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WHEN DUTY CALLS: ISTJ PASTORS AS EFFECTIVE  
MINISTRY LEADERS

By

TIM J. REED

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

2013



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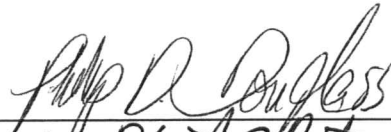


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Graduation Date May 17, 2013

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to explore how MBTI-ISTJ pastors lead effectively in pastoral ministry by understanding and capitalizing on their unique divine designs and temperament. This study utilized a qualitative design, using semi-structured interviews with eight pastors serving in the Presbyterian Church in America. The literature review and interview analysis focused on five key areas relating to one's pastoral leadership abilities: 1) how ISTJ pastors perceive their effectiveness as leaders in ministry, 2) how ISTJ pastors are motivated as leaders, 3) which leadership challenges ISTJ pastors typically face, 4) how ISTJ pastors understand others' perceptions of their pastoral leadership, and 5) how ISTJ pastors develop strategies to strengthen their effectiveness as leaders.

In the first area, dealing with effectiveness in ministry, the study findings revealed that the ISTJ pastors did perceive themselves as effective in ministry, primarily due to a high sense of duty and responsibility, a strong task-orientation, and a unique ability to bring a sense of calm to a crisis event. Regarding how ISTJs are motivated, the findings demonstrated the importance to these pastors of the ministry of God's Word, study, one-on-one interactions with people, and crisis management, to name a few. The findings in the third area of focus, concerning leadership challenges, were that ISTJ pastors may, among other challenges, become drained with too much people interaction, need time to process information, struggle to be visionary, and experience difficulty in functioning as part of a team. The study's fourth area of focus, others' perceptions of ISTJs' leadership abilities, revealed that ISTJ pastors may struggle to be at peace about their temperament, in light of the perceived cultural and congregational bias in favor of more extraverted

pastors. In the fifth focal area, strategies for effective leadership, the research revealed that strategies that ISTJs employ to help them succeed in pastoral ministry include creating margins in their schedules to allow them to recover from highly relational events, having office spaces that enable them to work in solitude, taking adequate time alone to recharge, and working with others through one-on-one interactions.

Through this study, the researcher concluded that ISTJs are effective ministry leaders for many reasons, chief among them their high sense of duty. The research demonstrated that ISTJs are effective in ministering God's Word in both the pulpit and the classroom. Further, pastors with this temperament thrive in the areas of administration, dependability, doing what needs to be done, bringing stability to practically every situation, and serving as stable shepherds of God's people.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my wife, Renee, for her constant love, support, and encouragement throughout my time in the Doctor of Ministry Program. Her partnership with me in this endeavor—and in ministry as a whole—has made all the difference. God has blessed me with a wonderful wife! My three children, Jessica, Zachary (a fellow ISTJ), and Meghan have also encouraged me in innumerable ways and are a rich blessing in my life. Their support of me not only in this project but also as a father and pastor has been invaluable. I treasure God's gift of a wonderful family.

The session of Covenant Presbyterian Church has supported me in this endeavor with their prayers, words of encouragement, and valuable resources, including the time I needed to complete this project. I am grateful for these elders' support. In addition, I wish to thank the many members of Covenant Presbyterian Church who partnered with me in prayer throughout this process. I would like to thank the eight study participants, as well, for their time and for the openness with which they shared their stories. They provided a wealth of rich data, on which this study is based. Dr. Phil Douglass, my faculty advisor for this project, has been a source of both encouragement and guidance. I am grateful to him not only for serving as my advisor but also for instilling in me an interest in human personality and its impact on pastoral ministry. For their advice and assistance, I also extend my thanks and appreciation to Dr. Tasha Chapman; Kristen Sagar, Assistant Director of the D. Min. Program; Dr. Robert Peterson, my second reader; and Rev. James C. Pakala, Library Director. Dorothy Carroll has served as the editor for this project; her skills have been most helpful, and I wish to thank her for a job well done.

My greatest hope for this dissertation is that God will be glorified through it. I also hope that it will encourage pastors, especially ISTJs, to delight in the temperament God has given them and to continue seeking his grace to be faithful leaders of God's people. The prophet Micah wrote, "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). I hope that this discussion will be of use to pastors as they seek to be that type of man—that type of leader in Christ's Church.

Scripture taken from THE HOLY BIBLE: ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

H. W. Crocker III, in *Robert E. Lee On Leadership*, explores valuable lessons on leadership from the American Civil War General's life. One lesson that readers can learn from Lee is the value of a strong sense of duty. Crocker writes, "Lee merely executed his duty to the best of his ability and gave no thought to anything else."<sup>1</sup> A letter Lee wrote to his eldest son, a West Point cadet, illustrates this great leader's sense of duty. He wrote, "Duty, then, is the sublimest word in our language. Do your duty in all things...You cannot do more, you should never wish to do less."<sup>2</sup> The title "marble man," by which fellow cadets and others referred to Lee when he himself was a cadet at West Point, depicts this aspect of his character or temperament. One should have little doubt that Lee's high sense of duty was part of the reason for his earning such a title. Lee's specific temperament type is unimportant to this discussion. Regardless of his Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (MBTI) type, Lee serves as a symbol for many who are likewise driven by a high sense of duty. Individuals with the MBTI type Introverted, Sensing, Thinking, and Judging (ISTJ) will resonate with the words that Lee shared with his son. The ISTJ temperament includes many traits, but chief among them is the strong drive to fulfill one's duty. When duty calls, ISTJs are often thrust onto center stage and, when so called upon, they lead to the best of their ability. This study will explore the ISTJ's sense of duty and many of its other traits to learn how ISTJs serve as effective

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<sup>1</sup> H. W. Crocker, *Robert E. Lee on Leadership: Executive Lessons in Character, Courage, and Vision* (Rocklin, CA: Forum, 1999), 193.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 188.

leaders in ministry. The research that follows will also show that ministers of this temperament type tend to encounter particular and at times even unique difficulties when pursuing the call to lead God's people, as the following story will illustrate.

A seminary student well into his preparations for pastoral ministry was shocked when his advisor told him to consider a profession other than the pastorate. Prior to this challenge, the seminarian had believed that God was calling him to pastoral ministry. Why, in light of the student's sense of calling, did his advisor offer such critical advice? The advisor had concluded that the seminarian's personality, which was of an introverted type, was not "cut out" for leadership in the church.

Several factors should discourage a person from pursuing pastoral ministry – the lack of a true sense of call, lack of affirmation of that call from God's people, pursuit of the call only to fulfill another person's expectations, serious character flaws, desire to escape from an unfulfilling career, and pursuit of the pastorate to soothe a guilty conscience, to name a few. Should specific temperaments also be automatic disqualifiers for leadership positions in Christ's church? How does one's personality or temperament affect one's ability to lead people? Experiences like that of the seminarian described above, combined with the researcher's desire to answer these questions, formed the motivation for pursuing this study.

This research explored the leadership styles and experiences of introverted pastors with the specific Myers-Briggs Type Indicator temperament, ISTJ (Introverted, Sensing, Thinking, Judging). Introverts as a whole, and ISTJs in particular, focus on the inner world. Therefore, the introverted leader leads best from the inside out. ISTJs and their fellow introverts need encouragement to appreciate God's gifting of them for leadership.

They need encouragement to lead intentionally, so that they can maximize the fruitfulness of their God-given gifts and abilities in a way that is consistent with God's grace and calling.

This introductory chapter sets the stage for those that follow, which will demonstrate that introverts, and in particular ISTJs, are designed to be effective leaders in Christ's church. Introversion equals neither ineffective nor defective leadership! In fact, quite the opposite is true – God calls leaders, introverted and extraverted, and uses them to pastor his flock. This chapter's survey of the literature on pastoral leadership and divine design will include a sampling of works on human personality, leadership, the ISTJ personality type, and pressures introverts face as leaders. Chapter two will provide a much fuller discussion of these topics. Relevant literature clearly reflects a bias against introverted leaders; the researcher will discuss this bias in the "Statement of the Problem and Purpose" section of this chapter. Next, the researcher will offer suggestions regarding the significance of this study for pastors and church leaders and will conclude with brief statements describing the research methods and defining key terms.

As mentioned above, Chapter two will provide a general review of the pertinent literature on human personality, introversion, MBI-ISTJ, and the leadership of ISTJ pastors. Chapter three will delineate the qualitative methodological approach utilized in this study. In Chapter four, the researcher will report and analyze the data, which were collected primarily through a semi-structured interview protocol. Finally, in Chapter five, the author will discuss the data analysis and the findings of the literature review, and will present implications based on the synthesized research.

## Pastoral Ministry, Divine Design, and Human Personality

Pastoral leadership is essential to the vitality and mission of the church. In *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, Dr. Donald McNair considers the importance of leadership in the church.<sup>3</sup> He writes, “For a church to be healthy, it needs healthy leadership.”<sup>4</sup> He further states, “Biblical church health virtually stands or falls with the health of the elder’s ministry!”<sup>5</sup> The Bible records many occasions when God called people to lead.<sup>6</sup> One text that illustrates the importance of pastoral leadership in the church is Acts 20:28. The Apostle Paul bid farewell to his beloved fellow elders at Ephesus by exhorting them to “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.”<sup>7</sup> Paul described the office of elder as one designed to fulfill a shepherding function, showing that God’s people need a leader to care for them. As sheep need a shepherd, so the people of God need shepherds to watch over them.

Bill Lawrence provides a helpful biblical definition for pastoral leadership. In *Effective Pastoring*, he states, “The pastor is a qualified overseer who shepherds God’s flock by equipping the saints for the work of ministry through teaching them to know and live God’s truth in such a way that they become disciple-makers.”<sup>8</sup> McNair agrees with Lawrence in understanding the role of the pastor primarily as that of a shepherd to God’s people. According to McNair, God’s design for pastoral leadership is “best summed up

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<sup>3</sup> Donald J. MacNair and Esther L. Meek, *The Practices of a Healthy Church: Biblical Strategies for Vibrant Church Life and Ministry* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Pub., 1999).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>6</sup> Several examples of leaders in the Bible are Abraham (Genesis 12-25), Moses (Exodus 3-Deuteronomy 34), Joshua (see the book of Joshua), King David (1 Samuel 16 - 1 Kings 2), the Apostle Paul (Acts 9-28), and Elders (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

<sup>7</sup> *Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> William Lawrence, Charles R. Swindoll and Roy B. Zuck, *Effective Pastoring: Giving Vision, Direction, and Care to Your Church*, Swindoll Leadership Library; (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1999), 76.

by the word ‘shepherd.’”<sup>9</sup> The role of shepherd, as understood broadly, can take many shapes and forms, depending on how the Lord has uniquely gifted the individual leader.

Many factors contribute to the health of ministry leaders, such as the person’s spiritual vitality; spiritual gifts; sense of call to ministry; emotional health; ability to maintain self-care; and competency in specific, essential, ministry and leadership skills. An additional factor—which is often overlooked, if not ignored—that contributes to an individual’s overall health as a leader in ministry is the person’s temperament, personality profile, or, in other words, divine design.

What functions are involved in pastoral leadership? The scale of competences necessary for pastoral ministry in today’s church spans a huge range of activities. The pastor is expected to minister in the areas of preaching, teaching, counseling, visitation, and prayer just to name a few. In addition, the skills of the scholar, CEO, accountant, administrator, manager, visionary, strategist, and more are often required. No one pastor can consistently meet all the demands placed on him. Nor should the church expect every pastor to perform at a high level of competence in every area of pastoral ministry. The gifts and abilities necessary for the role of the shepherd are more comprehensive than any one person can attain. Yet, God calls individuals to take up the mantle of leadership with both their abilities and their limitations.

Peter Scazzero, in *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, speaks of how he struggled with believing that he should be someone other than who God made him to be. He writes, “The problem was that God has not given me the abilities and capacities he has given other leaders. I bring other strengths to the task of leadership...I could not do anything I wanted. Yes, I had gifts and potentials. But, I also had limits given to me by God as a

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<sup>9</sup> MacNair and Meek.

gift.”<sup>10</sup> God has divinely gifted each pastor with abilities in leadership, and he has sovereignly imposed limits. Pastors would do well to understand not only their abilities in ministry but also their limitations, for both abilities and limitations are part of one’s divine design.

In *Maximizing Your Effectiveness*, Aubrey Malphurs champions the importance of pastors understanding their “divine design.” He writes,

Discovering who you are involves discerning your divine design. The process delves into your capabilities. Your capabilities are spiritual gifts, passion, temperament, natural talents and gifts, and other abilities that you have from God. They reside with each of us who knows Christ as personal Savior and in a sense are waiting to be discovered so they can be used in service for Christ ... everybody is a 10 somewhere, and the discovery of your design helps to determine precisely where.<sup>11</sup>

Malphurs is not alone in recognizing the importance of understanding one’s “divine design.” *Servants by Design* is a “self-report inventory and tool” developed by Robert S. Maris and Jerry C. Richardson.<sup>12</sup> This is an adaptation of Taibi Kahler’s Process Communication Model, “reflecting a biblical and Christian worldview.”<sup>13</sup> Kahler’s work has been widely used, according to Maris and Richardson, “because of its accuracy in assessing compatibility among members of a team and because of the model’s unique ability to predict how people are likely to react under stress.”<sup>14</sup> The inventory of Maris and Richardson helps individuals understand their unique God-given designs.

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<sup>10</sup> Peter Scazzero and Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship That Actually Changes Lives*, Expanded ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 138.

<sup>11</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Maximizing Your Effectiveness: How to Discover and Develop Your Divine Design* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006), 32-33.

<sup>12</sup> Robert S. Maris and Jerry C. Richardson, *Servants by Design* (2002). Profile Report Prepared for Tim Reed March 20, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.



Reginald Johnson, in *Your Personality and the Spiritual Life*, stresses the importance of divine design or temperament as a “creation gift from God.”<sup>15</sup> He states, “By discovering our own soulprint or personality type, we can appreciate the God-given attributes, identify some of our special areas of vulnerability and weakness, and discover the kinds of resources which might be most conducive for nurturing our relationships with Christ.”<sup>16</sup>

The concept that God uniquely designs each individual human being is rooted in Psalm 139. The Psalm records King David’s celebration of God’s sovereign work in creating human life. David declares, “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.”<sup>17</sup> This passage implies that God specially designs each person. If one extrapolates this principle to leadership, one is able to assert that each leader has a special design for shepherding God’s people. Thus, understanding a person’s divine design – how God has “wired” that particular leader, so to speak – is essential for being effective not only as a human being and follower of Christ but also as a leader in Christ’s church.

Isabel Briggs Myers, in *Gifts Differing*, discusses the sixteen temperament types of the Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (MBTI) inventory. According to Myers, one’s temperament is not developed solely by environmental forces, but is deeply rooted in the constitution of the person. She writes,

THE BASIC TYPE differences appear as differences in interest, but the division goes very deep and rests on a natural tendency to develop in a particular direction, and a natural direction yields not only effectiveness but emotional satisfaction and

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<sup>15</sup> Reginald. Johnson, *Celebrate, My Soul*  
*Your Personality and the Spiritual Life: Formerly Titled Celebrate, My Soul* / Reginald Johnson  
 (Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychology Type, 1999), 34.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>17</sup> *Holy Bible: English Standard Version*.

stability as well, whereas the thwarting of the natural development strikes at both ability and happiness.

If the direction of the development were entirely dependent on the environment, there would be nothing to be thwarted, but, in fact, a main hazard to good type development is the opposing pressure of environment.<sup>18</sup>

Myers' insights correlate with the principle of divine design found in Psalm 139. Each person has natural tendencies that make up his or her personality type. These tendencies are part of the individual's constitution as a person and impact the manner in which that person functions in all levels of life and, particular to this discussion, in roles of leadership. According to Myers, the environment can be a "hazard" to healthy type development.

Paul, in Acts 20:28, not only describes pastoral leadership as shepherding but sets forth the importance of the leaders' knowing themselves. The apostle begins by exhorting the elders to "pay careful attention" to themselves.<sup>19</sup> The primary import of this exhortation is to call the elders to take inventory of their own spiritual health in order to deal with the sin in their own lives, before focusing on the spiritual condition of their sheep. Ezekiel 34 tells the sad story of the ancient leaders of Israel not giving heed to their own hearts. The leader is to seek, as David sought in Psalm 139: 23, for God to "search me...and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!"<sup>20</sup> The false shepherds of Ezekiel's prophecy failed to take heed of their own lives and thus failed to seek God. Paul's exhortation in Acts 20 should be expanded to encourage leaders to "take their own spiritual temperature," and also to pay attention to how they are wired – knowing their

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<sup>18</sup> Isabel Briggs Myers and Peter B. Myers, *Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type* (Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Pub., 1995), 181.

<sup>19</sup> *Holy Bible: English Standard Version*.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*.

divine design. One might state that the effectiveness of pastors' leadership is in some degree based on how at peace they are with their personalities. Regardless of the expectations placed on pastors by congregations, one cannot overstate the importance of leadership for the health of Christ's church. It is necessary for leaders to know who they are. It is necessary that each leader's unique divine design for leading God's people be evident.

Is there biblical warrant for utilizing temperament studies in the Christian life? This question is relevant to this study, since the focal point of the study is the pastor's personality and how that temperament affects the pastor's leadership. A major component of understanding one's overall design, as discussed above, is to know one's particular personality or temperament. Are there biblical grounds for such a study? Dr. Philip Douglass, professor of practical theology at Covenant Theological Seminary, addresses this question in an appendix to an upcoming publication. He builds a strong biblical case for the use of temperament studies. "Some Christians," according to the introduction of the appendix, "may be reluctant to lend credence to temperament studies because they fear that such studies are 'secular' and unbiblical, especially in light of unbiblical strains of psychology that have arisen in our culture."<sup>21</sup> Douglass' purpose, as stated in the appendix, is to "respond to that reluctance." His first point is to show that categorizing temperament studies "...as 'secular' and not 'spiritual' is misguided. The point is whether they [temperament studies] are true and can be used to serve God."<sup>22</sup> For the Christian, no such dichotomy between "secular" and "spiritual" truly exists. Douglass argues that to reject temperament studies as "unspiritual" is akin to rejecting as

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<sup>21</sup> Philip D. Douglass, "Appendix: Biblical Grounds for Temperament Studies."

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

unspiritual the work of Christians and non-Christians alike “in fields like cardiology, architecture, or mechanical engineering.”<sup>23</sup> He states, “Thus, our thinking about temperament studies should proceed with the view that they can and ought to be endeavors that we employ to God’s glory.”<sup>24</sup>

Douglass further defends the use of temperament studies by appealing to “our ordinary experience.”<sup>25</sup> He distinguishes “character flaws,” which are viewed as sinful, from “personality traits,” which are not commonly considered sinful, but are better understood as temptations to which a person may or may not succumb. If the person succumbs to a particular temptation on a consistent basis, then it becomes an issue of character. He points out that one should “view human personality itself as a gift from God that can be used to his glory.”<sup>26</sup>

Another aspect of Douglass’ viewpoint is the link in scripture between personality and the soul. He states, in reference to *nepeš*, which is the Hebrew word for “soul” in Genesis 2:7, “This Hebrew word for soul may indicate not only the entire inner nature of man, but also his entire personality.”<sup>27</sup> Douglass cites the meaning of the Greek word for “soul” in the New Testament, *psuche*, as also referring to “the seat of human personality.”<sup>28</sup> James Montgomery Boice, as cited in Douglass’ appendix, writes, “The soul is the part of man that we would call the personality...”<sup>29</sup>

Douglass further shows how the lives of the apostles illustrate the dynamics of temperament. Under the influence of sin, Douglass states, one’s personality is used for

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

evil, but under grace one's temperament is used in service to Christ and the church. For example, prior to Paul's conversion, his personality was used to destroy the church, but after conversion, that same personality sought to serve Christ and his church with zeal.<sup>30</sup>

The last aspect of Douglass' case is related to the biblical concept of "diversity in the body of Christ." In reference to 1 Corinthians 12-14, which addresses the diversity of spiritual gifts in the church, Douglass suggests an analogy between the unique spiritual gifts God bestows on each individual and the uniquely designed temperament God gives each individual to use in service to Christ and the church. Just as love in 1 Corinthians 13 regulates how spiritual gifts are exercised, so must love govern the use of human personalities. Douglass then expands the analogy, stating that as spiritual gifts are to be exercised to build up the body, and as all things are to be done "decently and in order," the "study of temperament can be of great value to the Church in service to our Lord and his world."<sup>31</sup> Reflecting on the value of temperament studies, Douglass states that they "have an appropriate and helpful place in Christian thought and practice, including church leadership, ministry discipleship, and the individual believer's spiritual growth."<sup>32</sup>

Studying temperament and personality in relation to ministry leadership is a daunting task, due to the many complex issues involved in both of these subjects, as well as the vast amount of research available on both subjects. Even if one were to narrow the discussion simply to the sixteen personality types of the Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (MBTI) and how each type impacts a leader's ministry style, the scope of the work would still be immense. Further, of the sixteen MBTI types, eight represent different introverted temperaments. Though all introverts hold traits in common, the eight

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid. Acts 8:3 and 9:1.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 1 Corinthians 14:30-32

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

introverted types vary significantly from one another due to differences in the other components of each type. To lump all introverts together and assume they all behave the same way is to gloss over significant differences. Identifying the effects of an individual's temperament on his ability to lead is thus a complicated challenge, even when appropriate study limitations are in place. In light of the many and varied matters influencing how personality contributes to one's ability to lead in a healthy manner, this study focused on a particular introverted type, MBTI-ISTJ (Introverted, Sensing, Thinking, Judging). Though the central concern in this research is related to the ISTJ type, introversion in general will also be discussed at points, to foster better understanding of ISTJs and how they function.

### **Statement of the Problem and Purpose**

The literature shows that introverts, and therefore ISTJs, have the potential to be effective leaders. Myers, for example, states, "ISTJs make able executives."<sup>33</sup> In *Type Talk*, Kroeger and Thuesen state that ISTJs "make good soldiers."<sup>34</sup> They report, "In fact, based on a sample of more than ten thousand of the U.S. military – from enlisted personnel through four star generals and admirals – their predominant configuration is ISTJ."<sup>35</sup> Oswald and Kroeger remark, "SJ clergy [ISTJ is a subset of 'the conserving, serving pastor, SJ'] can be expected to excel in pastoral ministry."<sup>36</sup>

A review of the literature also shows that introverted leaders, and therefore ISTJs, face difficulties. Jennifer B. Kahnweiler, in *The Introverted Leader*, and Marti Olsen

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<sup>33</sup> Myers, 103.

<sup>34</sup> Otto Kroeger and Janet M Thuesen, *Type Talk: The 16 Personality Types That Determine How We Live, Love, and Work* (New York: Dell Pub., 1989), 217.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 217-218.

<sup>36</sup> Roy M. Oswald and Otto Kroeger, *Personality Type and Religious Leadership* (Washington, DC: Alban Institute, 1988), 77.

Laney, in *The Introvert Advantage: How to Thrive in an Extrovert World*, show the realities of the pressures many introverts face in everyday life and, more specifically, in the work place. Laney writes, “We definitely learn extroversion is the way we should be.”<sup>37</sup> Introverts encounter this pressure not only in the culture at large but also in the church. Adam S. McHugh, in *Introverts in the Church*, observes, “Even introverted pastors, though, feel the pressure to act like extroverts.”

Chapter two will include a fuller examination of the works of these and other authors. However, at this juncture, the above sampling of literature serves to demonstrate two realities: ISTJ leaders have the potential to excel in leadership, and ISTJ leaders face a cultural bias in favor of extraverted leaders that is present in all sectors of society, even in the church.

The effectiveness of a pastor’s ability to lead is not determined merely by temperament or MBTI type. A pastor of any MBTI type would have the potential to lead effectively and also have temperament-specific challenges to overcome. To maximize their leadership potential, ISTJ pastors have certain hurdles to conquer. One such hurdle is the perception, referenced above, of church culture, as well as culture in general, that the best pastors or leaders are “extraverts.” This perception may not be as prominent in churches and denominations like the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) that value strong preaching, which requires the pastor to engage in more introverted activities like study, prayer, and reflection. However, it is likely that this bias exists to some degree even in environments where introverted endeavors are valued.

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<sup>37</sup> Marti Olsen Laney, *The Introvert Advantage: How to Thrive in an Extrovert World* (New York: Workman Pub., 2002), 54.

A more formidable hurdle is the ISTJ pastor's own inner struggle with being designed by God as an introvert. The literature shows that most introverts view themselves as "odd ducks" in a very extraverted world, even a very extraverted church culture. This self-perception may result from the predominantly extraverted nature of many activities demanded of pastors in ministry. The idea that introversion is a defect has resulted in many pastors seeking to lead in ways that run contrary to their unique, God-given design.

ISTJ pastors have God-given abilities and gifts as leaders in Christ's church. The unique design of their particular temperament type is needed in the church, as is the case with the other fifteen types. The question, "Which personality type makes the best pastor?" is fallacious. No one personality or temperament type makes the best pastor. Instead, the question should be, "In light of one's divine design, how can one be most effective as a leader in Christ's church?" This study sought to answer that question for ISTJs.

Thus far, the importance in pastoral leadership of understanding one's own divine design has been established. In addition, numerous authors contend that ISTJs have the potential to be successful leaders. Though ISTJs and other introverts can lead effectively, obstacles remain for people of these personality types to overcome if they wish to achieve their potential as leaders. The purpose of this study is to explore how MBTI-ISTJ pastors lead effectively in pastoral ministry by understanding and capitalizing on their unique divine designs and temperaments.



### **Research Method**

This study employed a qualitative research design and utilized semi-structured interviews as the primary source of data gathering. The qualitative method enabled the researcher to gather comprehensive and descriptive data from the narrow field of ISTJ pastors who serve as leaders in ministry. In light of this problem and purpose, the following research questions guided this study:

1. How do ISTJ pastors perceive their effectiveness as leaders in ministry?
2. What aspects of pastoral leadership motivate ISTJ pastors?
3. What unique leadership challenges do ISTJ pastors face?
4. How do ISTJ pastors understand others' perceptions of their pastoral leadership?
5. What strategies have ISTJ pastors developed to strengthen their effectiveness as leaders?

### **Significance of this Study**

The significance of this study for ISTJ pastors, sessions,<sup>38</sup> and congregations includes its deconstruction of the false perception that introversion is a defect and a handicap for leaders. The researcher hopes that the study's findings will foster greater understanding among God's people of the unique design God has given each of his leaders, including each leader's temperament type. Further aims for this study are that it will foster greater appreciation for the unique qualities of ISTJ pastors as leaders and encourage a church culture that better understands, recognizes, and celebrates differences

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<sup>38</sup>The session is the local governing body of Presbyterian churches composed of elders. Refer to footnote 369 for more information.

in temperament types, not only for church leaders but for all members of their congregations.

In light of the reality that most extraverts and congregants have a negative view of the introverted personality, this study may serve to promote a healthy self-image, rooted in God's sovereign design, for pastors with an introverted temperament type and, in particular, ISTJ pastors. In addition, it is the hope of the researcher that the insights gleaned from this study will give ISTJ pastors tangible ways to capitalize on their strengths as introverts, so that they can lead more effectively. As well as strengths, this study may also help ISTJ pastors to recognize and wisely address their weaknesses. Each temperament type has stronger temptations in particular areas than other types. This study should aid in pointing out sin patterns of which ISTJ pastors should be mindful, helping them to pursue repentance where needed.

Another significant aspect of this study must not be overlooked. Introverts, in general, need healing. The researcher intends this study to be a healing tool for ISTJ pastors who have been "beaten down" either by others or themselves because of their particular personality type.

For church sessions, the significance of this study is two-fold. First, the study should provide helpful insights regarding the pastor's leadership style to session members of churches whose pastors are ISTJs. Such insight is important because in most Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) churches, the pastor serves as the moderator of the session. Many potential conflicts can be avoided or at least minimized if session members, including pastors, understand how others on the team approach issues. It is the hope of this researcher that this study will enhance the leadership dynamics of church

sessions and promote collegiality within the eldership. Second, the session's understanding of the ISTJ pastor's strengths and weaknesses should help the session members know how best to support that pastor, augmenting any weak areas, while emphasizing strengths.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (MBTI)** – a personality inventory tool, based on Carl Jung's original theories, which categorizes personality preferences into sixteen types.

**Introversion** – a personality preference where the person's main interest is in the inner world of “concepts and ideas.” The introvert “prefers doing things alone,” or interacting with just a few people, is a reflective, internal processor (prefers thinking before speaking), and is more reserved. Introverts enjoy people but are drained by interacting with people. Solitude recharges the introvert.

**Extraversion** – a personality preference where the person is focused on the “outer world of people and things.” The extravert (sometimes spelled “extrovert”) is energized by interactions with people. Extraverts are external processors (prefer speaking before thinking). They typically are known as “movers and shakers,” the life of the party.

**ISTJ** – one of the sixteen MBTI types, showing the following preferences: Introverted, Sensing, Thinking, and Judging.

**Divine Design** – God's unique design of each human being as understood from Psalm 139.

**Pastoral Leadership** – a phrase referring to the pastor's leadership, which describes the pastor as “a qualified overseer who shepherds God's flock by equipping the saints for the

work of ministry through teaching them to know and live God's truth in such a way that they become disciple-makers."

**Carl Jung (1875-1861)** – Swiss psychiatrist, researcher of individual differences in human psychology, and author of *Psychological Types*.

**Isabel Myers (1897-1980)** – Along with her mother, Katharine C. Briggs, based her psychometric questionnaire, MBTI, on Carl Jung's typology. Their method to determine one's Jungian type is presented in *Gifts Differing*.

**Ernst Kretschmer (1888-1964)** – German medical psychologist.

**David W. Keirsey (1921-)** – Co-author of *Please Understand Me* and developer of the self-assessment personality questionnaire known as the Keirsey Temperament Sorter.

**Church Personality** – A church's identity that shapes its practices and behavior.

## CONCLUSION

In this introductory chapter, the ground has been prepared to further the reader's understanding of how ISTJ pastors serve in pastoral ministry. To that end, pastoral leadership, divine design, human personality, leadership and the ISTJ personality type, and pressures introverts face as leaders have been discussed. The literature review that follows will build the picture of the ISTJ in the pastorate.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to explore how pastors with the MBTI – ISTJ type can lead effectively in pastoral ministry by understanding and capitalizing on their unique divine design. In order to understand how ISTJ pastors can lead effectively, the researcher reviewed literature on the following four topics: human personality, introversion, MBTI – ISTJ, introversion and cultural biases, and leadership and the introvert (ISTJ).

#### **Human Personality**

A literature review of human personality is essential for understanding how ISTJ pastors can be more effective in church ministry settings. To establish a basic framework of human personality types through which readers can view this study, in this chapter the researcher will summarize Carl Jung’s theory of psychological types and Isabel Briggs Myers’ MBTI, which is based on Jung’s theory. The chapter will also include a brief overview of the work of Ernst Kretschmer and David Keirsey.

#### **Carl Jung**

Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung (1875-1961) sets forth his research in “individual differences in human psychology” in his groundbreaking work, *Psychological Types*. Jung notes two categories of psychological types, which he labels “attitude-types” and

“function-types.”<sup>39</sup> He observes two “attitude-types,” introversion and extraversion, on which his theory is founded.<sup>40</sup> Jung describes the introverted type as placing a higher value on the subject and a correspondingly lower value on the object, whereas the extraverted type, “subordinates the subject to the object.”<sup>41</sup> Jung explains the basic difference between the introverted and extraverted types in the following manner.

The introvert’s attitude is an abstracting one; at bottom, he is always intent on withdrawing libido [psychic energy according to Jung] from the object, as though he had to prevent the object from gaining power over him. The extravert, on the contrary, has a positive relation to the object. He affirms its importance to such an extent that his subjective attitude is constantly related to and oriented by the object. The object can never have enough value for him, and its importance must always be increased.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, Jung understands introversion as “an inward-turning libido,” and extraversion as “an outward-turning” one.<sup>43</sup>

Myers’ description of the difference between introversion and extraversion flows out of Jung’s analysis. She writes, “The introvert’s main interests are the inner world of concepts and ideas, while the extravert is more involved with the outer world of people and things. Therefore, when circumstances permit, the introvert concentrates perception and judgment upon ideas, while the extravert likes to focus them on the outside environment.”<sup>44</sup> Oswald and Kroegeer similarly understand the extravert as gaining energy from his or her outer world, while retreating inside energizes introverts.<sup>45</sup> One author, Marti Olsen Laney, simply and cleverly distinguishes the two types by referring to them

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<sup>39</sup> C. G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, Collected Works (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 330.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 330.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 330.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 427, 452.

<sup>44</sup> Myers, 7.

<sup>45</sup> Oswald, 20.

as “innies and outies.”<sup>46</sup> The three main differences between extraverts and introverts, according to Laney, are that extraverts “recharge their batteries” by focusing outside themselves, while introverts focus inwardly; extraverts like a lot of external stimulation, while introverts are easily over stimulated by external input; and extraverts like breadth (many friends and experiences), while introverts prefer depth (fewer but closer friendships and limited experiences).<sup>47</sup>

The second category of psychological type described by Jung is the “function-type.” Attitude-types, as previously explained, distinguish individuals’ attitudes – their interests, whether inward or outward – in relation to an object. The four basic psychological functions that make up “function-types,” according to Jung, are thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuition. Function-types deal with how individuals adapt and orient themselves to the world.<sup>48</sup>

An important question must be considered at this juncture. Is one’s psychological type or temperament inborn or learned? Jung believed that the basic personality preference of human beings is inborn. He states,

Every human being possesses both mechanisms [introversion and extroversion] as an expression of his natural life-rhythm, a rhythm Goethe, surely not by chance, described physiologically in terms of the heart’s activity<sup>49</sup> ... Since the facts show that the attitude-type [introversion or extroversion] is a general phenomenon having an apparently random distribution, it cannot be a matter of conscious judgment or conscious intention, but must be due to some unconscious, instinctive cause. As a general psychological phenomenon, therefore, the type antithesis must have some kind of biological foundation.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Laney, 20.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 20-25.

<sup>48</sup> Jung, 330-407.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 331.

Isabel Briggs Myers agrees. She states, “The hypothesis is that *type* is inborn, an innate predisposition like right- or left-handedness, but the *successful development* of type can be greatly helped or hindered by environment from the beginning.”<sup>51</sup> Myers supports this theory by noting that the “most deeply rooted preference, and the one that appears earliest, is that of extraversion or introversion,” and that in infants a preference for a sociable or contemplative life can be often observed.<sup>52</sup>

Marti Olsen Laney understands Jung’s theory similarly. She writes, “Jung continued to develop his theory, and he surmised that we are born with a temperament endowment that locates us somewhere on a continuum between very introverted and very extraverted.”<sup>53</sup> Laney further summarizes Jung by stating that human beings have a “natural niche” on the continuum of introversion and extraversion, at which they function most effectively.<sup>54</sup>

Recent studies of communication pathways in the brain suggest that Jung’s observation – his “guess,” as one author in particular notes – that introversion and extraversion have a “physiological foundation” has validity.<sup>55</sup> Laney states,

Now, with the advancing technology of brain scans and imaging, we are closer to understanding the communication pathways in the brain and how they are reflected in human behavior. We can, for example, map the territory inside our brains and connect precise areas of brain activity to specific experiences and behaviors. Mind mapping also clarifies and validates which brain functions influence temperament.<sup>56</sup>

The origin of temperament, according to Laney, is genetic, and the differences in temperament between individuals “appear to be derived primarily from

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<sup>51</sup> Myers, 168.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Laney, 27.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.



neurochemistry.”<sup>57</sup> In the *Introvert Advantage*, Laney cites the research of Dr. Debra Johnson that shows, “the behavioral differences between introverts and extraverts result from using different brain pathways that influence where we direct our focus – internally or externally.”<sup>58</sup> Johnson finds that introverts have more cerebral blood flow than extraverts, which suggests more internal processing; that blood also flows along different pathways, with the introvert’s pathway being longer than that of extraverts, as well as more complicated.<sup>59</sup> Other research cited by Laney shows that each pathway requires a different neurotransmitter, as the following excerpt explains: “Whereas extraverts are linked with the dopamine/adrenaline, energy-spending, sympathetic nervous system, introverts are connected with the acetylcholine, energy-conserving, parasympathetic nervous system.”<sup>60</sup>

Laney provides a helpful summary of introversion and extraversion stemming from brain physiology:

As we have seen, the introverted brain has a higher level of internal activity and thinking than the extroverted brain. It is dominated by the long, slow acetylcholine pathway. Acetylcholine also triggers the Throttle-Down (parasympathetic nervous) system that controls certain body functions and influences how innies behave.<sup>61</sup>

The extroverted brain has less internal activity than the introverted brain. It scans the external world to gather stimulation to fuel the shorter, quicker dopamine pathway. The signals from the brain travel to the Full-Throttle (sympathetic nervous) system that controls certain body functions and influences how outies behave.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 85.

These physiological differences, according to the research, account for the difference in behavior between introverts and extraverts. For example, the longer, slower introvert pathway results in introverts having a good memory but being slower in retrieving memories; preferring to sleep on ideas, thoughts, and feelings so they can come to clearer conclusions; finding it difficult to think and talk at the same time; and being slow under stress—just to list a few.<sup>63</sup> Examples of extraverted behavior that are due to the extraverts' faster, shorter pathways are that, among many other traits, they crave outside stimulation, are skilled at thinking and talking at the same time (shoot from the “hip”), have good short-term memory, act quickly under stress, and “make social chitchat easily and fluidly.”<sup>64</sup>

Laney also shows that left-brain or right-brain dominance factors into the way introverts and extraverts behave. She believes that left-brain introverts tend to be more comfortable living with introversion due to the fact that left-brain people are typically more verbal and logical than right-brain individuals.<sup>65</sup> She concludes, “By understanding the way your brain works, you can reduce shame and guilt. You can create the optimal environment for yourself. You can enhance your appreciation of your own unique introverted advantage.”<sup>66</sup>

Though Jung strongly believed that one's temperament is inborn, in his work he does not discount environmental factors. He points out “every human being possesses both mechanisms [extraversion as well as introversion] as an expression of his natural

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 94.

life-rhythm.”<sup>67</sup> He affirms that environment, as well as biology, determines type. He writes,

But the complicated outer conditions under which we live and the even more complicated conditions of our individual psychic make-up seldom permit a completely undisturbed flow of psychic energy. Outer circumstances and inner disposition frequently favor one mechanism and restrict and hinder the other. One mechanism will naturally predominate, and if this condition becomes in any way chronic a type will be produced ... hence there can never be a pure type in the sense that it possesses only one mechanism with the complete atrophy of the other. A typical attitude always means the relative predominance of one mechanism.<sup>68</sup>

Oswald and Kroeger summarize Jung’s view by stating, “Carl Jung felt we were born with predisposition for certain personality preferences, although environment and personal experience also tend to shape us.”<sup>69</sup>

### **Ernst Kretschmer**

It will serve helpful at this point to briefly mention Ernst Kretschmer’s (1888-1964) contribution to the study of personality. A German medical psychologist and contemporary of Jung, Kretschmer developed two types: the cyclothymic, whose “functioning varied according to mood, cheerfulness or sadness” and the schizothymic, who “were capable of splitting their awareness and having an abstract attitude.”<sup>70</sup> Each type had associated sub-types. The cyclothymic sub-types are 1) hypomanic, “characterized by having enormous energy and quickness of response to the right moment” with “their thinking...conditioned by whatever was going on at the time rather than [being] systematic,” and 2) melancholic, “described as dependable, conscientious

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<sup>67</sup> Jung, 5.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 5, 6.

<sup>69</sup> Oswald, 16.

<sup>70</sup> Olaf Isachsen and Linda V Berens, *Working Together: A Personality-Centered Approach to Management*, 3rd ed. (San Juan Capistrano, CA: Institute For Management Development, 1995), 33.

and preserving” with sudden change often bringing on depression.<sup>71</sup> Kretschmer’s schizothymic sub-types are 1) hyperaesthetic, who are overly sensitive and demonstrate dramatic and enthusiastic responses both in writing and speaking, and 2) anesthetic, who seem emotionally detached and have a higher “systematic thinking and tendency to build logical, abstract systems.”<sup>72</sup> This typology, according to Kretschmer, was the primary factor in determining differences between individuals.<sup>73</sup> Now we turn to the work of Isabel Myers.

### **Isabel Briggs Myers**

John Black, in the Publisher’s Foreword in *Gifts Differing*, states, “Jung’s theory, once mastered, provides a beautiful structure for understanding both similarities and differences among human beings.”<sup>74</sup> Isabel Myers and her mother, Katharine C. Briggs, based their “psychometric questionnaire” (MBTI) on the typology of Carl Jung, and it is a reliable method to determine one’s Jungian type.<sup>75</sup> In the Preface of *Gifts Differing*, Peter Briggs Myers characterizes the premise of Isabel Myers’ work by stating, “The premise of this book is that each of us has a set of gifts, a set of mental tools that we have become comfortable using and thus reach for in the everyday business of living.”<sup>76</sup> The goal of reviewing Myers’ work is to better understand the “set of gifts,” or “mental tools” that individuals have at their disposal in navigating everyday life.

Myers states that basic differences in perception and judgment should result in differences in behavior.<sup>77</sup> The perceiving function refers to how individuals become

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>74</sup> Myers, xix.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., xii.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 1.

aware of “things, people, occurrences and ideas.”<sup>78</sup> Judging is how one draws conclusions about what is perceived.<sup>79</sup> Oswald and Kroeger distinguish these two processes as “data gathering” and “decision making.”<sup>80</sup> Myers describes two functions of perceiving: sensing and intuiting – this is the SN preference.<sup>81</sup> The sensing function is the process individuals use to become aware of their world “directly through their five senses,” while intuition is the process whereby one perceives things indirectly “by way of the unconscious.”<sup>82</sup> Oswald and Kroeger are helpful in describing how those with a preference for intuition and those with the sensing function perceive things.

Some people prefer to deal with incoming data in as realistic, factually oriented, practical a way as possible. They want to rely on data exactly as it is transmitted to their five senses – taste, touch, sight, smell and sound. These “Sensors,” as we will call them, are grounded in reality.

INTuitives, on the other hand, are more interested in the meaning of the reality before them. They want to make connection between the data they are perceiving and other data they have known in the past. They look for patterns and possibilities in everything they perceive.<sup>83</sup>

The two processes of judging are thinking and feeling – the TF preferences.<sup>84</sup> The thinking function is a logical process that is impersonal and directed to a set of findings.<sup>85</sup> Myers describes the feeling component as “bestowing on things a personal, subjective value.”<sup>86</sup> Again, Oswald and Kroeger are instructive in distinguishing between these two preferences.

Some people prefer to translate the data they collect into very objective, logical, linear decisions. They try to be as impersonal and impartial as possible. They

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Oswald, 18.

<sup>81</sup> Myers, 2-3.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Oswald, 18.

<sup>84</sup> Myers, 3.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

don't want their decisions clouded by any subjective, emotional input ... Thinking types look at the logical consequences of each decision they make; they are great at weighing cause and effect.

FEELING deciders, on the other hand, are much more conscious of the impact their decisions will have on themselves and others. They will allow this subjective data to influence their decisions. They are more interested in values than they are in logic.<sup>87</sup>

In *Gifts Differing*, four combinations of perception and judgment are presented: sensing plus thinking (ST), sensing plus feeling (SF), intuition plus feeling (NF), and intuition plus thinking (NT).<sup>88</sup> Myers also describes, as we discussed under Jung's theory, the extraversion-introversion preference.<sup>89</sup> Finally, the judgment-perception preference – “the choice between the perceptive attitude and the judging attitude as a way of life, a method of dealing with the world around us” – must be included in the identification of an individual's type.<sup>90</sup> Myers distinguishes between people who prefer judgment to those who prefer perception in this manner. She describes judging people as those who gather data and come to a verdict in light of their conclusion that all the evidence is in, while perceptive people typically hold off coming to a verdict since they want to leave things open in case of new developments.<sup>91</sup> The judging preference leads individuals to order their lives, while the perceptive function moves people to “just live them.”<sup>92</sup>

The basic structure of Myers' theory is the four preferences “concerning the use of perception and judgment:” extroversion or introversion (EI), sensing or intuition (SN), thinking or feeling (TF), and judgment or perception (JP).<sup>93</sup> Myers states that people “create their ‘type’ through exercise of their individual preferences regarding perception

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<sup>87</sup> Oswald, 19.

<sup>88</sup> Myers, 4-6.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

and judgment.”<sup>94</sup> From the four preferences above an individual’s type can be described. Thus, if one’s preferences were introversion, sensing, thinking, and judgment, in the case of the subject of this research, the four-letter type indicator would be ISTJ.

Another important distinction made in *Gifts Differing* is the role of dominant and auxiliary processes. Myers writes,

This phenomenon, of the dominate process overshadowing the other processes and shaping personality accordingly, was empirically noted by Jung in the course of his work and became, along with the extraversion – introversion preference, the basis for *Psychological Types* ... One perceptive process and one judging process can develop side by side, provided one is used in the service of the other. But one process – sensing, intuition, thinking or feeling – must have clear sovereignty, with opportunity to reach its full development, if a person is to be really effective.<sup>95</sup>

The auxiliary process enables human beings to be balanced. This function is not a rival to the dominant process but rather is auxiliary to it. “If the dominate process is a judging one, the auxiliary process will be perceptive: Either sensing or intuition can supply sound material for judgments. If the dominate process is perceptive, the auxiliary process will be a judging one: Either thinking or feeling can give continuity of aim.”<sup>96</sup> The auxiliary process is used for less important matters, typically.<sup>97</sup> For extraverts the dominant process is concerned with the outer world, but just the opposite is true of introverts. Introverts, to deal with the world, call upon the auxiliary function.<sup>98</sup> Myers demonstrates the importance of the auxiliary process to introverts. She states,

Introverts are reluctant to use the dominant process on the outer world any more than necessary because of the predictable results. If the dominant process, which is the most adult and conscientious process, is used on outer things, it will involve

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

the introverts in more extraversion than they can handle, and such involvement will cost them privacy and peace.

The success of introverts' contact with the outer world depends on the effectiveness of their auxiliary.<sup>99</sup>

Myers states that for extraverts the dominant process is “immediately apparent” – it is what is readily observed. It is their most trusted and skilled way of engaging the outside world. This is not true for introverts. For them the auxiliary function is used to engage the world. Myers states, “Most people see only the side of introverts present to the outer world, which is mostly their auxiliary process, their second best.”<sup>100</sup> This presents a paradox according to Myers.

Introverts whose dominant process is a judging process, either thinking or feeling, do not *outwardly* act like judging people. What shows on the outside is the perceptiveness of their auxiliary process, and they live their outer lives mainly in the perceptive attitude. The inner judgingness is not apparent until something comes up that is important to their inner worlds. At such moments they may take a startlingly positive stand.<sup>101</sup>

The same sort of paradox exists for those introverts whose dominant process is perceptive – “they do not outwardly behave like perceptive people.”<sup>102</sup>

Myers provides a helpful illustration of this dynamic.<sup>103</sup> In her illustration, the dominant process is a General, while the auxiliary process is his Aide. For extraverts, the General is always outside the tent and readily available to meet with people, dealing with the business at hand. In the case of introverts, the Aide is the one who goes outside to deal with the matters at hand while the General remains inside the tent, working on matters of top priority. The Aide shields the General from interruptions and less

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.



important matters. Others see the General only when business of the greatest importance requires his attention. Myers cautions,

If people do not realize that there is a General in the tent who far outranks the Aide they have met, they may easily assume that the Aide is in sole charge. This is a regrettable mistake. It leads not only to an underestimation of the introvert's abilities but also to an incomplete understanding of his wishes, plans, and point of view. The only source for such inside information is the General.

A cardinal precaution in dealing with introverts, therefore, is not to assume, just from ordinary contact, that they have revealed what really matters to them.<sup>104</sup>

The dominant process, according to Myers, may be found in three ways that involve analyzing an individual's four-letter type indicator. "The dominant process must of course be either the preferred perceptive process (as shown by the second letter) or the preferred judging process (as shown by the third). The JP preferences can be used to determine the dominant process, but must be used differently with extraverts and introverts."<sup>105</sup> Myers explains that the JP process only detects how one deals with the outside world. Since the extravert's dominant process prefers the outside, it shows on the JP preference. For example, if the extravert's four-letter type indicator ends in J, the dominant process would be a judging one, either T or F. For those extraverts whose type ends in P, the dominant process is a perceptive one, either S or N. The case is different for introverts. The introvert prefers to deal with the outside world with the auxiliary process and, therefore, the dominant process does not show on the JP preference – rather, the auxiliary function is reflected in the JP preference.<sup>106</sup> Thus, for an introvert whose indicator ends in J, the dominant process is a perceptive one, S or N, and in the case of the indicator ending in a P, the dominant process is a judging one, T or F.

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 13-14.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

To show the importance of the dominant and auxiliary processes, Myers writes,

The basic principle that the auxiliary provides needed extraversion for the introverts and needed introversion for the extraverts is vitally important. The extravert's auxiliary gives them access to their own inner life and to the world of ideas; the introvert's auxiliary gives them a means to adapt to the world of action and to deal with it effectively ... Good type development thus demands that the auxiliary supplement the dominant process in two respects. It must supply a useful degree of balance not only between perception and judgment but also between extraversion and introversion. When it fails to do so it leaves the individual literally "unbalanced," retreating into the preferred world and consciously or unconsciously afraid of the other world ... To live happily and effectively in both worlds, people need a balancing auxiliary that will make it possible to adapt in both directions – to the world around them and to their inner selves.<sup>107</sup>

Myers uses the example of a well-balanced introvert, ISTJ, to illustrate how the extraversion takes place with the auxiliary process. ISTJs typically deal with the outer world with their second-best process, thinking. ISTJs will therefore run their lives with "impersonal system and order."<sup>108</sup> The thinking process then provides the needed extraversion for the introvert. Thus, it is important for ISTJs to nurture and grow their thinking process.

Jung's theory contains eight types. Myers' work utilized the auxiliary process, which splits each of Jung's eight types in two, for a total of sixteen types under the MBTI framework. For example, "instead of merely the introverted thinker, there are the introverted thinker with sensing and the introverted thinker with intuition."<sup>109</sup> "The Type Table" in *Gifts Differing*, provided below, shows the relationships of the sixteen types (Figure 1).<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 19-21.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 29.

		Sensing Types		Intuitive Types	
		Thinking – ST –	Feeling – SF –	Feeling – NF –	Thinking – NT –
Introvert	I – – J	ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
	I – – P	ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
Extravert	E – – P	ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
	E – – J	ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ

Figure 1 The Type Table (From *Gifts Differing*)

### David W. Keirsey

A fourth contributor to the development of the study of human personality should be briefly considered before moving on to a discussion of the ISTJ type specifically. David W. Keirsey developed a “temperament theory” that is based largely on the work of Kretschmer and to a lesser degree Carl Jung and Eduard Spranger (contemporary of Jung and Kretschmer), and he adapted Myers’ MBTI to his theory.<sup>111</sup> The four keirseyan temperaments are “described in terms of the pattern of their behavior, which is taken as a given and inborn, and in terms of the theme of that configuration.”<sup>112</sup> The four temperaments are Idealists, who “value ethics and want to be authentic and whole;” Rationals, who “value knowledge and competence and want mastery over nature;” Guardians, who “value enculturation and civilization and want to have membership;” and Artisans, who “value art and play in their infinite variations and want to be free to choose the next act.”<sup>113</sup> Keirsey’s adaptation of Myers’ inventory assigns the four MBTI intuitive and feeling types under the Idealist, the four MBTI intuitive and thinking types under

<sup>111</sup> Isachsen, 38-40.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

Rationals, the four MBTI sensing and judging types under Guardians, and the four MBTI sensing and perceiving types under Artisan.

Thus far, this chapter has provided a general overview of the development of personality studies, with special focus given to the four major contributors, Jung, Kretschmer, Myers, and Keirsey. The literature review will now cover works on the introverted preference in general.

### **Introversion**

Laney, in *The Introvert Advantage*, makes helpful comments about traits of introverts in general. She states,

Introverts are more likely to:

- Keep energy inside, making it difficult for others to know them
- Be absorbed in thought
- Hesitate before speaking
- Avoid crowds and seek quiet
- Lose sight of what others are doing
- Proceed cautiously in meeting people and participate only in selected activities
- Not offer ideas freely; may need to be asked their opinion
- Get agitated without enough time alone or undisturbed
- Reflect and act in a careful way
- Not show much facial expression or reaction<sup>114</sup>

The introverts' communication style, Laney writes, "keeps energy, enthusiasm, and excitement to themselves," as they "share only with those they know very well."<sup>115</sup>

Introverts are reflective and need time to think before responding. They prefer communication one-on-one, need to be drawn out by others and invited to speak, and often have concern over the propriety of what was spoken.<sup>116</sup> In chapter five of *The Introvert Advantage*, Laney deals with parenting introverted children. The observations

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<sup>114</sup> Laney, 49.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

she makes about introverted children are also true of introverted adults. She makes an important point about the introverted child's needs for alone time and a private space. She states, "Introverted children need private time built into their daily schedules. During private time they spend less energy...Children also need extra breaks during highly stimulating activities."<sup>117</sup> Laney writes regarding private space, "Introverted children need their own physical space to make an actual barrier between their bodies and the outside world."<sup>118</sup> This space is important, for introverts need time to be free from external stimulation so that they have time to turn inward: "just being around people and activity drains introverts' batteries."<sup>119</sup> Further, Laney asserts that many introverts are uncomfortable at social gatherings, "even though they like people" and have good people skills.<sup>120</sup> The reason for this is that social gatherings require enormous amounts of energy. Laney explains that "it takes energy to gear up to go out," and "most introverted people need to ease into social situations gradually in order to get acclimated to the situation. Noise, colors, music, new faces, familiar faces, eating, drinking, smells—everything can cause *brain overload*."<sup>121</sup>

Another author who explores the world of the introvert is Laurie Helgoe. In part II of *Introvert Power*, she describes the "introvert's wish list," which gives helpful insights into how introverts function. First, she notes, as Laney, the importance of personal space – a room, a place outdoors, or an office (not a cubicle).<sup>122</sup> Second, introverts need time to think: "To come full circle, as introverts like to do, *time to think*, is not only a luxury for

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 133-134.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Laurie A. Helgoe, *Introvert Power: Why Your Inner Life Is Your Hidden Strength* (Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2008), 71-83.

introverts; it is a *necessity*. We need to pull our pendulums away from social rhythms and access the life-giving power of our own minds—our wonderfully aroused minds.”<sup>123</sup>

Third, introverts need the right to retreat. Helgoe writes,

For an introvert, retreating is the ultimate indulgence: an inner life binge that fills our depleted energy stores. Retreats, whether contemplative or adventure-oriented, provide a sanctioned and temporary way for us to step away from our worldly pursuits. This step provides perspective that we cannot obtain while in the midst of things.<sup>124</sup>

Fourth, an introvert needs the freedom to be a passionate spectator.

For the introvert, as for the flaneur [the passionate spectator], observing is not a fallback position—something we do because we can’t participate. We watch because we want to... Though introverts are drained by interaction, we can take immense pleasure in watching the scene around us: people moving about, their dress, movements, and preoccupations.<sup>125</sup>

Fifth and finally, Helgoe shows that introverts desire “inroads to intimacy.” She states, “Let’s clear one thing up: *Introverts do not hate small talk because we dislike people. We hate small talk because we hate the barrier it creates between people ... We want less—and more: less talk, and more understanding.*”<sup>126</sup> In fact, the author notes that “extreme talk is not cheap at all—it takes a huge toll on us [introverts].”<sup>127</sup> She speaks of “the conversation conundrum.”<sup>128</sup> In conversations between extraverts and introverts, the extravert typically takes the silence of the introvert, who is contemplating what the extravert has just said, as an invitation to speak—the result is the extravert dominating the conversation and the introvert remaining silent because he or she cannot think.<sup>129</sup>

Helgoe writes, “Mute means the invitation is still open, and continued talk assures that

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 99-100.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 112-111.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 120.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 132.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 131-142.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 131-132.

the introvert remains mute. By the time the extravert pauses to ask, the introvert's head is pounding and he or she just wants to get out so she can think. The extravert just assumes the introvert had nothing to say, and moves on."<sup>130</sup>

The introvert's focus on the inner life can be an asset in pastoral ministry. Eugene Peterson, in *The Contemplative Pastor*, quotes Hilary of Tours who diagnosed pastoral busyness as, "religiosa sollicitudo pro Deo, a blasphemous anxiety to do God's work for him."<sup>131</sup> Pastors can become busy, according to Peterson, for two reasons. First, he writes, "I am busy because I am vain. I want to appear important. Significant. What better way than to be busy?"<sup>132</sup> Second, according to Peterson, "I am busy because I am lazy. I indolently let others decide what I will do instead of resolutely deciding myself."<sup>133</sup> The three central aspect of pastoral ministry, according to Peterson, are prayer, preaching and listening. He states, he schedules time for "prayer, for reading, for leisure, for the silence of solitude out of which creative work – prayer, preaching and listening – can issue...I find when these central needs are met, there is plenty of time for everything else."<sup>134</sup> The research reviewed thus far shows the introverted preference to be a natural fit for these crucial aspects of pastoral ministry – listening, studying, and contemplation.

*The Leader's Journey*, by Herrington, Creech, and Taylor, makes a similar point to Peterson's. According to these authors,

Even leaders are not immune to looking for meaning in the externals. As the spiritual role model in the church, it is tempting to focus on what our lives look like, rather than on what is really going on inside. We measure our significance by the size of our congregation or by how well we are liked or by how highly we are

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 132.

<sup>131</sup> Eugene H. Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1993), 17-18.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 23.

thought of in the community...we obsess about the externals and starve our souls...What Rumford calls 'soul neglect' is a way of life for many in ministry. We grow busier and busier to please more and more people. We spend more time in meetings than we do in prayer. We scarcely have time to read the newspaper, much less spiritual classics or devotional readings. We study Scripture, but we do it for other people to convey God's Word to them. Our own hearts are often thirsty for a word from God, but who has time? We faithfully minister to the spiritual need of others and teach ourselves to be content with leftovers.<sup>135</sup>

Though any personality preference may struggle with spiritual malaise and "soul neglect," one strength of introverted types is an inherent preference for focusing on the inner life.

This general discussion of introverts sets the stage for considering the MBTI - ISTJ type specifically. A number of authors provide helpful insights into behavioral traits of ISTJs. As the various descriptions of ISTJs by these authors are taken as a whole, the hope is that a portrait will emerge that will accurately and comprehensively depict the behavioral traits of ISTJs.

## **MBTI-ISTJ**

### **Characteristics**

This review of the ISTJ type will begin with Myers' observations in *Gifts Differing*. Myers categorizes ISTJs under her descriptor, the "Introverted Sensing Types" (ISTJ and ISFJ). "Extreme stability" may be the best phrase to use representing Myers' description of this type. She writes, "The interaction of introversion, sensing, and the judging attitude gives them [ISTJs and ISFJs] extreme stability...they lend stability to everything with which they are connected."<sup>136</sup> Myers describes the interaction of these preferences in a manner that gives us much insight into how ISTJs function. She states,

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<sup>135</sup> Jim Herrington, Robert Creech and Trisha L. Taylor, *The Leader's Journey: Accepting the Call to Personal and Congregational Transformation*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 130-131.

<sup>136</sup> Myers, 102.



They [ISTJs and ISFJs] use their favorite process, sensing, in their inner life, and they base their ideas on a deep, solid accumulation of stored impressions, which give them some almost unshakable ideas. They use their preferred kind of judgment, thinking [ISTJ] or feeling, to run their outer life. Thus, they have a complete, realistic, practical respect both for the facts and for whatever responsibilities these facts create. Sensing provides the facts and after the introverts' characteristic pause of reflection, their judgment accepts the responsibility.<sup>137</sup>

Further, Myers characterizes this type as being systematic, painstaking, thorough, responsible, hardworking, practical (the most practical of the sixteen types), detail oriented, and outwardly matter-of-fact. She also describes them as skilled at adapting to routines, able to absorb and analyze huge numbers of facts, and preferring to keep “everything...factual and stated clearly and simply.”<sup>138</sup> ISTJs emphasize logic, analysis and decisiveness – they make “able executives,” “thorough lawyers,” and “a fine type for accountants,” and they are “ideal for dictating-machine-transcribers.”<sup>139</sup> Myers cites an interesting and, in her words, “odd and charming quality” of this type. When ISTJs are “on-duty,” the personality they show to the world is their auxiliary process of judging, thinking. Thus, they will appear very factual, analytical, and calm. However, Myers writes, “It is impossible to know what droll and unexpected associations of ideas take place behind their outer calm. Only when they are ‘off-duty’—relaxing from extraversion, responsibility, and the judging attitude—will they sometimes give spontaneous expression to this inner perception.”<sup>140</sup>

Oswald and Kroeger, in *Personality Type and Religious Leadership*, use the term “conserving, serving pastor,” as a descriptor for the ISTJ.<sup>141</sup> They focus on the SJ

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 102-103.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 103.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Oswald, 75.

function as the defining preference for ISTJs. SJs, according to these authors, are well grounded in reality, value belonging to and serving within an entity, are dutiful and loyal, handle administrative tasks skillfully, and take a common-sense approach to life.<sup>142</sup> They are often the “backbone of most of societies’ institutions,” are factual, accurate, and organized in their work, bring stability and order to institutions, and are traditionalists.<sup>143</sup> “Anything worth doing is worth doing well” is cited as an apt statement to get at the heart of the ISTJ.<sup>144</sup> Oswald and Kroeger state, “At the core, this is what drives the SJ—being the guardian of the creative genius of the past.”<sup>145</sup> The authors mention a few well-known SJ types: John Calvin, William Penn, Roger Williams, Ignatius of Loyola, and George Washington.<sup>146</sup>

In *Type Talk*, Kroeger and Thuesen distinguish the ISTJ by the phrase, “doing what should be done.”<sup>147</sup> This personality type is “driven by responsibility” and as such can be so “outgoing under clearly defined circumstances that they are sometimes mistaken for Extraverts without changing their essentially Introverted inner nature.”<sup>148</sup> The authors describe ISTJs as being demanding at home, having compulsive behavior at times, and exemplifying a “Type A personality – driven, impatient and obsessive.”<sup>149</sup> Kroeger and Thuesen state, they [ISTJs],

...often excel at school and work, rising to senior positions of responsibility as class presidents. School heroes, project managers, and community leaders—all of which may seem out of character for an Introvert. But for ISTJ’s, this is not out of character at all; they are simply doing their duty—doing what should be done

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 75-80.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>147</sup> Kroeger, 215.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

(though not what comes naturally. Indeed, should is a key part of the ISTJ's mantra...).<sup>150</sup>

Further, the authors note that “to the ISTJ, an idle mind is the devil's playground and ‘honest work’ is good for all. Even relaxation is scheduled and dutifully executed.”<sup>151</sup> An important point is made in *Type Talk* that shows a trait of ISTJs in the context of an intimate relationship like marriage. An ISTJ's

...word is as good as gold, and having once declared “I love you,” they can be trusted to be true to that sentiment for years to come—though they may not give voice to it often. The reason is simple: For the ISTJ, actions truly speak louder than words; the continued expression of love comes not in saying but in the doing—being there day in and day out, providing unfailingly, being a veritable Rock of Gibraltar. This nonverbal style of affection often gets ISTJs in hot water because it can be perceived as uncaring; they are often described as having “ice for blood.”

But ISTJs do care—and show it through their strong sense of responsibility. (Indeed, they would rather die than be seen as irresponsible.)<sup>152</sup>

One important trait of ISTJs, according to the authors, is that they are fiercely loyal to individuals and institutions.<sup>153</sup> A few occupational examples given in *Type Talk* that best fit ISTJs include military, surgical, legal, and accounting careers.<sup>154</sup>

Keirsey and Bates, in *Please Understand Me*, describe the ISTJ in terms of “decisiveness in practical affairs, being the guardian of time-honored institutions, and, if only one adjective could be selected, dependable would best describe this type which represents about 6 percent (a more recent frequency is reported at 11 percent, Figure 2, page 49) of the general population.”<sup>155</sup> People of this type, the Guardians in Keirsey's system, are further described as being quiet and serious, faithful to their word, dutiful

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 216.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 217.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 218.

<sup>155</sup> David Keirsey and Marilyn M. Bates, *Please Understand Me: Character & Temperament Types*, 4th ed. (Del Mar, CA: Promethean Nemesis, 1984), 189.

without fanfare, thorough, detailed, just, practical, and patient with their work.<sup>156</sup> One trait Keirsey and Bates emphasize is a high sense of duty. They remark, “Duty is a word the ISTJ understands.”<sup>157</sup> Other traits include a “distaste for and distrust of fanciness in speech, dress or home... ‘No nonsense’ in both food and clothes seems characteristic of this type who tend not to be attracted by exotic foods, beverages, or places.”<sup>158</sup> *Please Understand Me* lists a number of occupations well suited for ISTJs. These include auditors, accountants, supervisors, bank examiners, legal secretaries, and military officers, just to name a few.<sup>159</sup>

Isachsen and Berens, in *Working Together*, “rearrange the contributions of Jung, Kretschmer, Spranger, Briggs and Myers, Keirsey and others into a logical set of descriptions which can greatly increase your understanding of human motivation and behavior.”<sup>160</sup> They provide an extensive set of characteristics for each of the sixteen MBTI Types. The ISTJ type is described in terms of several categories. First, the management style of this type is “authoritarian and decisive.”<sup>161</sup> As leaders, they are focused on the organization out of a high sense of loyalty. They are highly task oriented, run efficient meetings, value being on time, seek to establish stability, are dutiful in preserving the organization, seek to preserve traditions, demonstrate high follow through, and are hard workers.<sup>162</sup> Regarding values, these authors note that the ISTJs are conserving and preserving of life and resources (focus on utility, production, and not making changes), trust authority by putting faith in credentials, have a high need to

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 190.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 190.

<sup>160</sup> Isachsen, 42.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 193-195.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

“belong,” value ownership, and “abhor dereliction of duty.”<sup>163</sup> Isachsen and Berens describe the attitude of ISTJs as being fatalistic (“things are what they are and little can be done to change them”).<sup>164</sup> These authors further describe the ISTJ’s attitude as one of concern about procedures and rules and as one that tends to see things in “black and white.”<sup>165</sup> ISTJ skills include logistics, inspecting, attention to detail, and a thought process that is both linear and step-by-step.<sup>166</sup> The driving force of ISTJs is a need for security and stability, and they hunger for responsibility – they “pride themselves in being accountable.”<sup>167</sup> Finally, ISTJs “prefer to learn through concrete methods – they learn faster if given concrete examples and comparisons.”<sup>168</sup>

Johnson, in *Your Spirituality and the Spiritual Life*, describes ISTJs (and ISFJs) as “Stabilizers.” Individuals with this type, “are like the Rock of Gibraltar—steady, reliable, and dependable; they are the Stabilizers among us.”<sup>169</sup> He expands upon this by listing three pairs of traits common to this temperament. First, ISTJs are thorough and persistent, rooted in a sense of duty and responsibility.<sup>170</sup> Second, practicality and prudence are descriptors of this type—they are “more like technicians than theoreticians.”<sup>171</sup> Johnson speaks of ISTJs’ prudence in several ways. He states, “Stabilizers seem to have a built-in caution light when it comes to change,” likely due to their affinity for maintaining traditions.”<sup>172</sup> Further, Stabilizers “leave no stone unturned in their efforts to complete

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 197.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 197-198.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 198-199.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 201.

<sup>169</sup> Johnson, 55.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 59.

their projects.”<sup>173</sup> The final category of Johnson’s analysis shows ISTJs as dependable and sensible, people who value common sense. “They can be counted on to finish what they start ... their demeanor is businesslike and they seem unflappable, regardless of the situation.”<sup>174</sup>

Herrington, Creech, and Taylor cite being a calming influence as an important quality for leaders. They write, “Effective leadership comes from someone with enough emotional maturity to call a congregation to discern and pursue a shared vision, to remain connected with those who differ with the leader or the majority and to remain a calm presence when the anxiety rises.”<sup>175</sup> As stated by Myers and others, ISTJs, in particular, bring stability and a sense of calmness to situations. Thus, being a calming influence is a tangible strength for this personality type.

In this quest to paint a portrait of the ISTJ, several authors have provided insight into the social functioning abilities of this type and into the gifts and abilities this type can offer to churches, workplaces, relationships, and societal institutions. Consider now the literature regarding the “dark-side” of the ISTJ personality type.

### **Temptations**

One important principle seen in the works of both Jung and Myers is that no particular personality type is better than another; rather, variation in personality types from one individual to another simply expresses individuals’ different preferences. Myers’ book title, *Gifts Differing*, emphasizes this. Each of the sixteen MBTI preferences has its strengths, as demonstrated in the previous section, which detailed the specific type, ISTJ. Laney observes, “... The main strength of this inventory [MBTI] is that it

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>175</sup> Herrington and Taylor, 46.

does not pathologize any personality type. Rather, it looks at innate preferences.”<sup>176</sup>

Equally true is the fact that each type, though having many positives, has a “dark side,” a set of stronger weaknesses, sins, temptations, or “blind spots and pitfalls” in particular areas than other types. Sin or character flaws occur when one with a temperament type succumbs to the temptation. As this study specifically considers the ISTJ preference, a brief overview of ISTJ temptations will serve to round out the examination of this personality type.

Laurie Helgoe, in *Introvert Power*, describes two unhealthy behaviors that introverts, and therefore ISTJs, may develop. At one end of the spectrum is the “Shadow Dwellers,” who alienate themselves from society. These introverts have dropped out of the mainstream of society and “keep a low profile or become openly hostile to the mainstream...”<sup>177</sup> “Shadow Dwellers are the introverts that appear (if they can be seen) as reclusive and inaccessible—alien ... If there were an archetype for the Shadow Dweller, he might take the form of a Goth.”<sup>178</sup> At the other end of the spectrum is the “Socially Accessible,” who is alienated from self. Helgoe believes that these introverts see extraversion as the bar to attain but find they can never quite reach it.<sup>179</sup> They look outwardly like extraverts and are very successful in social situations, but inwardly, they feel guilty for not having fun.<sup>180</sup> The author states, “This self-alienation is rampant among American introverts, as is the self-interrogation—society’s puzzled attitude turned

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<sup>176</sup> Laney, 12.

<sup>177</sup> Helgoe, 27.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

inward. Alienation from self can lead to depression, which is, at best, a loss of empathy for the self and, at worst, self-hatred.”<sup>181</sup>

Another unhealthy pattern for introverts, and therefore ISTJs, is the tendency to “internalize problems.” Helgoe states, “In other words, we [introverts] place the source of problems within and blame ourselves ... Internalizers tend to be reliable and responsible, but we can also be very hard on ourselves. And we can be wrong about ourselves.”<sup>182</sup> Helgoe writes that introverts are at risk of losing a sense of community. “Introverts are not afraid,” writes the author, “of being alone, because we know that solitude is generative. We prefer to take problems and work on them in isolation. We’re not big on study groups or committees. And most of us do very well on our own.”<sup>183</sup> The danger of the introverts’ tendency towards solitude, according to Helgoe, is that “because introverts often keep ‘one foot out’ of the group, we can lose a sense of belonging—a sense that we are part of something.”<sup>184</sup>

In *The Introvert Advantage*, Marti Olsen Laney records a number of difficulties associated with a preference towards introversion, which therefore applies to ISTJs. One trait of introversion that could be considered problematic, if not easily misunderstood, is the introvert’s propensity to become over stimulated. Laney writes, “Introverts enjoy complexity when they can focus on one or two areas, without pressure. But if they have too many projects, they easily feel overwhelmed.”<sup>185</sup> She further states, “Just being around people can be over stimulating to introverts ... When over stimulated, the

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 174.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 176

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 178.

<sup>185</sup> Laney, 23.



introvert's mind can shut down, saying, No more input, please. It goes dark.”<sup>186</sup> She writes, “If you don't pace yourself, you can end up feeling stressed and overwhelmed, unable to do anything. It gets worse if you procrastinate ... We introverts often feel guilty that we can't do more than our time or energy allows, so we capitulate to whatever demand is made upon us, setting no parameters at all.”<sup>187</sup> She encourages introverts to offset this frailty by pacing themselves (work when your energy is high, set realistic goals, choose when and how you expend your energy, and work on “bite-size” portions of projects), setting priorities (determine what is really important in life and set priorities accordingly), and setting personal parameters (regulate the external world so that one is not over stimulated).<sup>188</sup>

One interesting finding Laney cites is that a high percentage of the introverts she interviewed fear phone conversations—have “Phone Phobia.” She describes how introverts view the phone:

It's an interruption that drains energy and requires losing internal focus, which you have to gain again; it requires expending energy for ‘on-the-feet-thinking’; it doesn't provide innies with Hap Hits [a good feeling introverts experience when contemplating ideas for example]. Introverts can have so many dips of energy during the day that they are not able to expend energy at the drop of a hat.<sup>189</sup>

It is not uncommon for introverts to be in positions of leadership. Laney additionally cites a number of issues of which introverted leaders should remain mindful. “Introverted bosses may forget to communicate expectations, may fail to delegate, and may not realize the importance of praise and rewarding good work.”<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., 223, 238.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 224, 231, 238.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 184.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 214.

In *Your Personality and the Spiritual Life*, three pairs of ISTJ “infirmities” are described. Stabilizers can become self-absorbed and hidden within themselves.<sup>191</sup> This type has a tendency towards being suspicious and prudish: “Because of their high regard for tradition and their conservative nature in the face of change, their gift of prudence may degenerate into prudishness and their sensibility dissolve into suspicion.”<sup>192</sup> Finally, Stabilizers have a propensity for idolatry and perfectionism: “...it is tempting for Stabilizers to think that their perceptions are the only correct ways of seeing things. This attitude can become the breeding ground for arrogance, as it feeds on idolization of their own thoughts or systems.”<sup>193</sup>

Johnson suggests ways Stabilizers can minimize these weaknesses by nourishing faith and pursuing wholeness. People of this type can nourish their spiritual lives by being quiet (experiencing solitude), engaging in “structured prayer” (as Johnson suggests, for example, using the Lord’s Prayer as a template), maintaining “spiritual continuity” (focusing on tradition, spiritual heritage), and engaging in “intuitive play” (enabling the intuition to function to a greater degree).<sup>194</sup> The way to wholeness, Johnson advises Stabilizers, is to “affirm your gifts” and “deny your self-will.” He highlights the need to affirm gifts:

Because you are rather matter-of-fact, you may take for granted the things which you know that you can do, and believe that you are rather objective about the things which you cannot do. However, you may be selling yourself short and underestimating your abilities ... for this reason, it is important for you to spend time considering how your creation gifts are manifested in your life.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Johnson, 60.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 61-62.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 63-64.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 64-65.

Stabilizers tend to use the judging function to “size up others,” whether rightly or wrongly. Johnson encourages Stabilizers to first judge themselves and be more open towards others.<sup>196</sup> Another encouragement towards wholeness is to be willing to set aside the preference for “methodical ways of doing things” and practice flexibility when the situation warrants it.<sup>197</sup>

Isachsen and Berens add to the list of ISTJ weaknesses. They list several “blind spots and pitfalls.” Among them are being task oriented at the expense of people, lacking flexibility to change procedures when the situations warrant change, being impatient with those who appear lazy, having trouble delegating tasks and saying no, tending to be negative and to place blame, and focusing so much on facts that they may be viewed as cold and calculating.<sup>198</sup>

Potential difficulties for ISTJs, according to Oswald and Kroeger, are literalism, pessimism, and burnout (being “prone to becoming exhausted, worried, or sad”), as well as “hammering” people with rules and moralism, becoming irritated with those who do not follow the rules, and being stingy in expressing appreciation.<sup>199</sup> These authors point out another potential flaw in ISTJs that strikes at the heart of the Gospel message. “To be ‘saved by grace’ is almost to deny the SJ their temperament, duty and obligation being so much a part of their personality.”<sup>200</sup>

The literature seems to indicate that introverted pastors, and therefore ISTJs, may not work well in collaborative ministry settings such as a ministry teams. This is a significant issue, as collaborative ministry is a growing approach to pastoral ministry.

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Isachsen, 201-203.

<sup>199</sup> Oswald, 80, 81.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 76.

Francis, Jones, and Robbins conducted a study of 991 male clergy associated with the Evangelical Alliance in the United Kingdom. Though other research has shown that collaborative ministry may reduce clergy stress, these researchers discovered that this might not be the case for introverts. They conclude,

For stable extraverts, collaborative ministry should provide an effective and efficient way ahead. Such individuals tend to be energized by working alongside others and to be brought to life by functioning as a team... For neurotic introverts, collaborative ministry may not provide such an effective and efficient way ahead. Such individuals feel drained by working alongside others and feel held back by functioning as part of a team.<sup>201</sup>

Helgoe describes this phenomenon by stating, “Though we [introverts] also learn through our interactions, introverts prefer to learn through independent analysis. Leave us alone.”<sup>202</sup> Laney provides helpful insights into the relationship between the introvert and the work place in light of teamwork. She writes, “The work environment, like the social arena, requires abilities that go against the natural grain of introverts.”<sup>203</sup> She lists the three most problematic areas in the workplace for introverts: When introverts are in a large group—which is often the case at work—they find it “hard to both absorb the new information and formulate an opinion about it and therefore are reluctant to speak up in meetings”; to guard their inner world, introverts do not promote themselves in the workplace; and “introverts generally move at a slower pace” than their extraverted counterparts.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Susan H. Jones, Leslie J. Francis and Mandy Robbins, "Clergy Personality and Collaborative Ministry: The Way Ahead for Stable Extraverts?," *Pastoral Psychology* 53, no. 1 (2004): 40.

<sup>202</sup> Helgoe, 156.

<sup>203</sup> Laney, 190.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 190-198.

In *The Heart of Change*, John P. Kotter explores “eight steps people follow to produce new ways of operating.”<sup>205</sup> He notes, “In *The Heart of Change*, we dig into the core problem people face in all of those steps, and how to successfully deal with that problem.”<sup>206</sup> ISTJs, as this literature review has discovered, are traditionalists and are given to managing established processes or procedures – they will seek to maintain the status quo. Change, which will inevitably come, may be difficult for this temperament type. This is especially true in light of Kotter’s statement, “The central challenge in all eight stages is changing *people’s behavior*.”<sup>207</sup> Steps two and three of Kotter’s schemes are of particular import to this discussion. Step two is “building the guiding team.” ISTJs, as the researcher has reported, are more given to individual analysis and less likely to desire a team approach or collaborative work, as Helgoe and others have purported. Kotter states, “Large-scale change does not happen well without a powerful guiding force. A fragmented management team cannot do the job, even if the individual members are strong people. A hero CEO doesn’t work either – there aren’t enough hours in the day for even the strongest executive to accomplish change single-handedly.”<sup>208</sup> Chapter 3, “building the vision right,” presents another potential weakness of the ISTJ leader. Typically, this type is focused on the data and managing the process and not on being visionary. They need individuals that are more intuitive – and typically more skilled at vision casting – to help the ISTJ be more focused in developing a vision. Kotter shows the importance of having a clear vision: “A vision shows an end state where all the plans and strategies will eventually take you...without a good vision you can choose a bad

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<sup>205</sup> John P. Kotter and Dan S. Cohen, *The Heart of Change: Real-Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), x.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., 41.

direction and never realize that you've done so."<sup>209</sup> A team approach is best suited, according to *The Heart of Change*, for developing a vision:

In successful large-scale change, a well-functioning guiding team answers the questions required to produce a clear sense of direction. What change is needed? What is our vision for the new organization? What should not be altered? What is the best way to make the vision a reality? What change strategies are unacceptably dangerous? Good answers to these questions position an organization to leap into a better future.<sup>210</sup>

ISTJs who fail to understand the value of building the right team to bring about healthy change may struggle to lead effectively in the midst of needed and vital change.

Another area where sensitivities of the ISTJ temperament, and of introversion in general, may cause problems is conflict resolution. *Kenneth C. Haugk*, in *Antagonists in the Church*, writes, "Antagonism is a reality. It leaves in its wake broken lives and people who are hurt, discouraged, and apathetic toward the new life in Christ."<sup>211</sup> Pastors, as well as church leadership as a whole, are faced with resolving conflict in the church and confronting antagonists. "The leaders of a congregation will take the brunt of an active antagonist's attacks. Although everyone in a congregation has the theoretical responsibility for dealing with an antagonist, it is the leaders who for the most part will be confronted with hard, practical necessities."<sup>212</sup> One particular area where ISTJs may struggle is with internalizing the conflict to the point of viewing themselves as having failed – having not performed perfectly. ISTJs, as the literature has disclosed, struggle with perfectionism. Haugk writes,

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid., 68-69.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>211</sup> Kenneth C. Haugk and R. Scott Perry, *Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1988), 19.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 150.

Another problem experienced by church leaders is the perfectionism trap. This trap is so subtle and inviting that many church leaders unknowingly stumble into it and never discover the way out.

Some perfectionists refuse to recognize their human fallibility, clamping more rigid controls on themselves and setting more unattainable standards. Some eventually throw in the towel, saying in effect, “If I can’t be perfect, then I won’t play.”

Only God has the right to be a perfectionist. The idea that you can achieve God-like perfection in your life does not come from God; it comes from the other camp and is meant to drive you to despair.

Both clergy and lay church leaders spend entirely too much time castigating themselves when attacked by antagonists, as they transform fear of being judgmental into ruthlessness toward self. Since God finds you innocent in Christ, it is rather unwise for you to continue telling God that he is wrong.

You’re not perfect, and that’s all right. If you were, you would not need Jesus Christ. You need to surrender the antagonist to God’s care. And you need to surrender yourself to those same loving arms.<sup>213</sup>

Haugk’s advice is helpful to ISTJs, who have a high sense of duty and responsibility, value hard work, tend to place confidence in human ability, and are prone toward perfectionism.

In *Primal Leadership*, Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee point out another potential weakness for ISTJ leaders. The authors seek to show the importance of “emotional intelligence” in leadership. “Understanding the powerful role of emotions in the workplace sets the best leaders apart from the rest – not just in tangibles such as better business results and the retention of talent, but also in the all-important intangibles, such as higher morale, motivations, and commitment.”<sup>214</sup> The emotional task according to the authors is “primal – that is, first – in two senses: it is both the original and the most

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 157-158.

<sup>214</sup> Daniel Goleman, Richard E. Boyatzis and Annie McKee, *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 4-5.

important act of leadership.”<sup>215</sup> The key to primal leadership [the emotional task according to the previous quote] is the leader’s “emotional intelligence: how leaders handle themselves and their relationships. Leaders who maximize the benefits of primal leadership drive the emotions of those they lead in the right direction.”<sup>216</sup> The literature reviewed thus far shows that ISTJs are primarily focused on receiving data through the senses and processing it logically - drawing conclusions - by use of the thinking process. ISTJs are not focused to a great degree on “feelings” or the more emotional aspects of the individual. Lack of emotional intelligence for ISTJs is a potential weakness. The authors give an example of a “dissonant” leader, a BBC executive [possibly an ISTJ] who made people angry when delivering the bad news that a division was being shut down and the employees being laid-off. They write that he illustrated “*dissonant* leadership: Out of touch with the feelings of the people in the room, he [the first BBC executive] drove the group into a downward spiral from frustration to resentment, rancor to rage.”<sup>217</sup> This executive failed to empathize with the group and failed to “read the emotions of the group...in any work setting, the emotional and the business impact of a dissonant leader can be gauged easily: People feel off-balance, and thus perform poorly.”<sup>218</sup> *Primal Leadership* describes a second executive of BBC who met with the laid-off employees. He, according to the authors, “exemplifies *resonant* leadership: He was attuned to the people’s feelings and moved them in a positive emotional direction. Speaking authentically from his own values and resonating with the emotions of those around him,

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<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.



he hit just the right chords with his message.”<sup>219</sup> ISTJs are less focused on people and more on tasks. The Thinking function may cause them to devalue the emotional impact a decision can have on other people. This is a potential weakness, and ISTJs should seek to build the Feeling function by learning to have more “emotional intelligence.” Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee state a “critical point: Not only can emotional intelligence be learned, but it also can be retained over the long term,” and they provide a paradigm to accomplish that end.<sup>220</sup>

Introverts, and therefore ISTJs, tend to be frustrated with “small talk.” Helgoe notes, as discussed in the previous section of this study, that introverts do not “hate” small talk but the barriers to people relating deeply that small talk erects. Peterson shows that at some level “the art of small talk” is critical for ministering to people. He writes,

If we avoid small talk, we abandon the very field in which we have been assigned to work. Most people’s lives are not spent in crisis, not lived at the cutting edge of crucial issues. Most of us, most of the time, are engaged in simple, routine tasks, and small talk is the natural language. If pastors belittle it, we belittle what most people are doing most of the time, and the gospel is misrepresented.

We mount our Sinai pulpits week by week and proclaim the gospel in what we hope is the persuasive authority of “artful thunder” (Emerson’s phrase). When we descend to the people on the plain, a different artfulness is required, the art of small talk.<sup>221</sup>

Thus, introverts, and in particular ISTJs, should seek to develop the “art of small talk” and avoid this potential blind spot in ministry.

Every temperament type has a dark side. It is essential that one not only understands one’s personality strengths, but also its blind spots, pitfalls, and weaknesses in order to have healthy type development. Before the conclusion of this section on

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid., 19-20.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>221</sup> Peterson, 115-116.

MBTI - ISTJ, a brief overview of Phil Douglass' interesting application of MBTI temperament studies to "church personality" will also prove helpful.

### **Church Personality**

In *What is Your Church's Personality?* Douglass proposes that differences in churches "may well be because of church personality."<sup>222</sup> He defines a church's personality as not being the church's ideals set forth in a mission statement, but rather the church's "identity – a set of values, beliefs, norms – that shapes its practices and behavior like a mold shapes plaster." He continues, "The ideals of your denomination or church association are like plaster" that is poured into the mold, but the mold – personality – gives shape to the ideals and mission of the church.<sup>223</sup> The church's personality is one of the three components of the church's philosophy of ministry, according to Douglass; the other two are "community context" and "theological convictions."<sup>224</sup> The author uses the illustration of a computer's operating system to emphasize how church personality, like an operating system, drives the church. Douglass considers an important question. Should a church's personality be changed? He answers, "Your fundamental church personality should not be tampered with – so it is important that the pastoral leadership that best fits your church personality be chosen in such a manner that your church will grow and develop in its own unique way."<sup>225</sup>

Douglass discusses eight basic categories, or church personalities, in his book, *What Is Your Church's Personality?* Research indicates that one of the eight profiles will

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<sup>222</sup> Philip D. Douglass, *What Is Your Church's Personality?: Discovering and Developing the Ministry Style of Your Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Pub., 2008), 3.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., 17.

be descriptive of any given church.<sup>226</sup> The eight types of churches are Fellowship, Inspirational, Relational, Entrepreneurial, Strategizer, Organizer, Adventurous, and Expressive. The Church Personality Wheel is a visual aide presented in the book that divides these eight types along vertical and horizontal planes.<sup>227</sup> The more connectional churches (Expressive, Fellowship, Inspirational, and Relational) are positioned on the right side of the vertical axis with the more analytical (Adventurous, Organizer, Strategizer, and Entrepreneurial) being to the left. The horizontal axis distinguishes practical churches in the top half (Organizer, Adventurous, Expressive, and Fellowship) from innovative ones (Strategizer, Entrepreneurial, Relational, and Inspirational). As one might expect, the ISTJ temperament tends to be represented by the Organizer church (analytical and practical).

A church's personality is determined by personality traits of key leaders. Each leader completes a diagnostic tool that is based on the "building blocks" of this study: "information-gathering," "decision-making," and "lifestyle." The tool is found in the Appendix of *What Is Your Church's Personality?*<sup>228</sup> Douglass notes, "This diagnostic ... is based on the assumption that the personality of a church is determined by the true leadership of the church: the thirty individuals who exercise the greatest official and unofficial influence on the church."<sup>229</sup> This classification roughly parallels "the basic personality types as developed" by Jung and expanded by Briggs and Myers.

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 349-357.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 21.

The MBTI – ISTJ temperament type corresponds to Douglass’ Organizer Church.<sup>230</sup> One observes that the characteristics of the Organizer Church match those of the ISTJ previously described. A portrait of the Organizer Church is as follows: The Organizer Church manages

... ministry structures, such as their Christian education departments, ...making sure that programs run well ... They conduct their decision-making on the foundation of trustworthy facts and evidence of achievement and seek knowledge that assures them of being accurate in their presentation of truth. Organizer church strengths include correctness, reliability, self-control, continuity, management and the gaining of understanding through analytical abilities.<sup>231</sup>

Douglass characterizes the usefulness of this tool in reference to its benefit to graduates of Covenant Theological Seminary by stating,

As a result, I am able to predict the level of difficulty our graduates will experience during their first five years of vocational ministry if they serve a particular church. If a church’s ministry style is within one sector of a pastor’s ministry style (see the chart in chapter 3), then the probability of a fruitful ministry is high. Obviously, there are other important factors such as godliness, ministry competencies, theological convictions, and ministry experience. However, because this “degree of fit” factor is often ignored, the effectiveness of our graduates is too often diminished.<sup>232</sup>

Temperament studies, like the one presented in *What Is Your Church’s Personality?* demonstrate the value of utilizing personality studies in the life of the church in general and in particular in the relationships between the pastoral staff and key leadership.

Thus far this literature review has explored pastoral leadership, divine design, and human personality, in particular MBTI - ISTJ. Another area of interest to this study is the cultural bias against introverts that is depicted in the literature.

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 232-273.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 232.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., xiii.

### Introversion and Cultural Biases

Current research in the area of introverted leadership shows that a cultural bias exists against introversion, and therefore MBTI-ISTJ. This bias or cultural force (the “environment,” in Myers’ terms) may impact the development of pastors as leaders if they have an introverted temperament type.

Adam S. McHugh, in *Introverts in the Church*, highlights the negative impact that cultural biases regarding personality preferences may have in ministry. In the introduction, McHugh speaks of his struggle as an introvert. As he was contemplating entering ministry, he believed his personality – introversion – “excluded him from it [ministry].”<sup>233</sup> He once thought his personality “crippled ... [his] potential for ministry.”<sup>234</sup> He further describes the bias most introverts in the church at large face, stating, “A subtle but insidious message can permeate these communities, a message that says God is most pleased with extroversion.”<sup>235</sup> This researcher identifies closely with McHugh’s struggle. Most introverts, it seems, seek to be extraverts out of shame for the introverted way in which God has designed them. In the opinion of the researcher, there is a need for introverts to experience healing so that they may live authentically, without trying to be other than the people God created them to be. A significant portion of pastoral ministry (sixty to seventy percent, according to Dr. Douglass) demands the introvert be extraverted – that is, to engage in more extraverted activities, such as relating to significant numbers of people, and socializing.<sup>236</sup> Introverts who are not intentional

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<sup>233</sup> Adam S. McHugh, *Introverts in the Church: Finding Our Place in an Extroverted Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2009), 11.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Dr. Philip Douglass of Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, MO believes the 60 / 40 rule applies to pastoral ministry. 60 to 70 percent of ministry is more extraverted activity with 30 to 40 percent being introverted.

about scheduling sixty to seventy percent of their time to engage life and ministry as the introverts they are can quickly experience “extraverting overload.” The literature reviewed below, an additional source of encouragement, will also indicate that introverts can serve as effective leaders.

“Can Introverts Be Leaders?” asks Jennifer B. Kahnweiler in *The Introverted Leader*. She answers, “Absolutely, introverts can be successful leaders.”<sup>237</sup> This volume is devoted to exploring how introverted leaders can succeed. To ask the question is to assert that not everyone would agree that introverts could be successful leaders. A commonly held opinion holds that extraverts make the best leaders.

The subtitle of Marti Olsen Laney’s work, *The Introvert Advantage: How to Thrive in an Extravert World*, suggests that the environmental pressures introverts face in today’s world and in today’s church culture are real. Laney shows the consequences of cultural pressure on introverts:

Introverted children usually get the message loud and clear that something is wrong with them. In a study that was replicated three times with the same finding, introverts and extraverts were asked if they would prefer their ideal self to be extraverted or introverted. They were also asked if they would prefer their ideal leader to be introverted or extraverted. Reflecting the prejudices in our culture, both introverts and extraverts choose extraverts as their ideal self and their ideal leader. We live in a culture that caters to and extols extraverts. We definitely learn extroversion is the way we should be.<sup>238</sup>

She continues, “I have worked with a number of intelligent, introverted clients who thought they had a fundamental defect, that something was actually missing from their

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<sup>237</sup> Jennifer B. Kahnweiler, *The Introverted Leader: Building on Your Quiet Strength*, 1st ed., A Bk Business Book; Variation: Bk Business Book. (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2009), 3.

<sup>238</sup> Laney, 54.

brain. To make matters worse, they felt shame and guilt. People often use the words guilt and shame.”<sup>239</sup>

Susan Cain, in *Quiet*, remarks, “Today introversion and extroversion are two of the most exhaustively researched subjects in personality psychology, arousing the curiosity of hundreds of scientist.”<sup>240</sup> She further writes, “We see ourselves as a nation of extroverts—which means that we’ve lost sight of who we really are. Depending on which study you consult, one third to one half of Americans are introverts—in other words, one out of every two or three people we know.”<sup>241</sup> Cain continues, “If these statistics surprise you, that’s probably because so many people pretend to be extroverts ... It makes sense that so many introverts hide even from themselves. We live with a value system that I call the Extrovert Ideal—the omnipresent belief that the ideal self is gregarious, alpha, and comfortable in the spotlight.”<sup>242</sup> The rise of the “Extrovert Ideal” according to Cain was in large measure due to the influence of Dale Carnegie, who experienced a “metamorphosis from farm boy to salesman to public-speaking icon ...”<sup>243</sup> He founded the Dale Carnegie Institute in 1912.<sup>244</sup> This organization was “dedicated to helping businessmen root out the very insecurities that had held him [Carnegie] back as a young man.”<sup>245</sup> Cain states,

Carnegie’s journey reflected a cultural evolution that reached a tipping point around the turn of the twentieth century, changing forever who we are and whom we admire, how we act at job interviews and what we look for in an employee, how we court our mates and raise our children. America had shifted from what the influential cultural historian Warren Susman called a Culture of Character to a

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Susan Cain, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, 1st ed. (New York: Crown Publishers, 2012), 3.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

Culture of Personality—and opened up Pandora’s Box of personal anxieties from which we could never quite recover.

In Culture of Character, the ideal self was serious, disciplined, and honorable. What counted was not so much the impression one made in public as how one behaved in private. The word *personality* didn’t exist in English until the eighteenth century, and the idea of “having a good personality” was not widespread until the twentieth.

But when they embraced the Culture of Personality, Americans started to focus on how others perceived them. They became captivated by people who were bold and entertaining. “The social role demanded of all in the new Culture of personality was that of a performer,” Susman famously wrote. “Every American was to become a performing self.”<sup>246</sup>

Cain highlights the cultural bias against introversion in her analysis of the “Extrovert Ideal” and Culture of Personality.

This cultural prejudice against introversion is encountered in the church as well as in the culture at large. McHugh examines the dynamics of introverted members and leaders navigating life in an extraverted church culture. He shows that introverted pastors feel acutely the bias in favor of extraversion. He cites a Barna Research study showing that seventy-five percent of the senior pastors at the 627 churches in the study were extraverts.<sup>247</sup> He concludes that extraverted pastors are “prone to encourage extroversion in their churches.”<sup>248</sup> The prevalence of extraverted pastors and congregations fosters the idea that extraversion is the norm and introversion is abnormal. McHugh shows that introverted pastors experience the pressure to behave as extraverts by telling the story of a well-known pastor of a large congregation who acknowledged that “social interaction drains him and that he prefers not to be in the spotlight.”<sup>249</sup> McHugh states,

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<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>247</sup> McHugh, 27.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.



Yet the social demands of his job are staggering. He lamented that, in his congregation, he is expected to be the “lead socializer”—the first one on the church patio and the last one to leave. All the interviews I conducted with introverted pastors yielded one commonality: the coffee hour after worship is one of their least favorite hours of the week. They love their people, but after expending a tremendous amount of emotional energy to preach, they would prefer to disappear in their offices than mingle.<sup>250</sup>

The struggle of so many introverts is reflected in McHugh’s findings from an interview he conducted with a therapist who counsels pastors. The therapist acknowledged that many introverts had difficulty “finding balance in their lives,” struggled with depression, felt unable to meet the social demands placed on them by churches, and struggled to find boundaries to allow for rest and recharging.<sup>251</sup> He writes, “Because of these challenges, one friend, who was part of a pastoral nominating committee, observed that the group’s unspoken mantra was ‘if your personality starts with the letter “I,” you need not apply.’ All of these factors of mainstream evangelicalism combine to create an environment that can be marginalizing and even exclusive of introverts.”<sup>252</sup>

McHugh’s insights are helpful for understanding how a church environment that seems to be prejudiced against introversion is, in Myer’s words, a “hazard to good type development.” McHugh further writes,

In our day, I am convinced that introverts are an important ingredient in the antidote to what ails evangelicalism ... yet, because of the extraverted bias in many of our churches, introverts are leading double lives. We are masquerading as extraverts in order to find acceptance, yet we feel displaced and confused. We are weary of fighting our introversion, and we long to live faithfully as the people we were created to be.<sup>253</sup>

McHugh represents the struggle so many introverts experience in a culture, even a church culture that favors extraversion.

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<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 27-28.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 31.

This brief analysis of the literature strongly suggests a cultural bias in favor of leaders who are extraverts. Why is this the case? The answer to this question is a complex one and is beyond the scope of this study. However, a few observations from the literature are in order to show possible reasons for this bias.

First, the “clash” over the nature of introversion between Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung (Freud’s student) in the early twentieth century may be one cause for introversion being viewed negatively in culture as a general rule.<sup>254</sup> McHugh observes,

For Freud, introversion indicated an unhealthy self-preoccupation. It was a pathological step towards narcissism, a disorder that involves obsession with the self to the exclusion of others, a habitual turning away from the outside world. Carl Jung, in contrast, considered introversion a healthy and normal trait... Whereas Freud posited a temperamental dichotomy of “normal” and “abnormal,” Jung placed introverts and extraverts on an energy continuum, each being legitimate.<sup>255</sup>

Jung understood introversion as an introspective orientation where one finds energy within self, according to McHugh.<sup>256</sup> The extraverted orientation is focused outward, where one finds energy outside of self.<sup>257</sup> McHugh states that Freud viewed these psychological tendencies as stemming from one’s family and societal forces, whereas Jung “argued that these psychological types were inborn.”<sup>258</sup>

The advent of personality inventories like MBTI has shown that both introversion and extraversion are “normal” traits in mainstream culture and that introversion is a healthy temperament.<sup>259</sup> It should be noted that MBTI is based on Jung’s collective-unconscious theory.<sup>260</sup> McHugh states,

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid., 32-33.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid., 33-34.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

...but in the minds of many introverts, the debate between Freud and Jung rages on. Because our mainstream culture, even in our churches, praises the virtues of extroversion, practically every introvert has agonized with questions like "Is something wrong with me?" ... Introverts are targets for a variety of misguided arrows: we are shy, reserved, aloof, reclusive, melancholic, self-absorbed, passive, timid, social rejects, misanthropes and the list goes on ... But none of these are proper descriptions that result from others' misunderstandings or our own confusion.<sup>261</sup>

Another possible reason for the cultural bias against introversion, especially in the church, is the perception that Jesus was an extravert. A study conducted by Susan H. Howell utilized the MBTI and the Keirsey Temperament Sorter II to measure the perception of students from a private Baptist college regarding Jesus' personality. Howell found that students tended to perceive Jesus as an extravert. Howell states,

The present study indicated that students tended to perceive Jesus as an Extravert Feeler, but were divided regarding whether Jesus should be characterized as Sensing or Intuitive, Judging or Perceiving, with the former related to the participants' own Sensing/Intuitive dimension and the latter related to the level of importance the participants placed on modeling their lives after Jesus.<sup>262</sup>

The significance of these findings is reflected in the following observation:

Making an assumption that Jesus was extraverted based on a cultural bias might make it difficult for introverts in such a culture to accept and affirm their own behavioral preferences as legitimate and valuable; not something to be overcome, or even tolerated, but something to be appreciated and blessed. Such an assumption might also make it easier for extraverts to overlook the strengths of introversion and the benefits introverts bring to their interactions with others.<sup>263</sup>

Howell states, "In summary, the present study found the perceptions of Jesus' personality to be clear and well-defined in the areas of Extraversion and Feeling. Jesus as

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<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Susan H. Howell, "Students' Perceptions of Jesus' Personality as Assessed by Jungian-Type Inventories," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 32, no. 1 (2004): 54.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., 54-55.

an Extravert was a salient perception which might reflect the influence of a culture which values extraversion over introversion.”<sup>264</sup>

A third reason for societies’ preferences for extraversion may be related to confusion over the percentage of occurrences of introversion in culture. In the early development of the MBTI, which was during a time when population studies were rare, an unpublished study done by Isabel Briggs Myers concluded that roughly one-third of the population was introverted.<sup>265</sup> She used the findings of this original study in the 1980 publication of *Gifts Differing* and again in the 1995 reprint that included a footnote acknowledging that the statistic in question was based on an unpublished study.<sup>266</sup> Laurie Helgoe, in *Introvert Power*, observes, “Other authors quoted this statistic without the footnote, and their books became references to other sources. Before long, ‘several sources’ were repeating Myers original estimate, and the fact was born. What seemed to be several was actually one well-reasoned but extremely out of date statistic.”<sup>267</sup> Helgoe cites a 1998 population study based on a nationally representative, randomly selected sample in which introverts represented fifty-seven percent and forty-three percent were extraverts.<sup>268</sup> The long accepted statistic that extraverts outnumber introverts by one-fourth to one-third has been dispelled. *The Myers and Briggs Foundation* reports the estimated frequencies of ISTJ’s in the United States Population at between eleven and fourteen percent and that of Introverts at between forty-seven and fifty-five percent (Figure 2).<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>265</sup> Helgoe, 40.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., 40-41.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Myersbriggs.org, <http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/my-mbti-results/how-frequent-is-my-type.asp>

Total			ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
E	45–53%	49.3%	11–14% 11.6%	9–14% 13.8%	1–3% 1.5%	2–4% 2.1%
I	47–55%	50.7%				
S	66–74%	73.3%	ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
N	26–34%	26.7%	4–6% 5.4%	5–9% 8.8%	4–5% 4.4%	3–5% 3.3%
T	40–50%	40.2%				
F	50–60%	59.8%	ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
J	54–60%	54.1%	4–5% 4.3%	4–9% 8.5%	6–8% 8.1%	2–5% 3.2%
P	40–46%	45.9%				
			ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ
			8–12% 8.7%	9–13% 12.3%	2–5% 2.5%	2–5% 1.8%

Figure 2: Estimates of the relative frequency of each of the sixteen types in the United States population.

A fourth reason for this bias towards the extraverted leader in the church may be the unrealistic expectations many churches have for their pastors as leaders, which results, as McHugh observes, in churches desiring their pastors to be the stereotypical “superstar” leaders.<sup>270</sup> Roy M. Oswald and Otto Kroeger, in *Personality Type and Religious Leadership*, list a host of expectations congregations normally expect of ministers. The list includes activities in twenty-one categories, ranging from leading worship, preparing and delivering sermons, and teaching both adults and children, to giving pastoral care, performing denominational duties, promoting enthusiasm for parish activities, and administrating church business.<sup>271</sup> Oswald and Kroeger further state, “When a congregation calls a pastor it expects that s/he will be good at all of the above activities.”<sup>272</sup>

<sup>270</sup> McHugh, 115-116.

<sup>271</sup> Oswald, 28.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

McHugh records an observation from a pastor commenting on congregational expectations for ministers:

Most church cultures have expectations for pastors that no single person could ever fulfill. They want sermons that are biblical, deep, thoughtful and well prepared, but they also want the outgoing, extraverted, people-person, as well as the CEO mover and shaker. These seldom come in one person. This may be one reason why so many drop out of pastoral ministry in five or ten years.<sup>273</sup>

He further states,

We set our leaders up for inevitable failure when we measure them by unreachable standards. So this is not simply a matter of whether extraverts or introverts make better leaders, this is a question about the general soundness of our leadership models. When we explicitly or implicitly communicate that only a few people, for whom the stars miraculously align, can lead with power and effectiveness, we discourage those who do not fit our cultural ideals but have great potential to lead, thus doing harm to the body of Christ.<sup>274</sup>

The point McHugh, Oswald, and Kroeger make is that unrealistic expectations of churches create an environment that favors the extraverted, “superstar leader.” The result is a tendency to view those who do not fit this ideal as ineffective leaders.

The literature clearly reveals a cultural bias against introversion and, in particular, against introverted leaders in culture and within the church. Next, this study will show from a basic literature review that introverts can be successful as leaders.

### **Leadership and the Introvert (ISTJ)**

The previous section clearly establishes the cultural bias against introverted leadership, and therefore the leadership of ISTJ pastors. Kahnweiler, however, is one author among several who shows how the challenges that introverts, and therefore ISTJs, face in leadership can be turned into opportunities to succeed by utilizing the “Four P Process.” She states, “The Four P’s Process is an easy-to-remember roadmap to improve

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<sup>273</sup> McHugh, 119.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., 119-120.

your performance. ‘Preparation,’ ‘Presence,’ ‘Push,’ and ‘Practice’ addresses the four challenges of stress, preceptor section gap, derailed careers, and invisibility. These steps include many tools to move you forward as an introverted leader.”<sup>275</sup> The author believes preparation is the first and most important step for introverted leadership:

Preparing for interpersonal interactions is the single best action step you can take ... Preparation means you have a game plan, so take the necessary time to be alone and strategize for interpersonal interactions (e.g., clarify your purpose, think of specific questions and phrases to say, take notes, and rehearse with a trusted peer). Observe those who have great interpersonal skills and integrate their approaches into your style. It works.<sup>276</sup>

By “presence,” the second “P,” Kahnweiler means, “focusing on the current moment and the person [or persons] you are with.”<sup>277</sup> Presence enables an introvert to be perceived as someone who has “empathy and integrity” rather than one who is aloof and disconnected.<sup>278</sup> The third “P,” “push” refers to getting outside one’s comfort zone. “It is important to place yourself in situations where you are forced to stretch and get out of your comfort zone, whether it be public speaking or having a difficult conversation with a customer.”<sup>279</sup> The author illustrates the value of “push” in this statement: “When Mary Toland forced herself to build a relationship with her boss, she saw her career move forward. You are no longer invisible, and you gain key opportunities when you push.”<sup>280</sup> The final “P” is “practice.” Kahnweiler states, “Practice will make you proficient and help you incorporate many tools into you standing repertoire ... It is practice that keeps you fresh and experimenting with different ways to connect with people and deliver your message. Practice is also what gives you the ability to recalibrate your approach and

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<sup>275</sup> Kahnweiler, 19.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 20, 21.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

demeanor depending on the situation.”<sup>281</sup> The importance of practice lies in the fact that through practice, “trust and credibility will increase with co-workers, direct reports, and your boss. By taking down the cloak of invisibility, you will be moving your career forward.”<sup>282</sup> *The Introverted Leader* provides helpful insight on how to apply the four “P”s in various work situations, such as meetings, management, public speaking, project leadership, and relationship building. Kahnweiler provides numerous examples of introverted leaders turning what might be a weakness into strength. One example illustrates the power of silence. Reflecting on the value of silence, Kahnweiler records: “Sid Milstein, VP Global BPO for EDS, and HP Company, told me that you can convey a sense of reflective wisdom to your peers and your bosses because you ‘hopefully, are considering facts and issues before speaking.’”<sup>283</sup>

Another source that shows the potential for introverts as successful leaders, and therefore ISTJs as leaders, is *Introverts in the Church*. McHugh observes,

Calling belongs to God, and it is the foundational reason why introverts venture into Christian leadership. A sense of vocation is what sustains us, and though we do not determine our vocation, we can learn how to protect it and to thrive in it through self-care, spiritual disciplines, thoughtfulness about how we expand our energy, and a healthy perspective on our role in the ministry of the church.<sup>284</sup>

The good news, according to McHugh, is that “the stereotypical leadership model is breaking”—the model that favors extraversion.<sup>285</sup> McHugh reports two statistics (one in *USA Today* and the other through Barna) showing that in 2006 four in ten executives were introverts and that, the same year, 24 percent of Protestant senior ministers viewed

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<sup>281</sup> Ibid., 23, 24.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

<sup>284</sup> McHugh, 139.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid., 120.



themselves as introverts.<sup>286</sup> One crucial leadership value, according to McHugh, is character over charisma. He asserts, “Character is more than personal integrity and ethical decision-making, though it certainly includes those elements. The central component of character is authenticity ... Leaders with character find their identity from within and in harmony with whom God has uniquely created them to be.”<sup>287</sup> In speaking of leadership in light of character, McHugh further remarks, “True leadership is not cultivated in the limelight; it’s won in the trenches. Character is something that is built. Thus, the mark of godly leadership is not magnetic personality; it is discipline, because discipline develops character.”<sup>288</sup>

*Personality Type and Religious Leadership* discusses the impact of leaders’ personality preferences on their ability to fulfill the varied functions (roles) of pastoral ministry. This volume demonstrates that pastors in each of the sixteen temperament types have strengths that enable them to excel in some aspects of pastoral ministry. Oswald and Kroeger conclude, “In summary, if the pastoral role includes a lot of spiritual direction work, we would recommend an Introvert. For general pastoral work, we would recommend an Extravert.”<sup>289</sup> An interesting finding of their research considered the ability of introverts to be successful preachers: “The cultural stereotype would have Extraverts preaching with ease and introverts doing it with difficulty. We have discovered, however, that Introverts can be powerful preachers, especially if they have had some solid introverted time preparing for the event. And for Extraverts, preaching

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<sup>286</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>289</sup> Oswald, 34.

does not come easily at all.”<sup>290</sup> These authors suggest that SJ (ISTJ) pastors “... tend to be the most traditional of all clergy temperaments, bringing stability and continuity in whatever situation they are called to serve. They will tend to be loyal to denominational liturgies and doctrines ... SJ clergy bring superior skills to administrative functions ... SJ clergy can be expected to excel in pastoral ministry.”<sup>291</sup>

In *Introvert Power*, Helgoe explores the valuable contribution introverts, and therefore ISTJs, make in culture. She comments,

As much as introverts may be misunderstood or devalued, people are drawn to the richness we conceal and enjoy the products we create in our “tents.” The reclusive songwriter entertains through the computer audio system developed by introverts. Voices of introverts speak through books so varied we can be entertained by just looking at the titles in a bookstore. Introverts make us think and ask questions. We fall silent as the quiet person in the room reveals wisdom from the inner reservoir.<sup>292</sup>

Introverts have the potential to bring many gifts and abilities to positions of leadership.

One huge benefit introverts offer is “ideas.” Helgoe writes, “Introverts spend a lot of time pondering the big questions. Our love of ideas often inspires us to pursue noble work ...

Ideas are us. Introvert power can, if properly managed, efficiently advance every field of human endeavor, from science to business, education to politics.”<sup>293</sup>

Jim Collins’ *Good to Great* shows the value of introverts as leaders, and therefore leaders who are ISTJs. In *Good to Great*, Collins explores the reasons some corporations have become truly great ones with sustained high levels of performance. At the heart of these transitions are, surprisingly, non-stereotypical high-level corporate leaders. He

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<sup>290</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid., 75-77.

<sup>292</sup> Helgoe, 14.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., 155, 167.

asserts, “All the good-to-great companies had Level 5 leadership at the time of transition.”<sup>294</sup> Level 5 Leaders, according to Collins,

...embody a paradoxical mix of personal humility and professional will. They are ambitious, to be sure, but ambitious first and foremost for the company, not themselves ... [Level 5 Leaders] set up their successors for even greater success ... [Level 5 Leaders] display a compelling modesty, are self-effacing and understated ... [Level 5 Leaders] are fanatically driven, infected with an incurable need to produce sustained results ... [Level 5 Leaders] are more plow horse than show horse.<sup>295</sup>

Level 4 Leaders, “comparison leaders,” in contrast are “show horses,” charismatic leaders with “gargantuan egos,” “celebrity leaders” who lead to build themselves up often at the expense of the future of the company.<sup>296</sup> Collins states,

The great irony is that the animus and personal ambition that often drive people to positions of work stand at odds with the humility required for Level 5 leadership. When you combine that irony with the fact that Board of Directors frequently operate under the false belief that they need to hire a larger-than-life, egocentric leader to make an organization great, you can quickly see why Level 5 Leaders rarely appear at the top of our institutions.<sup>297</sup>

Collins further states, “the moment a leader allows himself to become the primary reality people worry about, rather than reality being the primary reality, we have a recipe for mediocrity, or worse. This is one of the key reasons why less charismatic leaders often produce better long-term results than they’re more charismatic counterparts.”<sup>298</sup>

McHugh, commenting on Collins’ findings, states, “Collins discovered that glitzy, dynamic, high profile CEOs are actually a *hindrance* to the long-term success of their corporations. Charismatic leaders naturally attract people, but these leaders may be less

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<sup>294</sup> James C. Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap--and Others Don't*, 1st ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 22.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., 72.

effective at drawing people to the mission and values of the organization itself.”<sup>299</sup>

McHugh understands Collins’ Level 5 Leaders as representing the biblical picture of a servant leader.<sup>300</sup> McHugh concludes that character trumps charisma in a leader.<sup>301</sup> The important point to glean from Collins and McHugh is that the stereotypical model of an effective leader—that of the charismatic leader—does not correlate with reality.

Leadership is about character. Introverts and extraverts with godly character can be successful in church leadership.

An interesting trait of many introverts is their ability to take on leadership roles and be thrust onto “center stage.” Laney writes, “So introverts are definitely not wallflowers. However, what drives introverts onto center stage is often different from what drives extraverts. Introverts come into the limelight because of their quest for work that has meaning to them, an unusual talent, or extraordinary circumstances.”<sup>302</sup> In *Type Talk*, mentioned earlier, Kroeger and Thuesen discuss a similar trait when they speak of introverts taking on very public roles as class presidents, community leaders, and so forth—traits typically viewed as being extraverted behavior. They explain this by pointing out that ISTJs have such a sense of duty—“doing what needs to be done”—that they can abandon their natural introverted behavior and “dutifully” step into the limelight “and do their duty.”<sup>303</sup>

The literature clearly shows the cultural bias in favor of extraverted leaders. The sources analyzed in this study, however, suggest that reality paints a different picture.

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<sup>299</sup> McHugh, 120.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., 121.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., 122-123.

<sup>302</sup> Laney, 42.

<sup>303</sup> Kroeger, 216.

Introverts, and in particular ISTJs, can be successful leaders of congregations. One observation McHugh makes about leadership is profound:

God has always been about the business of shattering expectations, and in our culture, the standards of leadership are extraverted. It perfectly follows the biblical trend that God would choose the unexpected and the culturally ‘unfit’—like introverts—to lead his church for the sake of his greater glory. The apostle Paul marveled at this paradox: “ ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.’ So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weakness, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.” (2 Cor. 12:9)<sup>304</sup>

Introverts, and therefore ISTJs, can be and are effective leaders in the church by God’s grace. God’s grace and sovereignty trumps temperament!

### **Conclusion**

This literature review has provided helpful data to construct a portrait of how ISTJ pastors navigate pastoral ministry. The researcher reviewed literature on the following four topics: human personality, introversion, MBTI – ISTJ, introversion and cultural biases, and leadership and the introvert (ISTJ). The following chapter will discuss the methodology used for this study.

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<sup>304</sup> McHugh, 127.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to explore how MBTI – ISTJ pastors lead effectively in pastoral ministry by understanding and capitalizing on their unique divine design. The assumption of this study is that ISTJ pastors have the potential to lead effectively but with respect to their temperament are faced with hurdles in pastoral ministry, which is by nature a significantly extraverted environment. Using a qualitative study approach, the researcher explored how ISTJ pastors perceive their effectiveness as leaders in ministry, which aspects of pastoral leadership motivate ISTJ pastors, which unique leadership challenges ISTJ pastors face, how ISTJ pastors understand other's perceptions of their pastoral leadership, and what strategies ISTJ pastors have developed to strengthen their effectiveness as leaders. This chapter delineates the design of the study and its sampling criteria, data collection method, analysis procedures, limitations, and researcher's stance (reflectivity).

#### **Design of the Study**

The researcher implemented a qualitative research approach for this study. Sharan B. Merriam, in *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, describes qualitative research in the following manner:

Rather than determining cause and effect, predicting, or describing the distribution of some attribute among a population, we might be interested in uncovering the meaning of a phenomenon for those involved. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences,

how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences. For example, rather than finding out how many retired folks take on part-time jobs after retirement, which could be done through a survey, we might be more interested in how people adjust to retirement, how they think about this phase of their lives, the process they engaged in when moving from full-time work to retirement, and so on. These questions are about understanding their experiences and would call for qualitative design.<sup>305</sup>

In qualitative research, which focuses “on understanding the meaning of experience, the researcher is the primary instrument in data collection and analysis, the process is inductive, and rich description characterizes the end product.”<sup>306</sup> Thus, qualitative research is useful for researchers who are interested in discovering “(1) how people interpret their experiences, (2) how they construct their worlds, and (3) what meaning they attribute to the experiences. The overall purpose is to understand how people make sense of their lives and their experiences.”<sup>307</sup> The author writes, “In summary, all qualitative research is interested in how meaning is constructed, how people make sense of their lives and their worlds. The primary goal of a basic qualitative study is to uncover and interpret these meanings.”<sup>308</sup>

Merriam reviews the more common types of qualitative research: both basic and phenomenological research, as well as ethnography, grounded theory, narrative analysis, critical research, and case study. She states, “A basic qualitative study is the most common form and has as its goal understanding how people make sense of their experiences. Data are collected through interviews, observations, and documents and are analyzed inductively to address the research question.”<sup>309</sup> The remaining types share the

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<sup>305</sup> Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series; Variation: Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 5.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., 37.

same characteristics as the basic study, but each one has additional dimensions.

According to Merriam,

A phenomenological study is interested in the essence or underlying structure of a phenomenon; ethnography focuses on a sociocultural interpretation; grounded theory strives to build a substantive theory, one “grounded” in data collected; narrative analysis uses people’s stories to understand experience; and critical research seeks to uncover oppression and empower.<sup>310</sup>

A qualitative case study seeks to provide an “in-depth analysis of a bounded system.”<sup>311</sup> The author describes a bounded system as “a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries. I can ‘fence in’ what I am going to study. The case then, could be a single person who is a case example of some phenomenon, a program, a group an institution, or a specify policy...the unit of analysis, not the topic of investigation, characterizes a case study.”<sup>312</sup> Merriam further states, “By concentrating on a single phenomenon or entity (the case), the researcher aims to uncover the interaction of significant factors characteristic of the phenomenon. The case study focuses on holistic description and explanation.”<sup>313</sup>

The researcher used a qualitative case study research approach for this study. This qualitative method provided for the discovery of the most comprehensive and descriptive data from participant perspectives in the bounded system or narrow phenomena of ISTJ pastors as leaders in ministry settings.<sup>314</sup> For this in-depth research, the case study method involved minimal variables because all the participants shared the same institutional structure and culture as ISTJ pastors. Because the variables involved in the data analysis were more focused, the case study provided avenues for enhanced

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<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., 40-41.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid., 42-43.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., 39-46.



exploration of the intricacies of the leadership issues that ISTJ pastors face.<sup>315</sup> As an additional advantage, the case study analysis provided a fuller understanding of this singular context. Thus, the case study enabled the research to gain a more complete emic<sup>316</sup> perspective of those involved as ISTJs in pastoral leadership.<sup>317</sup>

### **Sampling Criteria**

The type of sampling utilized in this study was “purposeful sampling,” the most common form of “nonprobability sampling.”<sup>318</sup> Merriam writes, “Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned.”<sup>319</sup> Thus, this study required participants who were able to communicate in depth about pastoral leadership as MBTI – ISTJs so that the most could be learned. The purposeful study sample consisted of a selection of people from the population of active ministers<sup>320</sup> serving in pastoral ministry in a particular denomination and who scored ISTJ on the MBTI.

Participants had to meet six primary criteria in order to be chosen. First, the researcher selected participants with MBTI – ISTJ scores, minimizing the variables associated with the differing ways the eight “high I” MBTI types approach leadership. Each participant completed a self-assessment personality profile to confirm his MBTI type.<sup>321</sup> The participant’s wife, if the participant was married, or a colleague, if the

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<sup>315</sup> Ibid.

<sup>316</sup> This term refers to the participant’s perspective, not the researcher’s, and is an “insider view,” versus the etic, or “outsider view”

<sup>317</sup> Merriam, 29.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

<sup>320</sup> One participant is not currently ordained. He is a seminary graduate and under care of a presbytery. This participant is serving as an intern in a PCA congregation.

<sup>321</sup> Humanmetrics.com, <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes1.htm>.

participant was unmarried, also completed the assessment tool for the participant, in order to confirm the findings. One participant was not required to complete the self-assessment inventory as his ISTJ score was verified by a reliable source. Second, the researcher purposely selected pastors who were affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), limiting the sampling to one denomination with a unique form of church government and a unique leadership environment.<sup>322</sup> Third, the selection criteria required participants to be serving currently in pastoral ministry and in a church setting. Fourth, participants served in churches of varying sizes. Fifth, the participants' pastoral staff positions varied, including senior pastor, solo pastor, assistant / associate pastor, and intern positions. Sixth, the participants ranged in years of pastoral experience. Thus, the initial selection of participants represented PCA pastors currently serving in pastoral roles in churches of various sizes, having varying degrees of pastoral experience, and serving in various capacities—all having an MBTI score of ISTJ.

The researcher conducted personal interviews with ISTJ pastors in the Presbyterian Church in America who currently serve in pastoral ministry in local congregations. An introductory letter, followed by a personal phone call or email, invited the interviewees to participate. All expressed interest in serving as participants and gave written informed consent to participate with the understanding that identifiable information would be kept confidential. The researcher asked each participant to complete a one-page, demographic questionnaire and an MBTI inventory prior to the interview.

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<sup>322</sup> Merriam, 77-78.

### **Data Collection Methods**

This study utilized semi-structured interviews for primary data gathering.

Merriam states, “The most common way of deciding which type of interview to use is by determining the amount of structure desired.”<sup>323</sup> Merriam describes three types of interviews: highly structured or standardized, semi-structured, and unstructured or informal.<sup>324</sup> Semi-structured interviews are well suited for qualitative research. Merriam writes, “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 semistructured interview.”<sup>325</sup> The open-ended nature of interview questions facilitated the ability to build upon participant responses to complex issues in order to explore them more thoroughly. Merriam states, “In this type of interview either all of the questions are more flexibly worded or the interview is a mix of more and less structured questions...This format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic.”<sup>326</sup>

The interviews were conducted in person, by teleconference, or by videoconference. The interviews ranged from approximately forty-five minutes to over one and a half hours in duration. Prior to the interviews, the participants each received a letter describing the general process of the interviews and the major areas of inquiry. The researcher digitally recorded the interviews on a computer, using digital recording

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<sup>323</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

software (Audacity, GNU General Public License by Free Software Foundation) and, for a back-up recording, the researcher's iPhone (iTalk by Griffin). The interviews all took place between November 2011 and October 2012. During the interviews, the researcher took notes, and after each interview, the researcher reviewed the field notes and recorded additional descriptive and reflective observations.

During the interviews, the researcher asked each participant to describe a defining critical leadership incident – “a marker” – that had proven to be formative to the participant's understanding of pastoral leadership. The researcher also used the following questions when interviewing the participants:

1. Describe your approach to pastoral leadership.
2. What are your strengths as a leader?
3. What do you identify as the major reasons for your congregation responding positively to your leadership?
4. Describe a critical incident where, in your opinion, you performed well as a leader?
5. What most energizes you about leading people?
6. Describe a leadership incident where, in your opinion, you performed poorly as a leader?
7. What most concerns you about leading people?
8. How do you respond to this remark? “The best pastors are extroverts.”
9. What concerns do you have about other people's opinions of your abilities in pastoral leadership?
10. Describe a situation where someone praised you over your skills in leadership?

11. Describe a situation where someone criticized your leadership?
12. In light of your perceptions of what others think about your leadership, what would need to change in your thinking for you to be confident in your leadership abilities as an ISTJ pastor?

Consistent with the semi-structured interview approach, the researcher at times omitted certain questions or added extra questions if it seemed beneficial to achieving the purpose of the study. The researcher derived the initial interview protocol categories from the relevant literature. “The literature is crucial to identifying the overall theoretical framework of your study, as well as shaping the problems statement.”<sup>327</sup>

### **Analysis of Procedures**

This study utilized the constant comparison method, which the researcher used routinely throughout the interview process. “Analysis begins,” writes Merriam, “with the first interview, the first observation, the first document read.”<sup>328</sup> The constant comparative method for qualitative data analysis is a dynamic process, as Merriam explains.

Emerging insights, hunches, and tentative hypotheses direct the next phase of data collection, which in turn leads to the refinement or reformulation of questions, and so on. It is an interactive process throughout that allows the investigator to produce believable and trustworthy findings. Unlike experimental designs in which validity and reliability are accounted for before the investigation, rigor in qualitative research derives from the researcher’s presence, the nature of the interaction between researcher and participants, the triangulation of data, the interpretation of perceptions, and rich, thick descriptions.<sup>329</sup>

The final product is shaped by the data that are collected and the analysis that accompanies the entire process. Without ongoing analysis, the data can be unfocused, repetitious, and overwhelming in the sheer volume of material that

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<sup>327</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid., 165.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid., 165-166.

needs to be processes. Data that have been analyzed while being collected are both parsimonious and illuminating.<sup>330</sup>

Merriam believes qualitative research is primarily both inductive and comparative.<sup>331</sup> She writes,

I thus draw heavily from the constant comparative method of data analysis first proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as the means for developing grounded theory. However, the constant comparative method of data analysis is inductive and comparative and so has been widely used throughout qualitative research without building a grounded theory...Data analysis is a complex process that involves moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation. These meanings or understandings or insights constitute the findings of a study. Findings can be in the form of organized descriptive accounts, themes, or categories that cut across the data, or in the form of models and theories that explain the data. Each of these forms reflects different analytical levels, ranging from dealing with the concrete in simple description to high-level abstractions in theory construction.<sup>332</sup>

Data analysis is basically the process, according to Merriam, of answering the research questions: “The overall process of data analysis begins by identifying segments in your data set that are responsive to your research questions.”<sup>333</sup> For this study the reach questions (RQ) are:

1. How ISTJ pastors perceive their effectiveness as a leader in ministry?
2. What aspects of pastoral leadership motivate ISTJ pastors?
3. What unique leadership challenges do ISTJ pastors face in pastoral ministry?
4. How do ISTJ pastors understand other’s perception of their pastoral leadership?

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<sup>330</sup> Ibid., 171.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid., 175.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid., 175-176.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid., 176.

5. What strategies have ISTJ pastors developed to strengthen their effectiveness as leaders?

The constant comparative method enabled the researcher to look for common themes, patterns, concerns, and contrasting views across the variation of participants, and provided for the ongoing revision, clarification, and evaluation of the resultant data categories.

The researcher personally transcribed each interview by playing back the digital recording and then orally transcribing each interview using speech recognition software (Dragon Dictate by Nuance). After fully transcribing the interviews and observation notes into computer files, the researcher proceeded with coding the data. “Coding is nothing more than assigning some sort of shorthand designation to various aspects of your data so that you can easily retrieve specific pieces of data.”<sup>334</sup> After the data coding was complete, the researcher used the constant comparative method to analyze the data.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Participants interviewed for this study were males serving in pastoral ministry, in church contexts, in the PCA, with an MBTI score of ISTJ. It may be possible to generalize some of the study’s findings and apply them to pastors of other introverted temperament types who serve in the PCA or other denominations or ministry contexts. Though the participants in this study were males, the findings may be helpful to female ISTJ pastors or ministry leaders. The results of this study may also be helpful for researchers seeking to compare two or more of the introverted MBTI types to study how different types of introverts lead in ministry. As with all qualitative studies, the readers

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<sup>334</sup> Ibid., 173.

bear the responsibility to determine what can be appropriately applied to their own contexts.

### **Researcher's Stance (Reflectivity)**

All research should be done in an ethical manner, which demands that the researcher's stance or reflectivity be disclosed.<sup>335</sup> In a qualitative study, the researcher serves as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Thus, all observations and analyses are filtered through the researcher's perspectives and values. Merriam explains that researchers must be sensitive to understand how biases or subjectivity shape the investigation and its findings. The integrity of the qualitative researcher is based in large measure on "reflexivity, 'the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, the human as instrument.'"<sup>336</sup> "Although some sense of the researchers' values can be inferred from the statement of their assumptions and biases or from the audit trail, readers of course are likely never to know what ethical dilemmas were confronted and how they were dealt with. It is ultimately up to the individual researcher to proceed in as ethical a manner as practical."<sup>337</sup> Merriam further states,

Investigators need to explain their biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the research to be undertaken. Even in journal articles authors are being called upon to articulate and clarify their assumptions, experiences, worldview, and theoretical orientation to the study at hand. Such a clarification allows the reader to better understand how the individual researcher might have arrived at the particular interpretation of the data. As Maxwell (2005, p.108) explains, the reason for making your perspective, biases, and assumptions clear to the reader is not to eliminate "variance between researchers in values and expectations they bring to the study, but with understanding how a particular researcher's values and expectations influence the conduct and conclusions of the study" (emphasis in original).<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>335</sup> Ibid., 209.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid., 219.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., 230.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid., 219-220.



It is imperative for the researcher to employ critical self-reflection to identify and disclose potential biases and assumptions, including worldview, theoretical orientation, and other connections to the study that may impact the investigation.

This section reveals areas or biases that affect this researcher's stance. The researcher is an Evangelical Christian who has served as an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America since 1989. The researcher has pastored only one congregation since his ordination. His service in pastoral ministry has been a combination of serving as solo pastor and as senior pastor of a small staff. The researcher's worldview is best described as biblical, wherein he understands the world through the lenses of Scripture (John Calvin). The theological and ecclesiological convictions of the researcher are Reformed (Calvinistic), Presbyterian, and Covenantal. The MBTI score of the author is I (35%), S (32%), T (35%), J (38%).<sup>339</sup> The researcher's wife scored him in a way that varied slightly: I (78%), N (12%), T (88%), J (89%). For much of his pastoral ministry, the researcher has struggled with being an introvert. The researcher's perception is that society generally views introversion as a weakness. Perhaps influenced by this perception – cultural bias – the researcher has at times also doubted whether introverts can be good leaders. In light of this, the researcher's aim is to show that introverts, in particular ISTJs, can serve faithfully and effectively as leaders in Christ's church.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has described the qualitative research approach the author used to study how ISTJ pastors lead in ministry. The qualitative design allowed for deeper, emic

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<sup>339</sup> The inventory used for both researcher and his wife is found at <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes1.htm>.

analysis of the meanings pastors have constructed from their own experiences in leading as ISTJ pastors. Chapter four will present the findings from the participant interviews.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore how MBTI-ISTJ pastors lead effectively in pastoral ministry by understanding and capitalizing on their unique divine design. The assumption of this study was that ISTJ pastors have the potential to lead effectively but with respect to their temperament are faced with hurdles in pastoral ministry, which is by nature a significantly extraverted environment. Five research questions guided this study. The research questions are:

1. How do ISTJ pastors perceive their effectiveness as leaders in ministry?
2. What aspects of pastoral leadership motivate ISTJ pastors?
3. What unique leadership challenges do ISTJ pastors face in pastoral ministry?
4. How do ISTJ pastors understand others' perceptions of their pastoral leadership?
5. What strategies have ISTJ pastors developed to strengthen their effectiveness as leaders?

This chapter will introduce the participants of this study and present their insights concerning the effective leadership of ISTJ pastors. The research questions listed above will serve as section headings, under which the researcher will group the research findings. Thus, the section headings for this chapter are, first, how ISTJ pastors perceive their effectiveness as ministry leaders, second, which aspects of pastoral leadership motivate ISTJ pastors, third, what unique leadership challenges ISTJ pastors face in pastoral ministry, fourth, how ISTJ pastors understand others' perceptions of their

pastoral leadership, and finally, what strategies ISTJ pastors have developed to strengthen their effectiveness as leaders.

### **Introduction to the Participants**

Seven pastors and one pastoral intern participated in this study. All of the pastors were men serving in pastoral ministry in the PCA at the time of the interviews. The intern was also serving in a PCA congregation. It is important to note that the PCA constitution allows for only the ordination of males to church offices. Thus, the data gathered reflect males' service in pastoral ministry; however, the findings can also be helpful to pastors serving in denominations that ordain females.

The following paragraphs provide a brief introduction to each study participant. For the sake of anonymity, the participants' names and identifying information have been changed. The introduction to each participant includes each participant's MBTI score, with the percentages in parentheses indicating the strength of each preference. It is important to note that the inventory<sup>340</sup> used for this assessment is non-scientific, and the results only approximate the participants' preferences.

BW's interview took place at his office on November 8, 2011. The interview was approximately fifty-nine minutes in length. Serving as a solo pastor in a small- to medium-sized congregation in the mid-South, BW has been in ministry for approximately twenty years. He is married with children and scored as follows on the MBTI questionnaire: I (89%), S (1%), T (88%), J (56%). His wife affirmed these results, scoring him as follows: I (100%), S (1%), T (62%), J (89%).

HJ's interview took place on November 8, 2011 at his office and lasted for one hour and twenty-three minutes. HJ is an assistant pastor with ten to fifteen years of

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<sup>340</sup> Humanmetrics.com, <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes1.htm>.

ministerial experience. His church, located in the South, is small to medium in size. He is married with children and scored as follows on the MBTI: I (44%), S (12%), T (75%), J (44%). His wife affirmed these results, scoring him as follows: I (67%), S (12%), T (62%), J (67%).

MC's November 9, 2011 interview also occurred in person at his office. This interview lasted one hour and thirty-two minutes. With approximately twenty years of ministry experience, MC has served in pastoral ministry for the past ten years. He serves as the solo pastor at a small- to medium-sized congregation in the mid-South and is married with children. His MBTI score was as follows: I (67%), S (25%), F (25%), J (56%). MC's wife's score varied slightly: I (67%), S (38%), T (1%), J (22%). For the purposes of this study, the researcher considered MC a borderline ISJT due to his inventory, which showed a slight "F" preference, and his wife's inventory, which indicated a low "T" preference.

BG's interview, which lasted approximately one hour and thirty-five minutes, took place on March 13, 2012 at the resort home of one of his church members. With about seven years of experience as an ordained minister, BG currently serves as the solo pastor of a small- to medium-sized church located on the East Coast. He is married with children. On the MBTI, he scored as follows: I (22%), S (25%), T (88%), J (56%). His wife affirmed these results, scoring him as follows: I (22%), S (25%), T (75%), J (78%).

RG's interview took place at his office on March 14, 2012. The interview lasted one hour and eighteen minutes. RG serves as the senior pastor of a medium to large congregation on the East Coast and has approximately twenty-one years of experience in pastoral ministry. He is married with children, but he and his wife were exempt from

completing the MBTI self-assessment because he has concluded through previous self-assessment that he is an ISTJ. In addition, extensive assessment has shown RG to be an ISTJ, with a reliable source verifying this finding.<sup>341</sup>

The researcher interviewed BK in person on June 21, 2012 at a coffee shop. The interview lasted forty-six minutes. BK has approximately six years of experience in pastoral ministry, currently serving as an associate pastor in a small- to medium-sized church on the East Coast. He is married with children. BK's MBTI score was as follows: I (78%), S (12%), T (50%), J (22%). BK's wife's score varied slightly: I (33%), S (38%), F (62%), J (56%).

On May 30, 2012, the researcher interviewed CJ by teleconference; the duration of the interview was forty-nine minutes. This participant, a seminary graduate under care of a presbytery, is preparing for ordination and serves as a chaplain intern. He is married with children. On the MBTI, he scored as follows: I (72%), S (25%), T (75%), J (67%). CJ's wife's score varied slightly: I (89%), N (12%), T (50%), J (56%).

Finally, the researcher interviewed SD by videoconference (Skype) on October 31, 2012. The interview lasted approximately one hour and twenty minutes. This participant serves a small to medium congregation on the East Coast and has approximately ten years of pastoral ministry experience. SD is married with children. His MBTI score was as follows: I (22%), S (62%), T (88%), J (44%). SD's wife's score varied slightly: E (33%), S (50%), T (50%), J (22%).

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<sup>341</sup> Dr. Philip Douglass (Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO) has evaluated RG and has verified his MBTI score of ISTJ.

### **How ISTJ Pastors Perceive Their Effectiveness as Ministry Leaders**

The first research question asks how ISTJ pastors perceive their effectiveness as leaders in ministry. The researcher arranged the pastors' responses under the following headings: ministry of the word, marks of leadership, approaches to ministry, relational ministry, and the best pastors.

#### **Ministry of the Word**

A common leadership theme among the participants' remarks was the primacy, through preaching and teaching, of the ministry of the word of God. BG stated,

My hope is that my ministry flows out of the scriptures, from the scripture. So, hopefully, it would be consistent with a priority on the word of God. So I think the way that translates into [ministry] is my priorities in ministry are the preaching of the word, and the preaching of the word. To me that's where, biblically and I think historically, the pastoral models that I've seen and try to learn from and read about, preaching is the main priority of the pastor—equipping the saints for the work of ministry. So that means that I, in my ministry, spend the bulk of my time preparing the sermon for the week, and also the service that goes around that, so that, the word is central...the pulpit is central and everything flows out from that.

BG believes that God uses all types of people in ministry, introverts and extraverts.

"Extroverts excel at some things and introverts excel at other things." He continues, "But at the same time I don't think as a pastor I'm primarily called to relational ministry. I'm primarily called to the pulpit..."

Preaching is also central to BW's approach to pastoral ministry. He said about his approach to pastoral ministry that it is "just the basics; nothing fancy—Word and sacrament, love people. Try to spend time with people—very basic." When the interviewer asked RG which ministry activity he would choose if he could only do one, he answered, "Well, that'd be hard, but it would be preaching."

Similarly, MC understands one of his major strengths in ministry to be preaching: “My strengths are probably pulpit ministry in the actual pulpit, of leading people by preaching the word, as well as shepherding people.” He further remarks,

I think those are my strengths. [Leading] from the realm of “thus sayeth the Lord,” rather than “thus sayeth of me”...And I would say that is one of the things that in my position as a pastor that has been interesting for me to see is that when I do have the force of the word of God behind me I’m really a different person. It’s a different personality; even my children would say I’m a completely different person in the pulpit...I hope it is the Spirit of God, really. That’s the only thing that I would know to attribute it to, truly. Certainly there are other factors as well, but I really do...I trust that when I get into the pulpit it is the Lord speaking.

When describing the reasons for his congregation’s positive response to his leadership, MC noted that he believes they would say, “he’s passionate about the truth of the Word of God and communicating it to us. I think that would be the first thing; and secondly, when he doesn’t do a very good job of that we know that he loves us.”

SD stated that prayer is the most important activity in pastoral leadership: “... I think it’s clear from the word that our primary responsibility is prayer and maybe secondarily ministry of the word. So my biggest task I guess you’d say would be to be in prayer.” He then stated, “but time-wise, when I look at my schedule of course, sermon preparation is the biggest task I have.”

The three participants who are not regularly in pulpit ministry expressed the importance of ministering the word through teaching. BK, who serves as an assistant pastor, seeks to dig deeply into a given Bible passage, so that he can understand it better and, in turn, communicate the meaning clearly to others. He remarked, “I enjoy teaching as well and research and digging deep into a subject to learn something that is interesting and valuable and then try to share it with others.” CJ, the intern, made a similar point: “[I] want to understand exactly what the text says. I kind of come to it, and I feel like it kind



of makes sense initially but I really want to understand exactly what it says so I put a lot of study into it.” HJ, who serves as an assistant, preaches on Sunday evenings, and teaches Sunday school, remarked,

Recently somebody kind of caught me after Sunday school and said that “I’m loving your Sunday school class right now, I’m loving it.” The comment that I appreciated the most was that “you can teach but you can also engage the group.” [I use] a lot of Socratic kind of stuff, a lot of engaging, asking questions. And even taking questions or comments that are off the mark and steering them back in the right direction.... actually I love them. I actually like them. I like, when I’m teaching—I’ve not thought about it this way before so I might back up after I say it—I think when I’m teaching I’m very aware of really interacting with a passage with Scripture and with people. And I don’t—is not always my job simply to convey the meaning—say in a teaching or Sunday school session, for example, to convey the meaning of this to you, but to draw you to see the meaning yourself. Do you see what I’m saying? So those kinds of questions, not only do they not throw me off, but I actually kind of enjoy them. I kind of like watching as people wrestle with, you know, getting steered back to what the passage is really after.

### **Marks of Leadership**

In their interviews, the participants revealed many characteristics or marks of their leadership styles. One quality that was important to some of the study participants was a high sense of duty and loyalty. BG commented, “I’m okay in the hospital. Hospitals don’t wig me out. I’m okay being at a bedside. And some of that is I feel like maybe it is some of that duty, some of that loyalty, this is my calling, this is my job.” He described a situation where the senior pastor of his church left and he served as the interim pastor until they could fill the pulpit with a new minister. His role was to “be the guy to get us [the church] from one guy to the next.” He simply said, “And so that was my job [duty]. And I was perfectly content with it.” RG recounted this sense of duty as a major factor in a ministry transition: “It really was a strong sense of duty.” SD verbalized his sense of duty in the following manner: “[I am] duty oriented, task oriented, to a fault I think really.” When asked, “Do you have a high sense of duty when it comes to preaching?”

MC answered, “Absolutely, yeah.” When thinking about how duty relates to his leadership style, he further stated, “I love that part—that was kind of revealing to me—that whole sense of duty. I’ve never looked at duty as a bad word, as a burden.” Another way in which MC disclosed his sense of loyalty was in his affinity for the term “guardian of the institution.” He said, “Actually that gives me a lot of comfort, even just to hear that. It does. That’s great, to hear that word ‘guardian.’ I mean that that resonates with me; I know that’s me. That’s what I feel like.” HJ spoke about duty in a different manner. When his senior pastor took a sabbatical, HJ filled the pulpit. He said, “When the role was there for me to step into it, I stepped into it.”

Some of the participants noted calmness and steadiness as major aspects of their effectiveness as leaders. BW believes that “...being steady and being there, not getting all worked up and out of whack when something happens, but just kind of being calm and steady and listening [is important].” MC shared feedback he had received about a hospital visit during which he celebrated the birth of a child with one family, just after ministering to another church member who was gravely ill. These people said, he was a “firm rock,” and, “Wow, he was steady.” MC commented in light of these remarks, “I didn’t feel like that at all, but that’s, I think, that’s how other people view that.” He furthered reflected upon this situation,

And even with [congregants] being in the hospital this past week I had one of their family members, [say] two things. One of the family members said, “You spent a lot of time up here,” and I said, “I certainly do love this family.” And he said, “That’s a question beyond debate”... But one of the other ones said to me, “I don’t see how you do it. You’re so calm and solid and you’re dealing with all this.” And we had someone who had a baby at the same time, so [I] went upstairs to rejoice with them and came back downstairs. And [they] said, “I don’t see how you do it.”

Several participants mentioned their presence with people as a mark of their leadership. BK recalled that his presence had been helpful during a youth mission trip, although the youth pastor had been responsible for the trip. BW also noted the significance of being present with people in times of crisis:

I can recall several times of crisis when just being there and not necessarily having much of anything to say—just being there with people to calm them down. And, then later, being told how much that meant—to just do that. Rather than being the guy that comes and has all the answers...Just being there [with a] family that's tearing up and has reached a crisis and everybody just needs to calm down for a minute... [There have been] several of those over the years and then later people would say, "I'm so glad you were there."

He also commented on the importance of remembering that God uses all sorts of people, introverts and extraverts, as his means to work in other people's lives. He said that the Bible is about "God work[ing] and change[ing] people; and I didn't do it. And it wasn't because I was a certain kind of person. Be there and steer things a little and get out of the way." Similarly, CJ shared a story of a time when a superior thanked him for just being with people while volunteering at a nursing home: "[It is] really important for me being with people that they really benefited from that... My presence there and care for them has been important."

To most of the participants, listening was an important leadership quality. One congregant said to BW, "I really like coming to you because you listen to me." He further notes, "...a strength as a leader [is] patience, listening to people, not being pushy and trying to make sure I don't get my way." CJ remarked, "I think there's a lot of strength that introverts have in listening to people and being thoughtful that extroverts find challenging to balance..."

In relation to conflict mediation, RG described himself as a “settling leader.” This description points to another theme that emerged during the interviews, namely the ISTJ as both calm and a calming force. CJ remarked,

I am pretty calm under pressure. Sometimes it’s because I really don’t know what I’m doing in a situation. But usually things don’t freak me out too much. I remain calm and [will] be okay in a situation. When I go and visit people at the nursing home, some people are pretty freaked out by seeing how bad [a shape] people are in. But for me it doesn’t impact my heart as much, which could be a personal problem, but I also think it’s a gifting in that through that I can be calm.

The hospital visitation situation that MC described earlier demonstrates the quality of calmness in a crisis: “I don’t see how you do it. You’re so calm and solid and you’re dealing with all this.” The ISTJ is also a calming force. BW said, “That’s the one thing I guess I’ve heard over the years. Rather than, ‘You’re smart,’ or, ‘You have all the answers,’ or, ‘You’re Mr. Personality,’ but it’s more of just being there, listening—calm people down when it’s needed.” He summarized his leadership as “faithful and calm and steady.”

Another participant, RG, described his calming influence in this manner:

So it’s not that I relish conflict, but I thought, “I will do my duty, and I’m going to step in that minefield.” I think my perspective is that I appreciate seeing God’s ability to use me to bring peace and direction in a crisis event. But I don’t relish it and enjoy it in a self-absorbed way, like I may have once done. In part it is because I realize I can empathize with the weightiness of the situation more.

Reflecting on a recent situation where he ministered to a family in crisis, he said, “The Lord has brought good, some degree of calm and health in that, but I wouldn’t call it enjoyable.”

Dependability emerged as another key leadership quality. Several participants’ comments were about the fact that they are “going to get it [any given task] done.” CJ remarked, “I am pretty dependable, I guess is one thing I would say. If you give me a task

... I'm eventually [going to] do it. I would do it and complete it and try to do it as best as I can." SD said it like this: "So, in that sense I think as a leader I am dependable... stay on task, maybe juggling several things, but just accomplishing whatever needs to be done." Another participant, RG, spoke of his dependability in terms of conscientiousness. He said, "Oh sure, yes, very conscientious about desiring to build and leave a healthy church."

### **Approaches to Ministry**

#### **Working Behind the Scenes**

In their comments, the participants revealed important aspects of the ways in which they prefer to lead people. Several pastors expressed being more comfortable when operating "behind the scenes." BK stated, "A lot of what I had done was sort of behind-the-scenes, so I didn't get a lot of you know necessarily recognition." A similar view was evident in CJ's comment: "I feel okay in front of a bunch of people. [I prefer to] be an assistant or associate and not the number one guy that everybody's looking to—a little more behind-the-scenes." MC served previously as a deacon, where much of his work took place "behind the scenes." He stated, "I do really well at the work of a deacon. As an introvert, that was lovely." One participant demonstrated his tendency to work "behind the scenes" by refusing to allow his name to be placed on the church sign. BW remarked,

There have been [a] few times over the years when someone wanted to put my name on the sign out front. And I probably shouldn't say this, but I said, "If you want to do that you can find somebody else. I will not stay here if you put my name on that sign." I felt that strongly about that. They kind of laughed it off. But I guess that's [an] illustration of what you're talking about—the Bible being a story about God and his work in the world and not about us. Yes, it's awesome to be able to teach that because that's exactly the point. That's the point. This is not about me...

### Being Task-Oriented

SD stated that he was “task-oriented” in approaching ministry. He said, “I am very task oriented, very focused, and tend to be somebody who really will follow through to the end and make sure something is accomplished.” MC agrees. The interviewer asked him under which circumstance he would thrive more: if someone gave him a list of tasks to do or if he had to produce the list of tasks himself. He responded that he would do better with a pre-made task list: “Yes, I wish it weren’t that way—really do. Particularly as a pastor, I wish it weren’t that way. But yes.” SD made a similar point when describing how he led during a church plant. He stated, “...you know, just nose to the grindstone, get out the to-do list kind of stuff. And I was very good at those things—just task orientation, get it done, and you know, maybe without a lot of interaction or chitchat about it—you know, just going off... finding a place to meet, getting the check written, and get the insurance policies squared away—just all those administrative things.”

### Shepherding the Flock

Several participants described their approach to ministry in terms of shepherding. MC stated, “My approach to pastoral leadership is hopefully to shepherd the flock that God has put under my care in such a way as I do that faithfully according to the Scriptures, not only by word but also by setting forth an example.” He described shepherding in terms of “loving people one-on-one in the midst of their families, in the midst of the hospital, whatever it is... [I] try to follow the example of Christ as a shepherd but think of myself more as an under shepherd,” BW remarked. “You have your basic framework of what a church is, what a shepherd is, and then you kind of get out of the way.”

Further, two pastors remarked that they try to lead the flock by setting a good example. MC's approach to ministry is to shepherd the flock over which God has entrusted him, "but also by setting forth an example." BW made a similar statement: "[I] lead by example—lead by trying to love people and listen to them."

### Team Building

Some participants mentioned utilizing "consensus building" or a "collaborative ministry" approach. BK stated that he tries to "build consensus." Similarly, RG believes that consensus building is one of his strengths. "I think consensus building, willingness to trust people to do their work and delegate that to them, [is a strength]. So I think, in a word, teambuilding." He described a critical incident in which he reorganized a board into a more collaborative ministry style: "I was able to define that [a new vision], cast that, [and] organize the board in a healthier way, that is, governance by collaboration and consensus as opposed to dictation." According to RG, the result of this approach was "getting everybody they could who was capable on committees and spreading out the ownership of the mission and the vision of the [institution] and, you know, just [allow people to brainstorm] creative, wonderful ideas that one to four people before just couldn't dream up on their own."

### Patient Leadership

MC recounted a situation when he exhibited "patient leadership," while helping his congregation navigate a land purchase decision. He stated, "...I've put up good, solid, patient leadership, in that, in thinking through, this is why we should do this, writing out the reasons why this is good for us, this is how it impacts our ministry, this is how it would impact our community; because I went away, took the time to do that. I was able

to provide some leadership in that arena and even when I had to communicate that to people that [this] is the right thing to do. I think that was a helpful.”

### Thinking Things Through

On a related note, thoughtfulness was an aspect of several participants’ approaches to ministry. BG agreed that he tends to be “more thoughtful.” He said, “[I am] going to be slower in doing just about anything because [I am] going to think it through...” CJ simply described this aspect of his approach to leadership: “I think being an introvert is a lot more slow-brew.”

### Maintaining Principles, Making Peace

One goal of HJ’s leadership is to bring people back to the relevant principles behind a given issue. He stated,

[I] think principally, and so maybe even sometimes to a fault. I will take ideas back to sort of the foundation of it, the principle behind it. And say all right, now here’s the principle we stay with. How do we execute it? There is freedom for that. So I think to me one thing is thinking principally, but also then you do get to use the gifts of others around you by saying we’ve got freedom in the application or in the means by which we accomplish that principle.

In times of conflict, MC leads by being a peacemaker. He states, “I’d say my style of leading in a conflict is I’m a peacemaker. I would bring people in and play the role of an arbitrator, play the role of a mediator between the two. I’m not afraid even with my temperament to say this is what the Word of God says and call people to conform to it and exhort people by it.”

### A Summarizing Remark

An interesting comment came from RG, as he discussed his basic approach to ministry. He asserted,



I think the single most shaping idea for me in pastoral ministry is the incarnation of Christ as a key distinctive in the Christian faith. And then as the primary way union with Christ in the pastoral ministry manifests itself. So it has been very helpful to me especially in the last few years to think about the practical implications of what it means to be with my people, in their place, in their places, sharing life with them, sharing their burdens with them, and then preaching out of that mutual experience.

### **Relational Ministry**

Another area that falls under the first research question deals with the participants' approaches to relational ministry. BG has sought to restructure his session meetings to focus more on relationships than church business. He stated,

As we shape our [session] meetings just not to get stuff done, but to be together and to love each other and to pray for each other, and be honest with each other about our sin and what we're struggling with, even if we have to table several things to the next meeting, it was still a successful meeting because we loved each other well. So my hope would be that I would foster on the session, within the session, the kind of relationships that model well for the church what the gospel does in relationship ... I am increasingly seeing the value of relationship and time together, and I think there's so much in our culture and so much in me personally that wars against that informal relationship time, just being together. The Lord in his mercy, I think, in his grace has let me see that that needs to be a priority, just informal time.

Several participants spoke of loving people and spending time with them. BW stated that his approach to ministry was to "love people. Try to spend time with people... Lead by trying to love people and listen to them." SD believes that love for people is the key to being an effective leader. He states, "From what I have read about leadership and what people think they want in a leader, a lot of the times, one of the top things they list is—or if you would just say, 'Describe the best leader you've ever worked with'—very often they say, 'He really cared about me.' And that's not necessarily extroverted. You know, it's more sincere, love for the person, care for the person." CJ describes the importance of relational ministry: "just being personable, just sitting down with the

people in the nursing home and talking with them, getting to know them, learning a little bit about them and asking them questions. I think that's one of the most important things. Kind of getting to know them and being as honest with them is something I've had to learn too."

An interesting dynamic of the interviews was that some participants mentioned being comfortable with both interacting one-on-one and being up front before a large group of people. For example, GB responded, "I'm going to be more engaged with one-on-one... So I think I am probably more engaged one-on-one than I am in a small group." But he then said, "I probably prefer the big group better, probably because I will be leading the big group." CJ remarked, "[I] feel much [more] comfortable one-on-one, [and in] small groups, in that sort of setting."

### **The Best Pastors**

The participants responded in several ways to the statement, "Extraverts make the best pastors." Some responded, like RG, simply, "I hope not." BW commented, "a number of men God used in the Bible were not extraverts and because there have been many pastors who are not extraverts, that's just a fact." BK, in making remarks about the PCA in relation to this statement, said, "I don't think that's really the case in the PCA. It hasn't been my experience that churches are looking for that dynamic TV personality...Because we [PCA] are more focused on doctrine and teaching, our churches tend to be more thinking churches than feeling."

Some participants agreed with the notion that extraverts make the best pastors. For example, SD believes the statement is true, "...because of their people orientation," and he continued, "and ministry is to people. So I think we all have strengths and

weaknesses. Extraverts might not be the best at everything but in general, I think, being an extravert would be a good asset.” HJ agrees: “I would sort of assume it’s pretty hard to pastor people if you’re by yourself; and the perception is that if you’re with people more you can or are pastoring them more. And so the folks that thrive on being with people are just inherently in a better place to pastor.” MC remarked,

My first response would be, yeah they probably are; but they’re able to mix it up, they’re able to be in community, and they know everybody out there, they know people and they can get them [understand them]. Talk about real pragmatic—they know the movers and shakers in the community, they know who the people are who have money, they can woo them into their midst, they can help out and they can do all that stuff. And I can’t. That would be my first response.

Several participants, in light of this statement, suggested gifts and abilities that introverts bring to leadership positions. RG spoke about an informal poll he took at a conference of pastors, which overwhelmingly indicated a preference of introversion within the group. He said, “I think you’re here because you’ve studied people and you’ve listened to people. When other people were talking, you were listening and observing. And you’ve become sensitive to souls. Now you’ve taken on an extraverted role [as a pastor].” CJ stated, “I think there’s a lot of strength that introverts have in listening to people and being thoughtful that extraverts find challenging to balance them.” He further said, “They [extraverts] probably would [be the best pastors] because everybody knows who the extrovert is. The introvert is a little more behind-the-scenes, and the extravert—I think somebody talked about this—gets to kind of shine in publicly, where introverts like have to be in a small group of people or have to be given more of an opportunity to show his gifts.” Regarding introversion, HJ observes,

I see it helpful in the sense that I want to be thoughtful and intentional, and I feel like that introversion affords me that. It gives me that chance to really sort of sit back and ponder and think and figure out, now, how am I going to deal with that

situation? How am I going to deal with that conflict? How am I going to deal with this person's issue? Or, how am I going to deal with that passage? Or, how am I going to deal with this meeting or this coming Sunday school series, or whatever the case may be?

BW summarizes well the responses that relate to this first research question. He remarked, "Christianity is a story about God and about the world. And you and I get to be in this story. But we're not the stars of the story...It's about the big story. It's not about me. That is a freeing thing, no doubt, and is also an empowering thing. I got my little part here, and what I get to do is play my part. It may be tiny, but the story has to have it."

### **Which Aspects of Pastoral Leadership Motivate ISTJ Pastors**

The second research question examines aspects of pastoral leadership that motivate ISTJ pastors. The respondents cited a number of things that energize them in ministry: preaching and teaching, seeing God's work, engaging people, managing crises, and completing tasks.

#### **Preaching and Teaching**

Preaching and teaching were found to motivate several respondents. BK remarked, "I preach probably about once a month, and I always get feedback. That is encouraging. Trying to take people to the text and wrestle with it with them [and] get into the details of the text is something I really enjoy doing." Another participant listed the ministry of the Word as one of the motivating factors for him. BG said, "I love the Word of God. I love to teach it; I love to study it, and I think the Lord's given me an ability to communicate it in a way that is relevant and applicable too, hopefully increasingly relevant and applicable. I pray that God would make me better able to apply the Word to his people." BG further spoke of his love of study and noted that his introversion enables him to focus on the major activity of his calling, preaching. He remarked, "On the

positive side, it [introversion] lets me study...I don't despise the main part of my calling. I love getting to have my Bible open and my legal pad there. And I am happy to go sit at Starbucks and read but at the same time, if I meet somebody there, I am happy to engage them in conversation and talk."

### **Seeing God's Work**

A number of respondents were energized in ministry by seeing God work in the lives of congregants. For BG, it is motivating to see the potential of what God can do. He said,

I get excited about the potential for what God can do in and through people. I really believe Ephesians. I believe that God uses people—well, I'm preaching through Ephesians. God has good works prepared in advance for his people to do and that he uses the ministry, he uses my ministry to lead people as part of what he uses to lead people into those [good works]. So I get really excited when a young mom in the church wants to go visit some eighteen-year-old girl that's had a baby and called us for diapers... Praise God you want to do that! Go do it. Just love on her. I love when people use their gifts, they get outside themselves and they serve other people. That gets me really excited. So I think that energizes me. And my leadership is to think that God might be pleased to use me to lead people into the good works he has prepared for them to do.

BW finds energy in observing God work over time. He remarked,

Seeing God work. Seeing them change. Seeing them work through their problems and even overcome them. And oftentimes that's slow ... normally that's slow. But over the years you see it, and I think that energizes me—that the Bible is true, that God does change people. How can that not energize you when you see that happen right before your eyes? But this is something that takes time ... You can't see this or do this if you go and stay somewhere for two years ... It's not just seeing God's Word work, but building relationships with people, where they trust you—that might take ten years.

It is "very satisfying" to RG when congregants are fulfilled in whatever God is calling them to do. When identifying what energizes him about ministry, he said,

I think seeing them [congregants] fulfilled in what they are called to do. It's another area the Lord has worked on me in... in maturing me. I used to think when I was a young pastor that being a pastor meant you had to be better than

everybody else in every aspect of the Christian life and every program in the church. Rather than seeing myself as fulfilling one role within the body on a team with all these other people who have roles to fulfill. So it's just become so much more enjoyable to me to do my part in preaching the Word and pastoring people's souls and then see them take off in an area of their particular [calling, or] their particular staff function, doing things that I can never do, fulfilling their calling in ways that I never could do, like the counselor or the evangelist or the youth leader ... So, challenging the people just to step into situations with the Holy Spirit and see what he does. And to see people start doing that particularly as we engage for the first time in urban ministry. To see people doing that in ways I would've never had the courage to do, or the creativity to do ... that's just very, very satisfying.

HJ spoke about this in terms of “watching the light come on in people.” He said, “I think the thing that energizes me the most would be watching people, watching the light come on for folks... In a teaching or counseling situation, to see that reaction to, ‘Oh, I get it now.’ I think watching, watching the ah-ha moments that others have, I really think is one of my biggest sources of encouragement.” He shared further about his love for teaching and helping students gain greater understanding:

I think when I'm teaching, I'm very aware of really interacting with a passage, with Scripture, and with people. [It] is not always my job simply to convey the meaning...but to draw you to see the meaning yourself. Do you see what I'm saying? So those kinds of questions not only do they not throw me off, but I actually kind of enjoy them. I kind of like watching as people wrestle with, you know, getting steered back to what the passage is really after.

SD described this experience similarly. He stated, “...Just helping people think through things, I mean it's exciting. I enjoy it. I enjoy when you know you see the light bulb come on ... You know you look back over ten years, and you really can see some spiritual growth among people.”

### **Engaging People**

Some participants identified engaging people as an energizer in ministry. Several highlighted the importance of one-on-one interactions. CJ admitted that too much time with groups of people is draining, but “something more I could do every day is just

meeting with people one-on-one.” He described how he engages a student with whom he does meet regularly: “he [the student] just really needs a Christian worldview to temper what he’s doing; otherwise he’s going to lose his faith. I really want to engage people and kind of challenge them to think about how Christ fits into their intellectual life and why it’s important—so kind of smaller conversations about significant things.” Further, CJ values the gift of hospitality, but with limits. He remarked, “[We have the] gift to be hospitable, to have people into [our] home to get to know them or have a meal with them or prayer group. So I guess my wife and I, we have like an open home once a month, and it’s draining, but I also enjoy having people over.”

HJ does not feel energized when in a room full of people where small talk is required, but “[a] one-on-one lunch with somebody, one-on-one counseling, one-on-one conversations, love it, much more comfortable for me.” He also stated, “I love engaging folks ... So thinking in terms of education committee, I’m all about getting a bunch of folks involved and getting input and taking ideas from folks.” MC commented that others would say he is an extravert, and that he is very good with people but doesn’t really enjoy larger group settings that much; however, he said, “I do enjoy really visiting one-on-one with folks.” The following remark demonstrates BK’s particular energy for engaging people: “I think [my gift] is helping people work together and get to a common ground or find a place of agreement.”

### **Managing Crises**

A number of participants identified their ability to lead in a crisis and noted that the responsibility to lead in such times is energizing for them. BG described a situation in

which he was closely involved, where a friend had suffered an accident. Though he was saddened over the plight of his friend and the family he said,

There's something about a crisis that I like. I like to manage a crisis, and I feel like I can do it fairly well. I think some of that may be a stability that I bring to [the situation]. I'm pretty even keeled, most of the time on my good days. I'm not given to real high highs or real low lows. And so in the midst of a crisis, I think you need stability. And so I think, I don't know if that is my introversion that was in me... There's a stability that served me I think and served the church well during those months.

He further stated, "I love ... trying to help people through the transition [a pastoral change]." As reported earlier, RG sees himself as a "settling leader" in the midst of a crisis. Though he does not relish dealing with difficult situations, he does acknowledge God's gifting of him in that way. He stated, "So it's not that I relish conflict, but I thought I will do my duty, and I'm [going to] step in that minefield. I think my perspective is that I appreciate seeing God's ability to use me to bring peace and direction in a crisis event. But I don't relish it and enjoy it in a self-absorbed way, like I may have once done."

### **Completing Tasks**

Some participants reported that accomplishing tasks motivates them. BK described a mission trip he planned and said,

[I did] the bulk of the planning and all of the work to put the trip together ... I felt like I could lead in terms of getting the things ready, having the answers to questions that parents asked, being prepared, planning things out as well, and that was more my contribution to the trip than actual a lot of leadership on the trip...I think where some of my gifts were helpful and my presence was helpful, but I didn't have to play the extrovert in terms of the management of all of the people during the trip.

BG commented, "I love coming up with the preaching schedule and moderating the session meetings..." CJ described having "concrete" assignments as energizing to him.



He said, “Having like a concrete task, and if we have like a workday, okay here are the things that we need to accomplish, let's go do them. I can take who's doing this or who's doing that, and we accomplish [it].” Leading people to accomplish tasks energizes SD, as the following statements illustrate:

I get a lot of satisfaction just for accomplishing things, just for its own, you know, value I guess.... For me leading people to accomplish a particular task really energizes me more than just being with people...What energizes me is actually doing something. So to the extent that I can lead a group of people to actually do something gives me way more energy than sitting around talking about what we might do someday. No interest in that.

For MC, it is a struggle to be motivated by external aspects of ministry. He has concluded, however, that doing his duty in leading people is motivating. He remarks,

I think it gets back to duty ... that is actually what energizes me—that it's my duty, it is my call; because, nothing external about that excites me. Nothing does. I can't think of a single thing that really excites me about that in any situation. Except for the fact that when—I guess on the other side of it—when I hear people say things like, “The Word has really gripped me,” or, “This has changed me,” or, “I loved what we're learning in Romans,” or, “That excites me,” that certainly excites me. But that seems to be on the back end of things rather than and on the front end of things. So I guess if I thought through it, that would excite me to continue. That's really hard for me to answer, because I'm not really sure other than just simply the sense of duty that I have to do what God has called me to do. But I love that duty.

One participant commented that he is motivated by creating something new and then passing it on to someone else who can take it to the next level. He said, “I love creating something new but actually enjoyed then passing it off to somebody else so that it wasn't mine forever...I've loved sort of getting something massaged—started, created—paddles to the chest, getting it going, then watching it go and I'm no longer doing it.... I love seeing things created and then go and succeed under someone else's leadership.”

### **What Unique Leadership Challenges ISTJ Pastors Face in Pastoral Ministry**

The third research question surveys what unique leadership challenges ISTJ pastors face in pastoral ministry. The researcher grouped the participants' responses into nine categories: fears, IST challenges, people interactions, leadership, conflict, work ethic, and ministry.

#### **Fears**

Participants acknowledged a number of fears in ministry. Several mentioned the fear of failing as a leader. What most concerned BG about one ministry situation in which someone criticized his leadership was the fear

...that I'm going to do it wrong [leading worship]. I need to know if [what] he's saying is true, and part of what made that so painful for me was that I was afraid he might be right. What if he's right? What if I am man centered, what if I am leading people into man centered worship and not Christ centered worship? What if I really don't really have a clue what I'm saying about grace? That was terrifying.

He also stated, "[I] want to be useful to the Lord. And I fear not being useful. I'm afraid that [like the Prophet] Malachi [my life might be] in vain [and that] gives me chills—thinking about my life being vain, of no use. So I think some of that is a godly desire to serve my master, but I think there's also a sinful aspect there that wants to make a name for myself."

BW simply stated, "I've had to fight feeling like a failure, and I'm not accomplishing anything because so much of our culture and the church culture and even in seminary there's this idea that you just got to be this certain thing or you're not going to be a leader." This participant, as mentioned in Chapter 1, recalled an advisor in seminary encouraging him to pursue another line of work. He said, "I was told, 'You're not going to do well with this, so you might want to think before you really get started.

You may want to rethink what you're doing here.'” Another way in which BW experiences a fear of failure is in his perception that the church is failing if it is not growing numerically. He stated,

[There is an] idea that a church is a failure if it doesn't grow, if it's not growing a lot regularly. And then tied in[to] that is the idea that part of what makes a church grow is the pastor's personality. They're drawn to him. They come for him. And there's no lack of churches where that is exactly what happens. It's a big personality [figure]. And they come. He draws them. And that's not wrong if a guy is himself and he has a big personality and he draws people. That's going to happen, but that's not necessarily a healthy growth; and so that's what's all around. So that's kind of what you fight; and so the only way, I guess the only way to get that expectation out of a congregation is to teach them the Bible... There's an expectation that's what a pastor is, and that is what you fight against, no doubt.

It is interesting to compare BW's statement above with MC's concern. MC stated, “One of my fears actually is that even though I'm not that extravert guy, there probably are people in our church because they know me or because they may like the way I do one particular thing—and I pray and I hope and I don't think it would happen—but one of my fears is if the Lord would ever call me a way that the people would leave the church.”

Two participants mentioned that they are fearful of the unknown and untested. HJ fears “the untested... I have a tendency, sort of the besetting sin sort of issue, [that] if I don't know what to do, [I] do nothing.” For him, clear guidelines are very helpful.

Similarly, MC agreed that the unknown and untested are “scary.”

Related to fearing the unknown or untested, HJ mentioned his hesitancy to pursue people as his greatest concern in pastoral ministry. He stated, “What most concerns me, my biggest fear? [It] would be the hesitation ... to pursue people.” MC expressed a concern about leading people as well, though his remarks were directed more specifically at leading people, primarily the church as a whole. His fear:

...Center[s] more around corporately than individually. I don't really fear leading somebody down a wrong path individually. That's not one of the things that keep[s] me up at night. One of the things that does keep me up at night however is the corporate nature in the church, and the fear of leading the church. Picture it: [that I] would be taking the entire fold and running them off the cliff; [that] would be more my fear. Not individually but the whole of the people at [his church] — fearing that I could really just kind of destroy it... If I have the Bible and I'm preaching with the force of the Word of God, then I can speak boldly and confidently. I would do it anywhere, and even as an introvert, I would do it in a stadium full of people. I would. But you ask me to be the chairman of the Board of Trustees and have to speak in front of eleven people, where I'm speaking outside of that context, I'm terrified. I'm terrified of that.

One participant expressed concern over not being viewed as a decisive leader. RG said, "I have insecurity or fear that I'm not going to be perceived as a leader. Not decisive enough—just all of those unhealthy sinful things, that weird combination of pride and fear. I think [I've] been driven most of my life by fear. It's hindered me from experiencing a lot of the beauty of life." He further mentioned that one of his concerns with regard to leading people is the fear of making a mistake: "making a mistake with their lives or making a mistake for the organization [is a fear]." Explaining why making a mistake was a concern for him, he said, "Well, it's an idol before me. It's an idol for me to be right."

### **IST Challenges**

The pastors in this study identified aspects of their IST temperaments (Introversion, Sensing, Thinking) that they view as challenges in ministry. Several questioned whether serving as a pastor is compatible with having an IST temperament. BW remarked,

...I have days where I think about... Would I be better as an assistant that's not the leader? And I thought about that a lot over the years, and this plays right into what we were talking about. Because of your personality type and your style, would you be better as an assistant or associate? And I pursued those things. I tried really hard about five years ago to pursue some of those. And even went as

far as interviews, but none of them worked out. It's a tricky thing to try to...read God's providence. Part of reading that Providence was you need to be here, and God's using you here ... He's not letting you leave, as hard as you tried. I tried hard, I really did.

He also stated, "Well, I think to me it [my personality]'s been an obstacle. I fought against seeing it as an obstacle; but then one of the things that has kept me going over the years is that other people tell me it's not an obstacle. I think it is... I like to make the joke that I quit every Monday, then you talk yourself out of it before you tell anybody."

In speaking about his struggle with being a visionary, MC said, "Sometimes I don't think I ought to be doing what I'm doing, to be real honest." He further stated,

I probably on the whole would view it [introversion] as—I think I would probably say it's—a difficult thing to be when you are in the ministry. I do recognize the positives. I think I would view it on a whole as lacking. That may be the best word I can think of. I mean there's a lot of young families [who] do murder mystery parties and all these types of parties. I would love to go to them, in fact. I do love being with the people; it's not that I don't. I would love to be [with] them, would love to do that, and we've been invited to some of them. But most of the time [my wife] and I both look at each other and go, "We don't want to go," or "We want to be home," and so I think I have a tendency to look at that as a weakness.

Several participants spoke about not being open with others. In answering the question of how introversion affects one's leadership, CJ spoke of his normal response to a conversation: "just naturally, I would just sit here and listen to this person and not say what's on my mind." Similarly, MC stated, "I often have gifts, often have ideas, often have things that probably would be good to be shared that I don't do [share]. I hesitate because of my personality. I do have good ideas that people should hear. I think the negative would be that I fail to actually take the leadership role that I probably should take at that particular time." One criticism MC has received relates to this concern. A

congregant suggested, “You need to communicate with us [the congregation] more. We need to know what you’re thinking.”

One participant, HJ, relayed a criticism he once received in relation to his temperament. One of his elders told him, “You need to go out and create your ministry. I think you may have a perception problem in the congregation.” The elder’s comment reflects his opinion that HJ was not engaged with people enough. HJ continued, “I have had an elder say those kinds of things to me before. But I never had anybody [suggest I create my own ministry]. That’s the only time I can think of that’s happened. I react to that with, I don’t think creating your own ministry, I don’t think that is the way it works.” CJ indicated a similar concern. He said, “It [introversion] could make me a little bit shy of going into situations, but once I’m in situations I’m usually fairly okay. But it can make me hesitant to get out there.”

A few of the participants’ remarks revealed additional ways in which one’s personality may affect one’s ministry. CJ was honest about being jealous of more extraverted leaders. He said, “It is easy to be jealous of people whose gifts are very public, and yours are like [not public] — okay, they’re the ones doing real ministry. I’m here reading a book or talking with a few people one-on-one or something. So it’s a struggle.” He realizes that “it doesn’t matter... this is part of the way the Lord has built me.” Another participant, HJ, admits,

[I] wrestle with knowing that I’m an introvert. I wrestle with the distinction between personality and just the sin of selfishness. That’s a battle. And from time to time, I don’t even know whether I’m winning it or whether I even realize where I am in that battle, but I’m at least keenly aware of the fact that there is a line between the introvert personality trait and just the sin of wanting what I want. I recognize that. So that’s one concern.

CJ struggles with confidence, noting that his introversion “causes ... [him] to question” the quality of his work: “I’d rather check around and get it confirmed by other people to make sure that I’m making sense.” He also struggles with guilt over his desire for solitude. He explains, “I kinda battle with guilt and, you know, should I be out with people right now, or am I being too introverted?” BW has tried taking on a different personality type in a given situation, playing the extravert for example, thinking it would help the situation. He found, “The thing died anyway. I think what I learned from that is it’s not you, your personality. Sometimes God just chooses not to fix this person, this family, and you trying to be different didn’t fix it... Trying to be a different personality type and it didn’t work, it didn’t help—it was a failure in a sense.”

Several participants expressed having difficulty being a visionary. CJ remarked, “[I am] not always very innovative or visionary. Those things don’t come as natural for me. I think I need to work on [this area]... pulling something out of thin air and having a vision for people, that is just a lot more difficult for me... I’m not a very forward thinker...” HJ spoke about his struggle with being a visionary in this way: “I need help with the possibility world—with that angle. I need more help there than I do with the managing what we’ve got already. I will feed off of people’s ideas—What about this? What about that? I don’t know that I will always come up with the possibilities, but I love looking into them.” Commenting on being visionary, MC simply said, “It frightens me.” He continued, “It frightens me, but it’s interesting. I would not say that I am [a visionary]; others would. They would say that I’m a visionary. I’ve even told people that I’m not good at this area of ministry, and their response to me is, ‘I can’t believe you would even say that. Look at what your vision is.’ But it frightens me; it scares me.”

Another participant talked about his struggle with emotional health. BG said,

I was just emotionally retarded, in that I didn't know what was going on emotionally in me. So I've been growing over the years to where I'm slowly better able to identify what's happening in me emotionally and to not dismiss that, to not think well that's evil because emotions are just wrong out of hand; well no, they can be wrong, they can be, but they're also God, God has emotions. BG, don't forget that. You [are] made in his image. So Covenant Theology with [a professor at seminary] actually I think helped me in my fear of emotions because I realize partially what it means to be made in God's image. All of that to say I'm becoming increasingly aware of what is going on in me emotionally. And I do think there's an ability to distinguish between, to compartmentalize so to speak, between the facts of the case and the emotional burden of it.

CJ expressed struggling with not being able to form an opinion quickly. He said,

"I'm kind of gullible and not [always able to form] my own opinion immediately. I remember [a conversation where] it took me a while to kind of really shape my opinion in this situation." BK expressed a similar concern. He said, "What concerns me about leading people is being surprised in a meeting where I'm not quick on my feet and can't respond in a way that's very effective usually in the moment. So if I can try and avoid surprises, that's helpful."

SD's MBTI – Sensing function was a factor in a difficult confrontation he had with a staff member, in which he may have "ran over" the staff member emotionally. In analyzing his interactions with this staffer, he said, "It's not the introvert, extravert dynamic for me, but I think the second aspect of the temperament analysis, being sensory versus intuitive. I am very much sensory, which can lead me to not be very Spirit-led. And, you know, I think there's been many times where I think I could've been more open to the Spirit's leading and less to my own plans and goals and objectives."

BK also stated that he is not very intuitive. Referencing his first pastorate, a solo position immediately out of seminary, he remarked,



I'm not very intuitive naturally, so it concerns me that I don't know what people expect, and then when I don't meet their expectations, they're disappointed or frustrated; and that was the situation with my solo pastorate. I didn't understand people's expectations, living in a different part of the country. I didn't understand the culture of the church coming right out of the seminary, and I didn't... My wife is very intuitive, so she's able to help me in this by picking up what are people really asking, what do they really want, and me not being able to recognize that nearly so easily. And that was a situation where I didn't understand and therefore I wasn't able to really lead well. Because the questions I was asking or the things I was thinking were not what the people really, the way they understood it.

BK also struggles with blaming himself when a meeting goes poorly, for example:

"Sometimes when a meeting goes poorly I feel like, well, I didn't step in enough, I didn't take the initiative enough, to get us where we needed to go."

### **People Interactions**

Most of the participants remarked about becoming weary after too much interaction with people. SD stated, "Too much interaction with people does completely drain me." He made an unexpected comment, however, when he remarked that he is more comfortable in group interactions that are on the lighter side than in one-on-one conversations that tend to be more intense:

...but honestly, I'm more comfortable in the previous environment [a group of people "shooting the breeze"] that you discussed, more of a surface conversation, just you know interacting, you know, with a bunch of folks. Which again might appear to be someone who's extraverted, but I don't know, I find, you know, it would be a good question; it's a good question, why I prefer that. But honestly I think maybe because it's more draining to be one-on-one with somebody. I don't do a lot of counseling.

He continued by describing an evangelism ministry he taught on Sunday afternoons: "So there're certain things, even though I'm more introverted, like sharing my faith, that I love to do, and I'll just live off adrenaline at that point. But I definitely crash on Sunday nights."

Generally, the participants preferred one-on-one interactions to group interactions. For example, MC admitted that both one-on-one and group interactions can be draining, but the social or group settings tend to be more draining for him. He joked about wanting to disappear at a party he had held at his house. He said, “The large group thing is always exhausting... I don’t like that. I can do it. I can do it, and most of the time I end up—I mean people would say I am an extravert most of the time because I’m very good with people. I just don’t like it that much. But I try not to let other people know that either.”

Several participants noted that they sometimes play the extravert out of duty but pay for it later. BK agreed that performing in the extraverted role is tiring. SD remarked, “I’m tempted to be more extraverted than I am. I just, you know, need to be who I am and not try to pretend to be extraverted.” He agreed that he feels pressure to be an extravert but noted,

I think it’s more of a matter of endurance and, you know, I just have to know my limits. You know, if I’ve had a long week, and been in church all day on Sunday interacting with people and then we often have groups of folks over for a meal after the worship service, so I might be doing that and then go out and meet with somebody Sunday night, and at that point I’m ready to crash and burn. I just need to realize that about myself and, you know, not try to pretend like I’m just all happy about meeting with this person when I’m just at the end of my, really at my limit as far as interacting with people. Then [I] come home. [And] we have a group [of] about a dozen folks over for meal—meal with them, talking with them. By that point I’m getting pretty worn out.

Several participants said that extraverts exhaust them. For example, MC said, “... oh yeah, they wear me out. They wear me out. Really, I’m sure you think that too sometimes. They exhaust me. Because a lot of times I leave thinking if I was only more like them, but I don’t want to be like them, if I were only more like them, and I know this is terrible to think, then I could be more successful.” BW, addressing the question of whether he would rather be extraverted, said,

No, I wouldn't. I don't know if this is part of the profile either, but I don't necessarily like being around loud, boisterous people—they're kind of annoying. I have to say that real carefully. My wife is the opposite, but she's not loud and boisterous, she is just very outgoing. But no, I've never wanted to be different. Although there've been times when you think, if I was a little different here, it might help the church, but still that's not something I really wanted to do. It would more turn into, well, I need to be doing something else. I'd rather do something else than be a different personality.

Some participants expressed a hesitation to engage people. HJ shared about a ministry incident in which he struggled to pursue someone: "It's this very issue. It's the issue of the hesitance to pursue someone—the reluctance to. In reality, it wasn't because I didn't care about the person, or I didn't love ministry, or didn't love doing youth ministry, or didn't love teaching or doing things out there, it was just because I knew that [pursuing a person] would take extra time away from me being kind of in my own little world." He further admitted, "...I know good and well my introvertedness has made it hard for me to talk with folks I don't know as well. To ask certain kinds of questions of folks I don't know as well; really to ask a lot of questions of most anybody. I know I have that real sense of I just like being with me and some books and a cup coffee or, you know, whatever." HJ stated that he finds it easier to take the initiative with people who are assigned to his shepherding group than to reach out to others in the congregation. He said, "Honestly, it [introversion] impacts my ability to and even desire to, just call up anybody and everybody in the church and say, 'Let's have lunch. Let's talk about this.'"

BG expressed a similar struggle with prioritizing relationships in ministry.

I would be content, I think, maybe it's a simple part my personality, to just do the work and do the business and let the relationships fall by the wayside. I am not in myself relational. And that may be some of my own weakness in forming my pastoral strategy with my elders is I know that I don't prioritize relationships, so I make myself do that. I would like to have regular meetings with each of my elders over lunch or breakfast or fishing together, shooting bow and arrows together, or

whatever it is just to maintain that relational context so that the only time I see these guys isn't at session meetings, or on Sunday morning when we're serving the Lord's Supper together... I have to make myself do it.

He described an out of town ministry opportunity he'd had and how he'd looked forward to the hour drive alone. He remembered that a congregant's son lived in the town to which he was traveling. He decided to invite the father to join him. He said, "It was just really beneficial," although he would have preferred the solitude. He remarked, "There's something in our soul that for every person, I think, no matter what their temperament is, resonates with face time and just being, not the Apple product, but with just being with others. And so I have to make myself do that." He remarked, "I don't want [my struggle to engage people] to be a hindrance to my ministry, and I feel like it can be—I feel like the fact that I have to work at relationships can be a hindrance."

Social settings and engaging in "small talk" were also difficult for some of the participants. BW described a wedding reception he attended. He said of situations like this, "I try to latch onto someone... I didn't care anything about walking around and mingling. You know, I met the people and spoke to them like you need to do, but when it comes to socializing, if I can't latch on—just hang with one person to talk with, I'll just leave. So I'm not a big party person." CJ said that he is good at listening to other people's small talk, but he noted, "I am not good at making it myself." HJ agreed. Regarding social events, he said, "[At] five o'clock Saturday, I'm not interested in going. And I don't love being there. Maybe this will sort of help. [My wife] and I just had a conversation the other day with somebody about a Christmas party we went to a couple years ago—hundreds of people at this Christmas party. I spent most of the time with a friend of mine in a corner, the two of us talking the whole time." He continued, "Small

talk, sort of just go and wander around the room and hobnob with people, I don't get a charge out of that at all." Discussing the demands of relating to others and his general need for alone time, HJ said,

My wife and I have talked about this for years. We wake up in the morning: she wakes up in the middle of a conversation, and I'm just going, woah, give me cup of coffee, leave me alone, let me catch up. She knows that I've got to have some sort of alone time to just, to get geared up for the day or to get geared up for, you know, whatever the case may be. So she actually probably recognizes it even more than I do that I need that.

## **Leadership**

### **Doing Versus Delegating**

The participants expressed some challenges in serving as ministry leaders. Two participants reported that they find it easier to complete a task than to delegate it to someone else. HJ said, "I don't always do a great job of delegating. Part of it is when I think about [it], I don't want to impose on other people's time. It's just easier for me to do it. I'm a little more hesitant to then delegate responsibility for the oversight of certain things." CJ stated, "I think one thing I'm particularly not good at is recruiting people. The new ministry or the volunteers or other things, I would rather do it myself than deal with the hassle of inspiring someone to take up something." As this comment points out, CJ struggles with being an "inspiring leader." He remarked, in light of feeling like he does not know what he is doing some of the time, "I'm learning that that's okay, and I'll just trust the Lord in that moment, and that will be actually a strength to the situation. But I just feel like I'm not a very adequate leader... Back on those old things of inspiring people and bringing them all together for one purpose, having a vision for them, those things are just more difficult."

## Feeling Ill-Equipped for Leadership

MC stated that he feels more comfortable working “behind the scenes.” He said,

I like to serve; I don’t like to lead. I like to follow people. I like to serve behind-the-scenes, and so I think part of it has to do with my temperament. I think also part of it has to do with not ever being taught how to do that. Not ever being taught how to effectively lead a corporation, a business and/or whatever. I know the church is not one, but certainly there are things that we need to know as the ministers and as lead pastors to help lead our congregation that I feel like and think that I’ve been very ill-equipped to do.

Beyond the ministry of the Word, he feels hesitant as a leader. He reported experiencing

“tentativeness of leadership outside of the realm of the Word of God. When I can do it

[lead in the business affairs of the church], I have those gifts to do it, and I’ve done

effectively in the past. And I do it when I have to. But I’m not real comfortable with it.

And it scares me to do it.” He further stated, “I don’t think they [the congregation] would

say, ‘We appreciate his leadership because he can lead us from one stage of the life of the

church to another.’ I don’t know of one person who would say that. That part scares me

to death of the church.” He further expressed his anxiety about leading the congregation

in moving to a new site. He states, “We’re meeting at a [rented facility], and you need to

lead the church to this next level of owning your own building and in doing—well, the

Bible doesn’t give me the foundation to lead, to do that. And so that part of it, putting me

out there in front of people, that’s when I feel isolated in a negative way. And I like to be

isolated, but that’s isolated in a bad way.” MC believes that his concern about leading in

the business affairs of the church is rooted in his hesitancy to assert his leadership. He

explains,

I often have gifts, often have ideas, often have things that probably would be good to be shared that I don’t do—that I hesitate [to do] because of my personality.

That I hesitate to really take... I’m not a ‘type A’ personality who gets up and says, ‘This is where we’re going; follow me.’ But I think it would be helpful

sometimes if I did, because sometimes I do have good ideas that people should hear. I think the negative would be that I fail to actually take the leadership role that I probably should take at that particular time.

Along similar lines, he mentioned struggling with

some of those ancillary decisions, even though they trip us up and they are hard to make, and I would like to say, really would like to say, I don't care what we do with small groups. Just do whatever. I do really care what we do with small groups. In fact, I am burdened so bad for the protection and the life of the church that if I make a mistake...in that area, I'm affecting the whole church again. So I mean, if I run off everybody in the church because I say "Do not commit adultery," so be it. I'm comfortable with that. But if I run off everybody in the church because we decide to not do small groups, I am not okay with that at all.

A further statement, which relates to the previous comment, may serve to label MC's

leadership style. A congregant said of him, "[MC], sometimes you are a fix-it guy. And

you want to fix things..." Regarding this critique, he commented, "[This] is another

interesting thing that didn't come up in our earlier discussion about my personality.

Because I want to guard this institution, I have a really big, huge desire to fix everything.

And he [the congregant who labeled MC a fix it guy] knows that [about] me, which is

interesting because he's a counselor professional. And he'll say to me point blank, 'You

can't fix this.'" Interestingly, MC also commented, "I'm not really sure anything really

excites me or energizes me about leading people."

### Avoiding the Brainstorm

RG recounted a critical incident, in which he sought to "ramrod" a staffing

decision through without building consensus. He said,

I ran contrary to all these principles [building consensus, collaborative ministry style] I've just been bragging on myself about. And just ramrodded that decision through without building consensus or getting feedback or collaboration from the people who would actually be working with that person. And so now we've got kind of a mess, so you know, there I'd forgotten, forgotten my principles. And that's usually when I make the big mistakes—it's when I am absolutely convinced that I know what's right and what needs to be done or even what needs to be said,

and I don't consult anybody else, or listen to a selective group of people who are just going to give me the answer I want. And the result is seldom good.

SD related a story from the early years of the church he planted. A group of people got together to brainstorm about how to plant the church. SD recalled,

...as we were getting ready to launch the church, we had some meetings getting people together to brainstorm a little bit and set some goals and vision type stuff—that kind of thing doesn't energize me at all. In fact, a week from tomorrow night, my assistant pastor and I ... are meeting with one of our elders who professionally ... now, he has his own business—he helps with executive coaching and strategic vision casting, and goes all over the world and meets with government agencies and companies to help them do this sort of thing—I'm not looking forward to it. I just don't enjoy getting together talking about stuff. It just doesn't energize me.

### **Conflict**

Several participants, such as BK, noted that they seek to avoid conflict and confrontation.

So I don't like conflict or dealing with it. So it's very important to me that things go smoothly, so that's something that I want to help bring about as a leader as much as possible. And of course that's not possible, so then I really want to grow in this situation and with this particular, with these people in this conflict or disagreement, and that will stretch me to engage more deeply with them, and it will stretch them to try and really figure out what the issues are that they're so inflexible about.

Similarly, BW said, "...I don't really like confrontation." RG agreed, making this humorous statement: "Conflict avoidance is something that is growing on me. I think it's been underrated. I am beginning to like conflict avoidance."

### **Work Ethic**

Some of the participants commented on how they go about the work of ministry.

BG spoke of his perfectionism:

I'm a perfectionist. I remember the first time I ever failed [an exam]. I mean, I studied hard, but I failed. ... But I remember that night when I came home from the exam, I was undone...first time I'm confronted with the fact that I'm a failure.



And I did not know what to do with that. And since that time, the Lord has been graciously allowing me opportunities to fail and make mistakes so that I can see the limitations of myself and the weakness that is in me, so that I might more fully rest upon him and see him as my sufficiency.

BG also admitted that he not only strives not to fail but expects that he will do things right. In relating a situation with his wife, BG spoke about his struggle with self-sufficiency. He said,

... [T]he needs of my family were revealing to me weaknesses and insufficiencies within myself, revealing the pride of self-sufficiency, and so I began to realize, holy cow I'm one of the proudest people I know. My pride just manifested itself in self-sufficiency. I think I should be able to do all things all the time by myself. Well, that has nothing to do with Christianity. If you take that spiritually, then I don't need Jesus—wait a second. So that pride, that fear of not doing it right, that fear of not being able to do all things sufficiently is still a motivating factor for me. But I'm beginning to see that for what it is, that it is not relying upon Jesus. And then, when it comes relationally to my wife, what that does is not basically inserting myself in between her and Jesus—you should never need Jesus because you have me. Well, that's spiritual death to my wife. It's brutal. It's okay for me to let her need Jesus. It's actually unloving for me to get in the way of that. And so I have no idea how we got here, but I have seen that pride in me, that fear of not being able to do it right. But I'm learning to let go of that and learning to say [to my wife], I can't do it; I need you to help me.

BG also spoke about being driven by principles and not being sensitive to individuals' needs. He gave an example of a situation where he was seeking to do the right thing for someone but ran over a family emotionally. He stated, "I did not handle that well—the whole incident. I still believe, on principle, that she needed to [follow my directions]. And so I was driven by that principle, and I lost sight of the fact that they're still people."

### **Ministry**

The study participants reported facing a number of challenges in particular ministry areas. RG, for example, has found the discipleship of his elders a challenge. The elders at his church have told him directly, "You don't disciple your elders." In light of that comment, he said,

And I can't yet get a real clear picture from them what that means; and I'll keep seeking that from them. I am pretty sure I know what that means, and that is, we would like to hang out with you more, take us through personal study, that sort of thing. And you know I'll make some effort to improve where I can, but I think I've come into some degree of peace that I'll never do it. I just can't do it. I'm not gifted at it, I'm not driven for it, and there's no way to pull off both. Preaching at the level that I think I'm called to, that they've come to expect, leading a collaborative approach to ministry as opposed to—I think I could have more time discipling individual elders if I for instance had an executive pastor's leadership style, where I said to him, "You run everything I don't ... Just report the high points to me," but I just can't do that. So my intensity of my discipleship is focused on a few pastors and a few elders, and beyond that I can't, I don't have the capacity, to stretch myself... And so I've been engaging him [one of the elders who voiced this concern] privately [to understand what he desires] — nothing very clear and definitive. I mean, if he did [give a clear assessment of what he wanted], given that I am an ISTJ, if he wrote down ten steps, I could do those ten steps, think my way through it. I would develop a process, and we would knock it out.

Two participants observed that they are not gifted at counseling. RG said,

I am not a very good counselor, in that I'm a good listener, and I can talk to them about biblical principles and so forth, but I just didn't, I don't have a great sense, an ability to tease out all the subtleties of someone's emotions and relationships and then prescribe a course of action. I am either dull to that or impatient, one of—you know, it vacillates. So I was very frustrated in that, in that I wouldn't see people change. I did a lot of listening, and then it would just wear me out and leave me spent. So even at [his former church], I started asking for relief from that, all of which the elders were eager to help me with. And I'm my worst enemy, in that just not being able as a pastor to say no to what anybody requests.

SD was encouraged by a counseling professional to increase his counseling ministry. A counseling professional gave him this advice: "[I] encourage you to do more counseling... SD, I think you're very personable; I think you would be really good at it." He responded, "But it's just not my inclination." BG believes that he has weaknesses in this area of ministry, in light of his personality. He stated,

...When I think about counseling, I do feel like this is a weakness in my personality. It's a weakness maybe that serves me well. I don't carry around other people's stuff. I don't own their pain. I'm able to sit across the table or in counseling with them and just hear them and I think afford them biblical perspective, but when I leave that counseling appointment, I'm rarely weighed

down with what they've been struggling with or what their pain is. I don't lose sleep over people. And I think that's a weakness because I feel like it's a weakness in that I'm not empathetic with other people, as I ought to be.

As this section on ISTJ leadership challenges comes to a close, one of SD's comments might apply, though SD was the only participant to assert this. He said, "That's probably one of my weaknesses too... I can, the church can easily become an idol for me, and accomplishing things for the church can just be entirely too important to me. You know, as far as wrapping that up in my own identity and all that."

### **How ISTJ Pastors Understand Others' Perceptions of Their Pastoral Leadership**

The fourth research question explores how ISTJ pastors understand other's perceptions of their pastoral leadership. The responses will be presented under the following headings: Perceptions of the Church, and Opinions in the Church.

#### **Perceptions of the Church**

Some participants revealed perceptions that they project onto their congregations. One participant, BK, does not perceive that his congregation expects him to be more extraverted. He remarked, "I don't get a sense from the church that they expect me to be more extraverted... I don't think I'm not meeting their expectations because I'm an introvert."

CJ expressed concern about the congregation's possible perception that he does not know what he is doing. He voiced the concern that "people would just look at me and say, 'He doesn't know what he's doing. He's not confident. He doesn't have a clear plan.'"

BG's reassuring perception of spiritually minded people was that for them, the ministry of the Word, not personality, is primary. He said, "I think spiritually minded

people know that what they need is to be fed the Word of God. They don't need somebody's personality. You can't build a church on personality. You can... Oh, you can build a church on personality, but it's not the church."

HJ, on the other hand, was concerned about a potential "perception problem." He expressed concern about what the congregants think he does with his time: "The assumption is, if I'm in here studying or that if I'm interacting with really only a fairly small proportion of the congregation, then people probably think, 'What does he do? Is he really a pastor? What does [HJ] exactly do?'" "I think for me, that's my biggest concern, is the sense that I either have to go out and create my ministry, or I have to be given one sort of publicly, or I'm going to deal with that perception, 'What does [HJ] do?'"

MC was concerned that some might perceive him as unable to lead the congregation into the next phase of their church's life. He said, "If I were a member of our church, I would be concerned about the pastor's ability to move us to the next phase as an institution, not spiritually." He commented that his weakness in being a visionary might be a contributing factor to this perception. He continued, "I think [it] would be a legitimate concern for a congregant looking at our church, going how is [MC] going to take us from here to there ... and they have every right—I don't want them to, but they have every right—to be concerned about it."

According to RG's perception, some congregants may be frustrated with him for not spending more time with people. He said, "I do enjoy being alone and enjoy getting my refreshment alone. I need alone time to concentrate and think clearly about leading preaching [and] so forth. I think there a few people who are frustrated with me that I

don't spend enough time with them—people who are key leaders or have key leader responsibilities.” In RG's evaluations over the last two years, his reviewers have said consistently, “You don't disciple your elders.” “If I'm not thinking about it [this critique] properly,” he said, “I can think of it as a weakness and let it produce insecurity in me and then try to overcompensate.”

### **Opinions in the Church**

Some of participants' perceptions of how others view them are rooted in opinions that their congregants have expressed. One congregant criticized BG for the way he dressed on Sunday morning. He reflected,

No, I don't tend to care too much about what people think of me. I'm going to wear jeans, [a] button down, and a blazer. I could probably have a tie on too. Because what I thought was the people that I would want to please by wearing khaki pants and a blazer are not the people that I'm concerned to please. It's not about pleasing man ... I want to be accessible to, to the community but not just to the PCA folk ... I do want people to think I'm a good preacher. I do want people to think of me as a good teacher. I guess I am concerned that they think [I am] good at what I do, [that] they really appreciate my preaching.

BW has felt pressure to “come out more.” He said,

There will still always be a handful who think you just need to come out more. There will always be those. And I always try to accommodate those people ... I'll try harder to accommodate those people ... These people mean well, but they've got this bigger personality idea so much that they feel like you are really not going to reach your potential until you come out more ... [I've] been told I need to be out there more—‘You just need to be a more outgoing leader ... talk more, smile more,’ things like that.

He interacted with this opinion by saying,

It's not like they're totally wrong. They're right in a sense, and I have over the years gotten involved in more stuff in the community. Sometimes their prompting has helped me do that. There is only so far you can go, and you can't change who you are. And my comeback is, “Listen, my eyes are brown. I don't care how much you tell me they need to be blue; they're never going to be blue.” ... There comes a point that's how you feel. I'm just not going to be that kind of person. You may be, but I am never going to be—it can be frustrating.

On the other hand, congregants have encouraged HJ by giving him positive feedback on his Sunday school classes. Some have expressed the opinion, “You can teach, but you can also engage the group.” HJ commented that he uses “a lot of Socratic kind of stuff, a lot of engaging, asking questions.”

From a survey of his congregation, SD received feedback that pointed out the opinion of some in his congregation. He remarked,

One of the things that came out of that was [that] people wanted, and the preaching they wanted ... was heartfelt, or deeper, sermons. And I think what they’re getting at is more feeling oriented and emotionally expressive sermons, and you know that’s, I think, a weakness of mine—[that] is, not to be very emotionally expressive ... So that is something I have worked on—I think the Lord has worked on me in that area of my life, but that was definitely an important time in in my life was to get this feedback ... [regarding] more deeper, heartfelt sermons, and I think what they’re getting at there is not necessarily more theologically deep but just more personal.

### **What Strategies ISTJ Pastors Have Developed to Strengthen Their Effectiveness as Leaders**

The fifth and final research question has to do with the strategies that ISTJ pastors have developed in order to strengthen their effectiveness as leaders. The researcher organized the participants’ comments into strategies for preaching and teaching, relational ministry, approaches to ministry, information processing, work environment, and personal recharging.

#### **Preaching and Teaching**

##### **Focusing on What Is Central**

Several participants mentioned strategies that enable them to be more effective in ministering the Word of God. BG stated, “My ministry is to preach the Word. My ministry is not to do all the ministries of the church... The word is central—the pulpit is

central—and everything flows out from that. So that means there [will] be good things that we say no to—great ministry ideas.” So that he can spend more time in sermon preparation, RG has given the primary shepherding activities to other church leaders. He explained, “It’s gotten easier as I have been willing to delegate shepherding, and trust shepherding to my elders, and staff people. It wasn’t that they were lazy as much as I was hesitant to give that over. So that frees me mentally to study. They’ve encouraged me to study to preach. So it’s that been very helpful, sharing that pastoral ministry more, so that I can focus on preaching.”

#### Being Vulnerable from the Pulpit

One strategy that BG believes is important to his ministry is to seek to be honest in the pulpit. He remarked,

I do think my willingness—and I have heard several people comment on my willingness—to be honest in the pulpit about thinking things in the middle of the night that make me wonder if I am a Christian or not [helps people]. I don’t know if I said it quite like that, but willingness to be honest in the pulpit, but also continuing to come back to the necessity of grace in my life. So I talk about sin, I talk about grace, I talk about the cross. And I think those themes resonate with the soul of believers. I think they resonate with the soul of non-Christians too.

He continued by describing his desire to be evangelistic in preaching: “my prayer anyway [is] that God would be drawing non-Christians to himself through my preaching.”

RG also spoke about the importance of being vulnerable in the pulpit. In commenting on why his congregation responds to his leadership, he said,

I think it is just [my abilities in] listening, reflecting on their feedback. It’s sincerity, which is conveyed by being vulnerable with them in the pulpit, hopefully appropriately. Letting them know that the gospel I’m trying to commend to them is one that’s necessary for myself, and then trying to pursue sincere relationships with them as well, and to make sure that the relationship that we have outside of the preaching event is a true one, in their ordinary life, giving energy to those relationships.

BW sees preaching and relationship as the primary reasons people should attend his church. He remarked, “The Bible is taught [here], and the people will love them and accept them; and that’s why they come. And I think those are the right reasons. It’s people loving people and inviting them. So, yes, I want people to come because of the gospel and the community, not because of me.”

### **Relational Ministry**

In some cases, participants commented on how they navigate relationships in the church. BG admitted that he thrives in solitude, but at times he needs to relate to people for his own emotional health. He commented, “If I am in a funk, [and then] if I spend time with people, I’m better, I’m more squared away, I’m less in a funk than I was before, which makes me go, ‘Maybe I am an extravert.’ But normally, my bent is I’d rather go be alone... I think I have a balance between needing to be alone, wanting to be alone, and I know that [it] is good for my soul to be with people.”

One participant described being more comfortable in front of large group meetings, provided he has an official role to play. HJ stated, “I much prefer one-on-one or large group [settings], but only [large group settings when] in the context of like leading or teaching. If I’ve got kind of a clear authority kind of role, or if I’m with people that I know well, sort of stepping up and asserting myself is not a problem; it’s not difficult... One-on-one lunch with somebody, one-on-one counseling, one-on-one conversations, love it, much more comfortable for me.” In contrast, CJ prefers small groups, in some cases, to one-on-one interactions. Reflecting on a group interactions, he said, “I enjoy that, in terms of [being on a] committee or my involvement on the session or men’s Bible studies. We have discussion groups that are smaller groups that are, I



think, very helpful, and I feel comfortable in that role, even more so sometimes than a one-on-one situation.”

Social events are challenging for HJ, but he has found that interacting with a few people and having an exit strategy helps. In describing one social gathering, he stated, “I spent most of the time with a friend of mine in a corner. The two of us talking the whole time.” He and his wife have a “signal” when he is ready to leave. Further, MC and his wife have found it helpful to force one another to attend social functions. He stated, “[My wife] and I push ourselves to get outside of our own envelopes.”

### **Approaches to Ministry**

#### **Building Relationships Within the Session**

Some participants made comments relating to their effectiveness as ministry leaders. BG decided to focus during session meetings on the elders’ relationships with one another. He states,

The session is a context where we can actually have good relationships with each other. And out of those relationships come, I think, better decisions, better policies, that are informed by the gospel, informed by the work of grace in our hearts, as opposed to just, ‘Here are nine things on the docket, and thanks for coming guys; let's get to it.’ There is a time [where] you’ve just got to knuckle down and do the work, but at the same time I would want that work to be done in the context of genuine love for each other.

#### **Collaborating with Other Leaders**

Several participants emphasized the importance of a collaborative ministry style and of building consensus for group decisions. RG described a critical incident where the leadership of a ministry within the church needed to be changed. A healthy collaboration arrangement existed between the elders and the other people involved. Reflecting on this collaboration, he said, “There is a much healthier trust relationship, I’d say, between the

people and the elders and vice versa. [A] greater comfort level [exists] with pushing as many decisions as possible to the lowest level, giving people real ownership, greater use of commissions to deal with issues, and occasionally you have to step back in and pull things back together, but we haven't had a lot of that." RG initially learned about collaborative leadership from a professor in seminary. He recalled, "[My professor's] emphasis [was] on leading from behind as a shepherd—shepherding people along, rather than charging along. So that tempered my approach to leadership, and then my first elders at [my first church] were very wise, experienced men—experienced in industry, experienced as elders. And they modeled to me what consensus building was, what collaborative leadership [was]." Likewise, BK described his leadership style as "trying to build consensus." In working with committees, he has realized that others may know much more about an issue than he does. He stated, "We've got a lot of people who really know a lot about teaching. How can we build consensus? How can we work together? [They] are the ones who are doing it [teaching] — I'm the facilitator, trying to lead us to a place of consensus, rather than the expert who's telling us what we should do." SD has also learned the importance of seeking to build consensus. He stated,

I have learned that you get much better results if you slow down and get more consensus. Let's say with the elders on the session or deacons or anybody really—I mean, in the military, you know, you sort of, you get your mission from higher headquarters. Once you get the mission, the commander says, 'Okay, this is what we're going to do.' And everybody gets in line, and you go and do it. It just doesn't work that way in the church. It just comes out so much better if you take your time, build consensus.

### **Taking Time to Think Alone**

A few participants tend to work better alone than they do on a team. MC stated, "[I] would rather go off by myself and think and work through those issues." He tends to

avoid “brainstorming” sessions with a “think-tank.” SD agrees: “I’m not much of a brainstormer.” In completing an exercise in which he had to write a summary of his life, he noticed that most of the activities he has done have been generally independent efforts. He observed, “So I appreciate the team activities, but honestly I’m more of an independent thinker and doer.”

### **Preparing Appropriately**

A number of the study participants find that being well prepared for an event is helpful. BK said, “For some of those events, I’ve tried to be well prepared so that I’m not surprised.” HJ also minimizes the potential for failure by preparing well. He said,

I think my inclination is to do a bunch a research. Ask folks, read, gather tools. My sort of immediate natural inclination is to sort of gather and glean ... I think it would be [to] sort of overly prepare. ...[T]he other thing for me is [that] things have to flow in a sort certain order. Everything I do, I think I’m often aware. For example, [when preparing] a sermon, I...may spend more time on the order in which I’m going to say things or present things or the structure of the sermon than on the language or the exegesis or the study itself. The flow matters to me.

### **Balancing and Sharing Responsibilities**

Some of pastors also noted the importance of finding ways to balance multiple responsibilities. BG spoke about multitasking. He said, “I can handle one thing at a time. In some ways I can multitask and [handle] small things, but if it requires much mental energy, I can’t multitask at all.” BW has found that he must manage current ministries while also being visionary. He said, “You have to manage what you have. But also you [have to] think about what we can do that is bigger and better ... kind of a visionary thing.” MC reported being weak as a visionary. This has caused him to seek out elders who are forward thinkers, so they can free him to focus on his role as a pastor. He commented, “I prayed for an elder who would be a visionary and who could stand up and

kind of give our church that which I'm lacking in that particular area." Similarly, BK described a joint ministry endeavor, where he served with another leader who was extraverted. The extravert focused on relationships, while BK took care of the administrative matters. He stated, "It was a good mix." RG told of a conference he attended, at which a well-known pastor was the keynote speaker. This pastor said that by most standards, he had performed poorly in gathering disciples. RG recalled,

Then he [the well-known pastor] went on to say, to talk about the people God has raised up around him who enable him, to help him, to fulfill [his] role, and he contributes to their role. It was one of the most affirming things that— you know, of course he does discipleship. He does it. I mean, how many people in our churches is [the well-known pastor] discipling? But he doesn't do it in [the normal] mode [of gathering a group of men and sharing life together]. Just very affirming.

#### Knowing Who You Are

A few participants spoke about the importance of coming to terms with who they are. BG, in a conversation he had with an older pastor who had recently arrived in BG's town, learned the importance of knowing one's calling, of being aware of one's gifts and abilities. The older pastor, according to BG, described his approach to ministry as follows: "What I do is I preach and write books and I speak at conferences. That's what I do; that's how I'm gifted. Anything other than that, I'm not going to do it." BG commented,

I think there's a real strength in that, to be able to say, "This is who I am by the grace of God. I am what I am, and I'm going to minister in these ways that fit God's gifting, and I'm not going to minister in these other ways." Now that can be abused, and you can be cold with that. One of the things that I wanted out of my first call out of seminary was to figure out what I was good at because I didn't really know. How am I gifted? How can the Lord use [me] in his kingdom? And I feel like that's been refined over the years to where I want to be preaching. I think the Lord has gifted me in that and for that, but he's also given me this introversion that I want to use well. I don't want to abuse it. I want to use it well. So I guess I'm not exactly sure what that looks like. I do try to limit myself to one

appointment a day, maybe two, maybe a breakfast, maybe a lunch ... I enjoy the appointments when I have them, and I can be fully present when I'm there, but at the end of the day, I'm done. I've got nothing left for my wife and kids. So it's good to know that about myself so that I don't overschedule myself. I also need, I need chunks of time to work on stuff ... I think introversion helps me in that.

BW voiced a similar sentiment. He commented, "There are certain competencies that a person has to have. He has to be able to talk and teach the Bible and be with people. But within his own 'who he is.'"

### Pursuing Spiritual Health

Two participants spoke about the importance of focusing on one's spiritual life in order to become better equipped to minister. BK said, "I want to trust the Lord that the gospel is working in my life, that I can be a gospel minister to others. And that's where I really want to live is in terms of pointing people to the gospel, in making that the focus, rather than the focus is what's best or, you know, the other things they could be fighting about or the conflict could be about." SD found a sabbatical to be critical in his ministry, especially in light of the feedback he received, suggesting that his sermons needed to be more "heart-felt." He said,

I took a sabbatical. That was a big part of it [working on that critique], I think, is just, you know—I believe my own relationship with the Lord is key to, you know, being able to communicate at a deeper level. So I took three months off. And, you know, came back [refreshed]; and this was after over ten years in the ministry without an extended break at all. So I think it was probably overdue. I was experiencing, you know, just the classic symptoms of burnout.

### Making Room for Margins

A number of participants noted the importance of "margins" or buffers in their lives, which enable periods of recovery from their interactions with others. SD's example illustrated this need:

Most people think I'm extraverted. Whenever I get into a conversation about temperaments and tell people I come out [MBTI] introvert, they're surprised, because they see me, you know, in a leadership role in the church, and when I'm in that mode I'm extraverted, you know, and I think I'm a pretty friendly person. And sometimes people interpret that as being extraverted, but certainly too much interaction with people does completely drain me.

He details the importance of margins in the following comment:

Dr. Richard Swenson is a medical doctor. He wrote a book called *Margin*, and his idea is that you should build in some space in your life; and you know, he says, the most effective people I know do not operate at 100% capacity. They operate at 90% capacity, and they always have a little room in case of emergencies or whatever to build up to that point. Even in the military..., in the helicopter community, the doctrine is that you fly your aircraft at about 70 to 80% of their availability. You never are flying everything you've got; because then when you need to surge, they actually call it a surge—you've heard the term used, you know, with Operation Iraqi Freedom—to surge, that's really a time in ministry where you get that call and you got to go to the hospital or something comes up. So you should really build in that space. I am not very good at that. I love to operate at 100% all the time. But I have learned, yes, I need to just get away. For example, I mentioned exercise. I might be going at full capacity, you know, for hours on end and then just say, I've got to go for a run, and just go for a run. So that's been good for me.

BK spoke about having to be more extraverted, having to “be on ... be more extraverted than I actually am, Sunday morning.” But then he said, “We've tried to draw a boundary in the church with I think some success, and people understand that we can't do a lot of church activities on Sunday afternoon.” RG stated,

You know, for years I would've said I can't be introverted; I'm in an extraverted role. So it was very helpful to figure out that [being more introverted according to MBTI] describes how I get refreshed and replenished for doing my work. So it means that I have to take into account the need to have margin between major events or ministry tasks that are draining. So it's changed the way I schedule appointments, and even my assistant helps me with that. Where she can forecast what is really going to be a heavy, demanding appointment and giving me time to recover for the next one. Giving myself time to recover on Sunday afternoons. Getting myself ready to go into events where there're large groups of people and just having to develop some strategies even as simple as, “I want to watch my children play a sporting event.” Developing a strategy for getting into that event and creating a buffer where I can really focus on that event and not pulled a 100 different ways.

I preach three out of four Sunday evenings a month, in addition to the two morning services. So we don't often, will never go out to eat with somebody if I'm preaching that evening, or schedule a highly demanding interpersonal interaction in that afternoon if I'm preaching that evening. So I'll come home, and we have our meal together as a family, and I'm still riding high on adrenaline until about two-o'clock. Then I am prepared for that adrenaline crash. So I just need a little twenty- to thirty-minute power nap, and I'm refreshed for [the next task]. Then I spend some time, usually if I haven't had time in between services to go over my evening sermon, I will schedule some time to do that. But I have tried to create some bigger buffers. I've quit going to Sunday school.

Then the other strategy has been to keep mornings free. Occasionally, like this morning, I had a meeting. By and large, no meetings in the morning, no breakfast meetings or early meetings. Just because that's the height of my energy, and it's the height of my creativity... Tuesday I do block scheduling. So Tuesday, all day is given over to study as well as mornings, and then Monday lunch is usually with senior staff. That leaves Wednesday and Thursday for other lunches. I try to make those enjoyable lunches—high leverage lunches. Not confrontation, not unpleasant topics.

### **Information Processing**

Most participants indicated that they process information internally. BK said, "I'm not exactly a verbal processor, but eventually I've found the value in that, processing with my senior pastor... This meeting went poorly—Why? —and then getting his feedback... is always very helpful. Or my wife's feedback." SD also indicated that he is "more internal." He said, "I mentioned that I ran the marathon a few months ago. I'm running less now, but for forty years, I've been jogging. [It] used to be three or five days a week. Now it's just a couple of days. But I tend, that's when I tend to do my thinking." Describing the need to retreat from an interaction so that he can process information internally, HJ made an interesting comment. He said,

I don't always retreat physically. Sometimes I find myself retreating from something mentally, and I'll miss some stuff; because my brain's off interacting with, you know, people are talking past each other, or people [are] using words in different ways, or people are only talking about the fruit of the tree and not dealing with the root and that sort of thing. I think I may disappear just mentally

in the course of the meeting. My brain walks off for a couple minutes and goes, “Wait, wait! Something’s amiss here; something’s not working.” And then I’ll come back and go, “Alright, wait. Here’s what I’m hearing, and here’s what I hear you say, and here’s what I hear you saying. Here’s where I think you’re missing each other.

A few participants indicated a preference to “think on” matters before responding to a question or an idea. HJ said, “Sometimes I’ll engage those ideas right away, but I’m not always as thoughtful about them at that point than if I were [to], you know, sleep on it and then come back. I think, while I love the discussion of ideas, but I think that my thinking is better alone—cup, coffee, give it a little time to sort of permeate—I will have a lot of sort of ah-ha moments.” Similarly, SD said, “My inclination is to give them a short answer, shoot from the hip, but not a thorough answer. And, depending on the nature of the question, to definitely say, ‘Let me think about that and get back to you.’”

MC explained,

My tendency is to engage the conversation, but I also know that even right before you came in, I had a conversation with somebody who called and asked a question, and it was very similar to that scenario. He had asked me specifically, “I know you need time to think about this,” and then asked the question. I oftentimes hear myself say, “Let me answer this off the top of my head,” but then I’ll also give it some thought. And that gives me the freedom to answer and to engage in the conversation but to honestly then give it some thought that it needs after that time. I do like to try to meet that need immediately and to have that conversation, particularly if it’s needed to take place then, so I like to have that conversation then but giving that person also the understanding that, “Look, I want to think about that as well.”

In one interesting comment, HJ points out the value of communicating by email:

“I love ideas to come up via email because then I have time to think. I like to interact. I like, I can think of some conversations just in the last week where people are writing pages of information, but that gives me a chance to process it.... gives me a chance to process it first.”



## **Work Environment**

Several participants remarked on the importance of their work environment. HJ remarked, “[I have a] love-hate relationship with [my] office.” People access the church secretary by walking through HJ’s office, so he often experiences interruptions.

I do a lot of work at the coffee shop. I can get a lot of single tasks accomplished at the coffee shop, because I may take that book, that commentary, that notepad and a pen ... It’s a place I can just be me—I mean, it’s like you said, it’s anonymous. But it’s also a place where I actually expect to see people I’ll know. And [I] can actually have some good one-on-one conversation with folks. So it really sort of serves both. It serves the anonymity—I can sort of turn into my own head and be my introvert self—and [I can] accomplish the one-on-one meeting that I like so much.

MC said, “My office is one of those that I can go into. I’m just in there. I can read; I can pray. It’s my space.” SD made a similar comment. He mentioned making a change in his home office by removing his phone and computer. Now, he said, “[my] little office is just me and my books, you know, a reading light, and that’s been good for me to have that little retreat space.”

## **Personal Recharging**

Most participants noted needing time to recharge. BG said, “I’ve got a ton of hobbies: photography, guitar, hunting... I like being alone. I like to go to the coffee shop.” Being with family and engaging in solitary activities helps BW recharge. He said, “[I recharge by] just being at home with family or getting with a book or [taking a walk]. I walk a lot. We live in the country... [Recharging] just happens automatically when you’re back in the normal, quieter setting.” HJ remarked,

I’m an early enough riser that I have...a significant portion in the morning [where] there’s nobody but my dog and a cup of coffee and me. And I know I’m going to have thirty minutes or so [before the family gets up]. So that’s usually built-in. The other is—and again, this is something this conversation has helped

me see a little bit, although I think I knew it—the coffee shop provides that. Because there actually comes a time every day when I need to go there. I’ve often thought that’s just the time of day I need my coffee. But I can go and not get coffee and still feel energized like that. So it provides that sort of enough alone time with thoughts [and] with ideas.

For MC, physical exercise is a means of recharging:

Mowing the yard by myself, picking weeds—give me any physical labor by myself. I will put in my headphones and listen to Whitehorse Inn or listen to Tim Keller or listen to anybody. I listen to sermons and be by myself, ride my bike by myself. And that’s another interesting thing, and that’s a weakness I think. Some of the guys in our church ride mountain bikes like I do. I don’t want to ride with them. I want to be by myself. I’ve gone with them once, and it was fine, but that’s my thing that I like, to keep in the corner over here. So that’s what I do to recharge. I love physical labor.

SD reflected on his sabbatical by saying, “I didn’t think about it so much at the time...but I think...for someone like myself to take a sabbatical, it was important to spend some time alone.” He further commented, “Mondays [are] my day of rest ... I definitely recharge more being by myself, just taking care of a few miscellaneous things around the house, maybe cut the grass. I am task oriented, so I like to accomplish things. But definitely, it would be more by myself would be my recharging type activities.”

Echoing many of the other participants’ comments, RG explained that solitude provides the best opportunity for him to recharge. He said,

[I recharge by] being alone in almost any way. I will volunteer to go get the milk in the middle of the night because that alone time in the car is recharging to me. And it’s not that I don’t like being with people. I really relish being with my family; I relish when I get to be with church people; but learning that I get replenished by also being alone has been a key. And then, but the most refreshing cocktail for me is anything in creation. I am really helped by Bill Hybels’ article. There’s a comment in there about the way human beings, created in the image of God, refresh themselves emotionally is by being in the creation. So that’s why I’m willing to play a bad round of golf—because it’s outdoors. Hunting, fishing—those are my favorite. And you know, [it’s] hard to justify in my task driven life. So, I have loving people in my life including my wife and key elders who force me to do that—they force it to be scheduled. Alone time and/or almost anything in creation.

### **Conclusion**

The interview findings detailed in this chapter provide in-depth insights into the ISTJ's effectiveness and challenges in pastoral ministry. The next chapter will discuss conclusions drawn in light of these findings and those reported in chapter two.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

This study has explored how MBTI-ISTJ pastors lead effectively in pastoral ministry by understanding and capitalizing on their unique divine design. The assumption of this study is that ISTJ pastors have the potential to lead effectively but with respect to their temperament are faced with hurdles in pastoral ministry, which is by nature, a significantly extraverted environment. Five research questions were framed to guide this study. The research questions are

1. How do ISTJ pastors perceive their effectiveness as leaders in ministry?
2. What aspects of pastoral leadership motivate ISTJ pastors?
3. What unique leadership challenges do ISTJ pastors face in pastoral ministry?
4. How do ISTJ pastors understand others' perceptions of their pastoral leadership?
5. What strategies have ISTJ pastors developed to strengthen their effectiveness as leaders?

In this chapter, I will summarize my research findings, present the conclusions I was able to draw from the research, and make recommendations for both pastoral practice and further study.

## **Summary and Findings**

### **Summary of Chapter Two**

The literature review provided in Chapter Two shows that ISTJ pastors have the potential to effectively lead in pastoral ministry but face leadership hurdles. The literature provides helpful insights into the study of human personality, introversion, MBTI – ISTJ, introversion and cultural biases, and leadership and the introvert (ISTJ).

The first section of Chapter Two, exploring human personality, reveals a number of important findings. The literature shows that introverts focus inwardly on concepts and ideas, while extraverts focus more outwardly.

An important question that many authors considered in the literature concerns whether a person's personality is inborn or learned. Jung's hypothesis is that personality has a "biological foundation," so that one is born with a certain personality preference, though environment and personal experience tend to shape personality as well.<sup>342</sup> The works of Myers and Laney, in particular, support this theory.

Chapter two also included a description of Myers' MBTI system. Myers' work utilized the auxiliary process, which splits each of Jung's eight types to two, making a total of sixteen types under the MBTI framework. The research data suggest that this auxiliary process is crucial for understanding introverts and ISTJs in particular.

Another area I studied through the literature review was introversion. The authors of these works cite many traits of introverts: for example, hesitating before speaking, avoiding crowds and seeking quiet, being absorbed in thought, reflecting and acting in a careful way, sharing only with those whom one knows well, preferring one-on-one communication, being uncomfortable in social settings, and being drained by too much

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<sup>342</sup> Jung, 331.

interaction with others. Other traits include needing personal space (an office or room), time to think, freedom to retreat to solitude, and freedom to be a “passionate spectator.” In the review, I described the introvert’s focus on the inner life as an asset in pastoral ministry, for prayer, preaching, and listening are introverted activities.

Through this study, I sought to investigate the leadership abilities of MBTI-ISTJ pastors and, therefore, in the literature review, pursued constructing an accurate and comprehensive portrait of the behavioral traits of this type. ISTJs are noted for bringing stability to their environment. They are systematic, painstaking, thorough, responsible, hardworking, practical (the most practical of the sixteen types), detail oriented, dutiful without desiring fanfare, and outwardly matter-of-fact. ISTJs emphasize logic, analysis, and decisiveness. They value tradition. ISTJs seek to do what needs to be done and value a job well done. They desire to be—and typically are—both dependable and sensible. As a leader, the ISTJ provides a calming presence.

The literature review also included an analysis of ISTJs’ temptations and weaknesses. Introverts, and therefore ISTJs, tend toward solitude. Because of their affinity for solitude, their sense of community tends to suffer. ISTJs easily become overstimulated by too much interaction with people and feel overwhelmed with too many projects. They can be self-absorbed, suspicious, and prudish. ISTJs have an unhealthy propensity for idolatry and perfectionism. They can be task oriented at the expense of people, lack flexibility to change procedures when the situations warrant change, lose patience with those who appear lazy, and have trouble delegating tasks and saying no. The ISTJ’s focus on facts may result in others viewing the ISTJ as cold and calculating. One significant temptation strikes at the heart of the Gospel message. ISTJs may be so

performance oriented that they struggle with legalism even viewing doing their duty defining their relationship with Christ. The literature seems to indicate that introverted pastors, and therefore ISTJs, may not work well in collaborative ministry settings such as a ministry teams. The literature suggests ISTJs do not focus to a great degree on “feelings” or on the more emotional aspects of the individual. Lack of emotional intelligence is a potential weakness for ISTJs. The data also indicates that introverts, and therefore ISTJs, typically do not like “small talk.” This poses a potential challenge in pastoral ministry.

The literature review briefly mentioned church personality as discussed in Douglass’ work, *“What is Your Church’s Personality?”* Eight basic categories, or church personalities, are presented in his book. The MBTI – ISTJ temperament type corresponds to Douglass’ Organizer Church.<sup>343</sup> “Organizer church strengths include correctness, reliability, self-control, continuity, management and the gaining of understanding through analytical abilities.”<sup>344</sup> The main point is that introverts and extraverts with godly character can be successful in church leadership. Particular to this study, introverts, and therefore ISTJs, can be and are effective leaders in the church by God’s grace. God’s grace and sovereignty trumps temperament!

#### **Summary of Chapter Four**

A summary of the interview findings provided in Chapter Four shows that ISTJ pastors have the potential to effectively lead in pastoral ministry despite hurdles associated with their temperament. The participants’ descriptions of what enables them to be effective in ministry, what motivates them in pastoral ministry, the challenges they

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<sup>343</sup> Douglass, 21.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid., 232-273.

face, how others perceive their leadership, and the strategies they have employed to succeed correlate well with the findings in the literature review.

The participants discussed how they viewed their effectiveness in ministry. The ministry of the word of God in preaching and teaching is considered to be the primary component of pastoral ministry, and thus the main way ISTJs effectively serve. The marks of leadership that impacted the pastor's effectiveness as a leader include a sense of duty and loyalty, as well as the pastor's calmness, dependability, and steadiness as a leader.

Effective approaches to ministry were a topic of importance in the research. Some pastors indicated they were more comfortable working "behind the scenes." A task-orientation to ministry was reflected in several interviews. Some who described their ministry approach used the term "shepherding." Another component to ministry voiced by several participants was consensus-building. RG described an incarnational ministry approach as "basic."

Another area explored by the participants in considering effectiveness in ministry was the relational component. The findings show that relationships are important to ISTJs. A theme of loving people was repeated, and participants generally agreed that one-on-one interactions with people were preferred. However, if they were in charge of a large group meeting, they were comfortable in that more "up-front" role.

The participant's views of their effectiveness in ministry were further revealed by responding to the statement, "extraverts make the best pastors." Some participants agreed. However, most of them responded like RG, who stated, "I hope not!" A number of gifts and abilities the more introverted pastor brings to leadership were discussed; for



example, being sensitive to souls, being thoughtful and intentional, and viewing ministry and the church as focusing on God and not on the pastor.

The findings revealed a number of ways that ISTJs are motivated in ministry. One major motivating activity is ministering God's word in preaching and teaching. Another aspect of ministry that motivates some of the study participants is observing God at work in people's lives. The participants mentioned engaging people as another way they were motivated in ministry. One-on-one interactions with people are significant ways ISTJs are motivated relationally. Several other motivating factors in leadership were mentioned. Crisis management is an area that motivates some participants. Another motivation factor for some is completing tasks. A sense of doing one's duty was also motivating for some.

Another area of interest to the research is the challenges ISTJ pastors face in ministry. The participants discussed a number of fears they experience in their work: "doing it [ministry] wrong," a sense of failure, leading the entire church "off the cliff," and not being perceived as "decisive enough." Some questioned whether the pastoral ministry was conducive to their temperament. Another challenge revealed is that of not being "open" with people. One participant was encouraged by one of his elders to "create his own ministry" and "be out there more." Some participants remarked that they struggled with being visionary enough. Too much interaction with people presents challenges for the participants. In general, these pastors preferred one-on-one interactions with people to being in large group social settings. Some participants struggle with taking the initiative to engage people. Social settings where "small talk" is often required pose an interesting challenge for ISTJs. Other challenges include delegating responsibilities to

others, tentativeness of leadership outside of the realm of the word of God, being a “fix-it guy, difficulty in discipleship of elders, and not being a good counselor.” How the participants go about their work was another area investigated. One participant views himself as a perfectionist, and in light of this, struggles with “self-sufficiency.” Another expressed concern the church could easily become an idol.

An important component to this study is the participants’ understanding of how others perceive their leadership role. The research did not reveal an overall sense that others expected them to be more extraverted. One participant feared that the church might be frustrated with him for not spending more time with people. Several participants spoke of positive comments they had received about their preaching and teaching.

The final area examined in the interviews was strategies ISTJ pastors have developed to enable them to succeed in ministry. Some participants spoke about strategies to enable them to more effectively minister God’s word. These strategies included saying no to good things to protect the priority of preparing to preach and teach, delegating most of the shepherding ministry of the church to the elders, and being honest in the pulpit about the need for grace in the preacher’s life.

Navigating relationships wisely is another area where the participants have developed effective strategies. Some participants admitted that they are comfortable in a large group setting if they have a definite role to play. As mentioned earlier, social events may pose certain problems for ISTJs. One participant has developed a signal to use to inform his wife it is time to go. Another has found it helpful to push himself and his wife to participate in more social events. Several described “surviving” a social event by spending most of the time talking to one person.

Strategies for approaches to ministry were discussed. One participant has begun to focus on building healthy relationships between elders during session meetings. Other participants view collaborative ministry and consensus-building as important strategies. One strategy that works for BK and others is being well-prepared for an activity. BG is able to multitask smaller activities, but must dedicate time to working on major responsibilities. MC has seen the need to delegate vision-casting to an elder that is gifted in that area. Some participants spoke about the importance of ministering in a manner that is consistent with God's design. Two participants spoke about the need to focus on one's spiritual life in order to be effective in ministry. Several participants voiced the importance of margins or buffers in their lives. Margins provide spaces to allow for recuperation between draining events and create a less busy schedule to accommodate the unplanned. Most participants indicated that they processed information internally. This means ISTJs typically need time to think about an issue before responding. One strategy some use in light of this is to give a brief answer to someone's question but then say "Let me think about this further and get back with you." Another strategy referenced by a few participants is the importance of office space – a place to call my own – a retreat of sorts. Finally, one strategy used to succeed in ministry is to take time to recharge by being alone and in engaging solitary type activities.

The summary of the literature (Chapter Two) and the interview findings (Chapter Four) form a solid data set for a discussion of the finding. The researcher will present his conclusions in the next section.

## **Discussion of Findings**

A discussion of the findings from this research will provide a rich description of the ISTJ in pastoral ministry including gifts and abilities that enable success and blind spots or temptations that need to be addressed. The labels for each subheading in this section are in the participants' own words to demonstrate the significance of these characteristics.

### **It Really Was a Strong Sense of Duty**

“It really was a strong sense of duty.” This statement was made by RG in describing a ministry transition decision. The importance of duty cannot be overstated for ISTJs. The opening account of Robert E. Lee’s letter to his son about duty is one with which every ISTJ will resonate. Interviewee MC represents the importance of duty by viewing it as a motivating factor in leadership. It is not only an important motivating factor in the pulpit and classroom ministries of the church that will be discussed in the next section, but also very much in the background in every aspect of the ISTJ’s life. “Duty is a word the ISTJ understands”<sup>345</sup> and “anything worth doing is worth doing well” are two statements cited in the literature that get at the heart of the ISTJ.<sup>346</sup> This high sense of duty affords the ISTJ useful skills in pastoral ministry. Leaders of this type will seek to complete every task with excellence. ISTJs will prove to be self-starters, and this is an important trait in pastoral ministry because most solo or senior pastors find themselves on their own regarding how they organize their time and work. A high sense of duty will drive the ISTJ pastor fulfill his responsibilities to the best of his ability.

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<sup>345</sup> Keirsey and Bates, 190.

<sup>346</sup> Oswald.

This sense of duty also has a dark side. Some participants expressed fear of failure in not fulfilling their duty. Thus, failing to do one's duty either in one's own eyes or in the eyes of others (criticism), may drive the ISTJ to despair. A particular temptation for this type is perfectionism. The literature describes ISTJs as valuing hard work, but they tend to place confidence in human ability, and they are prone to perfectionism. A sense of self-sufficiency has the potential to hinder their understanding of their need for Christ. Thus, as stated earlier in the summary of chapter two, ISTJ may struggle with viewing their relationship with Christ and other believers in terms of duty and obligation.

The ISTJ may tend to “play” the elder brother in Jesus’ parable of the Prodigal Son.<sup>347</sup> In this parable, the elder brother viewed his relationship with his father in terms of his performance – duty and obligation. The dialogue between the father and elder brother shows this:

And he said to him, Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound. But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!<sup>348</sup>

The elder brother believed that he deserved his father’s love because he had been the “good son.” ISTJs may view their relationship with Christ in a similar fashion. In addition, the elder brother’s legalistic view of life made him unmerciful toward his younger brother, who had repented and been restored. It is easy for any Christian to be as self-righteous as the Pharisees, but the ISTJ type is particularly prone to this. The remedy is “preach the gospel to oneself” daily. The gospel message is summarized in the Apostle

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<sup>347</sup> Luke 15:8-32

<sup>348</sup> Luke 15:27-30

Paul's words, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."<sup>349</sup>

The ISTJ's high sense of duty is a great asset to the church, but care must be taken to guard against duty spilling into self-sufficiency, legalism, and perfectionism. Dutiful ISTJs will seek to do their job to the best of their ability, and they will seek to do it in a way that is not self-promoting. Collins' description of the Level Five leader as "more plow horse than show horse" is an apt description of the ISTJ.<sup>350</sup> This high sense of duty is a major part of the ISTJ's zeal for ministering God's word, as we will consider next.

### **The Pulpit is Central**

"...the pulpit is central and everything flows out from that..." BG expressed the views of several participants by stating that the pastor's primary responsibility in pastoral leadership is the ministry of the word of God in preaching and teaching. Every pastor should approach the ministry of the word out of a sense of God's calling and love for scripture. The interview findings indicate that ISTJs understand that they are "primarily called to the pulpit." Given this, what makes ISTJs able preachers and teachers?

The literature review reveals ISTJs are well suited for the preaching and teaching ministries of the church. Study and communication skills fit the ISTJ pastor's temperament. Because introverts' main interests include "the inner world of concepts and ideas," and love for "pondering the big questions," as well as skills in logic, linear thinking and analysis, these are ideal tasks for them. Oswald and Kroeger have

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<sup>349</sup> Ephesians 2:8-10

<sup>350</sup> Collins, 121.

discovered that “introverts can be powerful preachers, especially if they have had some solid introverted time preparing for the event.”<sup>351</sup> The introverted preference, and therefore ISTJ, is a natural fit for a preaching ministry. One participant, BG, represented this conclusion, stating that his introversion enables him to fulfill the primary part of his calling, preaching, because he naturally is given to study. Often, ISTJs may struggle with their temperament, viewing it as a deficit. The opposite, however, should be the case. The various aspects of this temperament foster a skill set that is custom-made for a pulpit ministry.

Not only are ISTJs naturals at study and the mechanics of logically crafting sermons in preparation for the ministry of the word, but they are also able practitioners of the art of preaching. They prefer to operate behind the scenes, do not relish social interactions in large group settings, spend more time thinking and listening than talking, tend to be more reserved and not as outwardly expressive, and reluctantly let others into their inner world of ideas. Yet, ISTJs tend to be at home in the pulpit. An interesting trait of many introverts is their ability to take on leadership roles when thrust onto “center stage,” as will be explored in a later section.

For the purposes of this present discussion on preaching, suffice it to say ISTJs undertake what amounts to a very extraverted role on center stage, not because they like the attention but primarily out of a sense of duty—“doing what needs to be done.” As Laney notes, this sense of duty is so strong that it allows ISTJs to abandon their natural introverted behavior, step into the limelight “and do their duty.”<sup>352</sup> This powerful sense of duty and loyalty to Christ and his church animates the ISTJ to faithfully serve in the

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<sup>351</sup> Oswald, 34.

<sup>352</sup> Laney, 42.

pulpit. It is for this reason that MC described himself as a different person in the pulpit. Others, including his children, have observed a “personality change” of sorts when MC preaches. This change is motivated by the sense of duty that the ISTJ feels. One comment is worth repeating: “When I do have the force of the word of God behind me, I’m really a different person...I hope it is the Spirit of God, really.” This demonstrates how the ISTJ’s high sense of duty and loyalty enables them to overcome their natural preference to remain behind the scenes. ISTJs can be viewed as the most extraverted people in the room if that is necessary for them to faithfully fulfill their role. The researcher has often noted the irony of his preaching ministry - that the man in the pulpit is really the most committed “wall flower” in the room. But that is typical of an ISTJ fulfilling his duty in the pulpit.

The PCA is a denomination that values biblical education and doctrinal precision. As BK observed, the common notion that extraverts make the best pastors may not be shared across the PCA due to the denominational emphasis on study and love for doctrine, combined with the ISTJ’s inclination toward study and communication of God’s word out of a high sense of duty and loyalty. Thus, ISTJ pastors really do have a place in the PCA. The participants in this study very clearly communicated the belief that preaching is their primary task in pastoral ministry, and they considered it to be one of their strengths as leaders. ISTJs should increasingly view their pulpit ministry as the primary way they shepherd the flock.

In this section, we have seen how the ISTJ’s sense of duty drives their passion for preaching and teaching. Next, we will find that duty is a contributing factor to the ISTJ’s position as a calm and steady force in the church, especially in crisis.



### **A Settling Leader**

“A settling leader.” RG used this phrase in describing a pastoral ministry event with a family in crisis in which he was a calming influence. Other participants shared similar stories. Thus, the findings indicate that ISTJs bring calm and a sense of stability to institutions and situations, even during crisis events. ISTJs are faithful and steady, calm under pressure, and a “firm rock” in the midst of instability. It is no wonder that Myers uses the label “extreme stability” to describe ISTJs. This trait is valuable when shepherding people through a crisis, and it is also an important commodity during times of conflict. According to Herrington, Creech, and Taylor, it is important for a pastor to provide a calming influence during such times of stress.<sup>353</sup> Often pastors find themselves navigating conflict either as a mediator or as one of the parties involved in the conflict. In either case, the ISTJ will tend to diffuse the situation and provide a calming influence that will foster reconciliation. This trait is invaluable in pastoral ministry.

This valuable quality could be easily overlooked by the church. Much of the ISTJ’s influence as a “settling leader” is due to his presence with people in crisis, as well as what he might say. In fact, it is quite possible to say too much when conversing with people in crisis. For example, it is likely to aggravate a crisis situation the situation if someone tells a fellow Christian who has just lost a spouse or a child something like, “God is sovereign and you will get over this, just trust him.” People often try to fill an uncomfortable silence with words that may be true, but are insensitive. At such moments, a gentle hand on the shoulder and a simple “I am sorry, how can I help?” might be all that needs to be communicated. Just being present with someone in their trouble is often the greatest comfort people need in these types of crisis.

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<sup>353</sup> Herrington and Taylor, 67.

BW made a profound comment about this type of situation. He talked about the importance of “just being there” with people over the years at deaths, when families were falling apart, and in other crisis events that every pastor faces. He recalled how people later told him, “I’m so glad you were there.” This illustrates a powerful ministry of presence – just being there with hurting people – that is part of an incarnational ministry model.<sup>354</sup> ISTJs like BW have the natural ability to bring a powerful calming force to a situation without uttering many words. The researcher has observed a quiet and unassuming, but very affirming, comforting, and settling power of presence that ISTJs often bring to the storm of people’s pain. Thus, being a calming influence is a tangible strength for this personality type. The next section will show how this quality of being a settling leader can be of great help to people in a crisis.

### **Something About a Crisis**

“There’s something about a crisis that I like.” The ISTJ’s sense of duty, and the calming influence they bring to situations as discussed above enable them to lead well in crisis events, even to the point of being energized while navigating those events, as BG’s comment suggests. Pastors with this temperament are typically not given to high, highs or low, lows. They are a stabilizing force to those in crisis. Several participants spoke about giftedness in playing the role of mediator between people in conflict, not hesitating to step into a “minefield” to bring peace and comfort. With the many hurting, broken, and needy people in every congregation, the ISTJ has much to offer as an instrument of God in bringing wholeness and stability to people’s lives. Though people do not energize ISTJs, and though too much human interaction is draining, when a conflict or crisis point arises, the ISTJ has the ability to respond pastorally and shepherd well.

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<sup>354</sup> Under “Face Time” RG’s comment about incarnational ministry will be discussed.

What is behind this ability to lead well in a crisis? It is related once again to the high sense of duty most ISTJs have. Myers cites that when ISTJs are “on-duty,” the personality they show to the world is their auxiliary process of judging and thinking. Thus, they will appear very factual, analytical, and calm.<sup>355</sup> Another aspect of this explanation is the ISTJ sense of duty that drives them to do “what needs to be done.”<sup>356</sup> As noted earlier, the ISTJs’ dutiful posture enables them to abandon their natural introverted behavior and jump into action. Along with this are the well documented traits of ISTJs as dependable and sensible, people who value common sense. As Johnson asserts, “They can be counted on to finish what they start...their demeanor is businesslike and they seem unflappable, regardless of the situation.”<sup>357</sup>

There is something about managing a crisis that appeals to ISTJs. Although no one would desire people to suffer or experience turmoil in their lives, when it occurs, ISTJs are able to be on duty, stay present, and bring a sense of calmness, stability, and peace to the situation. The ISTJ will bring the facts, and in the pastor’s case, the truth of God’s word, to bear upon the situation, and will wisely and methodically lead those involved in the conflict to point of resolution. Their steady and settling presence is often even more important than what they might say.

The researcher has experienced this aspect of the ISTJ temperament. He found himself in a prominent leadership role as his presbytery worked through a difficult change. Others commented on the researcher’s demeanor being very calm, which resulted in a steadiness to his leadership and greater stability within the presbytery even in discussing difficult matters. When others remarked about this, the researcher was

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<sup>355</sup> Myers.

<sup>356</sup> Laney, 42.

<sup>357</sup> Johnson, 60.

surprised. He did nothing special, according to his own thinking; he simply navigated through the matter in a manner that was consistent with his temperament. To others, this demeanor was viewed as a special gift, which puzzled the researcher even more. The researcher simply served as a leader in a way that was consistent with how God had designed him. It should be stated clearly that the main reason the presbytery resolved the difficult issue was not the researcher's leadership ability, but rather God's grace at work. This grace worked through the researcher as he sought to serve his presbytery. This combination of a high sense of duty and an ability to bring calm to a crisis event is a hallmark of the ISTJ.

Pastoral ministry is a highly relational environment, and pastors are required to engage people in all sorts of situations, with a host of emotional and physical states. Another aspect to the ISTJ temperament that enables them to manage people in a crisis is their genuine love and commitment to the individuals under their care.

### **Face Time**

“Face time and just being, not the Apple product, but with just being with others.” Pastoral ministry is a highly relational and therefore extraverted environment as this comment highlights. Though ISTJs are drained by too much human interaction, recharged by solitude, and often wrongly criticized for being “relationally challenged,” they prove to be very effective in ministering to people because they highly value people and healthy relationships. The participants in this study described their effectiveness in ministry by using terms like shepherding, loving, and caring for people, as well as desiring to have an incarnational ministry. These terms denote a highly relational ministry mindset. BG has sought to make his session meetings more relationally based.

His goal is to model healthy, grace-centered relationships on the session to the congregation. This is atypical for an ISTJ, but may indicate that more ISTJs need to push outside their comfort zone and foster better relationships, especially among the leadership.

The findings from the interviews show that ISTJs value people and relationships; face time is very much part of their ministry model. Another important finding is revealed in the participants' comments. Some of the participants expressed that observing God's work over time in people's lives is one primary way they are motivated in ministry. One participant gets excited about the potential for what God can do in and through people. Seeing God change people energizes another of the pastors interviewed. One participant shared that he finds satisfaction when congregants are fulfilled in whatever God is calling them to do. Still another enjoys seeing the light of understanding in people when they comprehend a particular point.

Kroeger and Thuesen summarize this important aspect of the ISTJ. This type's care for people may be questioned, in light of their "nonverbal style of affection," which is easily interpreted as being uncaring.<sup>358</sup> However, these authors argue, "But ISTJs do care—and show it through their strong sense of responsibility. (Indeed they would rather die than be seen as irresponsible.) They are fiercely loyal to individuals and institutions..."<sup>359</sup> The fact that an ISTJ pastor serves for a long enough time to look back and see God's work in people's lives shows that the pastor has cared for them by being loyal and responsible, standing by them in difficult times and working as part of God's means to bring about change and healing in their lives. This type has the ability to

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<sup>358</sup> Kroeger, 217.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

persevere through just about any storm in the church and in relationships. ISTJs will commit to stay in it for the long haul. They will stand by individuals and churches even in difficulty and seek to be a settling leader; they will not turn and run at the first sign of trouble.

While ISTJs value relationships and understand the importance of face time, nevertheless they do struggle with interacting with people. Typically, ISTJs enjoy solitude more than interaction. One participant admitted being hesitant in pursuing people and stated this as his greatest concern in pastoral ministry. There may be many reasons for this, some being situational, but one reason must be addressed. This pattern may show a potential sinful tendency in the ISTJ's struggles with relationships. One participant said it is hard for him to pursue people because it will require time and energy and cause him to leave his "own little world"—an indulgent, introverted world. ISTJs need to be aware of this tendency, evaluate their hesitancy to pursue people, and ask themselves whether the preference is it rooted in self-centeredness or selfishness.

Though ministry is about people in large measure, and ISTJs genuinely desire to faithfully shepherd the flock, people are draining to this type. The literature as well as the interview findings shows that ISTJs can be easily overstimulated by too much human interaction. The researcher experiences this on a regular basis and at times has been at a loss as to how to manage a highly relational ministry. This can make it hard to meet the demands of the pastorate without burning out. In *The Introvert Advantage*, Marti Olsen Laney analyses this dynamic and gives helpful advice that merits repeating. She writes, "If you don't pace yourself, you can end up feeling stressed and overwhelmed, unable to

do anything.”<sup>360</sup> This correlates with Swenson’s work showing the need for margin in one’s life – buffers between interactions with people that allow an introvert to recover. This recovery time is a retreat of sorts for the introvert to do what he does best – engage his inner world and recharge.

ISTJs have a genuine love for people and a sincere commitment to shepherd God’s flock. As one participant observed, more introverted types are “sensitive to [the] souls of other people.” Introversion, and therefore the ISTJ preference, does not equate to a dislike for people. ISTJs need time away from people to recharge their batteries in order to engage people more effectively. They are, however, passionate about ministering to God’s people. The ISTJs’ love for people may be questioned in light of their struggle in social settings, as will be examined below.

### **Not A Big Party Person**

“I’m not a big party person.” Most ISTJs would respond, “Amen!” to BW’s remark. Social events and large group interactions like fellowship events at church pose a potentially uncomfortable setting for ISTJs, as the participants and the literature shows. The reality is that pastors cannot avoid such events; they part of the pastoral office. The literature and the findings indicate that ISTJs like people and often exhibit good people skills.<sup>361</sup> The researcher’s wife, for example, has commented that he can work a room better than she can (she is an ESFJ). Why then do social events involve stress for the ISTJ? This is because social gatherings require enormous amounts of energy – both energy to prepare for the event, as Laney explains, and energy to engage at the function

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<sup>360</sup> Laney, 223, 238.

<sup>361</sup> Ibid., 160.

itself. Laney points out that many introverts get so over stimulated at social functions that they experience “brain overload,”<sup>362</sup> which may result in a total shutdown.

How then do ISTJs navigate social events? The researcher learned of a caring father who was concerned by his child seemingly not “plugging” into her youth group socially. Over time, the father noticed a pattern. His child would tend to “stand back” and not participate in the activities “like the others.” When the father questioned the child, “Are you having a good time at youth group?” she responded, “Yes.” The father’s concerns were understandable and caring, but he did not understand his child’s temperament. This child was playing the “passionate spectator,” a term used by Laney. ISTJs and all introverts need strategies to navigate social settings, and being a “passionate spectator” is one of them. Another strategy discussed in the literature and by the participants is to latch onto one person and spend the time in a more one-on-one discussion.

Social settings and large group settings are part of pastoral ministry, and they cannot be totally avoided. As stated in chapter two, sixty to seventy percent of pastoral ministry demands the introvert to engage in more extraverted activities, such as relating to significant numbers of people and socializing.<sup>363</sup> It is crucial that ISTJs schedule thirty to forty percent of their time to engage life and ministry as introverts. “Extraverting overload” is a problem many ISTJs may suffer if care is not given to create margins or buffers. The congregation, as McHugh observes, can view the pastor as the “lead socializer.” Such an expectation can be devastating to the effectiveness of the ISTJ’s pastoral ministry, thrusting the minister into a spiral of “extraverting overload.” As such,

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<sup>362</sup> Ibid.

<sup>363</sup> McHugh, 13.



this unrealistic expectation should be gently, yet decisively dismantled. ISTJs are good with people generally, but for a limited amount of time.

Extraverting overload for ISTJs can lead to an unhealthy tendency towards isolation. Thus, the researcher believes ISTJs should be aware of a tendency towards isolation. MC remarked that he and his wife force themselves to attend social events because they realize the need for balance in their lives. BG remarked that he loves solitude, but when he is in a “funk,” being with people is restorative. He has found the need to force himself to go outside his natural tendency and engage people. Kahnweiler’s “Four P’s Process” encourages introverts with the third “Push,” to get outside their comfort zones.”<sup>364</sup> When it comes to social events, like fellowship events at church or outings with families, often ISTJs will need to venture out of their comfort zones. Failure to do so may foster a trend towards isolation, which could be problematic to one’s overall ministry.

It is important not to expect the ISTJ to be the life of the party. They are able to “work a room” full of people for a limited time, but they will find this draining and prefer retreating to a corner of the room, conversing with a single person, becoming a passionate spectator, or simply leaving the function altogether. However, the ISTJ is comfortable in certain settings that require human interaction, as will be shown next.

### **One-On-One and Large Groups**

“I much prefer one-on-one or large group [settings].” HJ reveals in these words an interesting dynamic in how many ISTJs engage people. This statement seems contradictory, because ISTJs prefer to engage people in one-on-one interactions, where “small talk” and socializing is minimized, but when “on duty,” they perform well in a

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<sup>364</sup> Kahnweiler, 23.

large group setting if they have an authoritative role to fulfill. The preference of ISTJs to engage people on a one-on-one basis is reflected in the interview findings. SD was the only participant that preferred a larger group setting to one-on-one interactions. He stated that conversing with individuals was more intense and more draining for him. The overwhelming response by the participants favored one-on-one conversations, and the literature supported that finding. One reason for this, according to Helgoe, is an introvert's aversion to small talk and a desire for meaningful and substantial conversation. As Laney observed, most introverts feel that small talk creates a barrier between people, thus hindering meaningful conversation.

Thus, if ISTJs prefer one-on-one interactions, how does one understand a preference for a large group setting? One of the participants elucidates the reason for this dynamic. HJ prefers one-on-one interactions and large group events if he has an authoritative role to play. As previously discussed, when an ISTJ has a responsibility to fulfill, they are comfortable being up front leading. This again reveals the high sense of duty that drives the ISTJ to be up front and in charge.

ISTJs excel at engaging people one-on-one. Their forte is sitting down with a church member over a cup of coffee at the local coffee shop and discussing life issues. The ISTJ's high sense of duty, additionally, enables them to be very comfortable in a setting where they engage a group of people, as long as they have a defined authoritative role, like preaching, teaching, or leading a meeting. They are well suited for the classroom and pulpit ministries, as well as serving as moderators of the session. ISTJs should capitalize on this unique combination of skills in interacting with people. One strategy for ISTJs to engage people more is to utilize what they do best, meeting one-on-

one with people over coffee or a lunch. The researcher often makes use of lunches to engage people one-on-one.

Does this preference for one-on-one interactions with people mean ISTJs are gifted at discipleship? The interview findings revealed one participant who struggles in the area of discipleship, as it is commonly understood in the Christian community. This interesting dynamic will be discussed next.

### **You Don't Disciple Your Elders**

“You don't disciple your elders.” The researcher identifies with this remark, made by RG referring to a common theme on his annual performance evaluations by his session. One would assume that a pastor who prefers one-on-one conversations with people would be energized at the prospect of discipleship. At least for the researcher and RG, this is not the case. During the interview with RG, the researcher began to feel a sense of relief in knowing that at least one other pastor has experienced the same sense of failure and frustration. It would be reasonable to assume that many ISTJs would agree.

Some ISTJs may need to face the reality that like this researcher and RG, they are not gifted at meeting what seems to be an expectation about how discipleship should be conducted in the Christian community. In the researcher's experience, the common view of discipleship in terms of pastoral ministry is that the pastor should be a “super disciple maker.” Every Christian has a responsibility to be involved in making disciples.<sup>365</sup> Christian parents disciple their children, and believers engage in discipleship in many ways in the church. The researcher's point is to address the expectation that pastors should have groups of people they intimately engage in the Christian walk. In this type of scenario, a pastor would have a group or several groups he connects with, regularly

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<sup>365</sup> Matthew 28:16-20

engaging not only the group, but also individuals in the group. There is an expectation of the disciple keeping up with the disciples – a high touch proposition from formal meetings to just hanging out. Living life together may be the best way to describe it. Discipleship is of great value to the church, and some are especially gifted for it. This becomes a problem, however, when the expectation to be a “super disciple-maker” is placed on every pastor.

The researcher shares RG’s struggle in this area. Typically, ISTJs have little energy to just “hang out with people.” This temperament is more task-oriented and values accomplishing goals. Just hanging out with people and gathering a group of men to live life with, engage in a little instruction, and initiate relationships with is not an activity that usually motivates ISTJs. BG made a helpful comment that is worth repeating, but would likely be considered controversial. He said, “I don’t think as a pastor I’m primarily called to relational ministry. I’m primarily called to the pulpit...” The pressure on ISTJs to disciple their elders or other groups of men is real. It can be a source of conflict between the pastor and the church, and it can certainly cause conflict within the pastor’s own soul, causing him to feel guilty for not having his “group of guys.” The researcher’s performance evaluations have included the critique, like that of RG, that “you don’t disciple your elders.” This issue has been the source of guilt and a sense of failure for the researcher.

The story RG shared of being at a conference where an internationally known pastor admitted that he had not disciplined anyone in the way most people understand it over the many years of his ministry needs to be heard. With this type of record, most pulpit search committees would discount this kind of pastor’s resume immediately, due to

this apparent long-standing failure as a pastor in the area of evangelism and discipleship. However, this well-known pastor's church members have been under his discipleship Sunday after Sunday through his pulpit and writing ministries. Also, as RG pointed out, many church members in churches across the spectrum have been disciplined through this servant's books and pulpit ministry. No doubt God has used this pastor's public preaching and writing ministry as part of his means to bring sinners to saving faith.

Does this pastor disciple and evangelize? Some would say no. He is a pulpit-eer and author. This pastor, however, does disciple. His pulpit and his books are his tools for discipleship and evangelization in a much broader way than working with a small group of "guys." It is of great importance that ISTJs who struggle with the expectations of discipleship and evangelism understand they are "wired" to these important disciplines in a different way – more publically and broadly. ISTJ pastors need to view their pulpit ministry and/or their writing ministry as their chief means of discipleship and evangelism. It is important to understand that ISTJs disciple, but it is primarily accomplished in the way that is best suited for them – the pulpit and classroom ministries, and through the written word. We are not primarily called to relational ministry, but to the ministry of the word.

This unexpected comment by RG in this section about discipleship will likely resonate with other pastors as it has the researcher. Another finding from the interviews was equally unexpected in light of the ISTJ's struggle with discipleship. Several participants admitted they were not given to counseling.

### **Not a Very Good Counselor**

“I am not a very good counselor.” This admission by RG was somewhat surprising to the researcher. RG acknowledged that he listens well, but shared that he found it difficult to “tease out” all of the details of another’s experience. Other participants specifically mentioned that they did not enjoy counseling, explaining that it was draining and that they viewed it as a weakness in their ministry.

The researcher has always thought of himself as an able counselor, and in some ways rightly so. However, these interview findings have been helpful in pointing out that just because a pastor is a good listener and is given to one-on-one conversations with people in order to converse at a deeper level does not necessarily equate with being a good counselor. A good counselor does not merely say to a counselee, “thus sayeth the Lord,” but is gifted, as RG noted, in “teasing out the subtleties of someone’s emotions.” Some ISTJs may be able counselors, but the findings suggest that this should not be assumed. The researcher suggests two approaches in light of this discussion. First, for ISTJs who struggle with counseling, it may be helpful to shift most of the counseling load to others, such as gifted elders or trained laypeople. Second, for ISTJs who, like the researcher, enjoy counseling, it might be beneficial to receive some evaluation of one’s counseling abilities or receive further training in this important area of ministry.

ISTJs’ ability to tease out the subtleties of one’s emotions may be affected by the next topic. This type processes information internally, over time, and therefore needs time before responding.

## Slow Brew

“I think being an introvert is a lot more slow brew.” This remark by CJ is a richly descriptive way to characterize the ISTJ temperament. This personality type needs time to “go inside,” think through questions, and ponder ideas. Shooting from the hip or having to think fast on their feet is not comfortable for ISTJs. The participants in general agreed that a hallmark of the ISTJ is “slow brew.” This means that ISTJs will be more thoughtful in analyzing matters and more patient leading their congregations. A few participants indicated that they prefer to “think on” matters before responding to a question or an idea. The researcher has often responded by saying, “let me get back to you on that.” Emails have their down side, but for ISTJs they serve a purpose and may provide a tool to enable better responses without the pressure of giving an answer immediately. Laney cites one interesting finding that a high percentage of the introverts she interviewed fear phone conversations; they have “phone phobia.” Receiving an email, unlike having to take a phone call, can be easily set aside for later.

The slow brew characteristics of ISTJs found in the interview process are consistent with the data from the literature review. ISTJs love time for pondering the big questions and are interested in the inner world of concepts and ideas. Introverts need time and quiet to think before answering, while extraverts think out loud and are able to articulate an answer quickly – thinking on their feet. Laney’s analysis of Dr. Debra Johnson’s work linking “the behavioral differences between introverts and extraverts result[ing] from using different brain pathways that influence where we direct our focus – internally or externally”<sup>366</sup> is helpful. The longer, slower introvert pathway results in

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<sup>366</sup> Laney, 70.

introverts finding it difficult to think and talk at the same time, as well as being slow under stress.<sup>367</sup>

One problem ISTJs may face due to this slow brew trait is “the conversation conundrum.” As Helgoe asserts, “Mute means the invitation is still open, and continued talk assures that the introvert remains mute. By the time the extravert pauses to ask, the introvert’s head is pounding and he or she just wants to get out so she can think. The extravert just assumes the introvert had nothing to say, and moves on.”<sup>368</sup> The researcher has experienced the conversation conundrum. At some point, the researcher likely had a “deer-in-the-headlights” look about him. This is not intended to be critical of the extraverted talker, but rather to state a dynamic that ISTJs often encounter in the highly relational environment of church ministry. Here again, the ISTJ needs to be careful to tactfully minimize the effects of this conundrum, which can be overwhelming.

Another arena that could prove problematic for ISTJs in light of their slow brew nature is the meeting format. HJ’s description of his brain “walking off,” or taking a break, while in a meeting is a helpful way to understand ISTJs. They need a mechanism like a safety valve on a pressurized tank, an escape that will allow them to relieve some of the stress of “brain overload” so they can reengage the discussion or meeting. The researcher has experienced his brain taking a break in meetings only to come back with a renewed vigor to listen and engage the matter of discussion.

ISTJs should not be expected to think quickly on their feet or be comfortable “shooting from their hip.” Those with this type would not make the best debaters, for example. Given time to internally process a question or consider an idea, ISTJs will

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<sup>367</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>368</sup> Helgoe, 132.



provide a well-considered answer or opinion. This slow brew trait is the nature of the ISTJ, and no amount of effort can change this fundamental aspect of this temperament. ISTJs are gifted at pondering ideas. It is interesting that when it comes to pondering the possibilities, the “what ifs,” ISTJs may struggle. Some of the participants, as well as the researcher, do not view themselves as visionary. As we will see in the next session, this causes some frustration for ISTJs.

### **I Prayed for an Elder Who Would Be a Visionary**

“I prayed for an elder who would be a visionary.” MC made this remark in explaining his perceived deficiencies as a leader in this area, further admitting that vision casting is frightening to him. MC is not alone, as other participants voiced similar sentiments. The researcher is consistently rated low in his annual review in the area of being a visionary. The struggle ISTJs may experience in this area of vision casting may be in part due to their personalities.

Oswald and Kroeger show that those with the sensing (S) function of the ISTJ type processes incoming data in as practical a manner as possible utilizing the five senses. Intuitive (N) types focus on possibilities. Thus “INtuitives” tend to be more the visionary type while “Sensors” are more the managers of “what is.” The researcher’s experience supports this finding. Most would expect the pastors to be the vision casters. The problem that some ISTJs may encounter in light of the findings of this study is that due to the preference of sensing over intuition, they are better managers than visionaries. As MC found, ISTJs would be well served to recognize the need to have other leaders who are more gifted at casting a vision on their team. The leadership team concept brings

up an interesting dynamic that could be a potential problem for ISTJs as we will consider next.

### **I Appreciate the Team Activities, but...**

“So, I appreciate the team activities but...” SD made this comment in describing himself as an independent thinker and doer over being part of a team approach to ministry. Several participants, for example, noted they were not given to being part of brainstorming sessions. These responses show a preference for working independently of others rather than working on a team. It is of interest to note that some participants mentioned the importance of consensus building to their leadership. SD, who prefers to work independently, values consensus building. BK described his leadership style as “trying to build consensus.” RG took this one step further and spoke about not only trying to build consensus as a leader but doing so in a collaborative ministry style. Though consensus building appears to be valued by some of the participants, team building and teamwork may not naturally come to the ISTJ. However, RG indicated that he preferred to lead by a collaborative style.

The study by Francis, Jones, and Robbins has shown that collaborative ministry may reduce clergy stress for more extraverted ministers, but this might not be the case for introverts. The introverted pastor, and therefore the ISTJ, may experience fatigue in the highly relational setting of teamwork and collaborative ministry. In many ways, collaborative ministry styles are unnatural for the ISTJ. Introverts prefer to learn through independent analysis, as the literature and the interview findings suggest. The literature shows that introverts are reluctant to speak up in a group setting, naturally guarding their inner world. Therefore, they do not promote themselves or their agendas easily, and they

generally move at a slower pace than their extraverted counterparts, needing time to process information. For these reasons, ISTJs may prefer to work independently of others. This suggests a challenge for ISTJ pastors, for a significant amount of pastoral ministry takes place on committees, which are teams. In the Presbyterian form of government, collaborative ministry takes place at the session, presbytery, and General Assembly levels.<sup>369</sup> These three courts form committees and establish commissions and agencies to conduct certain aspects of the church business assigned to them. The point is simply to illustrate that ISTJ pastors cannot escape collaborative work on teams. Some of what ISTJ pastors do is individual analysis—preparation to preach and teach, prayer, and other such tasks—but there remains a significant amount of teamwork to engage pastors. ISTJs may “run meetings well,” out of a sense of duty and responsibility, but the actual task of working on a team may be stressful and stretching for this temperament. One example of this may be the annual planning meetings where the session members gather to brainstorm about ministry ideas. ISTJs may view this type of teamwork as unproductive because although a lot of talking takes place, they perceive few tangible results. Also, much of the conversation occurs in the realm of possibilities, a more intuitive task, that, as mentioned previously, burdens ISTJs.

In light of the inevitability of teamwork in pastoral ministry, ISTJs need to learn to appreciate the benefit of brainstorming in meetings as a way to build consensus around ideas, which ISTJs love. Though the conversation may be disjunctive, the end result is usually greater clarity and organization, which ISTJs prefer. Participants like RG, as well as the literature, show the value of a collaborative ministry approach. In *The Heart of*

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<sup>369</sup> The Presbyterian form of government consists of three “courts:” The session or lower court oversees the local church; the presbytery, the middle court, oversees churches and pastors in a geographical area; the General Assembly, the higher court, oversees the denomination.

*Change*, John P. Kotter explores the value of teamwork and shows the importance of a guiding team in developing a clear vision for an organization. ISTJs who fail to understand the value of building the right team to bring about healthy change may struggle to lead effectively in the midst of needed and vital change.

Teamwork is a necessary part of pastoral ministry, and every pastor faces the need to engage in some degree of collaborative leadership, although it may not be to the extent that Kotter and others would prefer. It would be reasonable for ISTJs to explore this style of leadership and adopt aspects that are helpful to this leadership context. It is significant to note that the major priority for ISTJ pastors, both in time and importance, is the ministry of the word, which is typically done alone; ISTJs excel in this area. ISTJs will follow through with responsibilities, irrespective of their view of collaborative leadership, as the next section will explore.

### **Task-Driven Life**

RG described pastoral ministry as a “task-driven life.” ISTJs, as the literature and interview findings show, are often driven in positive ways, and sometimes negative ones, to accomplish tasks. Those with this temperament really do enjoy accomplishing tasks. One dynamic of pastoral ministry is that the list of tasks rarely seems to get completed, and some days it seems like nothing on the list was accomplished, although one was busy with ministry the entire day. A pastor once made the statement during a conversation with the researcher that he likes to mow the grass because he can look back over the freshly mowed lawn and say, “I accomplished something today.”

ISTJs can be frustrated with ministry because so much of the effort that goes into it does not produce tangible results. A counseling session may be very helpful to the

counselee, but the ISTJ counselor sees no progress in the counselee, and the only box checked off is scheduling the next appointment to talk about the same issues. Similarly, a meeting may lead into another meeting, and then another one, and the final decision seems very elusive. Sometimes, mowing the grass after a full day of ministry at church may be the only thing one can do and declare, “It is finished; mission accomplished.” The value of face time is unquestionable, but for ISTJs, even that can seem unproductive; nothing is accomplished, and no goals are fulfilled.

Another aspect of the task-driven personality is the preference to do the work oneself rather than delegating it. HJ reported that he found it easier to complete a task than to delegate it to someone else. There may be many reasons one would struggle with delegating duties to others. When a duty is delegated, the result often is better than if the person delegating it had done it, but sometimes it isn’t. A good leader will see the value in others taking ownership of a responsibility, even if the result is inferior. For ISTJs, the greater struggle in delegation may be the likelihood of the project not being completed as quickly and efficiently by someone else. Regardless of the reasons, ISTJ may find it difficult to relinquish tasks to others. After all, this is what ISTJs do; they complete the “to do” lists and find great satisfaction in the accomplishment. The data collected from the participants leaves little doubt that ISTJs are task-oriented.

The literature reviewed suggests a reason why ISTJs are task-driven. In *Type Talk*, Kroeger and Thuesen show that the sensing preference causes ISTJs to be highly responsible and therefore driven in “doing what should be done.”<sup>370</sup> This might explain why MC has been labeled a “fix-it-guy.” This is a colorful way to describe the task-driven life of the ISTJ. God uses ministers as part of his means to “fix” things in the

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<sup>370</sup> Kroeger, 215.

church and in people. The problem arises when one seeks to fix things and people in one's own power apart from the gospel, and when one believes something should be fixed despite the fact that God has ordained otherwise. This creates situations like that of BW, who tried to be a different person to "fix" a situation and experienced it "dying anyway." People often do not need the pastor to fix things or give advice, but they do need their pastor to listen, and this is another activity ISTJs do well.

Why do ISTJs generally like "to do" lists? This is likely because they find it enjoyable to complete a list and take pride in a "mission accomplished." Lists also serve to promote order and structure in one's life, both of which ISTJs need. This is primarily due to the TJ function, according to Kroeger and Thuesen, who speak of the "objective, organized (TJ) nature" of ISTJs.<sup>371</sup> Scheduling is therefore very important to this temperament type. One has responsibilities, and to accomplish them, lists and scheduling of each item on those lists allows one to systematically and methodically do one's duty. In the mind of the ISTJ, "What could possibly be wrong with that?" It is very logical to live life in that manner. The ISTJ's high sense of responsibility and duty would have them value completing the task, and putting it on the schedule is a way to ensure the work gets done. To do otherwise would not be doing one's duty, and that would be "anathema" to the ISTJ. Others, however, do not always perceive this in a similar manner.

The researcher encountered a situation earlier in his ministry and marriage that illustrates the perception some could have regarding his dedication to making lists. The researcher's wife expressed to him that she felt they needed to spend more time together as a couple. His response to her was classic ISTJ behavior, and it is telling of the "dark-side" of being highly task-oriented. The researcher responded, "Oh sure, honey, I will

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<sup>371</sup> Ibid., 216.

schedule you in” as he opened his Day Timer to that week’s calendar. As one might expect, a healthy, yet painful dialogue ensued where the researcher came to grips with how his task orientation made his wife feel. She felt like another appointment to be scheduled and another box to be checked off the list. She was partly right. The researcher was treating her that way – “My wife wants to meet; great let’s get it scheduled.” There is no doubt that sin was mixed into that equation. The researcher should have perceived all sorts of things about his wife and taken the initiative to minister to his wife in a healthier way. In many ways, he failed to do that, preferring the more logical route of hearing the need and scheduling. Of course most wives would perceive that as being unloving, cold, and calculating.

As the researcher has thought back on this situation, it is instructive to note that the response to scheduling time with his wife was almost immediate – reflexive. It seems to the researcher that the act of scheduling the meeting, as odd as this may come across, was actually out of loyalty, duty, and responsibility. What she heard was, “He does not value me,” and what the researcher was communicating, “I do value you, and I need to get it down so I can ensure I follow through.” This analysis in no way alleviates the researcher of the failure to be sensitive to his wife – he wasn’t – but it might not be as simple as a cold-hearted husband treating his wife the same as he treats others. This account demonstrates the importance of the ISTJs’ understanding that their task-driven approach to life can be misunderstood, and it should serve to help others better understand ISTJs who genuinely wants to do what needs be done.

The task orientation of ISTJs allows them to be skillful administrators. They follow through with responsibilities. They are responsible, dependable, and

conscientious, all qualities that are essential in pastoral ministry. When things need to be accomplished or “fixed,” it is wise to put an ISTJ in charge. However, ISTJs can put accomplishing a task over ministering to people, as the next section will explore.

### **Driven by That Principle**

“I was driven by that principle and I lost sight of the fact that there still people.”

This recalls the painful story BG told about a situation where he sought to do the right thing for someone but did not take into account how his actions would negatively impact a family involved. Being driven by principles and facts could be a potential blind spot for ISTJs. It is often a case of doing the right thing in the wrong way. SD described a similar situation when discussing a conflict with a church member where he dealt with the other party in a very factual and straightforward manner. However, in so doing, he failed to consider the other person’s emotions. These two accounts and the previous discussion on how ISTJs are task-driven illustrate a potential problem. The drive to accomplish tasks, and to act based on facts and principle without an awareness of people’s emotions, often cause ISTJs to wound those around them.

Isachsen and Berens list several blind spots and pitfalls of ISTJs, including “being task oriented at the expense of people,...and focusing so much on facts that they may be viewed as cold and calculating.”<sup>372</sup> ISTJs should not set aside their task-orientation or their desire to dutifully and responsibly accomplish tasks and meet goals. Nor should ISTJs set aside what they do best, gathering facts and operating out of principle. These traits are what make those with this temperament so effective in leadership. However, ISTJs should consider developing more of an awareness of how their task-fact-principle-

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<sup>372</sup> Isachsen, 201-203.



driven-bent may harm others. The very traits that enable ISTJs to be great leaders are the ones that may cause them to lead poorly.

The development of “emotional intelligence” is one way to boost this awareness as Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee seek to show in their book *Primal Leadership*. The researcher does not view emotional intelligence as the most important aspect of leadership, an opinion with which these authors seem to agree. The power of emotions in leadership, however, is one of many important aspects that can be easily discounted by ISTJs. This type is primarily focused on receiving data through the senses and processing it logically, drawing conclusions by use of the thinking process. ISTJs are not focused to a great degree on “feelings” or the more emotional aspects of the individual. Lack of emotional intelligence for ISTJs is a potential weakness, as SD and BG illustrated during their interviews. ISTJs would be well served to focus more attention on developing better emotional intelligence.

The next conclusion drawn from the research explores an interesting quality of ISTJ leadership. They find themselves in positions of leadership not because they desire the notoriety but because of principles and duty.

### **I Like to Serve Behind-the-Scenes**

“I like to serve behind-the-scenes.” MC, who made these comments, represents a trait of introverts in general and ISTJs in particular, a dislike for being the “center of attention.” Other participants expressed similar tendencies, revealing that ISTJs may prefer a more supporting role than a leadership one. The pastoral leader by necessity has to be visible and out front in order to fulfill his role as preacher, teacher, or administrator. The ISTJ leader may struggle with operating in a “fish bowl,” with all eyes on him and in

some cases being viewed as one on a pedestal by others due to the pastoral calling. Being recognized and having attention called to oneself is difficult for most introverts. One participant demonstrated this by refusing to allow his name to be placed on a church sign. He reasoned that the church was not about him; it was about God and his people.

The irony here is that introverts may prefer being behind the scenes, but they are often thrust onto “center stage.” Kroeger and Thuesen attribute this to a high sense of responsibility, due to the sensing preference of the “information-gathering function.”<sup>373</sup> The ISTJ gathers data out of a sense of duty and responsibility and will do whatever needs to be done, even if it means being up front and center stage. They can abandon their natural introverted behavior, step into the limelight, “and do their duty.”<sup>374</sup>

One reason introverts prefer working behind the scenes is their tendency towards humility. Collins found in *Good to Great* that humility and ambition are key to those found to be “great leaders.” The character trait of humility – understanding that ministry is not about self but about God and his people – comes naturally to the ISTJ, as the literature and findings show. McHugh believes that leadership is about character. Introverts and extraverts with godly character can be successful in church leadership. In particular, ISTJs with an aversion to being the “glitzy charismatic leader” are well suited for the servant leadership model of the church. The ministry will rarely focus on the ISTJ; the focus will tend to stay on Christ and his church. ISTJs under the grace of Christ have the temperament to be good servant leaders.

What ISTJs want to know is, “Am I doing my job faithfully? Am I fulfilling my duty?” A church member told the researcher on one occasion, “You are not a very showy

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<sup>373</sup> Kroeger, 215.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid., 215-216.

as a pastor.” What this person meant was “You do your job – you’re not the big personality pastor that is able to hold thousands captive on every word for hours, but you faithfully and dependably pastor this church. You do your duty.” To an ISTJ, that is really all the recognition and approbation needed. To be effective as a leader, the ISTJ needs his space – a retreat. The next section explores the value of that kind of space.

### **It’s My Space**

“Its my space.” MC’s office, as this comment shows, is an important component of what he needs to be successful. SD views his office similarly, even reconfiguring the furniture to better suit his needs. The literature and the findings point to the ISTJs’ need for a space they can call their own, where they can retreat to study and be refreshed. ISTJs are not suited for a cubical office arrangement. The researcher was interested to learn that HJ’s office setting is undesirable. He has compensated for this by working at a coffee shop. The coffee shop is an interesting culture, especially for ISTJs. One can experience solitude in a shop full of people by putting up a computer screen, opening a book, or putting in ear buds. This clearly communicates, “Do not disturb.” At times, the researcher is able to accomplish more in study alone in a crowded coffee shop than he would at church where many other responsibilities may hinder his ability to concentrate.

Private space is important. Introverts need time to be free from external stimulation so that they have time to focus inward. The researcher views his office as a crucial component to his ability to fulfill the responsibilities and demands of pastoral ministry; it is an invaluable tool. The office is a study where he can engage his inner thoughts, read, and prepare to minister God’s word. It is, a prayer closet free from the distractions of the world. It is a quiet place for contemplation. The office is a place to

work alone to accomplish tasks, plan, and do what ISTJs do well – the work of administration. Finally, it is a retreat, a refuge from the draining demands of interactions with people. My space is very much an oasis where I am replenished and restored to engage the outer world with a renewed energy. It is important for ISTJs to have a place to which they can retreat and engage their inner world of ideas, providing a respite from human interaction. The ISTJ's office creates margin in his life as we will consider next.

### **The Need to Have Margin**

“The need to have margin.” Margins help RG to be “refreshed and replenished” for doing his work. He schedules appointments to provide time to recover from each before entering the next one. RG is careful to take “recovery time” on Sunday afternoon before the evening activities at church. Several other participants spoke about taking steps to have margin in their lives. This means declining to participate in some activities, saying no to some meetings, and being willing to say “I can’t meet with you then, but how about later?” for non-emergency situations. The tendency for pastors and in particular ISTJs is to seek to meet every demand and meet with every person on everyone else’s timetable. There is pride and fear intermingled with right intentions in our drive to be available. There are times we must set everything aside and minister to a person in need or pastor people through a crisis. Much of the time, however, one has the ability to maintain margins to recover and wisely address issues.

Dr. Swenson’s concern, in *Margin*, is with people being so busy that no time exists to rest or handle the unanticipated demands. Laney does not use the term margin but makes an important point about the introverted child’s need for alone time as well as a private space. Activity and people, according to Laney, “drains the introvert’s

batteries,” and therefore one needs a buffer between highly extraverted situations to recharge.<sup>375</sup>

ISTJs must understand the importance of the need for buffers or margins in their lives. First, margin is needed to guard ISTJs from work overload in pastoral ministry. The ISTJ’s task orientation, sense of duty to his calling, loyalty to the Christ and his church, and perfectionistic tendencies can result in pastors performing at “full throttle” most, if not all of the time. This type may easily make the church or ministry an idol. When one adds to this an already overcommitted pastor, the unanticipated demand, whether it may be an emergency counseling session, death, or hospitalization, and one has a recipe for frustration and burnout. SD pointed out that the military never commits all of its assets, always keeping some in reserve to be used if the unexpected or the unanticipated happens. The goal is to operate at about eighty to ninety percent, with ten to twenty percent in reserve. Margin is important to allow time for rest from ministry and to ensure our schedules are flexible to meet those emergencies.

Second, margins serve as a barrier to people that can so easily cause “extraverting overload.” ISTJs would find it difficult to survive for long with activities that require intense interactions with people, one after another, and all day long. This may mean, as it did for RG, that the pastor should stop teaching and attending Sunday school in order to have that time as a margin between preaching events, (RG’s church has two services, with Sunday school being conducted between the services), or to schedule a light Sunday afternoon to allow time to be refreshed before the evening service.

The importance of margin cannot be overstated for ISTJs. Because of being task-driven and loyal, ISTJs will desire, rightly or wrongly, to meet every need and counsel

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<sup>375</sup> Laney, 138.

every person. The calendar could be easily overscheduled, and the ISTJ exhausted from playing the extravert far too much. ISTJs should be intentional about scheduling margin to reduce the potential for work overload and people overload. Margin allows for the ISTJ to be replenished and recharged for upcoming tasks. This leads into our last point of analysis, how ISTJs are recharged.

### **Alone Time**

“...Alone time.” RG used this phrase to describe how he is replenished by solitude. Other participants spoke of being alone on sabbaticals, doing manual labor, being out of doors, riding bikes, hunting, and engaging just about any hobby as being the primary way they recharge their batteries. One participant rises earlier in the morning than his family and has time built into his day to have coffee, read, think, and be alone. For others, spending time at a coffee shop is recharging. The researcher has a similar need for alone time. For example, group bike rides are enjoyable, but not as replenishing as a nice ride alone. MC’s experience in not being recharged by biking with a group is similar to that of the researcher. The key component for ISTJs to recharge their batteries is solitude.

The importance of solitude to ISTJs is reflected in the literature. The authors studied in chapter two show that introverts gain energy by turning inward, where extraverts are energized by focusing outward. Thus, the researcher and MC expend energy on group bike rides because of the constant need to focus outwardly when interacting with people. In one sense, they are doubly depleted – expending energy in peddling and in talking. For many, this may appear antisocial. Why wouldn’t anyone want to join a group ride and enjoy God’s creation while getting beneficial exercise

together? Sometimes, the ISTJ needs to join the group and be pushed outside his comfort zone. Too much of that, however, can deplete the ISTJ of energy. The researcher has paced himself, to use a biking term, in conducting most rides solo but sometimes engaging in group rides, ensuring adequate margin between these opportunities. This may seem simplistic, but ISTJs will suffer either guilt or extravert overload if recharging time is not intentionally managed.

One comment by Helgoe merits repeating. She writes, “For an introvert, retreating is the ultimate indulgence: an inner life binge that fills our depleted energy stores. Retreats, whether contemplative or adventure-oriented, provide a sanctioned and temporary way for us to step away from our worldly pursuits.”<sup>376</sup> Helgoe’s use of the word indulgence might be interpreted hedonistically, but the reality is that solitude to recharge is more than a luxury for ISTJs. It is essential to the maintenance of a healthy balance and energy level in life. As RG stated, his best “cocktail” is alone time in creation. It is for this reason the researcher believes that solidary activity is vital to pastors in general, and to ISTJs in particular. These activities serve as mini-retreats to replenish the “energy stores” of the ISTJ. Some of the most helpful words the researcher’s wife has said to him are, “Honey go on a bike ride!”

The last discussion point may be the main point of the entire study. In light of all that has been said thus far, what is the point? ISTJs need to simply be ISTJs.

### **My Eyes Are Brown...They’re Never Going to Be Blue**

“My eyes are brown ... they’re never going to be blue.” BW expressed these words in light of a critique of his pastoral ministry that he should “come out more,” be someone different. The desire to be someone different is not only an external pressure

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<sup>376</sup> Helgoe, 99-100.

placed on ISTJs by others, but also an internal one – an ISTJ putting pressure on himself to turn his brown eyes blue. BW attempted to do this, as he stated in the interview, and found that trying to play the extravert simply did not result in effective ministry. I believe this is a struggle or temptation for ISTJs in general.

Laney observes that one reason so many introverts, and therefore ISTJs, struggle with being who they are is the perception of the cultural bias in favor of extraversion. Introverts she has interviewed felt shame over their temperament. Susan Cain explained that we view ourselves as a “nation of extroverts,” and “the Extrovert Ideal” is always pressing in on introverts. McHugh’s view that introverts in the church find themselves leading double lives by “masquerading as extraverts in order to find acceptance” further shows the price introverts pay as a result of this bias. He felt that his temperament might disqualify him from entering the ministry. BW experienced this message in a very painful way when he was advised by a counselor to consider seeking another line of work, because he feared that his introversion made him unfit for pastoral ministry. The participants were asked to respond to the statement, “Extraverts make the best pastors.” The goal of this response was to measure this bias. Several participants remarked that extraverts probably do make the best pastors. These participants justified their response by pointing out that ministry is to people, and pastors who are energized by people should naturally be more oriented to pastoral ministry. Others responded by saying that they hoped that was not the case. Thus, the participants’ responses, as well as the literature, show the church and cultural pressures that ISTJs and all introverts face to be someone they are not.



The researcher identifies closely with McHugh's comments. He has often thought, "If I enjoyed large group gatherings or social events more, or if I was more the life of the party, or if I was with people more, or if I had the gift of gab, I would be a better pastor." Most introverts, it seems, seek to be extraverts out of shame for the introverted way in which God has designed them. In the opinion of the researcher, there is a need for introverts to experience healing so that they may live authentically, without trying to be someone other than the person God created them to be. Ultimately, ISTJs must come to terms with God's divine design, not only accepting his sovereign design but celebrating it by seeking God to enable them to live fully in his grace and power, in a manner consistent with his will for their temperament. Some parts of our personalities are fixed, but much about our behavior can and in some cases should be changed.

One must not justify sin by thinking; "Well, I'm an ISTJ, therefore running over people in my drive to accomplish a task is just me!" Sinful behavior is sinful behavior. God is sanctifying his people, and his people should be diligent and faithful to cooperate with him in sanctification.<sup>377</sup> Those aspects that are fixed, however, or inborn as Jung, Myers, and others suggest, are part of our constitution because God has ordained it to be so. Seeking to be someone we are not is akin to rebelling against God's sovereign design. Thus, we need to be content with the way in which God has "wired" us. ISTJs may need to repent of the idol of the perfect pastor, thinking that if they were someone different, life and ministry would be great.

A few participants spoke about the importance of coming to terms with who they were. The lesson BG learned in his conversation with an older pastor, who understood his calling and gifting in areas like preaching, speaking at conferences and writing books, is

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<sup>377</sup> Philippians 2:12-13

invaluable. According to BG, this older pastor focuses on these three areas, and that is what he does as a pastor. To be able to say generally, “This is what I do, and that particular aspect of ministry does not fit,” is important for effectiveness as a pastor, and it is quite liberating. The reality is that not every pastor has a staff that affords them the luxury of specializing in areas where they are particularly gifted. Many have small staffs or are solo pastors. They are forced to be generalist, needing competencies in a broad array of pastoral skills, from administration to visitation to preaching. Nonetheless, even with a solo pastorate, the minister’s energies should be directed to the two or three areas of their gifting and calling, while delegating other tasks as much as possible. The researcher views himself more as a generalist, but has benefited from ruling elders sharing shepherding functions of the church so he can focus more on preaching, teaching, and administration. The bottom line is that no man can do it all. One needs to understand one’s primary ministry tasks – one’s calling – and put most of one’s energies into those responsibilities, in effect saying, “This is what I do, and that is not.”

### **Recommendations for Practice**

The researcher has sought to shed light into the effectiveness of ISTJ pastors in ministry as well as to explore temptations this temperament type might encounter. The following are recommendations that might prove helpful in light of the conclusions drawn by the researcher.

First, ISTJs have a strong sense of duty and are highly responsible. These traits enable the ISTJ to serve faithfully in practically any leadership position, from those that propel them onto center stage to those that involve more individual effort, such as study. Churches would do well to seek out the dutiful and highly responsible ISTJs to lead,

because they will do what needs to be done. These helpful qualities can lead to a fear of failure, perfectionism, and unnecessary blame of self when circumstances turn sour. In addition, ISTJs may struggle with the ministry or the church becoming idols in their lives. In light of these temptations, it is recommended that ISTJs pay careful attention to themselves in this area of being dutiful and highly responsible,<sup>378</sup> and solicit help from accountability partners to point out any sinful tendencies in this area. These two recommendations will enable the ISTJ pastor to regularly conduct “spiritual inventories” to better understand sin issues and to seek repentance and spiritual health.

Second, the pulpit and the classroom are the arenas where the ISTJ may have the greatest impact as a leader in the church. ISTJs do not need to be told to study and prepare for preaching and teaching. Their high sense of duty and responsibility and their natural love for study will drive them to the task almost instinctively. In the researcher’s opinion, however, the very qualities that enable ISTJs to excel in ministering God’s word may become problematic if they does not guard their time for study. BG remarked that his primary calling was to preach, and therefore he had to say “no” to many good things. This is helpful advice. Because ISTJs are responsible and dutiful and may tend to struggle in delegating responsibility, care must be given to protect one’s preparation time for preaching and teaching. It is recommended that ISTJ pastors protect their study and preparation time for the most important responsibility of pastoral ministry, preaching and teaching. This will require pastors to be honest with their sessions about their limitations. As pastors realize they can’t do everything, and more needs to be done by elders, the end

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<sup>378</sup> Acts 20:28

result will be a healthier leadership team. Pastors and elders together will more faithfully “care for the church of God” as overseers.<sup>379</sup>

Third, ISTJ pastors serve well as “settling leaders.” They bring calm and clarity to most situations, especially in times of crisis. It is recommended that ISTJs not shy away from difficult situations and people in crisis, but understand that their temperament enables them to minister well in the midst of the fiercest storm. They are steady at the helm in a crisis, and their presence with people is often as important as what is said. The crisis event may be where the ISTJ’s leadership qualities shine the brightest. In light of the importance of the auxiliary function, according to Myers, ISTJs should seek to develop their thinking function. This will enhance their ability to be a settling leader as well as bringing more balance to their temperament.

Fourth, ministry is a highly relational and therefore “extraverted environment.” One conclusion reached is that ISTJs may struggle to engage people. One recommendation would be for ISTJ pastors to utilize their natural affinity for one-on-one interactions in building a relational ministry. The researcher has found that meeting with people over lunch or coffee has been a meaningful way to engage people in a way that capitalizes on his strengths. Another recommendation is related to a temptation. As HJ admitted, his hesitancy to pursue people in part was due to his desire for solitude. ISTJs may struggle with selfishness in this area. Their desire to be alone could become sinful, and they could prefer ministering to self rather than others.<sup>380</sup> Jesus’ example of servant leadership in John 13 should encourage ISTJs to “sacrifice” some solitude for the spiritual good of those they shepherd.

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<sup>379</sup> Acts 20:28

<sup>380</sup> Philippians 2:4-11

Fifth, a related issue to the one just mentioned is the ISTJ's struggle in social settings. The researcher recommends that ISTJs to "push" themselves outside of their comfort zones and attend some, but not all, social events. The introvert's natural tendency is to "turn down" invitations, but in turning down all offers, one may become "disconnected" from people, which runs the risk of being reclusive. In light of Laney's chapter on socializing<sup>381</sup> and the interview findings, the researcher would further recommend that ISTJs consider engaging fewer people at social events – "latching" onto to someone as HJ described – and having a clear exit strategy. The strategy of being the "passionate spectator" may serve the ISTJ well in navigating social events. One does not need to feel odd or apologize for being that "passionate spectator" who is very engaged in the social event as a reporter gathering data to analyze. This is what ISTJs do well.

Sixth, the ISTJ has been shown to be highly task-oriented and driven by principles. As with duty and responsibility, this orientation is very beneficial to the church but has a dark side. The ISTJ can focus on tasks and principles at the expense of people. One recommendation for dealing with this is for session meetings to be structured to build healthy relationships, as BG has done, as a means to model "grace-centered relationships" before the church. The tendency of the researcher is to work through the docket – the tasks. This is necessary, but as BG pointed out, building healthy relationships will further the overall work of the church and allow for better decisions. How to make session meetings more focused on relationships will be noted as an area for further study below. Regarding being driven by principles, ISTJs should become more aware of how the manner in which they seek to do the right thing and apply right principles may "run over people." Thus, growing in "emotional intelligence" could serve

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<sup>381</sup> Laney, 159-186.

helpful. The researcher would recommend reading *Primal Leadership*<sup>382</sup> and *The Emotionally Healthy Church*<sup>383</sup> to further this end.

Seventh, the researcher would suggest ISTJs take to heart the importance of being who God has designed them to be. It is recommended that ISTJ pastors give careful thought to their set of gifts and abilities and seek to be effective within the parameters of God's design. One must refuse to strive to be someone they simply can never be. Repenting of the idol of the "high profile, people person, and glitzy, life-of-the-party pastor" may be the beginning step for ISTJs to experience healing from wishing they were someone else. The researcher has found that being reminded that God uniquely designed him to be an ISTJ has been helpful. Of course, there are many weaknesses and sin patterns that must be addressed, but much of the struggle for ISTJs is the idol of wanting to be an ideal pastor, often in the image of an extravert.

Eighth, given the previous point about ISTJs serving in a manner that is consistent with their temperament, it is recommended that some consideration being given to "pushing" outside one's comfort zone in areas like social gatherings, discipleship, teamwork, and counseling. One should seek opportunities to grow in these areas or delegate them to others who are gifted accordingly.

Ninth, one trait that may frustrate the ISTJ is the fact ISTJs are "slow brew." Time is needed for ISTJs to think about questions and ideas in order to respond in a thoughtful manner. It is recommended that ISTJs employ the strategy described by several participants, asking for time to consider the question further before responding. ISTJs need to remember they are not generally at the top of their game when speaking

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<sup>382</sup> Goleman et al.

<sup>383</sup> Scazzero.

spontaneously, but when given the time to internally process data, they often develop full and thoughtful responses.

Tenth, the research has shown the importance of an office or some space that ISTJs can claim as their own. For the researcher, it is his office. It is recommended that ISTJ pastors create a space to which they can retreat for study, to be alone with their thoughts in contemplation, working on tasks alone and recuperating from highly extraverting activities. This should be a priority for sessions to ensure their ISTJ pastors have this important tool, offices at church or at home, where they can be alone when needed. This will make them more productive both in accomplishing tasks and in engaging people.

Eleventh, it is recommended that ISTJs seriously consider the need for buffers or margins in their lives. It is recommended that ISTJs give careful thought to being intentional about margin in their lives. Dr. Swanson's two resources, *Margin*<sup>384</sup> and *In Search of Balance*<sup>385</sup> may be helpful to guides for pastors regarding this area.

Twelfth, this study has shown the importance of ISTJs recharging by spending time alone. It is recommended that ISTJ pastors be intentional about scheduling "alone-time." It is further recommended that this need be communicated to sessions so that accountability can be provided to ensure regular times of recharging and refreshment. As will be recommended below as a topic for further study, self-care is essential for longevity in ministry.

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<sup>384</sup> Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*, Rev. ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004).

<sup>385</sup> Richard A. Swenson, *In Search of Balance: Keys to a Stable Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010).

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This study has investigated a specific question, how ISTJ can lead effectively in ministry. In so doing, it has merely brushed the surface of this important topic. Other questions have been generated that are worthy of study. This section offers a few of those for consideration.

The ISTJ's fit for a collaborative ministry style is a topic for further research. The Presbyterian form of government lends itself naturally to a collaborative style, as sessions, boards, and committees are part of the fiber of this system of governance. ISTJs are faced with teamwork as part of the normal ministry life of the church. It is important to consider how ISTJs might be more effective in collaborative leadership. This area of study should include strategies to enhance relationship-building on sessions so that the meetings are not merely all business.

The findings seem to indicate that some ISTJs may not be well suited for counseling. A study investigating ISTJs' abilities in counseling might prove helpful. Pastors are faced with many opportunities to shepherd individuals through difficulties, and discovering how ISTJs can do that more faithfully would be important. Another study that could prove beneficial is the potential struggle some ISTJs might have in the area of discipleship. As with counseling, this aspect of ministry carries with it a huge set of expectations. Research into how ISTJ can best navigate discipleship has merit.

An important area not considered to any significant degree in this study is the ISTJ and the spiritual life. Many of the disciplines of the spiritual life, like contemplation and prayer, are activities to which ISTJs are naturally given. Exploring this temperament in relation to spiritual disciplines could prove instructive.



A final area in need of investigation is self-care. This is a growing area of study, and it would be helpful to explore further how ISTJs can care for their own bodies and souls to be better equipped to serve Christ and his church. A key component of this topic would delve deeper into the question of how ISTJs “recharge their batteries.”

## **CONCLUSION**

We began this study with the exhortation of Robert E. Lee encouraging his son to do his duty. The researcher has sought to encourage ISTJs with the many characteristics of this type that are essential for leadership, and most significantly, a high sense of duty. This study has shown areas where ISTJs are prone to temptation, as is the case for all temperament types.

ISTJs should be encouraged because God has designed you as an introvert, sensing, thinking, judging pastor who has the ability to be a dutiful, faithful, dependable, and stable leader. The ISTJ is not only dutiful at the core, as this study has shown, but also steady at the helm as a leader. Myers wrote of ISTJs, “They look on tempests and are never shaken.”<sup>386</sup> Myers’ words serve as a tremendous encouragement to ISTJ pastors who are used of God to bring a steadying style of leadership to his church. At the end of the day, the ISTJ pastor is to rest in the sovereignty of God, who designed each of his human creations with their own individual temperament.

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<sup>386</sup> Myers, 102. This quote comes from Shakespeare’s 116th sonnet.

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