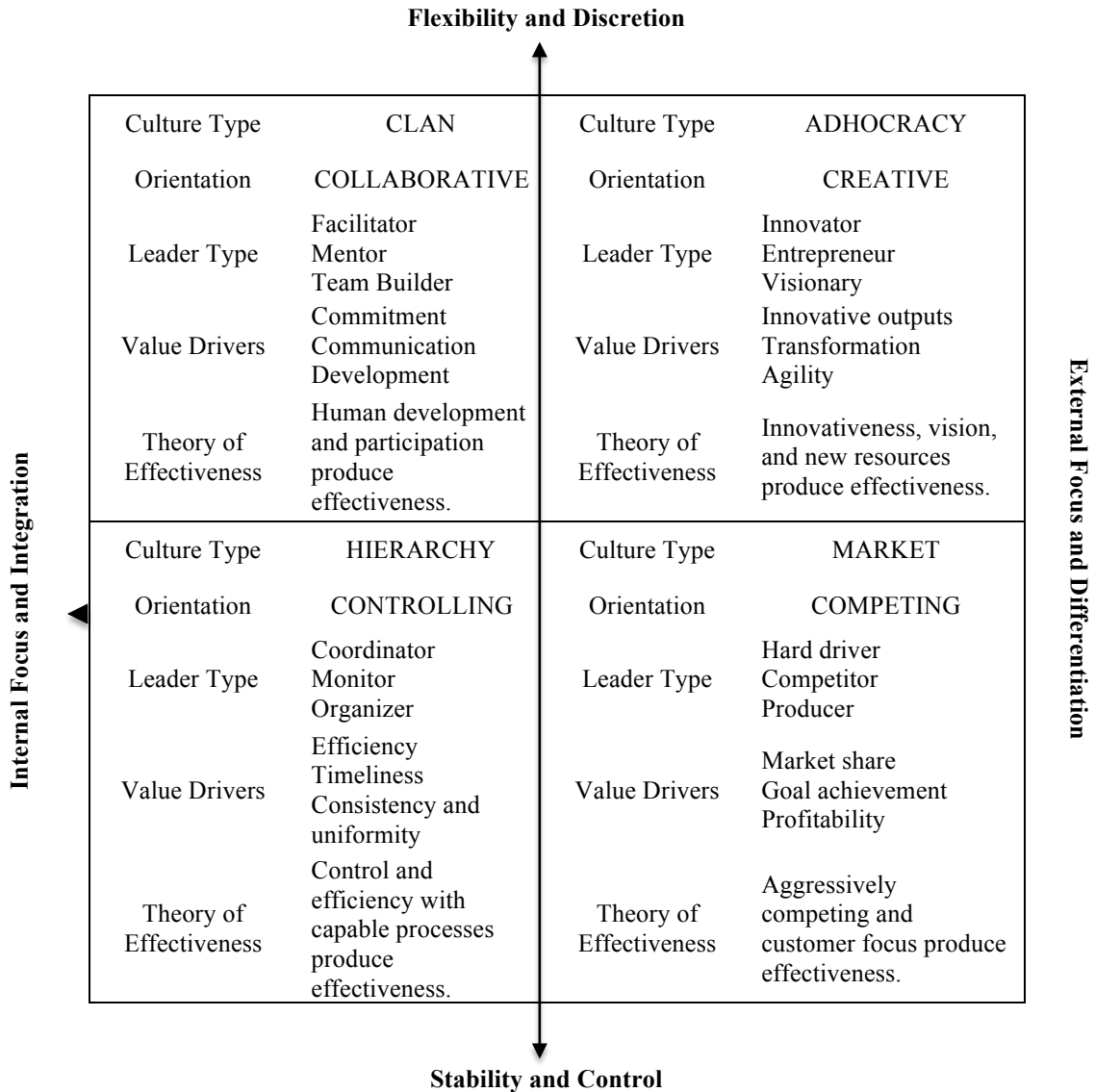
Pastoral leadership centers upon and revolves around relationships. As one former senior minister and national church leader states, “Ministry is nothing but relationships.... Relationships are ministry.... In order to be godly, my relationship [as a senior pastor] with God and my relationships with others are central to everything I accomplish” (Macchia 185). Senior pastors cannot expect to have healthy and dynamic staff and church leadership teams without understanding the centrality of relationships in their leadership efforts. For the top leader, ministry through the context of relationships must occur as much with the pastoral staff and lay leaders as it does with the regular church members, if not more so. True relational leaders seek to remember that their job is always to maintain their relationship with God first, and then with those they lead. Christ comes first and people second, as Macchia states, “Remember this: *our relationships with God and others determine everything about us* [original emphasis]. Relationships are everything” (185). With pastoral leaders, relationships are truly everything.

Organizational Culture

Leadership in the twenty-first century is, and in many ways must be, different from twentieth century leadership. Instead of consistently leading out of a hierarchical structure that emphasizes boundaries, progressive organizations now encourage group members to listen to numerous voices, even across specific leadership lines. Today's leader believes that influencers exist on all levels of management and not simply at the top. People, not just the success of the project, are a priority. A group's employees best achieve innovation within the structure of the team and not merely as isolated individuals. Times have changed, and leadership has changed with this new millennium (Hiebert and Klatt 2).

The Competing Values Framework

Modern management expert Peter Drucker has been quoted as saying, "We are in one of those great historical periods that occur every 200 or 300 years when people don't understand the world anymore, and the past is not sufficient to explain the future" (Childress and Senn 3). In the new world in which people live, organizations and their respective cultures must morph into innovative and effective models in order to lead in this new millennium. Organizational culture experts Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn researched effective organizations and developed the competing values framework, which includes four major culture types (35). Their research shows that "most organizations develop a dominant cultural style," and a majority of the organizations they studied fit into at least one of the following culture types (46). Differing leaders, culture types, and theories of effectiveness characterize the hierarchy, market, clan, and adhocracy cultures. Figure 2.1 organizes these four types.



Source: Cameron and Quinn 46.

Figure 2.1. The competing values framework.

Cameron and Quinn's quadrant of competing values outlines clearly each main culture type. The authors believe that "the highest performing leaders, those rated by their peers, superiors, and subordinates as the most highly effective, have developed capabilities and skills that allow them to succeed in each of the four quadrants" (47).

These successful leaders possess the ability to lead in each quadrant as necessary. They can be both mentor and competitor, organizer and visionary.

Every organization, and church, has a culture that more than likely fits into one of these quadrants. The church leader's goal is to determine where the church currently fits on this graph and where it needs to move in the future. In order for this change to occur, the leadership of the church must follow six steps:

1. Reach consensus on the current culture;
2. Reach consensus on the desired future culture;
3. Determine what the changes will and will not mean;
4. Identify illustrative stories;
5. Develop a strategic action plan; and,
6. Develop an implementation plan.

If a senior leader desires to move his or her leadership team in a relational direction, then these six steps are necessary to see that change happen. The leader would focus on the clan culture, as that particular culture closely identifies with relational leadership.

Ultimately, "all four quadrants are valuable and necessary" to organizations and leaders today (Cameron and Quinn 80).

Implications for Relational Leadership

Looking to the competing values framework, the clan quadrant does indeed characterize relational leadership better than the other three sections. The relational leader is to be a mentor, facilitator, and team builder, and the senior leader of a clan-type culture often becomes a parent-like figure, quite similar within a family. A high level of commitment exists within the organization and concern for people is a number one

priority (Cameron and Quinn 222). Large churches today need this type of organizational culture to be spiritually and organizationally successful. Senior leaders, staff pastors, and lay leadership teams must work to this end if they are to reach the next generation with the gospel of Christ. However, as effective as the clan culture may be, all four cultures need relational leadership. Whether the culture is adhocracy, hierarchy, market, or clan, relational leadership allows for an increased degree of organizational health in each quadrant.

Simply stated, relational leadership is not person focused. The relational leader is not required to be a charismatic and extroverted personality, always seeking to find a new friend. Sadly, when the topic of relational leadership arises, this type of disposition is the image often produced in one's mind's eye. Modern popular culture leads one to believe that introverted and reserved individuals cannot be relational leaders. Correct views must replace this faulty thinking.

The central truth to remember is that relational leadership is possible for any organization, culture, team, or leader. Personality does not play a part as much as the leader's heart for those whom he or she is leading and serving. Indifferent to personal gifting or human nature, relational leadership can and must become the very culture and ethos of any organization if that group, and especially its leadership, is to thrive, be productive, and leave a lasting legacy. Being relational certainly is more natural for some; however, any leader who seeks to lead relationally possesses the ability to do so. A former megachurch senior pastor states, "As a minister, I know that genuine ministry flows out of my relationships, not out of programs or my own personal skills" (Macchia

185). Truly, any minister or manager can lead from established and authentic relationships.

Organizational culture must come to focus on the creation of social networks among employees and not simply job assignments. Malcolm Webber, a leadership author, states, “Supportive relationships are critically important to maintain personal and organizational vitality.” If a church desires to achieve and maintain group spirit and unity, then the leadership of the church will seek to invest in its employed personnel as well as its congregants relationally.

Almost every church leader can locate their leadership style within one of the quadrants of the competing values framework. However, as noted earlier, the preeminent leaders learn how to model each culture to a certain degree, utilizing different roles at different times as necessary. The generalists are certainly necessary, yet successful church leaders always maintain their close relational connection to others within the ministry. Kouzes and Posner state, “The best leaders want to get closer to others, want to be more intimate with others, than do the poorer performers” (*Encouraging the Heart* 119). In today’s society, pastoral leaders seek to follow a senior pastor who desires more than a working relationship with them. They want to be a part of a family and not simply earn a wage.

If staff pastors and lay leaders personally connect with the senior leader, organizational productivity rises. Referring to worker output from a specific study, Hershey, Blanchard, and Johnson hold that “the most significant factor affecting organizational productivity was ... interpersonal relationships that are developed on the

job” (58). Relationships are at the heart of success; thus, relational leadership should be the focus of every pastoral leader.

Organizational Leadership Assessment

Laub discovered six main categories of servant leadership during his doctoral research:

Servant leadership promotes the valuing and development of people, the building of community, the practice of authenticity, the providing of leadership for the good of those led and the sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual, the total organization and those served by the organization. (“Defining Servant Leadership”)

He uses these six categories of servant leadership to create his instrument, the Organizational Leadership Assessment. Primarily, Laub’s literature review from his dissertation produced these six groupings.

His first category of servant leadership is valuing people. As Don Cousins states, “Devoting time to nurturing staff members’ competence and interpersonal relationships says we value *them* [original emphasis], not just their work output” (282). Senior pastors, and church leaders in general, must show their subordinates that they value who they are as humans and not simply as employees of the organization. The senior is responsible for creating this culture of valuing people. As Maxwell states, “And fundamentally, if you don’t value people, you will never create a culture that develops leaders” (*360° Leader* 298).

Developing people is Laub’s second category of servant leadership. Christ modeled this principle perfectly with his team of disciples. He constantly invested in them to further his message of good news. Jesus desired growth for his followers and hoped that they would become more like him; thus, he served them. Christ fed them

(John 6:11), protected them (Matt. 8:26), and even washed their feet (John 13:5). Indeed, he was the absolute servant-leader. Finally, after three years and with the help of the Holy Spirit, Christ's relational investment paid eternal dividends as the eleven began to lead a movement called Christianity, which continues over two thousand years later. If a leader will only commit to serve and intentionally develop his or her followers, the rewards will be exponential.

When leaders develop other leaders, they themselves grow. While interviewing a top church leader, an author asked whether the senior pastor should attempt to develop himself or invest in other leaders. In response to this inquiry, the senior leader answered, "Primarily developing others, because working to develop them would also develop me" (Chandler 86). When leaders develop other leaders, the dividends extend beyond initial and expected outcomes. Also, the task list becomes simply a means to an end, albeit an essential means. Leadership expert Maxwell understands the full meaning of developing people:

There's a lot more to good leadership than just getting the job done. Getting the job done makes you a success. Getting the job done through others makes you a leader. But developing the people while helping them get the job done at the highest level makes you an exceptional leader. When you develop others, they become better, they do the job better, and both you and the organization benefit. Everybody wins. The result? You become the kind of leader that others seek out and want to follow because of the way you add value to people. (*360° Leader* 229)

Any leader desires for others to learn and grow under their tutelage. If senior pastors would decide to develop their staff pastors intentionally, these top leaders would never suffer from a lack of job applicants for their church.

The third category of servant leadership according to Laub is the building of community. When leaders cease to serve, relationships atrophy and disunity arises.

However, when leaders give back to their subordinates, relationships are built and fellowship occurs between group members. Life is lived in relative harmony and peace, with each team member being willing to forsake self for the common good.

The early Church of Acts is an ideal example of community. Luke, the disciple of Christ, records in Acts 2:42-47 the perfect picture of Christian community:

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved. (NASB)

Devotion, fellowship, prayer, togetherness, and praise characterized this early group of believers. Luke uses other words to describe community and, specifically, unity. He utilizes pronouns such as "everyone," "all," and "their" to communicate the unification of the group.

The practice of authenticity is the fourth component of servant leadership. If senior leaders cannot be authentic with their followers and especially pastoral staff, then their leadership will suffer. Staff and congregants alike desire to see their leader as a real person with real needs. Senior pastors communicate the value of transparency when they share openly about their own struggles and shortcomings, and listeners respond to such openness. The servant, and relational, leader is a genuine leader who is willing and able to self-reveal appropriately when necessary.

The fifth aspect of servant leadership is providing leadership. Leaders provide leadership opportunities for those they are leading. Emerging leaders long to be trusted with leadership appointments that are vital to the church's mission and not simply their own niche ministry. Senior leaders that allow these opportunities for staff development show that they value their team members and are attempting to serve and lead them appropriately.

Sharing leadership is Laub's last servant leadership characteristic. As long time senior leader Dale Galloway writes, "Build leaders, and they will build ministries. Good sharing of responsibility enhances a Christian's worth, value, and self-esteem" (43). He continues by stating four factors for this type of delegation: assignment, authority, accountability, and availability (44). When senior pastors make clear assignments, extend authority, hold themselves and others accountable, and make their leadership and life available, high impact ministry occurs and lives are changed. Jesus created a movement using delegation with his followers, and today's leaders should follow in those holy footsteps as well.

Research Design

The design of this study is based upon quantitative research, with a qualitative measure. Quantitative research "describes phenomena in numbers and measures instead of words" (Krathwohl 740). This research is also nonexperimental, which is the most common research type in the academy (Wiersma and Jurs 155). The study used cross-sectional, standardized surveys to collect the necessary data. These surveys were used to highlight differences existing between and within churches and their corresponding leadership teams, especially focusing upon the relationships between the senior pastors,

staff pastors, and lay leaders. Semi-structured senior pastors interviews were used to gather more information regarding the churches, staff members, and the top leadership.

T-tests and/or analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used as the statistical tests. These two specific tests are the ideal types utilized in group comparison studies (Creswell 153). In this study, senior pastors and staff pastors within churches were compared regarding relational leadership, as well as churches compared to other church leadership teams.

Laub created the Organizational Leadership Assessment as a result of his doctoral dissertation on servant leadership (“Defining Servant Leadership”). During his research, he uncovered six servant leadership characteristics, which he, in turn, uses to measure organizations, such as businesses, schools, and churches. Numerous researchers have since used his instrument to study these servant leadership characteristics within groups and then to write their dissertations from their findings (e.g., Laub, “Defining Servant Leadership”). This tool is ideal for this specific study because servant leadership provides the groundwork for relational leadership. Laub’s six servant leadership characteristics are also relational leadership characteristics; however, he omits four additional relational leadership characteristics necessary to assess relational leadership completely. Therefore, the Relational Support Scale is a necessary additional instrument to measure relational leadership in its entirety.

The Relational Support Scale measures specifically relational leadership and its corresponding characteristics. Although adapted from the Mentoring and Communication Support Scale (MCSS), previous researchers utilized the MCSS to measure such aspects of the workplace as mentoring, communication, vocational success, and career

development (Rubin, Palmgreen, and Sypher 231). With minimal language change, the new RSS offers excellent possibilities in assessing relational leadership within the workplace.

Summary

In order for relational leadership to occur, ten characteristics must typify next generation pastoral leaders. Relational leaders

1. are authentic (Laub, “Defining Servant Leadership”),
2. value people (Laub, “Defining Servant Leadership”),
3. develop people (Laub, “Defining Servant Leadership”),
4. build community (Laub, “Defining Servant Leadership”),
5. provide leadership (Laub, “Defining Servant Leadership”),
6. delegate or share leadership (Laub, “Defining Servant Leadership”),
7. mentor others (Wright),
8. coach others (Wright),
9. are socially oriented (Rubin, Palmgreen, and Sypher), and
10. are collegially task-driven (Rubin, Palmgreen, and Sypher).

Ministers that seek to adhere to these ten relational leadership characteristics will only enhance the impact they have on other leaders for the sake of the kingdom.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Problem and Purpose

Within church leadership, ministry occurs most effectively when all pastors cooperate and work as a team to see the church's vision brought to fruition. However, frustrations arise between senior pastors and staff pastors when the vision is unclear, encouragement is sparse, or staff development is nonexistent, among other possibilities. When not properly voiced and addressed, these issues often cause vocational and personal rifts to develop between senior church leadership and the pastoral staff. Although the nature of these contentions vary, the solution remains constant. Relational leadership effectively deals with the aforementioned staff issues, handling each issue from a relational perspective. This type of leadership is invaluable to the church and its pastoral leadership in the twenty-first century, as church leaders become ever more dependent upon deep-rooted personal relationships to see God's work accomplished.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate, using the OLA and the RSS, the degree to which the largest Wesleyan churches in North America align with the concept and characteristics of relational leadership and to rate their overall relational health in the process. This research arose from a relational leadership void observed over the past several years in multiple staff churches of the Wesleyan denomination. Sadly, the senior leader is often disconnected relationally from the pastoral staff, which in turn influences the effectiveness of the entire pastoral staff team. My hope is that this work can be utilized to create more effective, relationally healthy churches and church leadership in today's postmodern society.

Research Questions and/or Hypotheses

I chose three core questions to offer direction to the research of this study.

Research Question #1

Using the OLA and the RSS, how did the Wesleyan senior pastors, staff pastors, and lay leaders rate according to the ten relational leadership characteristics?

Two online surveys, the OLA and RSS, were used to measure ten relational leadership characteristics among the leadership of twenty Wesleyan churches. These characteristics are authenticity, valuing people, development, community, leadership, delegation, mentoring, coaching, collegial social, and collegial task. Healthy pastoral leadership staffs do indeed exist, and relational leadership characterizes these particular ministerial teams. Because of the online assessment tool, this particular research question sought to determine the relationally oriented pastoral leadership teams within the Wesleyan Church of North America.

Research Question #2

Using the findings of the OLA and the RSS, how did the perspectives of the senior pastors, pastoral staff pastors, and lay leaders differ and align in accordance with the relational leadership characteristics?

The OLA is an instrument developed to measure the relational health of an organization's leadership. The study operated from the understanding that a direct connection exists between an organization's relational health and the ratings according to the OLA's six servant leadership characteristics. The RSS provided additional measurement to the study and sought to assess further four specific relational leadership characteristics within the leadership of the church. This research question attempted to

highlight the similarities and differences found in the survey answers given by the Wesleyan pastoral and church leaders. The question aided in triangulating the data in order to perceive at what level relational leadership exists and is engrained within the culture of the church and particularly the church's leadership.

Research Question #3

What other characteristics and practices of relational health emerged as a result of this study, specifically the pastor's and lay leader's health in connection with relational leadership?

Chapter 2 outlined the aspects of relational health and more exclusively the components of relational leadership. As a result of the data acquired through the two surveys and the follow-up interview questions, Wesleyan pastoral leaders should exhibit varying degrees of the presence of relational leadership. Some churches, and church leadership teams, may show a high rate of relational leadership, whereas others may highlight a lower level of relational leadership.

Population and Participants

The population for this study was a sample of churches and their corresponding pastoral leadership within the Wesleyan Church of North America. The main factor determining church selection was the size of the church, as larger churches provide the study with enough pastoral staff and church leadership personnel for adequate data collection. Therefore, by selecting the top twenty largest Wesleyan churches in North America, significant data collection was guaranteed or at least highly likely. Each church averages over one thousand attendees to their weekend worship services, resulting in the

necessity of numerous full-time pastoral staff members. Half of the population included suburban churches, and the rest were either urban or small town churches.

The population additionally included three different groups of participants: the church's senior pastor (or lead pastor), four full-time pastoral staff members, and two lay leaders composed the surveyed group, accounting for a total of seven participants per church. Twenty churches were polled, equaling 140 persons who participated in the study. The two lay leader participants were the vice chairperson of the local board of administration (LBA) and the head of the personnel committee. The vice chairperson of the church's LBA was selected due to their intimate knowledge of not only the senior pastor and some staff pastors but also of the inner workings of the church as a whole. The chair of the personnel committee was chosen due to his or her close connection to all staff-related issues within the church.

Design of the Study

This project was an explanatory, non-experimental, mixed-methods design study utilizing cross-sectional design surveys that made use of two specific research tools. A supplemental, qualitative measure was also used. The first instrument was a sixty-six question standardized online organizational leadership assessment survey tool (OLA) that was intended to measure servant leadership characteristics among the senior pastor, pastoral staff, and lay leaders. The second tool was a standardized survey instrument called the Mentoring and Communication Support Scale (Rubin, Palmgreen, and Sypher 230). The name was changed to RSS due to wording adaptations that occurred with the instrument. The tool consisted of fifteen questions intended to assess four specific relational leadership components, and the senior pastor, pastoral staff, and lay leaders

took this survey in an online, Web-based format, similar to the OLA configuration. The supplemental measure utilized three semi-structured interview questions administered by phone and e-mail.

Instrumentation

This study used two instruments in order to collect data. Initially, a standardized survey was administered to pastors and key church leaders entitled the Organizational Leadership Assessment. Laub created this instrument using a literature analysis and a Delphi process, making use of a servant leadership team of experts (*Assessing the Servant Organization* 128). This strategy led to the creation of a sixty six-question assessment designed in a Likert scale format. Laub identified six constructs of servant leadership (See Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Servant Leadership Grid

Servant-leadership is ...	
an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader. Servant-leadership promotes the valuing and development of people, the building of community, the practice of authenticity, the providing of leadership for the good of those led and the sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual, the total organization and those served by the organization.	
The servant-leader...	
Values people	<input type="checkbox"/> By believing in people <input type="checkbox"/> By serving other's needs before his or her own <input type="checkbox"/> By receptive, nonjudgmental listening
Develops people	<input type="checkbox"/> By providing opportunities for learning and growth <input type="checkbox"/> By modeling appropriate behavior <input type="checkbox"/> By valuing differences
Builds community	<input type="checkbox"/> By building strong personal relationships <input type="checkbox"/> By working collaboratively with others <input type="checkbox"/> By valuing differences of others
Displays authenticity	<input type="checkbox"/> By being open and accountable to others <input type="checkbox"/> By a willingness to learn from others <input type="checkbox"/> By maintaining integrity and trust
Provides leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> By envisioning the future <input type="checkbox"/> By taking initiative <input type="checkbox"/> By clarifying goals
Shares leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> By facilitating a shared vision <input type="checkbox"/> By sharing power and releasing control <input type="checkbox"/> By sharing status and promoting others
The Servant-organization is ...	
an organization in which the characteristics of servant leadership are displayed through the organizational culture and are valued and practiced by the leadership and workforce.	

Source: Laub, *Assessing the Servant Organization* 49-51; Metzcar 42.

Next, all participating pastors and lay leaders received a preselected version of a second survey. The RSS instrument measured an additional four relational leadership characteristics: mentoring, coaching, collegial social, and collegial task. The instrument contained fifteen questions, and the scale of measurement was a Likert type. The format for the tool was an online survey, and I used two versions. Senior pastors completed one version, and staff pastors and lay leaders completed the second version adapted to their

roles in the church. The versions were essentially the same, with minor wording alterations to match the participant(s).

Pilot Test

Pilot testing was not necessary because the two instruments used were standardized and established tools.

Variables

Numerous factors could exist as independent variables, such as age, years of ministry experience, personality type, leadership style, et al. These variables, which are also the confounding variables, were autonomous of the outcome and yet could still potentially influence the result. The dependent variable was the degree of relational leadership strength of the senior pastors and pastoral staff members.

The study did not target a specific denominational district or geographic area. Intervening variables are possible and would be cared for per each situation. For example, in the unlikely event of the loss of one of the participants, an effective and comparable replacement was immediately pursued. If the loss were a senior pastor, the next largest Wesleyan church was asked to participate as a substitute in order to maintain the number of twenty participating churches. If a staff pastor or lay leader was in need of replacement, another comparable replacement from within that specific church was asked to join the study.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability is a measure of stability. This study stayed true to procedures and did not make any exceptions to research rules. Referring to the OLA, Laub attests to a strong reliability and a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .98, thus highlighting its usefulness for

further studies (*Assessing the Servant Organization* 65). The RSS also reports high Cronbach's alpha scores, ranging from .75 to .89 for management respondents and from .76 to .84 for a general population (Rubin, Palmgreen, and Sypher 230).

Validity measures the truthfulness of the instrument. Regarding the OLA, past studies that illustrated excellent reliability determined construct validity (Rauch 66). Construct validity pertaining to the RSS was established by some stability of factors across three unique sample groups, as "interfactor correlations ranged from .33 to .50 with an average correlation of .40" (Rubin, Palmgreen, and Sypher 231). Both measures have ultimately been shown to be understood in the same way by different groups of persons, thus being confirmed truthful.

Data Collection

Initially, I obtained denominational church statistics from the general secretary's office at the Wesleyan Church World Headquarters in Fishers, Indiana, before I made official contact with churches and their pastoral leadership. This step was necessary due to the lack of personal knowledge regarding the official size of many of the denomination's largest churches. Once I received this statistical data from headquarters via a computerized spreadsheet, I strategically chose the twenty churches with the largest average weekend worship attendance for the 2008 calendar year. All of the selected churches happened to average over one thousand worshippers at their weekend services.

As soon as I identified the target churches, I contacted the senior pastors through an initial e-mail that provided an introduction, briefly explained the study, and outlined the process. A personal phone call to the senior pastor followed the introductory e-mail after approximately one week. This follow-up conversation served two main purposes:

First, the call encouraged those senior pastors who had not yet responded to the e-mail to do so, and, second, the telephone call attempted to clarify any uncertainty regarding the process.

The role of the senior leader's administrative assistant was paramount to the success of data collection. This person aided the process in numerous ways, including scheduling appointments and providing vital contact information of the necessary participants (i.e., names and e-mail addresses). Each senior pastor's assistant became invaluable to this study, especially when gathering pertinent research information.

Upon contact with all senior leaders and subsequent collection of all necessary e-mail addresses, initial contact was made with staff pastors and the two lay leaders through an explanatory e-mail (see Appendix E). This e-mail looked similar to the one sent to the senior pastors, except I changed some wording in order to accommodate for these specific participants. I invited participants to complete the two online surveys as soon as possible. To ensure complete return, all participants who contributed their input to this study were entered into a drawing for five Starbucks gift cards as an incentive to complete the survey. Personal resources provided the funds necessary for these motivational items. I outlined the offer in the initial e-mails sent to each participant (see Appendixes D and E).

Immediately upon completion of the surveys and assessment of the results, I sent a follow-up e-mail to the senior leaders and/or the senior leaders' assistants for two reasons (see Appendix F). First, I desired to express my appreciation for their participation in the study. Without their efforts, this research would not have been possible. Second, I offered specific survey results to the senior pastors only regarding

their particular church. If interested, they only needed to respond to my e-mail, and I would send them the data for their organization.

Data Analysis

Once the OLA group's computer calculated the OLA results, I received the data through an e-mail from the OLA group's administrator. Along with a professional statistician, I used a statistical analysis software program to tally and analyze the information received from the surveys. Next, I organized the numbers into Laub's servant leadership categories set forth in Chapter 2: valuing people, developing people, building community, displaying authenticity, providing leadership, and sharing leadership. Then, I tabulated the survey information to see how many senior pastors and church pastoral staffs aligned with the servant leadership model.

Survey Monkey analyzed the data from the RSS. The official Survey Monkey Web site computed the raw data from the surveys and inserted the numbers into a downloadable spreadsheet. I analyzed and interpreted the information using the assistance of statistician Dr. Janet Dean of Asbury University and my dissertation mentor, Dr. Thomas Tumblin.

Ethical Procedures

I took every measure possible to ensure the psychological well-being of all involved participants. Passwords and church code names, assigned at random using different letters of the English alphabet, protected all participants in the data collection process. I was the only member of the study with unlimited access to all surveys and, therefore, the only person to see the results. Upon completion of the research, I saved all research information onto a DVD disk and placed it in a personal safe deposit box. In

order to ensure protection even from immediate family members, I alone knew the box's combination.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Problem and Purpose

When organizations grow, challenges correspondingly increase. Not only does the business sector experience this reality, but ecclesiastical entities do as well. The church is not exempt from organizational difficulties, especially when these trials exist at the highest level of leadership. In past and current years, many senior pastors challenged employees to an elevated level of weekly job-related performance. Staff pastors and key lay leaders frequently became relationally disconnected from their lead visionary, causing unhealthy organizational patterns of operation.

Shortly before receiving the surveys, a megachurch staff pastor resigned his post due to a lack of community within the pastoral team. One month after completing the research surveys, at least one executive pastor resigned from his current position due in large part to a lack of connectedness with the senior leader. The second-chair minister did not have another position in mind. He simply realized the need to transition into a role where he felt personally valued more for who he was than what he did. These factual cases represent an ever-present void of relational leadership within Wesleyan congregations. This reality must be addressed in a timely and healthy manner.

The following study examines local church leadership within the Wesleyan denomination. Senior pastors, staff pastors, and lay leaders from the top twenty largest Wesleyan churches in North America answered Likert-scale formatted online surveys. The OLA and RSS instruments functioned as the primary survey tools. Senior pastors also submitted answers to three semi-structured interview questions. My research studied

the presence of relational leadership characteristics and resulting relational health among these Wesleyan ministers and volunteer leaders.

Participants

Out of the twenty churches, participants from each church included one senior pastor, four staff pastors, and two lay leaders. In sum, 140 ministers and church leaders received the online surveys. Fifty-seven pastors and lay leaders ($n = 57$) completed the OLA (40.7 percent), meanwhile forty-five clergy and church leaders ($n = 45$) finished the RSS (32.1 percent). Eight senior pastors out of twenty responded to the three follow-up interview questions (40 percent).

Research Question #1

Using the OLA and the RSS, how did the Wesleyan senior pastors, staff pastors, and lay leaders rate according to the ten relational leadership characteristics?

The test group received two instruments that measured the degree to which they exhibit relational leadership characteristics. The Organizational Leadership Assessment was the first instrument administered. This instrument contained sixty questions, with six supplementary questions measuring job satisfaction. The OLA measured six core values: authenticity, valuing people, development, community, leadership, and delegation (see Table 4.1). The additional three categories of job satisfaction, organization, and leadership, coupled with the OLA index, provided additional information regarding the churches and leaders. The core values of authenticity, valuing people, development, community, leadership, and delegation constituted six of the ten relational leadership characteristics.

A series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) showed only one significant difference between senior pastors, staff pastors, and lay leaders on the six leadership components and the additional three organizational factors measured by the OLA. In the component provides leadership, senior pastors ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 0.38$) reported higher servant leadership scores than did staff pastors ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.52$) and lay leaders ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.67$; $F [2, 47] = 2.65$, $p = .039$; see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Means and Standard Deviations for the OLA (N=57)

OLA	Senior Pastors (n = 7) <i>M (SD)</i>	Staff Pastors (n = 7) <i>M (SD)</i>	Lay Leaders (n = 43) <i>M (SD)</i>	<i>F (df)</i>	<i>p</i>
1. Values people	4.43 (0.45)	4.01 (0.61)	4.17 (0.58)	-1.44 (2, 47)	.247
2. Develops people	4.35 (0.35)	3.91 (0.62)	4.00 (0.59)	-1.52 (2, 47)	.229
3. Builds community	4.17 (0.49)	3.91 (0.50)	4.05 (0.54)	0.81 (2, 47)	.448
4. Displays authenticity	4.45 (0.38)	4.02 (0.63)	4.22 (0.56)	1.63 (2, 47)	.204
5. Provides leadership	4.30 (0.38)	3.72 (0.52)	3.88 (0.67)	2.65 (2, 47)	.039*
6. Shares leadership	4.37 (0.49)	3.86 (0.76)	3.99 (0.74)	1.31 (2, 47)	.280
7. Job satisfaction	4.31 (0.49)	4.26 (0.53)	4.46 (0.55)	0.78 (2, 47)	.465
8. Organization	96.29 (9.27)	87.86 (10.65)	90.09 (11.17)	1.62 (2, 47)	.208
9. Leadership	164.71 (23.19)	147.00 (24.112)	153.68 (23.54)	1.63 (2, 47)	.207
10. OLA index		3.91 (0.54)	4.06 (0.55)	1.83 (2, 47)	.172

In addition, the OLA group's administrator computed the overall index scores for the OLA by summing together responses for its sixty items and finding the average. I used these index scores to judge the organizational health of the church. Even though the

mean responses for each group fell into different categories of organizational health, significant differences did not exist among lead pastors, staff pastors, and lay leaders:

- Senior pastors
 - ($M = 4.35$, OLA rating of “Servant Leadership (Excellent Health)”, $SD = 0.37$)
- Staff/Associate/Assistant pastors
 - ($M = 3.91$, OLA rating of “Positive Paternalistic Leadership (Moderate Health)”, $SD = 0.55$)
- Lay leaders
 - ($M = 4.06$, OLA rating of “Servant Leadership (Excellent Health)”, $SD = 0.55$)
- $F(2, 47) = 1.83, p = .172$

Table 4.2 shows the correlation coefficients for the components measured by the OLA. All of the components appear positively correlated with one another, with Pearson product moment correlation coefficients ranging from .523 to .945.

Table 4.2. Correlation Coefficients for the OLA Components

		OLA Components							
	VP	DP	BC	DA	PL	SL	JS	Org	Ldr
VP	1.000	.792	.829 ¹	.871 ¹	.625 ¹	.884 ¹	.693 ¹	.856 ¹	.891 ¹
DP	.792 ¹	1.000	.780 ¹	.817 ¹	.817 ¹	.796 ¹	.555 ¹	.778 ¹	.912 ¹
BC	.829 ¹	.780 ¹	1.000	.826 ¹	.667 ¹	.770 ¹	.578 ¹	.935 ¹	.807 ¹
DA	.871 ¹	.817 ¹	.826 ¹	1.000	.692 ¹	.845 ¹	.628 ¹	.859 ¹	.904 ¹
PL	.625 ¹	.817 ¹	.667 ¹	.692 ¹	1.000	.697 ¹	.523 ¹	.678 ¹	.826 ¹
SL	.884 ¹	.796 ¹	.770 ¹	.845 ¹	.697 ¹	1.000	.607 ¹	.749 ¹	.945 ¹
JS	.693 ¹	.555 ¹	.578 ¹	.628 ¹	.523 ¹	.607 ¹	1.000	.582 ¹	.651 ¹
Org	.856 ¹	.778 ¹	.935 ¹	.859 ¹	.678 ¹	.749 ¹	.582 ¹	1.000	.774 ¹
Ldr	.891 ¹	.912 ¹	.807 ¹	.904 ¹	.826 ¹	.945 ¹	.651 ¹	.774 ¹	1.000

¹Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

VP—Values people; DP—Develops people; BC—Builds community; DA—Displays authenticity; PL—Provides leadership; SL—Shares leadership; JS—Job satisfaction; Org—Organization; Ldr—Leadership

The second instrument utilized was the Relational Support Scale. The RSS measured the four remaining relational leadership characteristics of mentoring, coaching, collegial social, and collegial task. Senior pastors received an RSS version verbally formatted for their role in top leadership; meanwhile, staff pastors and lay leaders received an RSS version verbally arranged for their specific roles as managers and workforce.

An independent samples *t*-test shows a significant difference between senior pastors and staff pastors/lay leaders on the RSS. In particular, senior pastors ($M = 65.22$, $SD = 5.87$) reported a higher view of personal relational investment in their staff and lay

leaders than associate pastors and lay leaders reported about the same relationship with the senior leader ($M = 57.81$, $SD = 7.22$; $t [43] = 2.85$, $p = .007$). Further analysis of the RSS shows consistency in responding across the items, with good internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha of 0.84; see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3. Means and Standard Deviations for the RSS (N=45)

RSS	Total <i>M (SD)</i>	Senior Pastors (n = 9) <i>M (SD)</i>	Other (n = 36) <i>M (SD)</i>	<i>t (df)</i>	<i>p</i>
RSS total	59.29 (7.53)	65.22 (5.87)	57.81 (7.22)	2.85 (43)	.007
Average response		4.35 (0.39)	3.85 (0.48)		

Possible RSS answers ranged on the Likert-type scale from one to five. The answers were as follows: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The average response given by participants varied slightly between senior pastors and staff pastors/lay leaders. Senior pastors answered slightly higher on average ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.54$) than did their paid and volunteer counterparts ($M = 3.85$, $SD = .48$).

The RSS measured the relational aspect of relational leadership, with four specific sections within the instrument. Staff pastors and lay leaders completed the same RSS version, combining them as a whole for unification purposes. The reason for this joint scoring was due to Wesleyan Church by-laws, as staff and lay leaders serve in their respective positions at the senior pastor's behest.

Research Question #2

Using the findings of the OLA and the RSS, how did the perspectives of the senior pastors, pastoral staff pastors, and lay leaders differ and align in accordance with the relational leadership characteristics?

Perspectives from senior leaders, staff ministers, and lay directors differed in numerous areas, especially in regards to the RSS. Significant differences emerged when determining relational connectedness from senior leader to staff/lay leader. Senior leaders reported an average response of 4.35, which falls between *agree* (4) and the highest possible response of *strongly agree* (5). In contrast, staff pastors and lay leaders reported an average response of 3.85, which falls between *neither* (3) and *agree* (4). Senior ministers viewed their relational connectedness with their staff and lay leadership as considerably higher than the staff and laity viewed the same apparent connection.

Apart from the RSS, the OLA showed one main difference between senior pastors and staff pastors/lay leaders. In the category *provides leadership*, senior ministers rated their leadership of the staff pastors and lay leaders higher ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 0.38$) than did the staff pastors ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.52$) and lay leaders ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.67$). Based upon a Likert-type scale, respondents could answer any one of five possible ways on the OLA: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. The category *provides leadership* included statements about organizational vision, goals, and accountability. Within this category, senior ministers consistently answered either *agree* or *strongly agree*. However, staff pastors and lay leaders answered on average between *undecided* and *agree*. Even though only one significant difference emerged, a trend

seems to exist where senior pastors describe themselves more positively in terms of servant, and ultimately relational, leadership than do staff pastors or lay leaders.

Perspectives from senior pastors, staff pastors, and lay leaders aligned in several main areas of relational leadership. In the OLA categories of *values people* and *displays authenticity*, the mean scores of all three groups ranged from *agree* to *strongly agree*: (see Table 4.1, p. 105).

Research Question #3

What other characteristics and practices of relational health emerged as a result of this study, specifically their health in connection with relational leadership?

Church Leadership Overall Health

Church leadership health is a crucial factor in determining whether or not the church as a whole is, or can be, healthy. The OLA measured organizational health in specific connection to servant leadership. The OLA used overall index scores to determine the health of the church leadership as a whole. As mentioned previously, senior pastors received an index rating equal to *excellent health*. Staff pastors received an index score equaling *moderate health*. Lay leaders received an overall index rating of *excellent health*. According to OLA health rankings, a rating of *excellent health* is not the highest possible category. Instead, a rating of *optimal health* occupies the top organizational health classification. Therefore, a score of *moderate health* is twice removed from the top, and a ranking of *excellent health* is once removed from the highest level possible.

While the OLA measured servant leadership specifically, the RSS assessed the relational component of relational leadership. Through a combination of the two

instruments, a proper gauge of relational leadership and overall church leadership health is obtained. The RSS recorded senior pastors scoring on average 65.22 out of a total 75 points possible. However, staff and lay leaders scored noticeably lower ($M = 57.81$) on the same scale with 75 points possible. With the average response of senior pastors at 4.35, they range between *agree* and *strongly agree* on almost every answer. Staff and lay leaders ranged lower, between *neither* and *agree*, with a 3.85 average response (see Table 4.3).

Therefore, senior pastors give themselves an elevated and positive rating regarding their relational connectedness to, and investment in, their staff and lay leaders. When one combines this high average with the OLA overall index rating of *excellent health*, the conclusion is clear. This group of Wesleyan senior leaders views themselves as effective and skilled relational leaders. The semi-structured interviews also support this finding.

Staff pastors did not agree with their senior leaders. Combining their OLA index result of *moderate health* with their lower RSS total ($M = 57.81$) and average response (3.85) of *neither* or *agree*, staff ministers highlighted their lack of full support for senior pastors. Lay leaders were split, as they offered complete confidence in their senior pastor's relational leadership capacities in the OLA with a standing of *excellent health*. At the same time, they contributed to the lower RSS scores. In sum, staff pastors, and, in part, lay leaders did not view their church leadership as being as healthy as the senior pastors viewed the same leadership units.

Semi-Structured Senior Pastor Interviews

The semi-structured senior pastor interviews provided vital supplemental information and consisted of three questions. The three questions helped to add an extended measure of qualitative data not gleaned from the two Web-based surveys. Each question is listed below, along with the findings from the corresponding questions. Out of twenty senior pastors who received the questions by e-mail, eight participated and submitted answers (40 percent return rate). Two ministers shared their responses by phone, and six replied by e-mail.

Of the eight respondents, two were Generation Xers and six were Baby Boomers. All eight senior pastors were male. Five ministers could be classified as introverted, whereas three were extroverted. Six pastors represented suburban churches, and two ministers represented urban churches.

1. What are some of the ways to build and maintain a high level of relational connectedness, especially among the church pastoral staff members?

Answers varied from “creating open discussion environments” to “attending district winter retreats.” However, out of all the responses, one major theme emerged. Time together, both quality and quantity, is an integral component in fostering relational connections among church leadership. One senior leader in his mid-forties stated, “Staff pastors and lay leaders are busy people living in a busy world, so strategic and intentional time together is hard to do.” However, he continued by arguing that their staff does indeed need to spend more time with each other. The eight senior leaders shared a myriad of means to accomplish this end (e.g., retreats, weekly staff meetings, walking the halls, daily prayer times, and group lunches outside office walls).

2. Does the senior pastor need to be the initiator and primary model for relational leadership, or could another staff pastor take on that role (e.g., executive pastor)?

Senior pastors answered with qualifications. Two senior pastors offered a definite “yes,” stating that the senior pastor must be the initiator and primary model for relational leadership. While making his case, one of these pastors stated confidently, “speed of the leader; speed of the team.” However, the remaining six senior pastors believed in some variation of senior pastor/executive pastor sharing of this responsibility. Some pastors stated that the senior leader should “buy in” at minimum; meanwhile, others held that senior pastors should “participate” and executive pastors must handle the “daily” duties of relational leadership within the staff.

3. Would you classify your church pastoral staff as relationally healthy? Why or why not?

Senior pastors overwhelmingly answered optimistically, thereby classifying the relational health of their church staff and lay leadership in the positive. Seven out of eight (87.5 percent) of senior pastors answered, “Yes.” Similar to question two, few ministers were willing to answer definitively in the positive. Exactly half of the respondents qualified their “yes” votes with statements such as, “moving in that direction,” “continuing to grow,” and “to a degree.” Three of the respondents answered with a decisive positive response, using phrases such as, “no fear” and “genuine care.” Only a single senior minister stated a conclusive, “No.” He qualified his answer by sharing that some of his staff “feel left out” and “currently alienated.”

All senior pastors did not appear to maintain the same level of commitment to relational connectedness. One senior leader stated that he was highly committed to

relational bonding within the staff through remaining “approachable” and constantly “sharing stories” with each other. In conjunction, two more senior ministers made a direct comparison between the health of their pastoral staff and the health of their individual marriages and families. They believed that if their personal relationships with their spouses and children were healthy, then this relational vibrancy would shift over into the leadership of their church, yet others exhibited a lower level of commitment. One senior leader held that “tensions between the executive pastor and staff hold back” any past gains in relational unity.

Summary of Major Findings

Using the two instruments and the senior pastor interviews, senior pastors viewed themselves and their leadership teams differently in regards to relational leadership than did their corresponding staff and lay leadership groups. Staff pastors continually ranked senior pastors lower than did lay leaders. While grouped together, staff pastors and lay leaders ranked senior pastors lower than senior ministers ranked themselves. However, when staff ministers and lay leadership were broken apart, the lay leaders ranked senior pastors’ leadership similar to how senior leaders ranked themselves.

Relational Differences

Significant relational differences existed between senior pastors and their respective staff pastors and lay leaders, especially regarding relational connectedness within their leadership capacities.

Pastoral Descriptions

As a trend, senior pastors described themselves positively in terms of relational leadership. However, staff pastors and lay leaders did not view their senior pastors' relational leadership capacity in such a confident manner.

Time Together

According to senior pastors, the main avenue to build and maintain high levels of relational connectedness was through quantity and quality time spent together with their staff and lay leadership.

Initiation

According to a sizeable majority of senior pastors, both the senior and executive minister (as applicable) must initiate relational leadership within the church staff and leadership.

Positive Health

A vast majority of senior pastors currently view their pastoral staff and lay leadership teams as relationally healthy.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Major Findings

Because of this review of literature, my twenty years spent as a pastor's child and grandchild, and ten years in personal ministry, I believe relational leadership is a mandate for all pastors and church leaders, not just another suggested leadership model or approach to life. The modern individual's time, and very existence, revolves around relationships. This relational reality is especially true for the current millennial generation. From several years recently spent in youth and young adult ministry to my current role as lead pastor, I have seen how millennials attempt to connect socially with others, in spite of the financial and personal investment. Pastoral leaders must embrace and capitalize upon this social trend through leading churches and staff teams via relational connections.

However, senior pastors often overlook the current necessity of relational leadership with church leadership. Staff pastors, who are frequently younger in age and experience, desire relational connections with their superiors. During the follow-up interviews conducted during this study, one senior pastor summarized the current situation well: "The staff wants the senior pastor to initiate relational leadership." Corporate America has even begun to learn the value of deep, personal relationships. Authors Daniel Goleman, Richard E. Boyatzis, and Annie McKee highlight how successful chief executive officers make a habit of spending "more time coaching their senior executives, developing them as collaborators, and cultivating *personal*

relationships [emphasis mine] with them” (82). Even in secular environments, strong personal relationships play an integral role in the health of the organization.

The motivation for this study developed out of an observed relational leadership void within the Wesleyan denomination. Numerous senior pastors seemed to be disconnected relationally from those they led. Using the OLA and RSS research instruments, senior pastors, staff pastors, and lay leaders were surveyed from the top twenty largest (in Sunday morning worship attendance) Wesleyan churches in North America. The two surveys combined together measured relational leadership. Senior pastors also answered three semi-structured interview questions to provide additional relational leadership data. The survey results were used to determine the degree of relational leadership and relational health within the top tier churches of the Wesleyan denomination.

Regarding the follow-up interview questionnaire, eight out of twenty senior pastors participated, resulting in a 40 percent return rate. The lower survey return rate may indicate the busyness and demands on the time of senior leaders. However, the reduced percentage rate for senior leader responses may also indicate a wariness to measure the relational health and existence of relational leadership within their staff and lay leadership specifically. A general church health evaluation might have produced a higher response than a study that directly measured the degree of lead pastor relational health in conjunction with his or her staff.

Significant Relational Differences

The outcome of relational leadership is multifaceted, including emphasis on accomplishments, bonding (affective), and efficacy. Eventually, the relational leader

should accomplish much within their church or local community. The same leader should also be effective in seeing connectedness occur within the staff and other leaders. Finally, the relational leader helps produce a sense of purpose and meaning in the lives of followers. Among the three categories, the affective aspect is the strongest within expected outcomes of relational leadership. Participants must develop and maintain connectedness within the group in order to be experiencing and producing relational leadership.

As the results illustrate from Chapter 4, significant relational differences existed between the senior pastors and their staff pastors and lay leaders. Senior pastors viewed themselves in a more positive relational manner than did their subordinates. This finding was not a surprise. Resulting from personal experience, I have found many senior pastors of large churches to be somewhat relationally detached from the vocational and/or personal lives of their staff ministers and lay leadership. Whether this disconnect was due to time constraints pertaining to the leader's role, staff size, or simply a lack of genuine interest, the reality still existed.

Chapter 2 discusses Moses and his development as a leader. He began his leadership journey taking orders from God alone. Yahweh told him what to say to Pharaoh. God gave him the Ten Commandments. The Almighty God spoke to Moses, and then Moses communicated the divine words to the Israelites. However, Moses eventually needed his father-in-law to speak into his life and aid in Moses' growth as a leader. Whether voluntarily or involuntarily, Numbers 11 shows how God even helped Moses learn to delegate. In the same way, senior pastors need others to speak honestly

into their lives regarding the reality of their leadership. Every leader needs a Jethro, including these senior leaders.

For senior pastors to accomplish this task, several options exist. Initially, the pastor can petition a key church member to serve as a bridge between the senior pastors, staff pastors, and lay leadership. While helping to monitor the relationships among the three groups, this member would need to be reliable, able to keep and maintain confidences, and be committed to honesty and integrity. Another option is hiring a church leadership consultant on a regular basis to determine relational health. This action would provide the unbiased assessment necessary to measure relational leadership properly. Every possibility inherently includes delegation of authority. As stated in Chapter 2, relationally healthy servant leaders are ones who readily share leadership with other trusted staff or lay leaders.

Senior leaders are often senior leaders because of their skill in many different areas, but especially pertinent is their ability to instill optimism in their people (both staff and laity). In local church ministry, the senior pastor's job description almost always includes vision casting and dreaming. These talents again require seeing reality in a better light. A leader's greatest strength frequently highlights their greatest weakness. This optimistic mentality assuredly influences any leader's ability to self-assess accurately.

With the senior pastor group surveyed within this study, all lead large churches. Therefore, they are skilled at their vocation. Simply stated, they are successful. If these leaders are to continue growing themselves and their churches, they must take a realistic look at their staff and lay leader relationships. Senior ministers must close the gap between personal perception and actual relational reality.

This result warrants further research to determine what factors precisely determine this relational disconnect. The factors certainly vary from leader to leader. The senior pastors could possess potentially too many other primary obligations. Quite possibly, executive pastor provides too much of a buffer between the senior leader, staff pastors, and lay leaders. Finally, the relational void may exist because the staff does not value the connection as much as the top leadership.

Senior Pastor Positive Self-Characterization

Although the OLA revealed few significant differences between senior pastors and staff pastors/lay leaders, a trend emerged. Senior pastors tended to identify themselves more positively with regards to relational leadership than did their staff pastors or lay leaders. Several factors may have contributed to this reality.

Ministers often move frequently. Some clergy find themselves with a new appointment, while others return to school for another degree. As highlighted in Chapter 2, staff pastors on average stay eight fewer months at a preceding church than do senior pastors. The gap widens when discussing their current church, with senior pastors staying eighteen months longer than staff pastors. Whatever the rationale, pastors are often transitory people.

At minimum, two of my senior pastor participants had been employed at their churches for less than two years. Certainly, any number of staff pastors and lay leaders could be new to their position. As a result, staff ministers and lay leaders may not have an accurate picture of the total relational health of their organization. They may be basing their answers on one or two isolated (positive or negative) interactions with the senior

leader. In this case, the church staff may be healthier than is actually reflected in the results, thus aligning more with the senior pastor's analysis.

Based upon personal experience, senior pastors are divided. Some describe themselves in a more positive manner, whereas others are frequently critical of their efforts and realize how often they consistently fall short of the ideal relational leadership standard. Either way, senior pastors would serve themselves well to reassess how they are truly performing within the OLA's six leadership components of authenticity, valuing people, developing people, building community, providing leadership, and sharing leadership.

Theologically, the Holy Trinity illustrates how individuals should view themselves, as well as how persons should interact with others. Jesus serves the Father, and the Spirit carries out the will of both. All three seek to put the needs of the other two above their own. In Romans 12:3, the Apostle Paul beckons believers to view themselves with humility: "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment..." (NIV). Senior pastors must approach their leadership with this same type of generous spirit and humble nature. Staff pastors and lay leaders should seek to do the same regarding their own lives and ministries, as well as their expectations of the churches' senior leaders. In sum, insecurity, busyness, and even temperament produce barriers to relational cohesion.

Quantity and Quality Time

Before the study, my role in full-time, vocational ministry had been limited to one stint as a small church solo pastor and several years as a large church staff pastor. Currently, I serve as the senior pastor of a medium-sized church in the suburbs. When I

served on staff of these sizeable churches, I always desired more of the senior pastor's time. His time was precious, and he seemingly never possessed enough hours in the day for me or for the other staff members. Senior leaders voiced this concern during the follow-up interviews. In reference to the question of how to build and maintain staff relational connectedness, one senior pastor stated, "Time, time, time together. And that's always a challenge." Obviously, time is a precious commodity for senior leaders, especially with regards to their staff and key volunteers.

Part of this time investment will certainly occur on the job. The same senior pastor continued to share regarding time, "Time for the senior leader to lead 'by walking around' and voicing words of appreciation and encouragement. Time to write notes to that same end. Time to publicly voice affirmation for the staff person's job and ministry." Encouragement becomes an integral component of time spent together, thus allowing the staff pastor to feel esteemed and needed.

Another aspect of time invested into staff and lay leaders will happen out of the church. The same senior pastor again reiterated the difficulty of spending time with staff members while he highlighted the need to invest outside of the office walls. "Though difficult to do, time spent together outside of the church setting can be a powerful means of building connectedness." In effect, the task of relational leadership goes beyond a team training time to the very fabric of an organization's professional, and personal, life.

The larger a church grows, the senior leader often becomes more isolated from his total staff, having the ability to invest deeply in only a small contingent of leaders. Albeit difficult, the literature review has shown that leadership requires time. Jesus spent massive amounts of time with his disciples, training and teaching them. When a church

leader sets aside time for their co-workers in Christ, the minister communicates a message of value. Senior pastors must strive to connect relationally with and lead as many staff and lay leaders as possible. Methods may vary, yet the message cannot. Relational leadership, properly executed in the life of church leaders, takes time.

The literature review referred to the perfect model of Christ and his interactions with the twelve disciples. Scripture shows that he instructed, fed, and spent time with them. Chapter 2 also discusses Paul and his time investment in his mentee, Timothy. Time spent together proved a transformational catalyst for both Jesus and Paul as they attempted to alter the lives of others, and particularly those closest to them.

Ministry today must reflect this need for quantity, and quality, time. Churches and church leaders should reevaluate their methods of ministry, allowing for incorporation of blocks of quantity time within their schedules to connect both inside and outside of the church walls. Without the quantity time, the quality may not happen. Wesley's class meetings provide a possible reproducible model in this instance. Leaders could be organized into smaller groups, providing them with avenues in which to grow and develop shared experiences. Whatever the model, time is the baseline from which to start building relational connectedness and healthy leadership patterns.

Relational Leadership Initiation

According to the senior pastor follow-up interviews, relational leadership within churches is the responsibility of both the senior and executive pastors. Out of the eight senior pastors who completed the interview questions, only two stated firmly that relational leadership is solely the job of the senior pastor. The remaining six ministers articulated some version of a hybrid model, where both the senior and executive pastors

become involved in the relational process. One pastor stated, “Ideally, the senior pastor would initiate. However, he must at least buy into the idea of relational leadership.”

Another shared that “the executive pastor can do it, but the senior pastor must participate.” Relational leadership requires a joint effort between the senior and executive ministers.

Senior pastors were hesitant to commit fully to leaving the task of relational leadership totally on their shoulders. Whether due to time constraints or a genuine lack of interest, these top leaders allowed another pastor to, at minimum, possess a role in staff relational investment. Research in Chapter 2 seems to disagree with this leadership model. Authors Richards and Hoeldtke argue that senior leaders must indeed first model relational leadership (226). The task is their responsibility before another minister may participate.

Chapter 2 also records Jesus relationally investing in the lives of twelve men along with some women who joined with him. He fed, taught, and traveled with these followers, literally showing them the Way. The Apostle Paul varied his methods somewhat, although still incorporating the model Christ set forth. For example, Paul would write letters to Timothy, instructing him in the faith. The penned correspondence became a vital component of Paul’s ministry. At the same time, he spent time with men who would travel with him, as well as families who would host him.

The literature review also highlights the leadership of Abraham Lincoln. One author describes his leadership style as “management by walk around,” referring to the president’s regular trips to his cabinet members’ offices. Since pastors today frequently

work next to one another in close physical proximity, this Lincolnian leadership style offers a viable relational leadership model for senior pastors.

During my time as a large church staff member, the senior pastor rarely physically visited my office area. However, the executive pastor would frequent my workspace, even just to discuss my personal life. Although these visits by the *second chair* provided encouragement and produced a valuable employer/employee bond, I found myself still longing for the same rapport with the senior leader. My season of life possibly factored into this hope for more relational bonding from my senior leader. At the time, I was in my twenties. The senior pastor was in his late forties and early fifties. He potentially did not need the same degree of connectedness I did.

In the future, senior pastors would do well to survey their teams. Every staff member is different, but each benefits from a relational leader. One senior pastor offered a familial analogy when he spoke of relational church staff health: “Each child demands varying degrees of parental connection and time investment.” Similarly, the amount of desired connection between staff members will vary. Some leaders need more personal investment than others.

According to Chapter 2, Jesus had his twelve disciples, but he also had his three. Peter, James, and John received more personal connection and investment than did the rest. The task becomes finding out which pastor or lay leader needs more or less relational investment for that specific leader to feel valued and encouraged. Even though this process is ongoing, a senior (and executive) leader would be wise to strive for more knowledge, understanding, and execution in this sphere of church leadership.

Relationally Healthy Church Leadership Teams

The results of the semi-structured senior pastor interviews revealed confident senior leaders. Question three asked the pastors, “Would you classify your church pastoral staff as relationally healthy? Why or why not?” Out of the eight responses, seven senior pastors answered with “yes.” This affirmative response reinforces the characterization of senior leaders throughout the rest of the study.

One surprise finding regarding staff relational health dealt with the senior pastor’s idea of health. Since the question posed did not offer a qualification of *health*, pastors answered based upon their personal notion of health. One minister surveyed in this study stated positively that his church leadership was healthy, yet the informative aspect of his answer was the rationale offered. He based the leadership’s apparent relational health on “a process we conducted a few years ago, which included reading a book that caused them to become more team-oriented.”

The literature review noted that a healthy church staff was one that maintained vibrant relational bonds from the top down. From Jesus to Paul to Lincoln, the top leader is responsible for being the greatest servant. This humble approach to leadership only aids in fostering greater staff relational connectedness, resulting in an increased degree of health.

In my experience, senior pastors can perceive their staff to be relationally healthy, when the opposite is true. Staff pastors feel under-appreciated, or unappreciated. Lay leaders make attempts to connect, but their overtures fall on deaf ears. A study of this nature possesses numerous benefits, and one of those advantages is unearthing what is reality and using that as a baseline for improvement. My hope is that more senior leaders

will contact me and inquire as to my results, specifically regarding their church. When a leader sees the facts, growth often follows.

Implications of the Findings

Wesleyan church leadership within larger congregations (Over one thousand people weekend worship attendance) needs a fresh framework for leadership. Previous tactics worked to a point, producing a robust work ethic and numerical growth. Today, young pastors crave relational investment. If they do not align with the vision *and* the person of the senior leader, upstart ministers will work elsewhere. These passionate leaders will become baristas at the local coffeehouse if they do not feel as though church leadership personally values them.

If senior pastors decide to become more relational in their leadership approach, several positive outcomes may occur. The staff retention rate will increase, especially among newer staff pastors. These young men and women will want to remain on a church staff that highly values their vocational contributions to the organization as a whole and their personal contributions. Marriages will exhibit greater relational health and overall family health if staff members feel truly cared for as individuals and not simply as task managers.

During the follow-up interviews, two senior pastors even stated clearly the link between staff and marital/family relational health. One pastor stated, “There is a direct correlation between my marriage personally and the relational health of my church.” He continued by offering an example: “I confront my children well, but I do not do a good job holding them accountable for their actions. The same is true with my staff.” He also referred to Paul and Timothy in 1 Timothy 3:4-5 where Paul admonished his young

mentee on the importance of managing his own family and the connection to the church: “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?)” (NIV) The other senior leader took the issue a step further by personalizing the responsibility of staff relational health. He stated, “I must help staff families be healthy so that we can model that to the church.” This lead minister owned the responsibility of health.

Limitations of the Study

If the study were to be repeated, I would take some different directions on several issues. Initially, I would broaden the test pool to the top thirty churches instead of the top twenty. By surveying only twenty, the return rate decreased and the overall study weakened. Surveying another ten churches would certainly increase returns, since smaller churches often times have less internal administrative demands. As a result, pastors and church leaders are free to respond to outside requests in a timelier manner. On the whole, the study becomes even stronger with a broader test pool.

By increasing the amount of churches involved and the amount of senior pastors surveyed, the power of statistical analysis strengthens as well. If a difference does indeed exist between the senior pastors, staff pastors, and lay leaders, this discrepancy will not be as difficult to observe. In turn, the trustworthiness of the entire study improves.

The study omitted any demographic data, which, in turn, weakened the results. Pertinent information such as gender, years in position, age, and ethnicity would have been helpful. Perhaps one of the most vital demographic pieces omitted was tenure, how long the senior pastor, staff pastor, or lay leader had served in their roles at the church. A

lower rating in any area would be more understandable if the senior leader had served only a short time. The converse is true as well. If a staff pastor had recently been hired, this employee would be unable to offer a thorough assessment of his or her senior leader's relational leadership ability.

A final weakness resides with the OLA and RSS. Statistically, a method did not exist to connect the two instruments. This inability to join the OLA and RSS limited the total strength of the study. Looking back, a research tool should have been developed or discovered that could measure relational leadership.

Unexpected Observations

Regarding the OLA, I did not expect so much agreement within the six categories. Although a trend certainly developed regarding senior pastors describing themselves more positively than others did, staff pastors and lay leaders did not wholly disagree. I would have thought that more of a disconnect would have been recorded, especially between the senior pastors and staff pastors. Granted, the executive pastor or senior leadership team would have influenced the results, as they would be closer to the senior pastor than almost anyone else on staff.

Another surprise I had was the low amount of return regarding the surveys. Fifty-seven pastors and lay leaders completed the OLA, whereas forty-five participants returned the RSS. Both numbers are significantly lower than the 140 total persons that received the surveys. Starbucks gift cards provided an incentive to take and finish the instruments; however, more apparently should have been done to ensure a more comprehensive rate of return.

A staff pastor of one of the largest Wesleyan churches contacted me after he completed the surveys, providing yet another unexpected result. He inquired as to whether he could meet with me in person to talk more about the study. The pastor shared how he was “encouraged by the questions” and wanted to hear more about relational leadership in the local church context. This initiation is impressive since he lives in the Midwest, and I currently reside in the Southwest. He is even willing to travel down to me in order to follow through on his wish. Discussions and meetings of this nature, coupled with an article, podcast, and even a book, will only further the development, implementation, and dissemination of relational leadership within church leadership venues.

Along the same lines, two senior pastors asked me to share with them the results of the study on the whole, as well as the scores of their individual churches. These two concerned leaders truly wanted an honest assessment of their own personal leadership, along with the health of their church leadership as an aggregate unit. I shared that I would provide this information once my study was complete. These men stood in contrast to some senior pastors who would not respond to any of my overtures or would reply with a reason as to why they personally, and their church staff, could not participate (e.g., lack of time, church calendar conflicts, personal writing commitments). Sadly, one minister shared with me in a face-to-face encounter that he would participate in the study, only to withdraw one month later via his staff secretary. Although I was certainly discouraged by those who refused participation, I found myself encouraged by these two leaders seeking to improve their leadership at the staff level.

Recommendations

In the future, this study could be improved by altering a few areas. A larger sample size would increase the power of the research. As mentioned previously, surveying thirty churches, or more, would easily upgrade the study's strength. Also, adding a control group would be beneficial. Large Wesleyan churches could be compared to small Wesleyan churches. In doing so, volunteers and lay leadership play a greater role within the church leadership, and thus the study, too.

Church health could also be used as an independent variable. Does church health affect leadership styles? Has the church recently experienced a split? Did the founding pastor recently resign, and was the resignation peaceful and well managed? What is the church's track record with senior pastors? Have senior pastors perennially experienced long tenures with these parishioners? Does the congregation choose sides on hot-button issues, picking between the senior pastor and a certain staff minister? All of these questions factor into the health of a church, congregation, leadership, and staff.

This dissertation serves numerous purposes. One, Wesleyan pastors and church leaders must learn more about relational leadership and less about marketing, programming, and the latest technology. According to Christian pollster George Barna in his book *Revolution*, the early Church "was all about relationships" (24). Mimicking the church of the past, the future church should be about relationships. Certainly, relationships with Christ and family are primary and should remain in that order. However, senior pastor and staff/lay leader relationships are also vital to a church seeking to maintain effective ministry in the years to come.

Also, this work stands to transition easily into a church leadership resource for any denomination. Any group can reproduce this study within their own churches or districts. Once the surveys are collected and interviews recorded, ministries stand to become healthier and more effective from the top to the bottom of their leadership structures.

Also, my local church and district benefit from a study of this nature on two different levels. Other district churches, regardless of size, can seek to become relational leaders. Using the ten relational leadership characteristics, pastors can assess the relational health of their staff and lay leadership. The district superintendent also has the opportunity to use both instruments in determining the relational health of his churches in conjunction with his pastors.

Follow-up research could be completed in other arenas as well. Relational leadership could be studied within other denominations. Groups such as the Nazarenes, Free Methodists, and United Methodists could all be studied, especially in reference to their largest churches or districts to ensure enough participants. Relational leadership could also be studied within individual churches, specifically churches with a low staff turnover rate.

Postscript

The church leadership material written in the past two decades, especially by a few select authors, can fill a pastor's study and more. In contrast, few works have been penned in reference to relational leadership within the church. Even within the literature review of Chapter 2 and reflected in the Works Cited, only one book specifically discusses and claims the name of *Relational Leadership* (Wright). Frequently, this book

dealt more with servant leadership than specifically relational leadership. My prayer going forward is that pastors, counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, scholars, professors, and even lay leaders would research and write more on this very transformational subject and how it can steer church leadership in a more healthy direction.

Furthermore, this research produced a new found passion in my life for improved relational leadership within my own denomination, The Wesleyan Church. Although certainly a process, modern technology can aid with information dissemination more rapidly than ever previously thought possible. My hope is to begin in my own current congregation. As a lead pastor, I must measure constantly my skill in relationally leading my staff. Once I begin to model and grow within this reality pertaining to my own leadership group, the goal becomes spreading the concept throughout the district and eventually the denomination. This goal may be accomplished through writing, speaking, and training on the subject that I have studied so intentionally within the last two to three years.

My own personal ministry must change. Although I consider myself a relational individual and extroverted by nature, I currently fall short of exhibiting all ten relational leadership characteristics outlined in this work. Personality certainly plays a role in relational leadership, with outgoing pastors possessing a natural affinity to relational connection. However, the valuing of relational leadership must remain a constant with every minister. Personally, I must consider how much I value others, share leadership, and exhibit the other relational leadership components. Now that I am a senior pastor, an increased amount of grace for senior leaders exists whereas previously justice lived.

Having been both a staff and lead pastor, I feel better equipped to demonstrate relational leadership to my staff and lay leaders. I see both sides of the equation with full authenticity and transparency. True identification, as opposed to assumption, is now possible on both levels of church leadership.

Another way my own personal ministry must change is through better self-care. I mentioned in Chapter 2 the necessity of proper balance in ministry. Jesus both gave himself away and withdrew for times of solitude. At times, I model this balance well. At other junctures, I do not. People constantly surround pastors. The challenge is withdrawal. I attempt to achieve balance through personal retreats and daily personal *office time* where I close my door. However, I must take more care and initiative in this area.

The relational leadership research must continue. Granted, these last few years yielded insightful results, yet I must continue to learn more about my profession, the pastoral ministry, and the practice of ministry. A responsibility exists within my heart and life to advance the profession of ministry and determine what practices and principles will improve the field. As a profession, pastors need research regarding how to reach not only the next generation for Christ but also how to connect with them on a basic personal level. If senior pastors can relationally connect with and lead their own staffs, then the staffs will prayerfully do the same with those under their tutelage. In this way, lives are changed one relational connection at a time.

APPENDIX A

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT

General Instructions

The purpose of this instrument is to allow organizations to discover how their leadership practices and beliefs impact the different ways people function within the organization. This instrument is designed to be taken by people at all levels of the organization including workers, managers and top leadership. As you respond to the different statements, please answer as to what you believe is generally true about your organization or work unit. Please respond with your own personal feelings and beliefs and not those of others, or those that others would want you to have. Respond as to how things *are* ... not as they could be, or should be.

Feel free to use the full spectrum of answers (from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). You will find that some of the statements will be easy to respond to while others may require more thought. If you are uncertain, you may want to answer with your first, intuitive response. Please be honest and candid. The response we seek is the one that most closely represents your feelings or beliefs about the statement that is being considered. There are three different sections to this instrument. Carefully read the brief instructions that are given prior to each section. Your involvement in this assessment is anonymous and confidential.

Before completing the assessment it is important to fill in the name of the organization or organizational unit being assessed. If you are assessing an organizational unit (department, team or work unit) rather than the entire organization you will respond to all of the statements in light of that work unit.

Indicate your present role/position in the organization or work unit from the drop down menu. Choices include: top leadership, management, or workforce

Please provide your response to each statement by choosing numbers 1-5 as shown below.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

SECTION 1: In this section, please respond to each statement as you believe it applies to **the entire organization** (or organizational unit) including workers, managers/supervisors, and top leadership.

In general, people within this organization...	1	2	3	4	5
1. Trust each other					
2. Are clear on the key goals of the organization					
3. Are non-judgmental – they keep an open mind					

4. Respect each other					
5. Know where this organization is headed in the future					
6. Maintain high ethical standards					
7. Work well together in teams					
8. Value differences in culture, race & ethnicity					
9. Are caring & compassionate towards each other					
10. Demonstrate high integrity & honesty					
11. Are trustworthy					
12. Relate well to each other					
13. Attempt to work with others more than working on their own					
14. Are held accountable for reaching work goals					
15. Are aware of the needs of others					
16. Allow for individuality of style and expression					
17. Are encouraged by supervisors to share in making <i>important</i> decisions					
18. Work to maintain positive working relationships					
19. Accept people as they are					
20. View conflict as an opportunity to learn & grow					
21. Know how to get along with people					

SECTION 2: In this next section, please respond to each statement as you believe it applies to **the leadership** of the organization (or organizational unit) including managers/supervisors, and top leadership.

Managers/Supervisors and Top Leadership in this Organization...	1	2	3	4	5
22. Communicate a clear vision of the future of the organization					
23. Are open to learning from those who are <i>below</i> them in the organization					
24. Allow workers to help determine where this organization is headed					
25. Work alongside the workers instead of separate from them					
26. Use persuasion to influence others instead of coercion or force					
27. Don't hesitate to provide the leadership that is needed					
28. Promote open communication and sharing of information					
29. Give workers the power to make <i>important</i> decisions					
30. Provide the support and resources needed to help workers meet their goals					
31. Create an environment that encourages learning					
32. Are open to receiving criticism & challenge from others					
33. Say what they mean, and mean what they say					
34. Encourage each person to exercise leadership					
35. Admit personal limitations & mistakes					

36. Encourage people to take risks even if they may fail					
37. Practice the same behavior they expect from others					
38. Facilitate the building of community & team					
39. Do not demand special recognition for being leaders					
40. Lead by example by modeling appropriate behavior					
41. Seek to influence others from a positive relationship rather than from the authority of their position					
42. Provide opportunities for all workers to develop to their full potential					
43. Honestly evaluate themselves before seeking to evaluate others					
44. Use their power and authority to benefit the workers					
45. Take appropriate action when it is needed					
46. Build people up through encouragement and affirmation					
47. Encourage workers to work <i>together</i> rather than competing against each other					
48. Are humble – they do not promote themselves					
49. Communicate clear plans & goals for the organization					
50. Provide mentor relationships in order to help people grow professionally					
51. Are accountable & responsible to others					
52. Are receptive listeners					
53. Do not seek after special status or the “perks” of leadership					
54. Put the needs of the workers ahead of their own					

SECTION 3: In this next section, please respond to each statement as you believe it is true about **you personally** and **your role** in the organization (or organizational unit).

In viewing my own role...	1	2	3	4	5
55. I feel appreciated by my supervisor for what I contribute					
56. I am working at a high level of productivity					
57. I am listened to by those <i>above</i> me in the organization					
58. I feel good about my contribution to the organization					
59. I receive encouragement and affirmation from those <i>above</i> me in the organization					
60. My job is important to the success of this organization					
61. I trust the leadership of this organization					
62. I enjoy working in this organization					
63. I am respected by those <i>above</i> me in the organization					
64. I am able to be creative in my job					
65. In this organization, a person’s <i>work</i> is valued more than their <i>title</i>					
66. I am able to use my best gifts and abilities in my job					

APPENDIX B

RELATIONAL SUPPORT SCALE

SENIOR PASTOR VERSION

Instructions: I would like to focus on some specific activities in which you may have participated. For the following situations, please indicate *whether or not* you agree that you have engaged in the following activities. Choose the number which best describes your feelings.

- 5 = Strongly agree
- 4 = Agree
- 3 = Neither
- 2 = Disagree
- 1 = Strongly disagree

1. As the Senior Pastor, I have placed my staff and lay leaders in important assignments or positions.
2. As the Senior Pastor, I frequently devote extra time and consideration to my staff and lay leaders.
3. As the Senior Pastor, I have shown a parental-like interest in my staff and lay leader's careers and personal lives.
4. I give special attention to my staff and lay leaders.
5. I have taught my staff and lay leaders the informal rules of our organization.
6. I have taught my staff and lay leaders the strategies for influencing group or departmental meetings.
7. I have coached my staff and lay leaders about office politics.
8. My staff, lay leaders, and I are friends as well as coworkers.
9. My staff, lay leaders, and I frequently listen to each other's personal problems.
10. My staff, lay leaders, and I share confidences with each other.
11. My staff, lay leaders, and I frequently exchange constructive criticism.
12. My staff, lay leaders, and I assist each other in accomplishing assigned tasks.
13. My staff, lay leaders, and I frequently exchange compliments and positive evaluations.
14. I work jointly on major projects or cases with my staff and lay leaders.
15. I frequently exchange ideas with my staff and lay leaders.

APPENDIX C

RELATIONAL SUPPORT SCALE

STAFF PASTOR/LAY LEADER VERSION

Instructions: I would like to focus on some specific activities in which you may have participated. For the following situations, please indicate *whether or not* you agree that you have engaged in the following activities. Choose the number which best describes your feelings.

- 5 = Strongly agree
- 4 = Agree
- 3 = Neither
- 2 = Disagree
- 1 = Strongly disagree

1. The Senior Pastor has placed me in important assignments or positions.
2. The Senior Pastor frequently devotes extra time and consideration to me.
3. The Senior Pastor has shown a parental-like interest in my career and personal life.
4. I receive special attention from my Senior Pastor.
5. I have had an associate teach me the informal rules of my organization.
6. I have had an associate teach me strategies for influencing group or departmental meetings.
7. I have been coached about office politics.
8. My associates and I are friends as well as coworkers.
9. My associates and I frequently listen to each other's personal problems.
10. My associates and I share confidences with each other.
11. My associates and I frequently exchange constructive criticism.
12. My associates and I assist each other in accomplishing assigned tasks.
13. My associates and I frequently exchange compliments and positive evaluations.
14. I work jointly on major projects or cases with my associates.
15. I frequently exchange ideas with my associates.

APPENDIX D

INITIAL SENIOR PASTOR E-MAIL

Hello Pastor (insert name),

My name is Brian V. Bradford, and I am an ordained minister within the Wesleyan Church, as well as a doctorate of ministry student in Asbury Theological Seminary's Beeson Program. Currently, I am the lead pastor of a Wesleyan congregation in the north Dallas suburbs. I am writing to you today because I pray you will assist me with my dissertation research. I only need a few moments of your precious and valuable time.

In my research, I am focusing on relational leadership within the Wesleyan Church of North America. I am currently surveying the top twenty largest Wesleyan Churches in an effort to determine the relational health of their staff and key church leaders. With your permission, the two surveys will be administered by email to three groups: you, four full-time staff pastors, and two highly committed lay leaders (preferably the vice chairperson of the local board of administration and the head of the personnel committee).

The survey consists of eighty-one total questions that are answered using a Likert-type scale. Sixty-six questions are related to servant leadership. Fifteen questions are related to relational leadership. Upon completion of the two brief surveys, every participant will be entered in a drawing to receive one of several **free Starbucks gift cards** for his or her time. Here are the exact steps necessary for participation.

1. Receive your permission to proceed with the surveys.
2. Obtain all necessary e-mail addresses from yourself or your administrative assistant.
3. Send out the surveys to all participants.
4. Receive a follow up phone call from me upon completion with any questions you may have, as well as a few questions I have for you.

I ask that you consider forwarding this email to your four staff pastors and two lay leaders. By doing so, you encourage them to participate and increase my completion rate.

For your information, all data gathered will be used in the strictest of confidence. I will **not** publish, nor make public, any church or personal names used in this study.

Thank you so much for your time, and I pray you will consider assisting me in my research of Wesleyan church leadership. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

With Much Appreciation and Anticipation,

Rev. Brian V. Bradford
972.369.XXXX – cell
bbradford@horizonstc.org

APPENDIX E

INITIAL STAFF PASTOR AND LAY LEADER E-MAIL

Hello (insert name),

My name is Brian V. Bradford, and I am an ordained minister within the Wesleyan Church, as well as a doctorate of ministry student in Asbury Theological Seminary's Beeson Program. Currently, I am the lead pastor of a Wesleyan congregation in the north Dallas suburbs. I am writing to you today because I pray you will assist me with my dissertation research. I only need a few moments of your precious and valuable time.

In my research, I am focusing on relational leadership within the Wesleyan Church of North America. I am currently surveying the top twenty largest Wesleyan Churches in an effort to determine the relational health of their staff and key church leaders. With your senior pastor's permission, two surveys will be administered by email to three groups: your senior pastor, four full-time staff pastors, and two highly committed lay leaders.

The survey consists of eighty-one total questions that are answered using a Likert-type scale. Sixty-six questions are related to servant leadership. Fifteen questions are related to relational leadership. Upon completion of the two brief surveys, every participant will be entered in a drawing to receive one of several **free Starbucks gift cards** for his or her time. Here are the exact steps necessary for participation.

1. Allow me to proceed with the surveys.
2. Receive an email shortly with links to the 2 surveys.
3. Complete the surveys.
4. Email me back upon completion stating you have finished.

For your information, all data gathered will be used in the strictest of confidence. I will **not** publish, nor make public, any church or personal names used in this study.

Thank you so much for your time, and I pray you will consider assisting me in my research of Wesleyan church leadership. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

With Much Appreciation and Anticipation,

Rev. Brian V. Bradford
972.369.XXXX – cell
bbradford@horizonstc.org

APPENDIX F

FOLLOW-UP SENIOR PASTOR E-MAIL

Dear Pastor (insert name),

I am writing today to see if you received my email not long ago, or to thank you for agreeing to complete the survey. If you have agreed, please skip to the surveys at the bottom of the email. If you have not completed the surveys, I ask for only a few moments of your time. As mentioned in the previous correspondence, my name is Brian Bradford, and I am an ordained Wesleyan pastor that is working on his doctorate in church leadership. I am surveying pastors and lay leaders of the top twenty largest Wesleyan churches in North America. Would you be willing to allow me to survey you and your staff? There are two online surveys and one follow up interview with you alone that can be conducted either over the phone or by email. I also need permission to survey four staff pastors and two lay leaders. Can you, or your assistant, provide me with those names and email addresses? Please let me know soon if you will be able to participate. The two surveys and follow up questions are listed below. Thank you so much for your consideration.

In Him,

Rev. Brian V. Bradford

Survey 1: www.surveymonkey.com/s/seniorpastorrss

Survey 2: See instructions below

- Go to www.olagroup.com
- Click “Take the OLA” on the upper right of the screen.
- Type in (4 digit code given) as the organizational code
- Type in (4 digit code given) as the pin
- Choose the standard version of the OLA.
- Choose the language option you are most comfortable with.
- Click “Start” and read the brief introduction
- Select your Present Role/Position in the organization (top level leadership)
- Click “Take the OLA”

Senior Pastor Interview Questions:

1. What are some of the ways to build and maintain a high level of relational connectedness, especially among the church pastoral staff members?
2. Does the senior pastor need to be the initiator and primary model for relational leadership, or could another staff pastor take on that role, i.e. executive pastor?
3. Would you classify your church pastoral staff as relationally healthy? Why or why not?

APPENDIX G

FOLLOW-UP STAFF PASTOR AND LAY LEADER E-MAIL

Dear (insert name),

I am writing today to see if you received my email not long ago, or to thank you for agreeing to complete the survey. If you have agreed, please skip to the surveys at the bottom of the email. If you have not completed the surveys, I ask for only a few moments of your time. As mentioned in the previous correspondence, my name is Brian Bradford, and I am an ordained Wesleyan pastor that is working on his doctorate in church leadership. I am surveying pastors and lay leaders of the top twenty largest Wesleyan churches in North America. Would you be willing to allow me to survey you? There are two online surveys that must be completed. For your time, I will enter your name into a drawing for 5 Starbuck's gift cards once you are done. Please let me know soon if you will be able to participate. The two surveys and instructions are listed below. Thank you so much for your precious time.

In Him,

Rev. Brian V. Bradford

Survey 1: www.surveymonkey.com/s/staffrss

Survey 2: See instructions below

- Go to www.olagroup.com
- Click "Take the OLA" on the upper right of the screen.
- Type in (4 digit code given) as the organizational code
- Type in (4 digit code given) as the pin
- Choose the standard version of the OLA.
- Choose the language option you are most comfortable with.
- Click "Start" and read the brief introduction
- Select your Present Role/Position in the organization (pastoral staff = management & lay leadership = workforce)
- Click "Take the OLA"

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