



COVENANT
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Collection

J. Oliver Buswell Jr. Library
12330 Conway Road
Saint Louis, MO 63141

www.covenantseminary.edu/library

This document is distributed by Covenant Theological Seminary under agreement with the author, who retains the copyright. Permission to further reproduce or distribute this document is not provided, except as permitted under fair use or other statutory exception.

The views presented in this document are solely the author's.

LD
1401
.062
R55
237

PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE
IN THE MULTIPLE-STAFF CHURCH

By

ARTHUR S. ROEMER

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE
FACULTY OF COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

2011

PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE
IN THE MULTIPLE-STAFF CHURCH

By

ARTHUR S. ROEMER

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED
TO THE FACULTY OF
COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

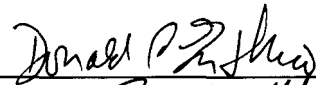
Graduation Date May 20, 2011

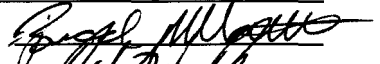
Dr. Donald C. Guthrie, Faculty Advisor

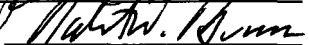
Dr. Bradley J. Matthews, Second Faculty Reader

Dr. Robert W. Burns, Director of D.Min. Program

Rev. James C. Pakala, Library Director









ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand the role that prayer has in a pastor's ministry in the multi-staff church when it comes to defending himself from the temptations and dangers in today's postmodern world. Scripture clearly teaches that spiritual warfare was in fact real in the early New Testament church and this is certainly true in today's church as well. Additionally, a large amount of literature has been dedicated in recent years to this subject of spiritual warfare. Very little though has focused primarily on the spiritual life of the leading pastor and staff alone.

This study first included a literature review then utilized a qualitative design using semi-structured interviews with twelve pastors in the Christian Church/Church of Christ. Each pair of pastors was on the same staff together. The data from the interviews revealed that when these teams of pastors relied on prayer to help them defend themselves from the temptations and dangers that are present in today's world they were properly defended. This practice of prayer was taught by example starting with their own families and church and encouraged in several forms present in their ministry today. There were three prominent forms that were practiced with prayer. These practices were journaling, praying through the Psalms and other scripture, and Christian music. These pastors practiced prayer primarily with their families and staff and also practiced it privately in different settings. The most significant element of these data from the interviews was the pastors' awareness of the grace of prayer itself and its great gift of the presence, power, and protection of God that prayer holds for the pastor today.

These interviews confirmed what was found about prayer in both the literature review and the scriptural study on the doctrines of justification and sanctification.

Further, they confirmed what scripture revealed to the pastor about spiritual warfare and the defense that God provides. Prayer is certainly the glue that holds together this defensive armor that our sovereign God has so completely provided the pastors in today's multi-staff church.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Sustaining Moral Integrity in the Pastoral Setting	4
Current Practices	8
To What Extent	11
The Ideal	13
Statement of Problem and Purpose	13
Primary Research Questions	14
Significance of the Study	15
Definition of Terms	17
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	
Biblical/Theological Framework	19
Four Pastoral Prayer Practices	22
A Pastor's Four Practices Applied	27
A Pastor's Leadership in Prayer	36
Justification and Sanctification: The Doctrines of Grace	72
Spiritual Warfare and the Leading Pastor	87
CHAPTER THREE: PROJECT METHODOLOGY	
Design of Study: A Qualitative Approach	102
Sampling Criteria	102

Interview Design and Data Collection Methods	103
Limitations of the Study	106
Summary of Chapter Three	107
 CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS	
The Participants	110
Interview Settings	116
Data Relating to the Participants' Beliefs and Practices	117
Data Relating to Current Practices	144
Data Relating to the Connection Between Prayer and Moral Integrity	147
Data Relating to the Ideal Prayer Life	150
Themes that Emerged from the Data	153
 CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary of the Study	157
Analysis Relating to Practices	158
Analysis Relating to Current Practices	161
Analysis Relating to the Connection Between Moral Integrity and Prayer	162
Analysis Relating to the Ideal Prayer Life	163
Some Personal Insights with Bible Studies	163
Recommendations for Further Research	172

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Interview Questions	175
APPENDIX B: An Interview with a Director, Center for Living Yoga and Meditation	177
APPENDIX C: An Interview with a Navy Chaplain	181
APPENDIX D: Recommended Further Reading	185

BIBLIOGRAPHY	187
---------------------	-----

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my church family for their prayer support and patience as this work was being researched and written. We have ministered at First Christian Church of Gillespie, Illinois for twenty-seven years. The Lord has made this ministry a great blessing. The prayers and love of the congregation have meant so much to me. Three families, in particular, were my strong prayer warriors throughout this work.

I thank my wife, Ella May, and our three sons and their families for their love and prayers while this project was being completed. Many things were left undone while I worked on hours of research. Again, I am amazed by their love and encouragement. I could never have attempted any class work or research without them.

I thank my camp board for their patience with me during my work on this degree. I was not always able to give CampMac the attention needed. Their understanding of the importance of this work and their prayers and support was a blessing.

I want to express a special thanks to those pastors who gave their precious time so I could complete my interviews. Their personal experiences and practices were so valuable to this study. God is good!

Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION.
Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of
Zondervan.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Pastors are facing challenges in ministry and leadership that are new to modern ministry structures and organizations of the church. *In the past, many clergy served average-size churches as solo pastors. Today pastors find themselves in churches that are much larger, requiring multiple-staffs to meet the spiritual needs of such churches. Also these pastors find themselves serving in a postmodern world. This world has become more hostile toward the Gospel and brings new levels of challenge and danger aimed towards Christians as a whole and their leaders in particular. What practices do our pastors identify that would sustain the moral integrity which is necessary in their ministry today? What are the current practices of these pastors' prayer lives? There is a great need to search out those pastors who have faithfully served for years and discover how their prayer habits have made a difference in their moral lives and successful ministries. Prayer does not guarantee a perfect life in Christ as a pastor for sure, but prayer is essential.*

Today God seems to be awakening His church anew to the vivid reality that we are at war: we are at war with evil; that evil is personal, not impersonal; it is supernatural evil, the kingdom of Satan. Jesus, the Lamb (the gentle, sacrificial Savior) and the Lion (the mighty warrior) calls us out of our complacency to be soldiers of the Cross. Girded with the full armor of God, we are to overcome the Evil One, to challenge the principalities and powers who hold individuals and peoples in bondage with the authority we have in Christ through declaration and intercession (see Acts 26:18).¹

Regardless of the quality of education that each pastor has received from a theological institution and the security of numbers in a multiple-staffed church body,

¹ Ed Murphy, *The Handbook for Spiritual Warfare*, new and rev. ed. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc., 2003), vii.

each pastor today will find himself at war with Satan. This conflict may arise from within, from the people in his or her church, or from the fallen world.

To fight this spiritual battle there are two things each pastor needs to understand. First, each pastor must realize that they are Satan's main target when they answer the call to become a leader in the church. Ed Murphy continues to write:

We discover his main *target* for deception, *leaders*. In the case of those who do not love our God, he moves in deception against persons in all levels of leadership. Political, military, economic, religious, educational, media, family, and other kinds of leaders become the target of his deception. Why? Because they control the destiny of humanity.²

If Satan can get a Christian to fall out of leadership due to moral failure, that fall will be great and the world will be sure to notice. Murphy points out that God's church will most definitely notice and the very destiny of that body of Christ will be in jeopardy. Satan's strategy is the deception of mankind. His targets are the leaders of this world, including the leaders in the church. Therefore, a pastor's moral integrity plays an important role in guarding the mind and soul of God's church.

Second, each pastor must come to the realization that he or she will certainly face spiritual warfare throughout his ministry. Spiritual warfare is inevitable. Each pastor is at war no matter the size of the church or staff. John MacArthur supports this by writing:

Furthermore, you cannot be a good leader and *avoid* the warfare. As Paul's life demonstrated, the more effective you are as a leader, the more the enemy will bring the battle to you. That is the nature of leadership. We therefore cannot lead well or fight the battle well unless we learn the Scriptures and acquire skill in using God's truth to answer lies.

Lies yield only to the truth. Rebellion ends when truth prevails. If you're a leader who is also a Christian, you may not realize it, but you are engaged in spiritual warfare. You need to be armed. You need to know the Word of God. And you need to develop skill in using it against the lies of the evil one.³

² Ibid., 19.

³ John MacArthur, *The Book on Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 2004), 142.

Satan's purpose is to dishonor God and shame His people. His diabolical scheme can best be accomplished by attacking the moral lives of the church's leaders. Murphy writes:

If a Christian leader sins, a church, a Christian institution, or a Christian home is damaged or possibly paralyzed. Who can argue with this? We are all to some degree the victims of the sinful acts of Christian leaders exploited by the media to the discredit of God's church.⁴

However, each pastor can overcome the schemes of Satan and maintain moral integrity throughout his or her ministry. MacArthur goes on to say that each pastor is utterly dependent upon the power of God and not education, experience, or personal skills alone. The power of God not only makes each pastor effective in ministry but also triumphant against Satan's schemes. MacArthur says,

Here's a principle to bear in mind: No competent leader is going to be anxious to impress people with his *credentials*. Leaders who are truly able are qualified because of their *character*. They are easily identified, not by letters of commendation, but because of the influence they have on others. They are people who are confident of their calling, and yet at the same time, they know they are utterly dependent on God as the source of their true power.⁵

The strength and power of God cannot be replaced by one's own excellence of speech, great mind, or wisdom. Each pastor must depend upon the power of God.

There is a need to explore the role of prayer in sustaining the moral integrity of pastors in our churches. Has it been an instrument that was used in the past for this purpose and can it still be used effectively today to guard against the schemes of Satan? James L. Nicodem writes,

The only way I know to keep this from happening is by doing a thorough review of my life, every day, with the Holy Spirit's help. One of the first things I pray each morning is that God's Spirit would put his finger on anything in my life that

⁴ Murphy, 20.

⁵ MacArthur, 103.

grieves—or even mildly displeases—him. And then I confess whatever he brings to mind.⁶

The senior pastor in a multiple-staff church is responsible for overseeing the ministries and moral conduct of the church staff. It is imperative that the senior pastor be aware of the moral conduct and standards of not only the church body but also his ministers and staff. If an inexperienced senior pastor is called and a problem should arise in this area, the challenge may test even his own moral stability. An experienced senior pastor may have faced this issue in his ministry and will know how he has overcome this problem in the past.

SUSTAINING MORAL INTEGRITY IN THE PASTORAL SETTING

“For a church to be healthy, it needs healthy leadership,” asserts pastor and church consultant Donald MacNair.⁷ Quality leadership is a crucial element for the success of any size church or organization. Sometimes we mistakenly measure a pastor’s leadership abilities based on the size of the church they serve. John MacArthur goes further by saying that God will actually use the weakest of us to do His work:

God is still bypassing the elite. He’s leaving the proud intellectuals in universities and seminaries, and He’s looking for clay pots who will carry the treasure of saving truth with humility. By using frail and common people, God makes it clear that the power is His, not ours. The fact that God can make spiritual leaders out of such unsightly clay jars is proof of the greatness of His power. Spiritual power is not the product of human genius or human technique. The power is from God.⁸

⁶ James L. Nicodem, *Prayer Coach: For All Who Want to Get Off the Bench and onto the Praying Field* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 103.

⁷ Donald J. MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church: Biblical Strategies for Vibrant Church Life and Ministry* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing Company, 1999), 107.

⁸ MacArthur, 114.

The weakness of a Christian is not willful sin or unrepentant sin, but lack of a true knowledge of his or her own limitations as a human being. The power that a true leader finds comes only from God. Knowing one's weakness becomes an advantage.

And the wonderful thing is that our weakness doesn't prove fatal to the cause of truth. In fact, it is advantageous, because it gets us out of the way and lets the power of God do its work. The great and encouraging reality of our calling as spiritual leaders is this: Knowing our weakness isn't a disadvantage; it is essential to what we do as leaders. And therefore, with Paul, we can rejoice in that weakness.⁹

Philip Yancey reveals in his book that Jesus used prayer to “firm up his resistance and renew his sense of mission.”¹⁰ As the reader finds from the Gospels, Christ put a high priority on prayer. R. T. Kendall writes, “I love to wait before God at the beginning of each day, wondering, ‘What will he show me today?’”¹¹ He later writes that there must be a local balance of Bible and prayer, “If you do nothing but read your Bible, you will *dry up*; if you only pray you will *blow up*; but if you read your Bible and pray, you will *grow up*.”¹²

J. Oswald Sanders, like MacArthur and others, believes prayer was a fundamental factor that made great leaders in the past and is what makes great leaders in our churches today. He states,

Great leaders of the Bible were great at prayer. They were not leaders because of brilliancy of thought, because they were exhaustless in resources, because of their magnificent culture or native endowment, but because, by the power of prayer, they could command the power of God.¹³

⁹ Ibid., 114-115.

¹⁰ Philip Yancey, *Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 79.

¹¹ R. T. Kendall, *Did You Think to Pray? How to Listen and Talk to God Every Day About Everything*. (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2009), 32.

¹² Ibid., 38.

¹³ Sanders, J. Oswald, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer*. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 91.

He goes on to say that each of our leaders needs to learn to pray in the spirit, practice prayer so he or she can know the urgency of God's work and know His will, and build a strong relationship with God throughout the ministry.

This study is interested in what our postmodern culture values in this area of moral integrity for leaders and how prayer, meditation, or any other form of discipline can maintain or correct the moral integrity in our work force. Two areas that will be examined here will be the practice of yoga in the world of business and the function of the military chaplain and his prayer life on the job.

What our culture values in leadership may not be the same as what the Bible determines is valuable in our leaders. In an article entitled, "Doing the Right Thing, The Importance of Maintaining Integrity in the Workplace," writer Keisha Gaye-Anderson reports on the effects of the past unethical practices of the pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly. She writes:

"Ethical behavior is essential if a business is to function effectively," says Frank Ross, a visiting professor at the Howard University School of Business. Ross adds that more and more business schools, including Howard, are incorporating ethics into business courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. And with the passing of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act in 2002, publicly traded companies are required to disclose information about their accounting practices that would make it difficult to carry out this level of corruption in the future.¹⁴

What these schools' curricula will be, and if prayer or any kind of meditation or quiet time may be included, will have to be discovered later on in this study. It is clear that Satan has touched all leaders throughout the world. It remains to be seen what a leader outside the church and away from God's scriptures will do to maintain his or her integrity.

¹⁴ Keisha Gaye-Anderson, "Doing the Right Thing, The Importance of Maintaining Integrity in the Workplace," *Black Enterprise* (New York), no. 8 (March 2007): 66.

We are living through an unprecedented explosion in knowledge and technology. Accompanying that phenomenon is the evolution of evermore complex economic, social and political issues. Within this environment, the range of moral business challenges is constantly expanding. To operate effectively in this dynamic environment, business leaders today need to think and react with more overt awareness of the moral issues surrounding everyday business decisions.¹⁵

After observing what the world outside the church faces in terms of moral challenges, a thorough study of the role of prayer in sustaining the moral integrity of pastors in our churches seems more necessary. As servant leaders under the authority of God, our leaders must master the practice of prayer in their daily lives in order to do the will of God in their ministries and maintain a moral lifestyle.

J. Oswald Sanders tells us that leaders are both born and made, and that they are formed and directed by God. He also says that there are natural and spiritual leaders and that true spiritual leadership blends natural and spiritual qualities together. He stresses that this kind of leader is full of the Spirit of God.¹⁶

The world around us sees these issues quite differently. In the practice of yoga our God has an optional part to play in sustaining one's moral integrity. Local businesses, hospitals, and schools are introducing the practice of yoga for many purposes. Businesses are using these classes to improve employee work performance and relaxation, while some of our hospitals are beginning to use them as a part of their mind-body fitness programs for healing, strengthening, breath work, meditation techniques, and visualization. "Students can expect to gain strength, flexibility, focus, and learn to

¹⁵ John A. Weber, "Business Ethics Training: Insights from Learning Theory," *Journal of Business Ethics* (New York), (January 2007): 61.

¹⁶ Sanders, 29.

relax.”¹⁷ Very little, if anything, is said about God; only one’s own spirit within is mentioned.

The word yoga originates from the Sanskrit *yuj*. *Yuj* may be translated as “to center one’s thought”, “to concentrate oneself” or “to meditate deeply”. All of these things involve the slowing of the movements of the mind. . . The codes of moral conduct, physical exercises, breathing practices, concentration and meditation all require effort, and all contribute to the goal of self-realization.¹⁸

In contrast with the practice of yoga, Marine Corps chaplain Patrick McLaughlin writes, “Prayer warriors can adapt and overcome with the help of God, the power of prayer, and the truth of the Scriptures.”¹⁹ Here again, this man is focusing on the presence and power of God in the lives of Christians and those they may influence.

This study includes an examination of how prayer plays a role in sustaining moral integrity in the lives of our pastors. This writer will explore the prayer lives of some of our best senior pastors to see if they identify any connections between prayer and moral integrity.

CURRENT PRACTICES

What does a praying pastor look or sound like? Is the practice or pattern of one pastor better? If they are strikingly different, would one practice be better than another? Rick Warren portrays a pastor’s (or any Christian’s) prayer life with simply two practices: continuous prayer and meditation on God’s Word. He writes, “You will never grow a close relationship with God by just attending church once a week or even having a

¹⁷ Linda Murphy, “Mind-Body Fitness Classes,” *Mindbody: Magazine for the Center for Living at St. John’s Hospital* (Springfield, IL: Prairie Heart Institute) (Winter, 2010): 8.

¹⁸ Christina Brown, *The Book of Yoga: Bringing the Body, Mind, and Spirit into Balance and Harmony* (Bath, UK: Paragon Publishing, 2004), 13.

¹⁹ Patrick J. McLaughlin, *No Atheists in Foxholes: Prayer and Reflections from the Front* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 119.

daily quiet time. Friendship with God is built by sharing *all* your life experiences with him.”²⁰

James L. Nicodem goes into much more detail. He encourages several practices, including writing a prayer journal, using your favorite hymnbook for reflection, praying through the Psalms, and using his A to Z list of Biblical names of God. On the subject of journaling he writes, “Confess sin via journaling a couple of times a week. Keep your entries to a single page. Write in a condensed style that sums up your transgressions. Make bullet-point lists when evaluating what went right/wrong in certain situations. Pray.”²¹

R. T. Kendall uses the model prayer of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:9-13). He writes, “The Lord’s Prayer provides an introduction on how to pray. It is the perfect prayer. It shows not only what we should say when we approach God but also the pattern we should follow.”²² He later suggests the use of intercessory prayer, and prayers of praise to God, and prayers that express thanksgiving. Like Nicodem, Kendall gives similar suggestions on how a pastor can praise God in prayer. “Read those psalms...Get an old hymnbook and start reading the hymns. Better yet, sing them...Sing some of the contemporary hymns or praise choruses...Try talking to God from your heart by telling Him what you like about Him.”²³

Philip Yancey writes, “If prayer is my response to God’s presence, first I must tune in to that presence.”²⁴ He makes it clear that the question of how, how often, and

²⁰ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 87.

²¹ Nicodem, 105-106.

²² Kendall, 63.

²³ Ibid., 118.

²⁴ Yancey, 286.

what to pray is up to each pastor. He very carefully makes it clear that “whom we pray to matters more than how or what we pray.”²⁵ The manner of prayer is secondary to understanding that we are praying to a sovereign God who cares for our every need. Yancey suggests using hymnbooks, the Psalms, the prayers found in Scripture, prayers of praise, and intercessory prayers.

In Dutch Sheets’ book, *Watchman Prayer*, he gives a unique understanding of the business of prayer and the pastor. He writes, “In this book, we have often mentioned the concept of watchmen keeping the serpent out of our gardens.”²⁶ The concept of watchman prayer is the key to understanding the emphasis of his book. The pastor must understand that it is his or her responsibility to pray for the protection of his family, church, and neighbors. Sheets strongly supports the idea of a prayer room in each and every church. He stresses that such a room will make prayer visible and inviting for everyone. “One of the most profound things a prayer room offers is a place to be alone and still before God. It promotes humility and a visible dependence on God.”²⁷ The author states that prayer rooms will mobilize both the pastor or pastors and the church family.

Richard J. Foster writes of the goal of prayer. “Not all Psalms are hymns or prayers, but the designation is still justified, for they all served to glorify God, which is the goal of hymns, and to lead us into the will and way of God, which is the goal of prayer.”²⁸ He later writes, “My part is to live this hour in continuous inner conversation

²⁵ Ibid., 288.

²⁶ Dutch Sheets, *Watchman Prayer: How to Stand Guard and Protect Your Family, Home and Community* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000), 107.

²⁷ Ibid., 184.

²⁸ Foster, Richard J., *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, Revised and Expanded (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1988), 110.

with God and in perfect responsiveness to his will.”²⁹ Our will is to be God’s will. His whole book is a perfect spiritual guide for the pastor on the practice of prayer. He covers twenty-one different practices of prayer from simple prayer, to prayer of adoration, meditative prayer, and intercessory prayer.

In this study it is important to know the current practices of a pastor’s prayer life. As George Barna quotes Leroy Eims, “A leader is one who sees more than others see, who sees farther than others see, and who sees before others do.”³⁰ MacArthur writes:

To put it simply, leadership is *influence*. The ideal leader is someone whose life and character motivate people to follow. The best kind of leadership derives its authority first from the force of a righteous example, and not merely from the power of prestige, personality, or position. By contrast, much of the world’s “leadership” is nothing but manipulation of people by threats and rewards. That is not true leadership; it’s exploitation. Real leadership seeks to motivate people from the inside, by an appeal to the heart, not by external pressure and coercion.³¹

TO WHAT EXTENT

In light of the challenges and moral dangers every pastor experiences today, each pastor must answer the question, “To what extent will I connect moral integrity with prayer?” Is prayer optional, something that one can rely upon on occasion, or a practice that is essential for every moment of every day when it comes to sustaining one’s morality? Foster writes,

...healthy prayer necessitates frequent experiences of the common, earthy, run-of-the-mill variety. Like walks, and talks, and good wholesome laughter. Like work in the yard, and chitchat with the neighbors, and washing windows. Like loving our spouse, and playing with our kids, and working with our colleagues. To be spiritually fit to scale the Himalayas of the spirit, we need regular exercise in the hills and valleys of ordinary life.³²

²⁹ Ibid., 125.

³⁰ George Barna, ed., *Leader on Leadership: Wisdom Advice and Encouragement on the Art of Leading God’s People* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997), 270.

³¹ MacArthur, vi-vii.

³² Foster, xii.

This would give the reader the idea that prayer must be a personal and daily practice, something that maintains morality. “Pray as much as you can, as often as you can, as best as you can, for as long as you can. Learn all you can about prayer. Then know that God enjoys your company and will take all He can get when it comes to your spending time with Him.”³³ Kendall continues this standard of prayer when he writes, “The most important thing prayer does for us, then, is to help us to know God and His ways.”³⁴ MacArthur addresses this issue directly, “You cannot be a good leader and avoid the warfare.”³⁵ On the subject of prayer he writes, “We’re inclined to think of prayer as work. We tend to think of prayer as inactivity. But it is not. Good praying is hard work, and prayer is the first and most important work of all ministry. All other activities of ministry are utterly futile if not bathed in prayer.”³⁶ He later writes,

My advice is to start each day with a specific time of prayer. Don’t let interruptions or appointments distract you from your first business. Go to the Lord when your mind is fresh. Prayer is hard enough work without putting it off until your mind is fatigued. Don’t squander your brightest hours doing less-important things.

But don’t limit your praying to mornings. “[Pray] always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints” (Ephesians 6:18).³⁷

Chaplain McLaughlin agrees with the statements of MacArthur, Foster, and Kendall. “After all, what is there in our lives that cannot be overcome with great faith, prayer, our actions, and the help of God and others? The idea of adapting and overcoming is not unique to, nor the invention of, the USMC. The idea is in the promise of Christ

³³ Kendall, 106.

³⁴ Ibid., 28.

³⁵ MacArthur, 142.

³⁶ Ibid., 173.

³⁷ Ibid., 174.

found in Matthew 17:20.”³⁸ In this study it is important to know to what extent pastors connect moral integrity with prayer.

THE IDEAL

What would pastors today consider to be the ideal prayer life? One would first have to consider the purpose of prayer itself. Nicodem writes, “He’s not going to answer our prayers until we start to value our *relationship* more than our *requests*, until we want more *of* him than we want *from* him.”³⁹

When pastors come to Him in prayer, how should they see themselves as they approach His mighty throne? Foster writes, “Jesus reminds us that prayer is a little like children coming to their parents.”⁴⁰ He continues, “What I am trying to say is that God receives us just as we are and accepts our prayers just as they are. In the same way that a small child cannot draw a bad picture so a child of God cannot offer a bad prayer.”⁴¹ Pastors can approach God with the confidence that he is more than ready to hear them. They are expected to make prayer a practice, a life style. Yancey writes, “Somehow we must offer our prayer with a humility that conveys gratitude without triumphalism, and compassion without manipulation, always respecting the mystery surrounding prayer.”⁴² This study will examine whether these ideas are found true in the lives of our senior pastors and pastors today.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

Tim Chester writes, “So we should pray with an open Bible. How else are we going to know what to pray for? If you pray without a Bible you are pitting your wisdom

³⁸ McLaughlin, 118-119.

³⁹ Nicodem, 136.

⁴⁰ Foster, 8.

⁴¹ Ibid., 8-9.

⁴² Yancey, 221.

against God's.”⁴³ Each and every pastor should listen carefully to these words. Chester continues, “Instead, try identifying a verse relevant to each prayer request and use it to shape your prayers.”⁴⁴ The pastor should use his Bible to shape and strengthen his prayer life.

Is there a need to explore the role of prayer in sustaining the moral integrity of pastors in our churches? The purpose of prayer is to guard against the temptations that are placed before pastors today in this fallen world. Pastors will continue to struggle morally and become less effective in their ministry if they do not depend upon prayer and the power of God that comes with it to lead them in their daily lives. The purpose of this study is to explore the role of prayer in sustaining the moral integrity of senior pastors.

PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Three main areas that are central to the role of prayer in sustaining the moral integrity of pastors have been identified: sustaining moral integrity in the pastoral setting, current practices, and knowing to what extent senior pastors will connect moral integrity with prayer. To that end, the following research questions resulted:

RQ 1: What practices do pastors identify that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministry?

OQ 1a: How do pastors describe their own prayer life?

OQ 1b: How do pastors describe the importance of their prayer life?

OQ 1c: How do pastors judge whether they have acquired a suitable and effective prayer life?

OQ 1d: What motivation do pastors rely upon to sustain change in their prayer life?

RQ 2: What are the current practices of these pastors' prayer lives?

RQ 3: To what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer?

⁴³ Tim Chester, *The Message of Prayer, Approaching the Throne of Grace* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 116.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

RQ 4: What would pastors today consider to be the ideal prayer life?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study has significance for every pastor. He or she is dependent upon the will, direction, and power that come only from God. One way to attain such a relationship with our God is to have a strong prayer life. This study is significant for the pastor who is just starting in the ministry, as well as those who have years of experience. All pastors need the encouragement and guidance that the Bible gives in this area. This study may also be significant to every church and pastor's family who find themselves working together in the Kingdom of God.

First, there is significance for the pastor who knows that his role is to lead not only his church family but also his fellow pastors and staff. These people will be depending on him for daily example and guidance in the area of prayer. Harmony in the multiple-staff setting is essential to perform the duties that are before them all. The many perils that may confront each multiple-staff setting can leave long lasting scars and affect the fruit of their labors for years to come. If the senior pastor is determined to hold his ministry and church staff in good moral standing, he will have to understand the importance of the role of prayer in his ministry.

Second, the senior pastor must realize and daily use the best possible practices of prayer to keep a close personal relationship with God and good standing in the ministry. He must be willing to understand the role of prayer in his own life and share these beliefs and practices with his ministry staff. These men must ask themselves, "What would be the ideal prayer life for me?" and, "Who are my prayer models?" When they can answer these questions, they must remain as close and attentive to them as possible.

Third, this study offers significant insight for every church family. They must come to see the importance of prayer in their leadership. They must give the pastor a place to pray, as much time as they need to pray, and most of all, they must pray for the pastor in all their own daily prayers. The apostle Paul was not just asking the pastors in leadership roles to pray for each other and for him, he was asking the whole church of Ephesus to do so.⁴⁵

Fourth, this study has significance for those who feel called to the ministry. Though they are not yet a pastor and may not have one single hour of seminary class, they must understand the importance of prayer in the pastor's life. No one can go into the ministry with the naïve idea that one can sustain moral integrity alone without the help of God and the prayers of others. John Piper writes in his book, *The Pleasures of God*:

Prayer is the walkie-talkie on the battlefield of the world. It calls on God for courage (Ephesians 6:19). It calls in for troop deployment and target location (Acts 13:1-3). It calls in for protection and air cover (Matthew 6:13; Luke 21:36). It calls in for firepower to blast open a way for the Word (Colossians 4:3). It calls in for the miracle of healing for the wounded soldiers (James 5:16). It calls in for supplies for the forces (Matthew 6:11; Philippians 4:6). And it calls in for needed reinforcements (Matthew 9:38). This is the place of prayer—on the battlefield of the world.⁴⁶

Earlier Piper writes:

The longer I meditate on the meaning of prayer and the more I try to learn from Jesus in the private “school of prayer,” the more convinced I become that prayer is given to us primarily as a means of power in the service of the spiritual weapon of God's Word.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Eph. 6:18-20.

⁴⁶ John Piper, *The Pleasures of God, Meditations on God's Delight in Being God*, new and rev. ed. (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2000), 225-226.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 204.

This chapter has introduced the problem, purpose, and significance of this study. The research questions that follow address the areas of sustaining moral integrity, its extent, and the ideal. What now follows is the definition of terms.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

It is very important to have the correct understanding of the key terms used in any dissertation. When it comes to the subject of prayer and spiritual warfare a complete understanding of what each term means becomes especially important. The purpose statement above states: The purpose of this study is to explore the role of prayer in sustaining the moral integrity of pastors in multiple-staff churches. The following definitions will apply to the context of this dissertation:

Christian Church/Church of Christ – This church originated in the early nineteenth century and was founded by Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander. Their aim was to the restoration of primitive Christianity, and consequent union of all the followers of Christ in one body (John 17:21). The purpose of this body is to exalt Christ above party and His Word above all human creeds. Today the people known simply as Christians number several million. Acting as locally autonomous congregations, they cooperate in establishing new congregations, conducting educational and benevolent institutions, and supporting hundreds of missionaries.

Essential – It is something of this world that is necessary and even indispensable. It is of the highest quality and should be desired by all man.

Fallen World – The term fallen world is the state of the world since the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3. The only hope for this fallen world is Jesus Christ our Lord.

Guard Against – This is the daily watch that each Christian is asked to do throughout their lives. Each of us is to watch in order to protect ourselves from the schemes of Satan.

Ministry – The ministry is the office or duties, or the time of service of a minister or pastor. The primary duties of each pastor are to preach and teach God's Word.

Moral Integrity – This describes an obedient Christian who is of good character or conduct. This person is considered virtuous according to the standards of the Bible. They are considered honest and upright people.

Moral Struggle – Moral struggle is a hard fight against Satan, our adversary, to do what is right in the eyes of God and to overcome the temptations to do evil.

Multiple-Staff Churches – A group of two or more ordained pastors who serve the same church family.

Pastors – May be the only pastor serving a church or a pastor who is under the leadership of a senior pastor of that same church body, sometimes referred to as Associate Pastor. The writer is assuming that these pastors may be male or female.

Prayer – Prayer is a conversation of friends. For the Christian that friend is God our Creator. Prayer is part of the definition of what it means to be a Christian. Prayer is a struggle against our sinful nature. Prayer is letting God and His Son into our hearts.

Senior Pastor – A pastor who is the spiritual leader of the church's multiple staff; may be called the "preaching pastor", "lead pastor", or "leadership pastor". This writer is assuming that the senior pastor is a male.

Sustaining – A Christian's duty is to find the right source to maintain or continue their Christian pilgrimage and to help others do the same.

Temptations – It is to create an appetite for something or an inclination to do or think something. For the Christian it is the instrument that Satan uses against them. The Bible says that Satan is always looking for someone to devour with his temptations. He desires to create an appetite in us to do wrong and disobey God which will result in sin and death.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand the role that prayer has in pastors' ministries when those pastors need to defend themselves from temptations and dangers in the postmodern world. The first section of this chapter will provide a biblical survey and perspective that will assist in understanding the role of prayer in establishing an effective spiritual defense for pastors in multi-staff ministries. The second section examines the doctrines of justification and sanctification so the reader can further understand how the grace of God blesses and enables pastors throughout their prayer lives. The third section studies the subject of spiritual warfare and prayer in the life and ministry of the leading pastor.

This literature review will study the following questions: What are the current practices of pastors' prayer lives? To what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer? What do pastors consider to be an ideal prayer life? These answers will provide insight to the benefits available to pastors who have quality prayer lives.

BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding prayer is a great challenge for every pastor. The best understanding is gained through the Bible's statements about prayer. If one were to ask one hundred pastors what prayer is, one would probably get one hundred different answers. They would, most likely, all be correct. But what value does prayer have for the

pastor? In an everyday practice of study, prayer, and holy living, how much time should be allotted to prayer, and in what manner?

Prayer is a gift of grace from God. Philip Yancey explains, “God is the playwright, we are the actors. That prayer exists at all is a gift of grace, a generous invitation to participate in the future of the cosmos.”⁴⁸ John MacArthur expands:

Prayer itself is, after all, an implicit recognition of the sovereignty of God. We know that we cannot change people’s hearts, so we pray for God to do it. We know that it is the Lord who adds to His church, so we pray to Him as Lord of the harvest. We know that “unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain” (Psalm 27:1).⁴⁹

So prayer is not only a gift of grace, but also a total dependence upon the sovereignty and power of God. “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.”⁵⁰ A pastor’s efforts can only plant and water. They can never produce any fruit without the blessings of God. Each pastor must keep these three – planting, watering, and fruit production – in the proper perspective.

Prayer is first mentioned in the Old Testament story of Seth, “Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time men began to call on the name of the Lord.”⁵¹ God later commanded that all men pray to him, “Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always.”⁵²

⁴⁸ Yancey, 246.

⁴⁹ MacArthur, 173.

⁵⁰ 1 Cor. 3:6-7.

⁵¹ Gen. 4:26.

⁵² 1 Ch. 16:11.

Jesus Christ commanded his disciples to pray, “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”⁵³ In the parable of the persistent widow, Jesus instructed his disciples to never stop praying, “Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.”⁵⁴ Immediately before his crucifixion, Jesus carefully encouraged his disciples to depend heavily on prayer, “Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”⁵⁵ One final example of Christ’s commandment to pray is in the Sermon on the Mount, where he gave specific instruction concerning prayer, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”⁵⁶

The Apostle Paul also commanded people to pray. He expressly stated that prayer would protect each Christian throughout the duration of their lives, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”⁵⁷ He personally instructed the young Timothy to do the same:

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man

⁵³ Mt. 26:41.

⁵⁴ Lk. 18:1.

⁵⁵ Lk. 21:36.

⁵⁶ Mt. 7:7-8.

⁵⁷ Phil. 4:6-7.

Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.⁵⁸

How do these scriptures help readers to identify what prayer practices pastors should use today? How does this demonstrate the importance of prayer in pastoral ministry? Paul builds a strong case for prayer in all of his letters. He especially commands all pastors to develop a sensible, durable, and healthy prayer life. Paul emphasized that pastors should give their concerns, all concerns, to God in order to receive His peace.

It is important to notice the phrase that Paul uses to begin this scripture in 1 Timothy 2:1, παρακαλω πρωτον τωντων. The English translation of this is, “first of all I urge.”⁵⁹ Paul is expressing the degree to which Timothy is to pray. Above all other things in his ministry, Timothy is to present his requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving to God. Prayer is of primary importance. The scope of his prayer is universal, on behalf of everyone inside and outside the church body. The duration of this prayer is continuous, throughout Timothy’s ministry. Paul uses a similar phrase in 2 Corinthians 8:5, “εαυτους εδωκαν πρωτοντω κυριω και ημιν.” Translated into English, this means, “They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and (then) to us.”⁶⁰

Four Pastoral Prayer Practices

How would pastors describe their prayer lives, and how can they judge whether they have acquired suitable and effective prayer lives? A word study of the four words used in 1 Timothy 2:1 helps to describe what prayer should include and what type of prayer practices would be acceptable to God. The four words are:

⁵⁸ 1 Ti. 2:1-6.

⁵⁹ William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 4th ed., (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1952), 734.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 734.

δεησεις, προσευχας, εντυξεις, and ευχαριστιας, meaning requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving. All four of these nouns are accusative plural in the original Greek. The accusative case of these nouns measures the idea of the verb as to its content, scope, and direction. These four actions are of primary importance in Timothy's ministry. They are not only what Paul wants to see in his ministry, but also what God expects to see every day, wholeheartedly in the Christian's life. Timothy is called on not to use just one prayer but many in all four of these categories.

How do these four kinds of prayers differ from each other? How do they describe a pastor's prayer life? A close look at each one's definition will give the reader a good picture of a pastoral prayer life. The first word, δεησις, means "entreaty, asking earnestly."⁶¹ It can also mean "to be in want, to need, to request."⁶² This word is used elsewhere in the words of Jesus, "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest fields."⁶³ This word is exclusively used in the New Testament to address God. Here, in 1 Timothy 2:1, it can be translated "offer prayer, or offer requests (to God)."⁶⁴ Similar usages of this word are found in Luke 5:33 and Philippians 1:4. The former reads, "John's disciples often fast and pray"⁶⁵ and the latter one deals with the Apostle Paul's prayer to the church at Philippi, "In all my prayers to all of you, I always pray with joy."⁶⁶ Paul even commanded such prayers of request in Ephesians 6:18, "And

⁶¹ Ibid., 170.

⁶² Ibid., 170.

⁶³ Mt. 9:38.

⁶⁴ Arndt and Gingrich, 171.

⁶⁵ Lu. 5:13.

⁶⁶ Phil. 1:4.

pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”⁶⁷

The second word Paul uses is προσευχη, which is the general word for prayer.⁶⁸ As previously mentioned, Paul used this word in Ephesians 6:18 as well as in 1 Timothy 2:1. This general use is seen elsewhere in Acts 1:14, “They joined together constantly in prayer”⁶⁹ and in 1 Peter 3:7 where the author is addressing the husbands of the church on how to be considerate to their wives “so that nothing will hinder your prayers.”⁷⁰ In Colossians 4:12, Paul informs the church that a fellow Christian sends them greetings and is “always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.”⁷¹ Paul uses this general term in Romans 1:9-10, Ephesians 1:16, 1 Thessalonians 1:2, and Philemon 4, where he greets these churches and states that he remembers them in his prayers. In Acts 10:4, when Cornelius called for Peter to preach to him, the angel of the Lord said, “Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a remembrance before God.”⁷² This believer used the same general prayers. Paul uses this same term again in 1 Timothy 5:5, describing how the widow “continues night and day to pray and ask God for help.”⁷³ Here, the general word for prayer is used with δεησις.

The third word for prayer used in 1 Timothy 2:1 is εντευξις, which is translated “petition, or request.”⁷⁴ Its second meaning, intercessory prayer, applies to this verse.⁷⁵

⁶⁷ Eph. 6:18.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 268.

⁶⁹ Acts 1:14.

⁷⁰ 1 Peter. 3:7.

⁷¹ Col. 4:12.

⁷² Ac. 10:4.

⁷³ 1 Tim. 5:5.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 268.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 268.

This word is recorded again in 1 Timothy 4:5, where Paul warns Timothy against false teachings and assures him that “everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.”⁷⁶ God wants his people to pray on the behalf of others and reminds them of the power of intercessory prayer.

The fourth word for prayer is εὐχαριστία. The first meaning of this word is “thankfulness and gratitude.”⁷⁷ The second meaning, which is used in this verse, denotes the rendering of thanks, thanksgiving, or prayers of thanksgiving.⁷⁸ 2 Corinthians 9:11-12 is a good example of the way this word is used in 1 Timothy 2:1. The second usage in 2 Corinthians 9:12 is also plural, but in the genitive case which defines the action in this verse. As a result, those who they are helping have become thankful to God as well.

You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers (δεησις) for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks (χαίρω) be to God for his indescribable gift!⁷⁹

This final word, thanks (χαίρω), describes the Christian’s prayer as being grateful or pleasing toward God. Each person praying in such a manner is mindful of the benefits which God has bestowed on them throughout their lives. Paul uses this same word while describing a Christian’s life of love to the people in Ephesus:

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. Nor

⁷⁶ 1 Ti. 4:5.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 328.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 329.

⁷⁹ 2 Cor. 9:11-15.

should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place but rather thanksgiving.⁸⁰

In Paul's closing words to the Christians in Philippi, he encourages them to be grateful to God, gracious to others, and genuine to themselves. In the midst of this last exhortation, he writes, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."⁸¹ Three of these four words are used here, prayers, προσευχη, requests, δεησις, and the present study, thanksgiving, ευχαριστια, "by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving."⁸² Paul also used a similar phrase when he instructed the Christian families in Colosse on the rules for holy living, "And be thankful...And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."⁸³

A final example is found in the words of John to the seven churches of Asia. John records the words of praise to God by the angels in heaven, saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God forever and ever. Amen!"⁸⁴ In this sevenfold doxology, even the angels in heaven embrace the idea of constantly giving thanks to God as they fall down and worship Him.

What can the reader learn from these four words that describe the role of prayer in each Christian's life, and specifically, in the lives of pastors today? What prayer practices can be identified that would sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in pastoral ministry? Can these verses best describe a pastor's prayer life?

⁸⁰ Eph. 5:3-4.

⁸¹ Phil. 4:6.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Col. 3:15 & 17.

⁸⁴ Rv. 7:12.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 and its related verses are the scriptures best suited to address the topic of the pastoral prayer life. These particular pieces of scripture perfectly portray conversations between missionaries or pastors. Here the reader sees an older and experienced pastor, Paul, instructing a younger one, Timothy, on how to conduct his personal life and ministry. Paul expresses the importance of performing these four important responsibilities, “I urge, then, first of all.”⁸⁵ Παρακαλῶ, translated in English as I urge, is first person present active indicative, an ongoing action, and expresses the mood of certainty. Paul is telling Timothy that as a pastor, he must always have this kind of prayer life. In the indicative mood, Paul presents his own commands or assertions to Timothy. Therefore, this word is a cohortative/imperative indicative. Before anything else in his ministry, Timothy must present his requests, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings to God.

A Pastor’s Four Practices Applied

How would the researcher describe these four practices for the pastor? First, the pastor must make it a priority to go to God in prayer with every need that arises. This would deal with pastors’ needs in ministry, responsibilities in and out of church, and in their personal lives. MacArthur makes a strong statement on this, “We’re taught by Scripture to pray earnestly, persistently, frequently, and soberly. Peter said, ‘The end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers’ (1 Peter 4:7). This is the first priority in all our work.”⁸⁶

Pastors will find that these personal needs are countless throughout the course of ministry. Therefore, everything in a pastor’s life must be accompanied by and covered in

⁸⁵ 1 Ti. 2:1.

⁸⁶ MacArthur, 173-174.

prayer. Pastoral duties and personal needs, and the anxieties they bring, can quickly overcome a pastor. So how can the simple expression of our needs to God help us? In his book, *Prayer Coach*, James Nicodem writes: “Praying seems to do a couple of things to my fears. First, it identifies them. It brings them to the surface. It outs them... The second thing that praying does to my fears is take my focus off them (after they’ve been identified) and place it back on God. Prayer is a God-ward activity.”⁸⁷

There is one word of caution that should be noted at the conclusion of this word study on the prayers of request to God. For the pastor, as for any Christian, prayer is far more than just asking God for something. God is more than “a giant vending machine” or “a teller at the drive-thru window.”⁸⁸ The purpose of prayer is not just the modern idea of getting what we want. Prayers are building blocks in developing a personal relationship with God. God becomes a life-line to the pastor. The very heart of Nicodem’s book is based on this idea:

Jesus wants us to stay connected to him—for our own good. That’s why, when it comes to prayer, he requires that we *relate* before we *request*. He requires that we get more *of* him before we can get more *from* him... He is not going to answer our prayers until we start to value our *relationship* more than our *requests*, until we want more *of* him than we want *from* him... God wants us to put a greater priority on our *relationship* with him than on our *requests*.⁸⁹

Requests should first begin by asking God for a closer and stronger relationship with Him in order to better understand His will. Then, and only then, will the pastor or any Christian begin to get the answers they need.

Second, the pastor must make it a priority to approach God in prayer. Everything, from the greatest to the smallest concerns in life must be brought to Him. God is involved

⁸⁷ Nicodem, 152-153.

⁸⁸ Nicodem, 136.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 136-137.

in them all, and He wants to hear about all of them. J. Oswald Sanders describes the pastor's prayers in a beautiful way:

The spiritual leader should outpace the rest of the church, above all, in prayer...Prayer is the most ancient, most universal, and most intensive expression of the religious instinct. It includes the simplest speech of infant lips, and the sublime entreaties of older age. All reach the Majesty on high. Prayer is indeed the Christian's vital breath and native air.⁹⁰

MacArthur reminds the reader of the great urgency of prayer in the pastor's life. He writes:

My advice is to start each day with a specific time of prayer. Don't let interruptions or appointments distract you from your first business. Go to the Lord when your mind is fresh. Prayer is hard enough work without putting it off until your mind is fatigued. Don't squander your brightest hours doing less-important things.⁹¹

Ravi Zacharias, one of the finest writers on the subject of living the Christian life, writes:

I have absolutely no doubt that if you are a praying Christian, your faith in God is what is carrying you, through both the good times and the hard times. However, if you are not a praying person, you are carrying your faith—you are trying to make your faith work for you apart from your source of power—and trying to carry the infinite is very exhausting.⁹²

In his book, *No Atheists in Foxholes*, Chaplain Patrick McLaughlin writes about the confidence and power that each Christian leader can find in prayer. He writes:

Prayer is a resounding "No"...When was the last time you said, "No! No!" to those whom you know oppose the will of God..."No!" to the fear and worry that accompany your prayer for a loved one at war..."No!" to the apathy of others about matters of great importance in your life, your community, and your world? When was the last time you cried out in prayer with a dogged determination and perseverance?⁹³

What is the ideal prayer life for the pastor? Maybe it is the life of confidence and power that only comes from God. Chaplain McLaughlin continues to write, "In the end, a life of

⁹⁰ Sanders, 83.

⁹¹ MacArthur, 174.

⁹² Ravi Zacharias, *Has Christianity Failed You?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 151.

⁹³ McLaughlin, 201.

prayer is a life with open hands where we are not ashamed of our weakness but realize that it is more perfect for us to be led by the Other than to hold everything in our own hands.”⁹⁴

Third, it is mandatory that each pastor should pray for each staff member, for the church members individually, and for the church body as a whole. This is intercessory prayer. A pastor working in a multiple-staff ministry will find this practice of prayer most valuable. Richard J. Foster presents this practice in perfect form:

If we truly love people, we will desire for them far more than it is within our power to give them, and this will lead us to prayer. Intercession is a way of loving others... When we move from petition to intercession we are shifting our center of gravity from our own needs to the needs and concerns of others. Intercessory Prayer is selfless prayer, even self-giving prayer... Intercessory Prayer is priestly ministry, and one of the most challenging teachings in the New Testament is the universal priesthood of all Christians. As priests, appointed and anointed by God, we have the honor of going before the Most High on behalf of others. This is not optional; it is a sacred obligation—and a precious privilege—of all who take up the yoke of Christ.⁹⁵

Even when a pastor exhibits a lifestyle of prayer, and there is an effective program of prayer in the church family, there must still be a form of spiritual protection for the leader and for the church’s team of pastors. C. Peter Wagner emphasizes this fact by stating that intercessory prayer among a team of pastors is the most important thing they can do in their ministry together. He writes, “Christian leaders need the spiritual protection that comes through specific, intentional prayer for them as individuals.”⁹⁶ He goes on to say that when church leaders begin to pray aggressively, they will be noticed. They will be noticed by God, by those in the church, by those of the world, and by the devil himself. He adds one very important factor here. He reminds the reader that it is not

⁹⁴ Ibid., 215.

⁹⁵ Richard J. Foster, *Prayer, Finding the Heart's True Home* (New York, NY: HarpersCollins Publishers, 1992), 191.

⁹⁶ Barna, 292.

just up to the leading pastor to do all the praying, nor does this responsibility fall to a group of pastors in a multiple-staff setting. Rather, it is up to every Christian in the church body to be involved in intercessory prayer. He adds:

How do Christian leaders rise to meet such a formidable challenge? Some might think it is up to the leader to pray longer, harder and more powerfully to avoid Satan's attacks. This is not a bad idea, and I strongly recommend that Christian leaders improve their personal prayer lives. Experience, however, has shown that if we leave it at that, the chances of success are not as high as we might hope. Few pastors or other Christian leaders are able personally to provide all the prayer that they, their churches, their ministries or their organizations need to survive high-level satanic attacks.⁹⁷

There are three challenges here: first, the challenge to constantly improve the personal prayer life of the leading pastor; second, to do the same for his team; and third, to improve the prayer lives of the whole church body. Wagner concludes by reminding the reader that, "of all the spiritual gifts (my list includes twenty-seven of them), the one most valuable for providing spiritual protection for Christian leaders is the gift of intercession."⁹⁸

R. T. Kendall does an excellent job of addressing this subject. He reminds each leader that "prayer begins with the sovereign will of God."⁹⁹ God knows best. It is God's prerogative to do what He wants with whomever He pleases in this world. But God does expect us to plead with Him with all our hearts, including everything and everyone who touches our lives. Kendall continues to write, "But I know at the same time that God will end up doing what He deems right in His own eyes, and we must trust His judgment,

⁹⁷ Ibid., 292-293.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 293.

⁹⁹ Kendall, 174.

unwavering love, and faithfulness when He does not come through for us in the way we wish He would.”¹⁰⁰

When a Christian leader prays according to the will of God, God wants to answer those prayers. When a Christian leader prays for his fellow leaders, God will bless those prayers. Kendall supports this practice of intercession. He writes, “There is, therefore, a kind of praying that requires consistent, persistent, and constant intercession. God does not let us off the hook by saying, ‘Enough; stop praying.’ No.”¹⁰¹ Could pastors quite possibly describe intercessory prayer as one of the most important roles in their prayer lives? Kendall ponders, “What does prayer do for others? Two things: it encourages them (if we tell them), and it sets God into action on their behalf.”¹⁰² These are two very good reasons to pray for each other.

Finally, the reader must remember that prayer also includes thanksgiving from the heart of the pastor. Paul lived such a life of thanksgiving, for he wrote to the young Timothy:

But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion’s mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.¹⁰³

Throughout all the good and difficult things in Paul’s life, there is one thing that he never forgot to do in relation to God. He never forgot to thank Him, “To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.” The same should be true of each Christian leader. James L. Nicodem reminds pastors that there are worries and troubles that can completely engross their

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 175.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 180.

¹⁰² Ibid., 22.

¹⁰³ 2 Ti. 4:17-18.

thoughts and time, even their prayers. Pastors must never fail to keep in mind the fact that “prayer is a God-ward activity.”¹⁰⁴

When pastors pray, God must be first on their minds. All the details, responsibilities, blessings, and difficulties can easily lead one down the wrong path. How can pastors judge whether they have acquired suitable and effective prayer lives? They can do this by focusing on God, and, therefore, maintaining a Christian sense of peace in a world of trouble.

James L. Nicodem has an excellent recommendation. He calls it “Thank-you therapy” (TYT).¹⁰⁵ He bases this therapy on Paul’s letter to the Philippians:

Rejoice in the Lord always, I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.¹⁰⁶

Nicodem explains that in order to find the peace of God which “will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus,” pastors must do three things. They must be fearful of nothing, be prayerful about everything, and be thankful for anything. On this final point of thankfulness, Nicodem writes:

It’s important to follow the recipe when praying. Our tendency is not to add too much of a certain ingredient to the mix. Our penchant is to leave something out completely. And it’s a vital ingredient: thanksgiving. When we fail to present our requests to God, *with thanksgiving* (as Phil. 4:6 teaches us to do), our anxieties are more likely to increase than decrease. We’ll find ourselves reaching for more water, as we choke on our concerns.¹⁰⁷

He continues to encourage his readers to think of everything in life that they are thankful for, no matter what those things are, no matter how big or small. We are to be “creative”

¹⁰⁴ Nicodem, 153.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 147.

¹⁰⁶ Phil. 4:4-7.

¹⁰⁷ Nicodem, 154.

and deliberate” in all the things for which we thank God.¹⁰⁸ This includes absolutely everything in a pastor’s life.

Richard J. Foster presents a whole chapter on “The Prayer of Adoration.” He defines adoration as “the spontaneous yearning of the heart to worship, honor, magnify, and bless God.”¹⁰⁹ He continues:

In one sense adoration is not a special form of prayer, for all true prayer is saturated with it. It is the air in which prayer breathes, the sea in which prayer swims. In another sense, though, it *is* distinct from other kinds of prayer, for in adoration we enter the rarefied air of selfless devotion. We ask for nothing but to cherish him. We seek nothing but his exaltation. We focus on nothing but his goodness.¹¹⁰

Foster explains that there are two sides to the prayer of adoration, “thanksgiving and praise.”¹¹¹ Here are some verses from Psalms that come to mind when one thinks of giving thanks to God. “I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders. I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.”¹¹² “I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliver; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge.”¹¹³ “Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.”¹¹⁴ One thing that must never be absent in the heart of a pastor is thankfulness toward God. Foster writes, “If we could only see the heart of the Father, we would be drawn into praise and thanksgiving more often.”¹¹⁵

In a pleasant and somewhat lighthearted way, Foster describes how a pastor, or any Christian, can build a prayer life of thankfulness and praise toward God. He calls

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 155-156.

¹⁰⁹ Foster, 81.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 81.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 83.

¹¹² Ps. 9:1-2.

¹¹³ Ps. 18:1-2a.

¹¹⁴ Ps. 106:1.

¹¹⁵ Foster, 85.

these practices “stepping-stones.”¹¹⁶ Foster begins, “Thanksgiving, praise, adoration—these are seldom the first words in our minds...on our lips...So here is my counsel: begin by paying attention to the little creatures that creep upon the earth.”¹¹⁷ If a pastor can begin there, then he may be able to describe his own prayer life in this way.

Foster also lists three additional stepping-stones. They are “practicing gratitude” in one’s daily life, being certain to “magnify God,” and “joyous, hilarious, foot-stomping celebration.”¹¹⁸ Pastors are to make sure they truly and humbly praise God and magnify His glorious name. The author adds an additional insight into the prayer of adoration. He includes music, noting, “Music is a marvelous aid in all this. Praise music abounds today that can ease even sad hearts into adoration. Joyfully we can join in with these songs even if we have little musical talent. At home or in the car no one hears but God, and he is pleased.”¹¹⁹

How do pastors describe the importance of their prayer lives? Would a heart of true praise and thanksgiving to God be imperative to a pastor’s ministry and personal life? Certainly a strong case for thanksgiving has been established at this point. “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”¹²⁰ Chaplain McLaughlin shares one of his morning prayers:

O God, for this day we give thanks. We ask for: stamina, faithfulness, hope, wisdom, power. We promise: loyalty, respect, commitment, creativity, exuberance. With your unfailing support, our efforts and accomplishments are unlimited. We work together to glorify you and our country today. *Amen.*¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Foster, 87-90.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 89-90.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹²⁰ Col. 4:2.

¹²¹ McLaughlin, 224.

A Pastor's Leadership in Prayer

How do pastors lead teams in prayer? In what manner do they motivate their staff members to pray and positively stress the importance of prayer in every day ministry?

How do pastors enable their staff members to pray? C. Peter Wagner writes,

The task of leading people in prayer involves bringing the whole group to the place where prayer is a significant part of their daily lives and where positive changes can reasonably be attributed to God's answers to prayer. In the case of a pastor, the congregation should be recognized by themselves and by others as a praying congregation and the growth and health of the church will presumably rise to levels not previously seen.¹²²

The question that must be asked now is how this can be done in the church staff context. Wagner's three approaches are: "(1) teaching the people the rules of prayer, (2) visibly modeling a lifestyle of prayer, and (3) organizing and programming for prayer."¹²³

Adapting these to addressing the leading pastor and a multiple-member staff is simple:

(1) teach the staff the rules of prayer, (2) visibly model a lifestyle of prayer for everyone to see, and (3) organize and program for prayer.

Wagner presents four rules of prayer: praying with faith, praying with a pure heart, praying with power, and praying with persistence.¹²⁴ Wagner supports each of these rules with scripture, making a strong case for each.

1 John 5:14 proved a fine support for his first rule, praying with faith. "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."¹²⁵ James 4:3 explains the second rule, praying with a pure heart. "You do not have, because you do not ask God."¹²⁶ The third rule, praying with power, is addressed in

¹²² Barna, 287-288.

¹²³ Ibid., 288.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 288-290.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 288.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 289.

the Gospel of Luke 11:11, 13. “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? . . . If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”¹²⁷

Wagner looks for three results when the pastor or Christian prays with persistence: “First, we pray until we see the answer. Second, we pray until God releases us. Third, we pray until God says no.”¹²⁸ Wagner uses the scripture from 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 to introduce the fourth rule, praying with persistence. Here, Paul speaks of the thorn in his flesh as being the strength in his Spiritual life, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”¹²⁹ God obviously told Paul “no” when he asked the Lord to remove his thorn of the flesh.

How long should a pastor keep praying? How do pastors know whether they have acquired suitable and effective prayer lives? How do pastors describe their prayer lives? Wagner’s approach to prayer can help answer these questions. One of the most important roles of a leading pastor is modeling a lifestyle of prayer. Wagner writes, “If prayer in leading people is going to be most effective, not only do leaders need to teach the rules of prayer, but they also need to model those rules through their lifestyles.”¹³⁰ He strongly believes that in order for the leading pastor to delegate the job of prayer to the people in the church, the pastor must first be a person of prayer. The pastor must have a strong prayer lifestyle and keep that vision before the staff at all times.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 289.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 290.

¹²⁹ 2 Cor. 12:9.

¹³⁰ Wagner, 290.

MacArthur elaborates on this lifestyle when he writes about one leadership principle that should describe every leading pastor:

An apathetic leader is a contradiction in terms. No true leader will ever be uncaring. In fact, this is another fundamental principle of all leadership: *A leader is passionate*. The person who is detached and indifferent is no true leader. All leaders must have passion, and spiritual leaders especially must be driven by an intense passion for the truth, as well as a deep, fervent, and abiding love for Christ.¹³¹

So each leading pastor must passionately press this issue of modeling a lifestyle of prayer to the church staff. Wagner writes:

It does mean, however, that the pastor or any leader who desires to create a powerful atmosphere of prayer should talk about prayer publicly and privately, should prioritize prayer in the church or organization's program, should provide a budget for prayer and the prayer ministry and should feed the congregation a rich diet of testimonies to answered prayer. Above all, the followers must know that their leader prays for them faithfully and systematically.¹³²

Wagner's final point is that it is essential for leading pastors to organize a program for prayer in their church. When a church's leaders agree on the rules of prayer and are certain that their prayer lifestyles are evident to their staff and church members, they will then be ready to implement a prayer program for their church. Wagner presents three purposes for a program of prayer: first, spiritual protection for the leader; second, the practice of intercessory prayer; and third, organizing a team of prayer partners.¹³³

What practices do pastors identify as necessary to sustain their moral integrity in ministry? Wagner helps to answer this question. He reminds the reader:

Nothing threatens the devil more than effective prayer. Keep in mind that he is not greatly disturbed by much of the pabulum, rhetoric praying that characterizes many Christians and many churches. As soon as aggressive Christian leaders move into action prayer, however, teaching and modeling the rules of prayer and

¹³¹ MacArthur, 124.

¹³² Barna, 291.

¹³³ Ibid., 292-294.

installing intense, systematic prayer ministries in their churches and other organizations, the world of darkness takes serious note.¹³⁴

Wagner believes that intercessory prayer only compliments the personal prayer life of the leading pastor. He writes, “The prayers of intercessors never substitute for the personal prayer lives of Christian leaders, but they very definitely supplement them, in many cases to a surprisingly large extent.”¹³⁵ Leading pastors cannot do this work alone. They need the help of their staff members and their church bodies.

Could developing a team of prayer partners be a profitable practice in a leading pastor’s prayer life? Could such a team help protect pastors and sustain moral integrity in their ministries? Wagner and others seem to think so. MacArthur writes:

What we have in the closing paragraph of 2 Timothy is an abbreviated sample of the network of people whom Paul depended on in his ministry. Here we are reminded that none of us who would serve Christ can do so alone. We are not islands. Although leadership is sometimes a lonely calling, the true leader must never be isolated from people. Just as people need leaders, leaders need people. Leadership itself is by definition a process of team building. Moses needed Aaron and Hur to hold up his hand (Exodus 17:12). When David was an outcast, he gathered men who were distressed, in debt, and discontented, and he made an army of them (1 Samuel 22:2). Even Jesus’ earthly ministry was devoted to training a few individuals, and at the hour of His soul’s deepest agony, He asked three of them to watch with Him in prayer (Matthew 26:37-41).¹³⁶

James L. Nicodem addresses this issue by using the analogy of a football team. He compares the leading pastor of a church to the quarterback in football saying, “The defense keeps track of their ‘sacks’ with pride. The quarterback is their primary target.”¹³⁷ Nicodem compares the defense to Satan and his demons, showing how the quarterback, the pastor, must be protected at all cost. Defending the pastor takes a team effort, involving multiple staff members and the members of the church. Nicodem

¹³⁴ Ibid., 292.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 293.

¹³⁶ MacArthur, 185.

¹³⁷ Nicodem, 199.

presents eight ways for the pastor's staff and church family to pray for him. First, the staff and church should pray for their pastors to be honored, affirmed, encouraged, and respected. Second, they should pray for their pastors to be protected from the focused attacks of Satan. Third, they should pray for their pastors to stay far from sin and to walk in obedience to God's Word. Fourth they should pray for their pastors to be given wisdom, patience, perseverance, and grace in facing people problems, and that those they lead will be loyal, understanding, and supportive. Fifth, the staff and church should pray for their pastors' marriages and parenting. Sixth, they should pray for their pastors' teaching ministry, especially for an ability to hear God's voice, time in the study, theological accuracy, the personal application of truth, and the filling of God's Spirit. Seventh, they should pray for their pastors to consistently practice important spiritual disciplines. Eighth, they should pray that their pastors would be zealous for their churches and compelling in promoting their mission.¹³⁸

There is yet one team member of the multiple-staff ministry who remains to be mentioned directly. First Peter 5:7 mentions this member saying, "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." The Almighty God participates in multi-staff ministry! J. Oswald Sanders applies his thoughts to 1 Peter 5:7:

Are we alone in the leader's role? Do we work in solitude? Not at all, Peter announces. Rather, our frustrations and worries are shared with God, who offers relief and reprieve...The Christian leader need not fear that care of the flock of God will be too heavy a burden. By God's invitation, the leader can transfer the weight of spiritual burden onto shoulders bigger, stronger, broader, and durable. God cares for you. Let worries go!¹³⁹

Other key scriptures help leading pastors to describe their prayer life. Can these scriptures also help pastors identify the practices that will sustain the moral integrity that

¹³⁸ Ibid., 199-210.

¹³⁹ Sanders, 50.

they so need in their lives? In the early nineteenth century, E. M. Bounds wrote of the awareness that must be in every pastor's heart when it comes to judgment day and their accountability to God. He writes these words:

How little does the church understand the fearful responsibility attaching to the office and work of the ministry! "For they watch for your souls as they that must give account." God's appointed watchmen, to warn when danger is nigh; God's messengers sent to rebuke, reprove, and exhort with all long-suffering; ordained as shepherds to protect the sheep against devouring wolves. How responsible is their position! And they are to give account to God for their work, and are to face a day of reckoning. How much do such men need the prayers of those to whom they minister! And who should be more ready to do this praying than God's people, his own church, those presumably who are in heart sympathy with the minister and his all-important work, divine in its origin.¹⁴⁰

Could the Apostle Paul have had these same thoughts on his heart when he was inspired to write the following scriptures? Could these same letters help today's leading pastors to identify what practices will sustain their moral integrity throughout their ministry?

A Pastor's Metamorphosis: A Change in Nature

Paul lists seven spiritual gifts in Romans 12:1-8. Directly following this list he writes:

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if

¹⁴⁰E. M. Bounds, *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds on Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 424.

he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.¹⁴¹

In Romans 12:12 Paul uses the Greek word προσευχη in the phrase, τη προσευχη προσκατερουντες, be devoted to prayer. The second meaning of the word προσκατερω is used here meaning “to busy oneself with, to be busily engaged in, to be devoted to.”¹⁴² The Greek word for prayer προσευχη, again, is the general word for prayer as found in 1 Timothy 2:1. Paul uses the same phrase with a small difference in Colossians 4:2. Τη προσευχη προσκατερειτε in the Colossians passage is a second person plural present imperative. Paul is commanding the church in Colosse to be devoted to prayer.

This word, προσευχη, is a plural masculine present participle. In Romans 12:12, Paul is describing a continuous action. He wants the Roman Christians to be continuously devoted to prayer. This word is also an adjectival participle. The action here is describing the noun, prayer. Paul wants these Romans to understand that he expects them to live a prayerful life so that when others describe them, they would be automatically described as prayerful people. The Roman Christians were to be people devoted to prayer at all times. Paul, as he does many times throughout his letters, relates a sense of urgency here. Paul’s urgent tone beckons the Roman Christians to this kind of prayer life. If they have not already begun, they must begin immediately. Once the Romans Christians begin, they must never stop.

Can Romans 12 help pastors identify practices that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministry? In the context of Romans 12, Paul is addressing the moral

¹⁴¹ Ro. 12:9-21.

¹⁴² Arndt and Gingrich, 722.

character of his audience. Paul begins by saying, “Therefore,” and is gathering all that he has said in the first eleven chapters of Romans concerning the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and presenting the Roman Christians with two imperatives or commands. Paul continues saying, “do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”¹⁴³

In full view of all that God’s grace has done for them, these Christians are to present themselves as a living sacrifice of praise and holiness to God. Now, these people are to stop being fashioned or formed by this world, for the world is lost in sin. The world’s morals are not God’s morals. There must be a radical change in their lives. This happens when they allow God to transform, μεταμορφουσθε, their lives.

What is the significance of these two imperatives in Romans 12:2, and how will they help pastors better understand how to sustain their good moral life? The first imperative, συσχηματιξεσθε, means to be formed like, be conformed to or be guided by.¹⁴⁴ The second, μεταμορφουσθε, means to be transformed invisibly to the physical eye.¹⁴⁵ Both of these imperatives are second person plural present passive imperatives. In the Greek language the second person imperative is the most forceful way to tell someone to do something. Paul sees himself here as the authority figure, with God’s approval, and is giving these people two very strong commands. Because these imperatives are plural, Paul is talking to all of the Roman Christians. No longer were they to conform to the pattern of this world, but they were to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. Paul speaks of a radical change inside, a change in nature and invisible to the human eye.

¹⁴³ Ro. 12:2.

¹⁴⁴ Arndt and Gingrich, 803.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 513.

The hearts and minds of all people must be changed in order for them to live righteously in this evil world. How are people transformed? By the renewing of the mind, τη ανακαινώσει του νοος. The Greek word ανακαινώσει means renewal, the spiritual rebirth of men.¹⁴⁶ This word is dative singular and is used in the instrumental case. How are people transformed? They are transformed by the renewing of their minds, as Paul says, “be changed by the renewal of your minds.”¹⁴⁷ This metamorphosis comes from God. Romans 12 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 help to explain this metamorphosis.

There are two different kinds of transformation. The first is a transformation that is outwardly visible. For example, Jesus took on the form of his heavenly glory and was transfigured in Matthew 17:2,¹⁴⁸ “There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.”¹⁴⁹ Mark 9:2 also records this account saying, “There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them.”¹⁵⁰ These two records show that Christ’s transfiguration was outwardly visible to those present, Peter, James, and John.

There is a second kind of transfiguration used in the New Testament; it is used in Romans 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 3:18. This “metamorphosis” is a change in nature that is invisible to the physical eye. It must take place within the life of each Christian so that there is a new boldness that Christians have in Christ Jesus whereby they boldly let the light of Christ shine in the world around them. Where does the Christian get this inward change, this transformation? How does it come about?

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 55.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 55.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 513.

¹⁴⁹ Mt. 17:2.

¹⁵⁰ Mk. 9:2-3.

A Pastor's Transformed Life with Ever-Increasing Glory

Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.¹⁵¹

The transformation into Christ's likeness and glory comes from God. Paul is speaking of the new covenant Christians have in Jesus Christ. When people turn to the Lord, they have the spiritual liberty to shine in Christ. Christians become mirrors of Christ. The original Greek reads like this, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."¹⁵²

The context of these verses must be studied. Paul's hope is that the Corinthian church will fully experience this glorious new covenant in Christ, as opposed to the old covenant of Moses. God poured out the Holy Spirit upon these people to change their hearts; therefore, they could become very bold. Those who receive the Holy Spirit are like Moses because they are invited into the presence of God. Unlike Moses, they are much bolder, and their radiance will never fade, as Paul explains, "Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses..."¹⁵³

Christian pastors today also experience these similarities and differences with Moses. Pastors are in the presence of God and have received His glory just like Moses.

¹⁵¹ 2 Cor. 3:12-18.

¹⁵² 2 Cor. 3:18.

¹⁵³ 2 Cor. 3:12-13.

Today's pastors differ from Moses because their glory will never fade and the veil is never necessary, for "We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away."¹⁵⁴

Paul uses this elaborate image to explain that Moses put the veil over his face so that the Israelites would not see that the glory of God was gradually fading, signifying the temporary nature of the old covenant. Moses' glory was being brought to an end. In the old covenant, God displayed his presence and glory in Israel's leader, Moses. Now, the new covenant shines eternally brighter with the Spirit of the Lord living in the lives of each Christian in the church and in its pastors. The old covenant "has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory."¹⁵⁵ God has allowed the old to fade away and make the new covenant shine forever. "And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts."¹⁵⁶ The glory of the new covenant far outshines the old, for the new covenant is one that will exist forever, lasting into eternity. Paul is expressing here God's promise that in this more glorious and new covenant God is pouring out his Spirit to change the hearts of his people. Therefore, Paul can be "very bold"¹⁵⁷ for he represents a new covenant. The glory of this new covenant will never fade. In contrast, Moses represented the old covenant that faded and so he veiled his face. Today, each Christian's experience under the new covenant is similar to that of Moses.

This veil of Moses affected the Israelites throughout the centuries, including the time of Paul. In spite of Paul's boldness, Israel's hearts remained hard as they had been in

¹⁵⁴ 2 Cor. 3:13.

¹⁵⁵ 2 Cor. 3:10.

¹⁵⁶ 2 Cor. 3:11.

¹⁵⁷ 2 Cor. 3:12.

Moses' day. Their hearts were hardened toward Christ's message because they refused to accept the new covenant and Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Now, just as Moses went into the presence of the Lord with the veil off, the person who turns to the Lord can do the same because "when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed."¹⁵⁸ Likewise, Moses removed his veil in the presence of the Lord: "But whenever he entered the Lord's presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he have been commanded, they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the Lord."¹⁵⁹ When people turn to the Lord in faith, the veil, which represents their separation from God and hardness of heart, is removed, and they are set free, as Paul explains "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."¹⁶⁰

Second Corinthians 3:18 is a glorious verse for all Christians, not just for the pastor. But for the sake of this study, this writer will focus on the pastor. What practices do pastors identify that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministry? Second Corinthians 3:18 and its context paint a picture for each leading pastor's life of sanctification.

Paul begins verse 18 saying, "And we all." The Greek, *ημεις δε παντες*, includes all Christians, not just pastors. Continuing, Paul says, "who with unveiled faces all reflect (behold, contemplate, to look at) God's glory." The Greek phrase *ανακεκαλυμμενω προσωπω την δοξαν κυριου κατοπτριζομενοι* describes what each leading pastor should see in the mirror, "with an unveiled face the glory of the

¹⁵⁸ 2 Cor. 3:16.

¹⁵⁹ Ex. 34:34-35.

¹⁶⁰ 2 Cor. 3:17.

Lord.” With no veil over their faces, pastors can clearly see the glory of the Lord in their reflection in the mirror. The “glory” of God includes every way in which people are like God, such as their moral character, knowledge, God-given abilities, and dominion over creation. All of these privileges are given under the authority and permission of God.

As pastors mature and the years go by, they should be able to see more and more of God’s glory in their lives. The Greek word, κατοπτριζομενοι, is a present middle participle. It should be translated, “look at oneself in a mirror,” since it is in the middle voice.¹⁶¹ It is translated, “look at something as in a mirror, or contemplate something.”¹⁶² The action here is continuous; therefore, pastors are to keep on looking, keep on contemplating, keep on beholding throughout life.

Paul argues that Christians should not lose sight of the glory as Moses did. Pastors should always be highly aware of God’s glory and let it shine to the whole world, throughout their lives and ministries. This will happen as pastors “keep on beholding” or “keep on reflecting” the glory of God in their lives.

Should leading pastors make this their daily goal? The word that God gives Paul next should describe each pastor’s life. The phrase την αυτην εικονα μεταμορφουμεθα means Christians are to be changed to the same form, a transformation invisible to the physical eye.¹⁶³ The only other verse in the New Testament that uses this word in the same way is Romans 12:2 where Paul says, μεταμορφουσθε τη ανακαινωσει του ποος, let yourselves be transformed by the renewing of your minds.¹⁶⁴ The Greek form used here is the second person plural present

¹⁶¹ Arndt and Gingrich, 425.

¹⁶² Ibid., 426.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 513.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 513.

passive imperative. The passive shows that God transforms pastors. God radically changes pastors throughout their lives and ministries.

What kind of change or metamorphosis must take place here and to what extent? There is only one kind of change that God expects, and he will perform it. Every leading pastor and his staff is being transformed into God's likeness with ever-increasing glory, *απο δόξης εις δόξαν*. The Greek words used here for glory, *δόξης* and *δόξαν*, are rich words. They are used throughout this passage, first, to describe the glory of God that shone on Moses' face and, second, on the faces of the pastors and all redeemed Christians. The word here literally means brightness, splendor, or radiance of heaven and of God.¹⁶⁵

Paul uses the same word to describe the light from heaven that blinded him on the road to Damascus saying, "because the brilliance of the light had blinded me."¹⁶⁶ The Bible also says that everything in heaven has this radiance including the radiant bodies in the sky here above earth: "There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor."¹⁶⁷

In this passage, splendor is used to describe those who appear before God: Moses and Christians on this earth in 2 Corinthians 3:7-18 and Christians in the next life in 1 Corinthians 15:42-43 and Colossians 3:4.¹⁶⁸ The 1 Corinthians passage reads, "So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 202.

¹⁶⁶ Acts 22:11.

¹⁶⁷ 1 Cor. 15:40-41.

¹⁶⁸ Arndt and Gingrich, 202.

imperishable.”¹⁶⁹ Colossians 3:4 reads, “When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” Christ is the “Lord of glory” in 1 Corinthians 2:8. Paul used the concept more widely to denote the glory, majesty and sublimity of God in Romans 1:23, when people “exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.”¹⁷⁰

As a final example, the Lord uses δοξα with reference to his disciples in 2 Corinthians 4:17, “But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.” First, Paul’s teaching again reveals how this glory comes only from God. Secondly, this verse shows that all Christians are “jars of clay.” Christians are the clay and God is the potter. MacArthur says:

All leaders are at best clay pots. Some may be better-looking pots than others. But no true leader can boast of having attained his position merely because of superior talents, physical attributes, communication skills, or whatever. If God did not use homely, ordinary clay pots, there wouldn’t be any spiritual leaders at all, because there aren’t any people who aren’t beset with blemishes and human weaknesses. The greatest of all leaders in Scripture were fundamentally flawed. Abraham gave in to his fears and shamefully lied (Genesis 12:13; 20:2). Moses freely acknowledged that he was “slow of speech and slow of tongue” (Exodus 4:10). He also had repeated problems with a fiery temper (Exodus 2:11-12; Number 20:11-12). David committed adultery and murder (2 Samuel 11). Elijah succumbed to fear and depression (1 Kings 19:3-10). Isaiah confessed that he had a dirty mouth (Isaiah 6:5). . . . All of these were fragile, imperfect men of clay.¹⁷¹

The question is, “Can God use such a man as a pastor?” If pastors struggle with moral integrity and have failed again and again, can they be of any use to God’s ministry? MacArthur writes some very encouraging words, “Why is such a priceless treasure contained in clay pots? [So] that the excellence of the power may be of God and

¹⁶⁹ 1 Cor. 15:42.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 202.

¹⁷¹ MacArthur, 109-110.

not of us (2 Corinthians 4:7).”¹⁷² This glory, this wonderful splendor, will be the pastors’, for they have turned to the Lord. The Apostle Paul also wrote this to the Corinthians:

Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”¹⁷³

McArthur writes, “By using common, ordinary clay pots, God put His glory on display in bold relief. The Corinthians of all people know that was true.”¹⁷⁴

Moreover, the glory of God in 2 Corinthians 4:17 is to be displayed in a different way in each stage of pastors’ lives. Paul writes, “We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”¹⁷⁵ This same reference to glory is made in 2 Corinthians 3:18, “...are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory.” Every stage of pastors’ lives can show this “ever-increasing glory.” God is glorified when pastors come to know Christ as their Lord and Savior. He is again glorified when pastors mature from the milk of the Gospel to the real meat of the Word. God is glorified during pastors’ years of formal education in college and seminary. He is further glorified in the early, middle, and then later years of ministry. At the end of their lives, pastors can follow Paul’s example for Timothy, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that

¹⁷² Ibid., 111.

¹⁷³ 1 Cor. 1:26-31.

¹⁷⁴ MacArthur, 113.

¹⁷⁵ Eph. 2:10.

day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearance.”¹⁷⁶ All this glory comes from the Lord who is gracious. This is finishing well.

A Pastor's Actual Transformation

What practices do pastors identify that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministry? God provides the power to transform the minds of pastors, but the questions still remains, “What must God do in the pastor to make him transformed? How does God renew the pastor’s mind?” Romans 12:1-21 provides helpful answers.

Paul lists righteous actions that must be a part of pastors’ lives and their staff members’ lives. These actions are God given, God ordained, and God blessed. They flow from God’s internal transformational work in a pastor’s life. The actions include showing humility, fighting for unity, loving genuinely, leading with zeal/fervor, devoting themselves to others, rejoicing in hope, practicing patience in affliction, praying faithfully, honoring others, practicing hospitality, rejoicing and mourning appropriately, living in harmony and peace with everyone, and overcoming evil with good. Each of these actions deserves further study.

First, Paul calls transformed pastors to show humility. Paul admonishes, “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.”¹⁷⁷ To learn humility, pastors must develop sober judgment, σωφρονεῖν, which is translated prudent, thoughtful, or self-controlled.¹⁷⁸ Pastors are to have modest, humble minds. God has

¹⁷⁶ 2 Ti. 4:7-8.

¹⁷⁷ Ro. 12:3.

¹⁷⁸ Arndt and Gingrich, 810.

given each Christian leader a different “measure of faith”¹⁷⁹ to live by; therefore, each man is to evaluate himself truthfully and realistically.

Paul uses a play on words twice in Romans 12:3. First, with the two infinitives φρονιεν, “to be” in a certain “frame of mind”¹⁸⁰ and υπερφρονειν, which means “to think too highly of oneself, be haughty.”¹⁸¹ Therefore, Paul comes with the message, “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought,” or “Do not be in such a certain frame of mind that you become haughty or you think too much of yourself.”

James Earl Massey, in his work on *Our Responsibility to God*, lists five reasons humility is necessary:

Humility is essential because the graciousness of God is behind all our work and witness...Humility is essential because our gifts are limited...Humility is essential because individual effectiveness is limited...Humility is essential because our knowledge is limited...Humility is essential because our time to live and serve is limited.¹⁸²

Humility as a part of pastors’ transformed lives is central to their daily ministry. Humility was a perfect place for Paul to begin. Massey continues to write:

Commitment, carefulness, and humility mark the life of all who truly honor God’s call upon them to ministry. Who else bears such a trust? Who else is sent to affirm creation, proclaim redemption, and lead others in celebrating the Creator? Who else is sent to probe, measure, and exalt life as God’s gift to us all? Who else is authorized to “name the Name,” speaking about God, as it were, from an inside post? To sense the depth of such a privilege is to be stirred to gratitude and surrender, praise and prayer, faith and devotion, trust and obedience, humility and morality. Our responsibility to God is openness and obedience—a grateful openness and a love-inspired obedience.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Rom. 12:3.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 874.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.,

¹⁸² James Earl Massey, *Leadership Handbook of Management & Administration*, rev. and exp. ed., ed. James D. Berkley (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 52.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 53.

The second play on words is with φρονεῖν (this word occurs twice in this verse) to be in a certain frame of mind and σωφρονεῖν which means sober judgment. Again, Paul comes up with a special message, “but rather think of yourself with sober judgment,” or “have the certain frame of mind where you can make a sober judgment.” That sober judgment is made by the measure of faith God has given to each pastor. The rational and righteous attitude pastors should have is humbleness of spirit because of the goodness of God in this matter.

Second, Paul calls transformed pastors to fight for unity. The transformed lives of pastors will be those of unity, “...so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”¹⁸⁴ Paul lists seven spiritual gifts. All pastors will have at least one or more of these; some may have many. These spiritual gifts are prophecy, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing/giving, leadership, and showing mercy.¹⁸⁵ Paul has three other lists of spiritual gifts found in 1 Corinthians 12:7-10, 1 Corinthians 12:28, and Ephesians 4:11. The body of Christ has both unity and diversity of gifts. Just as the human body works together to walk, run, work, eat, sleep, and play, so does the church body.

Third, Paul calls transformed pastors to love genuinely. Love, ἀγαπη, is the glue that holds all of these righteous things together. It also holds pastors’ lives together. Paul informs the Romans that hate must accompany this love, but that they are to hate only what is evil and cling to what is good. Concerning Paul’s thoughts, Nicodem writes

¹⁸⁴ Ro. 12:5.

¹⁸⁵ Ro. 12:6-8.

“Good and evil are regularly contrasted in Scripture. Paul exhorts us to ‘Hate what is evil; cling to what is good’ (Rom. 12:9).”¹⁸⁶

The best example of love is found in God’s love for us, “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”¹⁸⁷ Paul gives the Corinthians the Lord’s opinion of the importance of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-13 saying “...but the greatest of these is love.”¹⁸⁸ The fruit of the Spirit begins with love in Galatians 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” The Greek word καρπος means fruit, result, outcome, or product and is meant here figuratively in the spiritual realm.¹⁸⁹ Because this word is singular, Paul is emphasizing the unity of these nine blessings or virtues from the Spirit of God. All nine of these fruit are one. They work together to form each Christian and each pastor.

In contrast, Galatians 5:19-21 lists vices of mankind, the acts of the flesh, τα εργα της σαρκος, deeds that originate in the flesh (i.e. sin),¹⁹⁰ that can and will destroy each Christian leader.¹⁹¹ The word “acts,” εργα, is plural in the Greek, giving the spiritual message that there is nothing that is united in Satan’s work. In fact, these acts of the flesh are not only divided, but they will fight each other to control a human soul. Sexual immorality does not respect or honor impurity; impurity is immoral toward debauchery; debauchery is corrupt toward idolatry; idolatry does not worship witchcraft; witchcraft is ugly toward hatred; hatred hates the company of discord; and so on. The

¹⁸⁶ Nicodem, 131.

¹⁸⁷ Ro. 5:8.

¹⁸⁸ 1 Cor. 13:13.

¹⁸⁹ Arndt and Gingrich, 405.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 308.

¹⁹¹ Gal. 5:19-21.

reader quickly understands that God's spiritual virtues portray a happy family, and Satan's works are a horrible picture of corruption and fear. In contrast, love makes all the difference in the lives of pastors. Love is the best description of pastors' prayer lives and the main ingredient in sustaining their moral integrity.

Fourth, Paul calls transformed pastors to lead with zeal and spiritual fervor. These are closely related to each other by definition and therefore will be addressed as one concept. Greek word for zeal, *σπουδη*, means possibly haste and speed¹⁹² or eagerness, earnestness, or diligence in matters of religion.¹⁹³ The Greek word for fervor, *ζεοντες*, is to boil, to seethe. In this verse, it is used as an admonition or warning to Christians to be boiling spiritually, directing them to maintain their spiritual glow.¹⁹⁴ Paul admonishes Christian pastors to remain on fire, enthusiastic, and eager throughout their ministries. MacArthur supports this challenge. He writes, "A leader is optimistic and enthusiastic. Optimistic enthusiasm inspires followers. People will naturally follow a leader who arouses their hopes, and they will just as surely back away from someone who is perpetually pessimistic."¹⁹⁵ Leading pastors' zeal and fervor are contagious, and they must use their zeal and fervor for the edification of their congregation and staff.

Fifth, Paul calls transformed pastors to devote themselves to others, especially to their fellow pastors and their church family. The Greek word for devotion is *φιλοστοργοι*. The Greek translation of *τη φιλαδελφια εις αλλφλους φιλοστοργοι* is devoted to one another in brotherly love.¹⁹⁶ This is the only time in the New Testament that this word is used. It is also used with the word *φιλαδελφια*, philadelphia, which

¹⁹² Ibid., 771.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 771.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 338.

¹⁹⁵ MacArthur, 39.

¹⁹⁶ Arndt and Gingrich, 869.

means brotherly love and is a variation of this same word. MacArthur writes that one vital principle of leadership is cultivating loyalty,¹⁹⁷ and pastors can cultivate loyalty through their devotion to their fellow pastors and church family. MacArthur stresses the great value of this loyalty saying,

Loyalty is a great virtue. We often forget that simple truth in the cynical age in which we live. Our society is so rife with corrupt leaders and so hostile to the concept of authoritative truth that loyalty is often perceived as a weakness rather than a merit. Rebellion and defiance have been canonized as virtues instead. “Who can find a faithful man?” (Proverbs 20:6).¹⁹⁸

Sixth, Paul calls transformed pastors to rejoice in hope. The object of joy is hope in the Lord Jesus Christ as Paul writes, *τη ελπιδι χαιποντες*, be joyful in hope. The Greek word for joy, *χαιποντες*, means rejoice, be glad.¹⁹⁹ In the dative, it is translated rejoice in hope or filled with hope.²⁰⁰ An Old Testament example of this joyful hope comes from Psalm 71:5, “For you have been my hope, O Sovereign Lord, my confidence since my youth.”²⁰¹

Nicodem insightfully writes about joy saying,

Occasions of joy are the Holy Spirit’s promptings to pray. God desires that we share our good news with him. When you close a big deal that you’ve been working on for months, take a few minutes for a “Yeah, God!” before you pick up the phone to call your boss. When your son climbs into the car after winning his soccer game, turn to him and say, “Let’s tell God how much we enjoyed the victory and everything that went into it.” When you see a spectacular sunset, don’t just feel awed. Share the experience with the One who painted that sky.²⁰²

Seventh, Paul calls transformed pastors to practice patience in times of affliction.

The Greek word *Φλιψει* from the root word *φλιπις* means oppression, affliction, or

¹⁹⁷ MacArthur, 68.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 69.

¹⁹⁹ Arndt and Gingrich, 881.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 881.

²⁰¹ Ps. 71:5.

²⁰² Nicodem, 69.

tribulation of distress that is brought about by outward circumstances.²⁰³ Sanders writes about afflictions and trials in the lives of pastors. He says:

Everyone entrusted with spiritual authority can expect tests, temptations, and trials along the way. As difficult and inconvenient as these tests may be, they serve to purify and clarify leadership. The first chapter of James demonstrates that God allows, even plans, these experiences for our good and for our growth. Tests are meant to let us succeed, not fail. Tests display progress.²⁰⁴

The product of affliction is patience. James illustrates this relationship, teaching his readers to “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”²⁰⁵ The Greek word for patience paints a picture that informs its meaning. The Greek word, υπομενοντες, means to remain or stay behind instead of fleeing. Paul is calling pastors to remain steadfast instead of fleeing in the face of tribulation.²⁰⁶ This word has the idea of perseverance or a patient frame of mind. The same word is used in 2 Corinthians 1:6, “If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same suffering we suffer.”

Eighth, Paul calls transformed pastors to pray faithfully. Romans 12:12 cuts to the very heart of a pastor who faithfully practices prayer. What would pastors today consider to be the ideal prayer life? The Greek word for prayer that Paul uses in Romans 12:12 is προσευχη, from προσευχας which is the general word for prayer that was previously studied in 1 Timothy 2:1-6. Paul again emphasizes this practice. He tells the reader in

²⁰³ Arndt and Gingrich, 362.

²⁰⁴ Sanders, 131.

²⁰⁵ Js. 1:2-4.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 853.

Rome and the Christian leader today, τη προσευχη προσκαρτερουντες, to be faithful in prayer.

Darrell W. Johnson writes that pastors must monitor their prayer lives. He asks a series of questions on the subject of being faithful in prayer: “Are we more mature in our prayers? Do we have the conviction that prayer is a major task? Does prayer have an increasingly deeper hold on us? Are we making prayer our first priority? Are we able to help others move into the various aspects of prayer?”²⁰⁷

Pastors oversee many areas of their lives that can easily become unbalanced. They must manage both their relationship with God and their family, devotional and study time in the Bible, evangelistic work and shepherding the flock. Moreover, pastors must manage their own identity, emotions, and character while taking care of their own physical bodies with proper exercise and diet. All of this can become overwhelming, especially if one area is neglected or becomes out of balance. In light of pastors’ difficult situation, Johnson asks two very challenging questions, “How can we do it? How can we manage ourselves to be well, serve well, and finish well?”²⁰⁸

Paul helps bring clarity to pastors’ chaotic lives when he uses the Greek word “faithful,” προσκαρτερουντες. The first meaning for this word is to attach oneself to, wait on, or be faithful to someone.²⁰⁹ This word is used in the Gospel of Mark when Jesus asked his disciples to have a boat ready for him to use because the crowd was so large, “...he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from

²⁰⁷ Darrell W. Johnson, *Leadership Handbook of Management & Administration*, rev. and exp. ed., ed. James D. Berkley (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 28.

²⁰⁸ Johnson, 28.

²⁰⁹ Arndt and Gingrich, 722.

crowding him.”²¹⁰ The second meaning of this word is used in Romans 12:12 with the dative case, to busy oneself with, be busily engaged in, or be devoted to.²¹¹ In Romans 12:12 the translation is be busily engaged in prayer, or be faithful in prayer.

Despite many obstacles, pastors can position themselves to have a faithful and busy prayer life. Nicodem simply states the obvious, “Prayer. It’s time to stop talking about it and to start doing it.”²¹² Nicodem encourages pastors to master the basics of prayer from the start of their ministries and then to review those principles throughout their ministry career. Nicodem’s first rule is “get into a rut.”²¹³ He writes, “All I know is that routines help me avoid distractions and jump into whatever needs doing. The same holds true when I pray.”²¹⁴ Nicodem presents seven exercises to help each Christian stay faithful in prayer, to stay in the rut: believer’s armor, attributes of God, fruit of the Spirit, body parts, a few friends, thank-you’s, persecuted brothers and sisters²¹⁵

Nicodem begins to build a strong foundation to pastors’ faithful prayer lives with these seven exercises. First, he encourages Christian pastors to “pray on the Christian armor” each and every day. The exercise is based on Paul’s letter to the Ephesians and the six pieces of Christian armor.²¹⁶ Nicodem writes:

I can think of no better way to begin a day than by praying on the believers’ armor. Every day we’re engaged in a spiritual war—whether we’re aware of it or not. Our enemy stalks us relentlessly, like a roaring lion, hoping to devour us (1 Pet. 5:8). If we are not prepared for such a foe we will end up becoming his lunch. That’s why I taught my kids—and the men whom I disciple in an early morning small group—how to pray on the armor.²¹⁷

²¹⁰ Mk. 3:9.

²¹¹ Arndt and Gingrich, 722.

²¹² Nicodem, 245.

²¹³ Ibid., 43.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 43.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 44-60.

²¹⁶ Eph. 6:13-17.

²¹⁷ Nicodem, 44-45.

He then instructs the reader how to put on daily the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the Gospel shoes, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Word of God. Would this type of exercise in prayer help sustain the moral integrity of pastors?

Second, Nicodem uses his list of the names of God, the “A to Z List of Biblical Names, Titles, and Attributes of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,” to help the reader learn how to give praise to God each and every day.²¹⁸ In the appendix, Nicodem lists two hundred forty-six different names of God, his Son, and the Holy Spirit in alphabetical order. Nicodem encourages and demonstrates how to pray prayers by using these names to give God daily praise. He says, “Each morning I choose three or four attributes or titles of God like these and pray them back to him by voicing everything that they bring to mind and giving him thanks for such. It’s a great way to begin my day.”²¹⁹ What are the current practices of pastors’ prayer lives? Should this be one of them?

Third, Nicodem uses what he calls “The Fruits of the Spirit Prayer” asking the reader to practice the kind of prayer that asks God for these nine fruits of His Spirit into our lives every day. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”²²⁰ He encourages the reader with these words, “You get the idea. Choose a fruit that you need. Praise the Lord for the way in which he models that fruit. Ask him to produce the fruit in you—and be specific.”²²¹

²¹⁸ Ibid., 247-251.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 49.

²²⁰ Gal. 5:22-23.

²²¹ Nicodem, 51.

Fourth, Nicodem introduces “The Body Parts Prayer.” He encourages the reader to begin praying to God to use every part of their body to advance the Kingdom of God and to dedicate their lives fully to the Lord. The Apostle Paul instructs the Christian:

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.²²²

This exercise can include the eyes, hands, feet, tongue, heart or, any part of the body.

Nicodem illustrates a prayer for the eyes:

This will be followed by the declaration: “Lord, we give you our eyes.” As soon as this is said, we all put our hands over our eyes while I continue. “Our eyes have been used for sinful purposes this week—to look at people and things in a way that made us covet, or lust, or boast. But now we offer you these eyes and ask you to help us see others as you see them.”²²³

Fifth, Nicodem presents his “Few Friends Prayer.” He asks readers to list anyone who is praying for them on a regular basis, including some of the Apostle Paul’s friends: the Romans (Rom. 1:9-10), the Ephesians (Eph. 1:15-16), the Philippians (Phil. 1:4), the Colossians (Col. 1:9), the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1:2-3), and Timothy (2 Tim. 1:3).²²⁴

Recording a list of a few close friends to pray for can greatly encourage pastors to be faithful in prayer. If pastors know those friends are praying for them in return, their encouragement to be faithful in prayer will be even greater.

Sixth, are Nicodem’s “thank-you” lists. He writes:

It seems that we’re more interested in *getting* stuff than in *giving* thanks—an imbalance that can also be detected in our prayers throughout the year. We don’t have to wait until Thanksgiving to make our “thank-you” lists. This is a wonderful pattern of prayer to practice on a regular basis. Whether you’re by yourself, or with a friend, family members, or a small group, simply announce,

²²² Ro. 6:13-14.

²²³ Nicodem, 51.

²²⁴ Ibid., 53.

“It’s ‘thank-you’ prayer time.” Then start thanking God for whatever he brings to mind—one item at a time.²²⁵

This exercise can greatly encourage pastors every day to be thankful. There are many things pastors can be thankful for in their lives and ministries: the physical, mental, and spiritual health of themselves, their families, and staff; spiritual blessings throughout each day; and the many wonderful relationships they have with various people. Even the trials of life can be a blessing. Nicodem reminds each reader, “Thanking God for our trials is an art. And the better we get at it the more of God’s peace (Phil. 4:6-7) and joy (James 1:2-3) we experience in our lives.”²²⁶

The seventh and final practice in prayer Nicodem lists is “Prayers for Persecuted Brothers and Sisters.” For many, this area of prayer has often been neglected or simply forgotten. Our practice in prayer include not only those whose lives and faiths are secure, but also those whose lives and freedom are in jeopardy because of their faith. Nicodem soberly reminds the reader:

As Christ followers, we have brothers and sisters around the world who are enduring persecution—right now—because of their faith. They have lost their jobs, their kids have been denied schooling, they have little to eat, they have been socially harassed and physically abused, they are in prison or in hiding—all because they love Jesus and aren’t afraid to say so. More individuals have lost their lives for Christ in the past century than in all previous nineteen centuries combined! Members of our family.²²⁷

How can pastors remember to pray for such people? How do they put this type of prayer into practice? The best way to begin is to make a list of persecuted people the pastors know. Then pastors should begin praying this way, and continue, making it a lifestyle because Scripture encourages everyone to “Remember those in prison as if you

²²⁵ Ibid., 57.

²²⁶ Ibid., 58.

²²⁷ Ibid., 59.

were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.”²²⁸

These seven practices are good patterns for pastors’ prayer lives. If pastors make no plans or patterns for their prayer lives, they are simply planning to fail. Pastors must remember that the Holy Spirit is there to help them pray and that with the Spirit’s help they can develop a passion for prayer. Nicodem writes about passionate prayer saying, “A passionate prayer is definite. A passionate prayer is desperate. A passionate prayer is dependent. And these are characteristics that invite God to fly to our rescue.”²²⁹ Pastors must be clear and definite when they pray; they should name people by their full names and know the actual details of their concerns. Pastors must be deliberate and fervent in their prayers. They must totally depend upon God for everything in their ministries. God wants to be needed as Nicodem illustrates in his definition of prayer:

Praying is asking Jesus to do what only he can do, what we could never do on our own...Prayer is helplessness plus faith...God loves doing God things. Things that nobody else can do. God loves being the Go-to Guy (no irreverence intended) who, alone, can get the job done. “Call upon me in the day of trouble,” God says through the psalmist, “I will deliver you, and you will honor me” (Ps. 50:15). It’s almost as if God relishes opportunities to show us his stuff. He’s not bothered by our appeals for help. He’s honored by them.²³⁰

Ninth, Paul calls pastors to honor others saying in Romans 12:10, “...honor one another above yourselves.” The Greek word for honor is προηγχομαι. Scholars disagree about the translation of this phrase, τη τιμη αλληλουσ προηγουμενοι. Some scholars translate to try to outdo one another in showing respect. Others translate as consider

²²⁸ Hb. 13:3.

²²⁹ Nicodem, 83.

²³⁰ Ibid., 93.

better or esteem more highly for προηγούμενοι; as far as honor is concerned, let each one esteem the other more highly (than himself).²³¹

Concerning the translation of προηγούμενοι, this writer and most translations favor the second translation; as far as honor is concerned, let each one esteem the other more highly than himself. This description applied to pastors is very closely related to humility. In this verse, Paul more clearly defines the nature of the relationship between brothers in Christ, especially pastors in a multiple-staff ministry. This practice helps sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in the pastor's ministry.

Tenth, Paul calls transformed pastors to practice hospitality. The Greek word φιλοξενιον means hospitality or to practice hospitality with the heart of love.²³² Pastors must seek out opportunities to practice hospitality in their lives and to follow eagerly the practices of hospitality. Paul uses the Greek word διωκοντες in Romans 12:13. Throughout the Old and New Testament, God strongly instructed His people to be hospitable toward their brothers, their sisters, and even the traveler or stranger. Peter admonishes, "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in it various forms."²³³ John writes to his brother Gaius who was generous to those serving in the church, "We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth."²³⁴

The concept of practicing hospitality is further illuminated in Romans 12 by Paul's admonition to share generously. The life of the early New Testament church

²³¹ Arndt and Gingrich, 712-713.

²³² Arndt and Gingrich, 868.

²³³ 1 Pt. 4:9-11.

²³⁴ 1 Jn. 8.

personified this idea as “All the believers were together and had everything in common.”²³⁵ The Greek word used here, *κοινωνουντες*, means to share or have a share. In the context, one claims a part in the whole for oneself, or in other words, everyone takes a share. Paul is telling pastors to take a share in God’s people. The people’s needs become the pastors’ needs. This is true sympathy and care for those in need. This kind of sharing is to be directed toward those in the church body as it was in the early church; “All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.”²³⁶

Eleventh, Paul calls transformed pastors to rejoice and mourn at the appropriate times. Paul instructs pastors in verse fifteen to rejoice, *χαιροπτων*. Paul uses the participle with an infinitive that is preceded by a preposition, *χαρειν*, rejoice with those who rejoice. The same is true with the next phrase mourn with those who mourn, *κλαιειν μετα κλαιοντων*. The Greek word *κλαιοντων* means to weep, cry, or shed tears as an expression of any feeling of sadness, care, or anxiety.²³⁷

Twelfth, in Romans 12:16, Paul calls transformed pastors to live in harmony and peace with everyone. The word Paul uses for harmony, *φπονουντες*, is a present participle, meaning to set one’s mind on and be intent on living in harmony with one another. Verse 16 teaches that living in peace and harmony includes keeping pride and conceit in check. The Greek word for pride, *υψηλα*, literally means a high mountain.²³⁸ Paul’s usage here is figurative, meaning exalted, proud, or haughty. Pride should be interpreted as striving after things that are (too) high or being too ambitious,

²³⁵ Ac. 2:44.

²³⁶ Ac. 4:32.

²³⁷ Ibid., 434.

²³⁸ Arndt and Gingrich, 857.

τα υψνλα φπονουντες.²³⁹ The Greek word for conceited, φρονιμοι, means sensible, thoughtful, prudent, or wise. Used in Romans 12:16, μη γινεσθε φρονιμοι παρ εαυτοις, the word has the opposite meaning, wise in your own estimation or as in relying on your own wisdom.²⁴⁰

Living in harmony and peace with everyone includes fellow Christians and the world as Paul teaches in Romans 12:18; “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”²⁴¹ The Greek word for peace is ειρηνευοντες which could mean to reconcile, directed to those who are quarreling.²⁴² The word could also mean keep peace, to cultivate peace or harmony.²⁴³ In the context of verse eighteen, this second meaning is most likely. Paul’s message is

το εξ υμων μετα παντων ανθρωπων ειρηνευοντες, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Pastors can seldom depend on the world to make the first step toward peace; they must be the example of the peace of God. Pastors are to make the first step toward peace.

Thirteenth, Paul calls transformed pastors to overcome evil with good. Pastors must always strive to react to evil and good in a righteous way. Paul qualifies this with, “Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.”²⁴⁴ He uses the Greek word αποδιδοντες that means to give away, give up, give out or pay.²⁴⁵ The third meaning is used here in verse 17, to render, reward or recompense. Used with the clause, κακον αντι κακου, it is translated, do not repay evil for evil. Paul uses this same word

²³⁹ Ibid., 857.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 874.

²⁴¹ Ro. 12:18.

²⁴² Arndt and Gingrich, 226.

²⁴³ Ibid., 226.

²⁴⁴ Ro. 12:17b.

²⁴⁵ Arndt and Gingrich, 89.

in Romans 17 saying, “Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.”²⁴⁶ Christian pastors are never to repay evil for evil, no matter how terrible that evil may be. Paul’s teaching echoes other biblical teaching that commands, “Do not say, ‘I’ll pay you back for this wrong!’ Wait for the Lord, and he will deliver you.”²⁴⁷ Jesus directly teaches against vengeance saying, “But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”²⁴⁸ Peter reinforces Jesus’ words teaching, “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.”²⁴⁹

Paul quotes the Old Testament to further his argument saying, “If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”²⁵⁰ He says
μη εαυτους εκδικουντες, αγαπητοι do not take vengeance/vengeance, my friends. The Greek word εκδικουντες means to place vengeance, or punishment upon someone else.²⁵¹ Paul reminds pastors that vengeance belongs to God, Εμοι εκδικνσις.²⁵² God declares in Habakkuk, “For we know him who said, ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ and again, ‘The Lord will judge his people.’ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”²⁵³

²⁴⁶ Ro. 13:7.

²⁴⁷ Ps. 20:22.

²⁴⁸ Mt. 5:39.

²⁴⁹ 1 Pt. 3:9.

²⁵⁰ Pr. 25:21-22.

²⁵¹ Arndt and Gingrich, 238.

²⁵² Ibid., 238.

²⁵³ Hb. 10:30-31.

Instead of taking vengeance, pastors should bless those who persecute them. In Romans 12:14, Paul changes his usage of participles to an imperative, the command, *εὐλογεῖτε*, to bless. Pastors are commanded by God to bless those who persecute them. Paul adds that they are to bless and not curse anyone. There are two imperatives here, bless and do not curse or curse someone, *καταρασθε*.²⁵⁴

Showing restraint instead of revenge leads to overcoming evil with the goodness that comes from God. Paul uses the Greek words *νικῶ* and *νικά* meaning to be victor, prevail, or conquer.²⁵⁵ Paul's use here is translated conquer, overcome, or vanquish.²⁵⁶ In verse twenty-one, Paul uses the phrase *ἀλλὰ νικά ἐντῷ ἀγαθῷ τὸ κακόν*, but overcome evil with good. Jesus uses this same word to describe his mission saying, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."²⁵⁷ Christian pastors are called upon by God to be those who overcome evil:

This is love from God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.²⁵⁸

The victories of pastors are the result of overcoming evil. This list of character traits and practices will help enable them to overcome and receive God's gracious reward, "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."²⁵⁹ God also promises, "To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations—He will rule them with an iron scepter;

²⁵⁴ Arndt and Gingrich, 418.

²⁵⁵ Arndt and Gingrich, 541.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 541.

²⁵⁷ Jn. 16:33.

²⁵⁸ 1 Jn. 5:3-5.

²⁵⁹ Rv. 2:7b

he will dash them to pieces like pottery—just as I have received authority from my Father.”²⁶⁰ Again God promises, “He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”²⁶¹

In reconsidering the research questions that drove this literature review, what practices do pastors identify that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministries? To what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer? Could this scripture, Romans 12:1-21, be a good example of moral Christian living? According to this portion of scripture, does prayer play a significant role in sustaining pastors’ moral integrity in their ministries?

Why list such a long order of practices to describe the moral character of pastors? The scriptures studied suggest that while prayer is only one of the many pieces of the puzzle, it is a very essential one. The key scriptures that this writer has reviewed (Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Romans 12:1-21; and 2 Corinthians 3:12-18) are intended to help pastors and their staff better understand the role of prayer in their ministries.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive study in pastors’ righteous practices, but only a beginning. Other scriptures that are recommended for further study are Romans 13-15, Ephesians 4-5, Colossians 3-4, James and 2 Timothy 2. Special attention is suggested for two particular scriptures, 1 Timothy 2:1-6 and Romans 12:1-20. The former is Paul’s specific instructions to young Timothy, in a pastor-to-pastor frame of reference. The second scripture is an excellent list of practices that will transform pastors’ lives.

²⁶⁰ Rv. 2:26-27.

²⁶¹ Rv. 21:7.

To some pastors, prayer is elusive. To others, prayer is a great mystery. To many, it is a wonderful blessing and key to a growing, close relationship with God. Kendall writes, “I doubt there is a greater mystery in the Bible than the subject of prayer. But the old saying ‘Prayer changes things’ is true. Prayer makes things happen. So when you ask God to act for others, you are doing them a favor that cannot be measured here below.”²⁶²

Can prayer be understood by leading pastors as an essential ingredient in their ministry? Can prayer have an effect on the moral integrity of pastors’ lives? To what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer? To understand this, pastors must have a foundational understanding of prayer, the dignity and humility found in this privilege of speaking with God. Kendall continues much later in his book in describing the beauty of prayer:

Why pray? It is sheer obedience to God’s Word...God who ordained the end equally ordained the means to the end. The same God who said, “I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come: (Isa. 46:10), also said, ‘Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know,’” (Jer. 33:3)...Yes, prayer is an unfathomable mystery, but only fools would refuse to pray because they cannot figure things out in advance...Prayer is for *us*, not God; it keeps us humbled. Perhaps the greatest thing that can be said about prayer is that it keeps us humbled. It puts us on our knees, remembering who God is. “God is in heaven and you are on earth,” (Ecc.es.5:2)...God chose to honor our obedience. Logic says that since He knows our need and promised to supply it, there is no need to pray. God doesn’t honor our logic; He honors our obedience. The truth is, “You do not have, because you do not ask God” (James 4:2)...God knows our need but dignifies us by letting our praying make a difference. *Prayer changes things*. God gives us the privilege of changing things. We can have a hand in diverting a disaster. We can have a hand in moving God’s heart. As Jacob said when he realized he was wrestling with God, “I will not let you go unless you bless me” (Gen. 32:26)...Because God promises to answer prayer, His honor is at stake. His integrity is at stake. His Word is at stake...It is we who need this thing called prayer, not God.²⁶³

²⁶² Kendall, 21.

²⁶³ Ibid., 185-186.

JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE

In *Paradise Lost*, John Milton recreates in poetical form the story of man's disobedience to God and his loss of paradise from in Genesis 3. In Books I and II, Milton discusses the role Satan has in the fall as the serpent. Satan consults with his demons about whether they should retake Heaven or not. In Book III, as Satan is flying toward the earth to tempt mankind, God speaks to his Son, saying that his grace will be offered to save man:

Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls deceiv'd
By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in Mercy and Justice both,
Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glorie excel,
But Mercy first and last shall brightest shine.
Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious, in him all his Father shon
Substantially express'd, and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appeard,
Love with end, and without measure Grace,
Which uttering thus he to his Father spake.
O Father, gracious was the word which clos'd
Thy Sovran sentence, that Man should find grace;²⁶⁴

Milton assures readers that mankind will find grace, like Adam and Eve found before God sent them out of the garden, and God in Heaven alone gives this grace. When Book XI begins, the Son of God intercedes for Adam and Eve by presenting their prayers to the Father. God forgives them, but Adam and Eve cannot remain in the garden because of their sin. Therefore, God sends the angel Michael and a band of Cherubim to cast them

²⁶⁴ John Milton, *Great Books of the Western World, English Minor Poems: Paradise Lost, Samson Agonistes, and Areopagitica*, vol. 32, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins (Chicago, IL: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1952), 138.

out of the garden and then guard the garden with a flaming sword. Milton records the Savior's pleas to the Father on behalf of Adam and Eve saying,

Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood
 Praying, for from the Mercie-seat above
 Prevenient Grace decending had remov'd
 The stonie from their hearts, and made new flesh
 Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breath'd
 Unutterable, which the spirit of prayer...
 To Heav'n their prayers
 Flew up, nor missd the way, by envious windes
 Blow'n vagabond or frustrate: in they passd
 Dimentionless through heav'nly dores; then clad
 With incense, where the Golden Altar fum'd...
 From thy implanted Grace in Man, these Sighs
 And Prayers, which in this Golden Censer, mixt
 With Incense, I thy Priest before thee bring,
 Fruits of more pleasing savour from the seed
 Sow'n with contrition in his heart, then those
 Which his own hand manuring all the Trees
 Of Paradise could have produc't, ere fall'n
 From innocence. Now therefore bend thine eare
 To supplication, heare his sighs though mute;
 Unskilful with what words to pray, let mee
 Interpret for him, mee his Advocate
 And propitiation, all his works on mee
 Good or not good ingraft, my Merit those
 Shall perfet, and for these my Death shall pay.²⁶⁵

According to Milton, Christ paid the price for sin by his death on the cross, "Shall perfet, and for these my Death shall pay."²⁶⁶ Milton's poetry in *Paradise Lost* and its sequel *Paradise Regained* recorded man's need for God's justification and sanctification. He and other authors through the centuries have revealed people's need for salvation that only comes from God. The blessings of salvation through justification, sanctification, and glorification are essential for all mankind to experience the love of God as scripture teaches, "But if anyone does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 300.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 300.

Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”²⁶⁷ The Greek word, ἱλασμός, means “expiation” or “propitiation.”²⁶⁸ Milton uses propitiation saying, “And propitiation, all his works on [me]” First John 4:10 expresses this concept too; “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice (ἱλασμός) for our sins.”²⁶⁹ Christ now is the one who pleads to the Father in our defense. He is our advocate, our παρακλητον, our paraclete, the righteous one who intercedes for us. Christ is our helper, our intercessor.²⁷⁰ God called Christ to assist us.

The Theology of Justification

How does justification influence the prayer life of pastors and how does it help connect their prayer lives to their moral integrity? Does justification help describe the pastors’ prayer lives? Would the theology of justification help to determine the ideal prayer lives of pastors? Luke teaches in Acts that, “Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.”²⁷¹ Paul used this word regularly throughout his letters teaching in Romans, “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”²⁷² Again in Romans, Paul says, “Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was

²⁶⁷ 1 Jn. 2:2.

²⁶⁸ Arndt and Gingrich, 376.

²⁶⁹ 1 Jn. 4:10.

²⁷⁰ Arndt and Gingrich, 624.

²⁷¹ Ac. 13:38-39.

²⁷² Ro. 5:1.

justification that brings life for all men.”²⁷³ In Galatians, Paul also teaches, “So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.”²⁷⁴

The Greek word for justification that is used in all of these verses is δικαιοω. The first meaning of this word is to show justice, do justice to someone.²⁷⁵ A good example of this first meaning is found in the Old Testament, “...learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed.”²⁷⁶ The third meaning of this word is used in the four verses listed in the previous paragraph. Arndt and Gingrich say, “Paul uses the word almost exclusively of God’s judgment, especially of men, be acquitted, be pronounced and treated as righteous and thereby become righteous, receive the divine gift of righteousness, as a theological technical term be justified.”²⁷⁷ In Romans 5:17, this word is used as a noun, but in the other three verses Paul uses it as a first aorist passive verb. This grammatical usage is significant because the action here is not a human’s action; people cannot justify themselves in any way. This use of first aorist passive is described as “theological passive,” according to Chapell who explains,

The biblical writers are so open and direct in speaking of God’s actions for us and for our salvation, that it may come as a surprise to students of New Testament Greek that sometimes God’s sovereign grace is hidden in grammatical expressions that do not contain the name of God at all. This is the case with the construction Max Zerwick has called the “theological passive.” Jewish reticence about speaking of God directly show up quite often in Jesus’ use of the future passive indicative—perhaps as a kind of understatement for rhetorical effect. There are four classic examples in the Beatitudes, where Jesus says for those he pronounces “blessed” that “they will be comforted” (Matt. 5:4), “they will be filled” (5:6), “they will be shown mercy” (5:7), and “they will be called children of God” (5:9). The meaning is that *God* will comfort them, fill them, show them mercy, and call them his children. In a promise of answered prayer, Jesus says,

²⁷³ Ro. 5:18.

²⁷⁴ Gal. 3:24.

²⁷⁵ Arndt and Gingrich, 196.

²⁷⁶ Is. 1:17a.

²⁷⁷ Arndt and Gingrich, 196.

“Ask and it will be given you...knock and it will be opened...” (Luke 11:9). Clearly, *God* is the One who gives and who opens the door.²⁷⁸

Acts 13:38-39, Romans 5:1, Romans 5:18, and Galatians 3:24 use the theological passive. While Paul mentions God directly, he also uses the first aorist passive saying, is justified, have been justified and might be justified. God alone initiates the justification through Jesus Christ. For example, when Paul writes, “have been justified” in Romans 5:1, he uses the Greek as an aorist participle, indicating a completed action. Therefore, when a person has faith, God’s sovereign grace has justified them once and for all.

Chapell speaks of two levels of justification:

At one level—of past significance—this is a marvelous statement of how Christ’s sacrifice was first applied to us by faith when we became Christians. Because we had faith that Christ paid the penalty for our sin by his death on the cross, we received the benefit of his righteous fulfillment of the Law applied to us. God accounted us as just and righteous in his sight through Christ’s work and not our own. This message of our past justification by faith alone in Christ alone is clearly spelled out here and elsewhere (e.g. Rom. 4:23-25; Eph. 2:8-9; Gal. 3:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:24). Still, there is another level—a present, daily one—at which this union by faith operates. We have entry into a justified relationship with God through faith in Christ’s work, but Paul does not perceive the atoning work of Jesus as exhausting its benefits when we were justified. The resultant union we have with Christ by faith also enables us to continue to live as God desires now.²⁷⁹

By faith in Jesus Christ, pastors have been made right with God once and for all. Their justification is completed. Therefore, God has provided the state of justification, and he also provides for pastors to continue living in his justification by faith in what God has done, not in what they have done.

It is impossible for people to justify themselves. The first blessing of salvation is God’s justification whereby God relieves people from the guilt of their sin as Paul

²⁷⁹ Bryan Chapell, *Holiness by Grace: Delighting in the Joy that is Our Strength* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), p. 51-52.

explains, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”²⁸⁰

People can only offer God their sinful state. All of the redemptive gifts come from God alone. H. D. McDonald describes the theology of justification as being “the divine heart of the Gospel and the Gospel for the human heart.”²⁸¹ McDonald writes a fine definition of justification:

Justification is that judicial act of God’s free mercy whereby he pronounces guiltless those sinners condemned under the law, constitutes them as actually righteous, once and for all, in the imputed righteousness of Christ—on the grounds of His atoning work, by grace, through faith alone apart from works—and assures them of a full pardon, acceptance in His sight, adoption as sons, and heirs of eternal life, and the present gift of the Holy Spirit; and such as are brought into this new relation and standing are by the power of this same Spirit, enabled to perform good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk therein. Yet, such works performed, as well as the faith out of which they spring, make no contribution to the soul’s justification, but they are to be regarded as declarative evidences of a man’s acceptance in the sight of God.²⁸²

This theology of justification is the great mystery of God’s love for us. McDonald expounds on this thought saying,

The truth is that God sees the believing man as constituted righteous in Christ, and, accepting him “in the Beloved,” He pronounces him to be what he is—in Christ. Here is the paradox of the Gospel—a man is a sinner, yet perfect... It is not something done either *by* us or *in* us. It is what was done—once and for all—*for* us. We are justified, it is declared, “by the blood of Christ,” (Rom. 5:9) by His “righteousness,” (Rom. 5:18) by His “obedience,” (Rom. 5:19) “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 6:11)²⁸³

The nature of justification should amaze leading pastors. The grounds of justification will open the pastors’ eyes to Christ’s righteousness, which is now theirs. God attributes all these benefits to pastors because of their faith in Christ. Pastors are now

²⁸⁰ Eph. 2:8-9.

²⁸¹ H. D. McDonald, *Contemporary Evangelical Thought: Basic Christian Doctrines*. Carl F. H. Henry, ed. (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962), 213.

²⁸² Ibid., 213-214.

²⁸³ Ibid., 215.

adopted children of God, the end result of justification according to Paul who writes, “In love he predestined us to be adopted as his son through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.”²⁸⁴ McDonald further expounds the benefits of justification saying, “Such, too, have the Holy Spirit, not only as an earnest of our purchased possession, but as the One by whom our sanctification is effected and assured.”²⁸⁵

Like justification, prayer is given by the grace of God. Yancey writes, “Perhaps more accurately, God is the playwright, we are the actors. That prayer exists at all is a gift of grace, a generous invitation to participate in the future of the cosmos.”²⁸⁶ Because God justifies pastors through faith, they must come to the realization that prayer is a great gift from God and a mighty privilege. Yancey further writes,

I know Christians who yearn for God’s older style of a power-worker who topples pharaohs, flattens Jericho’s walls, and scorches the priests of Baal. I do not. I believe the kingdom now advances through grace and freedom, God’s goal all along...For a relationship between such unequal partners, prayer provides an ideal medium. Prayer is cooperation with God, a consent that opens the way for grace to work.²⁸⁷

Like justification, prayer is available to leading pastors because of God’s action alone.

God gracious gives prayer to leading pastors as a powerful spiritual tool.

The Theology of Sanctification

The moment pastors are justified by their faith, they enter the world of sanctification. Chapell explains that “Sanctification is the work of God’s grace in us that allows us to receive the benefits and power of Jesus, which in turn enable us to overcome

²⁸⁴ Eph. 1:5-6.

²⁸⁵ McDonald, 218.

²⁸⁶ Yancey, 246.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 103.

the evil that can so burden our hearts.”²⁸⁸ Murphy adds, “We begin our Christian life by faith in the Spirit who regenerates us, and live our Christian life in the Spirit who sanctifies us.”²⁸⁹ Serene Jones writes,

The doctrine of sanctification provides the convictional ground for understanding the importance of “the excellence of practices”; as sanctified believers, we are empowered to perform, in disciplined beauty, the reality of grace in our midst. Justification complements this understanding of forming grace by stressing “the freedom of practices”; when grace justifies, it sets us free to practice freely and with joy. While all Christian practices must be simultaneously marked by both views of grace, certain practices lean more toward formational “excellence” while others lean more toward “freedom.” Maintaining the dynamic interplay between these two is crucial for a healthy community of faith.²⁹⁰

The Greek word, *αγιασμος*, means holiness, consecration or sanctification. It is often used in a moral sense for a process or its result (the state of being made holy).²⁹¹ Sanctification means that a person has been given moral purity that only comes from God. In this context, how have pastors become pure and for what length of time?

Two scriptures that help illuminate this word are Hebrews 13:11-12 and Ephesians 5:25-27. These scriptures read:

The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.²⁹²

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.²⁹³

²⁸⁸ Chapell, 41.

²⁸⁹ Murphy, 111.

²⁹⁰ Serene Jones, *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, ed. Miroslov Volf and Dorothy C. Bass (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 55.

²⁹¹ Arndt and Gingrich, 9.

²⁹² Heb. 13:11-12.

²⁹³ Eph. 5:25-27.

The words for the people and the church that God made holy are expressed in the Greek as first aorist active subjunctives. The subjunctive mood indicates that this is a self-evident truth from God. The first aorist active often indicates that this action was done “once-for-all” and is a completed action but not always. The contexts of Hebrews 13:11-12 and Ephesians 5:25-27; however, point their readers to conclude that the action is completed. Jesus has “once and for all” made his people holy through his own blood, and he has “once and for all” made his church holy and blameless.

Mounce warns against always considering the aorist tense to be indicating a “once-for-all” idea saying,

The aorist tense has often been mishandled by both scholars and preachers. Aorist verbs too frequently are said to denote once-for-all action when the text has no such intention...we should not go to the other extreme and fail to see that in some contexts the aorist does denote once-for-all action, not merely because the verb is an aorist but because of the context.²⁹⁴

“once-for-all.” Romans 6:10-14 records Paul’s teaching that Christ “died to sin once and for all.” Pastors have been made justified by the grace of Christ and they will continue to be justified in the eyes of God, “once and for all.”

How do leading pastors enter into this Christian life and how is this life to be lived out in daily experiences? Romans 6 teaches that those who are born again in Jesus Christ also share in his victory over sin. Paul said, “We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?”²⁹⁵ Mounce expounds upon Paul’s point saying,

We died to sin by being baptized into Christ, for when we were baptized into him we were crucified together with Christ. The aorist ἀπεθανομεν (“we died”) in verse 2, therefore, denotes our once-for-all death to sin at our conversion. When we died with Christ the power of sin was broken decisively for us. This does not mean that we cannot sin any longer. Otherwise, the exhortation not to let sin reign in our lives would be superfluous (vv. 12-14). It does mean that the mastery,

²⁹⁴ William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993), 197.

²⁹⁵ Rom. 6:2.

dominion, and lordship of sin has been broken in a decisive way for believers. Since Christ conquered sin at his death, and since we died with Christ, we now share in his victory over sin. “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, so that you obey its desires” (v. 12).²⁹⁶

Since they have died to sin, how do leading pastors live obedient lives in Christ and make this a daily experience? Where does the hope in obedience come from? Chapell asks a similar question,

How do we encourage striving after godliness with depriving ourselves of the holy joy for which our hearts long? The answer is found in the following scripture. “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”²⁹⁷

Murphy describes this obedient life as a normal life, “This sanctified life I call the Normal Christian Life. God wants us to live a holy life. The enemy resists our efforts to comply. Thus the normal Christian life is lived in the context of on-going spiritual warfare.”²⁹⁸ Chapell expounds on the concept, explaining,

God alone can provide our right standing with him. And he does this only through what Christ accomplished for us. Biblical standards meant for our good do not establish our relationship with God any more than a parent’s rules establish his relationship with a child. Rules are an expression of love, but they do not establish love... We are united to God not on the basis of our good deeds but on the basis of faith in what he has done for us in Christ. Even this faith is not a work of merit but a gift of God’s grace, so that we can be assured that our relationship with God does not lie in our human performance or resolve (cf. Eph. 2:8-9). Thus, to find release from the bondage and burden of sin, and to access the joy that is the strength of the Christian life, we must believe that we can rely entirely on our union with Christ to make us right with God... But what is the nature of this union, and how does it enable us to grow in godliness? Paul shows in Galatians how we are united to Christ in his death, in his life, and by our faith, in order to demonstrate how God enables us to live more and more as he intends, and to escape the entanglements of our sin. This process of becoming more Christ-like in heart and conduct theologians call sanctification.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁶ Mounce, 197.

²⁹⁷ Chapell, 40.

²⁹⁸ Murphy, 61.

²⁹⁹ Chapell, 40-41.

Both Murray and Chapell speak of sanctification as being definitive and progressive. Because God provides initial and continuing sanctification, pastors can have confidence in their security in Christ. That confidence flows from what Christ has done for them in their faith. Leading pastors can pass this confidence on to their staff. Murray sets the stage by describing definitive sanctification. He writes,

There are various ways in which it can be characterized. The specific and distinguishing action of each person of the godhead at the inception of the state of salvation contributes to the decisive change which this sanctification denotes, and not only contributes to but insures the decisive nature of the change itself. But perhaps the most significant aspect of New Testament teaching and the aspect requiring particular emphasis is that a believer is one called by the Father into the fellowship of his Son. Union with Christ is the pivot on which the doctrine turns, specifically union with Him in the meaning of His death and the power of His resurrection.³⁰⁰

Paul addresses the issue in 1 Corinthians saying, “He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.”³⁰¹ Chapell writes, “Because of definitive sanctification, I get credit for what I did not, do not, and cannot earn; this blessing comes through my union with the life of the One who fulfilled all God’s righteous standards in my behalf. Even now he allows me to share his identity.”³⁰²

Sanctification comes through believers’ union with Christ. The Apostle Paul describes union with Christ in Romans 6,

We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ

³⁰⁰ Murray, 228.

³⁰¹ 1 Co. 1:8.

³⁰² Chapell, 48.

was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.³⁰³

Pastors have died in Christ; therefore, they have died to sin. Since they have died to sin and now are alive in Christ Jesus, there is no danger of abusing the grace of God because “The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.”³⁰⁴

Often, Christians struggle to understand the nature of their union with Christ.

Chapell clarifies saying,

Our union with Christ provides resources for continuance in the Christian life, which is also to be lived by faith. What is this life of faith in which those who have union with Christ now live? It is the experience of godly living that is built upon (or springs from) the union with Christ that faith grasps. This is a vital concept to understand if we are to grow in holiness as God intends. Most Christians instinctively try to validate, or ground, our justification in our sanctification (i.e., we instinctively try to keep our justification in effect by our good behavior).³⁰⁵

Chapell reveals the danger that many Christian pastors have found themselves in throughout their ministries. They come to believe that their works will justify them before the Father. This is merely fundamentalism or legalism; it is not biblical nor is it spiritually healthy. Murray writes of the great value of correctly understanding definitive sanctification,

No datum is of more basic importance than the definitive breach with sin and commitment to holiness secured by identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. And this relation of the believer to Christ's death and resurrection is introduced by the Apostle not in reference to justification but to deliverance from the power, defilement, and love of sin. The breach with sin and the newness of life are as definitive as were the death and resurrection of Christ. Christ in His death and resurrection broke the power of sin, triumphed over the prince of darkness, executed judgment upon this world, and by this victory delivered all those who are united to Him. Believers are partakers with Him in these triumphal achievements.³⁰⁶

³⁰³ Rom. 6:2-4.

³⁰⁴ Rom. 6:10.

³⁰⁵ Chapell, 53.

³⁰⁶ Murray, 229.

Do pastors identify definitive sanctification as a practice that sustains the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministries? God has placed pastors in their holy positions. Could this knowledge make them effective pastors of prayer?

While definitive sanctification establishes the righteous position with Christ and union with Him, progressive sanctification is the daily continuation of a relationship with Christ. God's sanctification continues throughout the lives and ministries of pastors. Chapell writes,

Our holy position or status (i.e., our definitive or positional sanctification) that results from our union with Christ is not the end of God's purpose in our lives. While it is great to know that my spiritual value is not determined by my legal performance, still I want to progress in my spiritual life. All sincere Christians delight to know that positional sanctification is ours, but we still desire progressive sanctification. How do I make progress in godliness as I live out what God intends for me with my new identity? The point being made by the pastor who connected helplessness to worthlessness—and by Paul in Galatians—is that faith in our union with Christ is the key to overcoming sin in our lives.³⁰⁷

God's progressive sanctification is seen in pastors' growth in Christ-like character, in their increasing love for God and His people, and in the fruit of the Spirit that continues to grow in their daily lives. The ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in pastors' lives makes them more and more like Christ. God and their congregants should see and experience pastors' growth in "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control"³⁰⁸ through the years. Justification tells pastors that they have been saved from their sins (Rom. 5:18).³⁰⁹ Sanctification tells pastors that they are being saved from the power of sin (1 Cor. 1:18)³¹⁰ so that they may live the normal

³⁰⁷ Chapell, 51.

³⁰⁸ Gal. 5:22.

³⁰⁹ Rom. 5:18.

³¹⁰ 1 Cor. 1:18.

Christian life. Pastors begin living larger lives in Christ as they battle sin daily. Thus Christian pastors persevere.

Arnold Dallimore records George Whitefield's teaching on God's wonderful work in our justification and sanctification. Whitefield writes,

He saw me from all eternity; He gave me being; He called me in time; He has freely justified me through faith in His blood; He has in part sanctified me by His Spirit; He will preserve me underneath His everlasting arms till time is no more...I stand here, not in my own, but His robes; and though I deserve nothing as a debt, yet I know He will give me a reward of grace, and recompence me for what He has done in me and by me, as though I had done it by my own power. Oh, how ought this to excite our zeal and love for the holy Jesus!...It is sweet to know and preach that Christ justifies the ungodly, and that all truly good works are not so much as partly the cause, but the *effect* of our justification before God...I need not fear the sight of sin when I have a perfect, everlasting righteousness wrought out for me by...Christ Jesus. The riches of His free grace cause me daily to triumph over all the temptations of the wicked one...The doctrines of our election, and free justification in Christ Jesus are daily more and more pressed upon my heart. They fill my soul with a holy fire and afford me great confidence in God my Saviour...Nothing but the doctrines of the Reformation can do this. All others leave freewill in man and make him, in part at least, a Saviour to himself...Man is nothing: he hath a free will to go to hell, but none to go to heaven, till God worketh in him the will and to do of His good pleasure...Oh, the excellency of the doctrine of election and of the saints' final perseverance!³¹¹

What practices do pastors identify that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministry? To what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer? How do pastors sustain "a holy fire" and great confidence throughout their ministries? The way leading pastors practice the means of grace will make a great difference in their relationship with God and their staff. If leading pastors are reading the Bible, praying, serving, and seeking God because they think these works will save them or earn God's affection, then they make Jesus ineffective in their lives. Instead, they are practicing legalism or fundamentalism. But if pastors practice these Christian disciplines because of

³¹¹ Arnold A. Dallimore, *George Whitefield, The Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth-Century Revival*, Vol. 1, 5t ed. (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1989), 406-407.

faith in God, the zeal from the Spirit and an understanding of their justified state, God works through the disciplines.

If leading pastors are halfheartedly practicing these Christian disciplines and think that they have no effect or do not even matter, they nullify Christ's work. The disciplines instead become a license, and sin will sneak into their lives. Murray reminds the reader that the Holy Spirit is the one who makes progressive sanctification work in pastors' lives. God is the gift giver, and the Holy Spirit is the agent.

It is to God the Father that Jesus addressed the intercession: "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17) It is the Holy Spirit Who is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ (Eph. 1:17). It is by the Spirit we put to death the deeds of the body (Rom. 8:13). The virtues which are both the marks and fruits of sanctification are the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22)...our working is not dispensed with or made superfluous because God works; God's working is not suspended because we work. There is the correlation and conjunction of both. The fact that God works in us is the encouragement and incentive to our working. Indeed, God's working is the energizing cause of our working both in willing and doing.³¹²

Chapell elaborates on this enlightening thought saying,

The difference that the knowledge of our unchanging status makes in our lives can be demonstrated through the way many Christians regularly practice the means of grace (i.e., *prayer*; reading, hearing, and meditating on *Scripture*; and seeking God in the *communion* of believers through fellowship, worship, seeking godly counsel, and participation in the sacraments). Many people feel that these means of grace are the instruments by which we secure God's love even on a daily basis. In our humanity it is natural to think in terms of such a barter system of love, but such thinking creates the impression that these Christian disciplines are not means *of* grace but means *to* grace.³¹³

Leading pastors may find themselves in this very situation. If pastors have the wrong understanding of how God has called and saved them, then their practice of Christian disciplines will be marred. The disciplines' beauty will be gone if pastors use

³¹² Murray, 232-233.

³¹³ Chapell, 56.

them as a barter system. How and in what spirit do leading pastors practice these disciplines? What gives them “the fire” or the zeal to live a life in the means of grace? instant pastors make such a confession, they will find themselves in a war against Satan.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE AND THE LEADING PASTOR

One of the best known scriptures dealing with spiritual warfare is Ephesians 6:10-20. Paul writes about warfare between the power of God and the power of Satan in the life of Christians. Timothy Chester writes concerning Ephesians 6,

Perhaps the most prominent New Testament passage on spiritual warfare is Ephesians 6:10-20. Paul calls on the Ephesians to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests (18). But this call to prayer is set in the context of a spiritual battle. In the light of this struggle we are to equip ourselves with the armor of God (13-17).³¹⁴

How do leading pastors put this spiritual truth found in Ephesians 6 into practice?

Nicodem encourages Christians to pray “on the belt of truth,” “the breastplate of righteousness,” “the soldier’s shoes of the gospel,” “the Roman soldier’s shield that is the believer’s faith,” “the helmet of salvation,” and “the sword of the Spirit.”³¹⁵ This type of practical teaching encourages leading pastors to apply the Christian armor to their everyday lives. Concerning the armor of God, John Calvin wrote,

The Lord offers to us arms for repelling every kind of attack. It remains for us to apply them to use, and not leave them hanging on the wall. To quicken our vigilance, he reminds us that we must not only engage in open warfare, but that we have a crafty and insidious foe to encounter, who frequently lies in ambush; for such is the import of the apostle’s phrase, the wiles (τας μεθοδευιας) of the devil.³¹⁶

³¹⁴ Tim Chester, *The Message of Prayer, Approaching the Throne of Grace* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 220

³¹⁵ Nicodem, 45-46.

³¹⁶ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), 334-335.

Paul writes to the church in Ephesus where Christians struggled against the evils of idolatry. One of the seven ancient wonders of the world, the Temple of Artemis sat just outside their city. Lincoln gives helpful background for idolatry from Paul's other letters saying,

The same issues—believers' identity, their relation to Christ and to the resources of power in him and in God, their need both to appropriate salvation from God and to live a righteous life in the world, the cosmic opposition to God's purposes for human well-being—appear again but now under new imagery. Through their recapitulation in this guise, these leading themes of the letter are magnified.³¹⁷

Barth notes, "The logic of the argument is this: if these arms are spiritual, and if they are sufficient for God and Jesus Christ—they will certainly be good enough for the saints."³¹⁸ Who will win in the end, Christian pastors who are in Christ or Satan? The obvious answer is Christian pastors who depend upon the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome the sin in their lives.

Chapell writes how God carefully and completely cares for his pastors:

Because I am a new creature in Christ Jesus, the Spirit of God indwells me and I have the means of grace available to me by which the spirit teaches, trains, and "rewires" me so that I can mature in knowledge and righteousness. ...In a similar way, the Spirit changes our hearts in a way that our own efforts cannot achieve. When the spirit supernaturally reorients our hearts to love and obey, we have the inclination and power to follow him. Thus, spiritual change is more than a matter of the practice of spiritual disciplines, or even of resolving to act on the reality of our union with Christ. We progress in sanctification as we humbly and prayerfully depend upon the Holy Spirit to mature our wills and transform our affections so that we stay on the course that he has designed.³¹⁹

Leading pastors have God's gift, Holy Spirit to strengthen them. They have the confidence that power over sin does not come from their efforts or mental resolve. As

³¹⁷ Andrew T. Lincoln, *Word Biblical Commentary*, Vol. 42, *Ephesians* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990), 433.

³¹⁸ Markus Barth, *Ephesians, Translation and Commentary on Chapters 4-6* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1974), 784.

³¹⁹ Chapell, 61.

Chapell writes, “Through Christ a true supernatural force is at work in us that makes otherwise impossible changes occur. By faith we exercise this resource of God’s grace also.”³²⁰ Pastors’ new lives in Christ bring about a new status, a new power, a new passion, and a new character. They become a new creation, a new creature in Christ Jesus according to 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Paul reminded his readers repeatedly of the power of the Holy Spirit that is available to them. In Galatians, Paul was greatly puzzled that the Galatian church would forget this power. In Ephesians, Paul prayed that they would always realize and use this power that only comes from God; “Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human efforts?”³²¹ Paul records two prayers that he prays for Christians in Ephesus,

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.³²²

And in Ephesians 3,

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may

³²⁰ Ibid., 60.

³²¹ Gal. 3:2b-3.

³²² Eph. 1:15-23.

strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever? Amen.³²³

The Holy Spirit gave Paul great vision in these two prayers that set the stage for the whole epistle to the Ephesians, especially the Christian armor and prayer that accompanies it. Chester writes, “If God knows all things, even the thoughts of our hearts, what do we hope to communicate in prayer? If God ordains all events as part of an eternal plan, what do we hope to achieve through prayer? If God is sovereign why pray at all?”³²⁴ Paul’s answers Chester’s honest questions because his prayer simply follows his theology. In the verse preceding Paul’s first prayer, he describes the great work of God in each pastor’s life. Chester writes, “Paul’s prayer for the Ephesian believers in Ephesians 1:15-19 is set in the context of his great exposition of God’s sovereignty in 1:3-14. God’s purposes for Christians began before the foundation of the earth and will extend into the eternal future.”³²⁵

Paul begins the prayer in Ephesians 1:15-23 pointing out the Ephesians’ faith in God. Next Paul points to their love for all the saints. Then he reminds them that they are not blind but can see the hope, the riches, and the power they have in Christ. The same power that is evident in heaven is available to them in their lives. This is a prayer of unity and a reminder of the sovereignty of God. All the church at Ephesus has, even the answers to their prayers, was established before the foundation of the earth was created.

³²³ Eph. 3:14-21.

³²⁴ Chester, 246.

³²⁵ Ibid., 246-247.

Because of God's sovereign kindness, the Ephesian believers can overcome this world together as Jews and Greeks. God knows all things, ordains all things, and is sovereign. Chester concludes, "In this prayer Paul prays for wisdom, revelation, knowledge and enlightenment, which come through the work of *the Spirit* within us (17-18)."³²⁶

In his second prayer, Ephesians 3:14-21, Paul prays for unity and power. Chester elaborates on this, "The goal of this prayer is that Christ might dwell in, or fill, his people and that they might grasp the extraordinary extent of his love. The oxymorons of the prayer give it rhetorical power. Paul prays that we might know what cannot be known and that the finite might be filled with the infinite."³²⁷ Paul's prayer would have encouraged the Christians in Ephesus whenever they felt discouraged or overwhelmed. While they might not fully comprehend the love and fullness of God on this earth, pastors must realize that the immeasurable and incomprehensible power of God is the secret to their success. Paul's prayer is that pastors or any Christian throughout the ages will be able to grasp the power and love that comes from God. In Christian unity, these two become available to everyone in Christ.

The unity and power of God two of the major themes of these prayers. Paul immediately goes on to describe unity in the fourth chapter. He portrays the moral lives of pastors and all Christians in the fifth and sixth chapters in the context of relationships between husband and wives, children and parents, and slaves and masters. Paul concludes this theme of unity and power with the armor of God or the Christian armor in Ephesians 6:10-20.

³²⁶ Ibid., 247.

³²⁷ Ibid., 189.

Paul uses three imperatives in the Christian armor, commanding Christians in Ephesus and pastors everywhere in verse ten “to be strong in the Lord,” in verse thirteen “to take up the full armor of God,” and in verse fourteen to “stand firm.”

The first imperative is the Greek word *ενδυναμουσθε* from the root word *ενδυναμω* and has the first meaning of strengthening someone or something.³²⁸ The second meaning, used in 6:10, has a religious and moral nuance, meaning to grow strong in faith, as in Romans 4:20. In Ephesians 6:10, *ενδυναμουσθε* means to grow strong in the Lord.³²⁹ Paul uses a rare word here, but it’s meaning is well understood. Calvin writes, “If the Lord aids us by his mighty power, we have no reason to shrink from the combat.”³³⁰ Lincoln writes,

The imperative to be strong with its indication of the resources for strength—in the Lord and his power—recalls the stress on the availability for believers of God’s power manifested in Christ’ resurrection and exaltation, the relating of that power of Paul’s apostleship, the connection of believers’ strengthening with the Spirit, and the praise of God’s power at work among believers.³³¹

This victory has already been achieved in Christ, but there is still a struggle here on earth between redeemed pastors and Satan.

The second imperative is the Greek word *ενδυσασθε* from the root word, *ενδυω*. has the first meaning to dress, clothe someone.³³² The second meaning is used in 6:11, to clothe oneself in, put on, wear something.³³³ It is translated, “put on the whole armor of God.”

³²⁸ Arndt and Gingrich, 263.

³²⁹ Ibid., 263.

³³⁰ Calvin, 334.

³³¹ Lincoln, 438.

³³² Arndt and Gingrich, 263.

³³³ Ibid., 263.

The third imperative is the Greek word *στητε* from the root word *ιστημι*, meaning to set, place, bring, allow to come to someone.³³⁴ In 6:14 it means to stand firm, hold one's ground in battle.³³⁵ The root word occurs in 6:11 and 6:13 as an infinitive. Lincoln gives some insight on how this word is used in these verses, "The exhortation about the need to 'stand' is reiterated ...but this time it takes the form of an imperative. The verb has the same force throughout, suggesting the stance of the soldier in combat, standing firm, resisting, and prevailing against the enemy"³³⁶ A good example of this stance is Epaphras' prayer for the Colossian church, found in Colossians 4:12. Epaphras prays that the Colossian Christians will "stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured."³³⁷ In Ephesians 6:14, the arming of Christian soldiers has already taken place. Now the soldiers need to "stand firm"³³⁸ and hold their ground. Standing firm must follow the arming.

Pastors must always remember that this whole armor comes from God, and the armor was originally God's. Barth reflects upon the significance of the armor's divine origin saying,

The allusions made to OT passages show that all these weapons are used and tested by God himself, and that they are first entrusted to one person on earth: the Messiah. Isaiah 11:2-5 avers that through the spirit, or together with the Spirit, a special armament is given to God's Anointed One: the sword of the word and the girdle of righteousness. Ephesians 6 goes beyond the OT: through the mediation of the Messiah and the Spirit, God's weapons are now transferred to all the saints. The logic of the argument is this: if these arms are spiritual, and if they are sufficient for God and Jesus Christ—they will certainly be good enough for the saints.³³⁹

³³⁴ Ibid., 382.

³³⁵ Ibid., 383.

³³⁶ Lincoln, 447.

³³⁷ Col.4:20.

³³⁸ Eph. 6:14.

³³⁹ Markus Barth, *Ephesians, Translation and Commentary on Chapter 4-6* (New York, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1974), 784.

Paul uses the same metaphors in his other letters. In 1 Thessalonians 5:8 he instructs the Thessalonians that their spiritual lives include, “putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.” In Galatians 3:27 he tells the Galatians, “for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 15:53-54, “For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.” Romans 13:12 and 13:14 speaks of “the armor of light” and command Christians to “clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ.” In Colossians 3:10 Paul instructs Christians to “put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” These scriptures all portray Christian pastors putting on the characteristics of God.

Pastors’ Prayers and Spiritual Warfare

What about prayer? How does prayer fit into Paul’s analogy of Christian armor? How does the Christian armor guide the prayer life of leading pastors? To what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer?

Some writers suggest that prayer is the seventh piece of armor, while most describe it as being much more. Murphy writes, “While prayer is not to be seen as an additional piece of armor, it is directly connected to all Paul has said from verses 10-17.”³⁴⁰ Clinton Arnold explains that Paul,

appears to give prayer a more prominent place than merely the seventh among a list of spiritual weapons...the author maintains a structural continuity with the foregoing delineation of the weapons by employing a participle (*proseuxomenoi*) still in dependence on the main verb ‘stand’ in verse 14... it is foundational for the deployment of all the other weapons.³⁴¹

³⁴⁰ Murphy, 412.

³⁴¹ Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 47.

O'Brien writes, "prayer itself is not identified with any weapon. The military metaphors are limited to vv. 14-17, while calling on God for strengthening is the way believers stand firm and appropriate the divine armor."³⁴² Lincoln continues this thought,

But prayer is not the seventh piece of spiritual armor as some claim...The military metaphors are limited to vv 14-17. Instead, the close link between the material on prayer and what has preceded, through the participles and διὰ, "through," underlines the spiritual nature of believers' combat.³⁴³

R. Kent Hughes paints an especially good picture of how prayer works with the armor saying,

This is the precise form of the Ephesian picture, for after the Christian warrior's armament is in place we read: "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and request. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints." Those who would engage in spiritual warfare, regardless of how well they wear truth and righteous and faith and salvation, regardless of how well they are grounded in peace, regardless of how well they wield the Word, must make prayer the first thing. The Christian soldier fights on his knees!³⁴⁴

Hughes teaches that the Christian soldier has been praying long before the battle begins as well as during it.

MacArthur puts another light on the subject of prayer and the armor by calling prayer the very spiritual air of the Christian soldier writing,

Prayer is not merely another godly weapon, as important as those weapons are. All the while that we are fighting in the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, we are to be in prayer. Prayer is the very spiritual air that the soldier of Christ breathes. It is the all-pervasive strategy in which warfare is fought.³⁴⁵

³⁴² Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 483.

³⁴³ Lincoln, 451-452.

³⁴⁴ R. Kent Hughes, *Ephesians, The Mystery of the Body of Christ*, Preaching the Word Series (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990), 249-250.

³⁴⁵ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Ephesians* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), 376-377.

He continues explaining how prayer is much more than a piece of the armor, “In the struggle with Satan, it is either pray or faint.”³⁴⁶ John Bunyan, in his book *Pilgrim’s Progress*, wrote of Christian using prayer as a weapon instead of his sword when he faced the dangers of hell itself. Bunyan narrates the event,

About the midst of this Valley, I perceived the mouth of hell to be, and it stood also hard by the wayside. Now, thought Christian, what shall I do?... he was forced to put up his sword, and betake himself to another weapon, called All-prayer (Eph. 6:18); so he cried, in my hearting, “O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul” (Psalm 116:4)...But when they were come even almost at him, he cried out with a most vehement voice, “I will walk in the strength of the Lord God.” So they gave back, and came no farther.³⁴⁷

Chapell gives light to the subject of prayer and the other Christian disciplines that pastors must practice from Ephesians 6:18-20. He gives reasons for why and how they are related to the whole Christian armor. Chapell writes, “Paul’s final instruction is not to add more armor but rather to seek to stir within us the will to use it.”³⁴⁸ Chappell also adds,

In light of the importance of the Spirit’s work to stir up new affections within us, what does spiritual warfare look like in real life? Should we practice spiritual disciplines? Yes, we should. But we should do so with the recognition that these disciplines are primarily means of polishing the armor that God has provided, so that we see his power more clearly (Rom. 13:12). Practicing these habits in order to overpower Satan by our own discipline and diligence actually makes us more spiritually vulnerable. We don the armor of God by faith, repenting of our own weaknesses and believing that each element of divine protection can resist the assaults of Satan as God has promised. And, having received the promises represented by each aspect of the armor, we relish and rely upon the love of God to stir up within us a large and loving heart for his glory and purposes. Then we act as that heart inspires and enables.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 377.

³⁴⁷ John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress, From This World to That Which is to Come; Delivered Under The Similitude of a Dream*, Hendrickson Christian Classics, 3d ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), 54.

³⁴⁸ Chapell, 150.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 155.

What kind of prayers is Paul talking about in Ephesians 6:18-20? Paul uses the Greek words προσευχη and δεησις. Paul uses these same two Greek words for prayer in Philippians 4:6-7 as well as 1 Timothy 2:1-2. Paul emphasizes his point. The first Greek word προσευχη is a general word for prayer.³⁵⁰ The second word, δεησις, is more specific in its request and is used exclusively as a prayer to God.³⁵¹

Pastors' Prayer in the Spirit

In Ephesians 6:18 the key phrase, "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions" guides leading pastors in understanding the role of prayer in their ministries. Lincoln gives some insight to the meaning of this phrase, "Praying 'in the Spirit' has reference to the Holy Spirit (cf. also Jude 20, 'Pray in the Holy Spirit') rather than to the human spirit. In Paul's thought, the Spirit is intimately involved in believer's prayers (Rom. 8:15, 16) and enables them to repeat the prayer of Jesus to the Father, 'Abba' (Gal. 4:6; Rom 8:15, 16)."³⁵²

Hughes calls this "Spirit-directed prayer."³⁵³ He writes,

How does prayer in the Spirit take place? The principal text which answers this is Romans 8:26, 27 where we are told, "the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." So we see that the Holy Spirit prays for us and also joins us in our praying, infusing his prayer into ours so that we "pray in the Spirit."³⁵⁴

Hughes continues by telling readers that two supernatural things happen to their prayers when they pray in the Spirit; "First, the Holy Spirit tells us what we ought to pray for... The second thing that praying in the Spirit provides is the energy of the Holy Spirit

³⁵⁰ Arndt and Gingrich, 720.

³⁵¹ Ibid., 171.

³⁵² Lincoln, 452.

³⁵³ Hughes, 250.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 250.

for prayer, energizing tired, even infirm bodies...to pray with power and conviction for God's work."³⁵⁵

Chapell also writes about praying in the Spirit. He states that the whole purpose for leading pastors to pray in the Spirit is to build within them the "sufficient desire to resist."³⁵⁶ He continues,

As we humbly submit our wills and desires to God's, the Spirit takes our limited wisdom and zeal as finite creatures and uses them with infinite wisdom and power to work all things together for good (cf. Rom. 8:26-38). In terms of our sanctification, the "good" the Spirit brings is accomplished by transforming us continually into Christ's likeness (Rom. 8:29)...What do we seek when praying in the Spirit for ourselves and others? Such prayer is not a plea for magical power so much as it is a prayer for the Spirit to stir up within us a greater zeal for God, an inner stirring to stand for his purposes when the enemy approaches.³⁵⁷

Calvin continues this thought of Paul "having instructed the Ephesians to put on their armor, he now enjoins them to fight by prayer. This is the true method. To call upon God is the chief exercise of faith and hope; and it is in this way that we obtain from God every blessing."³⁵⁸

MacArthur specifically speaks about praying in the Spirit:

The most important and pervasive thought Paul gives about prayer is that it should be in the Spirit. This supreme qualification for prayer has nothing to do with speaking in tongues or in some other ecstatic or dramatic manner. To pray in the Spirit is to pray in the name of Christ, to pray consistent with His nature and will. To pray in the Spirit is to pray in concert with the Spirit, who "helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groaning too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts know what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:26-27). As the "Spirit of grace and of supplication" (Zech. 12:10), the Holy Spirit continually prays for us; and for us to pray rightly is to pray as He prays, to join our petitions to His and our will to His. It is to line up our minds and desires with His mind and desires, which are consistent with the will of the Father and the Son...What do we seek when

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 250-251.

³⁵⁶ Chapell, 150.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., 150.

³⁵⁸ Calvin, 340.

praying in the Spirit for ourselves and others? Such prayer is not a plea for magical power so much as it is a prayer for the Spirit to stir up within us a greater zeal for God, an inner stirring to stand for his purposes when the enemy approaches... To be “filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18) and to walk in His leading and power is to be made able to pray in the Spirit, because our prayer will then be in harmony with His. As we submit to the Holy Spirit, obeying His Word and relying on His leading and strength, we will be drawn into close and deep fellowship with the Father and the Son.³⁵⁹

What practices do pastors identify that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministry? What are the current practices of these pastors’ prayer lives? To what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer? What would pastors today consider to be the ideal prayer life? These questions have been partially answered in this literature review. These answers will be further complimented by the following interviews and their evaluations.

The Lord has properly equipped leading pastors for their calling into ministry. He has graciously given them the privilege of prayer. With prayer’s God-given responsibility and power, leading pastors are allowed to do great things. Whether spiritual warfare is understood as being a war against pastors’ “personal demonic forces” or against the powers that are primarily impersonal, such as “social and cultural forces, structures, and institutions that bring war, violence, and oppression,” spiritual warfare is still a real war for the man of peace, the leading pastor.³⁶⁰

Chapell helpfully summarizes how prayer fits into God’s plan for this battle. First he writes,

The first purpose of this book is to make heaven’s view so clear to us that we will never stop seeing ourselves as God sees us. For if we cannot lift our eyes from an earthly perspective, then we will so focus on our weaknesses and stumbles that the race to please God will be misery. But if we remember that God is the lifter of

³⁵⁹ MacArthur, 380-381.

³⁶⁰ Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld, *Ephesians*, Believers Church Bible Commentary (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1984), 355.

our heads (Ps. 3:3), then we will raise our eyes to see the affection in his own. When we see that his regard for us does not waver, then his grace will quicken our steps, strengthen our hearts, and delight our souls to carry on.³⁶¹

Chapell also helpfully describes the role that God and the leading pastor play,

We have a Father who has already given us the power to resist all the challenges of our Adversary. We can prevail through the means and strength our Father provides, but we must still have the heart to do so. Because we need a heart that beats for him, our God bids us seek the Spirit, who opens our minds with the Word of God to the knowledge of the Savior and renews our will with a compelling love for him. By God's Spirit we desire to run with him (and to him) more than anything else in the world. His grace enables us "to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that [we] may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." (Eph. 3:18-19)³⁶²

Could it be that prayer is one of the most important practices and gifts that leading pastors have to help them finish well? May all pastors be able to repeat the closing words of Paul to the young pastor Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."³⁶³

³⁶¹ Chapell, 10.

³⁶² Ibid., 156.

³⁶³ 2 Ti. 4:7.

CHAPTER THREE

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Chapter two's literature review demonstrated that prayer plays an important role in sustaining the moral integrity necessary in the life and ministry of leading pastors. In today's postmodern world, leading pastors find themselves with significant challenges to their ministry and to their Christian integrity. The literature review revealed how essential prayer is to the doctrines of justification and sanctification in the lives of leading pastors. The sovereign Lord has graciously made prayer available to pastors, and his gift is indispensable. The literature review also revealed that there are many useful books available to the leading pastor to encourage and improve his person prayer life and the prayer lives of his staff.

The purpose of this study is to understand the role prayer plays as pastors defend themselves from the temptations and dangers of today's postmodern world. Therefore, a methodological plan using qualitative research and interviews was used. This research allowed leading pastors' beliefs and practices concerning prayer to be understood and evaluated. This chapter will outline the methodology of this qualitative research. The chapter will reveal how the methodology was used by reviewing the study's design, introducing those who participated, describing the interview process that was used, listing the main interview questions, and reviewing some of the study's limitations.

Design of Study: A Qualitative Approach

This study will be conducted through qualitative research methodologies. Sharan

B. Merriam defines qualitative research saying,

Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and experiences they have in the world...In contrast to quantitative research, which takes apart a phenomenon to examine component parts (which become the variables of the study), qualitative research can reveal how all the parts work together to form a whole.³⁶⁴

Merriam writes that there are four characteristics in understanding qualitative research.

First, the goal of qualitative research “is understanding the phenomenon of interest from the participants’ perspectives, not the researcher’s.”³⁶⁵ Second, in qualitative research the “researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis.”³⁶⁶ Third, qualitative research “usually involves fieldwork.”³⁶⁷ Fourth, qualitative research “primarily employs an inductive research strategy. That is, this type of research builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, or theories rather than tests existing theory.”³⁶⁸

Sampling Criteria

This researcher conducted six semi-structured interviews to collect the data necessary for analysis. Merriam explains the advantages to semi-structured interviewing,

For the most part however, interviewing in qualitative investigations is more open-ended and less structured. Less structured formats assume that individual respondents define the world in unique ways. Your questions thus need to be more open-ended. A less structured alternative is the semi-structured interview.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁴ Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Boss, 1998), 6.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 6.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 7.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 7.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 7.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 74.

This researcher prepared several written interview questions that were designed to allow for more questions, discussions and reflection within each interview session. These interviews were the major source of collecting the needed data for this study.

All of the data was collected through group interviews. Each of the six groups included two leading pastors. In two of the groups, other members of the pastors' church staff were present but only to observe. All of the leading pastors came from the same educational background and culture. Even though one pair of leading pastors was ministering presently in a rural area church, they each had over ten years of experience in urban areas. The other pastors also had over ten years of urban church experience. Keeping the pastors' experiences constant resulted in interview data that was more consistent as it was collected and analyzed. Choosing pastors with at least ten years experience brought out the lasting beliefs and practices in prayer of seasoned leading pastors. These experienced pastors also differentiated their beliefs and practices of from those of the contemporary world around them.

None of the pastors were retired but are still active in their churches' ministries. They all minister in the Christian Church or Church of Christ denominations. The pastors also were raised in these denominations by their parents and grandparents. All leading pastors are Caucasian though they all minister to other races in their church families.

Interview Design and Data Collection Methods

Merriam states the goal of qualitative research: "All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner."³⁷⁰ To achieve Merriam's goal, this researcher is disclosing the following information about the interview design and data collection methods. The first four interviews were conducted in an office of the

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 198.

church building where these participants serve. This researcher included men who have a long record of Christian integrity. This researcher has known several of the interviewees for many years, and reliable sources recommended the other participants. Each leading pastor teaches and preaches consistently with the Bible; they each have visibly modeled Christian prayer throughout their lives; they have also organized and programmed their ministry after God's prayer models.

Each interview lasted fifty to sixty minutes. Each interview was digitally recorded. Personal notes were also taken and then transcribed by this researcher. Copies were made of the transcriptions. Twenty-four questions guided each interview and are listed in Appendix A. A letter of gratitude and introduction of this study, two consent forms and a list of the questions was sent to each leading pastor prior to the interview. The researcher informed all the participants how long the interview might last. All participants agreed to an additional short interview if necessary.

This study also included field study and observation. Several pastors ran prayer programs in their churches and small groups; some had written material that was made available to their church family; some organized prayer rooms in their church buildings; some led staff prayer meetings. All of these practices contributed to the data collected

The questions in the interviews first focused on the personal lives of each of these leading pastors. This researcher wanted to know how each pastor was raised by their parents in the Lord. Who taught them to pray and when? What their prayer lives looked like years ago compared to now? Second, this researcher focused on the study's four research questions and the four OQs (Other Questions). Third, the questions concluded with the leading pastors' teaching and preaching on prayer, the modeling of their prayer

life for their staff members, and their organizing and programming for prayer in their ministry. The study's four research questions focused the whole interview process; what practices do pastors identify that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministry? What are the current practices of these pastors' prayer lives? To what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer? What would pastors today consider to be the ideal prayer life?

The constant comparative method of data analysis was used to analyze the data from the interviews. Merriam describes this method saying,

The constant comparative method of data analysis was developed by Glaser and Strauss as the means of developing grounded theory. A grounded theory consists of categories, properties, and hypotheses that are the conceptual links between and among the categories and properties. Because the basic strategy of the constant comparative method is compatible with the inductive, concept-building orientation of all qualitative research, the constant comparative method of data analysis has been adopted by many researchers who are not seeking to build substantive theory. The basic strategy of the method is to do just what its name implies—constantly compare.³⁷¹

The constant comparative method revealed how leading pastors can best use prayer in their ministry.

Two more interviews were conducted using the same qualitative research methodologies. This researcher first interviewed the Director of the Center for Living in a local city hospital. This director organizes and teaches the "Mind-Body Fitness" program at a hospital. The program includes practicing yoga, mind-body fusion, tai chi, pilates, self defense, and stay fit fitness. This participant did not grow up in the Christian Church or Church of Christ environment. This researcher chose the participant in order to understand the practices of Yoga and the world's view on meditation techniques, visualization, and life style recommendations. This interview was conducted in person.

³⁷¹ Ibid., 159.

The interview was digitally recorded, personal notes were taken, and copies made. The questions and its findings are in Appendix B.

The second interview was with a Navy chaplain. This chaplain is a Commander Five, grew up in the Christian Church or Church of Christ and has completed twenty-six years in the U.S. Navy as a chaplain. This interview was conducted over the telephone because he is stationed in Washington, D.C. It was digitally recorded, personal notes were taken, and copies made. The questions and its findings are in Appendix C.

The addition of these two interviews will help diversify this study, allowing the world's view, the military's view and the Christian's view to be compared. This comparison highlighted people's dependence on a power greater than or outside themselves in the practices of prayer or meditation.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the six interviews of twelve leading pastors in the Christian Church or Church of Christ in the United States of America, the western world. These interviewees grew up in a Christian home and strictly teach and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This study strictly limited itself to one race, one denomination, one region of the country, and one gender. Each pastor grew up in a Christian home and came to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior at a young age. They have never stopped living their Christian faith.

Each pastor ministers to at least one different ethnic group in their church family, but the limitation of these men's identical ethnic background still constrained the study. This study could be broadened greatly by studying all other ethnic groups together or each one individually.

This study only examined one denomination. Further study could be conducted to examine different denominational views on the role that prayer has in pastors' ministry when defending themselves in spiritual warfare.

The western world sees things much differently than the rest of the world does even when it comes to prayer. Comparing and contrasting different nationalities' and ethnicities' views on prayer could lead to limitless possibilities of further study.

The Bible teaches about so many kinds of Christian prayers, so many postures of prayer, and so many models of prayer, none of which are addressed in this study. Instead, this study limited itself.

Finally, this researcher is a pastor with over thirty-five years of experience in the ministry and may have created limitations for the study. The participants may simply have said what they thought this researcher wanted to hear. They also might not have wanted to reveal any problems in their prayer life or reveal great victories throughout their prayer life because of their humbleness in Christ.

Summary of Chapter Three

This chapter disclosed the method and order of the interviews used for this qualitative research to understand the role that prayer has in pastors' ministry when defending themselves in spiritual warfare. The study design, the role of the participants, the interview process, the interview questions, and the limitations of this study have been presented. Chapter four will carefully compare the data that was collected from the six interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

This study has focused on understanding the role that prayer has in a pastor's ministry when it comes to defending himself from the temptations and dangers in today's postmodern world. This study has been supported with a thorough Literature Review in chapter two. Twelve leading pastors were interviewed in pairs to record data about their beliefs, experiences, and practices regarding prayer. In addition, the Director of The Center for Living at a local hospital, and a Navy chaplain were interviewed for additional study (Appendix B and Appendix C). This chapter will compare the data produced in the interviews. It will observe and analyze the material through the eyes of the participants and not the researcher's. As qualitative research, the study concerns itself with the meaning people have constructed on this subject. Special attention will be given to tentative categories, properties, and hypotheses that will continually come to view throughout this chapter.

Analyzing the participants' families of origin yielded insights into their beliefs, values, and practices. Most of these participants come from strong, Christian families who prayed during the usual family gathering times, their three daily meals and bed time. Six of these participants had an even deeper prayer experience with their parents and siblings that included a weekly family devotion and prayer time. All the pastors witnessed their parents praying together and saw the evidence of a strong prayer life in

their parents. For example, many saw their father's Bible on the breakfast table every morning.

The interview questions first brought out the personal biography of each participant and then focused on their prayer practices as individuals, with their family and with their church staff. The questions then probed into how their prayer lives aided them in their every day moral lives. Eight primary research questions were used in each interview to discover their prayer practices and experiences.

RQ 1: What practices do pastors identify that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministry?

OQ 1a: How do pastors describe their own prayer life?

OQ 1b: How do pastors describe the importance of their prayer life?

OQ 1c: How do pastors judge whether they have acquired a suitable and effective prayer life?

OQ 1d: What motivation do pastors rely upon to sustain change in their prayer life?

RQ 2: What are the current practices of these pastor's prayer lives?

RQ 3: To what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer?

RQ 4: What would pastors today consider to be the ideal prayer life?

All of these participants shared strong life experiences in their prayer lives as individuals. All of them had a strong prayer life with their wives and children. Most importantly, all of these men had a close and meaningful prayer life with at least one member of their church staff in their multi-staff position. They had all struggled with what they would consider to be a proper and effective prayer life, and each participant greatly appreciated the subject and the value of the interviews.

The Participants

All of the participants were raised in a Christian home and were taught about the importance of prayer during their most formative childhood years. Some had better experiences than others, but they all currently have a close relationship with God in prayer. Each participant showed great humility when they shared their need for prayer. They all relied upon the presence and power of God in their lives. Without Him, the pastors could do nothing in his church as a leader.

Ryan was in his late thirties and has been a Christian all his life. He grew up in a strong, Christian family. His father was an elder in the Christian church during his youth, and his mother was a teacher there. Ryan has a wife and two daughters. Ryan has been in his present ministry in Missouri for one year, and he previously ministered in Georgia. Throughout his ministry experience, strong mentors and fellow staff members have helped him in his prayer ministry. He is well read on the subject of prayer and has a good library on the subject. Ryan is Dale's leading pastor. Ryan's name, like all other participants, has been changed to protect his anonymity.

Dale was in his late fifties and has also been a Christian all his life. He grew up in a Christian family in the Christian church that was almost legalistic in their beliefs and practices. His father and mother were never leaders in the church but were always active members. Dale and his wife have a son and a daughter who are grown and married. For over twenty years, he has ministered in his current position. As the administrative minister of a Christian church in Missouri, Dale is responsible for the church staff, missions, and other duties. Dale strongly believes and practices prayer with his family and staff.

Mark was in his late fifties. He was raised in a very strong Christian home and has practiced his Christian faith all his life. His father was a deacon and an elder in the Christian church while Mark was growing up. Mark's mother also taught at the church. Mark and his wife have three children who are all grown, married and have children of their own. Mark has ministered in his current position in central Illinois for over thirty-five years. Mark is known for his strong preaching abilities and is greatly respected by all of the members of his congregation. Throughout his experience, Mark's staff at times waned until he was the only minister due to various circumstances in the church. At the present time, his staff of four is very strong in their prayer times together. Mark is Paul's leading pastor.

Paul was in his early forties and was also raised in a very strong Christian home. Throughout his life, Paul's family and Christian church surrounded him with strong examples of praying Christians. His father was a leader in the church as Paul was growing up, and his mother was also active. Paul and his wife have three children. Two are still living at home, and one is in her first year of college. This is Paul's first experience in a multi-staff church setting in the Christian church. He has served at a Christian church in central Illinois for six years. Paul's prayer experiences at home and church have always been strong, especially at the present time. Paul is very close to Mark and considers him a mentor.

Jim was in his early forties and was raised in a Christian home. Throughout his childhood, prayer played an important role in his family's life. Jim's family prayed before meals and at bedtime and regularly had family devotions. His parents were active in the church and helped plant a new church in northern Illinois while Jim was still living

at home. Jim's father served for a time as an elder in the church. Jim is married and has two children at home. Jim has served at his present ministry at a Christian church in central Illinois for seven years. In his early years in the ministry, two older ministers mentored Jim. These men helped develop strong Christian leadership characteristics in Jim's life. His present staff has a close and prayerful relationship. Jim is John's leading pastor. Their relationship with each other is very strong.

John was in his early thirties and was raised in a strong Christian family as well. John's father greatly influenced him in the practice of prayer. John loved to hear his father pray at home and at church and counts those experiences as a great blessing as his family prayed together throughout his youth. John is married and has two children at home. Their prayer life at home is regular, even with their busy schedule. John and his wife spend as much time as they can together each evening in prayer for their family, friends, and the church. John greatly appreciates his experiences at his present ministry. He has ministered on staff for six years. John considers Jim as his mentor and closest friend on the staff.

Don was in his middle forties and has practiced his Christian faith since his youth. He described his family as a nominal, Christian family until he was eight years old. Then, the family began to attend a Christian church in central Illinois and follow Christ regularly. As a family, Don's parents and siblings did not pray together much, except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. Don's church influenced his prayer life more than his family. His youth ministers, teachers, and pastors taught Don by example how to pray and how to value prayer in his life. Also, Don read books on prayer during high school that encouraged him to pray. Don is married and has four adult children. He has many

concerns for his children. Some are suffering from their mistakes and are struggling, while the others are doing well. Don's children take up much of his and his wife's prayer time together. Don has been in his present ministry in central Illinois for five years now. He enjoys a strong prayer life with his staff. During his present ministry, Don has developed a strong church staff that functions together closely in service and in prayer. He is Brian's leading pastor.

Brian was in his middle thirties and was raised in a very strong Christian home. He grew up praying at meals and anytime the family was together. Brian's parents and grandparents were all a strong Christian influence in his life. Their family reunions and gatherings all began with a prayer event. Brian admits that he experienced more prayer than most people experience as they grow up. Brian is married and has two children. He has taught his children the same prayers he learned as a child, thus continuing the strong practices of prayer in his own family. Brian has kept up his study on prayer and owns many popular, current books on the subject. Prayer has blessed Brian's personal life and ministry. Brian has been on staff at his present pastorate for four years and loves the close relationships that he has with his peers and staff members. Before coming to central Illinois, Brian ministered as the leading pastor at a northern Illinois Christian church for eight years. Because of Brian's previous experiences, Don greatly respects him and depends upon his wisdom, insight, and prayers. In fact, they consider each other co-mentors and co-workers in the Lord.

Steve was in his late forties and was raised in a Christian home. His father was a deacon and an elder, and his mother taught at the church during Steve's childhood. They prayed at meals, at bedtime, and during devotions every evening even if someone in the

family was absent. Along with his parental guidance, Steve's grandparents set a good example for him. His grandfathers' faith was especially influential to his prayer life. Steve loved to hear his parents and grandparents pray, and they enjoyed their prayer times together as family. Steve is married with two children. His children are both in college but are home quite often. Despite their frequent separation, Steve has found time to pray together with his family, and they treasured those moments. Steve has served as the leading pastor at his present church for over twenty years. The church has experienced wonderful growth and has added three additional staff members. Prayer has always been a major focus in Steve's personal life, in his ministry, and his relationship with his staff. When the church built its new building, Steve arranged to establish a prayer room. Steve and his staff saw the importance of having a prayer room where they could go to pray individually and in small groups. The church family uses the prayer room and the church sanctuary for personal prayer time. Steve leads the staff meetings every Tuesday, and dedicates time at the end of each meeting to prayer. The staff members either pray together or separate into pairs. Steve is Aaron's leading pastor.

Aaron was in his early fifties. He has been a member of Steve's staff for over twelve years as the administrative and mission pastor. Aaron was raised in a strong Christian home, and his parents and family made prayer a part of his early life. His father was a deacon and then an elder in his church during Aaron's childhood. His family always prayed during meals and each evening together. They also always had family devotions on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays to fit their family's schedule. Aaron is married, and for over two years now, his wife's health has declined. They have a strong prayer life as husband and wife and pray together every morning and evening. As the

administrator, Aaron schedules all the staff meetings and organizes each agenda. When scheduling events and meetings, Aaron always prioritizes prayer. Like his father, prayer has become a lifestyle to him. Steve considers Aaron as his closest prayer partner.

Joe was in his early thirties. He was raised in the Christian church and has attended church throughout his life. His parents always emphasized prayer in his home as he was growing up, and his mother modeled prayer for him. Joe would see his mother praying throughout the day as she did her housework and office work. Joe's father was a deacon in the church. Joe remembered his parents praying together at every meal, and depending on whether his father was home or not, they also led prayer and devotions almost every evening. Joe is married and expecting his first child. Naturally, Joe and his wife have centered most of their prayers recently around the anticipation of their first baby. The excitement and expectation of their first child has brought them even closer as a couple, and Joe has grown in his own personal prayer life and in his relationship with his prayer partner on staff. Joe previously served in a multi-staff ministry, but his current position is his first as the leading pastor. Coming into the leading pastor position, Joe wanted to build accountability in the staff and maintain their spiritual growth together. Joe's goal included prayer. His first two staff meetings focused exclusively on prayer. Joe's first meeting with his elders also exclusively focused on prayer. Joe is Tom's leading pastor and prayer partner.

Tom was in his middle thirties. He grew up in a praying family in the Christian church. His father led his family in prayer though his mother also prayed regularly. The family prayed together at all three meals of each day. All four of Tom's grandparents prayed faithfully. Tom especially loved to hear his grandfathers pray. Tom's grandfathers

influenced his life more than anyone else. They were both musically talented men, Christian men, and men of prayer. Tom has patterned his life after his grandfathers. Tom is married with two children at home. He is the worship and mission minister at his church. Tom sees prayer as the focal point in every worship service. He has found that his love for music also enhances his love for prayer. Tom considers Joe as his closest friend. They have been prayer and accountability partners now for over five years. Tom and Joe's relationship has greatly blessed Tom's ministry.

Interview Settings

All participants were interviewed in person in the offices of these participants except for Ryan, Joe, and Tom. Ryan was called away for an emergency at the beginning of the scheduled interview, and he agreed to complete the interview over the phone on a future date. Because of schedule conflicts, Joe and Tom were interviewed over the phone together. All of the interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed, and printed.

The participants came from different ministry contexts. Some were leading pastors of very large churches with a very large staff in an urban location. Others were leading pastors of smaller churches with a smaller number of church staff members in a rural city location.

Each participant answered four lines of questions. First, the pastors addressed general questions about practices they identify that sustain their moral integrity. Their answers described their daily lives in relationship with God, as God's leaders in the church. Second, the pastors answered questions about their current practices for prayer in their ministry. Third, the pastors answered questions about the extent to which they would connect their moral integrity with prayer. Fourth, the pastors described their

ideal prayer life. All of these participants actively practiced a prayer life, especially with their staff members.

Data Related to the Participants' Beliefs and Practices

After the four preliminary questions were asked, the first primary research question was asked. What practices do pastors identify that sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their ministry?

Ryan saw prayer as the very life blood and foundation of his ministry. In his experience, nothing could be accomplished in the church without prayer as the foundation, and he practices journaling to keep his prayer life focused. Ryan began his present ministry with an emphasis on prayer in his preaching and teaching. The first presentation Ryan gave his new staff was entitled, "My Moral Authority Talk" which emphasized the rules for each staff member to follow to maintain their moral integrity. As a means to achieve moral integrity within their staff, Ryan focused his first staff meeting on prayer. Ryan repeatedly gave prayer a major role throughout his ministry. Ryan has always been very aware of the threat and power Satan presents to his ministry, and sees prayer as an avenue of claiming God's protection and keeping close to him. Ryan feels closest to God when he listens to music and prays.

Dale, in his long present ministry, practices a prayer life that continued throughout each day. Instead of praying for an hour each morning, Dale prays at all times, especially when there were decisions to be made, praying before he decides on anything. His previous leading pastor taught Dale that fasting must accompany prayer; thus, he prays and fasts regularly. Dale cherishes these Christian disciplines. For example, Dale's staff meets every Tuesday morning, and on the first Tuesday of every

month, they devoted their whole meeting to prayer. Dale believes prayer fortifies his staff's moral integrity, something he values in his church staff from the secretaries and interns to the leading pastors.

Mark greatly depends upon prayer in his ministry. His second son survived leukemia. Throughout the battle with cancer, Mark learned to depend completely upon God and the power of prayer. He identifies prayer as his lifeline. Mark realized early in his ministry that he was lost, "dead in the water," without prayer. He came to understand that he could not accomplish anything in his ministry without God's help. To keep his moral integrity, Mark believes he must completely depend upon God's presence and power along with his fellowship with other Christians.

Paul understands that God's purpose for prayer in his life and ministry is keeping him open to and grounded in God's will. Paul always goes to God in prayer so that God can mold him into the kind of person and pastor God wants. Paul believes that most Christians pray for the purpose of having God change their lives and mold them into the kind of Christian God wants.

Jim practices a prayer life similar to Dale's. Jim prays throughout the day as circumstances, problems, challenges, and praises arise. Jim's mind is always on the Lord and his people. Therefore, Jim is always aware of his constant conversation with God throughout the day's events. Jim gives God praise throughout the day and believes that his prayer without ceasing means a lot to God. Jim approaches prayer from a place of dependence upon God. Since his daily schedule is so busy, overwhelming, and challenging, Jim depends upon God for strength, wisdom, and protection. This approach to prayer humbles him and makes him dependent upon God more than upon himself. Jim

believes that God wants every pastor in this humble, dependent position. Relying upon God is of the reasons why Jim loves the ministry so much.

John sees how prayer empowers him. Realizing his inadequacies in ministry, John felt unable to balance everything that was competing for his attention. John often feels overwhelmed during his ministry and simply prays for God's strength to work through him. He realized early in his ministry that in order to keep his moral bearings, he would have to depend upon God and the Bible. John's favorite location to pray is outside in God's nature. John finds special peace with God when he fishes or kayaks, where he can escape from the world for a while and be alone with God. Although he could not spend hours praying, when John escapes, God always makes prayer easier for him. As a result, John sees his ministry as an exciting venture for him. As the day unfolds, he can always find great opportunities to pray.

Brian deeply depends on his reading of God's word, accompanied by journaling and prayer. He cultivated this dependence early in his ministry by working through the Navigator's material "Nav 27." The program challenged Brian to read the Bible through in one year, read through the Psalms each month, memorize Bible verses, and journal about his life and prayers each day. He has stuck with this program throughout his ministry. The thirty minutes a day that he spends with these exercises each morning keep him close to God. This discipline helps him focus on his work, protect his moral standards, and reflect on what God teaches him each day. While other practices wax and wane, this exercise has proven fruitful for him throughout the years. Brian learned that for him the practices of Bible reading, prayer, and journaling go together.

Don, like Brian, combines Bible reading, prayer, and journaling in his practices. He writes in his journal every time he prays and reads his Bible. Don believes that journaling is a chance to be blessed by what he reads and that it focuses his heart on what God is doing for him and in him. Journaling also helps Don vent when he is frustrated, fearful, or angry with things or people in his life. He has found this to be a useful system for him and a very good discipline. Don also shared that he sometimes falls away from journaling but eventually returns to it in a strong way. Don's wife has always helped him in low times and is a great encourager. Don bases his whole life and daily goals on Matthew 5:6, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness."³⁷² Some days, he does better than others, but Don is aware of his struggle and understands where to go for help when he finds himself at a low point in his life.

Steve sees prayer as the very heart and soul of his ministry. Prayer has kept his faith and trust anchored in God's presence and power. Steve understands that his ministry is worthless without prayer in his life. Prayer keeps him close to God and away from temptations and harm. Steve could do nothing unless God was with him. Steve also practices daily Bible reading, prayer, and journaling. Throughout his ministry, Steve says that this combination and discipline has kept him grounded in Christ. Steve also shared something he learned in seminary; he keeps his personal devotions separate from his sermon preparation and Bible study. Steve learned to practice this form of Christian discipline during his first ministry experience from an older pastor who had learned the hard way how to keep his heart close to God. Music is also very important to Steve. He prays through two old hymn books from his youth and through the Psalms. Many times when reading his Bible, praying, and journaling, Steve listens to Christian music, praise

³⁷² Matt. 5:6.

choruses or old traditional hymns. Steve stated that he loves them all. Steve also experiences a wonderful hope and joy when he keeps his heart close to God in these disciplines. In some periods of his life, Steve did not practice these disciplines regularly, but God's love and patience with him always wooed him back. Steve was greatly refreshed when he would return to these disciplines and understood that God loved him no matter how he performed in these disciplines.

Aaron is an intensely spiritual pastor and a deep thinker. He has always taken time to meditate on what God has shared with him. Aaron said that he practices four daily disciplines: Bible reading, praying, memorizing scripture, and journaling. Aaron reads his Bible and prays during and after breakfast with his wife. Later in the morning at his office, Aaron continues with more prayer, the memory verse from the day before, a new memory verse, and journaling. He said that he has practiced these disciplines in order to protect his heart, his family, and his church. Aaron also has a great love and talent for music. He has prayed through the Psalms every year for the past nine years and also prays through the church's choruses and hymns uses in its worship services and home Bible studies.

Joe is a young and enthusiastic minister as his daily practices of Bible study, prayer, praise, and journaling reveal. He has always used printed devotion books. Joe stated that it is more convenient for him and he has enjoyed the thoughts of others. He accompanies the devotion book with his Bible reading each and every morning. Joe associates pray with praise and thanksgiving. He said that he would be useless in this world and lost in his sin if it were not for God's grace in prayer. Joe believes God's grace also chose him for the ministry, and this greatly humbles him each day. He sees the

purpose of prayer as keeping him open to the will of God in his life, family, and ministry. Like Jim, he feels that prayer is a place of dependence upon God. Joe has always felt humbled coming before God in prayer, in complete dependence on His power and glory. Joe expressed that he could never a minister without the presence and blessings of God and that he would be completely defenseless without God's help.

Tom is also a young and exciting worship leader. He makes music an integral part of his prayer life. Every morning he reads his Bible, reads a devotional writing, and prays. Although he tried it several times, Joe does not enjoy journaling. Instead, he writes songs. His inspirations come first from the Bible, then prayer, his family, and Christian friends. Joe has prayed through the Psalms twice a year for almost five years now. He has never had a set time for prayer and devotions, but for Joe, prayer happened spontaneously throughout the day. In his preparation for worship, Joe prays over every hymn and chorus for worship and asks God to bless those who will sing them the coming Sunday morning. He stated that he believes he could never teach, lead a worship service, or do anything worthwhile in the church without prayer and God's blessings.

As has been revealed, all of these men have a full knowledge of prayer and practice a prayerful life. They have spent their lives studying, practicing, and sharing prayer with God and others. They all have struggled at times with prayer, but they understand the wonderful grace of God that touches their lives through prayer every day. While these pastors understand the importance of prayer in their own lives, their prayer lives extended beyond themselves. Just as they practice their personal spiritual disciplines, these pastors practice spiritual disciplines as a community with their wives, staffs and congregations. The corporate disciplines also include Bible study, devotions,

journaling, special prayer times, and accountability times that capitalize on prayer tools such as praying through the Bible, the Psalms, and chosen music.

Ryan practices reading his Bible every day and shared how he does it throughout his ministry saying,

I do a personal Bible study. I have a personal study Bible that is totally separate from like my preaching Bible. I just don't say, "Well, this is what I'm preaching and this is what I'm studying this week." I've got a personal study Bible that I work through. I like to underline. I got over marking up your Bible a while back. I mark it up a lot. I think that's ok.

Ryan also keeps a prayer journal. He has a unique way of using it that fits his personality and spiritual style. Brian's journaling includes his prayer relationships with his staff and his church family. He describes this journal saying,

I have a prayer journal. I am not great at journaling, I can tell you that. And journaling drives me crazy. It's not a spiritual pathway for me, but it keeps my prayer life in line. . . . I work through my prayer journal. Let me pull it out. It's got all of the important categories that I want to hit, that I want to make sure that I'm not missing. . . . So I've got categories for my family and I pray three prayers—one of them is the Lord's Prayer, one of the is the prayer of Jabez, and one is one that I have made up on my own. I pray those three every day and I pray a whole category on Molly—and I've got communication, you know, quick to listen and slow to speak, leading spiritually, romance, emotional, physical, and friendship. And then I have a whole category on Callie and Casey. And I've got ten bulletin points under that that I pray for them. And then I've got my extended family as category four, and then I've got my phase five which are the people I am trying to reach for Christ as my fifth category. My sixth category is my church and I'm just praying for the staff, the leaders, the elders, the volunteers, our seniors, for the future staff, for the budget, and for the evangelistic temperature of the church.

Ryan expressed his great love for music and how music touches his heart and soul. God has really touched him on a personal level through music as he says,

So Bible study, then my prayer journal—working my way through that—music is huge for me. If you are talking about sacred pathways, nature, nah, I'm not really, oh wow, I'm not really connecting to God in nature. Music though, man, I am moved constantly about worship songs. You won't find me out crying out in nature, you won't find me crying a whole lot reading my Bible necessarily or

praying through the prayer journal, but when I listen to music, you are getting me connected to God in an emotional way.

Dale also practices daily Bible reading. He has a printed covenant that lies under the glass cover of his desk to remind him every day of his personal responsibilities to God as a leading pastor. He reflects,

Naturally, Bible study and devotions are very important to me. From my years in college, we were always taught to read our Bibles devotionally throughout our ministry. Dan was a great encourager in this and we did a lot of this together. Now that Ryan is here he has encouraged the very same practice. What is the greatest about that is that Ryan practices what he preaches on Bible study and personal devotions and his whole staff sees that in his everyday life. He has been a great help to me.

I have a personal covenant on my desk, right here (pointing to it), that I look at every day. These are the promises that I have made to God personally. These promises are to God, my wife and family, to my staff, and to all the people in this church. The one thing that frightens me the most is that I don't want to disappoint God, my family, or anyone in this church. I need God's help to do that. . . . I always pray for protection. One prayer that I've had, and this is back when I started school in Cincinnati, I heard about another friend who had a big moral failure. Two of my personal prayers every day, that are huge, Lord help me never to do anything that might mess up my family or hurt this church. Because I realize that I can. It is shocking. It couldn't happen to him. Then I realized that if it could happen to him it could happen to me and that would be terrible. I have this covenant—this Shepherd's Covenant—from Focus on the Family. It doesn't look good but it is right here by the phone. You know, accountability, a shepherd's heart. This, I just—Dear God help me that I don't mess this up! You know it sounds negative, but I mean it sincerely.

Dale does not journal much in his ministry. He tried doing it and even found some of his old journals. Dale shared his feelings when he came across the old journals; he was amazed as to how much he had matured in his faith. Dale shared that, "If I did it more, maybe I would be better at it. I have journaled in different times of my life."

Dale described his relationship with the large staff he leads and how he handles the level of moral integrity in the staff saying,

I feel that one of my first responsibilities for my staff is to inform them of what I expect from them and then to pray for them on a regular basis. Our staff here is pretty large. We have twenty-one ministers and a couple of them are off campus here. But so I can't do them all at once. Usually I will break them up for different nights. That has helped me and my attitude towards them, because there is always somebody that I am a little frustrated with, especially as I get older and they get younger around here. There are ministers here my kid's age. They are just kids. But you know, but it helps me focus my compassion, my concern for them as people rather than just are they just producing and getting things done or not. I tell them that I am praying for them. . . . When I make my rounds at night to pray for certain staff members they have usually gone home by then. I will stop outside their office door, look at the family photos and other items on their door, and begin to pray for them. Sometimes they are in their office and they don't even know I am there praying for them. I pray for them, I pray for their secretaries, their ministry, and their families. . . . We did one of our training days for our ministers, it was just on those spiritual disciplines. How to do them, that they are tools, and that they are a means to the end. Just because you can set aside this time, this time, and this time, they can help you to get where you need to be in your relationship with Christ and with each other.

Every Tuesday, Dale's whole staff, including the secretaries and housekeepers, attends a staff worship service. After lunch together there is a worship time, a devotion time, and a time set for prayer. Dale intentionally set up the first Tuesday for prayer only.

Dale has always prayed for the people in his congregation. Even though the present size of the church makes this task difficult, he still prays faithfully for his congregation. He said, "Years ago I would go around to every area, sometimes individual pews where I knew someone would sit at Sunday, and pray for my people. They would be very personal prayers." Dale still practices this faithful prayer in his ministry. He said, "I keep a list over here and I always have a few names attached to my computer screen."

As for prayer tools, such as praying through the Psalms, Dale rarely uses any of these. He shared, "I have never run out of things or people to pray for. My prayer life is already busy. I think that maybe if I practiced praying through a hymnal that it would be beneficial to me, but I've never really had time to do so."

Mark shared his practices in Bible study and prayer. His Christian life has been so strong through the years, but many trials have still come his way. Mark reflects saying,

I have tried to balance my prayer life to be like that what I see in scripture—the best that I can. So I guess the combination of scriptures and my parents all have come together to form my prayer life. . . . All kinds of stuff stuck with me as I was growing up, and that makes me aware of how I pray today and how our young people look at my prayer life in public. This is one of the most important parts of our lives. There must be a balance of prayer in our lives along with Bible reading, worship, and praise toward our God. . . . I would simply identify it as my lifeline. Apart from it I am dead in the water because I am not going to do anything in this ministry without God you know, and it is just connecting to Him and realizing just how inadequate I am, but how all-sufficient He is.

Mark writes in his journal a few times every month, and thus journaling is not one of his daily practices. Mark also found some of his old journals that were 20-30 years old when cleaning his office. He was amazed at how God was working through his life and how God had really answered his prayers. Mark said, “You know, I had forgotten that I had prayed for that for my family and now I see that years later God has answered my prayers. I now write in my journal more often. I can’t wait to read it years later.”

Mark understands very well the importance of prayer and accountability in his church staff. He reflects,

We have staff meetings on Tuesday mornings of every week, and we have the same format that we follow every week. We have a time of devotion, and we have everybody share like this. And like Paul said, uh, it was his turn this week. It will be my turn next week to lead and Maggie’s the next week. We have one person to lead. We have a time of silent prayer and we always make sure we are listening to the needs of each other and not just centering on what we need or want. . . . We have discovered that this builds relationships in our small staff. Our differences are more easily overlooked and we come to see each other in a better way. I believe we come to see each other much like God sees us.

Mark said that the staff is always in prayer for their church family. As the church body has gotten larger, this has become a more challenging task, but they have adapted and grown with it. Mark says,

And after the devotional time we go into prayer time and we list the needs of the congregation before us—and we also list specific things, like, hey, we have a congregational meeting coming up, or we need to be praying for those who are going into leadership positions. . . . We are right in the midst of starting a Pre-school and we want to get going and we are praying for that. . . . Yesterday there were five of us at the staff meeting and we had fifteen names of people who had special needs. I divided them up with three names. Pray for these three names I told them. We had a moment of silent prayer and I led the staff in prayer.

Mark would like to get back into the practice of journaling more frequently than he does currently. He sees the value of journaling in his life, and Mark believes it would be a worthwhile thing to read his journals in years to come. He reflects,

My walk with God has been a land of hills and valleys. It has been like that, like a plane taking off. I am further along than I know I was a few years ago, but it has not been an easy path—because to me, above everything else, prayer is discipline. It just doesn't come automatically. And you know, I find the times when it is so easy to get caught up in ministry, I bow my head real quick and I'm done and back to my work. I say to myself, I have got to do this, I have got an appointment at the hospital, I have got to do something you know, and you are doing all of this, quote religious stuff, you know, and it doesn't mean anything if you don't have your personal relationship with God intact. And that is what prayer does. It feeds.

One of the practices that Paul has used for the last four months as a leading pastor is reading his Bible. He has been focusing on the four Gospels of Christ, and reflects upon the experience saying,

The one that I thought about when it came to this question is what I have been doing for the past four months. I have started reading through the Gospels. I could say extra reading as well, with all the books I have read recently. But reading through the Gospels has become a blessing to me in my prayer life. The reason I started doing it is because in one of the books I read this year was a story of a Rabbi. He shared that he was shocked as to how many Christians he had met who do not read the New Testament. How can you claim to follow Christ and not read the teachings of Christ constantly, because as a Jewish rabbi their practice was to constantly read the law. And this guy that I was reading challenged me read the gospels once a week. . . . How are you going to know how Jesus lived if you do not read it? How are you going to be like Jesus if you have never read how to be like Him? Where else can we learn that but in the Gospels?

Paul later shared how he had to slow his ambitious reading schedule to one Gospel a week. This pace worked better for Paul with his busy schedule. Reflecting about his prayer life, Paul said “I have tried to balance my prayer life to be like that what I see in scripture—the best that I can. So I guess, the combination of scriptures and my parents all have come together to form my prayer life.”

Paul also understands the importance of prayer in developing proper relationships among his church staff members by drawing them closer to each other and to God. He shares a recent example saying,

God’s purpose in prayer for my ministry particularly, is to keep me open to God’s will and to keep me grounded. I need to go to God just to allow him to mold me. At the staff meeting yesterday, someone pointed out the Psalm 39, and I really love what it says, “Search me, Oh God, and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts, search me and see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way of everlasting.” I think that a lot of times in our prayers I am asking God to change me and mold me, to be that person that He wants me to be. Prayer is there keeping me open to God’s Word and reminding me who is in charge. . . . But I think also for the staff it is a unity of purpose. It is a unity of bringing us together to say, you know, why we are here, we are working together for the Lord. And it also helps us to pray together with each other’s struggles as well and brings us into praying and doing that life together as a staff and to say, hey, I know what is going on in your life and I’m lifting you up in prayer. That means a lot . . . For one thing, if you’re having disagreements it helps to overcome that you know. Pray for those who persecute you. You pray for those who disagree with you. That is when God changes your heart because maybe it is me who needs to change and not the other guy. . . . Praying together also helps us to be accountable to each other. The others know that I am praying, that I am praying for our people in the church, and that I am praying for them. When they hear my prayers they come to know my struggles and my strengths—and my—and my strengths only come from God.

Paul also encourages accountability by those outside of the church staff. He explains,

Well, obviously it is my wife. Outside of that relationship, Gil calls me all the time to see how I am doing. Dylan is another one here in the church. He calls me regularly. We have a real open relationship. We meet for coffee on a regular basis and we talk. He wants to know if there is any way he can help, or if there is

something wrong or troubling in my life. He wants to know the struggles I am going through and how he can help. Gil is the same way. He is always cornering me and asking what he can be praying for. It is not uncommon for him to call me at ten at night and just say, “I was just praying for you and Mark and the church, and I just called to see if there was something specific that I could be praying for—or how are things going or are there any struggles that you are going through right now.”

Paul shared that he has practiced journaling throughout his ministry. Paul finds a lot of satisfaction in this practice and shared his experiences saying,

I love to use my journal. I receive one or two as a gift every year. It is usually my wife or mother who buys me one. I have done journaling with my studies and prayer time every year of my ministry. I enjoy from time to time going back and reading them. I will pick a year and begin reading it. But what I enjoy the most is going back to the beginning of the same year or choosing a certain holiday or special date of that present year and reading it. There has been times that my wife and I read it together. That hasn’t happened very often, um, but when it does it can be very funny to the both of us and also very rewarding. God is so good!

Paul also shared that he constantly will be in prayer for the people in his church family. He has developed his own personal practice of praying for his people. Paul describes this practice,

Usually I start at the middle of the week praying for the people who will be at our two worship services on Sunday. I will stand at each corner of the sanctuary and pray for those who will be sitting in that area. I start with the early worship service and make my way around the sanctuary. After I have done this I will leave and come back later to pray for those who I believe will be at our second service. I start at the same corner and make my way around the sanctuary. . . . If I know of a special need—say there is a family who is facing some very difficult times or if they have a wonderful praise in their life—I will sit in the pew where they sit and say a prayer for them. . . . I find this rewarding in my ministry.

Paul has tried some prayer tools to enhance his prayer life in the past. He has prayed through the Psalms and Proverbs in the past. He finds that such practices encourage him to pray more and also change his pace in prayer at times.

At first Jim sounded almost cavalier or casual about his prayer life, but as the interview advanced, he surfaced as a man of deep spirituality and prayer. Jim has not

written in his journal much, but he practices other disciplines that will be discussed later.

Jim also holds Bible reading and devotion dear to his heart. He explains,

For me, I have a really hard time in praying in a concentrated way of praying for an hour. I must have ADD. But I must say that I pray throughout the day and my mind is always on the Lord and His people. I praise God throughout the day and that praying without ceasing means so much to me. I have never really understood it perfectly, but I feel like prayer is the place of dependence upon God. I think for me that there is so much going on, not just in the ministry, but in people's lives that it is pretty overwhelming. I sit down and meet with people and I am just perplexed for them. Most of the time all you can really do is pray. I think that humbles us and makes us dependent upon Him in prayer and makes us chase Him and seek His will going in prayer. It is the very place that God pushes you to in the ministry. And that is one of the reasons why I love ministry.

Jim also values prayer. He understands that prayer fuels his minister. He has experienced difficult times in his personal life and his ministry when the combination of prayer and Bible reading rescued him. He reflects upon those times saying,

I think you go through seasons of your ministry where you try to go through your work on your own flesh, on your own wisdom or personality or strength or whatever you know, whatever. God lets you do that for a while and then He shows you what it is like to be like a branch disconnected from the vine and lets you wither for a while. Then you come to realize how stupid you were. But then you are back and into it with prayer and you learn again to depend upon God more. . . .If you are getting into the Word and you are listening in prayer that is good. If you are sitting there talking and not in the Word of God at all that is not good. So maybe the prayerful residence with God, a two-way communication works best. I think that there are people who pray and never get into the Word to change their lives. Prayer needs to accompany the Word and reading the Word needs to be accompanied by prayer. There is a tension there.

God will give me the guidance to do it correctly. When I am in the Word God's voice is just crystal loud, clear, unambiguous, convicting. And when I just sit and pray apart from the Word I almost feel like there is silence, you know. So I think prayerful reflection on Scripture would probably be the most difficult thing to do in the ministry. It doesn't feel like work. I have to be productive. And I have to answer John's questions, or anyone else's. There is a toilet that is broke, or someone ran into the sign out front, and that stuff. People feel that you need to do that on your own time. We don't pay you to sit around and read the Bible and pray. I would like to fish all day and do my best praying, but you know I can't justify that at all.

Jim expressed his pleasure over his present staff and the shepherding program at his church saying,

I have been here since 2000 and the multi-staff experience has been great. I have learned so much since. I have had good ministers around me since I have arrived. . . . For myself, there are times daily that I close this door and sit down and pray for our staff. I shoo everyone away or go to another place in the building if I have to. . . . Tuesdays we start having our staff meetings. I think that too many times we are a very strong task oriented in our meetings and we do not spend enough time in prayer. As a result, we have had more and more retreats where we as leaders do nothing but pray. Also, now on Wednesdays we start our staff meetings by praying for a certain segment of our congregation each week. . . . Since I have been here we have developed a dozen men who have become shepherds of our church family. They have their own group of people who give their shepherds their prayer requests and our shepherds bring their lists on Wednesday morning. Each Wednesday morning we have two different shepherds come to our staff meeting. Within six weeks we as a staff have cycled through the whole congregation. I would say that our whole staff is there for that meeting and our shepherds. So my office is packed. We do this every week without fail. . . . We as a staff are also on a shepherd's list so my shepherd may come up to me and ask how I and my wife are doing—So that way we are not out of the loop of these prayers. I do hope that this staff prays but I do not police that for them. I leave that up to them and their shepherds.

Jim cares for all of his staff members, especially the younger ones who work with the youth. Jim keeps them all in his prayers and tells them that he prays for them every day. Each morning he goes to a different office door or class room and prays for that staff member. He will pray for them by name, for their department and for their volunteer staff. He adds,

But in addition to that I also think some of the disciplines and practices just, you have to have boundaries in your life as to what you don't do. You don't put yourself in positions, you know, and there are all kinds of ethical guidelines that you can find anywhere but I also think that another part of this question is that I think that some of our staff really are a lot less vigilant about their moral integrity and put themselves into positions that I feel could really be a bad thing. So you know, part of it is protecting one another, you know, as a team and as a staff team. You probably shouldn't be going with that person (of the opposite sex) alone as you do. Even though you know that their hearts are not necessarily impure. If that were true they would not be on our staff. . . . So you really need one another and

there is a discipline of community and transparency that you need to practice as a staff.

Jim and his staff are pleased with the church's impressive prayer program, especially because they believe that their people have grown in their prayer life together. As the church family has grown to large numbers, the staff has met new challenges in praying for their congregation and how their congregation prays for each other. Jim felt that they as a whole have grown together in their practices. He explains those new practices saying,

We do a thing called, "Your Top Five," which is a list of their top five people that they would like to see to come to the Lord, and we have handed out some cards in the church, one of them is called "Pray for H.E.A.R.T." Pray for their heart to be receptive to the Gospel, eyes and ears to be spiritually opened, attitude to change toward sin, release to believe in Jesus Christ, and transformation.

I think it has gotten our people to become more immediately involved with the people around them—health wise, financially, with their personal problems, and whatever. I think it has also gotten our staff more involved with the congregation and the congregation more involved with the lives of our staff. And a month later they are still praying for them and they see what has changed. They are keeping several parts of these individual lives that are person in their hearts instead of a general prayer for them. It becomes very personal for them. . . .

We have set apart four Sundays out of the year where everyone in the church, staff and members, are given a card at the beginning of the service. They fill out their prayer cards, bring them to the front of the sanctuary, and at the end of the worship service everyone comes forward again to pick up a different card. This has developed into a very spiritual day. Our people love it. Both services go a little longer but no one seems to care. This service freshens their prayer lists and the staff's. . . .

We have a Sunday morning group that meets here. They are self-motivated and are always here. Some are staff members and some are not. It is a Christian lifestyle and it spills over into the rest of the church.

Jim shared that his staff have a close and strong relationship and that includes their Christian disciplines. They pray faithfully together and for each other. He shared that, "I have a journal and I have studied it. One thing is that I can teach on is the subject

of prayer. This will help me and help those I teach. We have studied '*Praying Through the Psalms*' in our small groups and in Sunday School and some short classes on journaling. Just having that everyday commitment is hard for me."

John is a quiet but thoughtful young leading pastor. John and Jim complement each other well in their ministry together. They are not only close friends but also accountability partners. John describes the encouragement of Jim's friendship and other factors that lead him to prayer,

Since I came here in 2001 it has been a wonderful experience. The people here are great to work with. . . . I see that in prayer there is an empowerment because as you minister you find yourself feeling very inadequate at many times and competing with things that are going on. They become overwhelming to me. And you just start praying for God's strength to work through us. As for prayer, I would like to go out on the lake and go kayaking and get away from the world for a while. I cannot take hours at a time in prayer in certain everyday settings but when I can get away from it all God make it easier for me. It seems like I can go somewhere and get away and things like prayer become so much easier. . . . It is much easier for me to read my Bible for a time of devotion. I don't know why that is. So what I have done for the last several years is that I will read my Bible first and then pray. My wife is a great encourager when it comes time to pray.

John enjoys writing in and using his journals; in fact, he encourages his whole family to do the same. His parents taught him how to journal, and the practice seems to be a great encourager and gift for him. He explains,

For me, a lot of it reflects back to my family. Living what I profess and being something different at home. One of the things that we did was the "Ninety Day Bible Challenge," and we did that at home and prayed together as a family. So that was an hour a day for ninety days that we had to carve out of our schedule as a family. We accomplished that and continue it to this day as a couple. It is a big commitment. Another thing I did. I created some prayer journals for my family members for Christmas. I personalized them all and encouraged them to have a personal prayer life with God.

The ways that his staff prays for each other and for the congregation greatly encourage John. He also greatly appreciates the work their shepherds do in the church

family. John feels that his staff properly cares for him, and he feels that by the grace of God he is doing a good job caring for them. John describes their symbiotic relationship saying,

This in turn, helps us when we are constantly meeting the needs of those around us as ministers. We know that we have people praying for us and that we are praying for each other. . . . It is very encouraging to have one or more of your staff members come to you and express their appreciation for you and your prayers. They know we are praying for them and the younger staff members and our youth sponsors really appreciate it when we come to them and pray with them in person before an event or a meeting. As their leader, I try to be the best example as I can be.

John works very hard encouraging his staff members to pray for the congregation. He has learned that there are members of the congregation who can teach their leaders and help the leaders grow. John shares one example of this saying,

I think you have the people who have the towering strength, you know, that surpasses everyone else and lead everyone, including me, in the church in the life style of prayer. . . . We have three elders, one in particular, who is a prayer warrior for us all. They are constantly praying for us and we can feel their prayers. When they pray with us they make a difference in our lives every time. That is so encouraging. That does not intimidate me as a leader. That greatly strengthens me in Christ!

John journals on a regular basis. His journal records his prayers for his family, wife, and closest friends. Journaling is also a time of reflection and self-examination. John also had prayed through the Psalms, but in general, he is more spontaneous in his prayer life. John would rather be outdoors with God most of the time, and if he had to be inside, he would be with his Bible and journal.

Don skillfully weaves together three spiritual disciplines: Bible reading, praying, and writing in his journal. Because of his transparent personality, Don's whole staff had come to know him very well in a very short period of time. His strong will and spirit have

made him a good leading pastor. Bible reading has not always been easy for him for he shared,

I fall off at times and become strong in it again. Sometimes it takes a word from my wife to get me back into it again. But maintaining that hunger for God, that hunger for prayer, that hunger for His Word, uh, there are moments that I shy from it.

Don writes in his journal almost every day. He enjoys doing it, and because of his strong personality, it had become good spiritual therapy for him. He reflects,

I journal after prayer and Bible readings. It is just a chance to be blessed by what I read. It refocuses my heart on what God is doing for me and in me. Sometimes it is venting. Sometimes there is poison in that pen. But I get it out of my system as soon as I can. I have found this a very good discipline.

Don is very happy with his staff members, and he feels like they all work together and compliment each other's work well. His staff has different ideas on how they pray, whether together or alone. Don would rather pray alone most of the time, but the staff is divided by gender. Don explains the differences and the encouragement within his staff saying,

We are together every Monday morning. It is a staff meeting but it is more of a staff gathering. We begin with a devotional. Uh, sometimes we are reading through a book together, sometimes it is open to whatever everyone wants to bring and we rotate a little bit. Uh, then after that we go into some prayer time for our congregation. We have a prayer list so we are on top of everything that is going on. But once we break out of that some of us what to hear the voices of others and some of us like to have some alone times on our knees. So, um, which is kind of funny. It kind of breaks between women and men. The women like to pray together while almost every man excuses themselves and we go to the big sanctuary and find our spots. It tremendously feeds me to see the staff on their knees and we have a couple of young fellows who will prostrate themselves before God. . . . We lay hands on each other during special needs times. We have seen some of our staff go through some hard times. . . . We are a praying staff. I doubt very much if we are the best praying staff you have ever seen, but we do pray together pretty frequently. . . .

We also have a part of our staff covenant where we commit to praying for each other on a regular basis. So we do that. This covenant is a written and signed

document. . . If anything, if I was to say what the staff has seen the most in me is the transparent kind of life I live. They know by battles, they know my fights, especially this guy (Brian). I have shared with him things that are ministry related that I have not shared with my wife. I don't want my wife to carry that stress in her life. So he has kind of become the catcher at the plate. So when I want to throw hard he is there to catch it. We are talking about accountability and what I get from him is a very—he has got a lot of wisdom—he can take my venting and he will give me good and wise advice. . . .

We have been on our knees together, the two of us. Not enough. You know, I'm responsible for mentoring the staff. The blessing here is that there are very few staff who need hand mentoring. Caleb served as a senior pastor in his former ministry, so he gets the bigger picture probably better than anyone else does. . . . We have been hired because we are trusted to do what we need to do. I don't want to have to look over their shoulder twenty-four hours making sure that they are doing their job. And uh, you know, and if that trust is broken, then why are you here? And so I have a trust in this staff. . . . I am always on my knees for my staff.

Don provides strong leadership in the areas fellowship and discipleship within his church. For example, when the church finished their mission fundraiser, tens of thousands of dollars were raised for their mission program. Immediately following the event, Don led a Sunday of prayer for the money and the mission program. Don explains these Sundays of prayer saying,

A half dozen times a year the church service is focused on prayer and people are on their knees throughout the service. This coming Sunday will be one of those events. I will be preaching on "Facing Your Giants" and stuff in your life, when you need time for prayer. People will be spending time on their knees. So they will be walking out this Sunday and the people will say that we are a praying church.

We have also had healing services here. And I, we were real careful as to what we were going to call this at the beginning. The elders were all over the front of the sanctuary. The worship was close and lifted up. People could walk forward at any time and the elders would pray for you. These two services would last over two hours by the time we received all the prayers from all our people. We do this on Sunday evening so we can spend as much time as we can with this. We have done this twice now, maybe three times now. . . . Our people know that we are a staff that prays for them and they pray for us. They also know that their elders always have them in their prayers.

Don has never used prayer tools like praying through the Psalms or through a hymnal. He explains saying that to him, they seemed artificial and impersonal when praying to God. He says,

I have never used tools like that. My prayer time—you know what, I will use one word, Abba—you know what? Brian knows that I have a very close relationship with my earthly father. We talk a lot on the phone. I don't have any program to use when I call my dad. I don't start with adoration, etc. Sometimes when we get on the phone the conversation starts with a deep and meaningful conversation. Sometimes we just talk about the ball game from the night before. Um, so I talk to my Heavenly Father the same way. I just don't know what I am going to say when I go to my knees. Sometimes it is a real crying out. . . . I am depending on the Holy Spirit to fill this gap because I don't even know what to think or say sometimes. I have heard of people who use these programs, but I have never used them. Would I be enhanced with such a thing? Probably I would, but now I am just hungry to talk, and uh, when I'm in the woods I just talk. I do my best praying in the sanctuary right now.

Brian also practices the basic Christian disciplines. He has a great passion for reading resources like the Bible and Christian literature. He explains,

On the ideal level in my previous ministry we worked through the Navigators material called Nav 27. That introduced the journaling component to me and those kinds of things. So reading a passage of scripture on a planned reading plan, through the Bible in a year, reading through the Psalms in a month, just kind of whatever I sketched out. Then journaling and reflecting on what God may have highlighted during that, kind of touched my heart. Then journaling on the day that was. I did scripture memory based on the Navigator's Topic Memory System and that all kind of—oh and then a page or two out of a book that I was reading—just kind of kept it up until I was full. . . . That was when I felt like the scriptures were strong in my heart. I have tried many different things, and they would wax and wane. I have seen that throughout these years there were time I really grew strong in prayer and Bible.

Brian helps lead all the staff meetings. Brian, along with Don and another leader, organizes the agendas. He states his goal for the meetings, saying "...no matter how busy we became. One of my responsibilities is to make sure that we pray together and pray well for each other."

When it comes to praying for the church, Brian says, “I remind our staff every week who we need to be praying for. We first pray for each other, then we pray for our church, then we pray for the lost world.” Brian struggles with differing perceptions about prayer within their church. Brian explains saying,

We have nine Sunday School classes with 329 people in them and they all pray for each other. We have twenty small groups that pray more fervently and are more into each other. It’s organic to those groups. We have people who come from churches who have had strong prayer ministries, prayer rooms, prayer seminars, prayer teams, and they look around and they don’t see those formal structures in place. And that signals in their minds a level of frustration. “Hey, they are not a praying church.” I don’t agree with that assessment. . . . Are we doing a lot? Yes. It is just kind of who you ask if we are doing enough or the right things. Because the scriptures do not lay out what our prayer ministry is supposed to look like. It tells us to pray, but it does not tell us everything. . . . I lead my staff every week in praying for our people. I humbly pray that they have developed the same kind of heart for them that I have.

Because of his commitment to prayer, Brian has put into practice several prayer tools throughout his ministry. He has always enjoyed “gathering his life in a journal,” praying through the Psalms and Proverbs, and praying through old hymnals from his childhood. Brian enjoys the hymnals’ more than the new choruses and contemporary songs.

Steve is a leading pastor with a very organized and methodological lifestyle. Everything in his life and ministry have been very carefully thought out and prepared, including his Christian disciplines. Steve has practiced Bible reading, devotions, prayer, and journaling his whole ministry. An older and experienced pastor mentored him in these disciplines from the very beginning of his career.

I have continued to do my personal Bible study, say my prayers, and write all the experiences and the things on my mind and heart in my daily journal. I was taught to do this by (Robert), yea, my minister—the same one I mentioned earlier today—who preached at the first church where I had my first ministry, my first youth ministry. He was great and I still call him several times a year. . . . I fill at

least two journals a year. I guess I need a larger one to start out with. My wife and family buy them for me. . . . I really enjoy journaling. . . .

I depend upon my relationship with Christ every day and the Bible and prayer keep that relationship close. Prayer to me is the very heart and soul of my ministry here. It all keeps me grounded. I would be helpless without them both—Bible and prayer that is. Everything that I do here I must remember to completely depend on God and His power and glory. I am not a great minister or pastor. Sometimes I wonder what I am doing here.

Steve values the work prayer has done in his staff, from their secretaries to their leading pastors. He ensures that all staff members pray regularly for each other and for their church family. Steve explains his methodology saying,

We have prayer partners here. There are four ministers on our staff and two secretaries. Aaron and I team together for the first six months of the year and then we trade off. Aaron and I always start the year off together. We will even get together for the rest of the year on a more informal prayer time. The two secretaries are always together. The other two are our youth ministers. They are younger than us and they always start the year together. I think they're attached at the hip, but that's good. Uh, well, we meet every Monday and Wednesday morning, Aaron and I and the staff. We spend time in the Bible together. We pray for each other and then for those needs of the church and stuff like that. Then we split up into our pairs for prayers together after the meeting. Aaron and I usually head to town and do our thing there and back.

Steve shared the prayer tools that he uses throughout his life and his ministry saying,

Aaron and I both love music. It is just one of those things that we both have in common. I have prayed through certain scripture passages and books of the Bible and they, uh, have all worked for me nicely. But I really enjoy music and there are some favorite ways I like to use music and prayer together—and then record the words and my experiences and feelings in my journal—that all really means a lot to me. I have two old hymnals that we sang from when I was growing up and I love to use them during my prayer times. I love to hear and sing those words. I have them memorized but I still write them down. . . . I also love to read through the Psalms and pray. . . . There are times when I get busy or lazy and slack off but, you know, God is always there to pull me back into his love.

Aaron is the perfect coworker for Steve. They work together well and have the same interests. Like Steve, Aaron also practices Bible reading, praying, and journaling

daily. While Steve and Aaron rely upon each other currently for support, Aaron's grandfather also taught him a lot about the Christian disciplines. He greatly appreciates his grandfather's faith in God and in him as well..

My grandfather has always been a great encouragement for me. I think he was the one who really taught me how to pray and read my Bible. I think I read my Bible today because of him. . . . He told me years ago when I first went off to school that he would pray for me every day that I would stay close to God and the Bible. He told me to remember that every morning when I got up that he had already prayed for me that day to do the right thing in the eyes of God. That has meant everything to me. . . .

Now that I am in the ministry I know that he has prayed for me the moment I wake up in the morning. I can feel his hand on me—I can hear his prayers for me. That motivates me to read my Bible and pray every morning.

Aaron had used a journal throughout his ministry. His wife makes them for him, and he is very grateful for her gift. He shares,

My wife is into scrapbooking—(laughter) and you know what that means. When I get a gift from her it comes in the form of some kind of scrapbook. She makes my journals for each year and has done so for years. It is a good thing they are really nice looking. I do really appreciate them. It could have gotten me into big trouble. I try to journal at least twice a week, at the beginning and the end of each week. I put down all of my thoughts—especially my music.

Aaron is in charge of scheduling and organizing all the staff meetings. He has enjoyed this responsibility and understands the importance of prayer at each meeting.

Aaron shares,

The younger guys think that I organize every meeting to death. I don't think so. This way it helps me to get things done—all the things I think need to get done. . . . We start each meeting with prayer and we end them the same way. Then we separate into our teams and pray some more together. I have seen prayer cement us together holding us closer than we could ever do by ourselves. Prayer helps us make the right decisions, pray about the right things, and really care for each other. We do a lot of praying together but I would like to think that when everyone gets back to their place they are praying even more—especially for each other. We all make an amazing team.

Aaron encourages his staff to pray for the congregation and members who volunteer in their departments. Aaron understands how important their prayers for their congregation are saying,

Steve is always most concerned that our prayers make a difference in the lives of our people. He does not want our prayer lists to sound just like a doctor's waiting room list or the ER. He wants us praying for the spiritual needs of our people and so we do. Some meetings we only have a few to pray for and sometimes we have a very long list. We will always divide them up between the six of us and pray for them individually and then take those names home with us. Naturally, we are mostly concerned about our own departments and the people in them so most of the time we will keep those names in those departments in the church education department.

Aaron's love for music is a wonderful gift to him, his family, and the church family, and his prayer tools reflect his love. Aaron's talent for music and for writing music facilitates his prayer life. He shares,

For the past nine years I have included music very powerfully in my prayer time. I don't play my music too loud like Steve thinks I do. I just love it so much. Right now I read or sing or play our Christian choruses that we are singing in our worship services and in our small Bible study group at home. I also have music that I have recorded from our worship services and home Bible study group and I will play it when I pray. I will also read or play the music that I have written.

Joe has always accompanied his prayer life with Bible study and devotions. Printed devotions help him in his daily Bible reading. This material both encourages him and fits his lifestyle as he explains,

I have always used printed or published devotion books that I buy at the Christian bookstores. They are easier to use for me and they help me to keep to my reading the Bible every day. My mother did it that way so I guess I'm just like her. I try to read through the Bible in a year, my wife and I are always in that kind of program, and I am always looking for a good devotion book.

Joe writes in a journal in his ministry. He enjoys finding useful thoughts in his devotional reading and recording them for his own use. Using a journal encourages him. He said, "I buy a new journal when I find them on sale at the end of the year. Right now I

am not only writing down my devotional thoughts and findings but what is on my heart as we are waiting for our first baby.”

Joe is very aware of the importance of prayer and connects prayer to accountability in their church staff. He was concerned about sustaining his own spiritual growth and the growth of his staff. Joe explains how prayer helps sustain spiritual growth,

We are one staff member short now. That’s no good, but we have to live with that. It is a good thing at we have Tom with us. He has helped to fill the gaps right now. That has brought us even closer. . . .Tom and I have been prayer partners for over five years now. We spend a lot of time together besides that. We work together guiding the younger staff members. We are all pretty young here right now. . . .

My biggest concerns for my staff right now is maintaining the right amount of personal accountability and maintaining our spiritual growth together. Prayer, I think, has really helped us there and the prayers of the whole church. We let them know that we are constantly praying for them and they let us know every day that they are praying for us.

Joe has loved music all his life. He and his wife sing together, and Joe plays the guitar. Because of his love for music, Joe capitalizes on prayer tools like reading through the Psalms or Proverbs and contemporary Christian music. Joe shared that, “I just love to sing or just listen to my music and pray. To me prayer is praise and thanksgiving offered humbly to our Lord God.”

Tom, as a worship pastor, shares Joe’s love for music and is following in the footsteps of his two musical grandfathers. While Tom does not follow a set time to read his Bible, have devotions, and pray, he is faithful with these practices. He said,

I love to read my Bible every day but if I would set a certain time I just feel that it would put unnecessary pressure on me. I read my Bible and pray when I get to my music which can be several times a day.

Tom depends on his prayer partner Joe who journals, but he does not use a journal. He explains, “I have tried it in the past but I just never enjoyed it. I don’t think that is for me, at least not yet in my life.”

Tom’s concerns for their staff are the same as Joe’s. He also feels that prayer is one of the best Christian disciplines that they could practice together. He also sees the importance of the church staff’s prayers for the church and the church’s prayers for the staff. Tom elaborates,

I feel that same as (Joe) does. We need to pray together and keep praying. And we need the church praying with us. We are one pastor short here right now but we will never be one Lord short. I feel just like (Joe). The purpose of prayer is to keep us open to the will of our God and all that we decide and do as a staff should always be in God’s will. . . .Our people are praying for us to stay accountable to each other and God. That should be our prayer as well.

Tom uses prayer tools to keep his prayer life fresh and alive. As a worship leader he understandably uses music based prayer tools saying,

I have prayed through the Psalms twice a year for the past five years. I also read and listen to music during my prayer time. I have not used any hymnals yet but I do use a lot of contemporary Christian music. It’s the best for me.

These exceptional participants represent several very similar beliefs and practices as leading pastors. All of them practice daily Bible reading and devotions. Though some are more faithful than others, they value these practices. Most of them use a journal in their prayer lives, and most capitalize on useful tools such as praying through the Psalms. Most importantly, they all value the role in prayer in their staff and in their church body. Important categories, properties, hypotheses and theories will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Data Relating to Current Practices

The last section gave a good overview of how each of these participants practiced their prayer lives today, answering the first research question. A closer look into each interview revealed more about their current practices, answering the second research question: What are the current practices of these pastors' prayer lives?

Ryan shared some specific information about his own personal prayer life and how he prays with others on his staff saying,

I have learned that it is important to pray alone with God as Christ did. I do this in the mornings when I first get up and through the day at work. Second, I pray with my wife and two daughters. I know exactly what my prayers are for them and they hear it. With my staff we pray before every service. I am grateful for that. . . . Music is huge for me. . . . I look forward to every first Tuesday of the month when our staff does nothing but pray. . . . Retreats—part of our retreats include elements of prayer and personal time. . . . We also have a “Prayer Champion,” Ted. He helps us to remember to pray as individuals and as a staff. He keeps us accountable.

Dale told of the changes over the years in his life and in the lives of the staff at church. His prayer practices have not always been the same. He explains,

When the kids were young my wife and I would pray and read the Bible stories with them before they went to bed. But by the time when our son was in Junior High I was rarely home at night. . . . Now my wife and I pray in the mornings. The kids are gone and we usually do not see each other until late each night. . . .

Most of my prayer life is now in the office and after hours. I have my personal prayers all day long. I pray for special needs when I happen to look at my notes on the phone or on my computer screen. I look forward to the first meeting of the month when we as a staff do nothing but pray. Most of the time my life is nothing but a long continuous prayer.

Mark said that his prayer life has greatly improved since he and his wife started to ride to work together. She has to be at work at six in the morning, and Mark takes advantage of a couple of hours alone at church. He reflects,

For the first few weeks I would look for a good place to lie down and take a nap. Then after a while I thought that that was a waste of time so I started a new prayer program for myself. I have been doing this for two years now or so. I now drop off my wife and come straight to the church. I will pray and read my Bible in the office for about a half hour, then I'd get up and go to the sanctuary and start praying for my people who will be worshiping there next Sunday. I will actually sit in their pew and pray for them. . . . I never pray behind the pulpit for I do not feel worthy to be there. I just pray for my people. . . . It is amazing how fast two hours go by. There are rarely any phone calls or any interruptions.

Paul said,

I have tried to balance my prayer life to be like that what I see in scripture—the best that I can. So I guess, the combination of scriptures and my parents all have come together to form my prayer life.

He also said,

I have a hard time praying in public sometimes. I see prayer as a very intimate relationship with God and it is almost like my intimate relationship with my wife. I consider that no one's business and that is how I sometimes feel about my prayer life with God. I really have to switch gears sometimes to pray with others or pray in public.

Jim said that his current practices have not changed much through the years. He sees prayer as a daylong adventure reflecting,

I praise God throughout the day and that praying without ceasing means so much to me. . . . I pray when I don't know what to do and I pray with others when I don't know what else to do. . . . I never just pray for an hour. I pray while I'm driving to the hospital, when someone on the staff is sharing a problem they are facing, or when one of my elders calls to share a praise they have. . . . I love to pray on Sunday morning together before each worship service. That is such a special time. . . . I love to pray for my wife and family and I love to pray with my wife and family.

John shared that he saw his prayer life today as a recharging station and source of spiritual growth,

I see prayer as a time when I can come to God to receive his strength so he can work through me. I practice prayer with my wife and family, at the office, and with other Christians but I like to pray the most by myself when it is just me and God...

I really appreciate the small group that my wife and I host in our home. There we do some of our best praying. This small group of people from our church means so much to us and we watch each other grow every week. This helps my daily prayer life. I can pray in the mornings as I need to. I work through my journal much easier because of what is happening now with this small group that meets each week. . . . My prayer life, my journaling, my praying through the Psalms all have helped me to grow.

Ron struggles with having a particular routine or any format that belongs to someone. That kind of prayer life seems artificial to him. Instead, Ron pursues a more organic prayer life,

I do my best praying in the sanctuary. That has worked for me the best lately. I do it two ways in there. I get on my knees in a pew and kind of bury my head in the cushion or I just walk around the sanctuary and I just talk to God out loud. I try not to let people see me do that. I believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit that he takes my prayer and he will use it. . . . Prayer now is a personal father-son relationship with me. I value it greatly. . . . My prayer life looks like this now, praying with my wife, praying all day long, praying on my knees at church, writing all of this stuff down in my journal, and then praying again.

Brian is confident that his daily prayer practices please God and fulfill what the church expects of him. He elaborates,

What I do in my current prayer life at first takes thirty minutes or more. I spend time in prayer for my family, my staff, and my church, then I read a portion of the Bible, then a portion of the book of Psalms, and then I reflect on what God has revealed to me and what he has in store for me during that day and I write it all down in my journal. Then I pray again. That sounds simple but that is not all. Those prayers continue through the day.

Steve makes prayer a major focus in his life. He has three practices in his daily life: Bible reading, praying, and journaling. He explains the practice saying,

Here is how my current practices in my prayer life looks like now. My Bible reading is divided up into two parts, Bible study and personal devotions. I was taught early in seminary to separate the two and keep them both in my daily life. Prayer completes my Bible reading. It is the very heart and soul of my ministry here and in my relationship with my wife and family. I can do nothing without prayer. I have two old hymnals beside my study Bible. I pray through a hymn that means so much to me and then I will either read a Psalm or just pray through it. I then will write in my journal what God has given me and he has given me a lot.

Aaron has the same current practices. His music is more detailed than Steve's but the pattern is the same;

Steve and I have learned a lot from each other. That humbles me. I go through the same practices as Steve does now but I spend, I feel, much more time on the music part. It means so much to me. Steve even will go along with me on this. I will try to share what I've learned or discovered—or even what I've just written—and he will get all excited over it.

Joe's current practices are very similar to Aaron's and Steve's, and they have never changed through his years in the ministry. Joe explains,

I very rarely change at all. I'm so much like my mother. Once I find something that works for me I keep it. I simply read my Bible, read a devotion, pray to God and give him all my praise, and write it all in my journal. It worked years ago for me and it still does. I can't see changing any of it anytime soon. This has worked well for me.

Tom does not see his current practices the same way as Joe does because of his love for music. Tom explains the blessing music brings to his prayer life saying,

I change as much as my music changes. Sure the basics are there, my Bible, my devotions, and my prayer times. But my music changes all the time. When I discover a new song I get excited. When I write some new music that excites me. When I get great news I get excited and pray. When I find a verse in the Bible that really touches me I pray. But the basics are always there Bible, devotions, and prayer. They are with me every day.

Nothing could stop these men from praying. Their current practices are very similar, but some of their attitudes toward prayer differ. Some are very structured in their prayer lives, while others prefer the flow of the day. Nonetheless, prayer always accompanies them throughout their days. The pastors clearly depend upon God.

Data Relating to the Connection Between Prayer and Moral Integrity

In the interviews, the pastors also addressed the third research question; to what extent do pastors connect moral integrity with prayer? They used many helpful words

reveal how they perceive the connection between prayer and moral integrity. Those words include stress, isolation, accountability and bearings.

Ryan openly mentioned all of these key words in his interview. He and Dale both reflected upon his charge to the staff at the beginning of his present ministry entitled “My Moral Authority Talk.” Ryan says,

I wrote lack of prayer leads to stress, isolation, and the lack of accountability. Then I wrote you lose your bearings. You can’t just disconnect them. Because if you are not praying, if you have got a lack of prayer in your life, that is going to stress you out because you are trying to do it in your own power. That’s going to isolate you because you are feeling isolated from God already so that is going to cause you to isolate yourself from others. It is going to promote this lack of accountability. And if you’ve got these things going on in your life, it is just a matter of time before, man, you are either off course or you are ready to crash. I have seen that personally.

Dale has been in ministry longer than anyone of the other participants, and he shared his wisdom saying,

You know what motivates me to pray? The older I get the more I am aware that I am completely unqualified and completely defenseless without prayer. I have learned skills, I can organize, I can plan, I can do it, but still there is spiritual warfare. . . . I am not worthy of doing this but God has made me worthy and able. He qualifies and protects me all the way through my prayers, my worship, my communion, and in everything I do here. . . . If I would stop praying I would stop living the Christian life I am living now. I would not have the strength or power to do so.

Mark’s answers also proved to have wisdom that comes from age. He says,

You know, I said that prayer is simply my lifeline to God. Apart from it I am dead in the water. Prayer keeps me accountable to my wife, to the people I work with, and with God in heaven. With Dawn and me, we pray for specific things and we hold each other accountable. With our staff we hold each other accountable on everything. That in turn encourages each of us to do our jobs. . . . Prayer keeps me in God’s will. How could I know how to do anything right if I was not talking and listening to God?

Paul’s response echoed Ryan’s thoughts on bearings. He said, “The purpose of prayer is to keep me open to God’s will and to keep me grounded in him. I go to God in

prayer to keep me on the straight and narrow road.” Later Paul added, “My wife, Mark, and two of my elders keep me accountable. They check up on me to make sure that I am praying and standing guard with God at my side. Prayer protects me. Prayer keeps me from being isolated from those who can help.”

Jim sees prayer as the power behind conversions, spiritual growth and a close relationship with God. He says,

Prayer is a regular part of spiritual discipline. Whether you are talking about your own personal integrity or the integrity of others I think that as you are praying for others that should be happening for you, praying that the Spirit break in on that person’s conscience and humble them. We have conversations with people who are sinning and just need to be closer to God. Prayer is that tool that breaks through and you can keep praying that God keeps breaking through.

John continued Jim’s thoughts with this statement;

Ministers may have a moral lapse, and you think that that is a person who has not been praying the way he should have been. Praying with others is essential. Just praying and having a proper prayer life is essential to a moral life.

Don and his wife pray for their children often because they face many problems.

He understands that there is a direct connection between moral integrity and prayer saying,

In my prayers I am focusing on my family and my children right now. . . . If I am lowering my head for a second in prayer—we are praying for our kids. Janie and I are almost numb. We can’t hardly talk about our kids any more. It brings tears to quick. And so I keep crying out to God. . . . I am reminded daily, almost every minute, how important prayer is and how it makes a difference. I believe in all my heart that my integrity, and Brian’s, and the whole staff’s integrity is protected by our prayers and the prayers of our people. These prayers have taken away stress, have kept us pure in the eyes of God, and have made us honest with each other.

Brian responded by reflecting on how prayer guards against stress and isolation in his life,

Prayer has become more personal with the Lord over the years. I’ve been more intimate with the Lord. Sometimes it is a duty to pray to him. I’m ok with that

because that honors God. Now I can see how God has protected me through the years and even has corrected and disciplined me as well. God wants me on the right road and the only way I can stay there is to keep close to his word and pray. I am never stressed out after I pray. I have noticed that. Satan cannot touch me if I'm close to God.

Steve confessed,

I need prayer every day. If I am not talking to God how am I going to live a righteous life for Christ? When I talk to God I want to live for him. He encourages me, protects me, and keeps me accountable to my friends in Christ.

Aaron also shared that prayer is essential in sustaining his moral integrity;

"I can't see me without prayer in my life. It has always been there from the beginning. I agree with Steve. I need prayer for all the same reasons."

Joe is excited about his prayer life;

I just love to pray now. You know why; we're having our first baby by the middle of December! How can I not go to God and not ask for his protection from

Tom shares in Joe's excitement;

Every time I sing a chorus in praise to my Almighty God I am reminded of how great he is and how much I depend on him. Many of our songs tell us that prayer is essential to matching up to what God expects of us. Even the old hymns that I grew up with taught me to pray to God for his guidance and protection. Many of the songs I write share my belief in prayer. Through our prayers God will take away our worries and fears and draw us close to his very presence. My prayers have kept me close to God and aware of the dangers of sin and shame.

Data Relating to the Ideal Prayer Life

The interviews finished by focusing upon the fourth research question; What would pastors today consider to be the ideal prayer life?

Ryan gave a quick answer saying,

I think the question is an easy one. The ideal prayer life is having a daily time alone with Jesus. You just turn things over to him. I guess I would also add the phrase, without ceasing. The ideal prayer life is that you are just, you know, you are breathing the atmosphere of connectivity with Jesus. That's my ideal.

For Dale, “The Lord’s Prayer is the model prayer. I want to keep Christ’s instructions of how to pray always in my heart. All of Christ’s prayers would be ideal for me to study and use. John 17 and his prayers for his disciples and for us is a great example.”

Mark told a story about one of son’s fight with leukemia as an example of the ideal prayer life. He says,

I still thank God for those times with Jack. That summer when we thought that his leukemia had come back, Jack just looked up at me that night from his bed and he said, “Let’s pray together dad.” He was the one who said it. We were tired and all we had gotten all day was bad news. So we prayed together. The next thing, everything changed for the good, and Jack got everything he had prayed for and he said, “See I told you dad.” That’s the ideal prayer life, a childlike prayer life of faith.

Paul shared his experience with an older couple in his church;

I found my ideal prayer life when I went to see a couple in our church who were both in the nursing home together. . . . They are the happiest and the most prayerful people I know. Those people have made me a prayerful man. Those people have made me the leader that I am today. They have shown me the ideal prayer life. They don’t even have their health, their home, but they have Jesus.

Jim’s answer demonstrated an honest assessment about himself and God saying,

I think the ideal prayer life is the one that is realistic. I think for me the Garden of Gethsemane is pretty realistic. The disciples falling asleep, failing to keep watch, and realizing their own human weakness and frailty in prayer and realizing that the one that is the perfect intercessor is the one that has to keep nudging us to stay awake and that we can’t pray to that level that Jesus had. He is our intercessor on our behalf. I think, you know, you get weighted down with guilt because you are not doing the way he does it, or that person does it, or somebody else does it. You know, I think that’s always the time it begins to erode you. . . . But comparing is disaster. You can be inspired by people, but you have to do something that is real and authentic to yourself. I think that that is ideal. But that doesn’t mean that you are to be a flake and not do it either.

John simply said, “You have to listen to God. He will tell you how to pray. That’s ideal. The Holy Spirit will help. God promised that he would.”

Don also put his answer in just a few words saying,

I think that the ideal prayer is having the same faith you had in God that you had as a young boy. When I was young I believed that God could do anything. Sometimes I forget that. I still want that same relationship now.

Brian used the analogy of his new running experience with what he would call the ideal prayer saying,

Dave, one of the young men in our church, helped me get started in running. The first mile is, well it's burdensome. But once you break through a little bit, you kind of hit the flow of it. And the times of prayer for me when I have gone through the pain of the start up, and when I'm kind of meeting all my goals and at my peak of efficiency in my prayer life, I feel like that is the best of my prayer. God begins to speak to me in a different way. You can't diet one day a week. You have to do it right to make it fruitful. The same is true with prayer.

Steve paused for a long time before he answered this question, even though he had previously written down an answer. He said,

Jesus my Lord is the perfect example of prayer. I know about every book on prayer includes the Lord's Prayer, but I love that prayer. That prayer is the ideal prayer life of this pastor.

Aaron went back to his grandfather who had taught him to pray and was such a strong example of prayer for him. He remembers,

Every one of my grandfather's prayers was the ideal prayer for me, this pastor. He prayed like Jesus did. He prayed like Paul did. And I strive to pray as my grandfather did. That's the ideal prayer life for me.

Joe reflected upon this question saying,

I believe that the ideal prayer life of a pastor, this pastor, is an honest relationship with God and Christ. My prayer life must first show my love toward God and then my obedience and trust in him. Then God will listen to what I have to say and that will make it ideal.

Tom went a little further with his answer;

I think that question is easy but yet hard in a way. A pastor's ideal prayer life must be steady, an every day, an every moment kind of practice. I think it must be full of faith and persistence, never doubting or forgetting its duty. The pastor must

spend most of his time alone with God but he must depend on his fellow man to help him through the best and the worst. He cannot always do it alone. The ideal prayer life is being honest with God. When we sin we must tell him. He always wants to hear. But most of all it would be praise. Praise to our God who loves us and saves us.

Themes That Emerged From the Data

After analyzing the interview data, several reoccurring categories emerged. These categories include the leading pastors' Bible study and devotion time, their journaling habits, time spent in prayer for their staff, time spent in prayer for their church members, and prayer tools they utilized. These leading pastors "identified with the presence and power of God," and "identified the essential qualities of regular or daily Bible reading and devotions." With regards to journaling, the pastors note journaling's benefits as "identification with God," and "identification with self." When praying for their staff, the pastors see "the importance of praying alone," "realizing the rewards of praying together," and "reaping the benefits of praying for each other." As the pastors pray for their congregation, benefits flow from this practice in the form of "their faithful example," "value of their prayers for the pastor," and "value of their own prayers for their people." When capitalizing on prayer tools, the pastors utilize three tools the most: "journaling," "praying through the Psalms or another scripture form" and "praying with aid of music."

This researcher anticipated that the participating leading pastors would identify that the preceding categories were necessary in sustaining their moral integrity in their ministry. The researcher anticipated four statements about the research. First, the "Moral integrity of leading pastors today depends in part on their lifestyle of devotional Bible study." Second, the "Moral integrity of leading pastors today depends in part on their

practice of praying privately and praying with their church staff members.” Third, the “Moral integrity of leading pastors today depends in part on the faithful example of their congregation’s in prayer, the congregation’s prayers that are specifically for their pastors, and the faithful prayers of the pastors for their congregations.” Fourth, the “Moral integrity of leading pastors today depends in part on the prayer tools that they may choose to use; for example, praying through the Psalms, praying with his journal, and praying with music.”

The data revealed that the participants regularly participate in the practices listed in the hypotheses. Each of the participants uses devotional Bible study, while all but three journal in their daily lives. All of the participants believe that a time of prayer alone is essential for their lives, while they also regularly pray with their wives, families and staff members. Every one of these participants has a prayer partner who is a member of their staff. They all express the importance of praying for each other to sustain their moral integrity.

All of the participants feel the power and presence of their congregation’s prayers. The pastors all know individual members who are effectively praying for them and who have built their faith through the years. They also see prayer for their congregation as an essential element to their ministry and seek out ways to have others pray for them.

The prayer tools that they use were very common, though one uses none at all. Every participant who uses these prayer tools uses at least two of them. The most common ones are praying through the Psalms, journaling when praying, and using music to accompany their prayers.

The humility these leading pastors demonstrate quite possibility contributes more than any other factor to their vibrant prayer lives. They know that prayer is a gift from their Father in Heaven. All the pastors are greatly humbled that God has called them into the ministry and fully understand that they must depend upon the presence and power of God to do their jobs. The pastors' prayers depend upon the work of the Holy Spirit and not their own wisdom or strength.

This researcher understands that these men have been faithful all their lives in sustaining their moral integrity in their ministry. They are all humble yet confident in the power of God to sustain them throughout their lives. These pastors plan to finish well for Christ. It is understood that this attitude affects the findings of the study in a way that contributes to the study's goal: To have fine examples of moral integrity to help others who are and will serve the Lord as a pastor.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The literature review of chapter two proved in detail that prayer plays an important role in sustaining the moral integrity that is necessary in the life and ministry of the leading pastor. God has provided the necessary resources for leading pastors in multi-staff churches to victoriously combat any scheme that Satan may throw their way. The literature review also revealed that there has been an increase in the interest of this subject in the last few years. Literature sources that have been studied in this research were intentionally varied to include fine literature of the past and the present. Nineteenth Century authors Andrew Murray (1828-1917) and E. M. Bounds (1835-1913) were studied as well as contemporary authors including Richard J. Foster, John MacArthur, Philip Yancy, and Bryan Chapell. C. Peter Wagner and Dr. Ed Murphy, who believe that power encounter and spiritual warfare are both essential parts of their life and ministry, were also included in this study, showing a trend in the recent literature toward the importance of prayer in spiritual warfare.

A methodological plan using qualitative research and twelve interviews was described in chapter three. Two additional interviews were presented in Appendices B and C on the subjects of yoga with meditation and prayer in the military chaplaincy. Chapter four recorded the findings of the interviews and the theories that resulted from them. Chapter five will discuss discoveries from the interviews, present personal insights with Bible studies, and make recommendations for future research.

Summary of the Study

This study was designed to discover how leading pastors in today's multi-staff churches can better equip themselves for spiritual warfare through the use of prayer in their daily lives and ministry. Pastors today, as in the past, faithfully answer the call to serve in the ministry of Christ Jesus our Savior. They meet various challenges and face many hardships. They are consistently role models of service, selflessness, and sacrifice. In the mean time, sustaining their moral integrity is essential, from start to finish. There is no occupation in the world in which moral integrity is more important than in the lives of leading pastors and their staff. Every leading pastor should aspire to leading a life of moral purity. The apostle Paul wrote, "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received."³⁷³ Leading pastors who live lives of immorality will destroy their opportunity to lead. The beliefs and practices of leading pastors must be dependent upon the authority of scripture.

As a result of this study and data collected from the interviews of twelve leading pastors, there are three categories that emerge over all others. First, pastors must balance between Bible and prayer in their life and ministry. Timothy Chester writes, "So we should pray with an open Bible. How else are we going to know what to pray for? If you pray without a Bible you are pitting your wisdom against God's. Instead, for example, try identifying a verse relevant to each prayer request and use it to shape your prayers."³⁷⁴ R. T. Kendall shares a wise insight, "If you do nothing but read your Bible, you will *dry up*;

³⁷³ Eph. 4:1.

³⁷⁴ Chester, 116-117.

if you only pray, you will *blow up*; but if you read your Bible and pray, you will *grow up*.”³⁷⁵

Second, leading pastors depend greatly upon intercessory prayer to sustain their moral integrity in spiritual warfare. All twelve participants agreed that they rely mightily upon the prayers of their staff and congregation. In turn, the staff and congregation depended upon the leading pastor’s prayers. These leaders saw a great need for organized groups in their congregation with the purpose of intercessory prayer. These group members included staff members, other leaders in the congregation, and church members. Philip Yancey writes of intercessory prayer in Paul’s ministry, “When I study the prayers of the apostle Paul, I see clearly the widening circle of God’s love.”³⁷⁶ Paul’s widening circle included his prayers for his fellow workers and for the church families he served. This is a perfect picture of intercessory prayer at work.

Third, all but one of the leading pastors pray using three major prayer tools. These tools were prayer journaling, praying through the Psalms or other scriptures, and praying with music. The leading pastors greatly value these tools, and they encourage their staff to adopt any practice that would enrich their lives and ministry.

Analysis Relating to Practices

The literature review reinforced the ideal that personal Bible study and prayer go together in the spiritual life and ministry of leading pastors. As the Apostle Paul reminded the young Timothy, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of

³⁷⁵ Kendall, 38.

³⁷⁶ Yancey, 308.

truth.”³⁷⁷ The data collected in the interviews aligns with Paul’s teaching. The interview data affirms that personal Bible study and prayer are the two major practices that leading pastors identify that sustain moral integrity that is necessary for their ministries.

The interview data reveals that intercessory prayer is very important. There are several purposes for this practice. First, the interviewed pastors practice intercessory prayer as a constant reminder of their reliance on God’s presence and power in their ministries. Second, intercessory prayer leads to accountability among the staff members. The leading pastors are accountable to at least one other person on staff as a prayer partner, and the time spent in prayer with their fellow staff member plays an important part in sustaining their moral integrity. Third, intercessory prayer keeps the staff running smoothly and in rhythm with God’s harmony and fellowship. Each leading pastor discovered that their ministries stay focused on God’s work and God’s love when they are regularly praying for each other as a staff. When these leading pastors focused their staff meetings on intercessory prayer, the staff came to see each other through God’s eyes, not their own. Fourth, intercessory prayer keeps the leading pastors aware of people around them and how God is protecting those people, giving them wisdom to do their jobs, and guiding them in His will.

This study also shows that God provides many tools that leading pastors may choose to use in ministry to strengthen and encourage prayer. The interviewees most frequently mentioned prayer journaling, praying through the Psalms or other scriptures, and praying with music. The literature supports these prayer tools and gives several other suggestions.

³⁷⁷ 2 Tim. 2:15.

When asked to describe their own prayer lives, the interviewees expressed a feeling of great satisfaction and closeness to God, even though they sometimes fall short of their own expectations. They wish they could be more intentional in prayer, but every participant prays without ceasing throughout their ministries.

All of the interviewees see prayer as the very heart or foundation of their ministry. One participant calls prayer the lifeblood and foundation of his ministry. Five others describe prayer with a similar phrase, the very heart and foundation of their ministry. All the others simply use the word foundation to describe the importance of prayer in their life and ministry. All of the pastors agree that they could not accomplish anything in their lives without prayer.

When the participants assess whether they have acquired a suitable and effective prayer life, they all agree on three things. First, they feel connected to God and confident in their work, especially during stressful events in their jobs. Second, they feel connected to God when they pray and talk to Him. Third, they feel grounded and peaceful in their lives because of a close relationship with God. They react to life's stresses in a positive and constructive way when they depend on God in prayer. When all three are present in their lives, they know that their prayers have been effective.

The pastors all agree that praying to a great and sovereign God motivates them to sustain change in their prayer lives. He is a God who cares, who helps, and who listens to their prayers. All of the pastors include their families in their prayers first. They pray for the health of their family, for guidance and wisdom as a father and pastor, and for the faith to maintain a personal relationship with Christ throughout their life. They all strongly believe that God answers such daily prayers.

Analysis Relating to Current Practices

The interviewees all agree that pursuing a fruitful prayer life requires specific practices, and they all currently practice them. First, personal Bible study and devotions are essential not only for their weekly sermon and lessons preparation, but pastors must devote a regular time to personally read the Bible and meditate on what God is telling them. Every one of the interviewed pastors spends time in the Gospels and the Psalms. Regularly reading through the Gospels and Psalms helps them to identify with the presence and power of God and gives them quality time to listen to God on a personal level. This practice strengthened the pastors' moral integrity on a daily basis.

While these pastors see prayer as a dependence upon God, they also see prayer as a dependence upon the faith and love of those around them. The pastors see intercessory prayer as an essential fortification to their moral integrity. They all pray for their staff and congregation members regularly. In return, these leaders depend greatly upon the prayers of their staff members on their behalf. They also value the prayers of their congregation. Most of all, they realize the role they play in modeling a prayerful lifestyle for their congregation. These pastors identify intercessory prayer as important in mentoring younger pastors, encouraging others, and keeping everyone on the staff accountable to each other. Practicing intercessory prayer plays a most important role in sustaining the moral integrity of these leading pastors and their staff.

To aid their prayer lives, these leading pastors use many prayer tools. One pastor, who does not use the most common tools, still uses his own tools. He prays the Lord's Prayer, where he sees his relationship in prayer as father-son, and he accompanies much of his prayer time with Bible reading. All the other participants use the three most

common tools: prayer journaling, praying through the Psalms and other scriptures, and praying with Christian music. These participants understand the great value of recording their thoughts, heart-felt desires, and insights into scripture in their journals. They also identify with the words of wisdom that come from Psalms, Proverbs, or John as they pray through them. In addition, their spirit and emotions are greatly touched and encouraged through music. Many of the pastors feel closer to God when they either pray through a hymn in an old hymnal or when they pray as they write or listen to Christian music. These participants strongly feel that these practices keep them close to God and have an important role in sustaining their moral integrity.

At least six of the participants also mentioned two other current practices. First, these pastors often practice fasting and praying when they have to make tough decisions or set difficult goals. Second, these pastors practice tithing and see tithing as a necessary goal for every pastor.

Analysis Relating to the Connection between Moral Integrity and Prayer

These participants agree that three benefits of prayer help them pursue moral integrity. First, they agree that prayer provides a close conversation with God that leads to a close relationship with God. Second, the pastors agree that prayer provides a confident stance in Christ when they face the stresses of life. Third, they agree that prayer provides an avenue for accountability in their lives in the presence of God. Without prayer, therefore, these pastors would instead experience isolation from God and others, a life of unnecessary stress, and no accountability before God and man.

Analysis Relating to the Ideal Prayer Life

The interviewees identified a daily time alone with Jesus when they could surrender everything in their life to Christ as an ideal prayer life. While most easily identify this as the ideal, others spend a lot of time considering what the ideal prayer life should embody. Every participant looks to Jesus' prayer life in the Gospels as a model for their lifestyle. Most of these leading pastors spend their best time in prayer in the morning hours. Three participants practice their major prayer time later in the morning. However, all of them pray continuously throughout the day.

Some Personal Insights with Bible Studies

Ephesians 6:10-20 describes in detail a believer's resources for spiritual warfare. The passage gives the most comprehensive manual on spiritual warfare even though Romans 13:12, 2 Corinthians 6:7, and 1 Thessalonians 5:8 share parts of the spiritual armor found in Ephesians Six. Christians have used Paul's military analogies as a visual idea of how God enables them to victoriously face the schemes of Satan.

Living in a Greco-Roman world, Paul witnessed the Roman army throughout his life. He saw them at work during his youth in Tarsus of Cilicia, where his parents lived and he received his early education. This education continued in Jerusalem where Rome had ruled since 63 B.C. Unlike Jesus, Paul was a Roman citizen, and "Roman citizenship in the time of Christ was a valuable commodity."³⁷⁸ Apostle Paul witnessed the Roman army and its practices throughout his life, and as he wrote Ephesians, he was chained to a Roman soldier. He wrote,

³⁷⁸ James S. Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era, Exploring the Background of Early Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 197.

Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.³⁷⁹

From the very beginning, Paul makes it quite evident that the soldiers' power comes from outside of themselves saying, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his might power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."³⁸⁰ Our strength comes from the Lord alone. MacArthur writes,

Whenever Satan is confronted by Christians, the means of opposition is the strength of the Lord and the provision he has already made for all believers. Every believer has already experienced "the surpassing greatness of [God's] power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:19-20). The power that raised Jesus from the dead and exalted Him in heaven is *our* power, bequeathed to us as joint heirs with Him.³⁸¹

Just before Paul lists the pieces of the full armor of God, he informs each Christian of the seriousness of the devil's schemes. Paul uses four words to describe how powerfully the devil threatens Christian: rulers, authorities, powers, and spiritual forces.³⁸² This is the third time Paul mentions these powers. The first two are in Ephesians 1:21 and 3:10. As Murphy said, "He is simply heaping up words to describe the massive and complex hierarchy of evil supernaturalism with which the believer is at war."³⁸³ At all times, the Christian soldier must never forget that he depends upon a much mightier force, God's power. Understanding the enemy we face is important, but depending upon God's armor, his power, is essential for spiritual victory.

³⁷⁹ Eph. 6:19-20.

³⁸⁰ Eph. 6:10-11.

³⁸¹ MacArthur, 341.

³⁸² Eph. 6:12.

³⁸³ Murphy, 406.

R. T. Kendall lists the three Rs of spiritual warfare: recognize, refuse, and resist.

He elaborates,

Recognize the devil—that is, when an evil thought comes, a thought God would not have put there, see it at once as the devil. *Refuse*. That means do not entertain the thought. Refuse to give the evil thought any attention whatever. *Resist*. If the devil keeps coming back, resist him! We have the promise, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).

The devil knows his end; he knows that his time is short (Matt. 8:29; Rev. 12:10-12). The next time the devil reminds you of your past, remind him of his future (Rev. 20:10).³⁸⁴

We, as God’s people, have a part to play in the devil’s destruction. We must obey.

There is one central command that follows the armor of God, “Stand firm.”³⁸⁵ Paul

mentions this word three times previously as a noun to describe their empowered position in Christ. MacArthur writes,

God gives no deferments or exemptions. His people are at war and will continue to be at war until He returns and takes charge of earth. But even the most willing and eager soldier of Christ is helpless without God’s provision. That is Paul’s point here: take up the full armor of God. We have His provision in being His children, in having His Word, in possessing His indwelling Holy Spirit, of having every resource of our heavenly Father. God is our strength, but His strength is appropriated only through obedience; His mighty armor must be put on (v. 11) and taken up (v. 13).³⁸⁶

Calvin adds, “The Lord offers to us arms for repelling every kind of attack. It remains for us to apply them to use, and not leave them hanging on the wall.”³⁸⁷

Paul gives three other imperatives throughout the passage. They have similar meanings and support Paul’s central command: be strong,³⁸⁸ put on,³⁸⁹ and take up.³⁹⁰

God clearly demands and expects all Christians to be obedient in using the armor of God.

³⁸⁴ Kendall, 85.

³⁸⁵ Eph. 6:14.

³⁸⁶ MacArthur, 343.

³⁸⁷ Calvin, 334.

³⁸⁸ Eph 6:10.

Ephesians 6:14-17 lists six pieces of armor, with prayer accompanying them: “the belt of truth,” “the breastplate of righteousness,” “your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace,” “the shield of faith,” “the helmet of salvation,” “the sword of the Spirit,” “and pray in the Spirit on all occasions.”³⁹¹ Romans 13:12 describes the Christian’s armor as being an armor of light, “The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.”³⁹² In 2 Corinthians 6:7, Paul speaks to the Corinthians about his ministry of great endurance as being “in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left.”³⁹³ As the Thessalonians wait for the coming of the Lord, Paul tells them, “But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.”³⁹⁴

All of the pieces of armor are found in the word of God. Thus, leading pastors must faithfully study the Bible and meditate on it, enabling them to fully prepare for the battle of each day. Calvin write, “There will be no danger which may not be successfully met by the power of God; nor will any who, with this assistance, fight against Satan, fail in the day of battle.”³⁹⁵

The first piece of armor is “the belt of truth buckled around your waist.”³⁹⁶ The Greek word for truth here is ἀληθεια meaning “truthfulness, dependability, uprightness.”³⁹⁷ In Ephesians 6, Paul uses the meaning, “truth,” especially of the content

³⁸⁹ Eph 6:11.

³⁹⁰ Eph 6:13.

³⁹¹ Eph. 6:14-18.

³⁹² Ro. 13:12.

³⁹³ 2 Cor. 6:7.

³⁹⁴ 1 Thess. 5:8.

³⁹⁵ Calvin, 337.

³⁹⁶ Eph. 6:14.

³⁹⁷ Arndt and Gingrich, 35.

of Christianity as the absolute truth.³⁹⁸ MacArthur refers to this truth meaning, “God’s truth.”³⁹⁹ Calvin defines it as “sincerity of mind ... Our attention is thus directed to the fountain of sincerity; for the purity of the gospel ought to remove from our minds all guile, and from our hearts all hypocrisy.”⁴⁰⁰ Lincoln writes,

Since the LXX Isaiah 11:5 truth referred to faithfulness and loyalty and what was said there of the Messiah is now applied to believers, it is likely that that is also the force of ‘truth’ in this verse.⁴⁰¹

The second piece of armor is “the breastplate of righteousness.”⁴⁰² This piece of armor protects the soldier’s vital organs. MacArthur writes,

The breastplate of righteousness that we put on as spiritual armor against our adversary is the *practical* righteousness of a life lived in obedience to God’s Word. (Cf. the putting on of righteous behavior in line with the ‘new self’ in 4:24-27, which having been done, will ‘not give the devil an opportunity.’⁴⁰³

Calvin suggests the same thing, “For the subject now under discussion is a blameless life. He enjoins us to be adorned, first, with integrity, and next with a devout and holy life.”⁴⁰⁴ Barth continues with this idea,

In the context of the book of Isaiah, righteousness means help, salvation, and peace for the down trodden. No one except the Messiah can and will establish it among his people and the nations. It is a gift of God.⁴⁰⁵

Chapter two addressed these practices with exegesis on the key scriptures Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, Romans 12:1-21, and 2 Corinthians 3:12-18.

The third piece of Christian armor is the shoes, “and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.”⁴⁰⁶ MacArthur writes,

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 35.

³⁹⁹ MacArthur, 349.

⁴⁰⁰ Calvin, 338.

⁴⁰¹ Lincoln, 448.

⁴⁰² Eph. 6:14.

⁴⁰³ MacArthur, 352.

⁴⁰⁴ Calvin, 338.

⁴⁰⁵ Barth, 796.

The gospel of peace is the marvelous truth that in Christ we are now at peace with God and are one with Him. Therefore, when our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, we stand in the confidence of God's love for us, His union with us, and His commitment to fight for us.⁴⁰⁷

Adrian Goldsworthy gives a good example of the way Roman generals did everything to build confidence in their army. He writes,

The general's task was to raise his army to the highest pitch of confidence before exposing it to battle. Military manuals encouraged a commander to seek every advantage, however slight, ranging from ensuring that his army fought with full stomachs against an enemy who was hungry, or that the opposition fought with the sun in their eyes. Such factors did not in themselves determine the outcome of the battle, but each additional advantage gave an army another 'edge' over the opposition.⁴⁰⁸

The confidence and advantages that come from the gospel of Christ are far greater than what a general can give his army. Leading pastors can equip themselves with the wonderful gospel of Jesus Christ and, through the power of God, build confidence in others.

The fourth piece of armor is "the shield of faith."⁴⁰⁹ Lincoln writes,

Faith is mentioned throughout the letter (cf. 1:13, 15; 2:8; 3:12, 17; 4:5, 13; 6:23), and in this context it is the confident trust in and receptiveness to Christ and his power that protects the whole person. Faith takes hold of God's resources in the midst of the onslaughts of evil and produces the firm resolve which douses anything the enemy throws at the believer (cf. also 1 Thess. 5:8, where faith is part of the breastplate, and 1 Pet. 5:8, 9, where firm faith is necessary for resisting the devil).⁴¹⁰

Calvin compares the shield of faith in Ephesians 6:16 and the shield of faith and love in 1 Thessalonians 5:8. He writes with great insight, "All that was intended, therefore, was

⁴⁰⁶ Eph. 6:15.

⁴⁰⁷ MacArthur, 355.

⁴⁰⁸ Adrian Goldsworthy, *Roman Warfare* (London: Cassell & Co., 2000), 64.

⁴⁰⁹ Eph. 6:16.

⁴¹⁰ Lincoln, 449.

obviously this, ‘He who possesses the excellencies of character which are here described is protected on every hand.’”⁴¹¹

The fifth piece of armor is “the helmet of salvation.”⁴¹² MacArthur writes,

The helmet of salvation is that great hope of final salvation that gives us confidence and assurance that our present struggle with Satan will not last forever and we will be victorious in the end. We know the battle is only for this life, and even a long earthly life is no more than a split second compared to eternity with our Lord in heaven. We are not in a race we can lose. We have no purgatory to face, no uncertain hope that our own continued efforts or those of our loved ones and friends will perhaps someday finally make us acceptable to God. We know that whom God “predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified” (Rom. 8:30). There is not the loss of a single soul from predestination to justification to sanctification to glorification. That is God’s unbroken and unbreakable chain of salvation (cf. John 6:39-40; 10:27-30).⁴¹³

Calvin states, “The head is protected by the best *helmet*, when, elevated by *hope*, we look up towards heaven to that *salvation* which is promised. It is only therefore by becoming the object of *hope* that *salvation* is a *helmet*.”⁴¹⁴ Lincoln adds, “God has already rescued them from bondage to the prince of the air and seated them with Christ in the heavenly realm (cf. 2:1-10). By appropriating this salvation as their helmet, believers have every reason to be confident of the outcome of the battle.”⁴¹⁵ The Christian soldier’s mind is now set on the hope of salvation, victory. As studied in chapter two, because of justification and sanctification, there will be glorification in Christ Jesus.

The final piece of the Christian armor is “the sword of the Spirit.”⁴¹⁶ Goldsworthy writes of the Roman sword or gladius, “All Roman infantrymen were first and foremost swordsmen, and by the last quarter of the third century at the latest, this sword was the

⁴¹¹ Calvin, 339.

⁴¹² Eph. 6:17.

⁴¹³ MacArthur, 366.

⁴¹⁴ Calvin, 340.

⁴¹⁵ Lincoln, 450-451.

⁴¹⁶ Eph. 6:17.

famous *gladius hispaniensis* or Spanish sword.”⁴¹⁷ This sword was about two feet long, was used for cutting and thrusting, and was made of the finest metal making the sharpest blade. The Apostle Paul would have known all about this sword. MacArthur writes, “Paul explicitly states that the sword of the Spirit is Scripture, the word of God.”⁴¹⁸ He later writes, “As the sword of the Spirit, the Bible offers limitless resources and blessings to the believer.”⁴¹⁹ The sword is the source for truth, happiness, spiritual growth, and power. MacArthur calls it a defensive and an offensive weapon.⁴²⁰ Lincoln elaborates on this idea of how the Spirit works. He writes, “The Spirit is not so much the one who supplies the sword—both the helmet and the sword are to be received from God—but the one who give it its effectiveness, its cutting edge.”⁴²¹ Bryan Chapell sums it up,

This was the point from the beginning: we stand firm against the assaults of Satan because we have strength “in the power of God’s might.” God provides the power that enables us to stand against Satan’s attacks (cf. Rom. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:8). The Old Testament passage that stimulates Paul’s thought on these images makes it clear that these pieces of armor are God’s (see Isa. 59:17). Thus, we stand firm in the confidence that we are protected—armored—by his truth, by his righteousness, and with the gospel of peace, with the faith, with the salvation, and with the Spirit that are from him.⁴²²

In Ephesians 6:10-20, all of the armor of God culminates in prayer. Calvin writes, “To call upon God is the chief exercise of faith and hope; and it is in this way that we obtain from God every blessing. *Prayer* and *supplication* are not greatly different from each other, except that *supplication* is only one branch of prayer.”⁴²³ Marcus Barth puts a historical touch in describing the role of prayer in spiritual warfare.

⁴¹⁷ Goldsworthy, 43-44.

⁴¹⁸ MacArthur, 368.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., 369.

⁴²⁰ Ibid., 370.

⁴²¹ Lincoln, 451.

⁴²² Chapell, 148.

⁴²³ Calvin, 340.

Words and sounds can play a decisive role in battles, not only in the OT but in the whole ancient world, to say nothing of later periods. Oracles are sought to secure a fortunate outcome; curses are pronounced upon the enemy; encouraging speeches are delivered to the troops; last-minute prayers are spoken before the battle; crisp commands are shouted and acknowledged; yells and obscenities accompany the charge. However, in Ephesians the “word” used in the confrontation of the saints with the world is the “gospel of peace” which was first proclaimed by the Messiah himself (2:17; 6:15; cf. Heb. 2:3-4). According to Eph. 6:18-20, the particular mode of wielding the “sword of the word” is the prayer of the saints to God and the announcement of good news in prisons, before courts, in the world’s capital, Rome, and thus virtually to all the world, cf. Acts 28:30-31. It is clear that the mere quotation of Bible texts does not in itself exhaust the use of the “word of God” which the saints are to make. Ever new prayers, meditations, and forms of proclamation are indispensable for their mission.⁴²⁴

Praying in the Spirit gives leading pastors the will to resist, to put on, and to stand. Chapell writes, “What do we seek when praying in the Spirit for ourselves and others? Such prayer is not a plea for magical power so much as it is a prayer for the Spirit to stir up within us a greater zeal for God, an inner stirring to stand for his purposes when the enemy approaches.”⁴²⁵ As Paul said, the Spirit changes our hearts and makes us new people in Christ. When leading pastors receive the promises that are represented in these pieces of armor, they rely upon the love of God to build them up for the purpose of serving Him. When they value prayer, then moral integrity can be sustained to its fullest. This will not be accomplished by the efforts and strength of pastors but by the very power of our sovereign God. The grace of prayer is simply accepting God’s invitation to “practice the presence of God.”⁴²⁶

Paul uses two words for prayer in Ephesians 6:18-20, *προσευχης* and *δεησις*. They are two of the four Greek words used in 1 Timothy 2:1, which were studied in chapter two in the section, “A Pastor’s Four Practices of Prayer.” The former is the

⁴²⁴ Barth, 800.

⁴²⁵ Chapell, 150.

⁴²⁶ Foster, 120.

general word for “prayer” used in the New Testament. The second word means “entreaty, asking earnestly, request” and is referred to offerings requested from God. Calvin referred to it as “supplication” to God.⁴²⁷

Leading pastors strive to finish well. Calvin writes, “A promise of victory is, indeed, involved in the exhortation, *that ye may be able*. If we only *put on the whole armour of God*, and fight valiantly to the end, we shall certainly *stand*.”⁴²⁸ Near the end of his ministry, Paul wrote to the young Timothy, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”⁴²⁹

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this study has been to understand the role that prayer has in a leading pastor’s ministry when it comes to sustaining moral integrity in the church today. Because this study was limited to the four primary questions given, I will now give some recommendations for further study and research.

Through the literature review, Bible study, and interviews of twelve leading pastors, this study has shown that in the role of leading pastors in multi-staff church setting, prayer is essential in spiritual warfare. The leading pastors in this study most commonly pray using intercessory prayers with their staff, a prayer journal, the Psalms and other scripture, music, and personal prayer accompanied by Bible study and devotions. Intercessory prayer benefits the staff as a whole, as well as each member individually. The prayer tools and personal Bible study and devotions benefit each leading pastor individually and then, ultimately, benefit the whole congregation.

⁴²⁷ Calvin, 340.

⁴²⁸ Ibid., 337.

⁴²⁹ 2 Ti. 4:7.

God had made grace and power available to Christians through prayer. What God wants from leading pastors is faith and obedience. What God wants is a close, personal relationship with each one.

Several practices of leading pastors arose in the interviews that deserve further study. First, the practice of prayer journaling deserves further study. Much of what was said during the interviews regarding this subject was not discussed in this study. What form does a prayer journal take? What would be the purpose and spiritual benefits of the use of a prayer journal? What would be the contents of such a journal and would these contents be of any future use for leading pastors and staff?

Second, praying through the Psalms and other scriptures deserves further study. How would such a prayer program be formed? What are the values found in Psalms or other scripture? What scriptures would be most beneficial?

Third, praying with music deserves further study. Many of the pastors in this study pray with a hymnal, chorus book, or peaceful and touching music. What material would the pastor choose and why? What type of music is most appropriate for the praying heart? Should music accompany prayer as a background for prayer? Is music alone, with no words spoken, sufficient?

Fourth, the devotional life of the pastor deserves further study. What material is available for pastors today? What material would be most beneficial? What different styles of devotions do pastors use?

Fifth, pastoral retreats and sabbaticals deserve further study. What value is there for pastors to take intentional time off from their work? How often should pastors go on

retreat or take a sabbatical? Who should go with pastors and why? What length of time is best for a retreat or sabbatical?

Sixth, intercessory prayer deserves further study. Although this subject makes a small appearance in many books, little has been written on this subject. What is intercessory prayer? How and where is it presented in the Bible? What are the practices of intercessory prayer in the church today? Would the church and pastors benefit from such a study?

Seventh, written covenants for a multi-staff ministry deserve further study. How would such a covenant benefit the congregation as well as the staff? What would such a covenant include and who would determine what is included in such a covenant? Would they differ from one church to another?

Eighth, the physical care of pastors deserves further study. Could a study on physical fitness in the ministry benefit the pastor, staff, and congregation? What does God expect from pastors in this area of their lives? How well are pastors maintaining their physical health? What kind of programs are they using?

Ninth, mentoring for young pastors deserves further study. Most of the participants interviewed for this study experienced a strong and positive mentoring at the beginning of their ministries. Who would make good mentors for our young pastors? What would be involved in a mentoring? For how long a period would this mentoring continue?

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following is the list of questions used for all twelve interviews with leading pastors of multi-staff churches. The subject of this study was prayer and spiritual warfare in the multi-staff church. Additional questions were asked if it seemed appropriate at the time. These differed from interview to interview.

Introductory Questions

1. Did you come from a Christian family who prayed together regularly?
2. How did you learn to pray? Who taught you to pray?
3. How many years have you been involved in the ministry with a multi-staff situation? What are some of your positive experiences?

Primary Research Questions

4. What practices would you identify that would sustain your moral integrity that is necessary in your ministry?
5. How would you describe your own prayer life?
6. How would you describe the importance/significance/power of your prayer life?
7. How do you judge whether you have acquired a suitable and effective prayer life?
8. Why do you pray throughout your ministry? What or who motivates you to pray?
9. What are your current practices in your prayer lives as a staff? How do you pray together? When? Where? Do you have a regular scheduled time?
10. To what extent do you as a pastor connect moral integrity with prayer?
11. What do you consider to be the ideal prayer life?

Additional Questions

12. How often, when, and how long do you pray in your own personal life/family?
13. Do you find satisfaction/safety in your prayers? Do you believe that prayer protects you from Satan?
14. When has prayer ever become a burden to you?
15. When was prayer a wonderful blessing for you and your ministry?
16. How do you think your prayer life has built a closer relationship with God and Christ?
17. How/When have you helped and encouraged your staff in prayer?
18. How/When has your staff helped and encouraged you in your ministry?
19. What do you believe to be the most important purpose in prayer?
20. What books, publication, etc. have helped you in your prayer life the most?
21. How does your prayer life today compare to when you were first in the ministry?
22. Where is prayer a significant part of your life? Is it with your family/home, office/work, evangelism/missions, or organizing/programming for prayer?
23. Where is your favorite place to pray?
24. Is prayer easier for you in a group setting or alone with God?
25. Who is your prayer partner and why?
26. How do you lead your staff in prayer?

APPENDIX B

AN INTERVIEW WITH A DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR LIVING YOGA AND MEDITATION

A personal interview was arranged by phone to meet for an hour interview at the Center for Living at a local city hospital. The center addresses the holistic needs of patients and visitors who come to the hospital for physical healing. It offers mind-body fitness practices like yoga, mind-body fusion, Tai Chi, meditation, acupuncture, massage, and as well as other holistic practices.

This interview lasted forty minutes and was digitally recorded for use in this appendix. The interview began by the participant telling this interviewer about the history of the mind-body medicine program.

The center is a result of a thirty year study at Harvard Medical School under the medical direction of a Dr. Herbert Benz. The center is now twelve years old and is modeled after the Harvard Medical School's program. The mind-body medicine model does have scientific rigor applied to it. So we can say with all honesty to our clients that what we supply for our clients is evidence based on complementary medicine.

The first question asked was, "Why would people come to this center for treatment?" "The primary reason people come here is one of two reasons. One is preventive...the second are those people who come here who have stress related illnesses and so they are seeking complimentary treatment to what their traditional doctors are prescribing."

When asked why people came to the facility, the participant answered:

So for an example, people come here with issues like chronic pain, like migraine headaches, like irritable bowel syndrome, like muscle contraction headaches, anxiety, and depression. Those are chronic illnesses that are all impacted by stress. And so they come for things like

yoga, like meditation, because those kinds of services literally, and this is what the research at Harvard shows, literally decreases sympathetic arousal in the nervous system and when you decrease, and I always use the metaphor of the volume on the remote control, you learn to breathe properly, learn to focus the mind means that your decreasing the volume on the stress hormones and when you do that you create balance in your anatomic nervous system and that is the major regulator of your body functions. So when you can regulate or control the main control mechanism then other things tend to fall into place.

When asked how their patients were taught to control the stress in their lives the participant said,

We teach stop, breathe, and reflect, which is an easy way of controlling stress. Stop, meaning to mentally, you know, stop what you are doing. Breathe slowly using the diaphragm. Breathing slowly using the muscle to turn off that body's stress response. And reflect means you ask yourself what am I feeling and what do I need. They then find themselves in the present moment where you are not worrying about the future and you are not worrying about the past. You are not anticipating about what might happen or worrying about what did happen. You are, therefore, right now in the present moment because slow breathing not only turns off the body stress response it brings, the mind back into the present moment. So now you have stopped, breathed, and reflected and you can choose how you are going to respond and you can choose to either let it go because you don't have the energy to deal with it or it is not your problem anyway. Or it is something that you have no control over, or you take action because it is something that you care about and you do have the resources in dealing with it.

Sometimes I tell people, and this is not because you are a minister, but I often say this, I tell them that you let go at that time and then you do what you do to get that into your heart and make a decision about what is the right thing to do. And for some people that is praying, sometimes that is meditation, sometimes that is talking to a friend, sometimes that is talking to a minister or a priest, a rabbi, or a counselor. But then you make up your mind and you go back and take action. So I have always said that the Serenity Prayer is the prescription for managing stress. You need to know what you have control over, what you can take action on, and when you need to let go.

It is reassuring that (this hospital) is aware that the people who come to this center have the right perspective in life and are aware of God's role in their lives. People here need to realize that they need to take time to meditate on God's Word and be still and know that He is God.

A question was asked about the role of meditation and how it was taught at the center and how it was applied to the lives of those who attended.

We offer yoga. We offer Tai Chi which is a moving meditation but again it is concentration which is using the breath and you have to concentrate on those movements. Um, from a traditional Chinese medicine perspective there are pathways that energy flows through the body and so Tai Chi is about moving through those pathways... We offer stress management classes every Tuesday, like today at noon. We offer a free mindfully-based meditation circle. Anyone can come. There is no charge for that... We have an instructor who teaches mindful eating, um, mindfulness for healthy living and mindfulness is a concept that refers to, it is mind training, so you learn to stay in the present moment. And so mindful means that you are mindful of what is happening as apposed to mindlessness which an untrained mind will be.

The next question dealt with the role of prayer with meditation and relaxation. Was it their intention at the center to replace prayer with such practices as relaxation?

First of all, we have resources for my people—medical doctors, counseling centers, and more. This center is all about what is natural and it is empowering to people. And when I teach them the word “relaxation response” that is how to turn off the stress response. I always use prayer for a tool. I respect their belief system but I find that out and then I use them, um, I always tell them to substitute a prayer that would have more meaning but I always have them breath in and this is after they learn to breath. “Be still and know that I am God.” I always use that phrase. When you can bring a person’s belief into the relaxation response that is whole. This is as whole as you can get and that is what God intended, you know.

The final question asked was in regard to meditation and yoga and moral integrity. “One more question. How effective is meditation or yoga when it comes to sustaining a person’s moral integrity? How does meditation or yoga help a person overcome things like alcoholism, smoking, or any other addictions?”

I think what yoga and meditation do is they help people reconnect with themselves. And as you know, when people have addictions or other major life struggles, a lot of times you almost become separate from yourself, because that other thing takes on your life. And so when you

learn to be quiet within yourself you reconnect with yourself. Now I believe, I don't preach this, but I believe, and I have seen this, for it is certainly my experience and I have seen it happen with lots of people, is that once you reconnect with your "self," small "s", and you stay there, you know, you connect, the God of your understanding, you are there, you hear what God is saying to you. So I think it helps that way. I think it helps physiologically because it turns off the stress responses and you think more clearly. And then people begin to experience a sense of peacefulness and calmness that they never had before because now their mind is calm. Their emotions are more balanced. And then you know, for some people spiritually they connect, you know, on a spiritual level. For Christians that would be probably connecting with Christ, you know, I mean, in their own way... This is not a cult nor a replacement of religion. These are tools that can be used to heal the people of God. When we do that Namaste, then I usually say that from that place of love within your heart you might want to share Namaste with other people and even with those whom you do not feel kind towards. And many times with war and poverty and major earthquakes and everything, we send blessing across the continent, you know. To me that is just a sacredness that is universal.

Four things stood out in the interview with this participant. First, this practice was friendly toward God and the Christian faith. This center did not practice these arts for strictly religious purposes. The practices are centered on meditation and relaxation methods and not Far East religions and beliefs. Second, this center encourages prayer and includes this Christian practice in their center. That does not mean, however, that they would promote it to those who do not believe in God or those who have not practiced prayer for a long period in their life. Third, the main purpose of yoga and meditation is as a mental practice to the relieve stress in their lives. This center strongly believes that these practices do work and would be beneficial to anyone who would faithfully practice them. Fourth, this center does believe that yoga and meditation are just as effective as prayer might be in sustaining moral integrity in a person's life.

APPENDIX C

AN INTERVIEW WITH A NAVY CHAPLAIN

This interview was done over the phone. The participant has been a military chaplain for over twenty-five years and is now a Commander Five in rank. He is in charge of several chaplains on the east coast of the United States and several chaplains who are now serving overseas. The questions were brief and simple. They were digitally recorded for use in this appendix. The primary questions of this study were asked as well as specific questions relevant to those serving in the armed forces.

The interview began with questions dealing with the responsibilities of military chaplains, their duties, and moral integrity. The first question: "What is expected of each chaplain as they enter their service in the military?" The interviewee stated that the first responsibility of each chaplain is no different than any other service man or woman. The chaplain is expected to know, understand, and follow the code of conduct. There are six articles to the code and the chaplain emphasized the sixth one: "I will never forget that I am an American fighting man, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America."

The second question: "How is the chaplain expected to treat all religions?" The Commander explained that each chaplain is to respect each and every religion that is represented under his responsibility. They may be of a different faith, but

they are to understand and respect the different faiths of others and serve them according.

The third question: “What practices do you as a Commander, and the Navy in general, expect each chaplain to practice to sustain the moral integrity that is necessary in their service for their country?” The Commander referred to three areas of life that each chaplain is to “keep in line.” First, they are expected to keep their uniform clothing and equipment in the proper order. Second, they are to practice proper personal hygiene and good physical fitness. Third, they are to maintain an acceptable level of good moral conduct. In order to do so, they were expected to study their Bible, pray, tithe, fellowship, and conduct communion, sharing the bread and wine in remembrance of Christ. This Commander kept in close contact with the chaplains under his command by regular phone calls, periodic personal visits, and by mail. The only method of mentoring or monitoring these chaplains’ moral conduct was by reading the records of their service, personal contact, and keeping in contact with them primarily by phone.

The fourth question: “What are some of the current practices of your chaplains’ prayer lives?” The Commander replied that the only way to measure these chaplains’ current prayer practices was to measure how well they prayed with their service men and women. He had a few chaplains whom he felt did not relate well with the Sailors and Marines when it came to prayer and worship. But he felt that most of them built a strong and close relationship with their people. These were the chaplains who were greatly respected and sought after. He knew

of five chaplains under his command who kept very fine prayer journals. He was amazed at how well they were organized and how spiritually minded they were in their records. This form of journaling was above and beyond what the Navy expected of them.

The fifth question: "To what extent do you think your chaplains connect integrity with prayer?" Two subjects arose from this question. First, the Commander said that the practice of a personal prayer life with God built a strong sense of accountability in his chaplains. He said that he could tell which chaplains had a close personal relationship with God. "If they are not reading their Bibles and praying daily, they will not make a proper and efficient chaplain in the Navy or any branch of the service. That is when the drinking problems arrive, marriage problems, or any other problems in their life and their service." Second, the Commander remarked that he has always had one or two chaplains who would frequently call him with problems or complaints. "Those are my chaplains who are not praying to God and relying on His presence and strength. The personal problems, marriage problems, or any other problems they have will all be connected to the absence of a proper personal prayer life and a strong personal relationship with Christ."

The sixth question: "What would your chaplains today consider the ideal prayer life?" The Commander replied by saying that this would vary with each of his chaplains. For many of them, prayer comes naturally and they would not even think about serving their country without involving themselves in a strong personal prayer life. This would include a healthy prayer life with their wife,

family and those service people under their care. The Commander expressed that his strongest praying chaplains were those who had been in combat situations. The ideal prayer life for his chaplains and for his life personally, would be “a quiet time with God each day, hopefully at least two or three times a day, to praise and worship Him and to share my life with Him. I think every one of my chaplains would agree with this statement.” The Commander gave the example of Daniel in the Old Testament and how he prayed three times each day to God.

The practice of Bible reading and prayer in sustaining moral integrity was as important to military chaplains as it was to pastors. It was amazing to hear the Commander relate stories of faith and prayer from chaplains who had been in combat and are presently serving in combat zones today.

APPENDIX D

RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING

Arterburn, Stephen and Fred Stoeker. *Every Man's Marriage: Every Man's Guide to... Winning the Heart of a Woman*. The Every Man's Series. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2001.

Baillie, John. *A Diary of Private Prayer*, First Fireside Edition. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.

Bloom, Anthony. *Beginning to Pray*. Nahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1970.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Letters and Papers from Prison*. 2d ed. New York: SCM Press Ltd., 1953; The Macmillan Company, 1967.

Buckingham, Marcus. *The One Thing You Need to Know: About Great Managing, Great Leading, and Sustained Individual Success*. New York, NY: Free Press, 2005.

Chan, Francis. *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed By a Relentless God*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2008.

Chapell, Bryan. *Praying Backwards: Transforming Your Prayer Life by Beginning in Jesus' Name*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005.

Covey, Stephen. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons on Personal Change*. New York: Free Press, 2004.

Crabb, Larry J. *The Papa Prayer: The Prayer You've Never Prayed*. Nashville, TN: Integrity, 2006.

Dossey, Larry, M.D. *Prayer is Good Medicine*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1996.

Goldingay, John. *Walk On: Life, Loss, Trust, and Other Realities*, rev. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.

Gothard, Bill. *The Power of Crying Out: When Prayer Becomes Mighty*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2002.

Lewis, C. S. *Letters to Malcolm Chiefly on Prayer: Reflections on the Intimate Dialogue Between Man and God*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt, 1964.

Martin, Linette. *Practicing Praying*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997.

- McMinn, Mark. *Why Sin Matters: The Surprising Relationship Between Our Sin and God's Grace*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2004.
- Omartian, Stormie. *The Power of a Praying Church: Experiencing God Move as We Pray Together*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003; Harvest House Publishers, 2008.
- Otis, Jr., George. *Informed Intercession*. Ventura, CA: Renew Books, 1999.
- Packer, J. I. and Carolyn Nystrom. *Praying: Finding Our Way through Duty and Delight*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006.
- Schaeffer, Edith. *The Life of Prayer*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1992.
- Sheets, Dutch. *Intercessory Prayer*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1996.
- Stanley, Charles F. *In Step with God: Understanding His Ways and Plans for Your Life*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008.
- Teresa of Avila. *The Interior Castle*. New York: Image/Doubleday, 1989.
- Teykl, Terry. *How to Pray After You've Kicked the Dog*. Muncie, IN: Prayer Point Press, 1999.
- Thrasher, Bill. *A Journey to Victorious Praying: Finding Discipline and Delight in Your Prayer Life*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2003.
- Towns, Elmer. *The Eight Laws of Leadership*. Lynchburg, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1992.
- Wagner, C. Peter. *Prayer Shield*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1992.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arnold, Duane W. W., ed. *Prayers of the Martyrs*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991.
- Arndt, William F. and F. Wilbur Gingrich., trans. & ed. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 15t ed. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1974.
- Arterburn, Stephen and Fred Stoeker. *Every Man's Battle: Winning the War on Sexual Purity One Victory at a Time*. The Every Man Series. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2003.
- Askew, Eddie. *The Silence and a Shouting*. Guilford, Surrey, England: Eagle Publishing, 2001.
- Anant, John. *The Passion Promise: Living a Life Only God Can Imagine*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2004.
- Baillie, John. *A Dairy of Private Prayer*. First Fireside Edition. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.
- Barna, George, ed. *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice, and Encouragement on the Art of Leading God's People*. The Leading Edge Series. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997.
- Barth, Carl. *Praying and Preaching*. Naperville, IL: SCM Press LTD, 1964.
- Barth, Marcus. *Ephesus, Translation and Commentary on Chapter 4-6*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1974.
- Berkley, James D., ed. *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration*, rev. and exp. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007.
- Boa, Kenneth, and Karen Boa. *Simple Prayers: A Daybook of Conversations with God*. Tulsa, OK: Honor Books, Inc. 1997.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship*. 2d ed. New York: SCM Press Ltd., 1959; Macmillan Publishing, 1963.
- Bounds, E. M. *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds on Prayer: Experience the Wonders of God through Prayer*. 16t ed. Baker Publishing Group, 1990: Baker Books, 2005.

- Breen, Mike, and Watt Kallestad. *The Passionate Life*. 2d ed. Colorado Springs, CO: Nexgen, 2005.
- Bridgwater, Mary Ann. *Prayers for the Faithful: Fervent Daily Prayer and Meditations for Christians Serving Around the World*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2008.
- Brokhoff, John R. *Pray Like Jesus: An Exploration in Prayer*. Lima, OH: The CSS Publishing Company, 1994.
- Brother Lawrence. *The Practice of the Presence of God*. New ed. Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1982; Whitaker House, 2006.
- Brown, Christiana. *The Book of Yoga: Bringing the Body, Mind, and Spirit into Balance and Harmony*. Bath, England: Parragon Publishing, 2004.
- Buchanan, Mark. *Your God Is Too Safe: Rediscovering the Wonder of a God You Can't Control*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2001.
- Buckingham, Marcus. *The One Thing You Need to Know: About Great Managing, Great Leading, and Sustaining Individual Success*. New York: Free Press, 2005.
- Bunyan, John. *The Pilgrim's Progress: From This World to That Which Is to Come; Delivered Under the Similitude of a Dream*. 3d ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004.
- Calvin, John. *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, Trans. William Pringle. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948.
- _____. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960.
- Cash, Lt. Carey H. *A Table in the Presence*. Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group, 2004.
- Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1995.
- Chapell, Bryan. *Holiness by Grace: Delighting in the Joy that is Our Strength*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001.
- _____. *Praying Backwards: Transforming Your Prayer Life by Beginning in Jesus' Name*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005.
- Chester, Tim. *The Message of Prayer, The Bible Speaks Today: Bible Themes Series*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

- Colson, Chuck, and Harold Fickett. *The Good Life*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2005.
- Covey, Stephen. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons on Personal Change*. New York: Free Press, 2004.
- Crabb, Larry J. *The Papa Prayer: The Prayer You've Never Prayed*. Nashville, TN: Integrity, 2006.
- Dallimore, Arnold A. *George Whitefield, the Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth-Century Revival*, vol. 1, 5th ed. Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1989.
- Feuerstein, George and Stephen Bodian, ed. *Living Yoga: A Comprehensive Guide for Daily Life*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1993.
- Foster, Richard J. *Prayer, Finding the Heart's True Home*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992.
- Fraser, Tara. *Total Yoga: A Step-by-Step Guide to Yoga at Home for Everybody*. London, England: Thorsons, 2001.
- Gaye-Anderson, Keisha. "Doing the Right Thing, The Importance of Maintaining Integrity in the Work Place," in *Black Enterprise*. New York: #8, March 2007.
- Goldingay, John. *Walk On: Life, Loss, Trust, and the Other Realities*. rev. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Goldsworthy, Adrian. *Roman Warfare*. London: Cassell & Company, 2000.
- Gothard, Bill. *The Power of Crying Out: When Prayer Becomes Mighty*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2002.
- Hill, E. V. *Victory in Jesus: Running the Race You Are Meant to Win*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2003.
- Hughes, R. Kent. *Ephesians, the Mystery of the Body of Christ*, Preaching the Word Series. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990.
- Jeffers, James S. *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era, Exploring the Background of Early Christianity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999.
- Kendall, R. T. *Did You Think to Pray? How to Listen and Talk to God Every Day About Everything*. Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2009.
- Lewis, C. S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: Macmillan, 1952; Harper One, 2006.

Lincoln, Andrew T. *World Biblical Commentary*, vol. 42, *Ephesians*. Dallas: Word Books 1990.

MacArthur, John F. and Wayne A. Mack. *Introduction to Biblical Counseling: A Basic Guide to the Principles and Practice of Counseling*. Dallas, TX: Work Publishing, 1994.

_____. *The Book on Leadership*. Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 2004.

Mannoia, Kevin W., and Larry Walkemeyer. *15 Characteristics of Effective Pastors: How to Strengthen Your Inner core and Ministry Impact*. Ventura, CA: Regal Light, 2007.

Martin, Linette. *Practical Praying*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdsman, 1997.

McDonald, H. D. *Commentary Evangelical Thought: Basic Christian Doctrines*, Carl H. F. Henry, ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962

McGilvery, Carole, Jimi Reed, Mira Mehta, and Silva Mehta. *The Encyclopedia of Aromatherapy Massage and Yoga*. London, England: Hermes House, 1998.

McLaughlin, Patrick, Chaplain, CDR, USN. *No Atheists in Foxholes, Prayers and Reflections from the Front*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008.

Merriam, Sharan B. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Boss, 1998.

Merton, Thomas. *Contemplative Prayer*. New York: Doubleday, 1969.

Milton, John. *Great Books of the Western World, English Minor Poems: Paradise Lost, Samson Agonistes, and Areopagitica*, vol. 32, Robert Maynard Hutchins, ed. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1952.

Mooney, Christopher F., S. J. ed. *Prayer: The Problem of Dialogue with God*. Papers of The 1968 BEA Instituted Symposium. New York: Paulist Press, 1969.

Mounce, William D. *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993.

Murphy, Ed. *The Handbook for Spiritual Warfare*, new and rev. ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Publishers, Inc., 2003.

Murphy, Linda. "Mind-Body Fitness Classes," in *Mind-Body, Magazine for the Center for Living at St. John's Hospital*. (Winter 2010).

- Neufeld, Thomas R. Yoder. *Ephesians*, Believers Church Bible Commentary. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1984.
- Nicodem, James L. *Prayer Coach: For All Who Want to Get Off the Bench and Onto the Praying Field*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008.
- O'Brien, Peter T. *The Letter to the Ephesians*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999.
- Packer, J. I., and Carolyn Nystrom. *Praying: Finding Our Way through Duty and Delight*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006.
- Pagitt, Doug, and Kathrya Prill. *Body Prayer: The Posture of Intimacy with God*. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2005.
- Plass, Ewald M., ed. *What Luther Says: An Anthology*. 2d ed., Vol. 2. Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1972.
- Pahner, Darl S. J. *The Need and the Blessing of Prayer*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997.
- Piper, John. *The Pleasures of God: Meditations on God's Delight in Being God*. 2d ed., rev. and exp. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2000.
- Rummage, Stephan Nelson. *Praying with Purpose*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2006.
- Sanders, J. Oswald. *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007.
- Schaeffer, Edith. *The Life of Prayer*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1992.
- Scott, John. *Ashtanga Yoga: The Definitive Step-by-Step Guide to Dynamic Yoga*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2000.
- Sheets, Dutch. *Watchman Prayer: How to Stand Guard and Protect Your Family, Home and Community*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000.
- Steere, Douglas V. *Dimensions of Prayer: Cultivating a Relationship with God*. rev. ed. Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 1997.
- Teresa of Avila. *The Interior Castle*. New York: Image/Doubleday, 1989.
- Thrasher, Bill. *A Journey to Victorious Praying: Finding Discipline and Delight in Your Prayer Life*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2003.

Trent, John. *The 2 Degree Difference: How Small Things Can Change Everything!* Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2009.

Trumbull, Henry Clay. *Personal Prayer: Its Nature and Scope*. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1915.

Wagner, C. Peter. *Prayer: How to Intercede for Pastors, Christian Leaders, and Others on the Spiritual Frontlines*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1992.

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose-Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002.

Weber, John A. "Business Ethics Training: Insights from Learning Theory," in *Journal of Business Ethics*. New York: January 2007.

Wyatt, Steve. *Trading Places: Allowing God to Renovate Your Life*. Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 2006.

Yancey, Philip. *Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006.

Zacharias, Ravi. *Has Christianity Failed You?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.