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Covenant Theological Seminary

**Pastors Developing Their Congregants
Through Nurturing Leadership**

By

Jean-Jude Lors

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of Covenant Theological Seminary
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

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2017

Covenant Theological Seminary

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Through Nurturing Leadership**

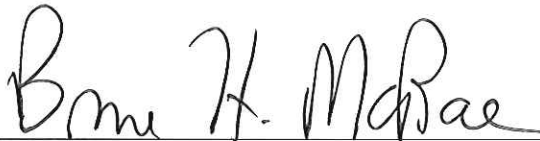
A Dissertation Submitted to
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in Candidacy for the Degree of
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By

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Abstract

As church leaders, pastors mainly provide leadership in these stated roles: They administer church service programs; they conduct the worship service; they preach; they teach; they do marriage counseling; they resolve conflicts. However, as the literature suggests, pastors more and more spend time providing leadership in administration. With administration topping the list of pastoral duties, pastors understandably are not spending time nurturing and developing their congregants' spiritual potential. There is one area of pastoral leadership that has not been given much attention: pastoral nurturing leadership. Nurturing leadership is needed in order to develop and grow congregants spiritually. Therefore, the purpose of this research study was to investigate how senior pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership. Specifically, this study was to discover the nurturing skills that senior pastors use to develop spiritual renewal and gifts.

Four research questions structured and guided this study:

1. How do senior pastors develop their congregants in spiritual renewal?
2. How do senior pastors develop their congregants' spiritual gifts?
3. What are the challenges for senior pastors in developing their congregants through nurturing leadership?
4. What are the benefits of congregants developing through senior pastors' nurturing leadership?

This study utilized a qualitative design using semi-structured interview format.

The researcher interviewed eight senior ministers that are currently active in ministry and have been in the senior pastorate for at least ten years. The data was analyzed using the constant comparative method.

This study finds that pastors who develop their congregants through nurturing leadership help congregants grow spiritually and numerically. Pastors who utilize nurturing leadership also transform, renew, and develop their congregants' gifts. Finally, these pastors are more effective and become better leaders in their church.

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Chapter One

Introduction

It takes a special kind of pastoral leadership to shepherd congregants towards spiritual renewal and gifts development. This leadership is called nurturing leadership and is an essential element for pastors who want to develop their congregants.

Churches today are challenging their pastors to do more than lead from their vantage point or for the sole benefit of winning souls and bringing more tithes and offering in the church. Instead, pastors are increasingly expected to elevate their members to spiritual maturity and spiritual growth.

Historically, pastors have been known as leaders, shepherd, preachers, teachers, counselors, and administrators. A Pulpit & Pew research study on pastoral leadership entitled, *What Do Lay People Want in Pastors?* by Adair T. Lummis of the Hartford Institute for Religion Research for Duke University School of Religion, reported what lay and regional leaders wanted in their pastors as they lead their congregations. It states,

Lay and regional leaders also want pastors who can preach wonderful sermons, conduct inspiring worship services, competently teach, care, counsel, and console. In choosing a new pastor, search committees differ in the abilities and characteristics to which they give priority, based on their past experiences with clergy and a host of other factors and influences.¹

As church leaders, pastors mainly provide leadership in these stated roles. They administer church service programs; they conduct service; they preach; they teach; they do marriage counseling; and they resolve conflicts. However, pastors tend to spend more

¹ Adair T. Lummis, "What Do Lay People Want in Pastors?" *Pulpit&Pew*, no. 3 (Winter 2003): 1.

time providing leadership in administration, as Edwards D. Rex, a writer for *Ministry Magazine Journal for Pastors*, states,

In Samuel Blizzard's study of ministerial roles, the ministers ranked the traditional roles of preacher, pastor, and priest as the most important and rewarding functions, while administration ranked next to last. On the other hand, when the ministers reported how much time was actually spent in the various functions, administration topped the list.²

Edwards D. Rex emphasizes—where pastors spend most of their time leading their congregants—is administratively. With administration topping the list of pastoral duties, pastors understandably are not spending time nurturing and developing their congregants' spiritual potential. Three leading scholars and seminary professors, Dr. Bob Burns, Dr. Tasha D. Chapman, and Dr. Donald C. Guthrie, explain the weight of administration and management that pastors face in their book, *Resilient Ministry*. Burns, et. al. write, "...most pastors dislike both leadership and management and would prefer delegating these responsibilities to someone else."³ They also state, "There is a certain weight of leadership and management that's just there all the time."⁴ Even necessary leadership and management/administration issues can create a weight in the pastors' obligation, which gives them less time to focus on nurturing the church.

Tim Woodruf, an executive pastor, talks about how much time pastors are spending with administration and how they also spend a lot of their time growing their church numerically and financially in his dissertation, *Perception of Leadership and Management Competencies Needed For Local Church Administration*. Woodruf writes,

² Edwards D. Rex, "The Pastor as Church Administrator," *Ministry Internal Journal for Pastors* (November 1975): 1.

³ Bob Burns, Tasha D. Chapman and Donald C. Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2013), 27.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 200.

“The growth of a church usually includes an increase in giving, congregants, professional staff members, and lay volunteer ministers.”⁵ This growth, as previously stated, does not include spiritual nurturing, renewal, and gift-development. Scholar and author Donald J. MacNair, in his book, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, writes, “In our American preoccupation with success, church growth is easily identified with increasing numbers of people sitting in the pews and participating in the programs. It would be a struggle to think otherwise.”⁶

With this American preoccupation with success, pastors are obliged to have a leadership focus on numbers instead of spiritual nurture and development. Jackson W. Carroll of Duke School of Divinity, a leading scholar in the area of pastoral leadership, described the expectations his members and church officials have for him as their pastor. He states,

I led in the worship and preached each Sunday morning and evening. I taught; I visited and provided pastoral care; I presided over weddings and funerals; and I attended meetings and did the necessary administrative tasks of the church. This was what my lay members and denominational officials expected of me. It was, however, a very pastor-centered model of the church, and it was essentially the model of ministry that I was taught in seminary.⁷

⁵ Tim Woodruff, “Executive Pastors’ Perception of Leadership and Management Competencies Needed for Local Church Administration,” www.xpastor.org, December 2012, accessed August 31, 2016, <https://www.xpastor.org/new-xp/church-business/executive-pastors-perception-of-leadership-and-management-competencies-needed-for-local-church-administration/>.

⁶ Donald J. MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church: Biblical Strategies for Vibrant Church Life and Ministry* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1999), 1.

⁷ Jackson W. Carroll, ““The More Things Change...””: Pastoral Leadership for the 21st Century, www.pulpitandpew.org, accessed August 31, 2016, <http://pulpitandpew.org/sites/all/themes/pulpitandpew/files/Claremont.pdf>.

This pastor model of ministry that emphasizes administrative leadership is not uncommon, but it comes with a lot of challenges. Carroll describes what he was taught his primary ecclesiology was in his lecture through an article shares,

Not much positive was said about the visible church or the larger body of members; nothing much that helped me to understand ministry as the work of the whole rather than of the pastor; nothing much that taught me how to help lay members discover their spiritual gifts or empower them to use their gifts in ministry; nothing about the importance of understanding a congregation's distinctive culture and context...⁸

In other words, pastors cannot lead the church only administratively without spiritual nurture and care.

Pastors face a leadership challenge: to understand that congregants should discover and develop their spiritual gifts as a way of empowering them for ministry.

Describing the calling and the responsibilities of pastors, Woodruff writes,

Pastors are called upon regularly to preach, visit, counsel, console, and provide spiritual leadership. Pastors are also expected to set the vision for the church, develop the strategy, communicate clearly the purpose and direction of the local congregation, manage and lead change, build and maintain the team of lay leaders, and shepherd people in the church including the ministry staff, and lead.⁹

Despite all of this responsibility, there is one area of pastoral leadership that has not been given much attention: pastoral nurturing leadership. Jon Coutts, from *Ministry Magazine*, explains this lack of pastoral nurturing leadership as he describes today's cultural understanding of pastoral leadership. In, "A Theological Approach to Pastoral Leadership Today," he writes,

In this culture, built upon the gospel of self-fulfillment and the latent ideals of consumerism, the tendency is to define churches and pastors by the standards of

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Woodruff, "Executive Pastors' Perception of Leadership and Management Competencies Needed for Local Church Administration."

the business world. Among other things, servant leadership has been confused with customer service, “shepherding the flock” has melded with corporate strategizing, stewardship of spiritual gifts has been turned into a pursuit of self-fulfillment, and preaching has become motivational speech.¹⁰

Coutts’ description expresses the need for true pastoral, nurturing leadership in the church. Coutts states further,

Leadership is not something separate from spirituality, as if one can get the spiritual batteries charged, go about pasturing, and then come back to the recharger every once in a while for a pick me up. Pastoral leadership is “participation in God’s work of transforming the community of faith until it is ‘blameless’ at the coming of Christ” and a perpetually “unfinished business.”¹¹

Scholars Lawrence O. Richards and Clyde Hoeldtke, in their book, *A Theology of Church Leadership*, write, “The responsibility of leaders is the care and nurture of believers.”¹² Pastoral leadership, as Coutts, Richards, and Hoeldtke stated, has to be more than administrative. Pastors must not separate leadership from spirituality, nurturing, and gifts-development when it comes to leading the churches and their congregants. It is clear that pastors as leaders have the responsibility to care and nurture the congregants over which they are given responsibility to lead.

Donald McNair further emphasizes that need, regarding the nurturing and caring of the congregants by pastors, when he writes, “Caring, loving, equipping – these words express the essence of Christ’s lesson about shepherding. A good shepherd is one whose care for the sheep drives him to equip them for doing what sheep do best, even at the cost

¹⁰ Jon Coutts, “A Theological Approach to Pastoral Leadership Today,” www.ministrymagazine.org, November 2008, accessed September 1, 2017, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2008/11/a-theological-approach-to-pastoral-leadership-today.html>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Lawrence O. Richards and Clyde Hoeldtke, *A Theology of Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980), 92.

of his own life.”¹³ MacNair is describing a leadership that shows and provides the spiritual nurturing and care for the congregants that can help pastors reduce their administrative duties, and focus more on the spiritual needs of the congregants. It is a nurturing leadership through spiritual renewal and spiritual-gifts development: a leadership that cares, renews, and develops people’s ability to become better Christians and better spiritual leaders.

Scholar John C. Maxwell, in his book, *How Successful People Lead*, expresses that idea for pastors as he writes, “What’s better than excellence at your work and high productivity from your team? Developing people so that they can lead with you. Great leaders measure themselves by what they get done through others.”¹⁴ That requires developing people in a leadership culture.

Robert G. Duch, a scholar in the Catholic milieu, in his book, *Successful Parish Leadership*, beautifully summarizes, “Pastors must be spiritual leaders of community worship and prayer, and must promote renewed spirituality.”¹⁵ Promoting renewed spirituality within the congregants can be one of the most effective ways for pastors to nurture the church in their leadership.

Carroll conducted a survey on how clergy spend their time at work, and he inquired about three tasks that need improvement for pastors. He reported,

When we asked about the three tasks most needing improvement, there was also remarkable consensus: Several tasks relating to administration topped the list, followed by training others for ministry, and pastoral care and counseling.

¹³ MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, 139.

¹⁴ John C. Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead* (New York: Centre Street, Hachette Book Group, Inc. 2013), 94.

¹⁵ Robert G. Duch, *Successful Parish Leadership: Nurturing the Animated Parish* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1990), 2.

Evangelism ran a close fourth for all groups. All this is to say that, despite considerable differences in denominational tradition and size of congregation, clergy of all denominational stripes gave surprisingly similar answers about how they spend their time and what they consider their strengths and weaknesses.¹⁶

These scholars have identified a need for pastors to change their ways of administering the church. There is certainly a need to train and equip congregants for ministry through spiritual gifts development; there is also a need for pastors to nurture and care more for their congregants. A nurturing, pastoral leadership is one that is surrounded and supported by a group of trained team leaders, which include elders and other members of the church. It is also one that promotes spirituality through spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development.

A survey conducted by Lummis regarding what congregations need of pastors states,

Regional leaders interviewed across denominations cited the pastor's ability to show members of the congregation that he or she loves and will care for them, as an almost essential clergy quality that search committees try to find when choosing a new pastor. Regional leaders from five denominations explain: Congregations want to be loved and cared for, loved and lifted up. If that is done, the congregation is happy.¹⁷

However, in order for pastors to show love and care, they must exercise a leadership that nurtures and develops the congregants to spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development.

Problem Statement

Pastors have enormous responsibilities to lead and nurture their congregants for spiritual and administrative effectiveness. While good pastoral, administrative leadership skills are necessary for pastors to have in order to conduct meetings, run church services and programs, and deal with conflicts, they do not help pastors nurture their congregants

¹⁶ Carroll, "The More Things Change...": Pastoral Leadership for the 21st Century,.

¹⁷ Lummis, "What Do Lay People Want in Pastors?" 13.

for spiritual renewal and spiritual-gift development. Much can be learned about pastors nurturing leadership skills that develop their congregants in these ways towards maturity in Christ.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate how senior pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership. This study will help the researcher find out of how pastors nurture their congregants toward spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development. This study seeks to discover how different pastors use different nurturing leadership skills to develop their congregants. The following research questions will structure and guide this study:

1. How do senior pastors develop their congregants in spiritual renewal?
2. How do senior pastors develop their congregants' spiritual gifts?
3. What are the challenges for senior pastors in developing their congregants through nurturing leadership?
4. What are the benefits of congregants developing through senior pastors' nurturing leadership?

Significance of This Study

This study has significance for the many congregants that are affected by a pastoral leadership that is more administrative than nurturing. The researcher hopes that the results of this study would persuade pastors and church leaders to provide congregants with more nurturing leadership in order to develop them in spiritual maturity and growth. It also hoped that the results of this study would help pastors discover new ways to renew their congregants for spiritual transformation. When it comes to spiritual gifts, it is hoped that this study would provide pastors with more leadership ability to develop their congregants' spiritual gifts for the benefit of the church and the

advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This study has further significance where congregants will benefit with a pastoral nurturing leadership style whereby pastors nurture, care, renew, and train them to become better disciples of Christ and better leaders in the church. It is the researcher's hope that at the conclusion of this qualitative study, pastors will be provided with tools to better nurture their congregants. Last, it is the hope of the researcher to find better strategies and skills that will help pastors of different denominations move from a leadership that is mostly administrative-focused to a more nurturing-focused leadership.

Definition of Terms

Leadership – The power or the ability to lead and empower people. Leadership is also caring more about the cause and the people in a company than about one's own personal pain and success. Leadership is the art of serving others by equipping them with training, tools, and developing their gifts so they can achieve their full potential.

Nurturing – The participle form of the verb nurture. It means to care for and encourage the growth or development of. It also means to bring up, train, educate, feed, and protect.

Nurturing Leadership – A leadership that cares, feeds, protects, trains, educates, and develops those they lead. In nurturing leaders are focused on developing individuals personally, professionally, and spiritually. They care about the individual's development.

Administrative – Adjective, pertaining to administration or relating to the running or management of a business, school, or other organization.

Administrative Leadership – A leadership that deals with communicating, managing information, performing specific tasks, and ensuring people are effective in their task.

An administrative leader leads a team of people that perform these roles in administration.

Spiritual – Relating to or affecting the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things. Concerned with religious values, relating to or involving spiritualism.

Renewal – The state of being made new, fresh, or strong again: the state of being renewed or the act or process of renewing. It is also a process of improving, repairing, or making something more successful.

Spiritual Renewal – The process of growth and transformation into the image of God. It is the process of being made new, reinvigorated spiritually, feeling fresh and reawakened and having a galvanized sense of mission and practice through spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development.

Spiritual gifts – A notable capacity, talent, or endowment given by God. It is a special ability given by God with some power, quality, or attribute in order to do service for him.

Development – The act, or process of growing or causing something to grow or become larger or more advanced; or result of developing. The state of being developed.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to investigate how senior pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership. In order to investigate, for a theoretical framework to be established, and to place its findings in the context of current scholarly debates, four different literature areas will be reviewed: leadership, spiritual renewal, spiritual gifts-development, and the biblical-theological framework.

The literature review provides the foundation, a theoretical framework of the knowledge base on the topic or problem being investigated in this study via qualitative research. This review provides a point of reference for the contribution that the current study will make to the knowledge base. The varying degrees that the topic is addressed in the literature review will help in presenting the discussed topic in greater detail.

Leadership

What is leadership? According to Puccio, Mance, and Murdock, who wrote about creativity in leadership in their book *Creative Leadership*, state, “More than a century ago, it was widely believed that leadership was an innate quality – a set of traits possessed a rare few since birth that predisposed these individual to achieve greatness.”¹⁸ Contrary to this definition, according to the literature, leadership today has different definitions and has taken new meanings. John Zechariah, a well-known author, in his book, *In Search of Christian Leadership Character*, defines leadership as, “a process of

¹⁸ Gerard J. Puccio, Marie Mance, and Mary C. Murdock, *Creative Leadership: Skills That Drive Change* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2011), 6.

influencing people to accomplish a task or a goal... Leadership is a process of getting things done through people.”¹⁹ Two leading scholars and contributors to *Harvard Business Review*, Nohria and Khurana, in their book, *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice*, state, “Leadership is essentially about the relationship between the leader and his or her follower.”²⁰ Another author, Brittney Helmrich, from *Business News Daily*, provides thirty-three ways that experts have defined leadership; two of them pertain to the current study. Helmrich writes, “Leadership is caring more about the cause and the people in your company than about own personal pain and success (Jarie Bolander).”²¹ The other definition is “Leadership is the ability to help people achieve things they don’t think are possible. Leaders are coaches with a passion for developing people...(Randy Stocklin).”²² These definitions point to how leadership nurtures and cares for people under a leader’s authority: developing their skills, their talents, and their gifts to their full potential.

In talking about the need for leadership, Amy C. Edmondson, a Harvard Business School Professor, in her book, *Teaming: How Organizations Learn, Innovate, and Compete in the Knowledge Economy*, writes, “Leadership is now more needed than ever before in today’s complex, constantly changing landscape.”²³ Edmondson classifies this

¹⁹ John Zechariah, *In Search of Christian Leadership Character* (Kashmere Gate, Delhi: Saurabh Printers, 2014), 1:7.

²⁰ Nitin Nohria and Rakesh Khurana, *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2010), 417.

²¹ Brittney Helmrich, “33 Ways to Define Leadership,” *Business News Daily*, April 2016, accessed October 3, 2016, <http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/3647-leadership-definition.html>www.

²² Ibid.

²³ Amy C. Edmonson, *Teaming: How Organizations Learn, Innovate, and Compete, in the Knowledge Economy* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 4.

kind of leadership in two forms when she writes, “the first is formal leadership... leadership with a large L... generally includes high-level executives and involves decisions and activities that influence everyone in the organization.”²⁴ This leadership is the kind of administrative leadership that some pastors use to lead their congregants without much congregant involvement. However, Edmondson talks about a second kind of leadership when she writes,

What’s needed is what I call leadership with a small l. This type of leadership is exercised by people throughout the organization, not just at the top, and especially by those at the front lines where crucial work affecting customer experiences is carried out. This kind of leadership is about developing others’ skills and shaping effective processes.²⁵

As Puccio, Mance, and Murdock explain, leaders can learn leadership skills “Although it’s true that some people are born with greater natural gifts than others, the ability to lead is really a collection of skills, nearly all of which can be learned and improved”²⁶

Nurturing Leadership

While there are several types of leadership, this paper focuses on nurturing leadership. Nurturing leadership focuses leaders’ attention on caring more about the people led than about their own personal gain and success. Nurturing leadership is one that cares, feeds, protects, trains, educates, and develops those they lead, developing individuals personally, professionally and spiritually. Nurturing leaders prioritize the individual’s development, connection, and relationships. Kouzes and Posner, leading scholars in leadership and authors of *The Leadership Challenge*, define nurturing

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Puccio, Mance, and Murdock, *Creative Leadership*, 7.

leadership this way, “Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow.”²⁷ In order for people to follow a leader, the leader must establish a nurturing relationship with the followers.

Comparing his past administrative management leadership style with his now caring professional relationships, Paul W. Abramowitz, of the AM J Health System Pharmacy, states,

In my earlier days as a pharmacy manager, I believed that hard work, clear objectives, technical skill, expertise, and a no-nonsense management style were necessary to achieve goals and enhance the practice of pharmacy. Over time I realized that, while these attributes are important, the most motivated and productive members of my staff were often those who had strong relationships with others with whom or for whom they worked. This was true not only within a department but across departments and institutions. As I matured as a manager, I realized that my time spent developing, maintaining, and cultivating these relationships was time well spent.²⁸

However, nurturing leadership does not only focus about caring and forming relationship, Nurturing leadership is also the art of serving others by equipping them with training and tools. Nurturing leaders develop the gifts of those in their care so they can achieve their full potential. Author and editor, James Berkley, in the book, *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration*, explains,

Servant leaders find joy in encouraging and supporting staff and team members. They enable others to develop their spiritual gifts in the context of ministry, and they publicly recognize the growth and the contribution of others. As a result, the congregation functions as a body where every person is valued, not as an audience that feeds the leader’s ego.²⁹

²⁷ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 5th Edition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 30.

²⁸ Paul W. Abramowitz, “Nurturing relationships: An essential ingredient of leadership,” *American Journal of Health-Syst Pharm* 58 (March 2001): accessed October 25, 2016, <http://www.ajhp.org/content/58/6/479.full.pdf+html>.

²⁹ James D. Berkley, *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books), 185.

People tend to love and appreciate a leader who gets them involved in developing their gifts and in doing ministry. Congregants that are nurtured and developed feel that they are valuable members of their congregations.

Nohria and Khurana, theorize about followers' expectation, saying, "Since leading is all about the relationship between leaders and followers, ...followers want to identify psychologically with the leader. The more they want is emotional connection, the more attracted they may be to a leader who relies strongly on charisma as source of his or her influence."³⁰ Establishing an emotional connection with the congregants is vital for pastors to develop their congregants. Relationship is a nurturing way for pastors to renew and develop their congregants. Berkley theorizes on that connectivity and building up workers or followers when he writes,

Workers who are led well and who enjoy fruitfulness and fulfillment can join together to form a strong, smoothly functioning work team. But just like an individual, the team needs to be led. It needs to be encouraged and motivated, it needs to be informed and educated; it needs to have its vision renewed...³¹

As nurturing leaders, pastors are to lead their congregants to become productive in their respective talents and gifts. Pastors are to spiritually encourage and motivate their congregants and constantly renew them for ministry in order for them to enjoy and be fruitful in their ministry role. In order for pastors to have a nurturing impact on the congregants' spiritual growth and gifts development, there must be interactions between the pastors and the congregants.

³⁰ Nohria and Khurana, *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice*, 422.

³¹ Berkley, *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration*, 281.

Based on organizational leadership theories, Nohria and Khurana, define leadership this way,

Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of the members. Leaders are agents of change—persons whose acts affect other people more than other people’s acts affect them. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group.³²

Similar to Berkley’s understanding of the leader’s leadership influence on the congregants, according to Nohria and Khurana, the principal agent of change to have the best impact and effect on the members of a group or organization is the leader. The leader is the one that motivates others that in turn motivate one another. The leader is understood to have a leadership interaction with his members through a nurturing relationship. True leadership can only happen when there are mutual interactions between leaders and members and members to members.

In order for them to have interactions, leaders have to see the members of the organization the same, treat them the same, value them the same and care for them the same. By doing so, those under leadership will know that they matter. In their book, *Everybody Matters, The Extraordinary Power of Caring for your people like Family*, two business men and leading scholars, Bob Chapman and Raj Sisodia state,

Our people matter... rare are the leaders of organizations who will tell you that their people don’t matter. However, there is a big difference between understanding the value of the people inside an organization and actually making decisions that consider their needs... when we say our people matter but we don’t actually care for them, it can shatter trust and create a culture of paranoia, cynicism, and self-interest.³³

³² Nohria and Khurana, *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice*, 121.

³³ Bob Chapman and Raj Sisodia, *Everybody Matters: The Extraordinary Power of Caring for Your People like Family* (New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2015), ix.

Chapman and Sisodia emphasize that when leaders care, they make decisions that nurture the needs of the people. These leaders do not just value the people, but they do things to show that they care. Nurturing leaders care and provide for the needs of their people. These leaders show that the people in their organization matter to them. Chapman and Sisodia further state, “We [leaders] just need to engage our heads and our hearts in an approach to leadership that validates the worth of every individual, an approach in which everybody matters.”³⁴

John C. Maxwell explains what nurturing leaders do in order to meet the needs of the people that they care for and to show them that they matter when he writes,

People who rely on position often mistakenly believe that it is the responsibility of the people to come to them for what they need and want. Good leaders understand that it is their responsibility to move toward their people. Leaders are initiators...if you want to move to level 2 in your leadership...you must make it your responsibility to learn who they are, find out what they need, and help them.³⁵

According to Maxwell, true leaders take the lead and people follow. True and caring leaders meet the people where they are and attend to their needs. They take time to nurture and learn whom their people are and what their needs are. They know it is their responsibility to help them to meet their everyday needs.

Maxwell also emphasizes the need for relationship and liking people when he writes,

Relationships are a major key to success...Building relationships develops a foundation for effectively leading others. The more... relationships deepen, the broader the foundation for leading people becomes. When people feel liked, cared

³⁴ Ibid., 68.

³⁵ Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead*, 41.

for, included, valued, and trusted, they begin to work together with their leader and each other.³⁶

For Maxwell, leaders cannot have success in their leadership if there are no relationships built—if they do not value, like, and care for the people they lead. By definition Maxwell understands that there is a need for nurturing leadership at all leadership levels, including the church and its congregants.

Chapman and Sisodia agree and explain the need for caring and nurturing leadership, “The greatest gift, the greatest charity we can give back to society is to be truly human leaders who treat the people under our leadership with profound respect and care and not objects for our success and worth.”³⁷ These authors express how a nurturing characteristic toward the people is the greatest gifts. Instead of undermining people, leaders elevate their people. Chapman and Sisodia emphasize this nurturing leadership even more as they compare it to parenting and state, “Good leadership and good parenting are both about taking care of the people entrusted to you... We (leaders) should feel the same way about all those we are privileged to lead.”³⁸ They continue, “It is a mutually respectful and nurturing relationship that sees the well-being and development of the person being led as the leader’s paramount obligation.”³⁹ This research explores the importance of pastoral leadership nurturing those under its care.

³⁶ Ibid., 46.

³⁷ Chapman and Sisodia, *Everybody Matters*, 71.

³⁸ Ibid., 72.

³⁹ Ibid.

Pastoral Nurturing Leadership

Pastoral leadership is a challenge. Nonetheless, Lovett H. Weems, Jr., an educator, an author, and a distinguished professor of church leadership, states, “It is in this current, challenging situation that the church calls its pastors to exercise effective leadership.”⁴⁰ He continues, “The failure... to take charge and give active leadership... can be as devastating to an organization as frankly autocratic leadership.”⁴¹ There is definitely a challenge to pastoral leadership, and it is that of pastoral nurturing leadership. In the context of pastoral leadership, Richard Rardin, a religious author who has experience with Fortune 500 companies, in his book, *The Servant’s Guide to Leadership*, defines this leadership as “a spiritual gift conferred by the Holy Spirit upon those called to lead.”⁴²

Weems’ third observation of leadership states, “Leadership is spiritual. Leadership and the spirit are closely related. Leadership is a spiritual experience and endeavor.”⁴³ In his second edition, Weems states, “Our calling from God represents the essence of our spiritual identity.”⁴⁴ As spiritual leaders, pastors are called by God to lead his spiritual people.

Author Dan Kohn, in *The Resilient Pastor*, describes this calling beautifully, “By choice, not by chance, Conception brings to be Another human being; Designed – His

⁴⁰ Lovett H. Weems, Jr., *Church Leadership: Vision, Team Culture and Integrity* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 15.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴² Richard Rardin, *The Servant’s Guide To Leadership* (Winnipeg: Selah Publishing, 2001), 40.

⁴³ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 22.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

holy plan. Mantled in His image, encoded with a cause, God modes another vessel for purpose in His plan.”⁴⁵ Kohn clarifies how pastors’ calling to leadership is not by chance, or their own decision, but it is God’s choice. In his book, *360-Degree Leadership*, Michael J. Quick, a professor of preaching and communication at Northern Seminary in Chicago, reports, “A 2003 survey (by George Barna), of pastors and congregants discovered that 92 percents of pastors considered themselves as leaders and 94 percent of the congregants agreed.”⁴⁶ Timothy Z. Witmer, professor of Practical Theology at The Reformed Theological Seminary, in his book, *The Shepherd Leader*, supports this calling of God as he emphasizes, “that it is clearly understood that leaders have both the right and responsibility to exercise shepherding care.”⁴⁷ This shepherding care is called nurturing leadership. Nurturing leadership is caring leadership. Pastors that are called to lead are also called to contextualize their leadership based on the needs of the congregation.

Barbara J. Bloodgett, a well-known author and a faculty member at Lexington Theological Seminary, writes, “effective congregations are led by effective ministers, and those who joyously commit themselves to doing better work and learning to be better tend to see an effect upon their congregations.”⁴⁸ As spiritual leaders, pastors must make

⁴⁵ Dan Kohn, *The Resilient Pastor: Maintaining “Bounce” through Balance & Boundaries in Faithful Ministry and Marriage* (New York: W W Press 2003), 151.

⁴⁶ Michael J. Quick, *360-Degree Leadership: Preaching to Transform Congregations* (Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBooks, 2006), 34.

⁴⁷ Timothy Z. Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing), 75.

⁴⁸ Barbara J. Bloodgett, *Becoming The Pastor You Hope to Be: Four Practices for Improving Ministry* (Herndon, VA: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), 3.

a commitment to lead their congregants for effective ministry through nurturing, spiritual renewal, and spiritual gifts development.

In addition, many authors note that pastors need a vision. Michael Quick defines vision as “a clear, shared and compelling pictures of the preferred future to which God is calling the congregation.”⁴⁹ Keith Lamdin, in the book *Finding your Leadership Style*, states, “it is the leader’s task to craft the vision and explain it and keep it ever before the minds of those with whom the leader works.”⁵⁰ Pastors need to have a nurturing leadership vision for their congregants in order to renew and develop them.

What kind of nurturing leadership do pastors need to provide to their congregants? Michael J. Quick, a pastor, was asked about his pastoral role and he answered, “I see myself as a shepherd to my people, he said. My main job is to feed the flock and care for them rather than to be their CEO.”⁵¹ According to Quick, pastors are called to nurture, care, protect, feed, train, educate, and develop the congregants that they are called to lead.

In describing spiritual gifts and pastoral calling, Rardin says, “the spiritual gift of leadership involves standing before others diligently, providing care, direction, protection, and support...the welfare of those led is primary importance to the leader.”⁵² Rardin emphasizes the utmost obligation for pastors to provide nurturing leadership to their congregants. Similarly, Weems says, “Both administration and management are

⁴⁹ Quick, *360-Degree Leadership*, 69.

⁵⁰ Keith Lamdin, *Finding Your Leadership Style: A Guide For Ministers* (London: Society For Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2012), 19.

⁵¹ Quick, *360-Degree Leadership*, 16.

⁵² Rardin, *The Servant’s Guide To Leadership*, 41.

required for effective leadership. However, administration and management alone do not equal leadership. One can administer and manage without vision and values. It is impossible to lead without vision and values.”⁵³

In order to nurture congregants, pastors must embody certain values. Author and retired minister, Peter White, in his book, *The Effective Pastor, Get the Tools to Upgrade Your Ministry*, states, “The work of caring springs out of three underlying values, our knowledge of our people, our love for them and the kingdom of God.”⁵⁴ It is almost impossible to nurture and care for people that pastors do not know and love. When it comes to knowing their people, White provides this advice for pastors:

He will take an interest in each person. He will particularly watch out for change in people. He will keep notes so as to remember the important things about them. He will build the kind of information system that enables him to show care on special occasions such as the anniversary, especially the first anniversary, of serious bereavement.⁵⁵

White describes the necessity for pastors to show that they know the congregants that they are nurturing, which is vital in establishing relationship with them. The second value is “our love for our people.”⁵⁶ Peter White asks,

The question for us to ask ourselves (pastors) is how greatly people weigh with us, whether we have them so much on our hearts as to lead to care in action. Our Lord made the point in the story of the Good Samaritan. He who would care must do so in a thousand particulars; if we are not taking care of people, we do not care for them.⁵⁷

⁵³ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 34.

⁵⁴ Peter White, *The Effective Pastor: Get the Tools to Upgrade Your Ministry* (London: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 97.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 98.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

According to White, love must motivate pastors and every act of kindness to their congregants.

White's third value is the "kingdom of God."⁵⁸ Citing Ezekiel 34, White writes, "God makes clear what a good pastor is working for: that Christ shall be people's king and shepherd."⁵⁹ It could not be clearer that pastors' motivation to nurture, love, and care for people should be for Christ and by Christ. Similarly, Tom Berlin and Lovett H. Weems Jr., in their book, *High Yield*, write, "There is nothing more important in the lives of Christian leaders than their love of God practiced in tangible ways that keep the relationship alive over time."⁶⁰ Witmer agrees and says, "In leading the flock shepherd must be motivated by love for the Lord and for the well-being of the sheep."⁶¹ It is this love that causes the pastors to care and nurture others for God's kingdom purpose.

In order to fully nurture congregants, pastors must fulfill their leadership responsibilities. Different authors offer differing views of what those responsibilities are. Witmer says, "The general description of the responsibilities of shepherds/pastors must begin, therefore, with dynamic of knowing the sheep/congregants... Personal interaction with sheep is fundamental to this element of shepherding."⁶² In order to provide proper attention and care, pastors must know each of their congregants. Witmer emphasizes that, shepherds (pastors), "must know the identification of the sheep, (and), the importance

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Tom Berlin and Lovett H. Weems Jr., *High Yield: Seven Disciplines of the Fruitful Leader* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 3.

⁶¹ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 156.

⁶² Ibid., 109.

of... mutual relationship.”⁶³ On the other hand, White writes about the responsibilities of pastors, stating,

The first such responsibilities is Spiritual Nourishment...It cannot be emphasized too strongly that bringing the Scriptures to bear on living human situations is the primary task of pastoral care in biblical Christianity...but also every situation where the Word of God is introduced, explored and relevantly applied.⁶⁴

Witmer believes the first responsibility of pastors is to “feed the Sheep.”⁶⁵ Referring to the pastors, he says, “They... guide his (Jesus) sheep to the green pasture of His Word and feed them spiritual food. The Word of God is that which satisfies the souls of the people of God... Meeting the need for God’s truth is a key to the health and growth of the people.”⁶⁶

Both Witmer and White emphasize the responsibility and the need for pastors to nourish and feed their congregants spiritual food using the word of God. Michael J. Quick agrees, “Through his Word God speaks contemporaneously to lead his people.”⁶⁷ He adds, “by doing business together, preaching and leading will transform local churches.”⁶⁸ Witmer adds, “feeding (macro-feeding) is the leaders’ responsibility to oversee the public ministry of the Word of God. This not only includes the preaching of

⁶³ Ibid., 109-110.

⁶⁴ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 99.

⁶⁵ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 139.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 140.

⁶⁷ Quick, *360-Degree Leadership*, 18.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 24.

the Word from the pulpit but the ministry of the Word in education classes as well as in small group ministry.”⁶⁹

Witmer continues, “A fundamental responsibility of any and every shepherd /pastor(s) is to assure that the sheep are well nourished.”⁷⁰ The nurturing pastors will make sure that their congregants are well fed and nourished and have a balanced spiritual diet. White agrees that feeding the sheep is important,

The second (task of pastoral nurturing) is to collect and keep it together: to herd it. ...It is to nourish a sense of the church, especially the church at worship, as the heartfelt desire and priority of every Christian and to encourage the responsible, accountable and sacrificial commitment to the life of the congregation as the life and gifts of each member allow.⁷¹

These authors emphasize making sure that congregants have their spiritual priority straight, ensuring spiritual desires are being met, and spiritual gifts are being encouraged.

White also provides a third responsibility of caring (nurturing) pastors as he writes,

The third part of a shepherd’s job in a land of wild animals is to protect his sheep. ...It is not just that in time of persecution or plague the Christian leader should be active in protecting his people physically; in addition, peace with God loses us peace with world, the flesh and the devil. These dangers to our salvation call the minister to protective skill of a special order.⁷²

White clarifies that the safety of the congregants’ spiritual liveliness is of great importance and should be protected by the pastors who have charged over them.

Like White, Witmer also emphasizes that protection is one of the main responsibilities of shepherds/pastors. He writes,

⁶⁹ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 141.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 100-101.

⁷² Ibid., 101.

Shepherds protect the sheep... Christ's undershepherds are called upon to protect his sheep. Shepherds needs to be aware not only of the vulnerability and weaknesses of the individual sheep but also of the wolves that threaten their well being... The shepherd must be vigilant to see that not only are the sheep well fed, but that they themselves do not become food for wolves.⁷³

Witmer stresses the importance and the need for pastors to keep wolves away from their sheep/congregants by providing them with adequate spiritual food, spiritual tools, and spiritual resources.

White gives pastors another responsibility that is worth noting: healing.⁷⁴ White says, "The good leader will defend the afflicted and save the children of the needy. A distinctive of pastoral care is that it follows up distress with practical mercy and kindness...Guilt and guilt feelings are very painful; happy the congregation whose pastor heals and builds faith."⁷⁵ White stresses the need for pastors to give particular attention to the congregants that are wounded, hurt, afflicted, and in need of healing. This is in fact a fundamental responsibility of nurturing pastors. On helping others, John Zachariah states, "A Christian leader helps others in need, shows his passion and love for the Lord, and is humble in all things."⁷⁶

In addition to these responsibilities, White and Witmer give another very important nurturing responsibility of pastors. White writes,

The fifth service that caring renders is to lead. A spiritual shepherd leads them out... The responsibility to include leading as part of pastoral care (nurturing) is present whenever scripture covers the subject. The pastor gives a lead whether he

⁷³ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 169-171.

⁷⁴ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 102.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Zachariah, *In Search of Christian Leadership Character*, 41.

likes it or not. The mind-set and progress of a congregation is more influenced by the leadership than by any other single factor.⁷⁷

Witmer also says,

Shepherds lead the sheep. Leading the flock is a key responsibility of the shepherd...characteristic of this leadership is that it is motivated by the well-being of the flock, not for the leaders' gain...In leading the flock shepherds must be motivated by love for the Lord and for the well-being of the sheep.⁷⁸

Both authors emphasize the importance of pastors providing true leadership and a leadership of love to the congregants. Leading with love, care, and compassion are what God requires pastors to provide to their congregants in their nurturing role. However, this leadership must also be extended to the elders and the congregants in their leadership role, which is part of church leadership.

Church Leadership

Lawrence O. Richards and Clyde Hoeldtke state, "The church is an organism. ... The church is not our church it belongs to Jesus."⁷⁹ Since it is an organism and it belongs to Jesus, it must have leadership. Church leadership involves both the pastor and the congregants. Richard Patterson, a clinical psychologist and a published poet, defines church leadership in his book, *Effectively Leading: A Guide for All Church Leaders*, as "all those who exercise influence, guidance, and direction to those in the church toward fulfilling the church's goals."⁸⁰ Patterson continues, "in order to be effective, each leader needs to be: a person of vision, action, steadfastness, servanthood, and dependence.

⁷⁷ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 102.

⁷⁸ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 155-156.

⁷⁹ Richards and Hoeldtke, *A Theology of Church Leadership*, 76-77.

⁸⁰ Richard Patterson, *Effectively Leading: A Guide For All Church Leaders* (Wheaton, IL: Evangelical Training Association, 1992), 8.

Effective church leaders are not born – they are developed... to be an effective leader requires that these God-given leadership characteristics be developed.”⁸¹ Patterson emphasizes the need to develop church leaders within their respective ability and God-given gifts potential.

Bruce P. Powers, an editor and a Professor at Campbell University Divinity School, in his book, *Christian Education Handbook*, says, “God has entrusted to the church an awesome responsibility for the guidance and spiritual welfare of persons.”⁸² Both Patterson and Powers emphasize the need for inclusive leadership, a leadership that develops effective leaders with God-given leadership ability. Like pastoral leadership, all church leadership must also be nurturing leadership. In other words, all leaders in the church including, pastors, elders, and staff must exercise a nurturing leadership to the congregants over which they have charge.

Church Nurturing Leadership

When it comes to church nurturing leadership, Powers says, “The early church nurtured and taught its converts.”⁸³ Patterson defines church nurturing as, “that aspect of church ministry which focuses upon developing individual believers to discover, claim, and be all that their Creator designed His people to be.”⁸⁴ Patterson also talks about the leaders nurturing responsibility in their leadership role when he writes, “All church leaders have the biblical responsibility for nurturing and equipping church members to

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Bruce C. Powers, *Christian Education Handbook* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 251.

⁸³ Ibid., 252.

⁸⁴ Patterson, *Effectively Leading*, 53.

minister in their world.”⁸⁵ In addition to their responsibility, Witmer says the congregation must know that the leadership of the elders is exercised for the good of the people and not for the benefit of the leaders.⁸⁶ Weems says, “Leadership is always for people and group purpose.”⁸⁷

Weems and Witmer believe that all leaders in the church are responsible for nurturing others toward leadership in the congregation. Peter White writes, “Leadership in the church should be marked by plurality.”⁸⁸ Church nurturing leadership is first demonstrated by pastors and then by the leadership circle of the pastors.

On the plurality of leading, Witmer provides three biblical purposes of macro-leading when he writes, “The church is called to serve God in three ways: To serve him directly in worship; to serve the saints in nurture; and to serve the world in witness.”⁸⁹ McNair also provides four foundations for the church’s mission when he states, “The church’s purpose and mission must be expressed in the four basic functions of worship, nurture, mercy, and outreach.”⁹⁰ Both Witmer and McNair expressed similar views when it comes to the purpose and mission of the church, including the nurturing of the saints/congregants, which is biblically fundamental.

Witmer also outlines the church’s biblical and spiritual purposes. He begins with “Worship: the church is called to be a people gathered to give praise to the Lord for who

⁸⁵ Ibid., 52.

⁸⁶ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 186.

⁸⁷ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 22.

⁸⁸ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 178.

⁸⁹ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 157.

⁹⁰ MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, 38.

he is and for what he has done.”⁹¹ Witmer emphasizes the importance of worship in nurturing a congregation’s spiritual hunger for God.

Witmer’s second biblical and spiritual purpose is “Education: leading the people to grow in their understanding and application of biblical truth.”⁹² Education means teaching the congregation so that they can have the knowledge of the word and living in accordance to the practical aspect of it. Describing the importance of nurturing the congregants through teaching, Powers writes,

Nurture is implicit in the admonition to maintain a level of understanding that will not allow a believer to be turned to false doctrine or religious fads. Rather, the body of believers, the church, is most effective when it is healthy and directed by the head, which is Christ. Each believer must maintain an intimate attachment to Christ. Teaching is important, but it must be accompanied by the nurture in love.⁹³

Powers emphasizes the need for teaching and educating the congregants in the word, and doing it in a nurturing, loving way in order that they may love the loving Christ.

Witmer’s third biblical and spiritual purpose is, “Fellowship: leading the people to grow in the understanding and use of their gifts in order to minister lovingly to one another as the body of Christ.”⁹⁴ This means that congregants need to develop their spiritual gifts given by God in order to minister collectively to one another for the effectiveness of the saints, and in leading the church to reach its full spiritual potential.

Witmer’s fourth biblical and spiritual purpose is, “Evangelism: leading the people and equipping them to share the gospel of Jesus-Christ with their friends and neighbors as

⁹¹ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 157.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Powers, *Christian Education Handbook*, 253.

⁹⁴ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 157.

well as supporting the cause of the advancement of his kingdom in the world.”⁹⁵ Witmer emphasizes the need for discipleship making and giving congregants the necessary tools to be effective witnesses in their community.

In his four foundations, McNair also says, “Worship, must in all circumstances be preserved and continually deepened.”⁹⁶ Similar to Witmer, McNair see worship as a central part of congregants’ spiritual growth. Patterson agrees and says, “Worship is a relationship with God.”⁹⁷ He continues, “Worshipping is looking from ourselves to God, focusing on Him and presenting praise, adoration, love, submission, - worship – from the believer to God...the benefits of worship... are the very means for developing true believers.”⁹⁸ As clearly explained by these authors, the congregants are to be nurtured by the church and its leaders through the church highest priority: worship.

McNair’s second foundation is nurture, and “includes fellowship, instructions, the regular celebration of the sacraments, discipling, discipline, and shepherding.”⁹⁹ Nurture, according to Bruce C. Powers, is “to encompass the idea of educating or training any person.”¹⁰⁰ Congregants can be spiritually connected and elevated through good pastoral relationship, spiritual fellowship, teaching, and discipleship/spiritual gifts development.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, 39.

⁹⁷ Patterson, *Effectively Leading*, 46.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 46-47.

⁹⁹ MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, 40.

¹⁰⁰ Powers, *Christian Education Handbook*, 252.

McNair's third foundation is mercy. McNair states, "Ministry of mercy should address the physical need of the immediate church family."¹⁰¹ McNair links the need to provide for and attend to congregants' needs with their spiritual growth and care. Regarding this ministry of mercy and compassion, Tom Berlin and Lovett Jr. Weems write, "Humility, compassion, empathy, and gratitude are all part of what people are looking for in great leaders. A key to demonstrating these qualities is to care for the people in their times of need."¹⁰² Both authors clearly express similar beliefs when it comes to the caring, compassionate, and loving characteristics that are to be demonstrated by a caring nurturing leader.

For McNair, the fourth foundation is outreach. He says, "Outreach includes evangelism, missions, and... being salty – leading righteous lives that are tasty to the world around us."¹⁰³ Patterson says, "Outreach takes many forms. It can be visitation, small group study, tract distribution, caring for the disadvantaged, and a host of other activities."¹⁰⁴ Nurturing congregants through outreach will make them feel more valuable in their Christian calling and in the utilization of their spiritual gifts to the glory of God.

Robert G. Duch states, "We must form the future of our parishes (churches) by dreaming of what can be, by revitalizing our own spirit, by empowering each person to help develop workable plans of action for on-going reorganization development and continuing self renewal."¹⁰⁵ According to Duch's statement, the need for nurturing

¹⁰¹ MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, 41.

¹⁰² Berlin and Weems, *High Yield*, 6-7.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 42.

¹⁰⁴ Patterson, *Effectively Leading*, 47.

¹⁰⁵ Duch, *Successful Parish Leadership*, 2.

leadership, for spiritual renewal, and for gifts development has been an ongoing effort in pastoral leadership. Duch emphasized this even more when he writes, “Pastors must be spiritual leaders of community worship and prayer, and must promote renewed spirituality.”¹⁰⁶ When the pastors are renewed, the parishioners/congregants are also renewed spiritually.

Spiritual Renewal

Regarding spiritual renewal, Weems says, “Leadership is... helping God’s people taking the next faithful step.”¹⁰⁷ Spiritual renewal is an utmost important leadership responsibility for pastors who want to lead their congregants to the next spiritual developmental level in their journey with God. Daniel P. Smith and Mary K. Sallon, clergy in the United Methodist Church and coaches for congregational renewal and leadership development, state, “As spiritual leaders of the congregation, pastors often initiate renewal and are among the first to sense God’s longings for the people.”¹⁰⁸

Spiritual renewal requires renewal leadership ability. Weems writes, “Clearly the church needs far greater renewal...Renewal will come, as it always does, in a rediscovery of the church’s rich heritage, identity, and mission.”¹⁰⁹ Surely, whatever the form it takes, churches are always in need of spiritual renewal. As Weems states, renewal is what gives the church its identity and helps it to develop. However, for spiritual renewal to happen, it requires renewal leadership from pastors. Regarding this Weems states, “Leadership for

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 2.

¹⁰⁷ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 1.

¹⁰⁸ Daniel P. Smith and Mary K. Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal: Practical Steps For Congregations* (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute), 84.

¹⁰⁹ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 132.

renewal will be characterized by a passion that can come only from a compelling message and an essential mission—that treasure passed on to us in clay jars... Leaders with a passion for renewal will put bells back in the steeples and ring out a clear and sure message of faith and hope.”¹¹⁰ Indeed, Weems emphasizes the need for pastors to think about spiritual renewal in order to have the church focus on its spiritual mandate.

Daniel P. Smith and Mary K. Sallon, ask, “What is renewal?”¹¹¹ They answered, “Congregational renewal... means a renewal of the people’s ability to notice and experience God in their midst, a renewal of the congregation’s desire to partner with God in achieving God’s aim for the world.”¹¹² No renewal takes place without a true experience of God’s presence and the will to do God’s will. Richard F. Lovelace, a well-known author and professor emeritus of church history at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, describes God’s presence as a “preconditions of Renewal: Awareness of the holiness of God; Awareness of the depth of sin.”¹¹³ Timothy Keller, an American pastor, theologian, and apologist, writes about personal renewal and corporate renewal. He states, “Personal gospel renewal means the gospel doctrines of sin and grace are actually experienced, not just known intellectually... corporate gospel renewal also called a ‘revival,’ a season in which a whole body of believers experience personal gospel renewal together.”¹¹⁴ Dr. Bruce McRae, professor and pastor, writes, “The gospel of

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Smith and Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal*, 5.

¹¹² Ibid., 7

¹¹³ Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1979), 75.

¹¹⁴ Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 54.

grace is the basis for individual renewal. The gospel is about Jesus who died on the cross and the Spirit according to Galatians 3:1-14 and 5:13-26. Dr. McRae also writes, with gospel resources, we fight the battle against...the flesh (Colossians 3:5-17), the world (I John 2:15-17), and the devil (Ephesians 6:10-20).¹¹⁵ These scholars agree that renewal means removing any ungodly spiritual conditions in order to satisfy the hunger for God's holiness. It also means experiencing the gospel of grace of Jesus to fight against the desire of the flesh and world, and to cultivate affections for God.

Speaking of love and affections and a strong desire after God holiness, Jonathan Edwards, a reformed theologian of the 1800s and a critical player in the first Great Awakening, writes,

Love is an affection, but will any Christian say, men ought not to love God and Jesus-Christ in a high degree? And will any say, we ought not to have a very great hatred of sin, and a very deep sorrow for it? Or that we ought not to exercise a high degree of gratitude to God for the mercies we receive of him, and the great things he has done for the salvation of fallen men? Or that we should not have very great and strong desires after God holiness? Is there any who will profess, that his affections in religion are great enough?¹¹⁶

Jonathan Edwards additionally writes, “Those affections that are truly holy, are primarily founded on the loveliness of the moral excellency of divine things.”¹¹⁷ He emphasizes the importance of having love for God and the Lord Jesus-Christ. This will help believers to hate sin and have desires and affections for the holiness of God.

John Calvin, a major player in the protestant Reformation, a pastor, and a theologian, states his own view of God's requirement of holiness for his children, “With

¹¹⁵ Bruce McRae, “Church Revitalization: Individual and Corporate Renewal” (PowerPoint Presentation, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, July 31, 2014).

¹¹⁶ Jonathan Edwards, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (n.p.: ReadClassic.com, 2011), 39.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

what better foundation can it begin than by reminding us that we must be holy, because ‘God is holy’? (Lev 19:1; 1 Pet 1:16).”¹¹⁸ Lovelace, McRae, Edwards, and Calvin, all emphasize the need to have an awareness and hatred of sin and to love God’s holiness as part of personal holiness.

Tom Ehrich, a writer, church consultant, and Episcopal priest, writes, “Jesus said God was ‘making all things new.’ Eventually, that becomes personal: one’s own life is being transformed.”¹¹⁹ The call to renewal is a call to transformation. Christopher J. H. Wright, an Anglican clergy and an Old Testament Scholar, writes, “The Gospel is Ethical Transformation. Repent and believe the gospel. Radical change of life goes along with faith in the good news.... The gospel involves putting off the filthy clothes of the old humanity and putting on the clothes that bear the aroma of Christlikeness.”¹²⁰ Wright shares similar view with the other scholars when it comes to the role of the gospel for a life of transformation for both the individual and the church as the ultimate objective of renewal. Michael Slaughter, lead pastor at Ginghamburg Church since 1979, states “Church renewal consists of people in community with one another, dreaming God’s vision, believing Christ’s victory, and living out the Spirit’s work. The evidence of renewal will be seen in transformed lives.”¹²¹ Gregg Ogden, pastor of discipleship at

¹¹⁸ John Calvin, *Institutes of The Christian Religion* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, 2008), 446.

¹¹⁹ Tom Ehrich, *Church Wellness: The Best Practice Guide to Nurturing Healthy Congregations* (New York: Church Publishing, 2008), 35.

¹²⁰ Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God’s People: A Biblical Theology of the Churches Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 194.

¹²¹ Michael Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs: 6 Principles For Risking Renewal* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 19.

Christ Church in Oak Brook, Illinois, and ex-director of Doctor of Ministry Program at Fuller Theological Seminary, also defines that call to transformation when he writes,

When we respond to Christ, we enter a lifelong process of change... the call to transformation is a call to inward development. We are to overcome those obstacles in ourselves which hold us back and keep us from growing up into the full stature of Christ... The general call to Christ, community, and transformation places a priority on the inner life of being that undergirds and gives direction to the outer life of doing.¹²²

When congregants are renewed, they are transformed and endowed with gifts as growing and maturing Christians to serve both the church and the community.

On pastoral renewal, Jim Herrington, R. Robert Creech and Trisha Taylor, state, “To the degree that we are personally being transformed, we are able to lead the way as our congregations change, so that they will be available to God for the transformation of their community.”¹²³ Pastors, as head leaders, start the transformation. When they lead the way, people follow. Herrington, et. al., express the very essence of spiritual renewal: total transformation of the believers and the church in its mission focus.

Describing the state of renewal in the church of Jesus-Christ, Gregg Ogden states, “The very foundation of the church of Jesus-Christ is rumbling with renewal. God is raising up at the grass roots a Spirit-filled people who see themselves as ministers, spiritually gifted ecumenists who see worship as the center.”¹²⁴ This signifies that at the center of renewal is the process of raising leaders with Spirit-lead and God-given spiritual gifts, and finding pleasure in serving and worshiping God. In addition, both Smith and

¹²² Gregg Ogden, *The New Reformation: Returning the Ministry to The People of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 193-195.

¹²³ Jim Herrington, R. Robert Creech, and Trisha Taylor, *The Leader's Journey: Accepting the Call to Personal and Congregational Transformation* (San Francisco: Josey-Bass, 2003), 14-15.

¹²⁴ Ogden, *The New Reformation*, 25.

Sallon state, “Congregational renewal is a renewal of the people’s understanding of their relationship with God, their relationship with their community, and their calling.”¹²⁵ The goal is to have the believers understand their relationship with God, their community, and their calling in order for renewal to happen.

A study conducted by three scholars, David Hung, Der-Thanq Victor Chen, and Thiam Seng Koh, on “*The Process for nurturing a community of practice/CoP*,” provides four principles for growing, developing, and sustaining communities and the fourth principle is of great importance for spiritual renewal. Hung, et. al.’s fourth principle states, “there has to be a growth and renewal process of new members with past and present persons within the community.”¹²⁶ Pastors without a growth and renewal process for their congregants are pastors with a lack of spiritual nurturing leadership. Spiritual renewal is necessary for growing congregants in Christ. It must include everyone.

It is important, however, for pastor-leaders to inspire congregants’ desire so they want to experience renewal. John Zachariah writes, “A Christian leaders is one who inspires others to live in a Christ-like manner and lives with integrity.”¹²⁷ This Christ-like manner of living is one that requires constant renewal. Richard F. Lovelace writes about two primary “essential elements of renewal, which stand out immediately as critically important elements in the history of church renewal: Justification and sanctification... Justification: You are accepted; Sanctification: You are free from bondage of sin.”¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Smith and Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal*, 8.

¹²⁶ David Hung, Der-Thanq ‘Victor’ Chen, and Thiam Seng Koh, “The Process of Nurturing a Community of Practice,” *Educational Media International* 43, no. 4 (December 2006): 269-270.

¹²⁷ Zechariah, *In Search of Christian Leadership Character*, 41.

¹²⁸ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 74-75.

Justification and sanctification, Lovelace believes, are always part of renewal for any church, movements, or individuals. He states two other primary elements, which are, “The indwelling Spirit: You are not alone; Authority in spiritual conflict: You have authority.”¹²⁹ Keller adds, “The first visible sign of renewal is when nominal church members become converted... experienced new birth, or entered a living relationship with Christ by grace.”¹³⁰ These elements are necessary for a true renewal to be. They are equally important in reflecting a Christ-like manner transformation.

Paul in Romans writes, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”¹³¹ In his book, *The Imitation of Christ in the Gospel of Luke*, Jimmy Agan also writes about that life of transformation when he states, “We must therefore, turn away from false standards which so often shape our identity, values, and goals, instead allowing God and his purposes to define the things that are most important to us and about us.”¹³² According these writers, having a Christ-like manner means put away the old nature and being willing to do things in a new way.

There are also new spiritual disciplines that must be practiced. Dr. Philip Douglas, professor and director of the Doctor of Ministry program at Covenant Theological Seminary, provides four steps for individual and corporate church renewal in his lecture PowerPoint Presentation on *Emmanuel’s Church Renewal*, which are:

¹²⁹ Ibid., 75.

¹³⁰ Keller, *Center Church*, 79.

¹³¹ Romans 12:2.

¹³² Jimmy Agan, *The Imitation of Christ in the Gospel of Luke: Growing in Christlike Love for God and Neighbor* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing Company), 144.

1. Personal Renewal: Ps. 23:2-3. Look for patterns in the way the Lord has brought renewal in your life.
2. Church Renewal: Is. 40:31. Look for patterns in the way the Lord has brought renewal into the life of your church over her history.
3. Lead Your Key Leaders through Renewal: Eph. 2:10. By Divine Design Discovery.
4. Lead the Church through renewal: Acts 2:42. Discover your church specific mission.¹³³

Douglas looks at renewal in the church for both individually and corporately. These steps are important if pastors really want to achieve complete renewal in their church.

Slaughter, on the other hand, provides six principles of renewal. Slaughter states,

During every period of renewal, the church has been universally committed to six theological principles: 1. The Lordship Principle: a clear focus on Jesus Christ as the object of faith; 2. The Biblical Principle: scriptural truth as the primary source for what we believe and do; 3. The Liturgical Principle: discovery of new worship forms; 4. The Covenant Principle: commitment to the integrity of membership; 5. The Priesthood Principle: equipping the laity for ministry; 6. The Leadership Principle: spiritual entrepreneurship.¹³⁴

In order for these principles to be recognized and applied during the renewal process, the church has to have strong and effective leaders, pastors who believe in renewal as an important element for church growth and development. Slaughter says, “The church must have Christ-Centered pastors and leaders. They must be spiritual entrepreneurs who are committed to these theological principles.”¹³⁵ These principles are very relevant in the congregants’ developmental process.

Different scholars have written on these principles on varying ways. Regardless of their format, it is important for congregants and churches to practice renewal principles

¹³³ Philip Douglass, “Emmanuel’s Renewal” (PowerPoint Presentation, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, July, 2014).

¹³⁴ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 18.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

that are in harmony with the biblical principles that can provide true transformation and renewal. When beginning a renewal process in the church, Smith and Sellon say, “Congregational renewal seeks to set new norms and ultimately to break the old patterns and the pattern-dependency of the congregational system.”¹³⁶ They believe that it is important in the beginning phase of renewal to form “initial leaders”¹³⁷ that they called,

A germination group. The germination group serves as the initial container for nurturing renewal. Its aim is to initiate new patterns of thinking, working, and relating. This group... of interested people come together to learn and talk with each other about renewal, to dream about what might be possible for their congregation... A germination group brings together interested people to have initial conversations about a different way of being and doing church.¹³⁸

These initial leaders, or germination group, are part of Slaughter’s leadership principles of spiritual entrepreneurship where he writes,

God uses leaders to shape the dreams of leaders...I have found one of the best ways to see a burning bush is to find others who have seen one. Vision is contagious... Throughout church history, leaders of renewal have been able to see beyond the immediate barriers of culture-bound tradition, to sense God’s intent for purpose and direction.¹³⁹

Smith and Sellon state, “Renewal begins simply, with two or three people having conversations about what might be possible.”¹⁴⁰ They add, “Renewal, with its aim of realigning the life and work of a congregation, cannot take hold without the support of a congregation’s formal leaders, clergy and lay.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ Smith and Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal*, 57.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 57-58.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 107-109.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 59.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 65.

Merton P. Strommen, a research psychologist, and the founder of President of Search Institute, in his book, *The Innovative Church: Seven Steps to positive change in your Congregation*, agrees and elaborates,

A pastor's attitude, words, and actions establish an atmosphere in a congregation that is conducive to or resistant to effecting needed change. The relationship you establish with your members is all-important... When a pastor's style of leadership includes a commitment to needed change, an affirming attitude toward members, and an openness to experimentation and new ideas, the atmosphere is warmed and becomes freeing.¹⁴²

According to these scholars, spiritual renewal cannot take place in a vacuum. It requires effective pastoral leadership, and it also requires pastors to have the right people with them who caught in the vision of renewal. Besides forming initial leaders in the renewal process, Smith and Sellon state, it is important to have a "renewal task force."¹⁴³ This process, they say, is necessary and must be voted by the board "if renewal is to become an effort owned by the congregation and led by its leaders."¹⁴⁴ The specific task of the renewal task force is very important in the initial renewal process and it is to:

Educate itself about congregational renewal; Anchor itself in a biblical and denominational understanding of the purpose and aim of the church and congregation; assess the current state of the congregation and its impact on its members and the surrounding community in relation to that purpose and aim; and bring to the board an assessment of the congregation's current trajectory and a recommendation about the congregation's future.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴²Merton P. Strommen, *The Innovative Church: Seven Steps to Positive Change in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997), 61.

¹⁴³ Smith and Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal*, 66.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 69.

Strommen also support the ideas of a task force, when he writes, “Establishing task forces is a significant innovation.”¹⁴⁶ He also says,

First, establish in people’s minds the need for a change, and then present this innovation as an approach that will enhance the mission of the congregation. Tie the innovation to the congregation’s mission, and meaningfully involve all whose support is sought for the innovation.¹⁴⁷

This step in the renewal process is necessary and part of the pastors’ and church leaders’ effective leadership ability. Whatever the renewal need is, it must first be assessed at the beginning phase. The congregants are to know why if it is to bring true change and transformation.

In the process of renewal, Smith and Sellon provide the following in the next process of renewal:

The opportunity for the entire congregation to build up neglected or never-formed faith muscles and invites members to join the leaders in thinking missionally and exploring the why of existence. People reflect on who they are as a congregation ...the congregation participates in discerning the new future to which God is calling it.¹⁴⁸

This step in Slaughter’s six universal principles will be the priesthood principle, where the congregation is part of the process and is called to exercise a ministry according to the gifts that they have been given. Slaughter says, “Equipping laity for ministry is crucial in renewal. Helping people identify God’s call.”¹⁴⁹ Slaughter also adds, “The church in renewal rediscovers this important New Testament principle- the priesthood all believers... All those who name Jesus as Lord are priests. All of us called to be co-

¹⁴⁶ Strommen, *The Innovative Church*, 54.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Smith and Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal*, 83.

¹⁴⁹ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 81.

laborers in his mission in the world. This principle lies at the heart of every renewal movement throughout the history of the church.”¹⁵⁰ It is important that spiritual renewal in the church involves the ministry of all the believers and not just a few. Renewal in the church should be both individual and corporate according to each believer’s calling and church mission.

Different scholars also strongly believe in the biblical and liturgical principle as means of spiritual disciplines for renewal. Tom Ehrich states, “Whether they say it or not, ...most people come to churches on a spiritual quest... the heart of their quest... is a hunger for God.”¹⁵¹ There is no doubt that they come for spiritual nourishment, and transformation. Their spiritual hunt can only be satisfied in a church where renewal is constant in the church’s biblical and liturgical practices. Through biblical and liturgical principles, congregants can practice different spiritual disciplines that can make congregational transformation possible. Dallas Willard, was an American philosopher, professor and author, in his book, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*, writes,

So what is needed, then, is a theology of the disciplines for the spiritual life. We need a foundation, a practical, workable theology of them. We must understand why the disciplines are integral to meaningful life in Christ. We must be clear about the essential part they play in the full and effective presentation of the gospel and the truth about life in God’s kingdom.¹⁵²

A church or a believer’s life without spiritual disciplines is a life doomed to failure. The disciplines, generally, are the part of the spiritual formation of the believers. The

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 82-84.

¹⁵¹ Ehrich, *Church Wellness*, 83.

¹⁵² Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1988), 26.

believers must be taught about the meaning of the disciplines and why they are important. There cannot be any continuous renewal in the congregants' life without spiritual disciplines.

When it comes to the practice of the biblical principle by the congregants, pastors have an enormous responsibility to teach to their congregants the meaning and the importance of spiritual renewal through the biblical knowledge and practice. They have an obligation to make it part of their church's renewal process for transformation and spiritual growth, and making sure that congregants understand and are part of the process. Lovelace says, "The beginning place for personal renewal in most congregations is a preaching and teaching ministry which emphasizes primary elements of spiritual dynamics: depth proclamation of the gospel."¹⁵³ Lovelace emphasizes the preaching of law and grace based on needs to help with the process of individual and congregational renewal."¹⁵⁴ In the biblical principle Slaughter states, "Scriptural truth is the primary source for what we believe and do. Biblical preaching, speaking with the authority of the Word of God, for transformation and (not) information only."¹⁵⁵ Slaughter shows the need for the relevance of scripture as God-given authority through preaching and teaching in the renewal and transformation of the congregants. Regarding this principle Slaughter also says, "Renewal grows out of rediscovery of biblical truth... People are longing for a word from God... our people yearn for a message from God."¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 210.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 210-211.

¹⁵⁵ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 46.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 48, 50.

Charles R. Swindoll, an evangelical pastor, author, educator, and radio preacher, in his book, *The Church Awakening, An Urgent Call for Renewal*, expresses similar views on the need to practice the biblical principles when he writes, “A contagious church has a number of individuals living out clear, biblical principles with the result that people pause in the midst of their busy lives. They realize this is a place worth their coming and participating.”¹⁵⁷ Both writers agree that there are congregants that are hungry and cannot wait to be transformed and renewed through the preaching of the word of God.

Swindoll also provides four biblical essentials of the biblical principles that are important for congregants to grow and be renewed spiritually. Swindoll states,

Many congregations... have experienced phenomenal growth. Unbelievable growth. But upon closer examination, you discover that they have not committed themselves to the four biblical essentials for a church as prescribed in the book of Acts: Teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer, (Acts 2:42).¹⁵⁸

He also added, “One of the worst things we can do in our churches is to take our eyes off the essentials.”¹⁵⁹ Swindoll clearly shares Slaughter’s view when it comes to the biblical principle as an essential element of spiritual renewal. Like Slaughter, Swindoll also emphasizes on the importance of preaching with regard to Paul’s admonition to the young Timothy in Timothy chapter 4:1-4, where he comments and says, “The command is clear: ‘Preach the word’ – followed by an explanation of when and how to do it. But there is also a why, a reason to proclaim boldly the Bible on a consistent basis.”¹⁶⁰ These

¹⁵⁷ Charles R. Swindoll, *The Church Awakening: An Urgent Call for Renewal* (New York: FaithWords Hachette Book Group), 71.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 76.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 72.

scholars understanding how critical preaching is to the congregants when it comes to their renewal and growth.

Sharing his personal experience about church renewal, Slaughter says, “Renewal broke out at our church when the people began to actively do what we had been reading in God’s Word.”¹⁶¹ This is to mean that the people had become the doers of the word instead of the hearers of the word; and this is critical when it comes to the biblical principle for renewal. In addition to preaching, the writers have also emphasized teaching through bible study to bring change and renewal to the congregants.

Larry Kreider, the founder and international director of DOVE Christian Fellowship International and author of more than 38 books, in his book, *Authentic Spiritual Mentoring*, states, “It’s not only new believers who are spiritual babies in the church today. Older Christians who lack spiritual maturity are adults in age but babies in spiritual growth.”¹⁶² This means all believers in the church new and old are in need of spiritual transformation. Kreider says, “Good spiritual parents focus on teaching the early lessons of Christian faith and moving their children on to new horizons.”¹⁶³ Pastors as spiritual fathers are responsible to teach the believers for spiritual transformation. For that to happen Kreider says, “Teach them the Word of God either one on one or in a small-group setting where everyone is learning the same basic foundational teachings...Get the new believer involved with other believers in both a small group and larger group settings

¹⁶¹ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 56.

¹⁶² Larry Kreider, *Authentic Spiritual Spiritual Mentoring: Nurturing Younger Believers Toward Spiritual Maturity* (Ventura, CA: Regal), 55.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 56.

so that they do not become emotionally dependent on their mentors.”¹⁶⁴ Gregg Ogden agrees and adds,

The Written Word that points to Jesus-Christ is central to both formal and informal gatherings of God’s people. Formally, it is right to make provision for people to “sit under” the teaching and proclamation of the Word. God has gifted and set apart prophets whose passion for truth energizes the body to faithfulness. Prophetic preachers keep a community of believers stirred up, having to confront truth in the context of the spirit of the times. There must also be formal structures for teachers to explain and fill in the whys and wherefores of the breadth of the biblical message.¹⁶⁵

Robert Schnase serves as a bishop in the Missouri Conference of the United Methodist Church, and in his book, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, states, “We learn the life of Christ and will of God by studying God’s Word and through experience with other people of faith.”¹⁶⁶ Krieder, Ogden, Schnase have put great emphasis on preaching and teaching the Bible to congregants as necessary elements for growth and renewal the knowledge of God through Christ. As stated in Slaughter’s discipline, “It is the business of the church to enable people to come to this point of biblical understanding, where transformation results. Renewal depends upon the local church rediscovering the vital unique truth that God has given us in this book.”¹⁶⁷

The liturgical principle is another important principle for spiritual renewal. James Hinkle, elder and former minister at the Burns Church and college professor, in his book, *Developing Church Leaders, Understanding and Nurturing Leadership in the Local*

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 55-56.

¹⁶⁵ Ogden, *The New Reformation*, 112-113.

¹⁶⁶ Robert Schnase, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 65.

¹⁶⁷ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 57.

Congregation, writes, “We get our modern word ‘liturgy’ from this Greek word (leitourgos), translated by others as worshipping.”¹⁶⁸

C. John Miller founded New Life Presbyterian Church and taught at Westminster Theological Seminary. From his book, *Outgrowing the Ingrown Church*, he outlines the first of four steps for renewal as, “Develop an openness to God’s vision for the local church.” He elaborates,

It is an important step forward in the local church whenever the pastor or other leaders begin to ask questions about the routine of worship. Questions that need to be asked include: How does God see us as we worship together?...Does our worship reveal a growing consciousness among us of the darkness from which we redeemed.¹⁶⁹

This implies that congregational worship must have a reason. It must connect congregants to their spiritual state of being. According to theologian, authors, and professor D. A. Carson, “Worship is the proper response of all moral, sentient beings to God, ascribing all honor and worth to their Creator-God precisely because He is worthy, delightfully so... What we must strive for is growing knowledge of God delight in Him – not delight in worship per se, but delight in God.”¹⁷⁰ What would worship be if the ultimate goal were not a growing knowledge of the creator and a delight in him?

Regarding liturgical principle, Slaughter states,

Renewal gives birth to new worship forms... We were created to worship. Worship is that place where we get in touch with God’s presence and discover anew who we are. Through worship, our spirits are energized and our priorities realigned... Worship is one of the most important experiences together as a community of faith. It must be vital and relevant to people in the context of their

¹⁶⁸ James Hinkle, *Developing Church Leaders: Understanding and Nurturing Leadership in the Local Congregation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 201), 15.

¹⁶⁹ C. John Miller, *Outgrowing the Ingrown Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 72-73.

¹⁷⁰ D. A. Carson, *Worship by the Book* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 30, 32.

life situation. We need to work hard at not letting it become drab, routine, or boring.¹⁷¹

Slaughter believes that pastors must change the way that their churches worship if they want renewal. In return, renewal must propel and bring new ways of worshipping.

Slaughter shared his experience at a church where he pastored when he writes,

We assemble worship team comprised of people who play synthesizers, guitars, flutes, horns, cellos, drums, and a variety of other instruments. Not only does this better reflect the music of our contemporary culture, but it gives many more people an opportunity to participate in worship in by using their gifts and talents.¹⁷²

Ogden says,

There is found in many places today as people alive in Christ who come together ready to pour out their hearts to God. It matters little whether the worship is highly structured or spontaneous. The difference is that people are prepared to give of themselves in song, prayer, praise, and response to the Word of God.¹⁷³

Slaughter and Ogden agree on the importance of pastors including different people, if not everyone, in worship. Worship must be done in a way where everyone feels included, is nourished, and experiences God's true presence and holiness. Worship is to be a renewal experience.

To do so, pastors may have to engage people's assumptions and expectations.

Gregg Ogden writes, "Often worship is viewed by God's people as an opportunity to escape from the pressures of real life. People want the sermon to be simply a positive

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 59-63

¹⁷² Ibid., 63

¹⁷³ Ogden, *The New Reformation*, 24.

word in the midst of a world that beats on them throughout the week. An equipping pastor will want to leave people with power and substance of the Word of God.”¹⁷⁴

Swindoll states, “Because God seeks our worship, it stands to reason that the church is to represent both a place of worship... and a place that cultivates its worshipers.”¹⁷⁵ Robert Schnase says,

God uses worship to transform lives, heal wounded souls, renew hope, shape decisions, provoke change, inspire compassion, and bind people to one another. God through Christ actively seeks relationship to us through worship... God in Christ changes people’s lives through Passionate Worship. Worship stirs people’s souls, inspires them, and strengthens them. They find such help and courage and belonging and care that they cannot help but talk about the sermons, ideas, stories, music, and prayers during the week.¹⁷⁶

Pastors, as the primary leaders of worship and renewal, have the responsibility of ensuring that believers—new and old—have a true worship experience in their churches.

Pastors and church leaders must cultivate their worshipers for a true spiritual transformation.

Along with worship, scholars also encourage churches to consider the role of membership and renewal. In his covenant principle, Slaughter states,

Renewal involves commitment to the integrity of membership... When a church gets serious about renewal, it begins to ask new questions about the responsibilities of membership... It costs something to be a follower of Jesus Christ. In times of renewal, the Church rediscovers this important principle. The integrity of membership cannot be divorced from the cost of discipleship.¹⁷⁷

Slaughter emphasizes that congregants must know that they are part of the covenant principle. Membership requires them to be committed disciples of Christ and as disciples

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 132-133.

¹⁷⁵ Swindoll, *The Church Awakening*, 117.

¹⁷⁶ Schnase, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, 34, 53.

¹⁷⁷ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 69, 71-80.

they have a duty and a mission to do. Smith and Sellon says, “Phase 2 (of the renewal process) provides the opportunity for the entire congregation to build up neglected or never-formed faith muscles and invites members to join the leaders in thinking missionally and exploring the ‘why’ of existence. People reflect on who they are as a congregation.”¹⁷⁸ Smith and Selon talk about the why of existence for congregants as committed members and mission-minded disciples of Christ.

Renewal also includes mission. Michael W. Goheen, professor of missiology at Calvin Theological Seminary, in *Introducing Christian Mission Today*, says, “Mission is the whole task of the church to witness to the whole gospel in the whole world. It involves the whole life of the people of God...”¹⁷⁹ Doing mission is what defines the renewal and development stage of congregants. Goheen agrees and writes,

Throughout the biblical story to this point the mission of God through his people has been centripetal: the people of God are to be attractive so those outside will come, drawn by the salvation visible in Israel...However, with Antioch the mission of God through his people takes a centrifugal direction: the people of God go out to the nations.¹⁸⁰

Another way to describe this attractiveness is renewal; a group of people seen by others as being transformed members of God’s kingdom. It is this renewal attractiveness that also compels congregants to do mission in order to reach their community and the world.

As the church pursues mission, it proclaims Jesus as Lord. Regarding his lordship principle, Slaughter states, “Renewal happens as the church moves from a vague theism to a clear faith in Jesus-Christ. The focus of the church is not church, but Jesus! God is

¹⁷⁸ Smith and Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal*, 83.

¹⁷⁹ Michael W. Goheen, *Introducing Christian Mission Today: Scripture, History and Issues* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2014), 402.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 66.

made known to us in Christ. Faith comes alive in Christ. Lives are transformed and empowered through Christ.”¹⁸¹ In doing spiritual renewal, pastors should not lose the main focus: recognizing the supreme authority of Christ as Lord and through whom lives can be transformed and changed. Writing about the role Christ plays, C. John Miller outlines his third step to renewal, “Personalize your relationship with Christ.”¹⁸² He continues, “So, in my serving for His glory, I must always trust that I am cooperating with Christ, the primary Worker.”¹⁸³ Christ is and should always be premier in all of spiritual endeavors. Slaughter adds, “The key for renewal is a clear focus on Jesus Christ as the object of faith and the cause of truth. . . . When Jesus becomes the focus of the life of the local church, new life comes to dry bones, and people begin to stand up and become a vital army.”¹⁸⁴ All the other principles revolve around this important principle of knowing who God is and who Jesus is. Having the proper and correct understanding of who Jesus is will give believers reason to worship, pray, fast, meditate, live Christ-like lives, and minister for him in their community. The lordship principle must be well understood and accepted by the congregants if they are to renew their spiritual life in accordance to the will of God.

Tom Ehrich writes of St. Augustine who stated, “Lord you have made us for Yourself, and our soul are restless until they find their rest in you.”¹⁸⁵ In other words, knowing who God is and finding spiritual rest in him leads to spiritual rest. Ehrich

¹⁸¹ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 32.

¹⁸² Miller, *Outgrowing the Ingrown Church*, 75.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 35, 45.

¹⁸⁵ Ehrich, *Church Wellness*, 84.

continues, “Responding to that spiritual quest is a tricky business...the best practice for responding to this delicate situation is to provide ...instruction in the classical spiritual disciplines (such as prayer, meditation, fasting and service).”¹⁸⁶ Lovelace classifies some of these disciplines in the renewal phase as secondary elements of renewal and “are necessary for continual growth and renewal.”¹⁸⁷ These spiritual disciplines should accompany the congregants’ continual spiritual formation for renewal. Ehrich includes study and meditation on the word as a spiritual discipline whereby he writes, “As a spiritual discipline, study means activities such as sitting with a verse from Scripture and allowing it to speak, writing an essay or story that takes one deeper into a thought about God and/or life.”¹⁸⁸ For Ehrich, one does not just read and study the Bible, but also meditate in order to allow scripture to do its work of life, transforming and renewing.

The spiritual discipline of prayer is also a necessary element for congregants’ renewal. Ehrich says, “Prayer means talking to God in whatever language or form one can manage.”¹⁸⁹ Lovelace writes, “The Third Awakening...consisted mainly of groups of lay people meeting together to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.”¹⁹⁰ Lovelace makes the case for prayer as an important discipline for renewal, transformation, revival, and awakening, without which none can happen. Lovelace strongly conveys that message when he states,

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 144-147.

¹⁸⁸ Ehrich, *Church Wellness*, 87.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 85.

¹⁹⁰ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 152.

The act of prayer is one of the closest approaches to the experience of redemption we can have before the eternal state...If all regenerate church members in Western Christendom were to intercede daily simply for the most obvious spiritual concerns visible in their homes, their workplaces, their local churches and denominations...the transformation which would result would be incalculable.¹⁹¹

According to Lovelace, prayer is very important in the process of renewal. It brings about spiritual transformation. Prayer is like faith. Without faith, there is no Christianity. Without prayer, there can be no spiritual transformation and renewal. On the importance of prayer, Dr. Kenneth Boa, the President of Reflection Ministries and author of several books, writes,

Prayer is personal communion and dialogue with the living God. Seen from a biblical perspective, prayer is an opportunity and a privilege rather than a burden or a duty. It is the meeting place where we draw near to God to receive his grace, to release our burdens and fears, and to be honest with the Lord.¹⁹²

Believers should be taught that prayer is a means of God's grace, a gift to commune with him and be connected with the divine. Prayer is an importunity given by God to men to come and cast their burden at his feet. Andrew Murray, a South African writer, teacher, and pastor, in his book, *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, also writes,

Nothing delights Him more than to find those whom he can take with Him into the Father's presence, whom He can clothe with power to pray down God's blessing on those around them, whom He can train to be His fellow workers in the intercession by which the kingdom is to be revealed on earth. . . What think you, my beloved fellow-disciples! Would it not be just what we need, to ask the Master for a month to give us a course of special lessons on the art of prayer?¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 158-160.

¹⁹² Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approach to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan 2001), 83-84.

¹⁹³ Andrew Murray, *With Christ in the School of Prayer* (Middletown, DE: Merchant Books, 2013), 5.

Murray emphasizes the importance of prayer. Contrary to what most people think of prayer, Murray wants effective pastors to teach their congregations about prayer and how delightful it is. Prayer is vital for congregational spiritual transformation, revival, and renewal.

Another discipline of spiritual renewal is fasting. Ehrich says, “Fasting needs to be chosen, not compelled; sought for positive reasons, not grudgingly adopted for negative reasons. It can have several meanings, but generally needs to go deeper than a child’s Lenten promise to give up, say, chocolate.”¹⁹⁴ Ehrich emphasizes fasting as a necessary discipline to help believers go deeper into their spiritual life for change and transformation. Similarly, Murray says,

And prayer needs fasting for its full growth...Prayer is the one hand with which we grasp the invisible; fasting, the other, with which we let loose and cast away the visible...fasting helps to express, to deepen, and to confirm the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, to sacrifice ourselves, to attain what we seek for the kingdom of God.¹⁹⁵

Renewal requires a lot of sacrifices giving up of the self and the will to change old habits to new ones. Fasting, as a spiritual renewal discipline, will help congregants do just that. Ehrich says, “This most ancient spiritual discipline is rarely practiced, but can be a life-changing experience.”¹⁹⁶ This is a summary of renewal: a life transformation.

The other necessary spiritual discipline for renewal is service/mission. Ehrich states, “Also known as mission and servanthood, ‘service’ means giving one’s life for the

¹⁹⁴ Ehrich, *Church Wellness*, 88.

¹⁹⁵ Murray, *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, 84-85.

¹⁹⁶ Ehrich, *Church Wellness*, 88.

good of another person. It is the acting out of ‘love your neighbor.’”¹⁹⁷ Swindoll adds, “Christian service means invading a battleground, not a playground, and you and I are the weapons God uses to attack and defeat the enemy.”¹⁹⁸ Service and mission require true discipleship and when believers serve others, they fulfill the mission of love to their neighbor. Ogden says, “All service is honorable to the Lord.”¹⁹⁹ Ehrich adds,

Service includes giving away one’s wealth, but it shouldn’t stop there, as often happens in church mission. Service should also mean “getting your hands dirty.” Doing work, making sacrifices, joining hands with others to build a house or dig a trench or fight for justice. The personal dimension of service is what truly transforms both giver and receiver...Mission work matters.²⁰⁰

Service/mission is where congregants learn to exercise love for fellow believers, their neighbor, and their community. The purpose of mission is transformation. Lovelace says,

All... dimensions of renewal are related and reinforce one another. Mission cannot be effectively pursued without prayer... Realities and effective prayer can only grow out of a community oriented toward mission. Genuine Christian community takes part of its motivation from shared consciousness of mission...²⁰¹

Lovelace states, counseling as another discipline for local congregation renewal when he writes,

A fully developed counseling ministry is normally essential to the renewal of the local congregation...Therefore, counseling which brings spiritual release and renewal explore (the full armor of justifying and sanctifying righteousness and with vital dependence on the Spirit) with great sensitivity to determine whether or not a vigorous response of faith is appropriating each of these benefits of union with Christ.²⁰²

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 89.

¹⁹⁸ Swindoll, *The Church Awakening*, 103.

¹⁹⁹ Ogden, *The New Reformation*, 178.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 146.

²⁰² Ibid.

When it comes to the spiritual disciplines for renewal—whether its prayer, fasting, , meditation, service/mission, or counseling—they are all spiritually connected. When believers are spiritually renewed and transformed, they are ready to express it in good deeds by doing mission outreach in their community and abroad in order to share God’s love and Christ fellowship to others in need. Congregants that go through spiritual renewal are in a state of readiness to be trained, and equipped in order to utilize their God-given potential through spiritual gifts.

Spiritual Gifts-development

In writing about leadership and gifts the author, author Brian Hall states, “Leadership, as we shall use the term, denotes the exercise of a particular set of gifts where a person finds him or herself called to a position of influence over a community of persons.”²⁰³ It is to be understood that any leadership that does not show and encourage the exercise of a particular set of gifts is not a true and effective leadership. Hall also says, “The Christian traditions have always been aware that the spiritual life is a journey—it is a developmental process from conversion to the higher experience of living day to day in conscious awareness of our Lord.”²⁰⁴ Hall implies how both the leaders (the pastors) and those being trained (the congregants) are becoming leaders. Developing congregants’ gifts is a process that involves their spiritual journey and their spiritual experiences.

²⁰³ Brian Hall, “Leadership Development and Spiritual Growth,” *Anglican Theological Review* 66 (June 9, 1984): 100.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

Professors Bob Burns, Tasha D. Chapman, and Donald C. Guthrie, in their book, *Resilient Ministry*, state,

when ministry leaders fail to develop others and then turn responsibility over to them, they actually harm their own effectiveness. They also curtail the growth and maturity of their system by making everything depend upon them...It's important to recognize the gifts of others and enjoy seeing others exercise their gifts rather than being threatened by them.²⁰⁵

Pastors must develop and encourage the gifts of their congregants. In turn, pastors become more effective and their congregants to grow and mature spiritually. Pastors who want to be effective in their leadership and nurturing ministry must prioritize congregants' gifts. Their effectiveness depends on how they train, equip, and delegate responsibilities according to their members' gifts. Berlin and Weems Jr. state, "The ability to delegate tasks while retaining responsibility is critical to fruitful leadership ...Delegation is more than just assigning work. You maintain a role as leader, but it is no longer to do everything yourself. You continue to give oversight because you cannot shed the ultimate responsibility."²⁰⁶

Pastoral willingness to delegate responsibility is paramount for congregants' gifts to develop. Berlin and Weems also state,

There are many benefits to effective delegation. You maximize your time for the tasks only you can do. You can utilize the gifts of those with knowledge you do not have. You help others develop new skills and knowledge. You motivate others as you trust them with important tasks. You increase chances for success through more involvement.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry*, 240.

²⁰⁶ Berlin and Weems, *High Yield*, 88-89.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 89.

Berlin and Weems continue, “It is critical to take time to cultivate key leaders, individuals without whom the vision cannot be realized...Key leaders have to possess spiritual depth and hold a faithful and sound theology if they are to serve the church.”²⁰⁸

These scholars intertwine nurturing with gifts development. The goal of delegation is to better others by developing their skills and knowledge. Leaders trust them with more responsibilities, and in doing so, congregants become key leaders in their respective role and exercise their gifts that will lead and move the church forward.

John Zechariah, in his book, *In Search of Christian Leadership Character*, states, “A great leader inspires his/her followers to reach higher levels of excellence.”²⁰⁹ Pastors develop their key leaders for effectiveness and excellence for the ministry for which they are called.

When it comes to developing the people’s spiritual gifts two authors, Chapman and Sisodia understand it as nurturing and caring for the people when they write,

Our responsibility as leaders, be it business, the military, in government, or in education, is to create an environment where people can discover their gifts, develop their gifts, share their gifts, and be recognized and appreciated for doing so-which creates an opportunity for them to have a more meaningful life, a life of purpose.²¹⁰

According to Chapman and Sisodia, leaders must understand their calling and purpose by allowing people space and opportunity to develop their gifts and talents. If leaders say they care, they must develop their people’s potential to a meaningful purpose. Chapman and Sisodia also say, “People come into this world with gifts and talents, full of

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 78.

²⁰⁹ Zechariah, *In Search of Christian Leadership Character*, 27.

²¹⁰ Chapman and Sisodia, *Everybody Matters*, 68.

possibilities and unrealized potential. Our responsibility as leaders is to help them realize those possibilities by looking for the talents and goodness that exist in them and inspiring them to become what they are meant to be.”²¹¹ Leaders must ensure that the gifts and talents of their people are developed to their full potential. It is a noble and awesome responsibility.

In explaining how leaders develop people to their potential for growth, Lovett H. Weems Jr. in *Church Leadership*, states,

The leader needs to be strong and active, but in an interactive relationship with others in the organization. The developer model asks the leader to see every situation that arises as an opportunity to achieve two purposes: the accomplishment of the task and the growth and development of other people in the organization.²¹²

Leaders who want to develop their employees or their followers must use every given opportunity in order to grow them to their full potential. Pastors are not exempt, and they, too, are required to have interactive relationship with their congregants, which will create success at the church leadership level.

A study on leadership development by Jason M. Newcomer, Sandra Kolberg, and Jon M. Corey, from Walden School of School of Management, found, “The top 5 percent of companies with effective leadership practices dedicate twice as much effort as other businesses to leadership development, a clear indication that the latter is a factor in organizational success.”²¹³ This study shows the importance of leaders developing their

²¹¹ Ibid., 68.

²¹² Weems, *Church Leadership*, 72.

²¹³ Jason M. Newcomer, Sandra Kolberg, and Jon M. Corey, “Leadership Development,” *Air & Space Power Journal* 28, no. 5 (September 1, 2014): 74.

staff for effectiveness. Pastors can benefit if they also take time to develop the gifts of their congregants for effectiveness.

Educational research can teach pastors about nurturing practices and developing spiritual gifts. David Hung, Der-Thanq ‘Victor’ Chen, and Thiam Seng Koh propose four principles for growing, developing, and sustaining communities. The second principle states, “the community has, over time, to develop a repertoire of artefacts for mutual enterprise. These artefacts represent the knowledge and skills of the members in that community.”²¹⁴ Churches can learn from this principle as they develop congregants’ spiritual gifts. When the church has congregants whose gifts are identified, developed, and recognized those gifts can be utilized to edify the saints and grow the congregation. This will help congregants become stable in practicing their spiritual gifts. Kouzes and Posner in their book, *Christian Reflections on Leadership Challenge*, say,

Developing is called talent radar... As a leader, learn what areas of strength each person on your team possesses. Everybody is good at something. Become a talent expert. Be on the lookout for clues by the way people respond to a situation. They are giving you information about what they’re good at... Do whatever it takes to get educated in spotting individual strengths in others: take classes, read books, attend seminars.²¹⁵

Both scholars understand that when leaders are developing others, it is important for them to know the area of their strength, which will facilitate the growth and the development process.

John Hall, contributor, co-founder, and CEO of Influence & Co., states, “If you nurture your employees’ individual abilities to communicate the essence of your brand,

²¹⁴ Hung, Chen, and Koh, “The Process of Nurturing a Community of Practice,” 269-270.

²¹⁵ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Christian Reflections on Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 93.

their voices will come together in a harmonious way.”²¹⁶ Similarly, if pastors nurture their congregants’ God-given abilities in their spiritual gifts, they will communicate the essence of the gospel of Jesus-Christ effectively and harmoniously as one body. Pastors must do this by matching their members’ gifts according to their strengths.

Albert Winseman, Donald Clifton, and Curt Liesveld, partners and leaders of the Faith-Based Organizations of the Gallup Organization, explain, “The fundamental building block of any strength is talent. When you enhance a talent by adding the right skills and useful knowledge, you have created a strength. Again, to live your strengths, you must first identify your talents”²¹⁷ Pastors cannot develop congregants’ without knowing what their gifts or talents are. Looking at the early church’s development of new believers’ gifts, the authors state, “Early believers were encouraged to find their place in the new community and to discover their gifts in order to be truly fulfilled as followers of Jesus.”²¹⁸ For these new believers, they write, “By living in community with others who had discovered this truth, they found opportunities to ‘build each other up’ – to encourage one another to discover their talents, build strengths, and maximize their gifts.”²¹⁹ A community of believers needs to encouragement to develop their talents, gifts, and full potential. Everyone can encourage one another. Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld

²¹⁶ John Hall, “Don’t Silence Your Team: Nurture Your Employees to Become Thought Leaders, Forbes/Entrepreneurs,” www.forbes.com, September 2015, accessed October 25, 2016, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/johnhall/2015/09/27/dont-silence-your-team-nurture-your-employees-to-become-thought-leaders/#7410130f497c>.

²¹⁷ Albert Winseman, Donald Clifton, and Curt Liesveld, *Living Your Strength: Discover Your God-Given Talents and Inspire Your Community* (New York: Gallup Press, 2004), 8.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 195.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 194.

furthermore say, “When people serve in roles that fit their talents and gifts, God does marvelous things.”²²⁰

Pastors must encourage the development and the use of talents and the gifts and also have people serve in the area of their gifts according to their strength. Tom Rath, an American consultant on employee engagement, strengths, and well-being says, “Carefully avoid supporting someone who is consistently struggling in his or her role. In such instances, the most developmental action you can take is to encourage him or her to find a different role – a role that fits.”²²¹ Paul W. Abramowitz, in his article, “Nurturing Relationships: An Essential Ingredient of Leadership,” states,

It has been my experience in all types of labor markets that an effective leader must work very hard to match workers’ strengths with appropriate job responsibilities. We all know that this is an imperfect world and that everyone has positive and negative characteristics. In a tight labor market, it becomes imperative to capitalize on a person’s positives and minimize the impact of his or her negatives.²²²

Like other scholars, Abramowitz stresses matching people’s strengths to their roles, whether in church or in a particular organization.

Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld also say, pastors should recognize and celebrate the congregants’ talents and gifts. They reference Paul’s letter to the Corinthians when they state,

If the Church was to be true to the purpose for which God intended it, Paul asserted, then individual talents and gifts needed to not only recognized, but celebrated... When we recognize, celebrate, and develop the diversity of talents

²²⁰ Ibid., 199.

²²¹ Tom Rath, *Strengths Finder 2.0* (New York: Gallup Press, 2007), 91.

²²² Paul W. Abramowitz, “Nurturing Relationships: An Essential Ingredient of Leadership,” 482.

that live among us, we are fulfilling God's purpose not just for our individual lives, but also for the church.²²³

Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld add, "Understanding your talents and strengths, and those of the people you work, can dramatically improve your effectiveness and accomplishments."²²⁴ They further explain, "A good coach can help people see talents and strengths that they often cannot see for themselves."²²⁵

To those who coach and develop others for growth, Rath states, "Seek roles in which your primary responsibilities include facilitating growth. Teaching, coaching, or managing roles might prove satisfying for you."²²⁶ Pastors need to recognize and acknowledge members with talents and to coach and develop them accordingly. In addition, to "naturally look for the best in people."²²⁷

Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld believe that a leader must include everyone when they write, "Stretch the circle wider. This is the philosophy around which you orient your life. You want to include people and make them feel part of the group. You hate the sight of someone on the outside looking in. You can draw them in so that they can feel the warmth of the group."²²⁸ Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld emphasize the need for leaders and pastors to include everyone who is not yet part of their circle. The

²²³ Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld, *Living Your Strength*, 201, 203.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 181.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 210.

²²⁶ Rath, *Strengths Finder 2.0*, 90.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 151.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 63.

need is to make everyone feel a sense of belonging and to involve them in the inner circle activity. In a more specific way, they say,

If you are particularly talented in Includer (the leader), you are accepting of others. You show awareness of those feel left out, and you made an effort to include them... For you, the Church is never an exclusive club for the chosen few. It is always an inclusive community where everyone is welcome.²²⁹

These scholars understand how crucial it is to make everyone, and not just a few, feel a sense of belonging and that they are valuable. Including everyone and helping everyone discover their spiritual potential and their God-given talent is true pastoral nurturing leadership.

Richard Patterson says, “Nurture is that aspect of church ministry which focuses upon developing individual believers to discover, claim, and be all that their Creator designed His people to be.”²³⁰ Bruce P. Powers agrees and expounds upon the idea. He provides some ways to develop people and leaders in the church,

Teachers and leaders in a local church require an effective Christian education program of training... Teachers need content knowledge in the areas in which they provide instructions, and process skills to teach work with person in small- and large group situations. Other church leaders need content and skills to make them productive in fulfilling their offices as well.²³¹

It is necessary for members to be trained so that they can train others. Powers states that the spiritual leader of the church—the pastor—should oversee this process,

A minister is expected to be a spiritual leader (etc)... Another major responsibility is that providing training for the laity. A minister can multiply outreach and ministry by investing time and effort in instructing members of the teaching staff... The pastor should encourage, support, and strengthen the education of the teaching staff. The content of teacher training... must be balanced with knowledge

²²⁹ Ibid., 150.

²³⁰ Patterson, *Effectively Leading*, 53.

²³¹ Powers, *Christian Education Handbook*, 225.

of subject matter in theology, biblical foundations, missions, music, evangelism, and an understanding of Christian education in the church.²³²

For Powers, if pastors are serious about developing their congregants to their full potential, then pastors must encourage their congregants and provide them with the necessary training to be effective leaders. Powers adds, “A primary purpose for a church training is to equip leaders for effective service.”²³³ One of the ways to recognize lay-leaders, Tom Ehrich writes is to “engage clergy directly in the leadership development process, with a direct role in identifying promising leaders, recruiting them and training them. Require all leaders to participate in training programs that are appropriate to their duties and to their level of responsibility.”²³⁴

Daniel P. Smith and Mary K. Sallon state,

In a healthy congregation clergy and laity exercise leadership jointly. Both take responsibility for developing individuals as disciples of Christ and the organization as the Body of Christ...The continual surfacing and development of new leaders is key to the ongoing transformation of the congregation.²³⁵

Smith and Sallon state that developing congregants, whether their gifts, talents, or skills, is part of their spiritual renewal, transformation, and growth. It is incumbent upon pastors to make sure this important process continues to take place in the life of their congregants through training and developmental programs. Powers says, “Each program has the responsibility for tasks that give shape to some aspect of Christian growth and development.”²³⁶

²³² Ibid., 226-227.

²³³ Ibid., 231.

²³⁴ Ehrich, *Church Wellness*, 42.

²³⁵ Smith and Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal*, 130-131.

²³⁶ Powers, *Christian Education Handbook*, 275.

Pastors train for individual growth and collective growth. A qualitative study by Meghan M. Fitzgerald and Rachel Theilheimer entitled, *Teams in the Workplace*, examined three Head Start Centers on leadership training for their staff development. The study found,

A climate of trust, respect, open communication, and clear organization emerged as important for the risk taking necessary for teachers to learn together. This climate depended on leadership that was willing to take on challenges, innovate, and make room for teacher autonomy. Teamwork thrived in a program that purposely built relationships among staff through opportunities for communication, the development of a shared philosophy, and the possibility of being known and feeling known by colleagues and supervisors. When administrators solicited and used teachers' feedback about professional development, the teachers felt themselves a valued part of the teaching community.²³⁷

This study shows the importance of involving everyone in the development process and making them feel a part of the community of learning and development.

C. Peter Wagner, an apostle, theologian, missiologist, writer, teacher, and church growth specialist, researches what the spiritual gifts are, people's attitude towards them, and how to develop them in his book, *Your Spiritual Gifts: Can Help Your Church Grow*. Wagner writes, "Most (churches) affirm at least in theory that laypeople should be empowered to discover their spiritual gifts and through them participate in the authentic ministry of the church."²³⁸ According to Robert G. Duch, in his book *Successful Parish Ministry*,

Empowering means love= knowing, caring, respecting, and responding. When people are being given a share in power, they no longer feel powerless. When parish leaders use the miracle of empowering their parishioners, they invite others

²³⁷ Meghan M. Fitzgerald and Rachel Theilheimer, "Moving Toward Team Work Through Professional Development Activities," *Early Childhood Educational Journal* 41, no. 2 (March 2013): 103-113.

²³⁸ C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books From Gospel Light, 2005), 17.

to help by reaching out to others and ask them to participate in the shared enterprise of the parish. It means that others are learning leadership skills and processes. They will feel confident that their contributions in successful ventures will encourage their leaders to ask them again to share their talents (gifts).²³⁹

Wagner and Duch agree as they advocate for empowering congregants to participate fully in the church's ministry through the development of their spiritual gifts and talents. When pastors help congregants develop their gifts, they are empowering them, and making them more effective for the ministry. Wagner shares, "Ignorance of spiritual gifts may be a chief cause of retarded church growth today. It also may be at the root of much of the discouragement, insecurity, frustration and guilt that plague many Christians and curtail their total effectiveness for God."²⁴⁰ Wagner understands the value of members understanding their spiritual gifts.

Wagner also provides the most basic step for congregants to identify their spiritual gifts for God's service,

Other things being equal, however, you may soon come to experience a liberating, invigorating and uplifting encounter with God's Holy Spirit as you discover what I consider to be the most basic step that you as a Christian need to take in order to define God's will for your life – knowing your spiritual gift.²⁴¹

God's will and spiritual gifts are intertwined. Wagner elaborates, "Your purpose in the Body is determined by your spiritual gift or combination of spiritual gifts."²⁴² So for Wagner, it is imperative for congregants to find their gifts in order to determine their purpose in the body of Christ. Wagner confirms that every believer has a gift when he writes, "But every Christian person who is committed to Jesus and truly a member of His

²³⁹ Duch, *Successful Parish Ministry*, 106-108.

²⁴⁰ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 21.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 26.

Body has at least one gift, or quite possibly more. The Bible says that every Christian has receive a gift (see 1 Pet. 4:10).²⁴³ Greg Ogden, in his book, *The New Reformation*, also confirms that every congregant has a gift when he writes, “In God’s design all the people in the church are gifted for ministry.”²⁴⁴

Donald J. McNair does not just recognize that everyone has a gift, but also says, “The church must treat individual members’ spiritual gifts with integrity. God wants each one of us to take all individual gifts of the Spirit seriously... no gift is superfluous or redundant; every believer matters”²⁴⁵ Peter White expresses the same view about the gifts when he writes, “No gifts is better or less useful than another. All are equally valuable and equally essential, they are up front or behind the scenes, impressive or less so.”²⁴⁶ McNair and White want leaders to treat believers equally when it comes to the use of their God-given gifts.

Peter Wagner defines spiritual gifts this way, “A spiritual gift is a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ, according to God’s grace, for use within the context of the Body.”²⁴⁷ The Holy Spirit, as Wagner and the Bible say, is the one who gives gifts. Wagner also identifies and provides a list of what the spiritual gifts are based on the three books of the New Testament when he writes, “The great majority of the spiritual gifts mentioned in the Bible are found in three key

²⁴³ Ibid., 30.

²⁴⁴ Ogden, *The New Reformation*, 21.

²⁴⁵ MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, 12, 109.

²⁴⁶ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 129.

²⁴⁷ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 33.

chapters: Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4.”²⁴⁸ In his master list of gifts, Wagner says,

Romans 12 mentions the following Spiritual gifts: Prophecy (preaching, inspired utterance), Service (ministry), Teaching, Exhortation (stimulating faith, encouraging), Giving (contributing, generosity, sharing), Leadership (authority, ruling), Mercy (sympathy, comfort to the sorrowing, showing kindness). First Corinthians adds, Wisdom (wise advice, wise speech), knowledge (studying, speaking with knowledge), Faith, Healing, Miracles, (doing great deeds), Discerning of spirits, Tongues... Interpretation of tongues, Apostle, Helps, Administration (governments, getting others to work together. Ephesians 4 adds, Evangelist, Pastor (care for God’s people).²⁴⁹

Wagner also adds other gifts to this biblical list, but acknowledges, “Christian churches today vary considerably about which offices are recognized.”²⁵⁰ He also highlights, “The main purpose of discussing the differences here is to point that regardless of what the office is named, the person who is called, ordained, commissioned or licensed to fill that office should qualify for it on the basis of the particular spiritual gift-mix God has given to him or her.”²⁵¹ Wagner also states, “none of the lists is complete in itself. None of them is intended to be a complete catalog of the gifts that God gives.”²⁵² For Wagner, “at least five other gifts are mentioned in the New Testament: Celibacy, Voluntary poverty, Martyrdom, Hospitality, Missionary.”²⁵³

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 53.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 53-54.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 55.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid., 57.

²⁵³ Ibid.

Wagner also adds three other gifts not mentioned in the Bible but based on his “empirical observation of church life and ministry.”²⁵⁴ These include, “Intercession, Deliverance (exorcism), Leading worship.”²⁵⁵ God is always adding more gifts to his church by the Holy Spirit for the perfection of the saints. Wagner lists other gifts, which he believes are useful for the ministry of the church. Wagner’s list also adds up to a total of twenty-eight spiritual gifts. Wagner confirms the working of God through Jesus-Christ by adding more gifts, as he sees fits, by the Holy Spirit, to grow and develop the saints for his kingdom on earth. This is to say that there are other gifts that have been developed and exercised in the church that are not listed in the master list above.

However, despite the gifts that God has given to the church, most congregants are not using their spiritual gifts. Dr. Philip Douglass, in a lecture for Advanced Ministry Cohort, stated, “20% of the people in the church are doing 80% ministry and 80% of the people are doing 20 % ministry.”²⁵⁶ These numbers show that many of congregants are not properly trained to use their spiritual gifts, and they are not discovering their gifts effectively for ministry. In order to help members discover and use their gifts, Wagner provides the following steps,

Read extensively. Read... books as well. List the points where authors agree on the definition of a particular spiritual gift; Get to know gifted people. Seek out and talk to Christian people who have discovered and developed and are now using their spiritual gifts. Find out how they articulate what their gifts are and how they interpret their ministry through gifts; Make gifts a conversation piece. Share openly with each other what our gifts are and what they are not. This will help us...know what the optimum possibilities are for our ministry. Experiment

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 69.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Philip Douglas, “Training Lay-leaders” (PowerPoint Presentation, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, August, 2014).

with as many gifts as you can. Some gifts are like that, the majority are not. You do as much experiment as possible. You discover your gifts just like you discover your natural talents.²⁵⁷

In addition, Wagner provides steps on how to begin practice the gifts when he writes,

A starting point is to look around and see what needs you can identify. Then try to do something to meet a need. Look for the need of other people. Look for the needs of the church. Find out where you can be useful in any way, and do it. Be available for any job around the church that you might be asked to do... undertaken it in prayer. While you are experimenting with the gifts, it is just as important to answer the question, Which gifts don't I have? As it is to answer the opposite question, Which gifts do I have? Every gift that you find you do not have reduces the number of options you need to work at for getting the positive answer. Also, use the gifts inventories, the Wagner-Modified Houts Questionnaire, to determine which gifts to experiment with first. Examine your feelings. God does, in fact, match our spiritual gifts to our temperament so that we will enjoy using them.²⁵⁸

Wagner has provided above some concrete steps for congregants to discover their gifts as they search and pray for God's leading in discovering their God-given spiritual abilities for the church. To Wagner's understanding, pastors have an enormous responsibility of unwrapping the spiritual gifts of their congregants. Wagner exhorts pastors to

motivate the congregation from the pulpit, study the biblical teaching on gifts, help adults discover their gifts, set a schedule for accountability and continue the experience indefinitely, meaning, the experience should be a permanent part of the lifestyle of the congregation. It needs to be stimulated with books, sermons, (Bible study) lessons, and task-oriented groups that help people put their gifts to use.²⁵⁹

Wagner shares similar views with other leading scholars on the steps provided for pastors to motivate the congregants to find and develop their spiritual gifts according to their

²⁵⁷ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 116-117.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 117-122.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 241-242.

God-given spiritual potential. Wagner and other scholars like Peter White provide the steps to help congregants discover their gifts, and also provide the benefits of congregants discovering their spiritual gifts.

John C. Maxwell, a leading scholar in developing leaders and people, also provides the following important steps in helping people maturing their gifts and be developed into strong leaders, “prepare them for leadership by equipping them, (meaning) preparing an unskilled person to scale a tall mountain peak. Training: generally focused on specific job tasks...a part of the equipping process that prepares a person for leadership.”²⁶⁰ Maxwell supports the need to equip and train the congregants for leadership. In a more specific and detailed way, Maxwell also provides a five-step process of training people to perform the specific of the job they are to do and they are:

Model: The process begins with (the leader) doing the tasks while the person being trained watches. Mentor: (The leader) continues to perform the task but the person (in) training comes alongside and assists in the process. Monitor: (The leader) exchanges places with the person trainee. The trainee performs the task and (the leader) assists and corrects. Be positive and encouraging. Motivate: (The leader) takes himself out the task and let the trainee go. The leader’s task is to make sure (the trainee) knows how to do it without help and keep encouraging him. Multiply: Once the new leaders do the job well, it becomes their turn to teach others how to do it.²⁶¹

While Wagner provides the steps to discover the gifts, Maxwell provides concrete steps on how leaders help people develop their gifts in order to mature and develop.

In addition to these steps, Maxwell advises leaders to complete the development process with three final steps. Maxwell says,

Give them the big three: responsibility, authority, and accountability. The one quality, he says, that all successful people have...is the ability to take on

²⁶⁰ Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead*, 83-84.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

responsibility. Responsibility must go with authority. When we first give authority to new leaders, we are actually giving them permission to have authority rather than giving them authority itself. We must give our people permission to develop authority. Once responsibility and authority have been given to people, they are empowered to make things happen. Accountability: True responsibility includes a willingness to be held accountable. The leader's part of accountability involves taking the time to review the new leader's work and give honest, constructive criticism.²⁶²

These three elements as Maxwell points out are essential if pastors truly want to develop congregants to their full potential, regardless of the area of their gifts development. All gifts and all people are to be given full access and full rights in order to be properly developed. Last, he says,

Giving responsibility without resources is ridiculous... It is important to provide developmental tools. Spend time mentoring people in specific areas of need. Be willing to spend money on things like books, tapes, seminars, and professional conferences. Be creative in providing tools. It will keep your people growing and equip to do the job well.²⁶³

Equipping, training, growing, and developing is the ultimate goal. While it is important to help congregants discover and develop their gifts, it is equally important for them to know that there are benefits in developing their gifts. White states some of these benefits when he writes, "The gifts and their expression will reflect and further the Lord Jesus-Christ. (White adds), They are to be used for the good of the Christian church, a profitable contribution...to the body life for the common good."²⁶⁴ Reflecting Christ and reaching the common good of others are great spiritual benefits. Wagner also shares some of the benefits for developing the spiritual gifts. The first benefit is how

²⁶² Ibid., 98-100.

²⁶³ Ibid., 101.

²⁶⁴ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 129.

The individual grows, which means, you will be a better Christian and better able to allow God to make your life count for Him. People who know their gifts have a handle on their spiritual job description. They find their place in the church with more ease. (They) tend to develop healthy self-esteem. They learn that no matter what their gifts may be, they are important to the Body of Christ.²⁶⁵

Wagner wants congregants to know the spiritual outcome of developing their gifts. They are not just developing their gifts, but they are benefits that are attached to it. It is a spiritual endeavor that is to be desired for the sake of God's church and their spiritual growth. The second and third benefits Wagner says are,

The whole Body grows. Not only does knowing about spiritual gifts help individual Christians, but it also helps the Church as a whole. Ephesians 4 tells us that when spiritual gifts are in operation, the whole Body matures. It helps the Body to gain "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (v. 13). When the church matures, predictably it grows. When the Body is functioning well and "each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows" (Eph. 4:16, TEV). Clearly, a biblical relationship between spiritual gifts and church growth exists. The third benefit is that God is glorified as first Peter 4:10-11 advises.²⁶⁶

White and Wagner point out the ultimate objective of congregants developing their spiritual gifts through pastors' nurturing leadership: to grow spiritually and grow in the knowledge of God the Father and the Lord Jesus-Christ. White and Wagner clearly emphasizes that spiritual gifts should produce spiritual growth to the body of Christ, the congregants, as they develop to full and mature believers.

Biblical Theological Framework

Lawrence O. Richards and Clyde Hoeldtke, in their book, *A Theology of Church Leadership*, state, "a leader's spiritual power to motivate heart changes is rooted in his incarnation of the Word that he teaches."²⁶⁷ This theological framework will emphasize

²⁶⁵ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 41-42.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 43-44.

²⁶⁷ Richards and Hoeldtke, *A Theology of Church Leadership*, 117.

exegesis and application of the text. Daniel M. Doriani, professor and vice president of strategic academic projects at Covenant Theological Seminary, in his book, *Putting the Truth to Work: The Theory and Practice of Biblical Application*, states, “sound application cannot occur without correct exegesis; there is a line between exegesis and relevance.”²⁶⁸ For Doriani, the explanation and interpretation of the scriptural text is very important for any biblical theological framework to be established. It is equally important to ensure the scripture passages address the topic discussed. It is paramount in the current study of nurturing and developing congregants in the areas of spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development that good exegesis and sound application are correctly applied.

Howard Marshall, a Scottish New Testament scholar and Professor Emeritus of New Testament Exegesis at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, writes,

At the level of exegesis of the text, evangelical scholars are playing an important role in the development and the application methods of study. Work of this kind is based on the axiom that all interpretation of the text must begin with the attempt to understand it as clearly as possible in terms of its original setting. Evangelicals (like other Christians) are examining afresh the ways in which we can appropriate the message of Scripture for ourselves, or better, to find out how we can discern what God is telling us through Scripture to believe and do.²⁶⁹

Both Doriani and Marshall emphasize the need for pastors, like theologians, to apply the message of scripture to the need of the congregants. The correct interpretation of scripture is important to its proper application in order to know what God is telling his people through his word.

²⁶⁸ Daniel M. Doriani, *Putting the Truth to Work: The Theory and Practice of Biblical Application* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing Company, 2001), 22.

²⁶⁹ Howard Marshall, *Beyond the Bible: Moving From Scripture to Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Publishing Group, 2004), 25, 30.

Theological/Biblical Understanding of Leadership

Biblical theologians have presented their varying views and theological understanding on the issues of leadership, nurturing, renewal, and spiritual gifts development. Paul, in 2 Timothy 3: 16-17 says, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”²⁷⁰ Regarding this verse Michael Slaughter states, “This a lantern unto a Christian feet, and a light in all his paths. This alone he receives as his rule of right or wrong, of whatever is really good or evil.”²⁷¹ Slaughter elaborates, “The Christian rule of right and wrong is the Word of God, the writing of the Old and the New Testament.”²⁷² Whatever Christians or pastors want to do, they must do it according to biblical and spiritual leadership principles.

Richard Rardin states, “God wrote the book on leadership development.”²⁷³ Lovett H. Weems Jr. writes, “Leadership... is a gift from God.”²⁷⁴ Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3:5-6a, “Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant.”²⁷⁵ Without a scriptural mandate, spiritual leadership is meaningless, and if God does not chose leaders, their leadership has no validation. Rardin reflects upon

²⁷⁰ 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

²⁷¹ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 49.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 48.

²⁷³ Rardin, *The Servant's Guide To Leadership*, 75.

²⁷⁴ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 131.

²⁷⁵ 1 Corinthians 3:5-6a.

God's ways of developing leaders, "even though His processes are well documented, no one ever has come close to developing leaders more totally or more effectively."²⁷⁶ In comparing the leaders that God chose, Rardin says, "Through all of history, few if any people rise to the level of these leaders, except one, Jesus-the Son of God."²⁷⁷

Witmer makes first observations regarding leadership and authority. His first point says, "All human authority is derived."²⁷⁸ He continues, "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me' (Matt. 28:18 NIV). Ultimately, all authority is the Lord's. All authority in the Church belongs to Christ."²⁷⁹ Witmer adds, "The authority of the elder (s) is from above as well. Paul reminded the Ephesians' elders that the 'Holy Spirit has made you overseer' (Acts 20:28)."²⁸⁰ Peter White agrees, "The authority of the ordained minister... is rooted in Jesus-Christ who has inherited it from the Father (Matt. 28:18), and Who confers it by the Holy Spirit."²⁸¹

Paul, expounding upon how Christ chooses leaders, says, "And he Himself gave some to be Apostles, some prophets, some evangelist, and some pastors and teachers; For the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."²⁸² Both biblical scholars and Paul confirm that authority comes from God the Father to the Son and from the Son to the leaders of the church by the Holy Spirit.

²⁷⁶ Rardin, *The Servant's Guide To Leadership*, 75.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 88.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 168.

²⁸² Ephesians 4:11-12.

Spiritual Renewal and Spiritual Gifts Development Through Nurturing

Prophet Jeremiah says, “I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.”²⁸³ God establishes church leaders as shepherds to lead his congregants. Jesus says, “I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd gives life for His sheep.”²⁸⁴ Matthew and Mark also picture the nurturing and caring ministry of Jesus as the good shepherd. Matthew states, “When He saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”²⁸⁵ Mark says, “Jesus looked at him and loved him.”²⁸⁶ Both gospels recorded the caring characteristic that is found in Jesus as the good shepherd.

David expounds a key responsibility for both the Lord and the shepherds, “He leadeth me besides the Still Water. He restores my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.”²⁸⁷ In this text the shepherds’/ pastors’ ability to lead is stated twice. This repetition represents importance as the psalmist emphasizes the dual leadership responsibility of pastors as shepherds.

The shepherd imagery includes leadership that nurtures and cares for the well-being of the sheep, who are the beloved congregants. Witmer says, “Peter describes this leadership as ‘not lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock’ (1 Peter 1:3).”²⁸⁸ Witmer describes this characteristic of leadership

²⁸³ Jeremiah 3:15.

²⁸⁴ John 10:10.

²⁸⁵ Matthew 9:36.

²⁸⁶ Mark 10:21.

²⁸⁷ Psalms 23:3-4.

²⁸⁸ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 156.

as one that “is motivated by the well being of the flock, not for the leader’s gain.”²⁸⁹ In 1 Timothy 3:5 Paul writes, “if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?”²⁹⁰ Paul’s admonishes those who lead Christ’s church to have a nurturing leadership. Such a leadership cares for and grows those who follow.

Scriptural and Christ-like leadership must be, as Peter White states, “spiritual, pastoral, and biblical.”²⁹¹ White cites 1 Thessalonians 5:12, “The task of ‘those who are over you in the Lord’ is in large measure their efforts for the eternal salvation of the believers. Its methods will be spiritual...its power is spiritual.”²⁹² If the objective of pastoral leadership is not to bring congregants to their highest spiritual potential, then pastoral leadership will be in vain and non-effective.

Peter White explores pastoral leadership using the Greek verb *proistemi*, found eight times in the New Testament. White says, “in most cases it seems to have the sense of ‘to lead, preside, direct, govern’; but the context shows in each case that one must take into account the sense ‘to care for, to assist’.”²⁹³ Biblically, a leadership that is pastoral must include nurturing and care; it must help those in need. White continues, “Pastoral care... comes alive and stays alive when exercised theologically: when we remember what it is that we are doing.”²⁹⁴ White writes, “Christ-like leadership is biblical. Not man’s wisdom, nor denominational tradition, nor convenience but agreement with

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ 1 Timothy 3:5.

²⁹¹ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 177-178.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 95.

biblical principle is the way to honor God in our leading.”²⁹⁵ All true leadership must be Christ-like and must be biblical. It must follow the biblical mandate that comes from the sovereign Lord of the universe, who leads and commands all things by his supreme authority in heaven, on earth, and in the church.

Spiritual Renewal

Judges 2: 7, 10 reads,

And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work which the LORD had done for Israel... And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them, who did not know the LORD or the work which he had done for Israel.²⁹⁶

Regarding this spiritual pattern, Richard Lovelace writes,

Under the Old Covenant the cyclical pattern of apostasy and spiritual renewal is one of the most obvious characteristics of the people of God... In the New Testament... the framework of the book of acts presents a pattern of continuous success for the infant Christian movement... both the cyclical experience of Israel and the experience of continuous renewal in Acts are coherent with one, and that both patterns are latent in the entire biblical witness.²⁹⁷

Lovelace interprets this cycle of renewal, “The cycle of renewal can be interpreted both as an act of sovereign mercy and as a divine response to the inarticulate heart cry of defeated Israel.”²⁹⁸ For support, Lovelace quotes Judges 2:18, “For the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them.”²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 178.

²⁹⁶ Judges 2:7, 10.

²⁹⁷ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 61-62.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 63.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 62.

Psalm 85: 4 and 6 says, “Restore (turn) us again, O God of our salvation... Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?”³⁰⁰ Lovelace comments, “Even the prayers for revival of leaders and people are stirred up by God’s Spirit... God is primary in the renewal of his kingdom...”³⁰¹ Lovelace clarifies how God always leads spiritual renewal, and God’s people follow his spiritual direction. In the New Testament, under the new covenant, spiritual renewal is to be continuous and constant in the life of the Christian church. Michael Slaughter states,

Throughout church history, there has been no example of renewal without a leader functioning as the catalyst. God has always used a human instrument as the agent for change... Israel went through cycles of obedience, disobedience, repentance, and renewal. God would use judges like Deborah, reforming kings like Hezekiah or Josiah, and prophets as the instruments for renewal.³⁰²

Referencing Israel’s renewal under Josiah’s leadership as the king of Judah, Slaughter says,

But a voice of reformation cried out from the ashes. Josiah, who became the boy king of Judah at the age of eight, would be God’s agent for renewal. He then quotes, He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his ancestor David; he did not turn aside to the right or to the left. For in the eight year of his reign, while he was still a boy, he began to seek the God of his ancestor David. (2 Chron. 34:2-3).³⁰³

Today again, just like Josiah, God is using pastors as his main instruments to renew his people. Pastors have an enormous responsibility to nurture their congregants through the constant cycle of spiritual renewal. In addition, pastors exercise nurturing leadership to develop their congregants’ spirituality.

³⁰⁰ Psalm 85:4, 6.

³⁰¹ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 67.

³⁰² Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 101.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 47.

On the theology of church renewal, Slaughter writes,

an identifiable renewal theology has been universal to every revitalization throughout the history of the church. In Ezekiel 37, the prophet is led by the Spirit of God into a valley of dry bones—bones that represented life from another time. A very significant question is asked: “Can these bones live?” (Ezek. 37:3) Can there be life again, where there is now death and decay? Is total transformation possible? Can dry institution be transformed into vital movements?³⁰⁴

Slaughter answered these questions with Lord’s words in Ezekiel 37: 5-6, 10,

Thus says the LORD GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live...” I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.³⁰⁵

Slaughter further comments, “The prophetic message from God opens God’s people to the Spirit of revitalization. It is a transforming work of the Spirit that turns dry bones into the living body of Christ and mobilizes a vast army of reformers. Renewal is God-breathed, not program planned.”³⁰⁶ According to Slaughter, spiritual renewal of the church and the congregants is theological and biblical. It is God’s doing through the practice of his word by his people.

In Romans 12:2, Paul directly commands total transformation to the Romans, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”³⁰⁷ In the book of the Revelation, John exhorts the believers at Ephesus to pursue repentance and renewal, “Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 17.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 17-18.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 18.

³⁰⁷ Romans 12:2.

Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works.”³⁰⁸

Slaughter states, “The messenger of the Lord was calling them to repent and return to their first love... The call was to remember first principles. The principles of renewal.”³⁰⁹

Both biblical authors and Michael Slaughter have emphasized on the importance of renewal as a spiritual necessity.

Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual gifts are a hallmark of the Christian faith, and God gives these gifts.

Peter White, in his book, *The Effective Pastor*, states, “The New Testament word for these gifts, Charismata, indicates that they are given by God’s mere kindness.”³¹⁰ In the book of Ephesians, Paul confirms this when he states, regarding Christ, “Therefore He says: ‘When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.’”³¹¹

Also, Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians, writes, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant.”³¹² Peter White says, “Pneumatikoi (v.1) indicates that such gifts are breathed into us by God’s Spirit.”³¹³ According to White, Paul recognizes that God through Christ by the Spirit has given gifts to the church. Paul is equally emphasizing that the knowledge of the believers about spiritual gifts and their possession of them is paramount. C. John Miller, in his book *Outgrowing The Ingrown*

³⁰⁸ Revelation 2:4-5a.

³⁰⁹ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 18.

³¹⁰ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 128.

³¹¹ Ephesians 4:8.

³¹² 1 Corinthians 12:1.

³¹³ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 128.

Church, writes, “who it is who offers gifts to men. It is Christ. The sole Head and Owner of the Church.”³¹⁴

McNair describes the first of two biblical directives about spiritual gifts, saying, “the church is a group of believers, each of whom should be exercising his or her gifts for the spiritual good of the group.”³¹⁵ He then quotes 1 Corinthians where Paul says, “To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”³¹⁶ McNair, like Paul, acknowledges the gifts that God has bestowed upon believers through the Holy Spirit. Paul wants believers to know what these gifts are and gives a detailed description of them in three of his epistles. In Ephesians, Paul writes, “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”³¹⁷ Paul clarifies what the gifts are and also states the reason why the gifts are given—to equip or develop the saints/the congregants for ministry. Miller says, “the people of God are the primary workers in building up the body. The pastors-teachers are preparers and equippers (developers) of this work. The pastor’s role is an honored but limited one: to equip the people for their work.”³¹⁸

Further, Paul encourages believers to develop their gifts. Paul says to Timothy, “I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. Do not lay hands on anyone

³¹⁴ C. John Miller, *Outgrowing the Ingrown Church*, 141.

³¹⁵ MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, 108.

³¹⁶ 1 Corinthians 12:7.

³¹⁷ Ephesians 4:11-12.

³¹⁸ Miller, *Outgrowing the Ingrown Church*, 139.

hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure."³¹⁹ Richard Patterson

comments that pastors' nurturing leadership ability affects the development of spiritual gifts. Patterson writes,

Using the nurturing and equipping of others as measuring tools of one's leadership ability was also a Pauline principle. Paul told Timothy that how well he developed others was a strong indication of how effective he was as a leader. Paul carefully explained that he must use great care in selecting, nurturing, and equipping each person he placed into church ministry."³²⁰

Patterson links spiritual gifts development with a pastor's effectiveness.

In Romans 12 Paul presents another set of gifts,

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy, in proportion to our faith... Or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; He who exhorts, in exhortation, he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; He who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.³²¹

Paul recognizes differences in the manifestation of gifts. God gives different gifts to different individuals for the benefit and the advancement of the ministry. Paul urges those who have specific gifts to exercise them in accordance to the gifts that were given to them and not something else. In 1 Corinthians, Paul elaborates,

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.³²²

³¹⁹ 1 Timothy 5:21-22.

³²⁰ Patterson, *Effectively Leading*, 52.

³²¹ Romans 12:6.

³²² 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.

The apostle Paul describes what he believes to be additional gifts to the body for the developing, equipping, and perfecting of the congregants. He also differentiates between the given gifts even as the same Spirit distributes them.

In summary, Paul establishes the biblical framework that God is the one who gives gifts through Jesus Christ and the Spirit distributes the gifts. Congregants, for their part, must utilize their gifts according to the gifts that God has given them through the Holy Spirit's guidance. The scholars stated that senior pastors, in their nurturing ability, have a leadership responsibility to develop their congregants' gifts for spiritual renewal, growth, and effective ministry according to the biblical framework.

Summary of Literature Review

This study has reviewed literary sources of books, journals, and magazine articles that reflect on recent scholarly discussions of how senior pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership for spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development. It has also focused on a biblical understanding of nurturing leadership and gifts development. The next chapter discusses the methodology used in this study in order to seek answers to the question of how senior pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership for spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The purpose of this research study is to investigate how senior pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership. Specifically, this study seeks to discover the nurturing skills that senior pastors use to develop spiritual renewal and gifts. The assumption that learning takes place in the context of ministry guided this study. The literature explored four areas as the study's main focus: leadership, spiritual renewal, spiritual gifts-development and the biblical-theological framework. This chapter will discuss six areas of methodology: design of the study, sample selection, data collection, data analysis, researcher position, and research limitations.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be used to structure and guide this study:

- a. How do senior pastors develop their congregants in spiritual renewal?
- b. How do senior pastors develop their congregants' spiritual gifts?
- c. What are the challenges for senior pastors in developing their congregants through nurturing leadership?
- d. What are the benefits of congregants developing through senior pastors' nurturing leadership?

Design of the Study

Sharan B. Merriam, professor of adult education at the University of Georgia, states, "A research design or a map is a logical plan for getting from here to there."³²³

³²³ Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 55.

This research design explains the plan that this research study follows to attain its goal.

This study was designed using qualitative research. There are several reasons a qualitative research was used. As defined by Sharan B. Merriam,

Qualitative research is an umbrella concept covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translates, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world. Basically, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world.³²⁴

Therefore, this qualitative study will help both the researcher and the readers to understand and learn the point of view of pastors from their experiences. Specifically, the study seeks to understand how senior pastors, as nurturing leaders, encourage spiritual renewal within their congregations, and how they help their congregants develop their spiritual gifts.

Merriam identifies four characteristics as keys to understanding qualitative research. She writes, “the focus is on process, understanding, and meaning; the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis; the process is inductive; and the product is richly descriptive.”³²⁵ These characteristics are very significant in understanding how senior pastors develop their congregants. Senior pastors who have years of experiences in nurturing leadership can help other ministers becoming effective church leaders. Because one key factor is to understand the process and the meaning, this research study will help the researcher and the reader gain a richer and deeper understanding of the challenges that senior pastors face when using nurturing leadership. Because pastors have different approaches to their ministerial roles, the researcher

³²⁴ Ibid., 13.

³²⁵ Ibid., 14.

expects the experiences of each pastor to vary depending on their context, skills, and visions. Because the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the researcher can quickly and easily adapt to varying responses and explore unusual/unanticipated responses during the interviews as data is being collected. As Merriam explains, “the researcher can expand his or her understanding through nonverbal as well as verbal communication, process information (data) immediately, clarify and summarize material, check with respondents for accuracy of interpretation, and explore unusual or unanticipated responses.”³²⁶ Furthermore, the researcher will test the hypothesis inductively in order to investigate what is not yet known from the senior pastors.

In order to convey what the researcher has learned, Merriam states, “It is anticipated that words, quotes and field notes from these pastors of senior years will be very meaningful and instrumental to the content of this qualitative research study. In fact, it is these characteristics about qualitative research, which makes it vital to this research study.”³²⁷

Participant Sample Selection

The participants in this research will be selected based on their ability to communicate effectively and deeply about how they develop their congregants. A purposeful sampling will be selected. According to Merriam, “purposely sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain

³²⁶ Ibid., 15.

³²⁷ Ibid., 16.

insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned.”³²⁸

Therefore, in order to collect meaningful data, the researcher will interview six to eight senior ministers that are currently active in ministry and have been in the senior pastorate for at least ten years. The participants will be chosen from different congregations within protestant denominations in order to discover different approaches and skills used by different pastors in different denominations. Due to limited resources for travel, the participants will be from the New York metro area. The participating pastors will also be selected from congregations of various sizes ranging from 70 to 2000 members. The purpose of this range is to better understand how well pastors develop their congregants from small to large congregations. The goal of qualitative research, according to Merriam, is to select information-rich cases (data) from which one can learn a great about issues of central importance.”³²⁹ The researcher will ask senior pastors of congregations of varying sizes how they developed their congregants throughout their years in ministry.

To conduct the interviews, a list of potential participants has been developed. Senior pastors will be invited to participate via an introductory letter or through email. After a week, the researcher will contact potential participants by phone call to find out if they are interested participating.

Data Collection

This study will utilize a semi-structured interview format as the primary tool for data gathering. In this type of interview structure, Merriam states, “either all of the questions are more flexibly worded or the interview is a mix of more and less structured

³²⁸ Ibid., 77.

³²⁹ Ibid.

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.”³³⁰ This open-ended, semi-structure format benefits the researcher by giving flexibility to adapt and respond in order to gather more data. All interested participants will be given a written letter about the research study and a written consent form to participate in the research. Each participant will be asked to complete and sign the consent form. Participants will be asked about their main leadership focus, size of the congregation, number of years as senior pastor, number of churches pastored. The researcher will use the research questions as the main guide for the interview protocol questions.

Interview Questions

The following research questions will be used to structure and guide this study:

1. How do senior pastors develop their congregants in spiritual renewal?
2. How do senior pastors develop their congregants’ spiritual gifts?
3. What are the challenges for senior pastors in developing their congregants through nurturing leadership?
4. What are the benefits of congregants developing through senior pastors’ nurturing leadership?

These next following questions will be used as interview protocol to gather data that will answer the research questions.

- 1) How do senior pastors develop their congregants in spiritual renewal?
 - a) Describe a time when focused on leading your congregants in spiritual renewal when you had to change your leadership style from an administrative approach to a nurturing approach.
 - b) How did you assess the need to develop your congregants to spiritual renewal?
 - c) What were some of the things you did to nurture your congregants to spiritual

³³⁰ Ibid., 90.

renewal? Please explain.

- d) How were you able to determine that your congregants were growing in spiritual renewal?
- 2) How do senior pastors develop their congregants' spiritual gifts?
 - a) What role did spiritual gifts play in the spiritual renewal of the congregants?
 - b) What did you do to help the congregants develop their spiritual gifts through spiritual renewal?
 - c) When did you know that the congregants' spiritual gifts were fully developed? Please explain.
 - 3) What are the challenges for senior pastors in developing their congregants through nurturing leadership?
 - a) Describe some of the challenges you had experienced going through the process of nurturing your congregants?
 - b) How difficult it was for congregants to develop their spiritual gifts?
 - 4) What are the benefits of congregants developing through senior pastors' nurturing leadership?
 - a) What are the benefits of spiritual renewal when developing the congregants?
 - b) How do spiritual gifts-development contribute to those benefits?

In order to conduct the interviews, the researcher will go to the participants' preferred sites. The interviews will be face-to-face, but participants will also be given the option to be interviewed by phone or through Skype. The interviews will be from one to one and half-hours each. An audio/digital voice recordings device will be the primary source of recording interview data and will later be transcribed to a word processing format for full data analysis.

Data Analysis

As soon as the interviews are recorded, one after the other, the researcher will immediately transcribe them and study the transcription for comparison, using the

constant comparative method. Merriam describes how the constant comparative method “involves comparing one segment of data with another to determine similarities and differences.”³³¹ Merriam continues,

Data are grouped together on a similar dimension. The dimension is tentatively given a name; it then becomes a category. Coding and categorizing the data will be a continuing process between interviews to allow for understanding and critical analysis of the interview data. The overall object of this analysis is to identify patterns in the data. The researcher will look for common themes, patterns, similarities, concerns, and contrasting views among the participants that will be interviewed. These patterns are arranged in relationships to each other in the building of a grounded theory.³³²

The constant comparative method will identify experiences of nurturing leadership skills that develop congregants. It will organize these experiences so that the researcher can identify a theory about nurturing leadership that will help other pastors develop their congregants with better and more effective leadership skills.

Researcher Position

The researcher as the primary instrument for data collection may cause others to challenge the worthiness of this qualitative research study or raise questions about its validity and reliability since researchers bring their own biases, assumptions, and worldviews into their analyses. Merriam addresses these issues when she advises, “Investigators need to explain their biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the research to be undertaken. This helps the reader to better understand how a . . . researcher might have arrived at the particular interpretation or data.”³³³ With this theoretical

³³¹ Ibid., 30.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid., 219.

explanation by Merriam, the researcher understands his bias, worldview, and backgrounds are factors that can contribute to negative interpretation of the data.

The researcher is in a denomination where pastors are sent to a church to serve for four years. The pastors' leadership skills are more about the amount of tithes given and souls won every year than nurturing congregants for growth. The researcher, however, is not biased against his denomination's ways of doing business in the church, but he hopes to learn better ways to help all pastors, across the denominational spectrum, learn how to develop their congregants spirituality.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this research study. Due to the limited resources of time and money, only six to eight senior pastors will be interviewed. The researcher is a pastor of two congregations, and a full time teacher. The researcher will not be able to travel to other states to interview other experienced senior pastors. Therefore, the conclusions drawn will not necessarily be universally applicable to every context.

Chapter Four

Findings

The purpose of this research study is to investigate how senior pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership. Specifically, this study was designed to discover the nurturing skills that senior pastors use to develop their congregants to spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development for spiritual growth. This study was guided under the assumption that learning takes place in the context of ministry. In order to investigate the problem and come up with the best nurturing skills that senior pastors use to develop their congregants the following research questions were used:

1. How do senior pastors develop their congregants in spiritual renewal?
2. How do senior pastors develop their congregants' spiritual gifts?
3. What are the challenges for senior pastors in developing their congregants through nurturing leadership?
4. What are the benefits of congregants developing through senior pastors' nurturing leadership?

In answering these research questions, eight senior pastors who served ten years or more in the pastorate were interviewed. These senior pastors nurtured and developed their congregants to spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development in their ministry. The interviews were analyzed, compared, and discussed.

Introductions to Participants and Context

In order to protect the identity of the participants, their names and their church's names have been changed to pseudonyms. Understanding the pastors' context of ministry is paramount, and the following explains each participant's context.

Joshua is the senior pastor of Lebanon Baptist Church of the Southern Baptist denomination. His church is located in the borough of Brooklyn, NY. Joshua has been serving in the current church for nineteen years. The congregation has seventy-three members and worships with eighty-five to ninety people every Sunday. Joshua has nurtured and developed his congregants to spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development. Pastor Joshua has a Master of Divinity from General Theological Seminary, a Master of Theological Studies from Union Theological Seminary, and a Doctorate from New York Theological Seminary. He taught high school for thirty-three years. Joshua currently teaches Greek and other subjects at the New York School of the Bible.

Jeremiah is the senior pastor of The Trinity Reform Church in Brooklyn, New York. He has been a pastor there for fifteen years. Reform Church is one of the founding congregations of the Reform Church in America of the Dutch Reform Church and has a membership of 200 congregants. Jeremiah grew up in a very warm, orthodox, Calvinist, Evangelical family. He studied at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, graduated with his master's from New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey, and holds a PhD from Drew University. Pastor Jeremiah also served as a senior pastor in Ontario, Canada, and in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

A native of New York, Daniel is the senior pastor of The Zion Methodist Church, in Brooklyn, NY. He has been pasturing there for over six years. He has been a senior pastor since 1980. He has over thirty-six years of ministry experience. He has pastored different churches in different boroughs in New York. He graduated with a Master of Divinity degree at Johnson C. Smith Seminary as a Presbyterian student then joined the Methodist denomination. He then went to Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston where he graduated with a Doctor of Ministry degree in Biblical Preaching. Pastor Daniel has a vibrant congregation with over 804 members that he nurtures and develops. He has two services every Sunday.

Shadrach is the senior pastor of the Memorial Presbyterian Church of the PCUSA in the borough of Brooklyn, New York. He has been the pastor there for twenty-eight years, nurturing and developing them. Shadrach has a flourishing congregation of over 500 members. People from 30 different countries attend church at the two services on Sunday morning. After earning his bachelor's degree, pastor Shadrach acquired a Master of Divinity and a Master of Pastoral Care and Counseling from Princeton Theological Seminary. He then went to Drew University and completed a Doctorate in Divinity with an emphasis on Pastoral Care and Counseling.

Matthew is the senior pastor of the Canaan Seventh-day Adventist Church in Brooklyn, New York. He has been serving there for over seven years. The congregation has a membership of 575 members. The pastor nurtures and develops his congregation for transformation and renewal. Pastor Matthew completed his bachelor's degree at Southern Adventist University, a master's degree in Pastoral Ministry from Andrews University. He is currently a doctoral candidate at New York Theological Seminary in the

area of transformational leadership. He has over fifteen years of ministry experience as a senior pastor.

Mark is a senior pastor of the Golgotha Pentecostal church in Brooklyn, New York. He has been the pastor there for twenty-eight years, since 1989. He has forty years of pastoral ministry experience. The church currently has 250 members. Pastor Mark graduated with a bachelor's degree from Northeast Bible Institute, and a master's degree in counseling from Villanova University. He was an assistant pastor for seven years in Staten Island, New York, and at another church for seven and a half years, in Brooklyn, New York.

Timothy is the senior pastor of Redeemer Pentecostal Church in Brooklyn, New York. He has been a pastor for many years, first as an assistant pastor under his father's tutelage, then he became a full-time and senior pastor for the past eight years. Pastor Timothy holds different degrees, including a doctorate. He nurtures and develops a congregation of more than 200 members.

Peter is a senior pastor of the Bethel Alliance Church in America in Brooklyn, New York. He has been a senior pastor for over ten years. The congregation has about 125 members. Peter has a bachelor degree, and a Master of Divinity.

In summary, all the pastors interviewed are senior pastors who are currently serving in the ministry, have been pastors for over ten years at different capacities, and are of different denominational backgrounds. These pastors have nurtured and developed their congregants to spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development.

The Findings

Below are the findings from the eight senior pastors' interviews. The findings are categorized in the order of the research questions and the major themes discussed in the interview questions.

How Do Senior Pastors Develop Their Congregants in Spiritual Renewal?

Many of the interviews revealed different methodologies for developing congregants. The following discusses four: nurturing relationships, preaching and teaching the word, prayer and counseling, and a vision for the church and community. Daniel, Joshua, and Shadrach emphasized nurturing relationships as an essential step in developing congregants. Mark, Jeremiah, Peter, and Matthew stated that renewal through preaching, teaching, prayer, and counseling helped them develop congregants. Timothy, Daniel, and Mathew emphasized the need to have a vision in order to develop the congregants.

Nurturing Relationships

On nurturing, Daniel emphasized the need to have relationships with the congregants when he stated,

It's very important to be in relationship. You have to be in relationships with your folk, and that may take some time. You don't get to know people overnight. To get to know people, to know their troubles and their joys, to just sit and talk, to work with people... I think you get into relationship with folk when you work with them, and those who don't do anything with the church, those are the folk I reach out to on a Sunday, the folk that just come to worship, but they're not involved. I want to get to know them because building relationships is one of the most important ways to understand how you can help people become whole persons.

When he was asked how he develops those relationships, he answered,

Visitation is important ... particularly people who are having troubles, who are not well... To visit where they live can tell you a whole lot about who they are, to see their home, to see the other members of their family who you may not see in

church, to understand the context and the world they live in. Visit somebody who is not well. Also, stand with people in their times of trouble; just the idea of going to court with somebody who may not have anybody else to go to court with. Very basic pastoral responsibilities, I think, show love. I have a family who live near me that was going to lose their house, and we help them. I think you show love in a very practical ways of supporting people and helping people.

Joshua discussed his early years in ministry and his misconceptions He stated how it is important to get involved in the lives of the congregants and build relationships with them, “I had certain preconception about ministry. I just thought that at first the only thing that was required was to go in and to preach and teach, but I soon learned that, that certainly was not enough, that you had to become actively involved in the lives of your members.” When Joshua was asked for examples of his nurturing and caring ways, he stated,

We have that kind of caring. I personally make home visitations to our members just to see how they’re doing...this is not just me, but the leadership of the church. Of course we visit the infirm. We visit our own who suffer bereavement, loss, those who are going through divorce, try to encourage them and to help them. We take some members out to dinners. Every third Sunday we have a family and friends fellowship. I call them on the phone if I haven’t seen somebody in a couple of weeks... letting them know that we love them and that we’re caring for them. Those who are bedridden, we commune. We go and have service with them... It shows that the pastor is concerned and cares about them.

In addition, on building relationships and showing care, Joshua stated, “I have to be circumspect in the way I respond to them and treat each one as if that is the most thing in the world for them.”

Shadrach also emphasized the need to have relationships with the congregants as a way of developing and nurturing them,

Initially, my first and second year you want to be seen as a relational pastor. Where you are constantly in touch with the people, and getting to know their families and their interests, and their desires, their frustrations. Out of that intimate relationship, word got out that there’s a pastor on the block who cared deeply about people. It

begins relationally. From then, once the relationships were cemented, then you move in the area of how can this start?

Shadrach was asked how he showed care, love, and nurture to his congregation. Shadrach responded,

I do different things. I do it from the pulpit. I do it personally. I do it by my phone calls. I do it by standing there every Sunday and greeting those persons and hugging those persons. It may be tiring, but you invest yourself. You do it by the way you address the concerns that people have. A good example... one of our members had a major fire. They lost everything. We prayed for them. We dig in our pockets and made an offering, give it to them to go buy some clothes, because they had no clothes, and people did. That's the best way to address the issue is to demonstrate it. Don't talk about it, just do it.

The pastors were asked, "how did you assess the need to develop your congregants to spiritual renewal?" Daniel responded, "Well, you know, over the years I have learned that congregations need to be stretched, I saw transformation in the many of the leadership." Joshua answered, "Congregation of hurting people, people being weak in faith, you feel compassionate and that they need nurturing... You interview folks individually and ask them... what kind of service do you think the church should be rendering to you?" Shadrach shared,

Part of being a leader is listening... You've got to listen to the people because your vision has to be tied into the needs of what have been coming from the community and the people. One best way to do it, we do what they call self-interest. What you do is, you go out to each member and you ask them about their families. Also, ask them, "If you had a chance to leave an impact on your church or something that can be used to improve the church what would that be?"

Preaching and Teaching the Word, Prayer, and Counseling

Mark, Jeremiah, Peter, and Matthew shared that preaching and teaching the word, prayer, and counseling are ways to develop and transform the congregants to spiritual renewal.

In sharing his view on the role of preaching and teaching the word in developing and nurturing congregants to spiritual renewal, Mark stated, “Nurturing begins with a clear presentation of the gospel.” He clarified that congregants may not be responding to pastors because “they have not had a definite or a clear conversion experience.” He said, “If I have newborn Christians, they’re all hungry. Nurturing is easy, I share the word and they feed on it... As they grow, then they begin to know what’s good for them. They feed on the word of God. I continue to nurture them with a clear, holistic approach to the scripture... Nurturing and fellowship and encouragement and praying for one another.”

Mark emphasizes preaching, teaching, and praying, and he also emphasizes with his leadership staff the need for counseling members. He stated,

I train them to be counselors... The next time a counseling session comes in, I bring one of my men in. If it is a woman, I have women that are trained in the church to counsel. They nurture. I just make sure that somebody is there to nurture and to love them, to take care of them... Sometimes, I say to somebody “I want you to be close to them. I want you to go take them into your small group. I want you to sit down and talk with them.

Jeremiah has a similar practice. He stated,

We meet weekly or monthly, We develop a prayer routine. We develop a study routine. We have something, however, else that we do that's quite been transformative, that has meant people changing their vocations, and even entering seminary, and that's called the catechumenate. It's an intensive 20 weeks, every Sunday night for 90 minutes. We simply read the gospel lesson every week in the lectionary readings, We pray, we read the gospel lesson, we use what's call the oral method of Bible study, sometimes called the African method of Bible study. We ask a series of questions and the final question every week is asking what is God's call on you through this passage?

Peter shared a similar view as he referenced those who were empty inside spiritually and needed God in their lives due to their lack of understanding of spiritual things. He stated, “They need God in their lives... Through the different years I spent time with them, prayed with them, studied the Bible with them. They will spend time

together; and pray for each other.” To cultivate spiritual renewal, Peter stresses counseling as a way of developing and renewing the congregants. He shared,

There’s a lot of counseling in terms of nurturing, it’s like bringing God’s truth in a way that they can understand into their life. That’s why I am concerned, that’s nurturing. It’s not just telling them what there is in the Bible, but helping them interact with the Bible, to make the Bible theirs. Also, the most basic part of that is nowadays people are broken... their relationships are broken. Mostly families are very broken up and marriage is broken. A lot of people [are] just struggling to survive. [These are the] reasons why I think (counseling) is important.

Matthew discussed how important praying, preaching, and teaching are in the renewal life of the church. He stated,

We do believe in prayer, but we facilitate programs here at this church that help to enhance the church spiritually. We do have our days of prayer and fasting in the church. Certainly, the word of God is very, very important to us. We believe in the constant study of the word. They come out and they study the word every sabbath. Not only do we do that, we believe that the word is central. In divine hour, on any given sabbath, we focus heavily on God’s word. The preaching of God’s word is crucial and important to us. We also have a very vibrant Bible class. Our youth program has God’s word in it. The young lead in teaching the doctrines here.

Articulating a Vision

Matthew, Timothy and Daniel expressed the importance of casting a vision in order to bring about spiritual renewal. Matthew shared,

I lay out a vision for my elders. I lay out a vision for my board. Then, from there, we lay out a vision for the congregation. We are in the process of putting a five year plan together for this church. We launched a massive revitalization program whereby we have taken the church to a point where they recognize the need. They recognize that there is a serious need for strong leadership, not only in the church, but strong leadership in our homes and our community.

Timothy added, “Our primary vision is what we stick to... this is a teaching and developing ministry church, that we are here to develop, to help you grow and to get to the place where God wants you to be. Not only to be, but to become leaders and fisherman for him.”

Daniel also talked about vision, but collective vision. Thirty years before he arrived at the church, Daniel's congregation had a vision to build a sanctuary for God. Their vision became the pastor's vision, and it brought about spiritual renewal. Daniel explained,

They had talked some 30 years about building a church... They had a lot of disagreements, when I came, things fell in place, and we were able to start that building and finish that building. They also rallied around that goal, that vision that they had to achieve that... We had to focus. It wasn't just prayer. What are your spiritual objectives in building this building? For what purpose? What is the vision that the Lord wants us to have to build a building? What are we going to do with it?

Emphasizing the spiritual and renewal aspects of the vision, Daniel added,

When you begin to list those things, and we're not doing this for ourselves, we're doing this for higher objectives, and then you begin to focus on your spiritual walk as a congregation, sermons, worship, everything, when people meet to have prayers around that help you stick with the vision. We're not just here to take care of business. We're here to also accomplish... Everything we do is to accomplish this vision that God has given us. When it becomes a comprehensive effort, that's when things begin to happen for good.

How Do Senior Pastors Develop Their Congregants' Spiritual Gifts?

In exploring the second research question, the participants provided three major steps to develop congregants' spiritual gifts: identifying gifts, understanding gifts biblically, and training to use gifts well. Three pastors, Joshua, Daniel and Shadrach, emphasized identifying the gifts as an essential element in developing the gifts. Mark, Jeremiah, and Peter focused on the biblical understanding for the exercising of the gifts. Matthew, Timothy, and Shadrach focused their attention on training the congregants in order to develop their gifts.

Identifying Gifts

Joshua talked about the identification of the gifts as a way to develop congregants. He explained,

What I do is to help people, well teach them steps on discovering what those spiritual gifts are that they have. Do an inventory. What is it that you have? What gift do you think God has given you? What do you excel at? What do you love doing, and how can you use that to further the ministry in the church?

In explaining how congregants react to this approach, Joshua continued, “Some people come to me and say, ‘Well, I think I have this gift,’ and of course as a leader with the help of others, we have to find ways in which to use that gift so we can help the entire congregation grow.” Joshua explained how he identifies the gifts,

Another obligation I had is to observe people, see what particular things that they’re good at, that they enjoy doing, because sometimes people may not see it, but you see it as a pastor. After a while, if my notions have been I believed confirmed, then I’ll speak to the individual. Most of the time, thank God, I am right, and we go to pray about it.

Similar to Joshua, Daniel shared his approach in identifying the congregants’ gifts, “I always find that it’s very necessary to find out from people, What is your prior experience?...What have you done in the past? What are your goals? Why are you coming here? To learn about that so that that can be developed in ways.” Daniel explained another way of seeing congregants’ gifts,

At least I’ve learned when folk come to a church to join the church, you’ve got to give them time to get in, to become a part of the household, become a part of the family. Most people will move toward an area that they want to be involved in. Many come knowing what they want to do. That means that I’m going to be in conversation with you about, “What do you know about that area? This is what we can teach you about that area.” You see, it’s again a learning process.

Shadrach also revealed his approach to identifying gifts,

There’s a formula, and there are several gift inventories you can use. James Dobson has one with Focus on the Family. Dobson is the method we use here. The Purpose Driven Life, Rick Warren, is another measurement that they use to measure people. We have used measurements over the years for people to take the examination and see where their gifts fall. They can Google it and get one to assess what their

spiritual gifts are. Once a person identifies what their gifts are, they say, “My gift is giving. My gift is visiting the sick.”

In the process of identifying the gifts, Shadrach also explained,

When new members are being trained and they are going through a new membership class, we ask them what their gifts are. Sometimes we ask them but also sometimes we can identify what we think their gifts are. Once I share it with you, then I try to create opportunity for them to use their gifts.

Biblical Understanding

Mark strongly believes that the gifts are only given by God and develop by the Spirit of God. He explained,

As far as the gifts are concerned, the church wants to say all of these gifts in play. I don't see it. I do see obviously, that God has given gifts that are still in play in the church, gifts of leadership, gifts of mercy, gifts of teaching. I am very concerned about them being under the control of the Holy Spirit. As they're under the control of the Holy Spirit, according to Ephesians 5:15-21, I see that they are going to be sensitive to what the spirit of God wants them to do with how he's gifted them.

To explain his biblical understanding of developing the gifts, Mark said, “When I have people out on the street in the middle of the battle, witnessing, appealing to people at an abortion clinic, handing out tracts, talking with people, if they are spirit controlled, they are going to be trained in that venue. They are going to experience development.”

However, Mark also believes that the correct biblical hermeneutic or interpretation of the gifts is important and is to be done by the pastor. He stated, “If you have a true gift from the Holy Spirit with teaching, all I have to do is make sure your hermeneutic is correct.”

Jeremiah shared a similar view on his biblical understanding of the gifts,

I do know that my sermon series now are going to be on the work of the Holy Spirit... I want to explore what the Holy Spirit means in our lives. I go through a sermon series saying, “scripture speak to us,” and I'll interpret for my people... I think people learn about their gifts when they confront God's word in their lives. That's what I believe. I don't think it's like, should I be a musician? No... I don't know. You ask the Lord Jesus how he judges me. I think it's Spirit led, because we

very much rely on God's speaking, and not on a prescribe program. Our whole orientation is how is God talking to you in scripture?

Peter also believes in a biblical understanding of developing the gifts through the Spirit, but he also emphasizes a pastor's guidance through discovery and identification.

Peter explained,

My goal is not just to tell them understand what the Bible says. My goal is to help them to interact with the Bible so that it becomes something real in their life in the same way I approach spiritual gifts. Of course I tell them, in the Bible it talks about this, different kinds of gifts and so on. You might have some of it. Designed by God, given by God through the Spirit. It's something designed by God that when you use it then the body of Christ is being built up.

Peter gives pastoral guidance for gifts development. He said,

I say, "Everybody is important." I would say that everybody has something to offer, something very unique too. My approach is that I will give them the picture. I say, "So many people have all these needs, what can we do? Then some people would say, "I can do this one. They will begin to do things that they can do and what they can do well and then I'll say "okay." According to how I understand what they can do or at least guide them to that direction.

Gifts Training

Matthew believes that it is important to train the congregants in order to develop their gifts. He explained,

The way we develop their gifts is, to a large extent, training. Number one, we run a gift-based ministry. Our members do the gift-based inventory. It's a test that's done online. We also provide hard copy for them. After doing that test, we walk them through the process of helping them to serve in the area of their giftedness. We give them the necessary tools. We train them, we teach them, and we send them to work.

Matthew elaborated upon his training process,

Empowering leaders to make leaders. Like for instance, at the end of this year, I have three officers who are resigning, but they are going to stay within the department because they have already trained someone, a younger person who they are presenting to take over and lead. They make that selection and they say, "Pastor, we think this person is a good person to train." I evaluate the person, sit down, and talk with them. Then, my leader, if that's okay with myself and them, they train that person and prepare them to lead.

Matthew also stated that he places congregants according to their area of gifts strengths,

I individualize my consideration for each leader. My first elder works for the city and he is a tremendous organizer. My business is to help to enhance his skills. He is also an IT person. He is not only my first elder, he is also the elder who looks over our IT for the church because of his skills. I specifically assigned him. In fact, quite a number of my elders specialize in ministry, and they specialize in ministry based on their area of giftedness. That's how we get to lighten the work for everyone, and we get to hold people accountable.

Describing his responsibility as a leader he continued, "I, as the leader, have the responsibility to provide resources for them, to stimulate them intellectually in their area of their giftedness. I go out on my way to bring in workshops for them consistently, officer's workshops, and leadership symposiums. There are ongoing seminars and training, not just for the officers but for the church in general." Matthew continued,

Another area and factor that is very, very crucial is to make sure that the empowerment process takes place, meaning that if you ask someone to do something, we do not micromanage that individual. We guide and lead but we don't micromanage. There's accountability and the pastor will hold people accountable for what they're supposed to do but we empower leadership.

Timothy also believes in training congregants to develop their gifts. He provided his steps to do so,

The Lord gives ability, even when he gives gifts. If you're going to be a singer, and then you're a singer for the Lord, and where you sing, people's hearts are now developed, or they feel the presence of God through singing. When he gives the ability, not just for people just to come up and sing but through the teaching now and developing, now they're developing and they're transformed, and now when they sing, it's no longer in self.

Timothy also gives opportunity to congregants. He stated, "You give opportunity, you teach, you develop, how to become better. We give quite a few opportunity even on Sundays mornings and evenings, during midweek, we give ample and enough opportunity (to be developed and exercised the gifts)."

Shadrach also offered a very detailed way of training his congregants in spiritual gifts development,

All of us have the ability. God has put into each one of us spiritual gifts. Who he calls, he equips says the scripture. What happens sometimes in ministry is that people are watching other people use their gifts, and feel insecure about their gift that God has given to them. Everybody has a gift that can be used. Something that you know that if given the opportunity, you can do good or do well here, so whether it's the administrative gifts, whether it's the love gift, or the gift of giving, the gift of control, and the gift of nurturing. All of those are gifts that people have.

Shadrach then explained the steps he used to train congregants to develop their gifts and to become leaders,

There are people who come in, we have a six weeks new membership course that people who want to join the church would go through for six weeks. Going through that, one of the classes is on using your gifts. We talk about that. If a person can sing, we happen to have a chair for the choir. If a person loves to pray, we say, "Okay, we have a prayer ministry here. I recommend that you join the prayer ministry." A person here has the gift of friendliness, and smiling and hospitality. We plug them into hospitality, the usher ministry here. Here so while they're coming out of the new membership class, we are already thinking about places in the ministry where they can be plugged in.

Shadrach further talked about other biblical gifts that his church used,

The gift of teaching is big here. We are a teaching church. We are a biblical teaching church. We are a traditional Presbyterian in that kind of sense. We are a teaching ministry here. The gift of service, we try deeply to convey the importance that we are saved to serve. A lot of stuff we do here is about service. We have major pantry here at church. We give out about 500 food per week to the community here. It's just giving, giving, giving. Service is big. The gift of hospitality is big. Hospitality is other persons who have this tremendous gift of visiting the hospitality when people are sick. They tend to the needs of those that are sick and shut in at home. They cater twice a month a coffee hour for all the visitors to come and to hear about the ministry.

Sadrach also discussed the importance of discipleship and evangelism with regard to gifts development,

We have a discipleship and evangelism ministry in place. It's done from the time we see a person and it goes from first base, second base, third base concept. When a

person joins the church and they finish the membership class, they would go to the new members and would start to create steps of goals.

Shadrach discussed the different gifts and ministries, but he also provided other means of training and development for leadership. Shadrach described the leadership training, saying,

We have our leadership training that occurs here where we train potential leaders in an area of sub-development in terms of thinking, in terms of cognitive development, in terms of behavioral change. We have it maybe three or four times a year. We take all the leaders, all of these diverse ministries on a Saturday. We have a conversation with them, and do workshops, and conversation development, and also content information of what it means to be a leader in the 21st century. Then also, a part of that training is to paint the picture of where we think the church is heading. I share the vision with them during the leadership training so they can go back to their various ministries here and create goals that satisfy the bigger goal.

In entrusting leaders with shared responsibility and leadership position, Shadrach said,

In the Presbyterian church we have maybe three major levels of leadership. The pastor, and then you have the governing board called the session. The session is made up of what they call the elders. They are the ones who govern the everyday function of the church. The second is called the trustees. They are responsible for the building, the maintenance, and the needs of the building. Also, they have fiscal responsibility in terms of gathering and spending monies. The third layer of leadership is called deacons. They are the ones that reach out in the community that are sick, hungry, when there is a death in the family, sickness, and hospital. Each person has a responsibility to help another person grow and evolve. Accountability in ministry is important.

The participants were also asked to evaluate the congregants' gifts development by answering the question, "When did you know the gifts are fully developed?" Matthew answered,

I don't believe they're totally fully developed. I want to be careful not to say they are, because fully developed mean you have arrived but I've noticed that we have gotten into a good place in terms of their giftedness. I have noticed that over the past two years now, and especially this year based on the certain things I'm able to see the church do in terms of programs and ministry, based on some initiatives that we have had in this community.

Timothy responded similarly, “Well, I don’t think anyone, in general, will ever get fully developed, because we all keep learning, but to a stage where they’re getting stronger developed, developing, you see that over a series of time, a period of time, after some time, of course.” Timothy gave an example of the disciples and their experience with the demons when they went to Jesus,

For example, Jesus sent his disciples out. When He sent them out and they came back, they said, “Well, listen, Lord they were subject to us. We prophesied. We spoke to them, and great things started to happen. Demon came out.” He said, “Well, you’re still missing out on something. Just rejoice that your name is written in the Book of Life. Don’t excited over all this other stuff.

Timothy concluded, “We’re never going to get to a place where we’re fully developed or we’re into a place that we have reached our pinnacle. There are always higher heights and deeper depths.”

Shadrach shared,

The best way to assess that is usually when people have somebody they start to mentor. When they no longer want to hold onto the gift for themselves but they want to pass on the baton to somebody else to mentor and then to assume responsibility. They become team players more than solo individuals. The best way to assess this when a gift is developed is when a person is willing to share it, and to mentor somebody else.

*What Are the Challenges for Senior Pastors in
Developing Their Congregants through Nurturing Leadership?*

Each of the participants described challenges that they encounter in their nurturing leadership. Joshua, Daniel, Shadrach, Matthew, and Peter discussed change as a human problem. Jeremiah, Mark, and Timothy named how a lack of interest was a challenge. Similarly, Timothy, Peter, and Shadrach said lack of Commitment and skills challenged them. The pastors also discussed how to meet these challenges.

Change As a Human Problem

Joshua explained the challenges he faces,

I think whenever you get involved in the lives of people, that can always be a challenge. If you get involved, you're going to have some challenges because sometimes you get disappointed. I think the challenges that we have is resistance. I think these are common challenges that we all face as pastors, and that is that you have a natural tendency to resist. When I say resist, what I mean is that there are some folks who want to stay stagnant. Another challenge that you have is that sometimes people don't grow as fast as you would like them to grow.

Joshua elaborated on the words "resist change," and he continued, "Yeah, they resist change. I told you that some people have that exceptional religion, everybody except me, but when you get everybody with that attitude, then that does not help a church to grow. It keeps a church stagnant." When Joshua was asked if he thinks that prevents transformation, he responded, "Yes, yeah, absolutely."

Daniel shared similar challenges on resistance to change,

Entrenched members of the church who do not want to see things change... Folks don't always see what's happening to them. They don't see what's happening to their congregation. When you have a group of people or an individual or anybody who is not open to change, to doing things differently, not simply because it needs to change, not because you want it to change, but because we obviously are at a point where we need to do some things differently. When you have that problem, you've got a problem, stubbornness, control. Those can be big problems in a church. If you get a core of people saying, "This is the way we used to do it, we're not going to do it differently," you've got a problem there. You've got to work on that problem.

Shadrach also talked about the issue of effecting change in people as a constant problem,

You know there's constant challenges. The one thing with people is you are always going to have challenges. Otherwise, you don't understand the complexity of leadership. The hardest part of it is for people to buy into the idea of change. It's bigger thing for them to buy into an idea of change. People are mostly comfortable with the status quo, the way things are. Since the future is unknown, they are not very sure that what you are telling them is going to work. So to try and sell your

brand, trying to sell your content and your vision is a big challenge. All of us are people. We are resistant to change by nature especially in the church community.

Peter also shared his challenges regarding this human problem,

There is this interesting part in humans and people is that sometimes they resent help. They don't want to change for various reasons and so that will take a lot of time to overcome. If you ask what kind of gifts they have, that's not difficult to know. The difficult part will be about utilizing, using the gifts in such a meaningful way in their life. That's the hard part.

Matthew also experienced resistance to change as a challenge to developing congregants through nurturing leadership,

It was difficult and still sometimes a challenge because some of them feel that they have a life. They come from back home, how they have always done it, and we want to do it just the same way we've done it back home. They said, "Pastor, let's do it like how we did it back home." Often times, I have to remind some of my leaders that you are no longer in Jamaica, and Guyana, and Haiti, and some of the other countries.

Lack of Interest

Jeremiah described his congregants' lack of interest due a lack of understanding of denominational doctrinal way of nurturing and renewing people, "I think a challenge that we have is teaching the culture of my denomination since the Reformed Church in America is as deep, rich tradition with real established patterns." Explaining his challenges and how new congregants react to the denomination rich tradition patterns, Jeremiah shared his congregants' reaction, "They didn't join Old First to be in a Reformed Church. They joined Old First because this was the church in this location that had a Christ centered worship service that was open and progressive."

Mark shared the congregants' lack of interest due to being unsaved as a challenge in nurturing leadership, "Nurturing is easy... but it is a difficult thing to do it with false

converts. It's a very miserable existence. I work at trying to clarify for people: what is your relationship with God?"

Timothy also expressed how congregants lacked interest and were not hungry,

Then the next challenge is that there are some that are not hungry enough. They don't hunger and thirst after the gifting of the Lord. It's in them, and you want them to let it birth out. That's one of the main things that they get into place of complacency or lazy, slothful type of behavior where the Lord has given talents that are not being used. That's where that parable of the talents come into play where he says, "I gave you the talents." I gave it to you already. All you have to do is now use them. There is nothing that I can do to force them to not be lazy, to come out.

Lack of Commitment and Skills

Timothy described the lack of skills and time commitment as a major challenge for people to reach new heights in leadership,

People want to get to a higher height, but they don't want to go through the process. That's one of the challenges that we find quite often. In order to receive the understanding, the mind of Christ, in order to really get that teaching, you have to now apply yourself. There are many excuses that many will make. They will say that they've got school, they have work, they have family, and other things like that. Do they apply? Do they really read God's Word enough? Do they pray? Again, they don't apply themselves enough.

Peter also described long-term time commitment as a major challenge,

The one major challenge is long term. Our people (he said) love short-term things. For example, they write in Romans 12, "Offer yourself as the living sacrifice." They are thinking about, "When am I going to be released from this?" "Go home and take a break," and so on. Nurturing is a long-term thing, just like growing life from a baby all the way up. It takes a long time. The commitment takes a long time too. That's one of the hardest things. People are willing to help with projects, but when you are asking them to commit five years or ten years or their life in nurturing other people is one of the hardest.

Peter expounded upon other challenges, "maybe people just don't know what tomorrow will be like so they feel that they cannot commit. They are afraid that they might offer something that they cannot follow up with and so on." Peter, who understands the meaning of commitment, added, "The kind of pledge that we are making before God, yes,

I have to be very serious and try my best to whatever I offer.” Peter also recounted the story, “There’s a kid who did not have time to serve God because he needed time to spend with his friends, time to play ball, time to play with his computer. All these are perishable things.” Peter asked,

Are they serving God? Yes, but there is something missing in there. Usually, I think this how people respond to God when he asks more from their lives and they will start reacting this way. Husband will try to save their personal space and time. The wife will try to protect the house, and thinking that it’s going to fall apart if not. They have a hard time with really getting to the real point of giving God something because they are not thinking about giving God the particular things that God is asking from them.

Shadrach also expressed his view on the time commitment challenges when he stated, “People are busy. People are very, very busy in the city and do not have time commitment to make, to sustain ministry.”

Pastors’ Ability to Meet the Challenges

In order to meet these challenges, Joshua believes in building relationships with congregants,

I firmly believe it now. I didn’t believe it when I first started. I had to come to that in my ministry. Let me say it again, I felt that my job was to come teach and preach. Now I realize that I’ve been called to do more than just that, and that is to invest all that I have, my time and my effort, my energy in the lives of my congregants and that means getting personal with them and sitting down at their tables and becoming involved in a number of aspects of their lives. Sometimes they welcome that. Sometimes they put up guards to try to prevent that, but they eventually will let those guards down and they open up and they say, “You know what? We really trust you as a spiritual leader.”

Daniel also makes the case for building relationships,

Relationship is important, it takes time to build that relationship. Once you build a relationship with the people, and you begin to help folk understand, “Look, this is what we’re up against, and this where we are today...” Once you change the culture in the church, very often folk will change. People will change, and they will change some of the ones that have been the most obstinate, and can turn around to be the greatest advocates for what change needs to be.

Jeremiah, on the other hand, described his challenges as a shared leadership problem,

The challenges for me are to share my work with Silas and Timothy. It's easy for me to be the pull all because I'm excited to do it. I like to be in the people's lives. I want to see the person... I do a lot of face-to-face with my people. I have to let other people do some of that work, but I love to do it much. The challenge for me is sharing the work.

Peter expressed how dealing with the people's brokenness through renewal helps,

A lot of people have brokenness in their lives. We are talking about, not only healing that, overcoming that, breaking through, talking about a long process... I advise them to pray and ask God to help. Did God help you? Did God really answer your prayers? Is He real? Is He powerful enough to help you? With that they gather more that can help them to deal with the more difficult challenges... All of this takes a lot of spiritual growth, your spirituality as your change. God has to be very real in your life."

Shadrach offered his ways of dealing with the challenges of congregants refusing to change and having lack of commitment, "You have to do those three things. You've got to preach about it. You've got to pray about it. You have to talk about it until people start to hear it over and over again, and start to enter the system here." Shadrach also talked about investing time in people, being consistent, and giving them opportunity to grow as a way of meeting the challenges:

It is a good thing of being in the same location for a long time as the leader. I'm not perfect, because none of us are perfect, but if you tend to be consistent over time here, you can see people's gifts being developed in long term ministry. You have been here, you have been encouraging, you have been motivating, and so although there can be challenges, if you stay with the people and encourage them, and create opportunity for them to serve, they will blossom. Part of what a leader's job to do is to create opportunity for service.

Timothy also offered opportunity as a way to meet challenges: "Those who are hungry enough and are developing, again, when we give them the opportunity and they kept on developing and developing."

Mark expressed his challenges as a nurturing leader in understanding and conveying the gospel to the congregants for transformation and spiritual renewal when he stated,

The biggest problem I had was not understanding the gospel clearly. Then I came to the point where I said there's something more here. There's something more, but it's pretty close and began to continue to study. Then, I began to understand that in the evangelical movement, the law had been ripped out of the gospel. The use of the ten commandments. I began to see where the apostle Paul had a high regard for the use of the ten commandments in the witness where a person would be brought to a place where they were convicted of their sin.

Mark added,

When I began to apply that, that is when things I think in the church became a lot clearer and for people, their understanding of the gospel became a lot clearer at that point, where we front loaded the gospel with the law. It's freed up a lot of people in the church to be able to understand how to apply the gospel to people's lives.

Matthew shared a similar view with Mark, using the gospel to meet the challenges and also identifying key leaders to help effect change. He stated,

We must learn to package the gospel to fit the environment and the setting that we are called to serve at. I often time, remind them of that. I sing that, I preach that, I teach that. Preaching is very important in changing the concepts of people. Every opportunity I get from this pulpit, I teach my members... Not only I do that but every good soldier does groundwork. How do you do groundwork? You have to identify the key and influential leaders in your church and get those sold on the program.

What Are the Benefits of Congregants Developing through Senior Pastors' Nurturing Leadership?

The participants shared the following benefits to their congregation from nurturing leadership. Joshua, Daniel, Shadrach, and Matthew shared how their congregants grow. Jeremiah, Peter, Shadrach, and Matthew named transformation as a benefit. Mark, Daniel, Matthew, Peter, Joshua, and Shadrach believe their congregations experiences better discipleship and service. Matthew, Shadrach, Timothy, and Joshua

said they exhibited better leadership. All the pastors experienced more effective leadership.

Congregants Grow

Joshua explained the benefits to his congregation from nurturing leadership,

First of all, I think that is the catalyst of growth for the church. The church will grow not just in number but spiritually. I think our objectives shouldn't be more than just to see the church get larger so we can get more in the plate on Sunday, but we want to see our people grow in their appreciation and love for their church community and for Christ. They love the church more. They contribute more.

Daniel saw individual growth as a spiritual benefit of pastors' nurturing leadership,

Well, the benefits are first to the individual. I think that they begin to see themselves in a new light hopefully. When I go back to my young years when I became involved in the church, and they asked me to come be a part of certain things, it did something to me. It helped me think good of myself. I felt I was a part of something. I think when you ask people to come and be involved, there's a certain excitement that people have; they can be inspired by participating and being asked to participate.

Daniel emphasized this benefit by saying,

Always ask a basic question, "What do you want to see happen here in this church? What don't you come be a part of that?" For people to be inspired to inspire themselves. We inspire ourselves. Also, very practically, people need to develop their very practical. Some people can write. You have a church newsletter. Some people are wonderful writers. We have a woman who is a wonderful poet. She's not highly educated, but she writes beautiful poetry. That's a benefit. She's developing her literary talent, and we get the blessing of reading, hearing her work, you see... There are a lot of benefits.

Daniel elaborated upon how the congregants' spiritual gifts contribute to the benefits,

Well, when people are renewed spiritually and understand that they have a close relationship with God, with Jesus, then the church is going to very often grow because it's going to become a place that other people want to come to, When people are inspired and you walk in the doors, you can feel it. When the spirituality is high and heightened, I think that's very key. When you have a church that is aware of its spiritual, the spiritual presence is amongst them, you're going to have church growth. People are going to come to that church.

Shadrach shared the benefits in the area of growth, “One person who is nervous about praying in public because they are afraid being seen praying in public is so dramatic, to see that person begin to pray two or three sentences, and now they can pray on behalf of the people. Yeah so the benefits are tremendous here.”

Matthew shared his view on the benefits in terms of financial growth and spiritual life transformation when he stated, “As we grow, then everything else will grow. For years now, we have invested. Actually, we are coming to the end a \$600,000 project in this church, building project. It’s going to be transformed, but the transformation process right now has shifted really from transforming a building to transforming lives.”

Transformation

Jeremiah expressed how transformation was a spiritual benefit of congregants developing through pastors’ nurturing leadership. He explained the state of transformation that takes place in a person,

My experience is that people are satisfied if they can have small, but real, God experiences in their lives. It can be as simple as seeing a friend’s life change, or having the experience of hope after some despair, or that’s what it means that Jesus became a human, that God became a human being. That’s what it is. That kind of stuff carries people a long way. My experience is that when people see a little bit of spiritual transformation in their life, it doesn’t take much if they’re mature people. That gives meaning in their lives and they’re willing to stand up for their faith. Having these God moments, and often they are not so much when it’s loud, often when it’s quiet... in silence or grief, or sharing with someone, or somebody reading a passage.

Jeremiah added, “When you are working within spiritual gifts... you are now feeling like you are within the kingdom of God.” Jeremiah shared a story to describe the benefits of transformation,

We had one guy, this is great, he was giving his testimony and said, “You might ask, ‘Why I spend all this time on all these committees?’ You know I’m on a lot

of committees. ‘Why do I spend all this time on the deacons board?’ I’m on the committee that makes food CHIPS, the food ministry.” He cooks every Saturday. “You know why I do this? Because when I’m doing it, I can see the kingdom of God,” he said, “I can see the kingdom of God. That’s what I want. I just want them to be able to see when they go through these experiences and these groups. I just want them to be able to see the kingdom of God.

Peter understands the first spiritual benefit of congregants developing through pastors’ nurturing leadership is to be transformation. He stated,

I would say that the number one is that the congregants would be heading in the right direction in their lives. They will not stay as an audience, sitting there and just enjoy. I believe that somehow the loving one another mandate in the Bible will be lived out in the church. I believe that one of the characteristics of the church will be a caring church, a church that the people feel that they are welcome to go to, to join in.

Shadrach also expounded upon the benefits of transformation, “To look on people that you have spent time with pouring into, and to see how they have gotten excited about their faith, to pour into a young man as I see here all the time and to see that young man start to teach and preach. You sit back and you say, ‘Wow, I’m so glad I made that investment...’”

Matthew understands that part of the spiritual benefits is transformation,

What happens is, it gets to a point where, just as the Bible says, the Bible encourages the edification of the church and the priesthood of all believers. All of these individuals, after they have found their gifts and they are stimulated spiritually and intellectually, because intellectual stimulation also breeds spiritual stimulation and growth... We always base that on the word. As individuals find their gifts and utilize it, they actually become the ones to actually empower each other... When you’ve transformed lives, they will transform other lives, and that group will transform other lives.

Better Discipleship and Service

Mark was asked what are the benefits of congregants developing through senior pastors’ nurturing leadership, he responded by emphasizing discipleship as one of the benefits when he stated,

They show the world that we are disciples. Jesus said, “If you love one another, the world will know that you’re my disciple.” That’s one of the things that people have told us. “We sense that you have love each other in this church, that you have a love for another. You enjoy one another. You like being around one another.” That’s important for people unsaved to see.

Daniel added discipleship as a benefit of spiritual gifts,

I think we all have some spiritual yearning that guides us to discipleship. When we’ve made up our mind to be disciples, then we go on to further spiritual development... The transformation process is when we are like Jesus we really entering onto a spiritual journey. It’s not until we’re transformed into discipleship that we then grow in terms of our spiritual gifts.

Matthew shared his benefits and mentioned discipleship and service:

I discovered that basically in my people’s lives, and ministry, their passion and their desire to serve God, and to get involved in various evangelistic trust and ministry. One of the ways in which I really saw that this church was growing spiritually is when we had the hurricane some years ago. I saw this membership stood up with their pastor. We went over to Canarsie. We went over to places in Queens, et cetera. Late at nights we were there serving people. Early mornings, giving people food and clothing, et cetera. I saw so many of our members involved in that.

Matthew also said, “That’s the indication that they have come to the place where they have grown spiritually and they realized that their existence is to serve God and to serve men. Those are indicators that people are growing spiritually when they are willing and ready to go and serve wherever they are called to serve.” Matthew added, “We see also that it really, really benefits the church as it relates to soul winning because as they grow, and certainly, the people who come in the church will be able to grow with them. Anybody who’s growing won’t want to leave there, they are growing because there’s vested interest in being here.”

Peter shared that discipleship and service are an important spiritual benefit. He stated, “Each individual will become a small pastor in that sense because they will be

practicing reaching out, evangelizing, and witnessing. They will be practicing nurturing one another. They will be practicing teaching one another.”

Joshua talked about service in the context of spiritual growth benefits. He stated,

I think the key to service is through the gifts that God gives you. You can do it two ways. You can do it through your natural fleshly means which brings no honor and pleasure to God, or you can allow God to equip you, surrender yourself to him and let him use you. Then I think that has far more benefits than the other. It’s what the apostle Paul said in Galatians 2 that, “I have been crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, but not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I live in the flesh I now live into the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.” That’s what we want to see in every one of our congregants.

When it comes to their growth in the benefits of service Joshua added, “they render greater service. They serve not only admirably but with a willing heart.”

Shadrach shared this point on the benefits of discipleship and service when he stated,

It’s not about personal benefit, it’s about God’s kingdom benefits. The more the good news gets spread, the more the gifts are transmitted. The more transmission occurs, is more the kingdom of God is spread. The Bible talks about the people who sowed the seeds in different areas, different soils, how they grow based on where they were planted. When they are planted in the right soil, and it takes deep roots then it flourishes.

Better Leadership

Matthew thought nurturing leadership is better leadership. He stated,

The benefit is, definitely, for the congregation. We have better leaders... For our leaders, them personally, it helps them not only in their leadership capability at the church but it helps them to be stronger leaders in their home, and to be stronger leaders out in the job and in the community. Maxwell says, “Everything rise and falls with leadership.”

When it comes to the benefits of congregants’ contribution to the leadership of the church, Shadrach stated,

I think there are benefits in terms of confidence. The people gain confidence in themselves. They gain confidence in their gifts. They recognize it. Then they

develop it and they teach it to somebody else. Once a person gets confident, and the trickle down effect starts to happen across the board, horizontally but also vertically.

Shadrach gave an example of this kind of leadership, “To look at a young lady who was afraid to dance, or to lead worship, and to call on somebody important and encourage them, and now they are worshiping and leading with confidence.”

Timothy talked about better leadership and unity among the congregants when he stated, “We become like a unit. We become unbroken, we fellowship together, we tabernacle together and we dwell together. We become alike. When that happens, that’s when the Spirit of the Lord just moves on the place, like in the Day of Pentecost, because they were all in one accord.”

When it comes to unity in the leadership, Joshua stated, “It’s not a tug of war that goes on between you and your congregants.”

More Effective Leadership

Timothy was asked, “How does nurturing leadership make you a more effective pastor?” He described his duty and responsibility to be the leader chosen with the vision when he stated, “One of the main benefits is the Lord has given the vision to the main leader, such as myself, any leadership, you pass that down, now, to the congregants. The main vision is here, but everyone else, where the Lord speaks to them, they tie right back into the main vision.”

Peter responded, “I will be in connection with my people. I will not be so far away from them. Also helping me to be humble, remembering that I’m one of the broken people too if God did not come and do all of this.” Peter added, “My leadership structure is that the church is there to provide the opportunity for people to grow and for people to

realize themselves as a disciple and to disciple other people. That's the most important part. I do not separate that. Everything has to go back to that."

Daniel responded,

Because you get what you give. When you are trying to help someone grow, when you are nurturing them, when you are feeding them, then you go and eat a little bit yourself. As you teach, as you counsel, as you help people grow in terms of their spiritual understanding, you are certainly going to grow in terms of your own spiritual understanding. In teaching Bible study, for example, when any time I'm teaching a Bible class or even preparing for a sermon, I come across something and I say, "Gee, I've have been reading this for 40 years, but I see something different here that I never paid attention to before. In different ways, in the process of helping others grow spiritually, you find yourself growing spiritually.

Matthew responded similarly to Daniel when he said,

It makes me more effective in that I nurture and I am being nurtured also. Not only do I nurture my congregation, there are times when they nurture me. I've always held on to this motto and I still do, pastors don't make churches, churches make pastors. That's my motto. Every church that I've been to, they have made me a stronger pastor.

Jeremiah stated,

Nurturing ministry keeps a person focused as opposed to institution. It keeps his spirit focused as opposed to program. Nurturing ministry, I think, is more like the way the Lord Jesus is incarnational... To me, it feels more like the New Testament. That's the way Paul did his ministry and that's the way the Lord Jesus did his ministry. Yes, there is the giving of the word. Paul preached. He always preached to his people.

Mark responded to that question by stating, "Just being a responsible leader. I would say just be responsible for what God's called you to do." He elaborated,

If he's called us to handle the Word of God in a proper way, to hold people accountable with the Word of God. Shepherding, leading, lead people in a certain way. Yeah, that's what's I want to do, but it's not always something that they perceive as good until they allow that God word to effect in their lives. Yeah, nurturing. Growing.

Finally, Joshua shared his view on how nurturing leadership makes him a better pastor,

I think it makes me... Well of course, I'm reluctant to say a better pastor. I think a more effective pastor, more effective. The effectiveness of ministry should be determined by changed lives, not by any external thing like how much they put in the plate on Sunday, but their changed lives. I witnessed that over and over again throughout the years in my ministry. Not as much I would like it, but I witnessed it in a number of individuals, and I thank God for that.

Shadrach also shared his view on the effectiveness of nurturing leadership when he stated, "In a community anyone that uses their gifts to nurture, to develop, to achieve transformation is leaving a legacy on the lives of people who might be able to help them find themselves."

Summary

This chapter presented the data collected during the interview process. It explored how pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership and reported according to their findings. The final chapter of this dissertation will discuss these findings in light of the themes that have emerged from the literature review and provide recommendations for future research and practice.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this research study was to investigate how senior pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership. Specifically, this study was designed to discover the nurturing skills that senior pastors use to develop their congregants to spiritual renewal and gifts development for spiritual growth. The assumption that learning takes place in the context of ministry guided this study. In Chapter Two, the review of the literature, explored the theoretical aspect of nurturing leadership as an important skill to develop congregants. The following research questions guided the exploration of how senior pastors use nurturing skills to develop their congregants:

1. How do senior pastors develop their congregants in spiritual renewal?
2. How do senior pastors develop their congregants' spiritual gifts?
3. What are the challenges for senior pastors in developing their congregants through nurturing leadership?
4. What are the benefits of congregants developing through senior pastors' nurturing leadership?

Summary of the Study and Findings

This study examined the nurturing leadership skills that pastors can use when developing congregants for growth. Both the literature and the interviews revealed the need for pastors to use nurturing leadership in order to develop their congregants for spiritual renewal and gifts development. In Chapter Two, the literature review had four areas of focus: leadership, spiritual renewal, spiritual gifts-development and biblical-theological framework. The biblical theological framework discussed how pastors and

church leaders develop and grow their congregants for spiritual maturity and transformation. Chapter Three provided a detail description of the methodology used for this qualitative research study. In searching for answers to the research questions, eight senior pastors with ten or more years of pastoral experience were interviewed. The research questions served as the interview protocol. Chapter Four presented and analyzed the data from the interviews. The findings show that these senior pastors nurtured and developed their congregants to spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development in their ministry.

Chapter Five will discuss the findings, each according to their category in order to offer a coherent view in light of data from the literature review and the interviews. Chapter Five will also provide recommendations for future research and practice.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this research study confirmed the assumption that learning takes place in the context of ministry. The participants shared their experiences about developing congregants through nurturing leadership in their ministry context. As the findings show, there are different nurturing leadership skills that pastors must have in order to nurture their congregants in spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development. The following discussion is based on the findings for each of the research questions.

Senior Pastors Developing Their Congregants in Spiritual Renewal

The first research question explored how the senior pastors developed their congregants for spiritual renewal. The literature and interviews revealed helpful practices that promoted spiritual renewal: nurturing relationships, pursuing gospel-centered

ministry, assessing the community's needs, worshipping as a body, and articulating clear vision. The following section explores these findings.

Nurturing Relationships

When it comes to nurturing relationships, the literature review and the interview participants espoused similar views. Scholars and participants talked about the importance of leaders building relationships with their followers. As Kouzes and Posner state, "Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow."³³⁴ Nohria and Khurana also express similar understanding when they write,

Since leading is all about the relationship between leaders and followers, ... followers want to identify psychologically with the leader. The more they want the emotional connection, the more attracted they may be to a leader who relies strongly on charisma as source of his or her influence.³³⁵

Maxwell also emphasizes on the need for relationship and liking people when he writes,

Relationships are a major key to success... Building relationships develops a foundation for effectively leading others. The more... relationships deepen, the broader the foundation for leading people becomes. When people feel liked, cared for, included, valued, and trusted, they begin to work together with their leader and each other.³³⁶

Daniel shares Maxwell's view on relationships. Daniel emphasized the need to have relationships with the congregants when he stated,

Well, it's very important to be in relationship. You have to be in relationships with your folk, and that may take some time. You don't get to know people overnight. To get to know people, to know their troubles and their joys, to just sit and talk, to

³³⁴ Kouzes, and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 30.

³³⁵ Nohria and Khurana, *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice*, 422.

³³⁶ Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead*, 46.

work with people... I think you get into relationship with folk when you work with them, and those who don't do anything with the church, those are the folk I reach out to on a Sunday, the folk that just come to worship, but they're not involved. I want to get to know them because building relationships is one of the most important ways to understand how you can help people become whole persons.

When asked how he develops those relationships, Daniel answered,

Well, visitation is important, to visit people... It's important to visit, particularly people who are having troubles, who are not well. To visit is very important... Visit somebody who is not well; also, stand with people in their times of trouble; just the idea of going to court with somebody who may not have anybody else to go to court with. Very basic pastoral responsibilities, I think, show love.

The literature review also emphasizes love and care as essential elements of relationships.

Lummis conducted a survey regarding what congregations need of pastors. The survey shows,

Regional leaders interviewed across denominations cited the pastor's ability to show members of the congregation that he or she loves and will care for them, as an almost essential clergy quality that search committees try to find when choosing a new pastor. Regional leaders from five denominations explain: Congregations want to be loved and cared for, loved and lifted up. If that is done, the congregation is happy.³³⁷

McNair also emphasizes the nurturing relationship of pastors' love and care for the congregants when he writes, "Caring, loving, equipping – these words express the essence of Christ's lesson about shepherding. A good shepherd is one whose care for the sheep drives him to equip them for doing what sheep do best, even at the cost of his own life."³³⁸ When pastors show love and care, they are exercising a leadership that nurtures and develops congregants to spiritual renewal.

Joshua, who has been pasturing his congregants for nineteen years, did not understand the importance of relationships when he first entered ministry, and he had to

³³⁷ Lummis, "What Do Lay People Want in Pastors?" 13.

³³⁸ MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, 139.

learn quickly how to prioritize relationships and how to get involved in the people's lives. Joshua stated, "I had certain preconception about ministry. I just thought that at first the only thing that was required was to go in and to preach and teach, but I soon learned that, that certainly was not enough. You have to become actively involved in the lives of your members." Joshua shared some of the caring ways that he shows love in order to lead and nurture his congregants,

We have that kind of caring. I personally make home visitations to our members just to see how they're doing...this is not just me, but the leadership of the church. Of course we visit the infirm. We visit our own who suffer bereavement, loss, those who are going through divorce, try to encourage them and to help them. We take some members out to dinners. Every third Sunday, we have a family and friends fellowship. I call them on the phone if I haven't seen somebody in a couple of weeks... letting them know that we love them and that we're caring for them. Those who are bedridden, we commune. We go and have service with them... It shows that the pastor is concerned and cares about them.

Joshua emphasized that nurturing involves not just the pastor but also the leadership.

In addition to building relationships and showing care, Joshua stated, "I have to be circumspect in the way I respond to them and treat each one as if that is the most important thing in the world for them." Joshua and Peter White share a similar perspective on treating everyone as the most important person in the world. White shares about the importance of showing interest in people, "The work of caring springs out of three underlying values, our knowledge of our people, our love for them and the kingdom of God."³³⁹ He continues, "He will take an interest in each person. He will particularly watch out for change in people. He will keep notes so as to remember the important things about them."³⁴⁰ Bob Chapman and Raj Sisodia similarly state, "Our people

³³⁹ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 97.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

matter... when we say our people matter but we don't actually care for them, it can shatter trust and create a culture of paranoia, cynicism, and self-interest."³⁴¹ I believe that it is important for pastors to show each congregant that they matter and that they are important. It is almost impossible to nurture and care for people if you do not show them they are important. It is imperative for pastors to show that they care about their congregations.

Pursuing Gospel-Centered Ministry

According to Weems, "Congregational renewal...means a renewal of the people's ability to notice and experience God in their midst, a renewal of the congregation's desire to partner with God in achieving God's aim for the world."³⁴² In other words, the call to renewal is a call to transformation. In Romans 12:2 Paul seems to command this direct message of renewal to the Romans for total transformation when he writes, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."³⁴³ There are many ways to renew and transform congregants spiritually. The literature review and the interviews provide a better understanding of the pastors nurturing renewal ability to help congregants through the word-based ministry of preaching, teaching, praying, and counseling.

³⁴¹ Chapman and Sisodia, *Everybody Matters*, ix.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 7.

³⁴³ Romans 12:2.

Timothy Z. Witmer notes, “A fundamental responsibility of any and every shepherd is to assure that the sheep are well nourished.”³⁴⁴ The nurturing pastors will make sure that their congregants are well fed and have a balanced spiritual diet in order to experience transformation and renewal. The participants support what many scholars state in their varying views. Mark sees spiritual renewal in light of experiencing the gospel message. He stated, “Nurturing begins with a clear presentation of the gospel.” He also stated clearly that congregants are not responding to pastors because “they have not had a definite or a clear conversion experience.” Mark explained, “If I have newborn Christians, they’re all hungry. Nurturing is easy, I share the Word and they feed on it... As they grow, then they begin to know what’s good for them. They feed on the Word of God. I continue to nurture them with a clear, holistic approach to the scripture... Nurturing and fellowship and encouragement and praying for one another.”

Bruce McRae also expresses the idea of a gospel presentation as an essential element for renewal when he writes, “The gospel of grace is the basis for individual renewal. The gospel is about Jesus who died on the cross and the Spirit according to Galatians 3:1-14 and 5:13-26. Dr. McRae also writes, with gospel resources, we fight the battle against...the flesh (Colossians 3:5-17), the world (I John 2:15-17), and the devil (Ephesians 6:10-20).”³⁴⁵

The gospel of Jesus Christ must be at the center of renewal in order for transformation to take place. Through the gospel, people can fight against fleshly and worldly desire in order to cultivate their affections for God. Richard F. Lovelace says,

³⁴⁴ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 141.

³⁴⁵ McRae, “Church Revitalization: Individual and Corporate Renewal.”

“The preconditions of renewal are: Awareness of the holiness of God; Awareness of the depth of sin.”³⁴⁶ Timothy Keller also expresses that, “Personal gospel renewal means the gospel doctrines of sin and grace are actually experienced, not just known intellectually.”³⁴⁷ Sins, in all its form, are to be eradicated from the lives of the congregants and the love and the grace of God must abound and felt among God’s people for transformation to become a reality. Jonathan Edwards asks, “Love is an affection, but will any Christian say, men ought not to love God and Jesus-Christ in a high degree? And will any say, we ought not to have a very great hatred of sin, and a very deep sorrow for it?... Or that we should not have very great and strong desires after God holiness?”³⁴⁸ The answer to these questions is yes. John Calvin says, “We must be holy, because ‘God is holy’? (Lev 19:1; 1 Pet 1:16).”³⁴⁹

Lovelace writes about two primary “essential elements of renewal: Justification and sanctification... Justification: You are accepted; Sanctification: You are free from bondage of sin.”³⁵⁰ In order to be free from the bondage of sins, people need transformation and affections for God’s holiness. Preaching, praying, and studying God’s word help establish renewal routines. Jeremiah explained how he does this for his congregants when he stated,

We meet weekly or monthly, we develop a prayer routine. We develop a study routine. We have something, however, else that we do that’s quite been transformative, that has meant people changing their vocations, and even entering

³⁴⁶ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 75.

³⁴⁷ Keller, *Center Church*, 54.

³⁴⁸ Edwards, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, 39, 142.

³⁴⁹ Calvin, *Institute of The Christian Religions*, 446.

³⁵⁰ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 74-75.

seminary, and that's called the catechumenate. It's an intensive 20 weeks, every Sunday night for 90 minutes. We simply read the gospel lesson every week in the lectionary readings, We pray, we read the gospel lesson, we use what's call the oral method of Bible study, sometimes called the African method of Bible study. We ask a series of questions and the final question every week is asking what is God's call on you through this passage?

Similarly, Peter shared how his congregants were in the depth of sin and human brokenness; they were empty inside spiritually and needed renewal. Peter spent time with them, praying and studying the Bible, "They need God in their lives... Through the different years I spent time with them, prayed with them, studied the Bible with them. They will spend time together; and pray for each other." Matthew also confirmed the importance of praying, studying the word, and preaching for renewal when he stated, "We facilitate programs here at this church that help to enhance the church spiritually. We do have our days of prayer and fasting in the church. Certainly, the word of God is very, very important to us. We believe in the constant study of the word. They come out and they study the word every sabbath. Not only do we do that, we believe that the word is central... The preaching of God's word is crucial and important to us."

Renewal can take place only when God's people are immersed into the word of God, as Lovelace says, "The beginning place for personal renewal in most congregations is a preaching and teaching ministry which emphasizes primary elements of spiritual dynamics: depth proclamation of the gospel."³⁵¹ Tom Ehrich states, "Whether they say it or not, ...most people come to churches on a spiritual quest... the heart of their quest... is a hunger for God."³⁵² Michael Slaughter states, "Scriptural truth is the primary source for what we believe and do. Biblical preaching, speaking with the authority of the Word of

³⁵¹ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 210.

³⁵² Ehrich, *Church Wellness*, 83.

God, for transformation and (not) information only.”³⁵³ He continues, “Renewal broke out at our church when the people began to actively do what we had been reading in God’s Word.”³⁵⁴ Larry Kreider agrees, “Teach them the Word of God either one on one or in a small-group setting.”³⁵⁵ Gregg Ogden says, “The Written Word that points to Jesus-Christ is central to both formal and informal gatherings of God’s people. Formally, it is right to make provision for people to “sit under” the teaching and proclamation of the Word.”³⁵⁶

Lovelace also adds prayer as an essential element when he states, “The act of prayer is one of the closest approaches to the experience of redemption we can have before the eternal state... If all regenerate church members in Western Christendom were to intercede daily simply for the most obvious spiritual concerns... The transformation, which would result, would be incalculable.”³⁵⁷ Andrew Murray adds both prayer and fasting when he says, “And prayer needs fasting for its full growth... Prayer is the one hand with which we grasp the invisible; fasting, the other, with which we let loose and cast away the visible.”³⁵⁸ I firmly believe, as these authors and participants have expressed, that praying, teaching, and the preaching the word are central for renewal and transformation within a congregation.

³⁵³ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 46.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

³⁵⁵ Kreider, *Authentic Spiritual Spiritual Mentoring*, 55-56.

³⁵⁶ Ogden, *The New Reformation*, 112-113.

³⁵⁷ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 158-160.

³⁵⁸ Murray, *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, 84-85.

Besides praying, teaching, and preaching of the word, some of the interviewees also stated counseling is an important elements of renewal. Lovelace suggests a similar idea when he says, “A fully developed counseling ministry is normally essential to the renewal of the local congregation.”³⁵⁹ Mark believes that teaching and preaching are important elements for renewal, but he also emphasized the need for counseling. He stated,

I train them to be counselors... The next time a counseling session comes in, I bring one of my men in. If it is a woman, I have women that are trained in the church to counsel. They nurture. I just make sure that somebody is there to nurture and to love them, to take care of them... Sometimes, I say to somebody “I want you to be close to them. I want you to go take them into your small group. I want you to sit down and talk with them.”

Peter also believes counseling to be important means of spiritual renewal,

There’s a lot of counseling in terms of nurturing, it’s like bringing God’s truth in a way that they can understand into their life. That’s why I am concerned, that’s nurturing. It’s not just telling them what there is in the Bible, but helping them interact with the Bible, to make the Bible theirs. Also, The most basic part of that is nowadays people are broken... their relationships are broken. Mostly families are very broken up and marriage is broken. A lot of people [are]... just struggling to survive. [Those are] reasons why I think [counseling] is important.

I believe that broken people need more than prayer, teaching, and preaching, but one-on-one counseling sessions can help people understand their condition and need for renewal. Counseling can also bring justification and sanctification in their lives as Lovelace says, “Therefore, counseling ... brings spiritual release and renewal explore (the full armor of justifying and sanctifying righteousness and with vital dependence on the Spirit).”³⁶⁰

Gospel-centered ministry is an important nurturing leadership skill. The literature and participant pursued nurturing, renewing, and transforming congregants for

³⁵⁹ Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 146.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

development and development and growth through preaching, teaching, praying, and counseling. They also pursued spiritual growth through assessing their congregants' needs.

Assessing the Needs

Daniel explained how he assesses his congregants' need for spiritual renewal: "Well, you know, over the years I have learned that congregations need to be stretched, I saw transformation in the many of the leadership." Daniel statement supports the authors Daniel P. Smith and Mary K. Sallon. They said, "As spiritual leaders of the congregation, pastors often initiate renewal and are among the first to sense God's longings for the people."³⁶¹ Joshua affirmed the pastoral sense and longing for renewal within a congregation. He explained how he sees a "Congregation of hurting people, people being weak in faith, [and] you feel compassionate that they need nurturing... You interview folks individually and ask them... what kind of service do you think the church should be rendering to you?" Joshua's way of assessing is in line with Smith and Sellon who state, "Assess the current state of the congregation and its impact on its members and the surrounding community in relation to that purpose and aim."³⁶²

Interviewing is an important tool in the early phase of renewal for assessing needs. Smith and Sellon express, "Renewal begins simply, with two or three people having conversations about what might be possible."³⁶³ Conversations and interviews are a good way of assessing congregants' spiritual renewal needs, and those can be between pastors

³⁶¹ Smith and Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal*, 84.

³⁶² Ibid., 69.

³⁶³ Ibid., 59.

and congregants, between congregants and congregants, or between a team of people, as Smith and Sellon say, in the form of “renewal task force.”³⁶⁴

Renewal through Worship

Worship is a vital component in the nurturing and renewal process of a congregation. The literature and interview participants indicated that it is paramount to have worship if true renewal is to take place. Robert Schnase, says,

God uses worship to transform lives, heal wounded souls, renew hope, shape decisions, provoke change, inspire compassion, and bind people to one another. God through Christ actively seeks relationship to us through worship... God in Christ changes people’s lives through Passionate Worship. Worship stirs people’s souls, inspires them, and strengthens them. They find such help and courage and belonging and care that they cannot help but talk about the sermons, ideas, stories, music, and prayers during the week.³⁶⁵

Here according to Schnase, worship is at the heart of the renewal process, and this is understandable because it is on the weekend that people come together to worship and to be renewed. Jeremiah shared how this takes place in the life of his congregants,

What I try to do is develop a small community of prayer and meditation. It’s 20 weeks, and it’s based on the church year epiphany, lent, Easter, Pentecost. We celebrate this in the worship service, so every participant is recognized. We have a ritual of welcome. Then on the first Sunday of lent we have the ritual of the cross. We put the sign of the cross on people. Easter vigil, the night before Easter we confirm them, and we’ve had baptism. On Pentecost season they have to make a testimony. The Easter season they make their personal testimonies in church. On Pentecost, they all stand up they say, “God, I believe that God is calling me to do so and so.”

Jeremiah shared how worship takes place in his congregation, and he also shared how worship has been transformative in the lives of his people. He explained, “The first year we had it, we had two calls to the ministry. Two guys said, ‘I’m being called to the

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 66.

³⁶⁵ Schnase, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, 34, 53.

ministry...’ One those guys called to the ministry, was also baptized.” Jeremiah added, “This has been transformative in people.” As in the case of Jeremiah, transformation of the people should be one of the main objectives of worship, for them to experience God in the most intimate way possible.

Joshua also talked about the transformation and renewal that took place through worship for his congregants and the community when he took his congregation to worship outside instead of inside. He stated, “We decided to have a little set up and get the little portable electric keyboards and things like that and have service right outside here on our lawn. Because the lawn is big enough for the whole service, but we got more chairs and we just put them out there. The community benefited from it. Now the community knows we’re here.” Joshua’s new way of doing worship gives support to Slaughter’s third principle of renewal, which is “The Liturgical Principle: discovery of new worship forms.”³⁶⁶ Slaughter says, “Renewal gives birth to new forms of worship.”³⁶⁷ The need for renewal necessitates new forms of worship. Slaughter shared his experience at a church where he pastored: “We assemble worship team comprised of people who play synthesizers, guitars, flutes, horns, cellos, drums, and a variety of other instruments. Not only does this better reflect the music of our contemporary culture, but it gives many more people an opportunity to participate in worship in by using their gifts and talents.”³⁶⁸

³⁶⁶ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 18.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 63.

At times, it is critical that congregational worship changes in order to meet new renewal needs. Daniel contrasted his congregation's new worship style and practices with their old ways:

In every generation there's something new for us to embrace, when you can accept that and appreciate that and look forward to that, then you're really in a spiritual journey because you're going to go somewhere. What existed yesterday is not the only way I can see God. My relationship with God 40 years ago is not the end of it. What is my relationship with God now? How do I worship the Lord today? The things we sang 40 years ago, we're singing different songs now.

Pastors should consider being open to new worship practices if they want to renew their congregants. The new generations sometimes have to be given something new, doing things in a whole new way in order for them to be connected spiritually with God.

Articulating a Vision

If the church is to be successful in renewal, pastors and congregants are to have a vision. This vision has to be coined by the pastor as the principal leader and then shared with the leadership team and then presented to the congregants. The congregants in turn have to buy into the vision. However, as the literature review and the participants show, at times pastors will have to buy into the congregants' vision that was already at work. The vision allows the pastor and the leadership to determine what is needed for where the church is headed. Weems says, "It is impossible to lead without vision and values."³⁶⁹ He adds, "Leaders with a passion for renewal will put bells back in the steeples and ring out a clear and sure message of faith and hope."³⁷⁰ A vision of faith and hope will mobilize the congregants and captivate them.

³⁶⁹ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 34.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 135.

Slaughter paints a helpful picture of how vision can help shape a community: “Church renewal consists of people in community with one another, dreaming God’s vision, believing Christ’s victory, and living out the Spirit’s work. The evidence of renewal will be seen in transformed lives.”³⁷¹ Matthew explained how he lay out his vision to his congregants for renewal:

I lay out a vision for my elders. I lay out a vision for my board. Then, from there, we lay out a vision for the congregation. We are in the process of putting a five year plan together for this church. We launched a massive revitalization program whereby we have taken the church to a point where they recognize the need. They recognize that there is a serious need for strong leadership, not only in the church, but strong leadership in our homes and our community.

Timothy also shared his way of presenting his vision: “Our primary vision is what we stick to. The primary vision is, this is a teaching and developing ministry church, that we are here to develop, to help you grow and to get to the place where God wants you to be. Not only to be, but to become leaders and fisherman for him.” According to Timothy, the vision can be anything that the church decides it needs to be. For Timothy’s church, they prioritize a teaching ministry.

Daniel also talked about a collective vision—the people’s vision to build a sanctuary for God from 30 years before he arrived at the church. In Daniel’s case, their vision became the pastor’s vision, and it brought about spiritual renewal. Daniel stated,

They had talked some 30 years about building a church... They had a lot of disagreements. When I came, things fell in place, and we were able to start that building and finish that building. They also rallied around that goal, that vision that they had to achieve that... We had to focus. It wasn’t just prayer. What are your spiritual objectives in building this building? For what purpose? What is the vision that the Lord wants us to have to build a building? What are we going to do with it?

³⁷¹Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 19.

Emphasizing the spiritual and renewal aspects of the vision, Daniel added,

When you begin to list those things, and we're not doing this for ourselves, we're doing this for higher objectives, and then you begin to focus on your spiritual walk as a congregation, sermons, worship, everything, when people meet to have prayers around that help you stick with the vision. We're not just here to take care of business. We're here to also accomplish... Everything we do is to accomplish this vision that God has given us. When it becomes a comprehensive effort, that's when things begin to happen for good.

The objective of any church vision should be a spiritual objective, one that transforms and changes the spiritual walk of the congregation. As the interview participants and the literature review emphasize, it is imperative that pastors have renewal leadership skills in order to nurture, renew, and transform their congregants. Pastors can then move to their congregations to the next level of spiritual development and growth as they are ready to be trained, and to use their spiritual gifts for the advancement of God's kingdom in their home, their church, their surroundings, and their community. Jim Herrington, R. Robert Creech and Trisha Taylor state, "To the degree that we are personally being transformed, we are able to lead the way as our congregations change, so that they will be available to God for the transformation of their community."³⁷² This is in reality the goal of congregants' transformation to be better equipped and it is to serve both the church and the community.

Spiritual Gifts Development

Developing congregants' spiritual gifts will enable them to grow spiritually and use their gifts for service and mission. Pastors have an enormous obligation to develop their congregants' spiritual gifts to their full spiritual potential and God-given ability.

³⁷² Herrington, Creech, and Taylor, *The Leader's Journey*, 14-15.

Brian Hall says, “Leadership, as we shall use the term, denotes the exercise of a particular set of gifts where a person finds him or herself called to a position of influence over a community of persons.”³⁷³ The job of any spiritual leader is to encourage the exercise of a particular set of gifts. This is how effective leadership works: it cares for and develops its people for service in their Christian walk. Hall shares this view when he writes, “The Christian traditions have always been aware that the spiritual life is a journey—it is a developmental process from conversion to the higher experience of living day to day in conscious awareness of our Lord.”³⁷⁴ Pastors must make all their effort to take their congregants to that spiritual life developmental journey. However, in order to develop the congregants’ gifts pastors must be able to identify their gifts.

Identifying Gifts

Bob Burns, Tasha D. Chapman, and Donald C. Guthrie, state, “when ministry leaders fail to develop others and then turn responsibility over to them, they actually harm their own effectiveness. They also curtail the growth and maturity of their system by making everything depend upon them. . . . It’s important to recognize the gifts of others and enjoy seeing others exercise their gifts rather than being threatened by them.”³⁷⁵ I believe that pastors have a solemn responsibility to develop and encourage the gifts of their congregants in order to be effective. In addition, pastors must recognize the gifts of the congregants and help them use their gifts for effective ministry and leadership. John Zechariah states, “A great leader inspires his/her followers to reach higher levels of

³⁷³ Hall, “Leadership Development and Spiritual Growth,” 100.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry*, 240.

excellence.”³⁷⁶ Congregants need inspiration to help them reach their spiritual heights, and pastors can help. Pastors are developing congregants for ministry excellence and effectiveness. Pastors can inspire people by helping them identifying their God-given gifts and talents.

Chapman and Sisodia write about identifying people’s gifts: “Our responsibility as leaders, be it business, the military, in government, or in education, is to create an environment where people can discover their gifts, develop their gifts, share their gifts, and be recognized and appreciated for doing so-which creates an opportunity for them to have a more meaningful life, a life of purpose.”³⁷⁷ Chapman and Sisodia clarify the leaders’ responsibility: help people identify and discover their gifts. Chapman and Sisodia also recognize, “People come into this world with gifts and talents, full of possibilities and unrealized potential. Our responsibility as leaders is to help them realize those possibilities by looking for the talents and goodness that exist in them and inspiring them to become what they are meant to be.”³⁷⁸ Peter Wagner says, “The most basic step that you as a Christian need to take in order to define God’s will for your life – knowing your spiritual gift.”³⁷⁹ The pastors’ responsibility is two-fold. First, pastors must recognize that people are born with gifts whether in the spiritual or in the physical realm. Second, leaders’ must help their followers identify those gifts.

Kouzes and Posner in their book, *Christian Reflections on Leadership Challenge*, further clarify the steps for identifying gifts:

³⁷⁶ Zechariah, *In Search of Christian Leadership Character*, 27.

³⁷⁷ Chapman and Sisodia, *Everybody Matters*, 68.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

³⁷⁹ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 22.

Developing is called talent radar... (they continue) As a leader, learn what areas of strength each person on your team possesses (you may have heard these referred to in the church as spiritual gifts). Everybody is good at something. Become a talent expert. Be on the lookout for clues by the way people respond to a situation. They are giving you information about what they're good at... Do whatever it takes to get educated in spotting individual strengths in others: take classes, read books, attend seminars.³⁸⁰

Similarly to Kouzes and Posner, Joshua stated how he identifies the gifts in congregants as he develops them: "What I do is to help people, well teach them steps on discovering what those spiritual gifts are that they have. Do an inventory. What is it that you have? What gift do you think God has given you? What do you excel at? What do you love doing, and how can you use that to further the ministry in the church?" Joshua explained that congregants react to his approach. People come to him and say, "Well, I think I have this gift." Joshua explained, "of course as a leader with the help of others, we have to find ways in which to use that gift so we can help the entire congregation grow." Joshua added, "Another obligation I had is to observe people, see what particular things that they're good at, that they enjoy doing, because sometimes people may not see it, but you see it as a pastor. After a while, if my notions have been I believed confirmed, then I'll speak to the individual. Most of the time thank God I am right and we go to pray about it."

Confirming Kouzes and Posner, Daniel stated, "I always find that it's very necessary to find out from people, 'What is your prior experience? ... What have you done in the past? What are your goals? Why are you coming here?' To learn about that so that that can be developed in ways." When Daniel was asked if there is any other way of seeing their gifts? He answered,

³⁸⁰ Kouzes, and Posner, *Christian Reflections on Leadership Challenge*, 93.

At least I've learned when folk come to a church to join the church, you've got to give them time to get in, to become a part of the household, become a part of the family. Most people will move toward an area that they want to be involved in. Many come knowing what they want to do. That means that I'm going to be in conversation with you about, "What do you know about that area? This is what we can teach you about that area," you see it's again a learning process.

Shadrach also revealed his approach in identifying gifts: "There's a formula and there are several gift inventories you can use... James Dobson has one with Focus on the Family." Shadrach added, "When new members are being trained and they are going through a new membership class, we ask them what their gifts are. Sometimes we ask them but also sometimes we can identify what we think their gifts are. Once I share it with you, then I try to create opportunity for them to use their gifts."

It is impossible to develop congregants without knowing what their gifts or talents are. Reflecting on the early church's experience, Albert Winseman, Donald Clifton, and Curt Liesveld, state, "Early believers were encouraged to find their place in the new community and to discover their gifts in order to be truly fulfilled as followers of Jesus."³⁸¹ Pastors who skip the step of identifying their congregants' gifts skip a key component in their congregants' spiritual developmental process.

Develop Gifts Through Biblical Understanding

The literature and research participants agree, God the Holy Spirit gives people their spiritual gifts. Peter White writes, "The New Testament word for these gifts, Charismata, indicates that they are given by God's mere kindness."³⁸² In addition, the

³⁸¹ Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld, *Living Your Strength*, 195.

³⁸² White, *The Effective Pastor*, 128.

apostle Paul writes, regarding Christ, “Therefore He says: ‘When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.’”³⁸³

Peter Wagner defines spiritual gifts, writing, “A spiritual gift is a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ, according to God’s grace, for use within the context of the Body.”³⁸⁴ Wagner also identifies and provides a list of the spiritual gifts, based on the three New Testament books, “The great majority of the spiritual gifts mentioned in the Bible are found in three key chapters: Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4.”³⁸⁵

While the Holy Spirit gives the gifts, scholars and the interview participants understand that pastors and leaders can help congregants develop their spiritual gifts. The interview participants were in disagreement about how much influence pastors have to develop spiritual gifts among their congregants. Mark strongly believes that God gives the gifts. Mark also believes that the gifts are develop by the Spirit of God when he stated,

I do see obviously, that God has given gifts that are still in play in the church, gifts of leadership, gifts of mercy, gifts of teaching. I am very concerned about them being under the control of the Holy Spirit. As they’re under the control of the Holy Spirit, according to Ephesians 5:15-21, I see that they are going to be sensitive to what the spirit of God wants them to do with how he’s gifted them.

Mark understands that the Spirit develops the gifts as he stated, “When I have people out on the street in the middle of the battle, witnessing, appealing to people at an abortion clinic, out handling out tracts, talking with people, if they are spirit controlled, they are

³⁸³ Ephesians 4:8.

³⁸⁴ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 33.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 53.

going to be trained in that venue. They are going to experience development.” However, Mark also believes that the interpretation of the gifts is important and pastors help their congregants develop their gifts. Mark stated, “If you have a true gift from the Holy Spirit with teaching, all I have to do is make sure your hermeneutic is correct.”

Jeremiah shared a similar view on his biblical understanding of the gifts,

I think people learn about their gifts when they confront God’s word in their lives. That’s what I believe. I don’t think it’s like, should I be a musician? No... I don’t know. You ask the Lord Jesus how he judges me. I think it’s Spirit led, because we very much rely on God’s speaking, and not on a prescribe program. Our whole orientation is how is God talking to you in scripture?

Several interview participants explained their understanding that the development of the gifts are done by the direct influence of the Holy Spirit and not through human intervention.

Like Wagner and the participants, I also believe that the gifts are given by God through the Holy Spirit, but unlike some of the interview participants, I believe that through the Holy Spirit God has given pastors and leaders ability to help others develop their spiritual gifts. Peter expressed a similar understanding, “Of course I tell them, in the Bible it talks about this, different kinds of gifts and so on. You might have some of it. Designed by God, given by God through the Spirit. It’s something designed by God that when you use it then the body of Christ is being built up.” Concerning pastoral guidance, Peter said,

I say, “Everybody is important.” I would say that everybody has something to offer, something very unique too. My approach is that I will give them the picture. I say, “So many people have all these needs, what can we do? Then some people would say, “I can do this one. They will begin to do things that they can do and what they can do well and then I’ll say “okay.” According to how I understand what they can do or at least guide them to that direction.

Chapman stresses the need to “recognize the gifts of others.”³⁸⁶ Peter also wants all pastors to understand that every congregant in the church is important. In addition, pastors must recognize the role that the Holy Spirit plays in the distribution of the gifts to the church and to each congregant. Pastors must understand their role and responsibility to help the congregants develop their gifts in accordance to the biblical teaching of the word of God. They must understand that the Spirit has his part in distributing the gifts to the believers, but pastors and church leaders have the responsibility of helping the congregants develop those gifts in order to grow and edify the church, as Paul says in Ephesian 4, “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”³⁸⁷

Develop Gifts Through Training

Jason M. Newcomer, Sandra Kolberg, and Jon M. Corey, on their case study on *Leadership Development*, found, “The top 5 percent of companies with effective leadership practices dedicate twice as much effort as other businesses to leadership development, a clear indication that the latter is a factor in organizational success.”³⁸⁸ This study finding points pastors to the importance of training and developing their staff and their congregants as a whole. Pastors can develop their congregants for success. Richard Patterson says, “Nurture is that aspect of church ministry which focuses upon developing individual believers to discover, claim, and be all that their Creator designed

³⁸⁶ Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry*, 240.

³⁸⁷ Ephesians 4:11-12.

³⁸⁸ Newcomer, Kolberg, and Corey, “Leadership Development.”

His people to be.”³⁸⁹ Bruce P. Powers offers an example of how this developing should be done: “Teachers and leaders in a local church require an effective Christian education program of training.”³⁹⁰ Powers adds, “A minister is expected to be a spiritual leader (etc)... Another major responsibility is that providing training for the laity.”³⁹¹ Pastors should not leave the training of the laity to the laity. The pastors’ first job is to train and equip the laity to become leaders that will train others. Powers states that clearly, “A primary purpose for a church training is to equip leaders for effective service.”³⁹²

Matthew agrees with Powers and believes that it is important to train the congregants in order to develop their gifts and in order to better equipped them. He stated,

The way we develop their gifts is, to a large extent, training. Number one, we run a gift-based ministry. Our members do the gift-based inventory. It’s a test that’s done online. We also provide hard copy for them. After doing that test, we walk them through the process of helping them to serve in the area of their giftedness. We give them the necessary tools. We train them, we teach them, and we send them to work.

Peter Wagner also proposes a gift-based inventory in order to identify gifts, match them with needs, and train people in their area of giftedness. Wagner explains, “A starting point is to look around and see what needs you can identify. Then try to do something to meet a need. Look for the need of other people. Look for the needs of the church.”³⁹³ He continues,

Motivate the congregation from the pulpit, study the biblical teaching on gifts, help adults discover their gifts, set a schedule for accountability and continue the experience indefinitely, meaning, the experience should be a permanent part of

³⁸⁹ Patterson, *Effectively Leading*, 53.

³⁹⁰ Powers, *Christian Education Handbook*, 225.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 226-227.

³⁹² *Ibid.*, 231.

³⁹³ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 117-122.

the lifestyle of the congregation. It needs to be stimulated with books, sermons, (Bible study) lessons, and task-oriented groups that help people put their gifts to use.³⁹⁴

Wagner also says, “Use the gifts inventories, the Wagner-Modified Houts Questionnaire, to determine which gifts to experiment with first. Examine your feelings. God does, in fact, match our spiritual gifts to our temperament so that we will enjoy using them.”³⁹⁵

These proposed steps by both scholars and interview participants provide pastors a system, which can be used to effectively identify, train, and develop their congregants’ spiritual gifts.

Matthew stated, “Empowering leaders to make leaders” as another way to train people wherein the more experienced leaders take time to train the younger ones. Matthew described the training process: “They make that selection and they say, ‘Pastor, we think this person is a good person to train.’ I evaluate the person, sit down, and talk with them. Then, my leader, if that’s okay with myself and them, they train that person and prepare them to lead.” Matthew shows that he practices a shared and joint leadership. Smith and Sallon state, “In a healthy congregation clergy and laity exercise leadership jointly. Both take responsibility for developing individuals as disciples of Christ and the organization as the Body of Christ...The continual surfacing and development of new leaders is key to the ongoing transformation of the congregation.”³⁹⁶

Robert G. Duch states, “Empowering means love= knowing, caring, respecting, and responding. When people are being given a share in power, they no longer feel

³⁹⁴ Ibid., 239-242.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 117-122.

³⁹⁶ Smith and Sallon, *The Pathway to Renewal*, 130-131.

powerless... They will feel confident that their contributions in successful ventures will encourage their leaders to ask them again to share their talents (gifts).”³⁹⁷ Matthew practices a shared leadership that empowers others, and he understands what his responsibility is when training his congregants. He stated, “I, as the leader, have the responsibility to provide resources for them, to stimulate them intellectually in their area of their giftedness. I go out on my way to bring in workshops for them consistently, officer’s workshops and leadership symposiums. There are ongoing seminars and training, not just for the officers but for the church in general.”

As Matthew empowers his congregants, he also makes them accountable. He explained, “There’s accountability and the pastor will hold people accountable for what they’re supposed to do but we empower leadership.” Matthew’s approach shows that he understands and shares Maxwell’s view when it comes to the leaders responsibility. He said,

Giving responsibility without resources is ridiculous... It is important to provide developmental tools. Spend time mentoring people in specific areas of need. Be willing to spend money on things like books, tapes, seminars, and professional conferences. Be creative in providing tools. It will keep your people growing and equip to do the job well.³⁹⁸

Timothy provided his process for training his congregants to develop their gifts,

The Lord gives ability, even when he gives gifts. If you’re going to be a singer, and then you’re a singer for the Lord, and where you sing, people’s hearts are now developed, or they feel the presence of God through singing. When he gives the ability, not just for people just to come up and sing but through the teaching now and developing, now they’re developing and they’re transformed, and now when they sing, it’s no longer in self.

³⁹⁷ Duch, *Successful Parish Leadership*, 106-108.

³⁹⁸ Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead*, 101.

Timothy develops congregants through teaching, and he also gives opportunity for them to serve. He stated, “You give opportunity, you teach, you develop, how to become better.” Timothy’s attitude toward his congregants in giving them opportunity while in training is that of an includer as Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld state, “Stretch the circle wider... You want to include people and make them feel part of the group.”³⁹⁹ Including everyone should also be every pastor’s attitude toward congregants that they are developing.

Shadrach also detailed his method of training congregants: by looking for the best in people. Tom Rath states, “Seek roles in which your primary responsibilities include facilitating growth...naturally look for the best in people.”⁴⁰⁰ Shadrach explained,

All of us have the ability. God has put into each one of us spiritual gifts. Who he calls, he equips says the scripture. What happens sometimes in ministry is that people are watching other people use their gifts, and feel insecure about their gift that God has given to them. Everybody has a gift that can be used. Something that you know that if given the opportunity, you can do good or do well here, so whether it’s the administrative gifts, whether it’s the love gift, or the gift of giving, the gift of control, and the gift of nurturing. All of those are gifts that people have.

Shadrach explained, “all of us have gifts and God-given ability. But all of us must be trained in order to remove fear and insecurity in using the gifts.” Tom Ehrich, who believes in training leaders, says, “Engage clergy directly in the leadership development process, with a direct role in identifying promising leaders, recruiting them and training them. Require all leaders to participate in training programs that are appropriate to their

³⁹⁹ Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld, *Living Your Strength*, 63.

⁴⁰⁰ Rath, *Strengths Finder 2.0*, 151.

duties and to their level of responsibility.”⁴⁰¹ Shadrach confirmed what Ehrich advised.

Shadrach described,

We have a discipleship and evangelism ministry in place. It’s done from the time we see a person and it goes from first base, second base, third base concept... We have our leadership training that occurs here where we train potential leaders in an area of sub-development in terms of thinking, in terms of cognitive development, in terms of behavioral change. We have it maybe three or four times a year. We take all the leaders, all of these diverse ministries on a Saturday. We have a conversation with them, and do workshops, and conversation development, and also content information of what it means to be a leader in the 21st century.

Shadrach described how people have different gifts and abilities that can be developed if given opportunity. Many times, people’s gifts are not developed because first, they do not know what they are, and second, they have not been given the opportunity to practice their gifts. Timothy and Shadrach understand the importance of giving people opportunity to exercise their gifts in order to develop them.

Shadrach explained the importance of placing people in the area of their giftedness,

People who want to join the church would go through for six weeks. Going through that, one of the classes is on using your gifts. We talk about that. If a person can sing, we happen to have a chair for the choir. If a person loves to pray, we say, “Okay, we have a prayer ministry here. I recommend that you join the prayer ministry.” A person here has the gift of friendliness, and smiling and hospitality. We plug them into hospitality, the usher ministry here. Here so while they’re coming out of the new membership class, we are already thinking about places in the ministry where they can be plugged in.

Shadrach emphasized the need for people to exercise their strengths as Albert Winseman, Donald Clifton, and Curt Liesveld state, “When people serve in roles that fit their talents and gifts, God does marvelous things.”⁴⁰² Paul W. Abramowitz expresses a similar view, “It has been my experience in all types of labor markets that an effective leader must

⁴⁰¹ Ehrich, *Church Wellness*, 42.

⁴⁰² Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld, *Living Your Strength*, 199.

work very hard to match workers' strengths with appropriate job responsibilities."⁴⁰³

According to these authors and Shadrach, pastors are advised to encourage the development and the use of talents and the gifts of the congregants, but also to have people serve in the area of their gifts according to their strength. Church leaders have the tendency to choose anybody to perform a function or a duty without knowing the person's gifts or abilities. This study, however, suggest pastors take a different approach.

The participants were also asked to evaluate when their congregants' gifts were fully developed. The majority of the participants shared how they do not believe that the gifts will ever be fully developed. Matthew stated, "I don't believe they're totally fully developed. I want to be careful not to say they are, because fully developed mean you have arrived but I've noticed that we have gotten into a good place in terms of their giftedness." Timothy responded in a similar way, "Well, I don't think anyone, in general, will ever get fully developed, because we all keep learning, but to a stage where they're getting stronger developed, developing... There are always higher heights and deeper depths." Shadrach stated,

The best way to assess that is usually when people have somebody they start to mentor. When they no longer want to hold onto the gift for themselves but they want to pass on the baton to somebody else to mentor and then to assume responsibility. They become team players more than solo individuals. The best way to assess this when a gift is developed is when a person is willing to share it, and to mentor somebody else.

Identifying, training, and equipping congregants are paramount for pastors who want to develop their congregants to spiritual growth. In Wagner's words, pastors have an enormous responsibility of unwrapping the spiritual gifts of their congregants by,

⁴⁰³ Abramowitz, "Nurturing Relationships: An Essential Ingredient of Leadership."

motivate the congregation from the pulpit, study the biblical teaching on gifts, help adults discover their gifts, set a schedule for accountability and continue the experience indefinitely, meaning, the experience should be a permanent part of the lifestyle of the congregation. It needs to be stimulated with books, sermons, (Bible study) lessons, and task-oriented groups that help people put their gifts to use.⁴⁰⁴

It is indeed an enormous responsibility, but it is also a humble responsibility given by God to the pastors as the chosen leaders of their congregations. However, this responsibility of developing congregants' gifts must be done in accordance to the biblical teaching on spiritual gifts as instructed by God through the Holy Spirit.

Challenges of Nurturing Leadership

Pastoral leadership is a challenge, especially when it comes to nurturing leadership. However, the literature offers strong encouragement to those who feel challenged in their current ministry. Lovett H. Weems states, "It is in this current, challenging situation that the church calls its pastors to exercise effective leadership."⁴⁰⁵ He continues, "The failure... to take charge and give active leadership... can be as devastating to an organization as frankly autocratic leadership."⁴⁰⁶ On the other hand, Michael J. Quick reported on a 2003 survey conducted by George Barna that discover, "92 percent of pastors considered themselves as leaders and 94 percent of the congregants agreed."⁴⁰⁷ With that understanding, pastors have the responsibility to lead, even when they are faced with challenges.

⁴⁰⁴ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 241-242.

⁴⁰⁵ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 15.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁰⁷ Quick, *360-Degree Leadership*, 34.

Change Is a Human Problem

When asked what the challenges are for senior pastors in developing their congregants through nurturing leadership, Joshua stated, “I think whenever you get involved in the lives of people that can always be a challenge. If you get involved, you’re going to have some challenges because sometimes you get disappointed. I think the challenge that we have is resistance.” For Joshua, this resistance affects things that need change but also people who need transformation. When asked if human resistance to change affects transformation, he responded, “Yes, yeah, absolutely.”

Daniel shared similar challenges on the human dilemma on resistance to change when he said,

Entrenched members of the church who do not want to see things change... Folks don’t always see what’s happening to them. They don’t see what’s happening to their congregation. When you have a group of people or an individual or anybody who is not open to change, to doing things differently... you’ve got a problem there. You’ve got to work on that problem.

Shadrach shared, “The one thing with people is you are always going to have challenges. Otherwise, you don’t understand the complexity of leadership... People are mostly comfortable with the status quo, the way things are.” Matthew stated, “It was difficult and still sometimes a challenge because some of them feel that they have a life.” Change in reality is a complex human problem and most organizational leaders can relate to this challenge of resistance and refusal to change. It affects all levels of organizations including the church.

Lack of Interest

Lack of interest is another challenge pastors face. Peter Wagner shares, “Ignorance of spiritual gifts may be a chief cause of retarded church growth today. It also

may be at the root of much of the discouragement, insecurity, frustration and guilt that plague many Christians and curtail their total effectiveness for God.”⁴⁰⁸ The lack of interest by church members in using their gifts often stems from the fact that they do not know what the spiritual gifts are. Lack of interest can come from lack of understanding of the biblical truth and church doctrine.

Jeremiah explained this dilemma well, “I think a challenge that we have is teaching the culture of my denomination since the Reform Church in America is as deep, rich tradition with real established patterns.” Jeremiah said, “They didn’t join [this church] to be in a Reformed Church. They joined [this church] because this was the church in this location that had a Christ centered worship service that was open and progressive.” Shepherding so many expectations would be a challenge for any pastor. Convincing someone of the biblical truth, doctrinal truth is difficult, but also to convince them to be transformed and to use their spiritual gifts for their spiritual growth is even more challenging.

Mark also shared about lack of interest in his congregants because they were not converted. He stated, “Nurturing is easy... but it is a difficult thing to do it with false converts. It’s a very miserable existence. I work at trying to clarify for people what is your relationship with God? When people are not true to themselves and when they do not want to be transformed there is nothing that you will do that will interest them. They’re just not connected.” Timothy added another reason: when congregants are not converted, they are not hungry. Timothy said, “They don’t hunger and thirst after the gifting of the Lord. It’s in them, and you want them to let it birth out. That’s one of the

⁴⁰⁸ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 21.

main things that they get into place of complacency or lazy... It is very hard to change their attitude of complacency.” These interview participants helpfully describe the challenges for nurturing leadership in the lack of interest in congregants who refuse to be spiritually transformed and utilize their God-given potential. Their lack of interest is also a part of their lack in spirituality and zeal.

Lack of Commitment and Skills

Timothy described his congregation’s lack of commitment,

People want to get to a higher height, but they don’t want to go through the process. There are many excuses that many will make. They will say that they’ve got school, they have work, they have family, and other things like that. Do they apply? Do they really read God’s Word enough? Do they pray? Again, they don’t apply themselves enough.

Peter described long-term time commitment as one of the major challenges, “The one major challenge is long term. Our people love short-term things... people just don’t know what tomorrow will be like so they feel that they cannot commit. They are afraid that they might offer something that they cannot follow up with and so on.” Shadrach also shared Peter’s dilemma, “People are busy. People are very, very busy in the city and do not have time commitment to make, to sustain ministry.”

Gregg Ogden, who understands people’s lack of commitment to spiritual things and to God, says,

When we respond to Christ, we enter a lifelong process of change... the call to transformation is a call to inward development. We are to overcome those obstacles in ourselves which hold us back and keep us from growing up into the full stature of Christ... The general call to Christ, community, and transformation places a priority on the inner life of being that undergirds and gives direction to the outer life of doing.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁹ Ogden, *The New Reformation*, 193-195.

Slaughter states,

Renewal involves commitment to the integrity of membership... When a church gets serious about renewal, it begins to ask new questions about the responsibilities of membership... It costs something to be a follower of Jesus Christ. In times of renewal, the Church rediscovers this important principle. The integrity of membership cannot be divorced from the cost of discipleship.⁴¹⁰

Pastors can teach people to prioritize their spiritual life in order to remove obstacles that prevent them from having a life of transformation and a life of commitment to God and Christ. When people prioritize their spiritual lives, renewal will take place.

Pastors' Ability to Meet the Challenges

Merton P. Strommen states,

A pastor's attitude, words, and actions establish an atmosphere in a congregation that is conducive to or resistant to affecting needed change. The relationship you establish with your members is all-important... When a pastor's style of leadership includes a commitment to needed change, an affirming attitude toward members, and an openness to experimentation and new ideas, the atmosphere is warmed and becomes freeing.⁴¹¹

Strommen describes a pastor's effective leadership skills: the pastors' way of talking about change and highlighting the need for change has a direct effect on the congregants' response to that need. All of the interview participants shared the different leadership approaches that they have used in order to affect change in their congregations despite the challenges that they encountered.

In order to meet the challenges of resistance, Joshua believes more in building relationships with the congregants as opposed to more preaching and teaching in order to meet with their resistance. He stated,

⁴¹⁰ Slaughter, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs*, 69, 71-80.

⁴¹¹ Strommen, *The Innovative Church*, 61.

I firmly believe it now... and that is to invest all that I have, my time and my effort, my energy in the lives of my congregants and that means getting personal with them and sitting down at their tables and becoming involved in a number of aspects of their lives. Sometimes they welcome that. Sometimes they put up guards to try to prevent that, but they eventually will let those guards down and they open up and they say, “You know what? We really trust you as a spiritual leader.”

When pastors want to change their congregants, they have to be mindful of their connection with the people. They have to know the people first. Daniel also makes the case for building relationships when it comes to meet challenges with the congregants:

Relationship is important, it takes time to build that relationship. Once you build a relationship with the people, and you begin to help folk understand, “Look, this is what we’re up against, and this where we are today...” Once you change the culture in the church, very often folk will change. People will change, and they will change some of the ones that have been the most obstinate, and can turn around to be the greatest advocates for what change needs to be.

Nohria and Khurana explore relationships as a means of meeting leadership challenges.

They state,

Since leading is all about the relationship between leaders and followers, ...followers want to identify psychologically with the leader. The more they want is emotional connection, the more attracted they may be to a leader who relies strongly on charisma as source of his or her influence.⁴¹²

Relationships take time to build, but they are worth the time and effort. Pastors should never rush to change a congregation without first knowing their congregants and or establishing a relationship with them. The only way people will trust their leaders is when they have already built trust through relationships.

Delegating is one way to form trust and relationships among congregants. Jeremiah described his personal challenge to delegate responsibility, “The challenges for me are to share my work with Silas and Timothy. It’s easy for me to be the pull all because I’m excited to do it. I like to be in the people’s lives. I want to see the person... I do a lot of

⁴¹² Nohria and Khurana, *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice*, 422.

face-to-face with my people. I have to let other people do some of that work, but I love to do it much. The challenge for me is sharing the work.” Jeremiah exemplifies why it is important for pastors to delegate responsibility to their leadership staff in order to avoid leadership conflicts and challenges. Pastors should do all that is in their power to be aware of their limitations and compensate as needed. According to Berlin and Weems, “The ability to delegate tasks while retaining responsibility is critical to fruitful leadership.”⁴¹³ Berlin and Weems add, “Delegation is more than just assigning work. You maintain a role as leader, but it is no longer to do everything yourself. You continue to give oversight because you cannot shed the ultimate responsibility.”⁴¹⁴ Pastors’ willingness to delegate responsibility to congregants is paramount if congregants are to exercise and develop their gifts. Pastors’ effectiveness depends on how they train, equip, and delegate responsibilities according to their members’ gifts.

Peter expressed the challenges of dealing with the people’s brokenness through renewal,

A lot of people have brokenness in their lives. We are talking about, not only healing that, overcoming that, breaking through, talking about a long process... I advise them to pray and ask God to help. Did God help you? Did God really answer your prayers? Is He real? Is He powerful enough to help you? With that they gather more that can help them to deal with the more difficult challenges... All of this takes a lot of spiritual growth, your spirituality as you change. God has to be very real in your life.

Dealing with people brokenness requires preaching the gospel for renewal and transformation. One of the biggest problems with church-goers is that of brokenness due to lack of conversion. The solution is preaching the gospel and the law. Mark stated that

⁴¹³ Berlin and Weems, *High Yield*, 88-89.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*

he used the gospel with the law as a vital weapon to deal with these challenges. He shared,

I began to see where the apostle Paul had a high regard for the use of the Ten Commandments in the witness where a person would be brought to a place where they were convicted of their sin. When I began to apply that, that is when things I think in the church became a lot clearer and for people, their understanding of the gospel became a lot clearer at that point, where we front-loaded the gospel with the law. It's freed up a lot of people in the church to be able to understand how to apply the gospel to people's lives.

Matthew shared a similar view with Mark. He spoke about using the gospel to identify key leaders to help affect change. Matthew stated, "We must learn to package the gospel to fit the environment and the setting that we are called to serve at... Not only I do that but, every good soldier does groundwork. How do you do groundwork? You have to identify the key and influential leaders in your church and get those sold on the program." Mark and Matthew preach the gospel and the law to meet the challenges of unconverted church members. Timothy Keller also recommends this approach for spiritual renewal, "Personal gospel renewal means the gospel doctrines of sin and grace are actually experienced, not just known intellectually... corporate gospel renewal also called a 'revival,' a season in which a whole body of believers experience personal gospel renewal together."⁴¹⁵ The preaching of the gospel of law and grace is key to bring people to Jesus' feet to repent of their sins and to experience conversion and spiritual transformation. It is also important for pastors to have other church leaders who have already gone through that spiritual transformation to help in the new renewal process.

Shadrach explained how he deals with congregants who refuse to change and to commit. He stated, "You always have to preach about your vision, pray about it, and talk

⁴¹⁵ Keller, *Center Church*, 54.

about it... You have to talk about it until people start to hear it over and over again, and start to enter the system here.” Shadrach also said, “If you tend to be consistent over time, ... you can see people’s gifts being developed in long term ministry... if you stay with the people and encourage them, and create opportunity for them to serve, they will blossom.”

Timothy shared Shadrach’s view, “Those who are hungry enough and are developing, again, when we give them the opportunity and they kept on developing and developing.” Pastors who want to be successful in bringing change must have a vision. Pastors must share the vision with their staff and preach about it to the entire congregation so that the congregants can embrace the vision for change. Doing so gives people the opportunity to develop and use their gifts in the process.

Strommen advises that pastors to cast a vision when they propose change to a congregation: “First, establish in people’s minds the need for a change, and then present this innovation as an approach that will enhance the mission of the congregation. Tie the innovation to the congregation’s mission, and meaningfully involve all whose support is sought for the innovation.”⁴¹⁶ Duch similarly states, “We must form the future of our parishes (churches) by dreaming of what can be, by revitalizing our own spirit, by empowering each person to help develop workable plans of action for on-going reorganization development and continuing self renewal.”⁴¹⁷ Weems adds, “Leadership for renewal will be characterized by a passion that can come only from a compelling message and an essential mission-that treasure passed on to us in clay jars... Leaders with

⁴¹⁶ Strommen, *The Innovative Church*, 54.

⁴¹⁷ Duch, *Successful Parish Leadership*, 2.

a passion for renewal will put bells back in the steeples and ring out a clear and sure message of faith and hope⁴¹⁸

It is important for pastors who want to bring about change of spiritual renewal to their congregants to be clear and precise in their message. As shown in the findings and the literature review, the vision must be accompanied with well-formed relationships and a plan to empower congregants to participate in the vision. The message must show that they have a detail and descriptive plan to bring about spiritual renewal for transformation and growth.

Benefits of Nurturing Leadership

The literature and interview participants named many benefits that flow from nurturing leadership. These benefits include congregational growth and transformation, improvement in worship and discipleship, and pastoral leadership improvement.

Congregants Grow

Powers examines gifts development programs and concludes, “Each program has the responsibility for tasks that give shape to some aspect of Christian growth and development.”⁴¹⁹ Rightly so, growth is in fact one of the benefits of congregants developing through pastors’ nurturing leadership. Whatever programs pastors do in the church must have the objective of bringing spiritual growth to their congregants for their development and spiritual transformation.

Wagner shares some of the benefits for developing spiritual gifts: “The individual grows, which means, you will be a better Christian and better able to allow God to make

⁴¹⁸ Weems, *Church Leadership*, 132.

⁴¹⁹ Powers, *Christian Education Handbook*, 275.

your life count for Him. People who know their gifts have a handle on their spiritual job description. They find their place in the church with more ease.”⁴²⁰ Wagner emphasizes individual growth as a benefit. He understands that as congregants develop their gifts personally, they also enjoy the corporate benefits of growing in Christ’s church. It is indeed a spiritual endeavor to be desired. Wagner shares a second benefit: “The whole Body grows. Not only does knowing about spiritual gifts help individual Christians, but it also helps the Church as a whole. Ephesians 4 tells us that when spiritual gifts are in operation, the whole Body matures. It helps the Body to gain ‘the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ’ (v. 13).”⁴²¹

Both spiritual growth and membership growth are good for the church. The scholars understand the value of spiritual and numeric growth, and the interview participants experienced firsthand this growth benefit. Similar to Wagner, Joshua explained the growth benefits of nurturing leadership:

First of all, I think that is the catalyst of growth for the church. The church will grow not just in number, but spiritually. I think our objectives shouldn’t be more than just to see the church get larger so we can get more in the plate on Sunday, but we want to see our people grow in their appreciation and love for their church community and for Christ. They love the church more. They contribute more.

Joshua added, “We even increased our membership a little.”

Daniel sees individual growth when it comes to the spiritual benefits of congregants developing through pastors’ nurturing leadership. He stated, “Well, the benefits are first to the individual. I think that they begin to see themselves in a new light hopefully... I think when you ask people to come and be involved, there’s a certain

⁴²⁰ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 41-42.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, 43-44.

excitement that people have; they can be inspired by participating and being asked to participate.” Daniel also emphasized this benefit with an example, “We have a woman who is a wonderful poet. She’s not highly educated, but she writes beautiful poetry. That’s a benefit. She’s developing her literary talent, and we get the blessing of reading, hearing her work, you see... There are a lot of benefits.” What Daniel shared above is exactly what Wagner means when he said, “People who know their gifts have a handle on their spiritual job description. They find their place in the church with more ease.”⁴²²

When Daniel was asked how do congregants’ spiritual gifts contribute to the benefits? He responded, “Well, when people are renewed spiritually and understand that they have a close relationship with God, with Jesus then the church is going to very often grow because it’s going to become a place that other people want to come to.” Shadrach shared the benefits in the area of growth, “One person who is nervous about praying in public because they are afraid being seen praying in public is so dramatic, to see that person begin to pray two or three sentences, and now they can pray on behalf of the people. Yeah so the benefits are tremendous here.”

Matthew shared about financial growth and spiritual life transformation: “As we grow, then everything else will grow. For years now, we have invested. Actually, we are coming to the end a \$600,000 project in this church, building project. It’s going to be transformed, but the transformation process right now has shifted really from transforming a building to transforming lives.” Congregants who are nurtured and developed will experience growth both spiritually and numerically, but the ideal is spiritual growth and transformation.

⁴²² *Ibids.*, 41-42.

Transformation

Jeremiah shared the spiritual benefits of nurturing leadership that he observed. He expressed the state of transformation that takes place in a person, saying,

My experience is that people are satisfied if they can have small, but real, God experiences in their lives. It can be as simple as seeing a friend's life change, or having the experience of hope after some despair... My experience is that when people see a little bit of spiritual transformation in their life, it doesn't take much if they're mature people. That gives meaning in their lives and they're willing to stand up for their faith. Having these God moments, and often they are not so much when it's loud, often when it's quiet.

Jeremiah elaborated upon how this believer, who was involved in these different committees, explained his involvement to others who did not understand, "You know why I do this? Because when I'm doing it, I can see the kingdom of God," he said, "I can see the kingdom of God."

Shadrach said, "To look on people that you have spent time with pouring into, and to see how they have gotten excited about their faith, to pour into a young man as I see here all the time and to see that young man start to teach and preach. You sit back and you say, 'Wow, I'm so glad I made that investment.'" Matthew stated, "As individuals find their gifts and utilize it, they actually become the ones to actually empower each other... When you've transformed lives, they will transform other lives, and that group will transform other lives." Transformation is what all pastors should want for their congregants. The main objective of spiritual renewal is transformation: to change lives into the image of Christ for the growth of the kingdom.

Better Worship

McNair says, “Worship, must in all circumstances be preserved and continually deepened.”⁴²³ Patterson says, “Worship is a relationship with God.”⁴²⁴ He also says, “Worshipping is looking from ourselves to God, focusing on Him and presenting praise, adoration, love, submission, – worthship – from the believer to God...the benefits of worship... are the very means for developing true believers.”⁴²⁵ There is no question that worship is central to the renewal and development of congregants. Equally, better worship is a sign of renewal, transformation, and growth.

Daniel explained how inspiration in worship is a means of spiritual growth. He said, “When people are inspired and you walk in the doors, you can feel it. When the spirituality is high and heightened, I think that’s very key. When you have a church that is aware of its spiritual, the spiritual presence is amongst them, you’re going to have church growth. People are going to come to that church.” Jeremiah also emphasized the benefits of worship, “People are very involved in the worship. A lot happens in our worship service. I do the preaching. Our elders celebrate. I think that’s probably the most important thing that we do for spiritual transformation and spiritual nurturing.”

Better Discipleship and Service

Ehrich states, “Also known as mission and servanthood, ‘service’ means giving one’s life for the good of another person. It is the acting out of ‘love your neighbor.’”⁴²⁶

Charles R. Swindoll says, “Christian service means invading a battleground, not a

⁴²³ MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church*, 39.

⁴²⁴ Patterson, *Effectively Leading*, 46.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 46-47.

⁴²⁶ Ehrich, *Church Wellness*, 89.

playground, and you and I are the weapons God uses to attack and defeat the enemy.”⁴²⁷

Discipleship embodies both service and mission. When believers serve one another, they fulfill the mission of love to their neighbor. Gregg Ogden says, “All service is honorable to the Lord.”⁴²⁸ Ehrich also adds, “Service includes... doing work, making sacrifices, joining hands with others to build a house or dig a trench or fight for justice. The personal dimension of service is what truly transforms both giver and receiver... Mission work matters.”⁴²⁹

Mark explained how service has benefitted his congregation’s witness to non-Christians,

They show the world that we are disciples. Jesus said “If you love one another, the world will know that you’re my disciple.” That’s one of the things that people have told us. “We sense that you have love each other in this church, that you have a love for another. You enjoy one another. You like being around one another.” That’s important for people unsaved to see.

For Mark, joining hands together and being together is part of discipleship, for it is the manifestation of love among believers. Love characterizes true discipleship. Daniel says, “When we’ve made up our mind to be disciples, then we go on to further spiritual development... The transformation process is when we are like Jesus we really entering onto a spiritual journey. It’s not until we’re transformed into discipleship that we then grow in terms of our spiritual gifts.”

Witmer agrees that service and discipleship fuel evangelism. He understands discipleship as a way of “Leading the people and equipping them to share the gospel of

⁴²⁷ Swindoll, *The Church Awakening*, 103.

⁴²⁸ Ogden, *The New Reformation*, 178.

⁴²⁹ Swindoll, *The Church Awakening*, 103.

Jesus-Christ with their friends and neighbors as well as supporting the cause of the advancement of his kingdom in the world.”⁴³⁰ Matthew shared a similar experience, saying, “I discovered that basically in my people’s lives, and ministry, their passion and their desire to serve God, and to get involved in various evangelistic trust and ministry.” Matthew’s congregants were motivated to serve after Hurricane Sandy. Matthew’s description illustrates Wagner’s assertion that, “God is glorified as first Peter 4:10-11 advises.”⁴³¹ God is glorified through discipleship and mission as congregants show their spiritual growth through acts of service and love. Matthew continued, “That’s the indication that they have come to the place where they have grown spiritually and they realized that their existence is to serve God and to serve men. Those are indicators that people are growing spiritually when they are willing and ready to go and serve wherever they are called to serve.” Matthew also added, “We see also that it really, really benefits the church as it relates to soul winning because as they grow, and certainly, the people who come in the church will be able to grow with them. Anybody who’s growing won’t want to leave there, they are growing because there’s vested interest in being here.”

Peter shared how discipleship and service have spiritually benefitted his congregation. He stated, “Each individual will become a small pastor in that sense because they will be practicing reaching out, evangelizing, and witnessing. They will be practicing nurturing one another. They will be practicing teaching one another.”

Joshua emphasized how service must honor God, saying, “I think the key to service is through the gifts that God gives you. You can do it two ways. You can do it

⁴³⁰ Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 157.

⁴³¹ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 43-44.

through your natural fleshly means, which brings no honor and pleasure to God, or you can allow God to equip you, surrender yourself to him and let him use you. Then I think that has far more benefits than the other.” Shadrach added, “It’s not about personal benefit, it’s about God’s kingdom benefits. The more the good news gets spread, the more the gifts are transmitted. The more transmission occurs, is more the kingdom of God is spread.” God’s kingdom benefits are what transformation is all about: growing, transforming and renewing ourselves for better service to others and to God. Truly transformed congregants will not and cannot help but to be true disciples of Christ and to do service to others by helping and sharing Christ’s love with others in their church and community.

Better Leadership

Better leadership is certainly a great spiritual benefit to the church. When churches have good leaders, they can realize their vision. Berlin and Weems state, “It is critical to take time to cultivate key leaders, individuals without whom the vision cannot be realized...Key leaders have to possess spiritual depth and hold a faithful and sound theology if they are to serve the church.”⁴³²

Matthew emphasized how better leadership benefits the church as a whole, “The benefit is, definitely, for the congregation. We have better leaders... For our leaders, them personally, it helps them not only in their leadership capability at the church but it helps them to be stronger leaders in their home, and to be stronger leaders out in the job and in the community.”

⁴³² Berlin and Weems, *High Yield*, 78.

Shadrach described the benefits in terms of confidence. He said, “The people gain confidence in themselves. They gain confidence in their gifts. They recognize it. Then they develop it and they teach it to somebody else. Once a person gets confident, and the trickle down effect starts to happen across the board, horizontally but also vertically.” Shadrach gave an example, “To look at a young lady who was afraid to dance, or to lead worship, and to call on somebody important and encourage them, and now they are worshiping and leading with confidence.” Shadrach’s description typifies confidence but also exemplifies delegating responsibility to others in order to make them better.

Timothy talked about better leadership and unity among the congregants. He stated, “We become like a unit. We become unbroken, we fellowship together, we tabernacle together and we dwell together. We become alike.” Joshua stated, “It’s not a tug of war that goes on between you and your congregants.” This common understanding and bond makes leadership more effective and enhances the relationships between the leaders and the congregants. Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld encourage pastors to recognize and celebrate others’ talents and the gifts. They reference Paul’s letter to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, saying, “If the Church was to be true to the purpose for which God intended it, Paul asserted, then individual talents and gifts needed to not only recognized, but celebrated... When we recognize, celebrate, and develop the diversity of talents that live among us, we are fulfilling God’s purpose not just for our individual lives, but also for the church.”⁴³³

Berlin and Weems add,

There are many benefits to effective delegation. You maximize your time for the tasks only you can do. You can utilize the gifts of those with knowledge you do

⁴³³ Winseman, Clifton, and Liesveld, *Living Your Strength*, 201, 203.

not have. You help others develop new skills and knowledge. You motivate others as you trust them with important tasks. You increase chances for success through more involvement.⁴³⁴

More Effective Pastoral Leadership

As the literature review explored, Peter White explains that nurturing leadership is caring leadership. White states,

The fifth service that caring renders is to lead. A spiritual shepherd leads them out... The responsibility to include leading as part of pastoral care (nurturing) is present whenever scripture covers the subject. The pastor gives a lead whether he likes it or not. The mind-set and progress of a congregation is more influenced by the leadership than by any other single factor.⁴³⁵

I understand that leadership is precisely called caring. Effective leadership is nurturing leadership. Barbara J. Bloodgett writes, “effective congregations are led by effective ministers.”⁴³⁶ As part of the pastors’ effective leadership, Woodruf says, “Pastors are also expected to set the vision for the church as part of the leadership ability and responsibility.”⁴³⁷

Timothy explained how nurturing leadership made him a more effective pastor, and his response overlaps with Woodruf’s stance. Timothy stated, “One of the main benefits is the Lord has given the vision to the main leader, such as myself, any leadership, you pass that down, now, to the congregants. The main vision is here, but everyone else, where the Lord speaks to them, they tie right back into the main vision.” Timothy confirmed what Keith Lamdin states, “it is the leader’s task to craft the vision

⁴³⁴ Berlin and Weems, *High Yield*, 89.

⁴³⁵ White, *The Effective Pastor*, 102.

⁴³⁶ Bloodgett, *Becoming The Pastor You Hope to Be*, 3.

⁴³⁷ Woodruf, “Executive Pastors’ Perception of Leadership and Management Competencies Needed for Local Church Administration.”

and explain it and keep it ever before the minds of those with whom the leader works.”⁴³⁸

Pastors, as nurturing spiritual leaders, must make a commitment to lead their congregants for effective ministry through vision.

Peter shared, “I will be in connection with my people. I will not be so far away from them. Also helping me to be humble, remembering that I’m one of the broken people too if God did not come and do all of this.” Peter experienced the benefit of effective leadership in terms of his relationship with congregants. Paul W. Abramowitz discusses the importance of having nurturing relationship. He states, “Over time I realized that, while these attributes are important, the most motivated and productive members of my staff were often those who had strong relationships with others with whom or for whom they worked.”⁴³⁹ Abramowitz continued, “As I matured as a manager, I realized that my time spent developing, maintaining, and cultivating these relationships was time well spent.”⁴⁴⁰ For Peter, growing through meaningful relationships epitomized effective leadership.

Daniel shared how nurturing leadership helped him grow. He said,

Because you get what you give. When you are trying to help someone grow, when you are nurturing them, when you are feeding them, then you go and eat a little bit yourself. As you teach, as you counsel, as you help people grow in terms of their spiritual understanding, you are certainly going to grow in terms of your own spiritual understanding.

Matthew responded similarly, “It makes me more effective in that I nurture and I am being nurtured also. Not only do I nurture my congregation, there are times when they

⁴³⁸ Lamdin, *Finding Your Leadership Style*, 19.

⁴³⁹ Abramowitz “Nurturing Relationships: An Essential Ingredient of Leadership.”

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

nurture me. Every church that I've been to, they have made me a stronger pastor." These participants' experiences indicate that there are great benefits in growing others. Leaders who grow others also grow in the process. Pastors should do their best to utilize the best nurturing leadership skills when growing congregants for it is one of the best ways for them to be effective and grow. Jeremiah stated,

Nurturing ministry keeps a person focused as opposed to institution. It keeps his spirit focused as opposed to program. Nurturing ministry, I think, is more like the way the Lord Jesus is incarnational... To me, it feels more like the New Testament. That's the way Paul did his ministry and that's the way the Lord Jesus did his ministry. Yes, there is the giving of the word. Paul preached. He always preached to his people.

Mark responded,

Just being a responsible leader. I would say just be responsible for what God's called you to do. If he's called us to handle the Word of God in a proper way, to hold people accountable with the Word of God. Shepherding, leading, lead people in a certain way. Yeah, that's what's I want to do, but it's not always something that they perceive as good until they allow that God word to effect in their lives. Yeah, nurturing. Growing.

Similar to Jeremiah and Mark, Richard Patterson explains the benefits of nurturing leadership, writing,

Using the nurturing and equipping of others as measuring tools of one's leadership ability was also a Pauline principle. Paul told Timothy that how well he developed others was a strong indication of how effective he was as a leader. Paul carefully explained that he must use great care in selecting, nurturing, and equipping each person he placed into church ministry.⁴⁴¹

Nurturing leadership, in order to be effective, must be scriptural in following Christ's and Paul's example of shepherding, leading, equipping, and caring for God's flock.

Joshua shared how nurturing leadership makes him a better pastor,

I think it makes me... Well of course, I'm reluctant to say a better pastor. I think a more effective pastor, more effective. The effectiveness of ministry should be

⁴⁴¹ Patterson, *Effectively Leading*, 52.

determined by changed lives, not by any external thing like how much they put in the plate on Sunday, but their changed lives. I witnessed that over and over again throughout the years in my ministry. Not as much I would like it, but I witnessed it in a number of individuals, and I thank God for that.

Shadrach also shared his view on the effectiveness of nurturing leadership, “In a community anyone that uses their gifts to nurture, to develop, to achieve transformation is leaving a legacy on the lives of people who might be able to help them find themselves.”

Patterson says, “in order to be effective, each leader needs to be: a person of vision, action, steadfastness, servanthood, and dependence. Effective church leaders are not born – they are developed... to be an effective leader requires that these God-given leadership characteristics be developed.”⁴⁴² I would add, effective leadership must show nurturing leadership ability. It is the ability to renew and develop congregants for transformation and growth.

Overall, the literature review and interviews revealed that there is a need for nurturing leadership in the pastorate. Nurture is interconnected with leadership ability, caring, development, renewal, transformation, and growth. This knowledge and the understanding of this critical ministry skill is paramount to the transformation and growth of the congregants in the church.

Recommendations for Practice

In light of these findings, I offer recommendation that may help ministry practitioners who want to develop their congregants.

First, it is important to know that this research can be used across all denominations for effective nurturing leadership practice. This research was conducted

⁴⁴² Patterson, *Effectively Leading*, 8.

with the intent to be used for any church, regardless of the denominations, groups, or ministries.

Second, pastors are advised to familiarize themselves with the term nurturing and to make it the common language of their congregants. Nurturing will not take place in a vacuum. Pastors and congregants alike need to make it the vocabulary of the people.

Third, make renewal a continuous cycle and constant practice. Similar to the history of the church, congregants go through a cyclical pattern and must be renewed on a constant basis. Growth is often possible when there is renewal.

Fourth, pray, teach, and preach about the spiritual gifts. Teach the gifts according to the biblical understanding of what they are. Make a chart and create a list of what the gifts are, and post them in visible locations in the church building. Encourage and require people to become familiarize with the gifts. Help them discover their own gifts.

Fifth, since the gifts can never be fully developed, as the findings revealed, continue to grow. There should be a common practice among pastors to make it a priority to continue leading their congregants to spiritual growth in their giftedness.

Sixth, the findings reveal that all churches do not all use the same gifts. It is recommended that pastors and congregants use the gifts that are mostly relevant and appropriate to their ministry context.

Seventh, pastors should identify other hidden gifts other than the spiritual gifts described in the Bible and to have the congregants use those gifts to better the church and the community in which they serve.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study focused on how senior pastors develop their congregants through nurturing leadership. As with any study, there are limitations as to how extensive the focus can be. Therefore, the following areas of study are recommended.

First, more research and more books are needed in the area of nurturing leadership as it relates to spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development. Pastors should have access to more literature in the area of nurturing leadership in order to have better skills to develop their congregants. Second, the findings reveal that gifts can never be fully developed. A more in-depth research study is needed to find out if there is an alternative to that conclusion.

Last, but not least, I would like to propose the following books for the reader who want to explore more on the topics of nurturing, renewal and spiritual gifts development: *Church Wellness: A Best Practices Guide to Nurturing Healthy Congregations* by Tom Ehrich, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* by Richard F. Lovelace, *Effectively Leading: A Guide For All Church Leaders* by Richard Patterson, *Spiritual Entrepreneurs: 6 Principles For Risking Renewal* by Michael Slaughter, *Pathway to Renewal: Practical Steps for Congregations* by Daniel P. Smith and Mary K. Sellon, *Your Spiritual Gifts: Can Help Your Church Grow* by Peter C. Wagner, *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church* by Timothy Z. Witmer, *The Effective Pastor* by Peter White. These eight books will be very instrumental to anyone in their pursuit of learning more about nurturing leadership.

Conclusion

This qualitative research study has confirmed that pastors need nurturing leadership skills in order to develop congregants in spiritual renewal. The findings show what many of the scholars have suggested and proposed in the different literatures about nurturing leadership. When I set to research on the topic of nurturing leadership, I knew the findings would be very instrumental to various ministry leaders. Though there have been separate studies done on nurturing, renewal, and spiritual gifts development, this research study specifically focused upon nurturing leadership as a way of helping congregants to develop through spiritual renewal and spiritual gifts development.

This study shows that nurturing and spiritual renewal are critical to the development of congregants, and their spiritual gifts. It also shows that through the utilization of the gifts more and more spiritual growth takes place. In that context, this research study provides ministry leaders tools to better equip pastors for more successful and effective leadership in their ministry practice. In light of what the scholars have said and what this research study finds, it is paramount that pastors prioritize developing and growing their congregants through a nurturing leadership in order to be effective in their ministry.

In conclusion, the researcher hopes this study with its findings will enable pastors and researchers alike to have a better tool to develop congregants through nurturing leadership. It is also the hope of the researcher that this study will further equip pastors to be more effective nurturing leaders as they develop their congregants.

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