2020

A Strategy To Coach Pastors to Revitalize Declining Churches in the Carolina Conference and other Seventh-day Adventist Conferences in the United States

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ABSTRACT

A STRATEGY TO COACH PASTORS TO REVITALIZE
DECLINING CHURCHES IN THE CAROLINA
CONFERENCE AND OTHER SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST CONFERENCES IN THE
UNITED STATES

by

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ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Document

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A STRATEGY TO COACH PASTORS TO REVITALIZE DECLINING
CHURCHES IN THE CAROLINA CONFERENCE AND OTHER SEVENTH-
DAY ADVENTIST CONFERENCES IN THE UNITED STATES

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Problem

Many English-speaking Seventh-day Adventist churches are in an attendance decline or plateau in the United States. Specifically, the investigator found that 56% of English-speaking churches within the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists were in decline when comparing the five-year attendance mean for 2008-2012 and 2013-2017 using annual average attendance data. This discovery was alarming. Simultaneously, however, the population was growing in many of these communities. More intentionality was needed to stem the tide of attendance decline. These churches were in need of revitalization, but many of their pastors lacked the natural temperament and/or support needed for revitalization to occur.

Method

This initiative was assessed with a clear goal in mind—to measure the impact that coaching pastors for revitalization would have on the attendance of declining churches irrespective of pastors' personalities. Pastors were given a revitalization process to lead churches through—*Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*—as they were coached by the investigator routinely. Although the thrust of the process constituted as quantitative research, the investigator also obtained the pastors' DiSC® and MBTI® personality profiles and compared their profiles to turnaround and non-turnaround pastors from prior research.

Conclusions

Since coaching pastors through a revitalization process turns around declining churches—the most challenging kind—it is expected to advance plateaued churches in growth. Along the way, the study revealed that personality is a strong predictor of the ability of pastors to turn churches around and that coaching for many neutralizes any disadvantages of temperament. Therefore, it behooves schools of theology, seminaries, and hiring entities to assess the DiSC® and MBTI® personality profiles of pastoral candidates. Additionally, it is profitable for church structures (i.e. conferences, unions, and divisions) to provide adequate revitalization leadership and coaching support to pastors leading plateaued and declining churches.

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Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

by

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Recent research by Pew Research Center, GALLUP®, LifeWay® Research, and

The State reveal that United States church attendance was down sharply and continued to

decline yearly ("Attendance at Religious Services," 2019; Earl, 2019; Ellis, 2018; Jones,

2019; Newport, 2018; Saad, 2018). For example, one study showed as few as 60% of

Protestant churches were plateaued or declining (Earl, 2019). Yet others maintained that

figure was 80% with the majority being churches in decline (Bird & Ferguson, 2018;

Cheyney, 2016a). Highlighting the enormity of church decline, Burrill (2004) enumerated

this figure to be 80-85% for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. While Malphurs (2013)

averred 80-85% of American churches were in decline or plateaued, he extrapolated that

80% of pastors are unable to lead in church renewal. Alarmingly, the decline in church

attendance occurred while the population had increased by nearly 6% from 2010 to 2018

per the United States Census Bureau ("U.S. Population Up 5.96% since 2010," 2018).

Furthermore, fewer Americans each year believed in God, prayed, studied or

meditated on the Bible, or lived out other Christian discipleship practices. According to

its "Attendance at Religious Services" study, Pew Research Center found a strong

correlation between church attendance and the following: belief in God, frequency of

prayer, scripture study, scripture meditation, moral guidance, etc.

These coinciding trends—whether church leaders ignore or proactively engage them—are tantamount to a crisis of eternal significance. Therefore, allowing this crisis of broad church attendance decline to go largely unanswered may put at risk the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8).

Cheyney (2016b) notes that there has been a heightened emphasis on church planting the past two decades; however, there has not been "corresponding attention given to the revitalization and renewal of our churches" (p. 45). As a result of many good leaders being engaged in church planting, there is a cataclysmic leadership deficit in plateaued and declining churches. Cheyney (2016a) exclaims that church planting efforts will be hindered in the absence of developing healthier, renewed churches that may sponsor future plants. Consequently, church revitalization is critical to the impact of Christianity in the United States.

This introductory chapter sets the stage for this project by stressing the critical challenge of church decline. The investigator's ministry context from which this project springs is detailed. The problem the investigation seeks to specifically address is defined. The particular way the project tackled the problem is stated. Furthermore, the delimitations of this investigation are disclosed.

Herein, the project process is described. This threat is tackled with a thoughtful theological reflection comprising chapter two. Chapter three further strengthens the investigation with a review of current literature elucidating a suitable remedy. The initiative is laid out in the subsequent chapter via nine phases that sought to provide revitalization to declining churches. The plan pursued this by coming alongside pastors

with coaching. A narrative of the implementation is shared in the fifth chapter. Lastly, chapter six underscores the benefits of the initiative, notes lessons gained, and sets forth recommendations to advance the cause of church revitalization. Additionally, definitions of terms pivotal to this investigation are included.

Description of the Ministry Context

The investigator serves as the Church Planting, Church Revitalization, and Health Ministries Director of the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He has served in this role since July 2012. The primary setting for implementation of this investigation is within the Carolina Conference. This investigation included a secondary setting—other declining Seventh-day Adventist Christian churches beyond the Carolina Conference but within the United States. Some churches may have attributed their decline in attendance to recent nearby church plants. The majority, however, were due to other causes.

The Carolina Conference comprises of Seventh-day Adventist Christian churches within North and South Carolina. The researcher is responsible as the Church Revitalization Director to lead the cause of renewal of declining and plateauing churches. He is responsible for creating agendas and follow through for the Carolina Conference Church Revitalization Committee. All four Carolina Conference officers are members of this committee as well as other conference leaders and lay members.

Moreover, the investigator is responsible for determining what indicators (i.e. statistics) help reveal church decline. Beginning in 2013, the Church Revitalization Committee has studied reports of church accessions (i.e. baptisms and individuals becoming members by a profession of faith), tithe, and attendance. It then selected those churches in severe decline to undertake a monitored Natural Church Development (NCD)

process. Each church received an NCD coach to assist them in the processing of their results and discuss next steps. Per the request of this committee, the pastors of these churches gave progress reports every six months; thus, a level of accountability was incorporated. Churches remained in this follow-up process until conclusive signs of turnaround had begun.

However, these churches did not receive a more comprehensive revitalization process as contained in *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* until 2019. This book includes the NCD process. Although the previous monitored process provided an NCD coach, it was not as systematic as this investigation set forth.

Statement of the Problem

With the majority of churches in decline or in a plateau, more investigation and intervention was needed. The investigator calculated the five-year attendance mean for churches in the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 2008-2012 and 2013-2017 using annual average attendance data. Only churches that had reported attendance for a minimum of three years for each five-year period were evaluated. A total of 77 English-speaking churches were discovered fitting this criterion. The two five-year averages were compared, and the difference was measured. Of them, 43 had a lower average in the more recent five-year period representing a majority or 55.84%. Of the 43 churches, a total of eight had nearby church plants during the same period.

The discovery of a majority of English-speaking churches declining in attendance was disturbing. Simultaneously, the population was growing in most of these communities. These results were inclusive of the prior efforts of the Church

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Revitalization Committee with declining churches. If the tide of attendance decline was to be stemmed in the Carolina Conference, more efforts were needed. This challenge was not limited to congregations in North and South Carolina but was prevalent across the United States ("Attendance at Religious Services," 2019; Burrill, 2004; Earl, 2019; Jones, 2019; Malphurs, 2013; Newport, 2018; Olson, 2008; Saad, 2018). These churches were in need of revitalization, but many of their pastors lacked the support needed for revitalization to occur.

Statement of the Task

First off, it cannot be overstated: all methods are otiose without the blessing of God—the presence of the Holy Spirit (Clouzet, 2011). Beyond inviting God's Spirit to turn around latent churches, the task of this project is three-fold. The plan is to develop, implement, and evaluate a coaching process with a sampling of pastors who led churches with declining attendance in the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. And since the challenge was not limited to congregations in the Carolinas, a sampling of other Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors outside the Carolina Conference but within the United States is included to strengthen the investigation. In this initiative the investigator first provided a revitalization process for pastors to lead churches; he concurrently came alongside the pastors through coaching.

Delimitations

The conditions of this initiative delimited it in quite a number of ways. First, it was limited to pastors leading English–speaking churches. Second, the territories included were within the Carolina Conference (North and South Carolina) and other regions within the United States. Third, the investigation was limited by the personal

connections of the researcher to find qualifying churches and pastors. Whereas the investigator had many connections within the Carolina Conference, links to prospective pastors elsewhere was limited to his relationships with administrators in other conferences and their buy-in for project participation.

Fourth, the project involved pastors who lead churches in decline. The investigator chose to work with pastors who led churches in decline since it was reasonable to suppose if a turnaround could happen with them, it would be likely to occur with plateauing churches as well. While Barna (1993) discovered that declining evangelical churches required a new pastor in order to turn around, Dodson and Stetzer (2007) and Eymann (2012) claim that pastors leading during a decline may also succeed in the same, albeit less likely. This project was limited therefore to existing Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors who led declining churches, not new pastors who transitioned into such churches. The researcher sought a solution for declining Seventh-day Adventist Christian churches with the pastors leading them.

Fifth, churches in decline were defined within certain narrow yearly Sabbath morning worship service record parameters. These included churches experiencing a decline in attendance when the two more recent consecutive five-year periods were compared. Churches qualified for the study that had a lower average for the more recent five-year period. Sixth, attendance figure records for up to 10 years and their accessibility were dependent on the pastors, churches and/or conferences.

Seventh, the investigation included coaching interested pastors through a guided step-by-step process found in the book authored by the investigator, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* (Cauley, 2016).

Eighth, the study was limited to churches that voted to participate in this revitalization process. Ninth, in order to help ensure the validity of the potential impact of coaching, pastors must have led the churches for a minimum of one year and had a low probability of departing. Tenth, the plan involved one-on-one, personalized, regular coaching by telephone for a sufficient period of time to work through the revitalization process.

Eleventh, the revitalization process provided in the book was reduced by the churches' choices of which church growth practices to implement. The book advocates implementing a limited number of recommendations for each of the eight steps—namely, three. This helps prevent churches from taking on more than they can effectively sustain. Twelfth , it may have been beyond the scope of this initiative to follow churches for more than the time needed to complete the revitalization process. Lastly, the project was unexpectedly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Six of the seven churches had not completed the revitalization process nor restarted it six months after worship services were halted.

Description of the Project Process

The initiative included constructing a theological foundation, examining recent literature, forming and executing a proposed remedy, evaluating the results, and offering recommendations for further study.

Theological Reflection

With churches experiencing attendance decline such as in the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, it seemed suitable to seek understanding from what God has revealed in His Word. For the theological reflection, then, the examiner felt it best to particularly examine principles of coaching found in (a) portions of Old

Testament wisdom literature, (b) the life of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke, (c) the life of

Barnabas, "the Son of Encouragement" in the Acts of the Apostles, and (d) show the

relationship between the personal development of others and church growth therein. This

reflection, undergirded by a Biblical foundation, led in the formation of a strategy that

addresses the daunting challenge of church decline.

Review of Literature

The literature review built upon the theological foundation in seeking to discover

what primary factor(s) must be present for church revitalization. Within this scope, the

following was ascertained: (a) if the personalities of pastors inhibit their ability to turn

churches around, (b) to what degree coaching may neutralize any such limitations, (c) the

soundest way to measure church decline and revitalization, and (d) what methods of

coaching are ideal for church revitalization. Determining the above enabled a strategy to

be developed that precisely addresses the daunting challenge of church decline.

Development of the Intervention

The intervention grew out of the investigator's own experience in working with

declining churches within the Carolina Conference and previous pastoral assignments.

While some churches began remarkable turnarounds with the abovementioned Church

Revitalization Committee process, other churches needed additional assistance. Serving

as the conference Church Revitalization Director as well as leading other departments, he

felt it was a wise use of time to place a church revitalization process in writing.

Moreover, although some books exist that offer assistance with church revitalization,

such as *The Seven Pillars of Church Revitalization and Renewal* (2016) by Tom Cheney,

the investigator chose to help fill the dearth with a specific process for Seventh-day

Adventist Christian churches.Whereas the investigator could not be present with every

declining church due to time and geographical limitations, the book, *Steps to a Vibrant

Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* offers a simple walk

through of an entire church renewal process. However, the book in itself is not as

effective as addressing a key constraining factor for declining churches—the leadership

of pastors. Therefore, coming alongside pastors as they take on the daunting venture of

church renewal was the focus of this study.

Structure of the Intervention

The investigator decided to divide the intervention into nine phases. The first

phase was to share the initiative with conference administrations for approval. Declining

churches were identified through statistical analysis in the second phase. The third phase

included eliminating pastors that have been leading a declining church for less than one

year. Furthermore, the plan was also to eliminate pastors who did not have a low

probability of departing the churches within two years. The fourth phase comprised of

finding a sampling of interested pastors in being coached through a step-by-step

revitalization process. The process was thoroughly explained in a written coaching

covenant.

Furthermore, phase five involved giving the following book to help guide the

revitalization process for the churches: *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide

for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. This book was given to the pastors to share with

key leaders for the churches' consideration of the revitalization process therein. Phase six

consisted of a church vote to proceed with the revitalization process. After a church

decided to proceed, in phase seven, the pastor completed the coaching covenant to begin

the coaching relationship. Phase eight included routine coaching meetings commenced with pastors of declining churches and continued for sufficient time to work through the abovementioned revitalization process. And lastly, phase nine involved the pastors completing the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) and DiSC® Personality Profile assessments at some point within the coaching relationship. The pastors shared the results with the investigator. The coaching relationship lasted at least as long as the churches were working through the revitalization process within the book.

<div align="center">Research Methodology and Protocol</div>

The impact of this initiative was assessed with a clear goal in mind: to measure the impact that coaching pastors for revitalization would have on the attendance of declining churches albeit the pastors' personalities. Although not comprehensive in nature, attendance measurements represent the best method of assessing church growth or decline (Olson, 2008). The average worship service attendance figures were reported by the churches to the responsible party at the conference level (e.g. conference secretary for the ministerial department) and obtained by the pastor and/or investigator beforehand to assess qualification. In order to observe changes, the statistics were obtained in the same manner after the coaching began. Although the thrust of the process constituted as quantitative research, the researcher also obtained the pastors' DiSC® and MBTI® personality profiles. Their profile results were compared to the profiles of TAPs and NTAPs for continuity with literary research. The personality profiles were collected through reputable online websites, and the pastors sent their official results to the investigator.

Given the sensitive nature of statistics and personality profiles, the identities of the pastors and churches were kept confidential. This was stipulated in the Informed Consent Form. The examiner

did not anticipate it would be as challenging as it turned out to be to secure a sampling of pastors within the parameters set. He met this challenge through asking God for His assistance weekly and by being doggedly persistent in finding prospective pastors. In the end, a total of seven pastors signed the Informed Consent Form, electing to be coached through the revitalization process aforementioned.

A potential oversight that would have affected the research would have been failing to receive attendance data from the local church after the coaching had begun (e.g. local churches ceasing to count the attendance). In order to prevent this from occurring and thus affect the ability to measure the impact of the project, the investigator verified with the pastors from time to time (i.e. every several months) that attendance was still being counted and recorded.

Definitions of Terms

There exists some recurring terms within this paper that are described here to establish a clear basis of understanding. Although some of the italicized terms may be described more exactly elsewhere, they are defined below as they relate to the particular context and objective of this investigation.

As Webb (2015) puts it, *coaching* is "listening and asking powerful questions to draw out from leaders what God had put in" (p. 22). For the purposes of this project, coaching in this purest sense was practiced except on rare occasions. Those exceptions involved consulting only after permission was granted by coachees. The examiner was

the *coach* or the one serving in the coaching role for the implementation of this project. Coaching was advocated as the remedy to church decline for this project but more precisely coaching for the purpose of church revitalization. It is necessary then to define how the investigator identifies church decline, church revitalization, and church growth. *Declining church* refers to a church that's diminishing vitality is best reflected or measured by a decrease in average weekly worship service attendance. Similarly, *church revitalization* occurs when a body of believers experience greater vitality reflected in an increase in average weekly worship service attendance following a state of decline. Juxtaposed, however, is *church growth*, which more generally refers to churches growing irrespective of size, age, or health.

Moreover, this investigation focuses a great deal on what differentiates between a turnaround pastor (TAP) and non-turnaround pastor (NTAP). *TAPs* are summarized by Malpurs and Penfold (2014) as follows:

- Score mid to high D or I or D/I combination on the DiSC® personal profile.
- Passionate and visionary.
- Have a mentor/coach more often than not.
- More outgoing with good people skills.
- More innovational than traditional.
- More energetic (this is essential).
- "Young in ministry," regardless of their biological age.
- Better team players; better at delegating; better at training new leaders.
- Focused and determined.
- Able to embrace necessary change and willing to pay the price to do so.
- Good conflict resolution skills.
- Better than average communicators (vision and direction as well as preaching).
- Passionate use of their primary spiritual gifts and ability to empower others to use theirs. (pp. 95-96)

In contrast, *NTAPs* can be described as follows when compared to their counterparts:

- Scoring higher in S and C on the DiSC® profile and therefore less outgoing.

- Less clarity, passion, focus, determination, risk-taking, and energy.

- Less likely to have a mentor/coach.

- Less empowering.

- Less able to clearly articulate the direction of churches.

Additionally, a plateaued or declining church will be much more likely to experience a turnaround when led by TAPs rather than NTAPs. Similarly, NTAPs are more likely to lead during a decline in average weekly worship service attendance. While most pastors may be characterized as NTAPs, around 10% of all pastors are TAPs.

Summary

This chapter has introduced the unquestionable challenge of church revitalization, exclusively English-speaking Seventh-day Adventist Christian churches in the United States. The need for and impact of this project was measured by weekly average worship service attendance. There are three significant factors of engagement the investigator is measuring: (a) the impact of coaching pastors who are leading revitalization; (b) personality as it relates to leading revitalization; and (c) the use of the process outlined in *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. It is then the investigator's hope that this project will provide insight, inspiration, and direction to church leaders who desire to proactively engage in church revitalization.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

This theological reflection will examine the principles of coaching found in (a) portions of Old Testament wisdom literature, (b) the life of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke, (c) the life of Barnabas, "the Son of Encouragement" in the Acts of the Apostles, and (d) show the relationship between the personal development of others and church growth therein. This examination will help undergird a Biblical foundation to form a strategy that sufficiently addresses the daunting challenge of church decline. With churches experiencing attendance decline such as in the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (as detailed on page 4), it seems appropriate to seek understanding from what God has revealed in His preserved scriptures.

Coaching Principles in Old Testament Wisdom Literature

Understanding how to tackle the complexities of church decline, as they relate to pastoral leadership, calls for acumen. The Biblical books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes were reviewed for applicable timeless wisdom. However, various passages are found in the book of Proverbs and Eccl 4:9-12 affirming "that a companion with a listening ear, a timely word, or the ability to bring thoughts and intentions to the surface embodies relational empowerment" (Ogne & Roehl, 2008, p. 58). These passages point out that

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people become more productive as they gain wisdom from others who "listen, challenge, encourage, and sharpen" them (Ogne & Roehl, p. 57).

Some of what Proverbs highlights as practices of the wise is consistent with coaching principles. The book discusses how much a person verbalizes in comparison with how much he knows. The wise person "restrains his lips" realizing "when there are many words, transgression is unavoidable" (10:19, New American Standard Bible). "חוֹשֵׂךְ" (10:19) is similarly used in 17:27 promoting restraining one's own words. This term in both conveys a "withholding" of words (BibleWorks, 2011). Additionally, 12:23 indicates: "A prudent man conceals knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaims folly." Furthermore, "כָּסָה" (12:23) denotes a concealing or keeping, and thereby "does not mean he never speaks; rather, it means he uses discretion" (Garland & Longmann, 2008, p. 124). Similar meanings are found in 14:33 and 18:2: "A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own mind." A fool prefers to be heard more than understand, which comes through active listening. Likewise, wise coaches conceal understanding as knowledge discovered by coachees is owned and more likely acted upon.

Beyond concealing knowledge by withholding words, good coaches are proficient listeners. Patiently listening until understanding another before speaking is called, "wise," while the opposite is considered "shame" (18:13; Lane, 2000). In this way, the wise show regard to others speaking (Garland & Longmann, 2008). As Alden (1986) and VanGemeren (1997b) note, in fact, Solomon reserves his toughest criticism in Proverbs for ones who speak hastily without devoting adequate time to listening and thinking; such are worse than fools (29:20). The only other type of person Solomon gives an intense

rebuke to is the one "wise in his own eyes" (26:12), Alden observes. Good coaching is therefore consistent with what Solomon articulates on listening and thinking prior to speaking.

Also found in portions of Biblical wisdom literature is an emphasis on the words spoken. Both 12:18 and 18:21 antithetically highlight words expressed may bring "death and life," pain or healing, and "those who love it will eat its fruit" (18:21). Alter (2010) suggests on 18:21, "The choice of the verb 'love' is revealing in regard to the underlying attitude toward language" (p. 272). The examiner agrees the wise have special regard for the words they employ. Coaches too are attentive to their choice of words.

Connected with the word usage of the wise is the manner they are spoken. With imagery of dazzling jewelry (25:11), Solomon calls attention to how the wise use appropriate words expressed in the right manner and at the proper time (Alter, 2010; Kitchen, 2006; Lane, 2000; Murphy, 1998; Murphy & Huwiler, 2012; Plaut, 1961; VanGemeren, 1997b). Likewise, effective coaches also follow this counsel of the wise.

Corresponding to coaching objectives, Solomon imparts the profundity of life-on-life mentorship. He inscribes, "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (27:17). Alter (2010) reveals the impact of the wise is strongest when it comes with friendship just as magnetized iron clings to iron. While VanGemeren (1997b) shares the sharpening herein to "another's wits" (p. 742), Kitchen (2006) and Lane (2000) argue it refers to helping another function more efficiently. What's more, "פְּנֵי־רֵעֵהוּ" (27:17) literally denotes the front, face, or surface of a friend. As Kitchen exposes, the Hebrew word for "face has a broad range of meaning, including describing the person as a whole and his personality. No doubt, here, it has a sense of something like that" (p. 615). Harmonizing

with Kitchen, Murphy (1998) translates "פְּנֵי־רֵעֵהוּ" (27:17) the same with "face" indicating "'perception, conduct, etc.'" He notes, it is "widely interpreted by commentators as intelligence, personality, etc." (p. 208). Therefore, the examiner believes this passage, appropriately understood, authenticates the notion that a pastor's leadership and personality may need to be "sharpened" in order to lead a church to revitalization.

Whereas Proverbs contains principles associated with coaching such as the amount of speaking, the value of listening proficiently, care in the words employed, the timing and manner of how ones speaks, and the power associated with a friend honing another, it includes another capability. Solomon explains, "A plan in the heart of a man is *like* deep water, but a man of understanding draws it out" (20:5). Some scholars associate "a man of understanding" with someone possessing the ability to draw out one's own plans (Kitchen, 2006; Steinmann, 2009), while another is uncertain (Murphy, 1998). Conversely, the majority of scholars recognize this person to be another skilled, wise individual (Alden, 1987; Allen, 1971; Garland & Longman, 2008; Hatton, 2008; Kitchen, 2006; Plaut, 1961). VanGemeren (1997b) suggests a reason for this is one's heart or mind is self-deceptive. True, the "plan" indeed resides inside the one needing guidance. Kitchen goes further by emphatically stating that to claim 20:5 refers to one's own ability to draw out the plan within oneself "flies in the face of all the Book of Proverbs has said about the natural bent of man's heart" (p. 441). A fuller understanding was needed to ascertain the best interpretation.

The investigation also found a wise counselor is needed to cultivate lucidity, particularly since one's "plan" or motive is below the surface (Allen, 1971; Creswell,

2006; Garland & Longman, 2008; Hatton, 2008; Huwiler & Murphy, 2012; Kitchen, 2006; Murphy, 1998; Plaut, 1961); it is like "deep" waters in a well "not easily assessable" (VanGemeren, 1997a, p. 948). Consistent with coaching techniques, Alden (1987) and Plaut say a key skill of accessing the "deep waters" is the judicious utilization of questions that help one to realize their full potential.

Appreciating the significance of being true to the context of the book of Proverbs, the investigator agrees with Kitchen and other scholars who claim Solomon is pointing to a person who possesses certain skills and wisdom to assist others needing direction. Additionally, Kitchen advocates this person of understanding is best understood as a friend (27:17). Thus, a wise person having caring coaching skills is capable of helping others gain awareness of their buried motives and plans. Persons who obtain awareness and direction combined with friendship as provided by a coach will therefore have the built-in accountability needed to experience progress.

Whereas Solomon highlights life-on-life mentorship connected to companionship (20:5; 27:17), he also takes it one step further in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. First, Alter (2010), Brown (1978), Garland and Longmann (2008), VanGemeren (1997c) concur Solomon perspicuously shares how much safer it is to have a companion—even a fellow worker: "Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor for if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion" (Eccl 4:9-10a). "עָמָל" (Eccl 4:9) refers to man's livelihood (VanGemeren, 1997b, p. 436). Herein, two persons represent fullness or sufficiency (VanGemeren, 1997c). Then, one worker benefits from a fellow worker who comes alongside.

Second, if one fellow companion may aid another in navigating through difficulties, two friends are more resilient: "And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three *strands* is not quickly torn apart" (Eccl 4:12). VanGemeren (1997c) maintains this refers to an adversary who may overwhelm a laborer. Considering pastors who lead churches in decline, there are spiritual, personal, and practical forces working against his/her leadership. A coach who is a colleague would serve pastors well in their revitalization efforts, and having the benefit of an additional coworker is superior.

Through his search through Old Testament wisdom literature, the investigator found sufficient evidence promoting coaching principles. Specifically, only one was found in Ecclesiastes, but Proverbs provides a wellspring of relevant wisdom. Within this examination, principles relating to varying aspects of speech, listening, and the efficacy of life-on-life mentorship have been discovered. Yet, examiner was thrilled to find a friend may improve another's effectiveness and personality. Now he will consider how the New Testament relates to coaching principles.

Coaching Principles Practiced by Jesus in the Gospel of Luke

While Solomon is known as a quintessential source of wisdom, no one ever knew the hearts of people and cared like Jesus Christ, the Savior. As such, Jesus was a learning coach with the disciples (McNeal, 2011), even a master coach (Ogne & Roehl, 2008). For these reasons, the investigation now turns to consider how Jesus utilizes coaching practices within the Gospel of Luke. Related to the admonishments of Solomon, various passages in Luke illustrate how Jesus applies coaching techniques, including His proficient use of questions. Exploring these may uncover why, what, and how Jesus

served as a coach. Comparable to a coach, one finds Jesus connecting well with others, listening, asking outcome and counter questions, and creating awareness in His interactions.

Jesus Connecting with Others like a Model Coach

Coaches start off their interactions by connecting with coachees on an entry level in order to successfully open the way for a fulfilling journey (Webb, 2012). Luke exposes such an instance in his record of Jesus' post resurrection appearance on the road to Emmaus. Jesus connected with Cleopas and his companion by approaching them, deftly asking, "'What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking?'" (24:17). After Cleopas expressed disbelief in a return question, Jesus then asked yet another open-ended question, "'What things?'" (24:19). In this way, Jesus drew the two out (Dear, 2004) and began a process of self-discovery based on "honesty and transparency" (Davey & Davey, 2014, p. 148). Coaches may ask questions they already know the answer to in order to help others process internally.

Jesus Listening like a Model Coach

Not only did Jesus connect well with people, but He skillfully listened. Even in boyhood, the Savior was found in the temple listening to the teachers (2:46). If the teachers were "amazed at His understanding" (2:47), Jesus adroitly listened. In His ministry, Jesus rarely injects His own feelings but wants to listen to others share. Indeed, Jesus is "first and foremost a listener" (Dear, 2004, p. 276). Creswell (2006) observes: Jesus leads others in a process of discovery without expressing what they should do, a prime example being Zacchaeus (19:1-10). Like Jesus, a coach must be a good listener enabling others in their journeys of self-discovery.

Jesus Asking Outcome Questions like a Model Coach

Jesus' interactions also include outcome questions. An outcome question is one asked of the coachee for him/her to state his/her takeaway goal(s) at the beginning of a coaching session (Webb, 2012). Jesus asks a blind man, "'What do you want Me to do for you?'" (18:41). Although Jesus knew the answer and was willing to heal him, He wanted the blind man to express his need for his own clarity (Batterson, 2016). The researcher found this to be an astonishing outcome question. It appears Jesus was willing to grant him almost any request, and yet this caused the examiner to consider what his response would be if posed with the same. He would likely reply, "Jesus, please tell me what You want me to do with my life."

Jesus Asking Counterquestions like a Model Coach

Though people may like to ask Jesus questions to fulfill their deepest needs, He often answered questions posed to him with counterquestions (Adams, 1986; Garland & Longmann, 2007). Coaching as aforementioned involves coaches leading a process of self-discovery in coachees rather than supplying answers. For example, when a lawyer asked what he should do to inherit eternal life, Jesus replied with the following: "'What is written in the Law [Pentateuch]? How does it read to you?'" (10:26).

Jesus brilliantly asked an open-ended question that led to the lawyer's self-discovery. And when the lawyer asked another question, Jesus gave a parable and asked him another probing counterquestion (Dear, 2004). Just as coaching is focused on what future steps are needed to address current challenges, Jesus' counterquestions led others to decisions (10:26; Garland & Longmann). Not unlike the lawyer's attempt to stump Jesus, the chief priests, scribes, and elders tried the same by asking by what authority He

carried out His ministry. Jesus' counterquestion, "'Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?'" (20:2-3) reveals their hypocrisy (Garland & Longmann). Although not due to ignorance, Jesus' refusal to answer these questions and others are turned into openings to coach people through counterquestions.

<center>Jesus Creating Awareness like a Model Coach</center>

Most of Jesus' questions including some of His counterquestions chronicled by Luke bring to light His prolific use of one coaching technique more than others—creating awareness of vital issues in the coachee. Such questions reveal His loving nature and His desire for people to interact with the truth—to create a deep understanding within themselves (Adams, 1986; Dear, 2004). He uses questions to open up hearts and minds. Within these questions one finds a God who wants to serve and have close relationships with His people (Dear; Ogne & Roehl, 2008).

An awareness question, like coaching, is future-focused and designed to enable others to determine their next steps. The future is best informed by greater awareness of the present, not the past (Webb, 2012). Jesus' awareness-inducing communication in (a) the Sermon on the Mount, (b) counterquestions, (c) judging addressments, (d) reflection queries, (e) stirring others' need of Him, (f) inquiries on His identity, and (g) urgency-creating questions, therefore, display His loving interest in people's future decisions based on present realities.

Jesus masterfully posed a series of awareness questions in His Sermon on the Mount:

> "If you love those who love you, what credit is *that* to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is *that* to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to

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receive, what credit is *that* to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same *amount*." (6:32-34)

Adams (1986) points out these questions help His hearers better comprehend the deeper implication of love and cause them to examine their motives. Similarly, Jesus presents another penetrating query designed to explore others' devotion to Him: "'For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?'" (9:25). Jesus caused His listeners to explore their futures if their ambitions, goals, and values did not align with His (Adams).

To those endeavoring to trap Him with the probe, "'Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?'" Jesus countered with a question of His own, "'Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?'" (20:22, 24). Dear (2004) surmises this was a reflection question meant for us to conclude everything belongs to God. While it is true Jesus led the questioners to reflect, Jesus did express the lawfulness of paying taxes to the government. With those who consider Jesus to be a model coach, the investigator concurs, especially with His exceptional use of awareness questions above.

Jesus had a way of addressing inappropriate judging without being overt or too direct. He spoke generally on this topic by admonishing others in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus humorously asked, "'Or how can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye," when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye?'" (6:42). This awareness question helps slow down our judging (Adams, 1986) from a position of humility and grace (Dear, 2004). On another occasion, Simon the Pharisee judged a sinful woman who touched Jesus—believing her to dishonor Him. Jesus asked Simon which debtor would love a moneylender more: one who was forgiven

little or one forgiven much (7:40-42). The Master Coach had a cunning way that caused people to reflect about judging others.

Furthermore, Jesus addressed judging when He Himself was judged. When scribes and Pharisees accused Him of breaking the Sabbath by healing thereon, Jesus raised a question forcing them to confront the reality of preventing His beneficence on the day of blessing (Dear, 2004). Moreover, when Jesus was accused of casting out demons by demonic power, He nullified their reasoning with the well-known confounding question, "If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand?" (11:18). And when religious leaders questioned His ability to forgive sins, Jesus asked if forgiving sins was more difficult than healing a lame man, thereby stoking their wonder (5:22-23). Jesus cleverly challenged judging by presenting questions that compelled mindfulness.

Jesus created awareness by asking reflection questions. He asked the crowd concerning John the Baptist's ministry: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are *found* in royal palaces! But what did you go out to see? A prophet?" (7:24-25). Jesus was holding "a mirror up to the people who were rejecting him so they could see themselves as they were…and what they were doing to him" (Dear, 2004, p. 161).

In the same way, Jesus asked the disciples in a post-resurrection encounter, "'Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?'" (24:28). Through these reflection questions, He encouraged trust in Him as people knew He could read their hearts, Dear notices. Additionally, He created awareness of the need to obey Him,

not simply providing lip service: "'Why do you call Me, "Lord, Lord," and do not do what I say?'" (6:46). And in the aforementioned, Jesus leads Cleopas and the other disciple in a process of discovery by asking awareness questions that they might recognize themselves better (Davey & Davey, 2014). Jesus, then, modeled the coaching value of fostering reflection and soul-searching.

Some of Jesus' questions were designed to lead others to realize their need of God. "'And which of you by worrying can add a *single* hour to his life's span? If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters? But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more *will He clothe* you? You men of little faith!'" (12:25-26, 28). The examiner is amazed how Jesus makes difficult matters plain. He shows the irrationality of what people do when all that is needed is implicit trust in God's providence.

Dear (2004) correctly views the objective is about relinquishing control to God. And likewise, after the disciples failed to trust, Jesus encouraged faith when after calming the storm He prodded, "'Where is your faith?'" (8:25). Adams (1986) shares, not only did He reveal their need of God but in showing gratitude to Him: "'Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine—where are they? Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?'" (17:17-18). Accordingly, Jesus exemplifies the enormity of a coach pointing people to God.

Being an essential part of the gospel, Jesus questioned His disciples on His identity. He elicited a response from them with the following: "'Who do people say that I am?'" and "'But who do you say that I am?'" (9:18, 20). In the wake of others' lack of

belief and clarity, Jesus helped His disciples process His true identity. And at another time, He catechized His hearers to lead them to a greater realization of who He is: "'How *is it that* they say the Christ is David's son? For David himself says in the book of Psalms, "The LORD says to my lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'" Therefore David calls Him "Lord," and how is He his son?'" (20:41-44). Jesus coached His followers to become cognizant of His identity.

Lastly, Jesus aroused pronounced awareness of the gravity of the time people lived. Affirming the crowd's ability to discern upcoming weather, He added, "'You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?'" (12:56). Jesus' question was propounded to create an awareness of what God was doing through Him in their presence. Awareness was needed in order for the Jewish people not to miss "who they are and what they are doing" and their hopes as a people for the future (Adams 1986, p. 114). He was creating urgency and awareness they needed in the present in order better position themselves to follow Him. Corresponding with Adams, Dear (2004) offers,

> The "present time" refers to this moment, the years of this current generation. The Greeks had two words for time: *chronos*, meaning chorological time, and *kairos*, meaning the present, urgent moment, God's time, the time beyond time, the *eschaton*. Jesus wants to know why people cannot discern the *kairos* moment, the eschatological time when God stands in their midst." (p. 192)

Correspondingly, there is an immense need today to discern the "*kairos*" in order to align ourselves with the priorities of Heaven—reconciling as many as possible prior to the return of Jesus to Earth. With the blessing of the Holy Spirit, church revitalization will be a vital part of this plan to successfully reach people with the gospel in the United States in this time of great urgency. The eternity of many is at stake!

This investigation found Jesus' use of questions in the Gospel of Luke were designed to inhibit listeners from vacillating between opposing beliefs, values, attitudes, and practices (McNeal, 2011). As Adams (1986) resonates, the purpose of Jesus' questions were to help people discern "who [they] are, where [they] are going, and what [they] most truly believe" (p. 8). Harmonizing with the principles of coaching found within portions of Old Testament wisdom literature, it was revealed Jesus accomplished these purposes by listening, asking outcome and counter questions, and notably creating awareness in the minds of His hearers. The investigator considers His awareness-inducing interactions in Luke's accounts of the Sermon on the Mount, counterquestions, judging addressments, reflection queries, stimulations of others' need of Him, inquiries on His identity, and urgency-creating questions, to exemplify coaching at its best.

Just as Jesus' hearers experienced growth through His challenging questions designed to awaken and call for beneficial decisions, ministry leaders today may grow by having someone like Jesus come alongside and lead them in a process of self-discovery (Davey & Davey, 2014). It is should be expected, therefore, following Jesus' model will be productive when applied to pastors who lead churches experiencing a decline in worship service attendance.

By the by, exploring Jesus' questions caused the examiner to wrestle with the issues He addressed. In order to expose coaching principles further, this investigation now turns to a follower of Jesus named Barnabas.

Coaching Principles in the Life of Barnabas Found in the Acts of the Apostles

While this investigation collected insight from the pen of Luke on Jesus, the author of the Acts of the Apostles is also the primary contributor of what is known about Barnabas, the "Son of Encouragement." While it is beneficial to grasp some background information on Barnabas, it was beyond the investigator's scope to examine extra-biblical data (e.g. tradition). Barnabas was a Hellenist Jew like Saul of Tarsus in contrast to Palestinian Jews like Peter (Buttrick, 1962). He was a cousin of John Mark (Col 4:10). Barnabas' given name is Joseph who is "a Levite of Cyprian birth." He was "also called Barnabas by the apostles" (4:36). Kollmann (2004) more precisely indicates it was the apostles in Jerusalem who give him this nickname. Barnabas was likely named to distinguish him from others with the name, Joseph (Garland & Longmann, 2007). With the aim of examining coaching principles in the life of Barnabas, the investigation will unpack the meaning of "Barnabas," his prominent role in the early church, his coaching nature, and his coaching relationships with Saul of Tarsus and John Mark.

Meaning of "Barnabas"

Luke translates and understands "Βαρνάβας" to mean, "Son of Encouragement" (4:36; Buttrick, 1962), although this is not a literal translation. Adolf Deismann, Gustaf Dalman, and George B. Gray attribute "Βαρνάβας" to a "Graecized form the Semitic ברנבן," which denotes "Son of Nebo" (BibleWorks, 2011). Others agree on a similar meaning (Beck, Freedman, Graf, Herion, & Pleins, 1992). "Nebo (Nabu)" (2003) clarifies "Nabu" is rendered "Nebo" in scripture. Coinciding with Luke, conversely, Matthew Henry (BibleWorks) and Bruce (1954) in their commentaries offer "the son of prophecy," "a son of exhortation," and "a son of consolation" as possibilities due to Barnabas' comforting nature. Like Henry and Bruce, Kollmann (2004) suggests "son of

prophecy" as a possibility as well as the apostles choosing a name as "a play on words…[with] Joseph Barsabbas of Acts 1:23 without being aware of the original heathen significance of this Greek Semitic proper name" (pp. 13-14). Undisputedly, Barnabas is associated with encouragement in several instances in the Acts of the Apostles (e.g. 11:23).

Conflicting with Deismann, Dalman, and Gray (BibleWorks, 2011), Kollmann (2004) recognizes the etymological challenges with the name, but says, "It is, however, scarcely imaginable that the Jerusalem apostles would *consciously* refer to the Levite Joseph as a son of a heathen deity, Nabu" (emphasis original, p. 13). Although others prefer not to resolve the mystery surrounding Barnabas' name (Anim, Hernández-Ramírez, Siu-Maliko, & Stephanous, 2015), the examiner is satisfied with Henry's and Kollmann's conclusion the nickname, "Barnabas" affectionately represented "Son of Encouragement" to the apostles.

While Barnabas embodies coaching principles found in Old Testament wisdom literature authored by Solomon, being named "…encouragement" is similarly consistent with the New Testament linkage of the Holy Spirit. Existing as a depiction of the Holy Spirit, "'one who comes alongside,'" denotes Barnabas' ministry practice (Branch, 2007; Moots, 2004). Luke makes this connection by unequivocally stating Barnabas was "full of the Holy Spirit" (11:22, 24). As will be seen for Joseph also known as Barnabas, encouragement was more than a name—it was his way of life.

Barnabas: Prominent Early Church Leader

Despite a surprising lack of attention among scholars, Barnabas was a crucial leader in the early church, indubitably among the five most prominent (Kollmann, 2004).

Perceptively, Branch (2007) spotlights how he was known as a generous man of good character, one of deep faith, full of the Holy Spirit (4:36-37; 11:24), a "people person", a prophet and teacher (13:1), the most prominent leader of the Antioch church (11:22; 13:2; Buttrick, 1962; Kollmann; Moots, 2004), an apostle (14:14), and one who healed others (15:12). Branch goes so far as to assert Luke "portrays no one else—except Jesus Christ—in such glowing terms" (p. 295).

Concurring with Branch and Kollmann, Garland and Longmann (2007) underline how he was a key figure in the extension from Jerusalem to Rome and served as a "hinge between the mission to the Jewish world and that to the Gentiles" (p. 784). Given Barnabas' nature of empowering others, the investigator suspects Barnabas would not have objected to the apparent lack of interest among the modern church.

<div align="center">The Coaching Nature of Barnabas</div>

Barnabas exemplified coaching principles. This was the basis for his nickname, "Son of Encouragement." Barnabas was called by Christ to come alongside people, ask questions, encourage them, and help clarify God's leading. It was not so much a strategy as his way of life (Moots, 2004). Barnabas acted as a liaison between people, building bridges to bring them together.

Like a good coach, Barnabas had faith in God and in people (11:23-24). Branch (2007) elucidates, "He repeatedly seeks out and champions others," listens, and encourages them (p. 306). He fulfilled the Biblical role of a coach—one "called alongside to encourage, prepare, equip, and help others succeed" and asked "people to answer the following questions: Where am I? Where do I want to go? How will I get there?" (Carlton & Logan, 2003, p. 16). Corresponding with Carlton and Logan, Ogne & Roehl

(2008) claim Barnabas' coaching effectiveness stemmed from his "Spirit-filled character" that empowered him to perceive ministry promise in others (p. 62). Ogne and Roehl go so far to say Barnabas is the best coach in the entire New Testament and he had more impact on the growth of others than anyone else in the early church, second only to Jesus, and for this reason his name is synonymous with "coach" in Japan.

<div align="center">Barnabas' Coaching Relationship with Saul of Tarsus</div>

Barnabas functioned as Saul of Tarsus' encourager and coach. He served also as a successful mediator between Saul (later renamed Paul) and the Jerusalem apostles (9:26-27; Anim, Hernández-Ramírez, Siu-Maliko, & Stephanous, 2015; Beck, Graf, Freedman, Herion, & Pleins, 1992; Buttrick, 1954; Carlton & Logan, 2003; Garland & Longmann, 2007; Hemer, 1989; McNeal, 2011; Moots, 2004). Barnabas was willing to patiently remain alongside Saul when others would have separated themselves from him (Moot, 2004; Ogne & Roehl, 2008). Barnabas came and recruited Saul after Saul went to Tarsus; together they worked in Antioch side-by-side; Barnabas devoted a year to coach Saul in ministry (11:25-26; Anim, Hernández-Ramírez, Siu-Maliko, & Stephanous; Hoffman & Wilson, 2007; Moots, 2004). Arguably the most important person in Saul's ministry was his coach, Barnabas. When ministry leaders who face challenges have an encouraging coach who invests time as Barnabas did with Saul, the results are promising. Likewise, when pastors leading churches declining in attendance have another ministry leader who comes alongside with encouragement, there is hope for a turnaround.

In Antioch, Barnabas gave Saul an opportunity to grow in more promising circumstances—among Gentiles. In order to accept this ministry proposal, however, becoming Barnabas' protégé or coachee was part of the arrangement (Kollmann, 2004).

Barnabas was an older man (Branch, 2007), which perhaps made the relationship more natural. Barnabas helped Saul in his theological formation—deemed Antiochene theology—as is discernable in his New Testament epistles (Kollmann). During this Antioch endeavor, Elmore (1995) claims Barnabas demonstrated qualities of a good coach including his empowerment, adaptability, patience, vision of others' potential, and words of wisdom. The investigator concurs Saul accepted the arrangement alongside Barnabas, a man who possessed unique abilities to help him develop. This is not unlike a modern-day pastoral internship that greatly benefits newer pastors.

Attributable to Barnabas' prominence and standing among the apostles, he was listed before Saul and others (13:1; 14:12; 15:12) during his training relationship of Saul (Buttrick, 1962; Garland & Longmann, 2007; Kollmann, 2004). This fact indicates Barnabas was the teaching partner or coach of the two (Beck, Graf, Freedman, Herion, & Pleins, 1992).

Nevertheless, Luke's order of names changes at a defined point after they were sent to Cyprus from Antioch. Luke begins by naming Barnabas before Saul (11:30; 13:1, 2, 7) and afterwards switches to name "Paul" before Barnabas. At the same time when Luke refers to Saul's moniker (13:9), there is a change of positions in the listing of names (13:9). More precisely, the changes of name and position take place as a result of Saul being filled with the Holy Spirit and striking a sorcerer named Elymas with temporary blindness in Paphos; this in turn resulted in the conversion of a Roman proconsul, Sergius Paulus (13:8-12). From this point forward, Luke gives Paul more prominence than Barnabas (Anim, Hernández-Ramírez, Siu-Maliko, & Stephanous, 2015; Beck, Graf, Freedman, Herion, & Pleins, 1992; Buttrick, 1962; Kollmann, 2004; Ogne & Roehl,

2008). Moots (2004) gives careful attention to the fact that the casual reader of Luke's writings in scripture may disregard these slight changes, however, "Luke is well known by scholars for his careful craftsmanship, and the change in order would seem a deliberate choice by the author" (p. 28).

Plus, Moots (2004) unflinchingly states the Holy Spirit laid aside Barnabas for Paul's leadership. While Paul does turn out to be the dominant leader in the mission to the Gentiles (Anim, Hernández-Ramírez, Siu-Maliko, & Stephanous, 2015), Luke's own writing does not substantiate such a strong assertion. Although Branch (2007) acknowledges Barnabas is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles after chapter 15 and the narrative concentrates on Paul thereafter, Anim, Hernández-Ramírez, Siu-Maliko, and Stephanous (2015), Buttrick (1962), and Kollmann (2004), recognize Barnabas is listed before Paul on other occasions (14:12, 14; 15:12, 25) due to his preferred standing. These include Gentile crowds giving more honor to Barnabas in Lystra (14:8-20), the Jerusalem Council among the Jerusalem apostles (15:12-21), and the letter written by the Jerusalem Council to Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia (15:23-29).

Notwithstanding the growing prominence of Paul and declining role of Barnabas among the Gentiles, Barnabas ostensibly did not remonstrate (Anim, Hernández-Ramírez, Siu-Maliko, & Stephanous, 2015). Paul subsequently became the chief proponent of salvation apart from ceremonial laws (Kollmann, 2004).

Incidentally, it is Kollmann's (2004) view Barnabas abandoned Paul after their dissention, leaving him isolated to labor by himself. Yet, Ogne & Roehl (2008) assert Barnabas deliberately retreated in order to encourage Paul in his leadership. In other words, Barnabas would not have separated from Paul had Paul not been fully prepared to

take on an associate to train. Contrary to Kollmann's contention, Paul took Silas, an associate and prophet (15:22, 32, 40) as a ministerial companion from Antioch to continue on the mission as planned by the Jerusalem Council. Afterwards, Paul is joined by other associates whom he helps train. It is the investigator's view Barnabas epitomized great leadership and maintained exceptional coaching practices. This further corroborates Luke's account of the meaning of "Barnabas." For this reason Barnabas separated from Paul who was ready to lead others independent of him. Then, Barnabas reinvested his ministry of encouragement by championing another.

<center>Barnabas' Coaching Relationship with John Mark</center>

Although he was not set apart like Barnabas and Saul by the Antioch Church, the younger John Mark became their accomplice on their missionary journey to Cyprus (13:4-5). After concluding their missionary journey, John Mark returned home to Jerusalem when others returned to Antioch (13:13-14). It was for this reason Paul and Barnabas would later have a sharp dispute when Paul refused to take the malingering John Mark back on as their assistant (15:37-40; Moots, 2004). At this point Barnabas discontinues his coaching of one leader and reinvests in John Mark (Moots, 2004; Ogne & Roehl, 2008). Moots avers Barnabas was so empowering that his coaching of the John Mark enabled him to become a powerful leader for Christ after a failure and rejection of Paul; moreover, Paul later accepted John Mark through Barnabas' influence (Philemon 24; Carlton & Logan, 2003).

The researcher does not regard the abovementioned transition between Barnabas and Paul to be premeditated although conceivably capricious. Nonetheless, Barnabas' true character of encouragement shines through with his relationship with John Mark.

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Therefore, even under adverse conditions the ministry of encouragement can be employed with pastors leading churches in decline just as Barnabas coached Saul and John Mark through challenging circumstances.

This investigation has established Barnabas' ministry to be congruous with the principles of coaching found in wisdom literature penned by Solomon and within Luke's account of the life of Jesus. These areas produce ample basis for a conclusive theological framework. For further substantiation, however, the examiner will evaluate the effect of the personal development of others on church growth found within the scriptural parameters delineated.

The Relationship Between the Personal Development
of Others and Church Growth

God divinely designs every person with innate capabilities comprised in part as a behavioral style or temperament. Some temperaments are more uniquely positioned for growing the body of Christ. Some personalities are better suited for leading churches in revitalization. The Apostles Paul and Peter are two natural leaders who were effective in leadership based in large part upon their temperaments. Paul had a choleric and Peter a sanguine personality, respectively (Rohm, 2012). Yet, most personality types are more effective when developed by other experienced leaders as Malphurs and Penfold (2014) demonstrate.

Therefore, discovering the potential impact of the personal development of others on church growth arising out of Solomon's Old Testament wisdom literature and the lives of Jesus and Barnabas in the writings of Luke is worthwhile. Whereas Old Testament wisdom literature, specifically Proverbs and Eccl 4:9-12, has immeasurable value relating

to coaching principles, it does not contain personal examples due to the nature of its genre. On the other hand, coaching principles embodied by Jesus and Barnabas show specific outcomes relating to church growth.

Correlations Found within Solomon's Old Testament Wisdom Literature

Generally speaking, Solomon does show how developing others may lead to personal growth and even church turnarounds. Rohm (2012) clarifies a well-known instruction suited for parents (Prov 22:6) is best understood not for training children to the desire of the parents but according "'to his own unique bent or personality'" (p. 35). This illustrates the importance of guiding and developing others relative to their own divine design. Likewise, a friend may "sharpen" (Prov 27:17) another's effectiveness including areas involving one's personality. Hence, pastors may become more effective with the help of a friend. Having another who has the coaching ability to "draw" (20:5) out Spirit-led plans of a pastor is crucial to undertaking a revitalization effort. This way enables one to discover and therefore own the response to the predicament of church decline. Additionally, having the benefit of a friend, particularly a colleague, able to assist with challenging ministry contexts provides indispensable encouragement to break leadership lethargy and discouragement (Eccl 4:9-12).

Correlations Found in the Life of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke

The impact of Jesus' coaching may be best measured in two main audiences: the apostles and the multitudes. Jesus spent three and a half years of ministry predominantly focused on a small group of men—the Twelve. As Coleman (2010) uncovers, it was precisely this seemingly counterintuitive but brilliant strategy that enabled the world to be

exposed to the gospel. Others may have chosen a different route; namely, to influence as many people possible rather than deeply investing in a small number. However, this may have been counterproductive. The investigator is impressed with the farsightedness and genius of Jesus on the matter. It was precisely through the apostles the gospel was carried forward with explosive success.

Then again, the apostles would not have had the success they did unless Jesus adequately prepared the masses through His coaching questions stirring people to discipleship. Coupled with His preaching and miracles, Jesus was a master at causing people to make resolute decisions through His reflection queries, counterquestions, urgency-creating questions, etc. This primed the early church for a rich harvest as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. The many baptisms the apostles performed are attributed to Jesus' life and ministry (White, 1911).

<div align="center">Correlations Found in the Life of Barnabas in the Acts of
the Apostles</div>

There are three main correlations with church growth found in the life of Barnabas in the Acts of the Apostles: (1) the significance of his influence at the Jerusalem Council, (2) his effect on Saul of Tarsus (Paul) and Paul's own impact upon Christianity, and (3) the encouragement of John Mark. Correspondingly, Moots (2004) describes Barnabas' "legacy [as] the missionary work of Paul, a thriving and faithful congregation in Antioch, churches planted and tended on Cyprus, the ministry of John Mark (including, possibly, the first written gospel)" (p. 126). As it stands, Barnabas has quite the exemplary record, and it is hard to imagine what the church might have become deprived of such an impact.

First, the initial council in the early church decided if and how Gentiles may become a part of Christianity (Acts 15). If the church only reached out to those within Judaism, it would have severely limited the fulfillment of the Great Commission. If the contextualization of ministry to Gentiles had been too narrow, it would have prevented their acceptance of Christ. Barnabas played a crucial role in settling this tenable Gentile question (Beck, Graf, Freedman, Herion, & Pleins, 1992; Garland & Longmann, 2007; Kollmann. 2004, Moots, 2004).

Determining how best to tackle ministry to the Gentiles within the early church was a critical issue and moment (Garland & Longmann, 2007; Moots, 2004). Barnabas was unequivocally "among the five most important figures in early Christianity, who determined the fate of the Church" (Kollmann, 2004, p. 41). Barnabas' served as the lynchpin for the Antioch church as well as the broader church, Garland and Longmann hold. Barnabas along with Paul powerfully insisted against requiring circumcision among the Gentiles; they were fruitful in this approach heretofore (Beck, Graf, Freedman, Herion, & Pleins, 1992). This paved the way for further outreach to Gentiles, and many came to know Christ as a result.

Without his Spirit-filled character, encouragement, and empowerment of others, Barnabas would not have had the influence needed to influence the other apostles on these crucial matters. Videlicet, short of Barnabas' integrity with other leaders, Paul's ministry may never have been supported, void much hesitancy. Without any exaggeration, Barnabas was an efficacious model of church leadership (McNeal, 2011; Moots).

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Second, Barnabas' influence on Paul was key in the early church. Hoffman and Wilson (2007) convey Barnabas showed courage to see in Paul a potential, powerful instrument for the Lord, and for this reason coached him for a year. Indirectly, 60% of the New Testament has resulted from Barnabas' coaching of Paul (Ogne & Roehl, 2008). Inclusive of the tremendous impact of Paul's writings upon Christianity, his church planting and organizing genius served to raise up more leaders (e.g. Timothy, Silas, Titus, Aquila and Priscilla) as Barnabas had invested in him (Hoffman & Wilson). Moots (2004) convincingly emphasizes Barnabas' coaching influence on Paul changed Christianity, and Branch (2007) argues further, "It changed the course of history" (p. 308). Scholars and ministry leaders find it hard to overstate the impact of Paul upon Christianity when reflecting on what it may have become devoid the influence of Barnabas' ministry.

Thirdly, Barnabas' encouragement of John Mark should not be overlooked. As Kollmann (2004) discloses, while John Mark was not an apostle as Barnabas, Paul, or the Twelve, his assistance "in terms of both history and impact, belongs as much in the orbit of Peter as of Paul" (p. 30). Without Barnabas stepping in to defend and encourage John Mark in the rejection by Paul, John Mark may have not continued on in ministry. As abovementioned, he may have not gone on to write his version of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for which others have been based (Moots, 2004). If true, Barnabas played an even more substantial role for the growth of Christianity.

Recognizing the model of Barnabas and its potential for church growth, McNeal (2011) advocates for current-day leaders who will see in people "possibilities when others ignore them;" they will come alongside younger leaders to encourage them in

ministry (p. 43). What strikes the researcher is people may not apprehend the potentiality of coaching others at the outset. The Acts of the Apostles reveals instrumental results would not have been realized without Barnabas being Spirit-filled, full of integrity, and one possessing vision to see godly potential in others. As the investigator discovered the incalculable influence of Barnabas, he has been inspired to follow his example of believing in and building others.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This investigation has set forth to establish a proper theology to undergird a strategy that effectively addresses the formidable challenge of church decline. Specifically, this Biblical evaluation ascertained the benefit of coming alongside pastors of declining churches through coaching.

This exploration has enhanced the investigator's understanding of how coaching principles are highlighted in Old Testament wisdom literature authored by Solomon, perception of how much Jesus' questions are awareness inducing, and grasp on how significant Barnabas was to Christianity. Within the scope of this examination, the examiner sees abundant theological support to coach pastors of declining churches utilizing these Biblical patterns.

And yet supplementary review was needed to ascertain what may be discovered in recent literature as it relates to coaching pastors leading declining churches. The investigator was particularly interested in what may be revealed vis-à-vis the impact of coaching and/or mentoring on one's personality and effectiveness. This is the focus of the next portion of this investigation.

While it is beyond the parameters of this review, study may be given into other examples of teachings and models of coaching in Holy Writ. Undoubtedly, there are other examples of coaching principles in the Old and New Testaments. Despite having a sufficient basis herein, determining the similarities and nuances of this investigation with others may further solidify the validity and methodology of coaching others in ministry.

Notwithstanding a literature review, when one considers the decline in attendance of churches such as those in the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the effect of Jesus and Barnabas applying coaching methods, the investigator was struck with how scarcely coaching pastors of declining churches was advocated and/or methodically applied. While the consequences are too great to ignore, the opportunity is extraordinary.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review will seek to discover what primary factor(s) must be present

for church revitalization. Within this scope, the following will be ascertained: (a) if the

personalities of pastors inhibit their ability to turn churches around, (b) to what degree

coaching may neutralize any such limitations, (c) the soundest way to measure church

decline and revitalization, and (d) what methods of coaching are ideal for church

revitalization. Determining the above will enable a strategy to be developed that precisely

addresses the daunting challenge of church decline.

Primary Factors Needed for Revitalization

While most church growth experts agree on one primary factor that is needed for

church revitalization, others name other essential factors. Even still, some indicate more

than one must be present simultaneously. The first primary factor is the right type of

pastor. As early as the 1980s, Schaller (1986) claimed church revitalization requires

certain types of leaders, even more narrowly focusing in on pastors who have a certain

temperament. However plausible Schaller's claim may be, Hadaway (1991)

acknowledges, "Little research has been used to back up the notion that pastoral

leadership is *the* key determinant of church growth" (emphasis original, p. 74).

Although Barna (1993) also acknowledges there is a dearth of quantitative evidence to support the claim, this did not prevent him from asserting, "The one unmistakable reality is that a church needs a strong leader form the outside to accomplish a turnaround" (pp. 71-72). The aforementioned lack of evidence began to change after the groundbreaking research of Thomas (1989). In this study, Thomas assesses the DISC® Personality Profile of 20 pastors of turnaround churches located in New England. These findings show a clear link with pastoral temperament and church revitalization. While some may use the terms "church growth" and "church revitalization" interchangeably, still others may surmise if certain types of leaders are needed for church growth in general, they would be imperative for churches in a plateau or decline.

Having the right type of pastor refers to those who possess specific skills including temperament. These skills are not the same for every stage of the life of the church as declining churches need a particular type of pastor, says Hadaway (1986). Barna (1993) unequivocally states this type of leader is rare. Schaller (2005), McIntosh (2009), and Malphurs and Penfold (2014) concur with this paucity. And Frazee (1995) goes so far to say, "many churches cannot make a comeback because they hire a person . . . [who] does not have the temperament, gifts and passion to do the job of a change agent" (p. 45). Although Ogne and Roehl (2008) recognize much of this discussion focuses on personality and style, they have an alternate view when they contend the foremost issue is character. Frazee is not naive to claim that the temperament alone uniquely qualifies one for the role of TAP, but the pastor must also possess a healthy level of spiritual maturity and character.

By excessively focusing on leadership, however, those who have contributed to the discussion may overlook the importance of providing a proven process or course of action for declining churches. Grossman, Sellon, and Smith (2002) interject the enormity of providing a framework towards church transformation more than pastoral leadership. While Frazee (1995) agrees with the significance of providing a turnaround process, he does not goes as far as to emphasize it more than pastoral leadership. The essential ingredients to a turnaround, after all, include both the right pastors as a primary factor and a turnaround process as a secondary one.

Nonetheless, as more research became available church growth authorities began to echo others' earlier claims in stating pastoral leadership as the number one factor in church turnarounds. For instance, a later study by Samelson (1999) in five turnaround Methodist churches in California and Nevada revealed the character and personality of the pastor is the "single most significant factor contributing to turnaround and growth" (p. 88). Wood (2001) called strong pastoral leadership "essential" and that "no serious student of church growth argues the fact" (p. 35). While Rainer (2005) agrees, he did find pastors who led during a decline who later led a turnaround in the same churches. Dodson and Stetzer (2007) call pastoral leadership "the most important factor in making a comeback" (p. 210). Similar to Rainer, their research finds church turnarounds took place because of a pastoral change—a new pastor or a renewal of an existing pastor.

As the discussion progresses into the 2010s, it further corroborates previous findings. Penfold (2011) finds among 27 evangelical congregations located in Rocky Mountain States that pastoral leadership is the primary factor for turnarounds. Eymann (2012) and Christopherson (2014) come to the same conclusion among 30 conservative

evangelical TAPs in western states and Baptist church pastors in the El Paso region, respectively. Eymann also finds that pastoral leadership is a top factor for church decline. Contrary to the findings of Rainer (2005) and Dodson and Stetzer (2007), Penfold discovers it is rarer to have an existing pastor to lead a turnaround. Like Thomas (1989), Penfold utilizes the DiSC® Personality Profile and discovers comparable links in pastoral temperaments and church turnarounds.

Although Frazee (1995) claims spiritual gifts are a key aspect of pastoral leadership, Malphurs and Penfold (2014) find no measurable difference in spiritual gifts or age of pastors as it relates to church revitalization. Honing in on pastoral temperament, Malphurs and Penfold audaciously claim that "all pastors are not created equal" when it comes to ability to revitalize declining and plateaued churches.

With little variance research undoubtedly points in one direction—having the right type of pastor to lead churches back to vibrancy is a primary factor. Shelton (2015) finds one consistent explanation for turnarounds across seven previously declining Baptist General Conference churches of Texas—pastoral leadership. Building on the research of Thomas (1989) and Penfold (2011), Ingram (2015) also uses DiSC® Personality Profile and finds a corresponding result, specifically turnaround churches have particular types of pastors. His study involves 27 pastors of evangelical churches in the western United States.

Notwithstanding the significance of having the right type of pastor for church revitalization, it is difficult to turn churches around without another primary factor. Regardless of how suited pastors may be for turning churches around, churches must also

be willing to be led to growth. Therefore, another primary factor that enables declining churches to experience revitalization is having a willing congregation.

Albeit having a willing congregation is logical, it is named by several sources as a primary factor in church revitalization (Barna, 1993; Grossman, Sellon, & Smith 2002; Wood 2001). Connecting a willing congregation to church health, Grossman, Sellon, and Smith highlight the importance of church health more than pastoral leadership, his/her leadership notwithstanding. Combining two factors, some explicitly stress the right pastor and a willing congregation must be present simultaneously (Malphurs & Penfold, 2014; Penfold 2011; Penfold 2012). Thus, even the most qualified TAP needs a willing congregation.

Although Malphurs and Penfold (2014) place more importance on having the right pastor, they emphasize a willing congregation as a must; then they conclude, "When these two dynamics come together, vibrant, renewed ministry is the outcome" (p. 21). While there exists agreement on the necessity of a willing congregation for church revitalization, few claim it may happen without the right type of leader.

Pastoral Temperament Necessary to Turn Churches Around

It has been widely understood that certain types of pastors are essential to turn churches around, principally those with certain temperaments. This was the case prior to the surfacing of ample research that would reinforce the assertion. For example, church growth guru, C. Wagner wrote in 1984 that the temperament of the pastor is a limiting factor with his/her ability to spur church growth; Barna (1993) matches this supposition. The amount of research in this area for the next 20 years led Mays (2011) to state, "With

so many churches in dire need of effective leadership to change their courses, seminaries and church leaders are studying the personalities" (p. 2).

Disputing this notion, however, leadership specialists, Devanna and Tichy (1986) allege that "transformational leadership is not idiosyncratic" (p. viii). Harmonizing with Devanna and Tichy, many business experts regard transformational leadership as teachable behaviors not tied to any special trait (Behling & McFillen, 1996). Therefore, there is a divergence between authorities on the matter within and without the church.

Still, the majority of later church growth experts maintain a strong link between pastoral temperament and church revitalization. As part of this, a pastor's relational adeptness correlates with his/her ability to turn churches around (Barna, 1993; Crandall, 2008; Frazee, 1995; Malphurs & Penfold, 2014; Mays, 2011; Penfold 2011; Penfold 2012; Rainer, 2005; Samelson, 1999; Shelton, 2015; Swanson, 1999; Thomas, 1999). In actuality, poor relational pastoral leadership attributes to church decline (Malphurs & Penfold, 2014; Shelton, 2015). TAPs are also task-oriented and driven to achievement (Crandall, 1995; Goodwin, 1999; Rainer, 2005; Reeder, 2008; Russell, 2004). Although many claim certain traits are exclusive to TAPs, more personality research is needed to validate these claims.

Rationalizing a reasonable compromise between the above secular and church growth experts, L. Anderson (1999) alternatively opines the most important aspect of pastoral leadership is what the pastor does with his/her temperament. This is not incompatible with Mays (2011) who accurately finds there is no single ideal personality profile in church revitalization, but there exists commonalities in TAPs. However legitimate the views of L. Anderson and Mays may be, it is sensible to grant that God

designs the personality of each to fulfill his/her calling (Stuart 2016). Regardless of one's

personality, church growth experts should readily embrace the fact that the Holy Spirit

calls people to different ministries based upon His unique gifting, not human choosing.

The Apostle Paul declares this to be the case (1 Cor 12:27-31; Eph 4:11-12).

Since varying positions exist on whether or not certain temperaments are

indispensable to turn churches around, it will prove beneficial to analyze pastoral

leadership studies that utilize personality assessments. The investigator will narrow his

focus on research utilizing the following personality assessments: (a) 16 Personality

Factor (16PF®), (b) DiSC® Profile, and (c) Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®).

16PF® Research Findings

The first group of studies that will be examined involves 16PF® assessments

since the 1980s. While there are less recent studies analyzing pastoral effectiveness using

the 16PF®, it proves corroborative when considering an aggregation of this personality

investigation. The additional benefit for incorporating the 16PF® findings is research is

presented among Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors. Whereas the examiner will be

implementing a project exclusively among Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors, there

exists a dearth of available research involving Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors

using other standard personality assessments such as DiSC® and MBTI®.

The 16PF® is a 187-question self-inventory that assesses 16 personality traits.

The 16 primary scales are (Factor A) warmth, (B) reasoning, (C) emotional stability, (E)

dominance, (F) liveliness, (G) rule-consciousness, (H) social boldness, (I) sensitivity, (L)

vigilance, (M) abstractedness, (N) privateness, (O) apprehension, (Q1) openness to

change, (Q2) self-reliance, (Q3) perfectionism, and (Q4) tension (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

The investigator examined two studies exclusively among Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors. There are mixed conclusions among these studies on the predictability of pastoral effectiveness relating to personality. In the first of these, Dudley (1982) carefully concludes, "The personality of the pastor does not seem to be highly related to the growth of their churches although some significant relationships were discovered" (p. 49). Dudley does find that there is a correlation that "pastors of growing churches are more likely to be suspicious, dominant, and independent than pastors of non-growing churches" (p. 49). Furthermore, there are other personality traits more common among pastors in growing churches, including being more "outgoing, venturesome, discreet, emotional, and have an acting-out tendency" (Dudley, p. 49). For the purposes of the 16PF®, "suspicious" is defined as "defensive, oppositional, distrusting, antagonistic, jealous, dogmatic," and "venturesome" is defined as "socially bold, overt interest in opposite sex" (Appendix A). So while Dudley concludes that the personality of pastors is not highly related to church growth, he seems to conflict with his own conclusion by discovering several such correlations.

In the second of these 16PF® studies, Swanson (1999) finds more effective pastors scored significantly higher than less effective pastors on dominance (Factor E). Swanson finds more effective pastors score significantly lower in Factor Q2 (self-sufficiency), whereas Dudley's (1982) finds they score higher. Additionally, Swanson finds a connection between pastoral effectiveness and having higher accessions (i.e. baptisms and professions of faith) with task-orientation as rated by their supervisors.

Swanson also finds pastors with more church growth score higher in Factors A, F, H, Q1, which are social warmth, enthusiasm, social boldness, and openness to change, respectively. Notwithstanding Dudley's cautious conclusion that there is no strong relationship with the personality of pastors and growing churches, Swanson is more definitive when he says of his research that it "lend[s] support to the idea that personality differences influence pastoral performance" (p. 263).

Contrasting Swanson's findings among Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors, Pickens (2000) finds, "The correlational analysis of the 16PF® did not support the hypothesis that interpersonal warmth, extroversion, and emotional adjustment predict effectiveness" among 54 students enrolled at Fuller Theological Seminary (pp. 14-15). Pickens alleges, "Using personality as a predictor of effectiveness appears to lack conclusive support" and concludes by denying a connection between effective pastoral ministry and personality (p. 16).

Finding varying conclusions with analyses of 16PF® that evaluate pastoral effectiveness, the researcher explored research that uses other personality assessments.

DiSC® Profile Research Findings

The second group of studies that will be examined involves the DiSC® Profile assessment. Like the 16PF®, the DiSC® Profile is a self-inventory to gauge one's personality. DiSC® is an acronymic modern classification equivalent to aged Greek terminologies: choleric, sanguine, phlegmatic, and melancholy. First, "D" stands for "dominant," which is outgoing and task-oriented. Some key descriptive words for this temperament are determined, drive, and demanding. This personality's greatest need is challenge. The old Greek equivalent is choleric. About 10% of the population are high D.

Next, "i" stands for "inspirational," which is outgoing and people-oriented. Some key descriptive words for this temperament are inspirational, influencing, impressive, and impressionable. This personality's greatest need is recognition. The old Greek equivalent is sanguine. About 25-30% of the population are high I. Next, "S" stands for "steadiness," which is reserved and people-oriented. Some key descriptive words for this temperament are steady, stable, supportive, and submissive. This personality's greatest need is appreciation. The old Greek equivalent is phlegmatic. About 30-35% of the population are high S. Lastly, "C" stands for "conscientiousness," which is reserved and task-oriented. Some key descriptive words for this temperament are competent, cautious, correct, and conscientious. This personality's greatest need is quality answers. The old Greek equivalent is melancholy. About 20-25% of the population are high C (Rohm, 2012).

Each personality has a different emphasis: D on "shaping the environment by overcoming opposition to accomplish results;" I on "shaping the environment by bringing others into alliance to accomplish results;" S on "cooperation with others to carry out tasks;" and C on "working within existing circumstances to promote quality in products or service" (http://disconline.com/). A table has been provided in appendix C that summarizes the differences in the DiSC® personalities.

There are three significant doctoral studies that evaluate the ability of pastors to turn around declining churches in the United States based upon their DiSC® Profile results. The first key doctoral study is by Robert Thomas (1989) with 20 New England Baptist General Conference churches under a membership of 200. He classifies a TAP as arriving after a church has an average annual worship service attendance growth rate of

less than 10% for three years and afterwards is greater than 10% annually. Thomas discovered that TAPs of small passive Baptist churches in New England fit a certain personality profile. Using the DiSC® personality profile with 20 TAPs, he finds they match the "persuader pattern" or high I, secondary D, and low C and S. Benefiting from Thomas' research, Malphurs (1993) is exactly right when stressing that assessment of pastors is crucial to finding pastors who are uniquely designed to be change agents (i.e. TAPs). Even then, Malphurs advocates using DiSC® and MBTI® to determine which pastors are designed to be TAPs. Later, Frazee (1995) affirms that those with the "persuader pattern" are uniquely wired to be TAPs.

Reacting to the claims and research to the contrary, Reeder III and Swavely (2004) rebuff the notion that dying churches should seek pastors with certain personalities as the answer for church revitalization (e.g. extroverts and/or high D on the DiSC® profile). While they correctly assert that God is not limited to one personality type to lead churches to a turn around, they offer no research to reinforce their claims, excluding some anecdotal evidence. Though Rohm (2012) points out that the high D personality is demanding, mistakenly, Reeder III and Swavely equate a high D DiSC® profile with an unrelenting authoritarian leader, not a delegating one. However, a high D is not necessarily authoritarian, and neither are some other temperaments necessarily delegating.

The second key doctoral study is by Gordon Penfold (2011) with 27 evangelical church pastors in Rocky Mountain States. A TAP is classified as leading a church with a minimum of 2.5% average annual worship service attendance growth for five years. He finds TAPs are high D and/or high I while NTAPs have higher scores in S and C.

Nuancing from Thomas (1989), Malphurs (1993) is the first to claim that a primary D

also can be a TAP; consequently, Malphurs' claim is authenticated by Penfold's findings.

Moreover, Penfold's (2011, 2012) finding of high D in DiSC® among TAPs corresponds

with Dudley (1982) and Swanson (1999) with higher dominance (Factor E) in the 16PF®

of effective pastors. Contradicting Reeder III's and Swavely's (2004) mischaracterization

of high D personality, Penfold (2012) finds that most high D pastors are TAPs that have

"strong relational qualities, and are more directive without being domineering" (p. 191).

Building upon Thomas's research, Penfold (2012) concludes that the DiSC® Profile

accurately assesses a person's potential to be a TAP as Malphurs (2013) later concurs.

The third key doctoral study is by William Ingram (2015) with 26 evangelical

church pastors in the western United States. Ingram classified a TAP as leading a church

with a minimum of 2.5% average annual worship service attendance growth for five

years. Ingram finds that there are remarkable differences in the average scores in each of

the four temperaments of DiSC®. TAPs score much higher on D and I than NTAPs, and

NTAPs score much higher in S and C than TAPs. Therefore, Ingram's research and that

of Thomas (1989) and Penfold (2011) consistently indicate that TAPs are more likely to

have some combination of a high D and I score and lower on S and C than NTAPs. The

weight of the three doctoral studies using DiSC® is augmented by the fact that "these

three research studies over a twenty-five year period across three different regions of the

United States discovered similar findings" (Ingram, 2015, p. 169).

Moreover, there is supplementary research collaboratively conducted by Aubrey

Malphurs and Gordon Penfold that was published in 2014. This more comprehensive

study includes pastors from all 50 states, Washington D.C., and all ten Canadian

provinces who were requested to complete both DiSC® and MBTI® personality

assessments; there are a total of 139 and 131 pastors who completed the assessments,

respectively. As in some of the prior doctoral research, a TAP is classified as leading a

church with a minimum 2.5% of average annual worship service attendance growth for

five years.

Their findings are equivalent with the three doctoral project results as 73% of

TAPs are identifiable by "some combination of the D or I temperament on the personal

Profile" (Malphurs & Penfold, 2014, pp. 143-144). "The TAPs tended to score mid to

high D and i. The NTAPs scored high in the S and C temperaments" (p. 95). More

explicitly, Malphurs and Penfold

> discovered that 75 of the total 103 re-envisioning pastors (73 percent) patterned as
> some combination of the D or I temperament on the Personal Profile. Of the 75, 22
> DIs, 14 were IDs, 7 were Ds, and 13 were Is. We discovered 19 additional REPs who
> patterned DS, DC, CD, and IS. (p. 111)

It is interesting to note that no significant differences were found with DiSC®

among Canadian responses. The authors believe this may be attributed to Canadian

pastors being more relaxed and laity requiring less from their pastors. All of the above

DiSC® research involving pastors in the United States have consistent results,

nonetheless. Additionally, being that both D and I are outgoing personalities, all of the

DiSC® research (Ingram, 2015; Malphurs & Penfold, 2014; Penfold, 2011, 2012;

Thomas, 1989) verify the extroversion traits of effective pastors that Dudley (1982) and

Swanson (1999) find using 16PF®; alternatively, it argues against Pickens' (2000)

16PF® assertions.

Analyzing the results of NCD pastor questionnaires from 2007-2017 representing

9,529 United States congregations of various denominations, Cincala and Cho (2017)

found that pastors of churches experiencing worship service attendance growth self-assessed their leadership styles differently than other pastors, irrespective of church size. Harmonizing with the personality profiles relating to TAPs above, the top four leadership styles were team-oriented, goal-oriented, people-oriented, and relational.

Juxtaposed against insufficient research of earlier decades, the investigator finds the more recent DiSC® results together with the complementary discoveries of Cincala and Cho (2017) to reveal one trend on whether or not personality is a key factor for identifying potential TAPs; yet, incorporating research on one more personality assessment will strengthen the investigation.

Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator® Research Findings

The third group of studies that will be examined involves the MBTI® assessment. Like the 16PF® and DiSC® Profile, MBTI® is a self-inventory to gauge one's personality. People possess personality preferences based upon four pairs: (a) Extraverted or Introverted; (b) Sensing or iNtuitive; (c) Thinking or Feeling; and (d) Judging or Perceiving. The combination of capital letters in each of these pairs represents one's personality (e.g. ESTJ) (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1988). A table has been provided in appendix C that summarizes the differences in the MBTI® personalities. There are three main studies involving MBTI® among clergy, two of which include Seventh-day Adventist Christians.

The first study involved 1,319 ordained clergy who completed the MBTI® assessment. Among the clergy, 254 are Presbyterian clergy and the remainder are from 16 other denominations including Seventh-day Adventist Christian. As Oswald and Kroeger note, NTs (an intuitive-thinking combination) are natural change agents as they

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bring energy and press for excellence. However, they are demanding and may become

impatient with people-oriented problems they view as obstacles to change. As a result,

NTs best fit congregations which are ready and needing change of a revolutionary nature

(e.g. new church plants), not evolutionary; NTs may push congregations faster than they

are willing to change (Oswald & Kroeger, 1988).

SJ clergy are also astute at administering positive change.

As change agents, SJ clergy know how to work a system to bring about necessary change. NT clergy can best envision the changes that need to occur in a parish, but SJ clergy are more adept at bringing these changes about. Politically astute, grounded in reality, aware of the incremental steps necessary for change, the SJ pastor deliberately and methodically develops a parish. (Oswald & Kroeger, 1988, p. 76)

Due to the fact that SJ clergy are loyal to the past, they will not lead

congregations to go through unnecessary change. And since most people tend to be

resistant to change, their evolutionary manner of introducing change will tend to fit most

congregations in need of a turnaround. Furthermore, SJs are very dependable and follow

through on commitments and, like NTs, strive for excellence.

While declaring ENTJs, INTJs, INFJs, and ENFJs to be effective leaders in

general, the best administrators are ESTJs who get things done while interacting with

people; ISTJs are the next best church administrators. The administration trait is

advantageous for leading in revitalization. Those of the same type are not equal in

effectiveness as training, discipline, and experience increase one's abilities (Oswald &

Kroeger, 1988).

The second study using MBTI® is among clergy in South Africa and Namibia.

Though not in the United States, the clergy are exclusively Seventh-day Adventist

Christians. Joubert (1993) notes preserving the identity of the past is not valuable to NT

clergy as they believe congregations' future is tied to the future. On the other hand,

> SJ clergy put a lot of energy into the *process*. How things are done is important and should conform to the tradition and policies of the denomination and the parish. Order, structure, and predictability are very important aspects of the process for SJ clergy." (Emphasis original, p. 45)

Agreeing with Oswald and Kroeger (1988), Joubert shares that SJs are more

suited for evolutionary change agents given that churches have an aversion to change,

especially revolutionary change. Self-actualized pastors are extraverted (Joubert, 1993),

which would match TAPs who are more outgoing and driven to excel as referenced

above.

The third study using MBTI® as stated above was conducted by Malphurs and

Penfold (2014) more comprehensively than the others. Their MBTI® research finds that

68 TAPs are extroverts, while 31 are introverts; and 68 are judging, while 31 are

perceiving. The extroversion tendency is not surprising as it is shown to be an asset.

There is no significant difference between sensing and intuitive or thinking and feeling.

For NTAPs, as in TAPs, there is a higher disparity between judgement (28) and

perception (4), though there are not pronounced differences between the others. Malphurs

and Penfold learn that

> The most common patterns for REPs [re-envisioning pastors, a term similar to TAPs] are: ESTJ (15), ENFP (12), ESFJ (11), or ISTJ (9). Those patterns for the NREPs [non-re-envisioning pastors, a term similar to NTAPs] are INTJ (6) or ISFJ (4) or ESFJ (4). This is most significant. It would appear that if you are an ESTJ, ENFP, ESFJ, or ISTJ on the MBTI, you are likely a pastor who can lead plateaued or declining churches to re-envision themselves and should strongly consider this when taking a church. (p. 114)

Preference to extroversion is noteworthy, but what is most striking is that SJs fit 3

of the 4 MBTI® temperaments associated with TAPs and two of the three of NTAPs.

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This seems to indicate that not all SJ are suited as TAPs, notwithstanding the statements of Oswald and Kroeger (1988) and Joubert (1993). However, as ESTJs are named by Oswald & Kroeger as the best administrators, this type is also the most common MBTI® pattern of TAPs Malphurs and Penfold discover.

Some personality assessments are apparently more conclusive than others at identifying TAPs based on temperament. While extroversion and dominance (matching D profile in DiSC®) seem to have greater occurrence among pastors of growing churches, there is conflicting results among 16PF® research. The results of the DiSC® studies show TAPs have significantly higher D and I scores and significantly lower S and C scores than NTAPs; NTAPs score high S and C and much lower D and I. And with the MBTI® results, ESTJ, ENFP, ESFJ, and ISTJ are the most common personality types of TAPs with ESTJ being the most common; and INTJ, ISFJ, and ESFJ are the most common among NTAPs (Malphurs & Penfold, 2014).

Interacting with the results of their own findings, Oswald and Kroeger (1988) urge the church for the sake of the ministry to lovingly say "no" to candidates who do not have the right temperament for specific callings; and Malphurs and Penfold (2014) bravely ask the minority of pastors who do not have the potential to become TAPs with coaching to leave pastoral ministry. These actions should be applauded seeing the future of Christianity in America, entire denominations, and the eternal life of many are at stake.

Relationship between Coaching Pastors and Church Revitalization

Though the right type of pastor and a willing congregation indeed prove to be primary factors in church revitalization, it is critical to ascertain how determinative is

coaching pastors who lead declining and plateaued churches. Though coaching cannot alter one's temperament, it can empower the coachee to discover and own answers to his/her challenges. Webb (2012) puts it this way: "Coaching involves listening to others, asking questions to deepen thinking, allowing others to find their own solutions, and doing it all in a way that makes people feel empowered and responsible enough to take action" (pp. 20-21). In order to consider whether coaching NTAPs may neutralize any temperament limitations to become TAPs, it is valuable to investigate the impact of coaching for performance across other disciplines. In addition, this investigation will discover the time needed to turn churches around.

Coaching for Performance across Other Disciplines

Although coaching was readily used in emergency circumstances since the 1960s, the benefits later became recognized as a means to improve performance at all times. In fact, top executives attribute their breakthrough success to coaching. It is viewed as the best way to "maximize the performance of others" (Payne, 2007, p. 24). Today, coaching is broadly recognized as a means to improve performance, cause necessary change, and produce growth, thus saving much time and money (D. L. Anderson & M. C. Anderson, 2004; Bachkirova, Cox, & Clutterbuck, 2014; Sheppard et al., 2006; Grant & Stober, 2006; Fraser & Tracey, 2005; Whitmore, 2002). For example, business executives make significant progresses in skills and performance; this results in across-the-board positive outcomes (De Meuse & Guangrong, 2009). These outcomes are independent of the personalities of leaders (Behling & McFillen, 1996).

Coaching does not alter the talents of leaders as much as it unlocks their abilities. In actuality, Coe, Kinlaw, and Zehnder (2013) contend, "Sustained superior performance

occurs, most of all, because people are committed to do their level best all of the time. Coaching is a proven strategy for building such commitment" (p. 1). However, Adams warns that coaching may only "attempt to increase the likelihood that the coachee" will adopt the preferred actions (p. 78). The primary matter is one of commitment rather than personality, and coaching assists individuals and organizations to attain the best results (Coe, Kinlaw, & Zehnder, 2013, p. 10). Bringing clarity on the matter, Payne (2007) illuminates further: "Not everyone has the potential to rise to the top of his or her profession. But everyone does have talents, skills, and expertise that can be maximized through coaching" (p. 24). For this reason, he and McMahan (1998) call coaching essential. There is consensus across disciplines other than church leadership on the significant impact of coaching irrespective of temperament.

<p style="text-align:center">Coaching Pastors for Church Revitalization</p>

Given there is broad acceptance in other fields on the advantages of coaching to produce greater productivity, it is vital to examine how coaching impacts church leaders and more specifically pastors of churches in need of revitalization. Evidence shows the effectiveness of coaching on improving performance in Christian leadership contexts (Ogne & Roehl, 2008). It is rarely disputed that coaching provides vital support to pastors of churches in need of turnaround. One reason for this is because "engaging in the turnaround process contributes to a higher turnover rate of pastors" (Sullivan, 2009, p. 79). Sullivan advocates for intentional support that counteracts pastoral disengagement and resignation of churches in need of revitalization. However, what is not yet clear is whether or not coaching is a vehicle that helps NTAPs become TAPs.

Ongoing coaching is essential for Christian leaders leading change (Collins, 2009; McMahan, 1998; Sullivan, 2009). Taylor (2014) discovers among Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors that coaching produces growth, especially shaped by the accountability in the relationship. Taylor's coachees find significant growth via the coaching relationship in the following areas relating to turning churches around: (a) successfully leading productive church boards, (b) managing time well and getting things done, and (c) being well organized and effectively managing the operations of the church. Taylor's findings correspond to those of Larry Ousley who piloted a coaching project among 10 African-American United Methodist pastors in South Carolina. Though plateaued or declining churches were not necessarily targeted, the outcome is an astounding average attendance growth of 12.06% in a 10-month span (Hastings, 2012).

While some like Eymann (2012) do find while it is possible for a pastor who led the church in decline to lead in a turnaround, it is more an exception than the rule. On the other hand, Dodson and Stetzer (2007) find that 40% of churches turned around in their research through a renewal of the current senior pastor (i.e. a replacement of the senior pastor did not occur). Coaching may be a key factor among them. Consequently, the investigator seeks to discover whether coaching may neutralize the apparent lack of preferred leadership ability or temperament to enable pastors to turn churches around.

Argued prior to more recent research on the link between temperament and pastors, L. Anderson (1999) exclaims, "Bottom line: Having certain traits doesn't guarantee effective leadership any more than lacking certain traits guarantees ineffective leadership. What a leader does with those traits is what matters most" (p. 42). Ingram (2015), however, maintains an opposing position when he concludes, "The characteristics

of turnaround pastors are primarily innate strengths and gifts that are not teachable, but are clearly identified through a combination of standardized assessments and survey questions" (pp. 184-185). Ingram's claim largely differs from the assertions of other fields on coaching aforementioned as well as some church growth leaders.

For example, accepting that leaders must have a minimum level of capabilities, Wofford summarizes the evidence leading up to 1999: "A growing, and now dominant, group of scholars has concluded that effective leadership can be molded in the adult years" and is not limited to certain types of personality (pp. 187-188). Also, Ogne and Roehl (2008) indicate coaching enables church leaders to learn new skills. Besides, having completed more extensive research than Ingram, Malphurs and Penfold (2014) find that although TAPs are much more likely to have certain temperaments, about one-fourth of TAPs did not. Acknowledging the disparity, the investigator believes it is possible for pastors that do not possess the preferred personalities to be a TAP, albeit less likely.

Moreover, Penfold (2011, 2012), Malphurs and Penfold (2014), and Ingram (2015) discover a strong link between pastors who have coaches and TAPs; this is independent of temperament, even though high D and high I are more likely to have coaches. This indicates a possibility of pastors who have coaches to turn churches around regardless of temperament, notwithstanding certain personalities having more innate drive. Though Swanson (1999) does not cite research justification on the effects of coaching ineffective pastors, he articulates the following: "Ineffective pastors can be coached to align their priorities and time allocations more closely to those of the effective pastors, and in the areas where they lack proficiency on particular tasks" (p. 279). Having

a small sample size, Ingram finds NTAPs who have a coach experience 1.25% annual church attendance growth as compared to his 2.5% benchmark of TAPs. He further suggests churches should connect a coaching relationship with the hiring process of senior pastors. The examiner accepts the link of coaching pastors and church growth/turnarounds.

Elaborating on the benefits of pastoral coaching for churches in need of revitalization, many church transformation experts recommend pastors be coached by an experienced TAP (Cheyney, 2016a; Easum, 2007; Malphurs & Penfold, 2014; McMahan, 1998; Penfold, 2011, 2012; Wofford, 1999). This is imperative when coaching a NTAP (Penfold, 2011, 2012).

Malphurs and Penfold (2014) make a stunning declaration: "With guidance from REPs who serve as mentors or coaches their ability to move their churches to greater ministry effectiveness increases. Through this process, some pastors will undoubtedly become REPs" (p. 192). They claim that a smaller percentage of NTAPs below the standard deviation do not have the potential to become TAPs and suggest it would be better for these ministers to leave the pastoral profession. Fittingly, TAPs and NTAPs who lead churches in need of a turnaround should be paired with coaches who are experienced TAPs. While there is consensus that coaching pastors for church growth leads to greater results, there is disagreement on whether or not NTAPs may become TAPs. Approving of those in other disciplines, Malphurs and Penfold affirm that having certain temperaments does not preclude one from becoming a TAP, especially when an experienced TAP is his/her coach. The researcher concurs with Malphurs and Penfold that a majority of NTAPs can become TAPs given the right coaches.

Time Involved in Church Revitalization

While establishing which kind of pastors can turn churches around is crucial, it is valuable to grasp how long it takes to turn churches around. Cheyney (2016a) observes declining churches are mostly older (i.e. the average age of members); Dodson and Stetzer (2007) accordingly state this is ample reason to progress through the turnaround process slower due to a lower willingness to change. Bearing this and other factors in mind, experienced TAP Frazee (1995) indicates the turnaround process takes two years. Yet, a few indicate it takes an average of about three plus years (Barna, 1993; Burrill, 2004; Cheyney, 2016a). Some indicate a time period of five years (Easum, 2007; Eymann, 2012). Based upon the length of time the above claim, the investigator aligns this timeframe with those stating three years is needed; but at the same time, the attendance would already be turning around within two years if not less than one year per Ousley's coaching project (Hastings, 2012).

The timeframe of the coaching relationship should be better aligned to the parameters needed for revitalization. Wright (2008) concludes that while coaching pastors for shorter time periods (e.g. 6 weeks) yields positive results, additional benefits would be realized with longer coaching relationships. This is more so the case in coaching for revitalization since church turnarounds require more time. Terminating a coaching relationship within six months will cut progress as longer time periods yield greater impact (D. L. Anderson & M. C. Anderson, 2004) and by extension church turnaround efforts. For that reason, the investigator deems a one to two year coaching relationship for revitalization sufficient.

Measurement of Church Decline and Church Revitalization

On one hand, it is essential to recognize the relationship between pastoral temperament and coaching with church revitalization, but on the other hand, it is necessary to recognize when revitalization occurs. Experts say the best way to discern church decline and revitalization is by measuring weekly weekend worship service attendance. Olson (2008) argues that "a growing number of religious researchers believe that weekend church attendance is the most helpful indicator of America's spiritual climate" (p. 25). Explaining further, Olson expresses that "attendance is a real-time indicator, a weekly appraisal of commitment" (p. 25). This is not a new assessment as Hadaway in 1989 indicates, "Growth and decline are best measured by comparing change in attendance figures" (p. 152). Attendance is the most basic and useful way to measure church health.

As contributive as Olson's (2008) research is by focusing on worship service attendance, he overlooks the importance of other key components relating to church health, such as discipleship and community impact. While many define church revitalization quantitatively, Sullivan (2009) explicates, "A revitalized church is a healthy, growing church that connects with the community context, turning around from decline into vibrancy" (p. 5). One resource that measures qualitatively is Natural Church Development. Measuring qualitative health using NCD proves advantageous as it assesses discipleship, community impact, and several other vital areas related to church growth (Schwarz, 2006). Burrill and Evans (2014) concur NCD is an excellent tool; they further expound that Seventh-day Adventist Christian churches have embraced it due to its principles harmonizing with the Bible, the writings of Ellen White, and the church's

emphasis on health ministry. Measuring the impact of NCD in over 100 Seventh-day

Adventist Christian churches in the United States, Mills (2009) found a direct association

with an increase in financial giving, membership, baptisms, and attendance for those that

attempted to improve their weakest area(s). With Ousley's coaching project, the NCD

process was used to aid pastors in church growth (Hastings, 2012). Therefore, utilizing

worship service attendance (quantitative) and NCD (qualitative) concurrently is a sounder

method to measure church revitalization.

Methods of Coaching for Church Revitalization

Now that this investigation has positively defined the type of pastoral leadership,

the value of coaching, and the best measurements for church revitalization, it is better

equipped to discuss secondary areas that promote the turnaround process, namely: the

benefits of providing a turnaround process, the importance of focusing on the relationship

with the coachee rather than goals, and other pertinent coaching recommendations.

Benefits of Providing a Process

Granting the most important ingredients needed to turn churches around are

having the right type of leader and a willing congregation, providing a turnaround process

along with the coaching relationship may be enhancing. Many assert that providing

evolutionary, precise, predictable turnaround steps is essential (D. L. Anderson & M. C.

Anderson, 2004; Cauley, 2016; De Meuse & Guangrong, 2009; Grossman, Sellon, &

Smith, 2002; Anderson, Campbell, Canning, Mellon, Sheppard, & Tuchinsky, 2006;

Devanna & Tichy, 1986), especially for NTAPs (Frazee, 1995; Grossman, Sellon, &

Smith, 2002; Schaller, 1986). Anderson, Campbell, Canning, Mellon, Sheppard, and

Tuchinsky (2006) clarify that coachees should set their own goals within the specified parameters.

Conversely, Payne (2006) in *Coaching for High Performance* shares, "Good coaches tie their coaching conversations to goals for improvement, learning, or growth. They also make sure there is a plan in place that supports these goals" (p. 13). Payne's point is that the purpose of the coaching relationship needs to be goal-focused. Grossman, Sellon, and Smith (2002) have shown that using Kotter's (1996) 8 step process within the church produces church revitalization, and Ousley's fruitful coaching project had the stated goal of increasing attendance as well (Hastings, 2012). There already is a Seventh-day Adventist Christian evolutionary church revitalization work available: *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* by the investigator, Brad Cauley (2016). This guide provides the necessary milestones to help govern the process. It is the view of the investigator that providing an evolutionary sequence as provided in this work will enhance the turnaround process.

Coaching Relationship Focused

While NTAPs will likely make more progress with a process being provided, some coaching authorities caution against having a task-oriented or goal-focused relationship as recommended by others above. Instead, they advise the coach to focus on the relationship with the coachee (Ogne & Roehl, 2008; Stoltzfus, 2005). Practically, this means the coach authentically shares his/her story in the first coaching session. It means that accountability is relationship focused, not on accomplishment or performance. In this way, the results of the coaching relationship will be more efficacious for the coachee's ministry long term—transformational more than transactional (D. L. Anderson & M.C.

Anderson, 2004; Ogne & Roehl, 2008; Stoltzfus, 2005). Rather than forcing his/her agenda, the coach hears the heart of the coachee (Ogne & Roehl, 2008).

Furthermore, the coach may adjust his/her coaching based upon the coachee's DiSC® and/or MBTI® personality assessment results. For example, a coach would allot more time for sanguine/extrovert coachees (Ogne & Roehl, 2008; Taylor, 2014). Though there will be benchmarks to be reached in the turnaround process, it is better to focus more on the personal relationship rather than what the coachees may accomplish. The researcher concurs with both those who assert the need to be goal-focused and those who claim the focus of the coach should be on the relationship (i.e. the person of the coachee). When there already exists a motivation within the coachee, the coach is free to focus more on the relationship; this is the ideal scenario.

Other Coaching Recommendations

Coaching specialists have other recommendations it is wise to consider implementing for the turnaround process. Notwithstanding the coach focusing principally on the relationship, D. L. Anderson and M. C. Anderson (2004) call attention to the necessity of having coachees agree at the outset to pursue goals that benefit the organization (i.e. a church turnaround). They contend it is vital for coaches to set the context for success by explaining how coaching will benefit coachees and to link the coachees' objectives to turnaround goals. Thus, an important counsel is to only coach leaders/pastors who are motivated to lead in the turnaround process; coaching unwilling leaders is ineffective (Collins, 2009; Dai & De Meuse, 2009; Ogne & Roehl, 2008; Wofford, 1999). In fact, procuring written commitments for the coaching relationship

with its stated purposes will keep the relationship professional and prevent pastors from

dropping out (Collins, 2009; Wright, 2008).

Another practical recommendation is to coach one-on-one by phone or video

conference, especially where it is not practical to meet in person (Creswell, 2006;

Hastings, 2012; Stoltzfus, 2005; Taylor, 2014; Webb, 2012). Contrarily, Ousley believes

group coaching is more effective than individual coaching (Hastings, 2012). In spite of

this, the investigator prefers a one-on-one format due to its personalized approach as each

pastor and church turnaround is unique. Additionally, Taylor advises coaches early on in

the relationship to stress the importance of maintaining a quiet place to minimize

distractions during coaching sessions. Cheyney (2016a), a church revitalization guru,

says coaching pastors for church turnarounds should be performed monthly.

Lastly, whereas there are different coaching models, the examiner views the

COACH Model® as a strong, simple, yet practical method to coach pastors aiming for

church revitalization. The COACH Model® "follows a [sequential] pattern that has

proven to produce successful, holistic, and empowering conversations" (Webb, 2012, p.

41). "COACH" is an acronym that stands for connect, outcome, awareness, course, and

highlight. The "connect" stage is used to connect socially and to follow up on the

coachee's action steps from the previous session; "outcome" refers to the result the

coachee wants to achieve from the coaching session; "awareness" is "reflective dialogue

intended to produce discoveries, insights, and increased perspective for the coachee" (p.

43); "course" refers to the step-by-step action plan; and "highlight" is to review the part

that is most helpful to the coachee.

Conclusion

With church decline and stagnation being the norm for many churches, this literature review has investigated ways to assist the church, God's vehicle to lead people to salvation, to be better positioned to reverse course. Although some conclusions such as the need to have a willing congregation to turn churches around may be expected, there were new discoveries the examiner found revealing. For example, though there exists different perspectives how significant the temperament of the pastor is for a church turnaround, the investigator found the aggregate of several studies substantial and convincing. Specifically, this investigation determines that within the DiSC® findings of Thomas (1989), Penfold (2011), Malphurs and Penfold (2014), and Ingram (2015) that TAPs most likely have DiSC® combinations of D and I, and MBTI® results of ESTJ, ENFP, ESFJ, or ISTJ; NTAPs score considerably higher in S and/or C in DiSC® and more commonly have MBTI® results of INTJ, ISFJ, and ESFJ. The DiSC® results soundly correlate with the NCD self-assessed leadership styles of pastors. It is therefore in the best interest of the mission of the church for hiring entities (e.g. conferences) to standardly utilize DiSC® and MBTI® with prospective pastors.

Though there is some differing results of 16PF® relating to church growth or pastoral effectiveness among Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors, there exists a higher likelihood of dominance, social warmth, task-orientation, enthusiasm, suspicion, independence, and social boldness. Not surprisingly, the findings among the DiSC®, MBTI®, and 16PF® are comparatively harmonious.

Moreover, the investigation finds a substantial correlation between coaching pastors and church turnarounds. Coaching, therefore, has the probability of helping

NTAPs overcome any potential temperament limitations. The probability increases when the coach is an experienced TAP. The time necessitated for a church turnaround is roughly three years though signs of turnaround may manifest within one year. Besides utilizing personality assessments, hiring entities would be wise to facilitate coaches, particularly for pastors who do not possess the characteristic temperaments of TAPs.

Furthermore, the investigation shows the soundest method to measure church decline or growth is the average weekly worship service attendance (quantitative) along with a church diagnostic tool like NCD (qualitative). In most cases, coaching is found to neutralize limitations for revitalization due to temperament. Other coaching methods are found to be preferential in church revitalization, such as (a) providing a turnaround process for the coachee, (b) relationship-focused coaching, (c) limiting coaching to pastors who are willing to commit to turnaround goals, (d) the coach being an experienced revitalizer, (e) a coaching frequency of once a month, (f) coaching by phone or video conference in a quiet place to minimize distractions, and (g) utilizing the COACH Model®.

Accordingly, the investigator will only seek to involve pastors and churches that are willing to undergo a process of revitalization. He will utilize the preferential coaching methods abovementioned. While pastors will be chosen based upon willingness, their DiSC® and MBTI® profiles will be obtained to ascertain the influence of temperament upon the outcome, especially church attendance.

Recommendations

This investigation has uncovered some recommendations that will convey more conclusively the findings of prior research. First, as it relates to the stated purpose of this

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project, carrying out studies similar to Malphurs' and Penfold's (2014) DiSC® and MBTI® personality studies solely among Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors would be invaluable. This would be useful to discern if there exist unique findings that will modify what comprises TAPs within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. If no such study is undertaken by the time this project is completed, the investigator may embark upon it.

Second, the investigator deliberates on the efficaciousness of having many training meetings for pastors (e.g. twice yearly), which often involves lecture-style enrichment. Would it not be more fiscally responsible and productive vis-à-vis church revitalization to reallocate time and resources to coaching pastors in the field as methodically?

Experienced administrators, coaches, and TAPs within a conference territory may coach pastors on a monthly basis by phone or video conference in lieu of other meetings. A study could show which yields more benefit to the field—lecture style pastors' meetings only or monthly coaching in the place of some of these meetings. Regardless if such a change is made, given what research demonstrates, Seventh-day Adventist Christian conferences would do well to implement a comprehensive strategy to coach pastors for greater effectiveness.

Third, it would be worthwhile to have further research that identifies other current factors that may prevent church revitalization, irrespective of pastoral temperament and the willingness of congregations (e.g. cultural and demographic changes). Fourth, it may be determined how pastoral tenure relates to church revitalization and how shorter pastoral transitions, which is more common in the Seventh-day Adventist Christian Church, benefits, deters, or has a neutral effect. Fifth, hiring entities may want to pursue a

course beyond résumés and references by obtaining the personality profiles of every

pastoral candidate to increase the potential of church turnarounds.

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE

Given the missional imperative of making disciples (Matt 28:19) and urgency of

proclaiming the everlasting gospel to as many people as possible (Rev 14:6-7), the

impediment of declining churches must be overcome. Thus far, this investigation has

found two primary factors requisite for revitalization: a willing congregation and the right

type of pastor. The right type of pastor—rated as most important—is not determined by

age or spiritual gifting but rather temperament. Though many pastors do not possess one

of the turnaround pastor (TAP) personality profiles, a majority of non-turnaround pastors

(NTAPs) may become TAPs if they are coached for revitalization (Malphurs & Penfold,

2014). Furthermore, coaching and its principles are rooted in scripture, particularly

highlighted above by OT wisdom literature, the ministry of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke,

and the life of Barnabas in the Acts of the Apostles.

It has yet to be determined if the claim of Malphurs and Penfold (2014) holds

with a sampling of Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors—explicitly, 65 to 74 percent

of pastors who do not possess a TAP temperament may become TAPs by having

experienced TAPs coach them. Additionally, Malphurs and Penfold claim TAPs make up

around 6-15%, and despite coaching around 20% of pastors will not become TAPs.

Notwithstanding support from the theological basis and literature review, the initiative

described herein has yet to be undertaken. In particular, this plan comprised coaching

Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors for revitalization respective of pastoral temperament. This project sought to set parameters limited to NTAPs who may become TAPs via coaching through a church revitalization process.

The investigator pursued a credible plan to show the impact of coaching pastors who led churches experiencing attendance decline. The attendance was deemed declining when average annual attendance of the more recent five-year period was less than the previous five-year period. Such statistical analyses will occur prior to the onset of coaching relationships. This plan aspired to determine if an ongoing coaching relationship will help pastors lead churches to experience an attendance increase. The revitalization process was facilitated in part by the book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* written by the investigator, Brad Cauley (2016).

The investigator set forth the following sequential plan in nine phases:

1. Seek backing from conference administrations

2. Identify declining churches using statistical analysis

3. Eliminate churches already beginning to turn around and pastors with less than one year tenure or a likelihood of departing within two years

4. Find sampling of interested pastors to be coached through step-by-step revitalization process

5. Provide *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* (Cauley, 2016)

6. Prospective churches decide on revitalization process

7. Establish coaching relationships with pastors

8. Coach pastors routinely for sufficient time through a revitalization process

9. Pastors complete DiSC® Personality Profile and MBTI® assessments

The order was the preference of the investigator and may vary depending on differing circumstances. His principle concern was that each step was covered, not the order.

Phase One: Seek Backing from Conference Administrations

Communication with conference administrations was essential for multiple reasons. While pastors are the gateway to churches, conference administrations are the doorway to pastors. It was appropriate to contact conference leadership for permission and support before speaking to pastors. Moreover, conference administrations had knowledge which churches and pastors qualify within the parameters of project. For example, conference administrations within the Seventh-day Adventist Christian church reassign pastors at their discretion and may be the best ones to determine which pastors had a low probability of departing within two years. Concerning church attendance and access to pastors within the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the researcher maintains attendance records of all churches and is connected with the pastors therein.

The investigator planned to capitalize on relationships with conference leadership of Seventh-day Adventist Christian conferences within the United States. His intent was to contact presidents, executive secretaries, treasurers, ministerial directors, and church revitalization directors at the conference level. Additionally, he would contact those further removed from the conference level—namely those in similar ministry roles at union (e.g. Southwestern Union) and division (i.e. North American Division) levels.

These initial contacts would lead to those who have direct access to pastors who led

churches with declining attendance. For the Carolina Conference the examiner would

seek out permission from its conference president. When reaching out initially to various

ministry associates, the investigator planned to send them the Informed Consent Form

(see appendix A). This form was approved by Andrews University Institutional Review

Board and thoroughly describes the project.

The investigator intended to request each conference president to sign the

coaching covenant (see Appendix B) after the coachee and coach (investigator) sign

prior. This is in harmony with the findings of Eccl 4:9-12 that state, two co-laborers are

stronger than one, and three are greater still (VanGemeren, 1997c). Furthermore, the

Church Revitalization Director of North New South Wales Conference of Seventh-day

Adventists who has worked extensively with declining churches and their pastors highly

recommends having the support of the conference presidents in the project (N. Coutet,

personal communication, November 26, 2018). The coach and coachee represent the

primary strands while a conference president adds a third for an additional level of

accountability. From the onset, the investigator envisioned communicating that he will

send periodic reports to the conference president. A conference president's level of

accountability was projected to be limited to signing the coaching covenant and receiving

email reports.

Phase Two: Identify Declining Churches Using Statistical Analysis

After gaining support of conference administrations, the next step would be to

find out which churches fit the parameters. This would be achieved by analyzing annual

attendance statistics over the past 10 full years. Specifically, churches that qualify are English-speaking, established churches within the United States. The researcher had access to attendance records within his department in the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The department secretary receives, records, and then compiles annual average attendance records for each church in the conference in a spreadsheet. These statistics and others are reviewed by the Carolina Conference Church Revitalization Committee. For conferences other than the Carolina Conference, the investigator would request attendance statistics from the person who maintains these records.

While examining average annual worship service attendance of a church from one to five years is helpful, a broader scope (i.e. more years) would give a more accurate picture of the trajectory of churches. This is particularly the case within the Seventh-day Adventist Christian Church as pastors often transition within several years. Therefore, in order to identify trends of church wellbeing, the examiner proposed to utilize the average of the two most recent five-year periods. An average for annual attendance in each five-year period would be calculated.

In reality, there are churches that do not report their attendance. Therefore, the investigator prepared to choose only churches reporting attendance for a majority of years within both five-year periods. This translates to a minimum of three years of each five-year period. In the investigator's estimation, less than this amount would run a risk of inaccuracy—thereby jeopardizing the integrity of the project. Likewise, the investigator would choose not rely on the conjectures of church leaders but concrete statistics.

There may be disagreement on what degree of change represents declining attendance. If a church's attendance remains unchanged, one may argue it is experiencing decline. However, rather than enter into this conversation, the examiner elects to define a declining church by one having a decrease in average worship service attendance. For example, if a church has an average attendance of one person less for the more recent five-year period, this church would qualify. To be clear, churches experiencing any decline whatsoever in the five-year annual attendance average for the two most recent completed five-year periods were eligible for this project initiative.

Additionally, if the average attendance was identical when comparing average annual attendance between two five-year periods, any such churches were not to be allowed. The impact of other factors influencing attendance (e.g. population change) was beyond the scope of this study. The reason for this is it would be more complex and perhaps subjective to determine how multiple variables impact churches—aside from coaching pastors through a revitalization process alone.

Phase Three: Eliminate Churches Already Beginning to Turn Around and Pastors with Less than a One Year Tenure or a Likelihood of Departing within Two Years

After gaining support of conference administrations and analyzing annual worship service statistics of established English-speaking churches, some pastors were to be excluded. These would be those who have not led churches long enough or were not likely to be leading for the entire revitalization process. These limitations were critical in order to maintain the integrity of the project. If pastors of declining churches were a part of this project and the investigator began coaching them just as they begin to lead churches (e.g. less than one year pastoral tenure), it would be too soon. Otherwise, if

churches increased in attendance, it could be accurately stated it was not due to the project. Instead, a justifiable claim may be that pastors would have led churches in a turnaround without being coached through a revitalization process. Thus, the impact of coaching pastors through a revitalization process needed to be more insulated.

Results would also be affected if the pastors or churches abandon the process prior to completion. For pastor-led churches, representing the majority of Seventh-day Adventist Christian churches in the United States, momentum is lost during pastoral transitions. Hence, the investigator intended to communicate with pastors who lead churches in decline and their administrations on the need to work with pastors who had a low probability of leaving before two years. Per current literature, two years is preferred as a revitalization timeframe although significant results may be observed by coaching one year (Hastings, 2012). Since pastors' circumstances could have changed, candid communication with conference administrations (phase one) and pastors was needed beforehand. It could have been that the coaching process would have transpired one year for some while the effects of the process (i.e. impact on church attendance) were observed afterwards.

Even though a church was identified as declining in phase two and pastors had led for a minimum of one year, it would not necessarily qualify them for consideration for this project. The researcher observed instances of churches in the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists that began to turnaround shortly after a new pastor arrived (e.g. first year). Consequently, the pastors would not qualify as these churches had already experienced an attendance rebound notwithstanding a lower attendance average in the more recent five-year period.

The investigator recognized these parameters conceivably limit the number of pastors to coach through a revitalization process; however, they were vital to isolate the impact of coming alongside pastors who lead declining churches. This was especially true since, as aforementioned, Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors in the United States have average tenures of about five years (B. Ford, personal communication, May 20, 2019). Here are the parameters set by this investigation: (a) pastors who led churches experiencing a decline in attendance as defined above, (b) pastors whose churches had not undergone an annual attendance increase since he/she began leading the church, and (c) pastors and administrators who agreed the pastors had a low probability of leaving within two years.

Phase Four: Find Sampling of Interested Pastors to be Coached Through Step-By-Step Revitalization Process

While the investigator would identify pastors by contacting conference administrations, gather and analyze attendance data, and exclude some based upon tenure, he would not be able to coach all who qualify. Due to the investigator's time constraints, a sampling was to be included. While the goal was to work alongside pastors within the Carolina Conference, pastors from other conferences may strengthen the project if attainable. It was desirable to work with pastors in different regions of the United States (e.g. Northwestern, Southwestern, Midwestern, Southeastern, etc.) and churches within different types of communities (e.g. urban, suburban, and rural). However, limitations due to the connections of the researcher and willingness of pastors and churches were probable. Moreover, declining churches may be more readily found in areas further away from population centers (i.e. rural regions).

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While the intent was to include a sampling of pastors within the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, other Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors from other areas were to be included in the selection. Whereas the examiner has influence with Carolina Conference pastors as a departmental director, he depended on his various relationships with other conference administrators to recruit other pastors. Involving pastors from outside the Carolina Conference would reinforce the impact of coaching irrespective of previous rapport with the investigator-coach. It was hoped that the anonymity would not be disadvantageous. Plus, Carolina Conference pastors who fit the strictures would be eliminated if the investigator had previously assisted them in the churches. The objective was to enable all churches as far as possible to be at an equal position.

It was ascertained whether it was needed to contact many conferences in order to find churches and pastors who fit the parameters outlined above. This was attributable in part to (a) the short tenure of Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors, (b) the necessity of finding pastors at least leading for one year but had a low probability of departing within two years, and (c) finding churches that reported worship attendance for 10 years, etc. Likewise, pastors needed to have churches vote to go through the revitalization process (phase six); subsequently some alacritous pastors would be foregone.

The investigator expected the process would involve multiple conversations with potential pastors. For those within the Carolina Conference, the investigator planned to contact pastors who fit the limitations via texting, emailing, phoning, etc. For those outside the Carolina Conference, he committed to contact pastors after receiving their contact information from their conference administrations. Prior to establishing coaching

relationships, he needed to ascertain if they qualify. He planned to learn from pastors

regarding their tenure, etc. Then, he would send them the Informed Consent Form that

thoroughly describes the project. The investigator intended to be available to entertain

further questions and/or concerns relating to the process and coaching relationship.

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Phase Five: Provide *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide*
for Churches in a Plateau or Decline

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Once willing pastors who fit the limitations had been discovered, the researcher

wanted to mail one copy of the book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for*

Churches in a Plateau or Decline. This book would be sent free of charge to the pastor.

The pastors would then be requested to familiarize themselves with the revitalization

process therein. It contains a revitalization process they would consider using in leading

church renewal via a group workbook format. The pastor would have the option of

sharing his copy with local church leaders to assist them in phase six. The investigator

planned to communicate with the pastors, addressing questions and/or concerns they may

have had about the process. The examiner intended to coach pastors through the process

within this book; therefore this project aimed to determine the effectiveness of coaching

pastors through this specific revitalization process.

The book contains an introduction explaining the framework; it then walks

through eight sequential steps for church revitalization and growth. The introduction

explains how the church should elect a turnaround or revitalization team. Instructions are

given on how and whom to elect. While the team members are the driving force for

positive change, they refer each recommendation to the church board. They also assign a

person to be responsible for follow-through. According to Cauley (2016), here are the eight steps comprising the guide's revitalization process:

- Step one: A greater commitment to God in prayer

- Step two: Create Spirit-filled momentum

- Step three: Commit to become a healthy church

- Step four: Make evangelism the number 1 priority in the church

- Step five: Develop a 2-3 year church growth plan

- Step six: Transition to the discipleship model

- Step seven: Shift in pastoral leadership

- Step eight: Follow through!

Phase Six: Prospective Churches Decide on Revitalization Process

As the literature review discovered, both a willing pastor and congregation are required simultaneously for revitalization to ensue. Thus, after a pastor had decided he/she would like to participate in the project, he/she would have needed to share it with the church. The pastor would share with key leaders and the church board. The investigator meant to advocate the pastor to have the church vote in a business meeting to embark upon a revitalization process. The advantage of an entire church voting on the process was to obtain broader buy-in early rather than potentially jeopardizing future forward momentum—a commodity seldom experienced in declining churches. However, if pastors deemed voting at the church board level sufficient, the researcher was willing to continue with the remaining phases. If the church board and/or business meeting voted

against going through the revitalization process, the examiner was not willing to proceed any further.

If the church voted to proceed with the process, then it was at this stage when the church could elect its revitalization or turnaround team members based upon certain criteria in *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. If local church revitalization teams desired copies of this book for the revitalization process, the researcher was willing to share how they may be purchased. The investigator supposed it was better than teams receiving them gratis, lest they undervalued their ownership in the revitalization process. The objective was for the pastor to meet regularly with this team to cover the content of the book.

Phase Seven: Establish Coaching Relationships with Pastors

Once the declining churches vote was to move forward with the church revitalization process, the investigator aimed to have the Informed Consent Form and Coaching Covenant signed by the pastors. The investigator-coach would sign them and request the conference president to sign the coaching covenant. Thus, the pastor, the investigator, and the pastor's conference president had a place to sign the coaching covenant before the coaching relationship commences.

If not enough willing pastors fitting the parameters were found whose churches have voted to go through the revitalization process, the investigator was prepared to start back at phase one to find more pastors outside the Carolina Conference. He would start again at phase four within the Carolina Conference since he had already completed the first three phases therein. The goal was to continue until the sampling size was

satisfactory. The target was a sampling consisting of four to six pastors with around half being part of the Carolina Conference.

The coach for the pastors who lead churches in decline was predetermined to be the investigator. Some coaching experts claim one does not need to be an expert in the same field to be a good coach (Comiskey, Scaggs & Wong, 2010; Ogne and Roehl 2008), yet those involved with church revitalization agree it is essential. This is especially true when coaching a NTAP as this initiative consists (Cheyney 2016; Easum, 2007; Malphurs & Penfold, 2014; McMahan, 1998; Penfold, 2011, 2012; Wofford, 1999). The investigator is known for being a TAP having experienced attendance growth in each district he has led.

Phase Eight: Coach Pastors Routinely for Sufficient Time through a Revitalization Process

Once a pastor, the investigator, and the conference president goal signed the coaching covenant, the plan was for the examiner and pastor to begin their coaching relationship. As coaching authorities commend, the first coaching appointment would not focus on church revitalization but the relationship between coach and coachee (Comiskey, Scaggs, & Wong, 2010; Ogne & Roehl, 2008; Stoltzfus, 2005). During this first session, the idea was for both to share how they begun to follow Jesus as Forgiver and Leader. In addition, they would share their stories of how God called them to ministry. The objective was for the relationship to launch on a positive personal foundation. Thereafter, the investigator endeavored to coach the pastor as he/she leads a church through the revitalization process contained in *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline.*

Frequency of Coaching Sessions

Experts disagree on the most effective frequency of coaching sessions. Dodson and Stetzer (2007) say weekly coaching of church planters has the most successful impact on church attendance. Webb (2015) concurs more positive results follow more frequent coaching (e.g. every one to two weeks) when compared to monthly. Interestingly, quarterly coaching was shown to be more efficacious than monthly (Dodson & Stetzer; Webb, 2015).

Yet Cheyney (2016) who specifically hones in on coaching for church revitalization recommends monthly coaching sessions. Still, a Seventh-day Adventist church revitalization director in Australia strongly advocates for more frequent sessions. Due to the intensity needed early on to turn churches around, he shares, weekly sessions are needed for the first three months (N. Coutet, personal communication, November 26, 2018). For these reasons, the researcher intended to meet at least monthly and inform pastors during early stages that it may be necessary to meet weekly. Moreover, the investigator was concerned with asking pastors to meet weekly for a considerable time (e.g. up to two years) as it had the possibility to discourage some from embarking on the process altogether. Seeing the goal was to support pastors based upon their needs, the examiner planned to meet monthly and be available to meet as often as they deemed necessary.

Particulars of Coaching Sessions

The plan also determined how the coaching sessions were executed—in person or by phone. While coaching pastors within the Carolina Conference were possible to conduct in person, it was not practical with those outside the Carolina Conference.

Furthermore, Webb (2015) found coaching by telephone is more effective than in person. In order to isolate the impact of coaching pastors through a revitalization process, the investigator believes it was best to keep other variables to a minimum. Hence, all coaching sessions were to be by phone.

According to Webb (2015), the length of each coaching conversation is also a factor. Over half of all coaching conversations are 30-39 minutes while the second most popular is 60-69 minutes. The effectiveness may decrease as the length increases. A shorter period helps one to be more "focused and productive" (p. 62). The investigator strove to have coaching sessions from 30 to 60 minutes.

In order to focus the conversations, the investigator wanted to employ the sequential pattern known as the COACH Model® heretofore explained. Furthermore, the researcher sought to text the coachee a day or two prior to obtain his/her "outcome" (i.e. what he/she wanted to accomplish in the conversation). Next, the investigator-coach aspired to adequately prepare for each coaching conversation; he wished to arrange an orderly list of potential questions based upon the desired outcome of the coachee. This was highlighted by Joel Comiskey (Comiskey, Scaggs, & Wong, 2010). This preparation would enable the examiner to be more focused on the relationship through active listening rather than concentrating on what questions to ask.

Comiskey, Scaggs, and Wong (2010) share different perspectives on coaching. While Scaggs and Wong maintain purer coaching techniques alone (e.g. listening, encouraging, and asking empowering questions), Comiskey makes a convincing case for flexibility to apply "consulting, teaching, and training" based upon the needs of the coachee (p. 50). The investigator subscribes to Comiskey's contention that it is better to

be more versatile. Though the researcher intended to use purer coaching methods, he anticipated using other methods when apropos. He construed it would be better to ask permission of the coachee beforehand, however.

The duration of the coaching relationships would vary based upon the needs of the pastors and churches. Barnabas coached Saul of Tarsus for one year with successful church growth (Anim, Hernández-Ramírez, Siu-Maliko, & Stephanous; Hoffman & Wilson, 2007; Moots, 2004); therefore, coming alongside pastors for a comparable time seemed appropriate. *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* involves a one year process. Due to the fact that others assert church revitalization takes more than one year (Barna, 1993; Burrill, 2004; Cheyney, 2016; Easum, 2007; Eymann, 2012; Frazee, 1995), and there exists a higher rate of turnover for pastors involved in church revitalization (Sullivan, 2009), the investigator was open to come alongside pastors for more than one year.

Furthermore, NCD is an option within Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline to consider, but it is not compulsory. Whereas NCD surveys may be completed in order to measure qualitative health, churches would need to go through the process multiple times to gauge qualitative impact. Given the time needed and voluntary nature of NCD, the impact of this study was to be measured by the change in worship service attendance after coaching had begun. While the investigator was willing to coach pastors up to two years, the impact upon church attendance could still be followed afterwards.

The examiner intended to send progress reports to the pastors' conference presidents throughout the coaching relationship. This added layer of accountability may

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have increased the effectiveness per Taylor's findings (2014) and Coutet's experience (personal communication, November 26, 2018). This could have been intimidating however as presidents possess the influence to fire and was exacerbated by the reality these pastors were leading declining churches. Consequently, the investigator sought to help the pastors feel more comfortable; he purposed to email them drafts and request them to edit the content prior to it being sent to the presidents. The conference presidents' involvement was not designed for more than signing the initial coaching covenant and receiving periodic reports via email.

Phase Nine: Pastors Complete DiSC® Personality Profile and MBTI® Assessments

At some point in the coaching relationship, the investigator intended to request the pastors to complete the DiSC® Personality Profile and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® assessments. The chief reason for this phase was to ascertain how the pastors' personalities compare with the review of literature. It was possible to determine that their personalities were a significant factor in the state of the churches. However, the effect of coaching through a revitalization process notwithstanding their temperaments would need to be realized.

While Malphurs and Penfold (2014) hold the majority of pastors are NTAPs and most NTAPs may become TAPs with coaching, they claim a smaller percentage of pastors (20%) will not become TAPs regardless. In juxtaposition with what experts express concerning the ability of NTAPs to become TAPs via coaching, the investigator wanted to discover the impact on a sampling of Seventh-day Adventist Christian NTAPs.

A question to be settled was whether paid authorized versions of DiSC® and MBTI® should be employed or free versions available on the internet. Rather than running the risk of obtaining inaccurate results undermining the findings, only authorized versions were to be included in this project.

Additionally, it needed to be decided who would cover these costs and have access to the results: the pastors, the investigator, and/or another entity. The costs were $64.50 for DiSC® (Personality Profile Solutions, LLC, n.d.) and $49.95 for MBTI® (The Myers-Briggs Company, n.d.). Even though the pastors benefitted from the assessments, the researcher opined it would be unwise to request them to pay for them; they were already engaging in a rigorous process and regular coaching sessions. The investigator surmised it was more comfortable and less trouble for him to cover the costs than to ask other entities. The results would be received by the pastor, and the examiner would request the results be shared with him. The profiles would be shared anonymously when reporting on this project.

Lastly, it needed to be determined what stage in the coaching relationship the pastor would be requested to complete the assessments. The options were before the first coaching session, at the end of the coaching relationship, or in between. Since personalities would not change during the project, the profile results would not be affected much by the timing. However, it was considered that having the results earlier in the relationship could help the pastors and investigator process how they may adapt their leadership for church revitalization. It was supposed that expecting completion of these assessments prior to initiating coaching sessions may have stalled the coaching relationships. Consideration was given to a possible advantage to waiting until the end of

the coaching relationship. This may prevent any negative effect (i.e. discouragement) on the pastor if he/she gets affirmed that his/her personality is not ideal when tackling the daunting challenge of church decline. Furthermore, addressing this within the coaching relationship aligned with the purpose of this initiative. On the other hand, obtaining the results towards the end would avert the examiner from coaching in a prejudiced manner. Having weighed the above options, the researcher decided to choose a time in the midst of the coaching relationships.

Conclusion

In summary, the investigator opted to execute the plan as detailed in the nine phases herein. This included coaching pastors through the revitalization process within the book, Steps to a Vibrant Church: *A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. However, the coaching was to be driven by the coachees not by the investigator. While the researcher planned to utilize coaching skills, he was ready to offer other skills as well. These included but were not limited to consulting, teaching, and training in order to effectively assist pastors who led declining churches.

CHAPTER 5

NARRATIVE OF THE INITIATIVE

IMPLEMENTATION

The goal of this initiative was to coach pastors who lead declining churches

through a church revitalization process and then measure the impact on worship

attendance. This chapter details the results of the execution of the initiative—namely, its

nine phases.

**Phase One Realized: Sought Backing from Conference
Administrations**

The first step in the implementation of this plan was to contact conference

administrations. This investigation found that conference administrations were indeed the

doorway to pastors. In every case conference administrations were contacted first. Then

the prospect of inclusion with the project was discussed with pastors. Conference

administrations did have access to the pastors and hold knowledge on which pastors fit

the parameters set by this investigation.

The investigator capitalized on as many relationships with administrators of

Seventh-day Adventist Christian conferences within the United States as he deemed

productive. He contacted eight conference presidents, two executive secretaries, a

treasurer, eight ministerial directors, two evangelism/outreach directors, and a church

revitalization director. If an administrator had multiple responsibilities, he is only listed

herein with the position with more seniority (e.g. if a president serves as the ministerial director, only the title of president is included). Additionally, he contacted an executive secretary, a ministerial director, evangelism director, and church growth director at union (i.e. encompassing an entire region such as the southeastern United States) and division levels (i.e. North American Division).

The investigator found the most support and access from within his own conference—the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists—due to his relationships and job assignment as the Church Revitalization Director. His project had the full support of the Carolina Conference administration and ministerial team. However, support and access in other conferences were more challenging. Whereas the researcher contacted no less than 17 conference administrators, only about half of them expressed openness to discuss participation. The regions where these conferences are located and the number in each region include the Southeast (3), Mid-Atlantic (3), Northeast (1), Midwest (3), Southwest (2), West (2), and Northwest (3). The lack of openness among some was surprising because qualified revitalization coaching was offered gratis to pastors leading declining churches. Among the others, however, the examiner found a great deal of willingness to find pastors within their conferences that could receive this support.

The investigator's goal was to obtain declining churches from several major regions within the United States (e.g. Southwest, Northwest, Midwest, West, etc.), thereby procuring a broader cross section to apply the findings. Yet the lack of interest among some was a negative factor affecting the realization of this objective. All those who were amenable were sent the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix A) detailing

what was involved. The conference administrations were notified via this form that conference presidents would receive periodic reports by email.

Phase Two Realized: Identified Declining Churches Using Statistical Analysis

The next phase of the implementation was to identify declining churches using statistical analysis. Part of the parameters established was evaluating the average worship service attendance of English-speaking churches for the last 10 years. The investigator requested his department secretary to compile the last 10 years of annual attendance of every church in the Carolina Conference in a spreadsheet. This was completed for the years 2008-2017. Per the request of the investigator, she then calculated an average for the five-year periods 2008-2012 and 2013-2017. Churches were revealed as declining while others did not fit the parameters as outlined in chapter four. When more pastors were needed for the project, she did the same for the years 2009-2018 computing the five-year averages for 2009-2013 and 2014-2018. This revealed more declining churches that had not fit the prior constraints due to a lack of statistics reported for at least three years of each five-year period.

Unexpectedly, none of the other conferences sent the examiner all of their churches' attendance statistics; this information would have been used to determine which pastors to inquire about participating in the project. Instead, statistics were requested by the investigator for specific pastors who expressed interest or were recommended by an administrator. For these churches, averages would be calculated for the two most recent five-year periods as well. Some conferences' ministerial departments or whoever maintained attendance records sent the statistics. Some pastors provided the

researcher the statistics directly. Also unforeseen was that three conference administrations who were open to their pastors participating had not been keeping church attendance records for the previous 10 years. Moreover, the willing pastors in these conferences were unable to obtain worship service statistics for the previous 10 years from the local churches. To maintain integrity in the conclusions of this investigation, pastors who did not possess the previous 10 years of attendance records were disallowed. There was also a pastor that was interested, but the church he led was not an English-speaking congregation. Hence, the investigator was disappointed as different regions were not included in this study due to incomplete or no attendance records, notwithstanding the willingness of pastors.

A dearth of worship attendance reporting was a limiting factor within the Carolina Conference as well. According to the plan, only churches that had reported a minimum of three years in each five-year period were allowed. This prevented some declining churches from being considered. No churches were included that did not have this minimum attendance reporting threshold within the Carolina Conference or other conferences. In all, the Carolina Conference had about 46 English-speaking churches with the required number of years reported that were declining in attendance. Only churches that had a lower average worship service attendance in the more recent five-year period were included.

Phase Three Realized: Eliminated Churches That Already Began to Turn Around and Pastors With Less than a One Year Tenure or a Likelihood of Departing within Two Years

After analyzing the average worship service attendance statistics, the next phase was to eliminate churches that had already begun to turnaround, had a new pastor for less

than a year, or had a pastor with a likelihood of leaving within two years. There were others reasons not preconceived that led the investigator to exclude some churches and pastors.

There were some declining churches in the Carolina Conference that had already begun to turn around with the arrival of a new pastor. Though these churches had lower attendance averages for the more recent five-year period, the attendance was trending upward. These pastors were typically there for one to three years, and the attendance began increasing soon after the new pastors arrived. They were not included in this project.

There were other churches that had a pastor begin less than a year prior to the embarking of this project. Within the Carolina Conference there were a significant number of pastoral moves preceding the implementation of this initiative. This impacted about eight of the declining English-speaking churches. There were several more pastors the investigator knew would be transitioning out of the church districts due to him serving on the Ministerial Council and Personnel Committee. Participation on these committees proved advantageous.

There were additional churches that were not included for sundry reasons. These involved those that were led by pastors serving in church districts for several years or were eligible for retirement. In an effort to prevent pastors from beginning the process and not being able to follow through, the researcher decided not to present the project to those who were more likely to transition within two years. Moreover, the examiner determined it was better to not include churches within the Carolina Conference he had

previously assisted in church growth; this related to about four of the 46 declining churches.

Of the 46 English-speaking churches with the required number of years reported in the Carolina Conference, many were eliminated due to various other reasons. After consulting with his advisor, the investigator decided not to include companies (i.e. congregations that had not yet developed to full "church status") that had declined in attendance. Furthermore, it was decided to omit declining churches that were led by volunteer lay pastors. There were several of these qualifying in the Carolina Conference and one elsewhere. This would ensure that all declining churches had the same employee status—full-time salaried pastors.

As mentioned above, it was decided that sounder project conclusions could be made if as many variables as possible were precluded. Another variable related to influences outside the congregations was the impact of nearby church plants. In the Carolina Conference there were eight churches that underwent a decline in attendance having had nearby church plants begin in the more recent five-year period. In order to minimize this variable, these particular declining churches were excluded.

The parameters set in advance were as follows: (a) pastors who led churches experiencing a decline in attendance as defined above, (b) pastors whose churches had not undergone a recent annual attendance increase since he/she began leading the church, and (c) pastors and administrators who agreed the pastors had a low probability of leaving within two years. All of these parameters were adhered to with further controls of variables specified here restricting the number of pastors the project may include. This level of limiting was greater than the researcher initially envisaged, thus increasing the

time and effort needed to find eligible pastors. However, he felt these were essential to help buttress the conclusions and extrapolations.

Phase Four Realized: Found Sampling of Interested Pastors to be Coached through Step-By-Step Revitalization Process

After prospective churches were eliminated in this study, the next step was to connect with prospective pastors who were leading declining churches. Nonetheless, due to the manner in which some administrations disseminated the project information to prospective pastors, this phase was meshed together with phases two and three. Stated more accurately, phases two through four were practically reversed for several conferences while the phases were followed in sequence in the Carolina Conference. The sequence of the initial phases was contingent on the investigator's level of access to pastors and the attendance information of churches. No specific sequence was requisite.

A conference president in the Mid-Atlantic region chose to contact all his pastors via a blanket email. He communicated that they should contact the examiner directly if interested. He felt this would prevent anyone from feeling embarrassed since they would be in effect admitting that a church they led was declining and that they needed help (Anonymous, personal communication, August 23, 2018). Following this president's sagacity, the investigator shared this president's action with other conference administrations when asking about the possibility of coming alongside pastors in their fields. This served well as two more conference administrators chose to do similarly, including one Northeast conference president and a Midwest conference ministerial director.

Other conferences decided to contact the pastors within their fields differently. A separate Mid-Atlantic conference administration (ministerial director) chose to inquire of specific pastors who led declining churches. A Southeast conference chose to have the examiner make an announcement about the project at its church revitalization conference since its pastors attended. The investigator was already present as an organizer of the event. For the Carolina Conference where the researcher serves as a departmental director, he had full and direct access to pastors.

The blanket email from the first Mid-Atlantic conference yielded responses from five pastors. The investigator requested the pastors to send him figures for the last 10 years of church attendance. He calculated the five-year averages for the most recent five-year periods to determine if the churches qualified. The conference president told the examiner that one of the four would be moved within a short time. Another one was leading a young church plant and therefore did not fit the parameters. A third had not led for at least a year, although both of the churches he led qualified by attendance. After contacting this particular pastor at the point of his one-year tenure, it was discovered the church was already growing through his leadership. His interest therefore waned and no longer desired to proceed with the project. A fourth pastor was interested but was only in his district for eight months. The investigator requested this pastor in the meantime to send the attendance reports to him. He never responded. The only remaining pastor led a three-church district. Two of these churches qualified, but the researcher chose the church that had declined more severely for the project. For the fourth pastor, the examiner decided not to send another email requesting the attendance data; it was deemed

important to work with pastors who showed ample interest, and one qualifying pastor from this area was already moving forward.

The Northeast conference president asked if part-time pastors were allowed. After consulting with his advisor, the investigator indicated to the president that they would not be included in order to keep the type of pastors equal. The result of this president's blanket email to all full-time pastors was one pastor showing interest in participating.

The Southeast conference that allowed a public appeal to its pastors netted two who discussed the project with the examiner during the church revitalization conference. It was discovered one of these pastors had already begun a turnaround in the declining church he led. The other was interested but questioned whether or not he would be moved within two years. He was a preordained pastor who had served for four years in a three-church district. The investigator subsequently spoke to the ministerial director about the pastor's length of stay. After the ministerial director conferred with the conference president, it was determined that this pastor would likely remain for at least two years. In spite of this, the pastor was nonresponsive to the investigator's requests for church attendance for the previous 10 years. The conference's ministerial department secretary confirmed they did not maintain attendance records. After three attempts to find out if the local churches may have them, the researcher discontinued communication with the pastor. He did not hear from the pastor again.

Meanwhile, a Mid-Atlantic conference ministerial director recommended to the investigator five churches and the pastors who led them to be considered for the plan. After receiving the request for statistics on those churches, he sent the examiner the membership data including annual accession growth and tithe for the previous 10 years.

Disappointingly, he did not possess attendance figures, and the local churches only held attendance numbers for the previous six years (2013-2018). No churches from this conference were included due to a lack of attendance data as was true for the Southeast conference mentioned above.

So thus far in the process there were two interested pastors who qualified as well as churches within their districts: one from a conference in the Mid-Atlantic region and another from the Northeast. Next, the investigator followed up with the ministerial director from a conference in the Midwest. One receptive pastor was leading two non-English-speaking companies that were not applicable to the study. Another two pastors open to project involvement led districts that had insufficient attendance data. Unfortunately, none of the interested pastors from this conference were able to be included in the study.

Concurrent with the examiner communicating with outside conference pastors, he sought to procure interested pastors within the Carolina Conference. Due to having more possible pastors there to communicate with about participating in the initiative, the researcher had more conversations with them than others. This was due to his access to pastors and attendance data of all Carolina Conference churches. This was true even though many of the 46 churches were disqualified. Initially, there were a total of eight likely pastors who could move forward. Of them, one considered it and then decided later he would likely transition out of the district within two years. Another pastor that had two churches that qualified decided against it. Having lost these two, the investigator decided to contact two additional pastors he deemed less likely to participate. After not receiving any indication of their interest, he then contacted them once more via texts. After not

receiving a response a second time from either of them, the researcher equated this to a dearth of willingness. However, three more pastors were found expressing some interest later in the process.

Phase four did in fact involve multiple conversations with administrators and pastors via email, texting, and phone calls. This was essential to ascertain if the churches and pastors fit all the chosen parameters as the process was unfolding. The examiner sent the Informed Consent Form to all pastors to review who fit the parameters and led churches that qualified. The investigator was available to answer questions and concerns the pastors had on the project details therein.

Though conversations with the pastors' administrators took place about their likelihood of leading for a minimum of two years, candid conversations likewise took place with each interested pastor. The intent of pastors leading through an entire revitalization process was then evaluated by the investigator.

With the aim of finding a sampling of at least four to six pastors, it was needed to contact additional outside conferences. Due to the narrowness of the sampling desired ongoing communication was needed with conference administrators and pastors to determine which churches and pastors would qualify. This was attributed to the following: (a) the short tenure of Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors, (b) the necessity of finding pastors at least leading for one year but having had a low probability of departing within two years, (c) finding churches that reported worship attendance for 10 years, (d) securing only qualifying full-time pastors who led congregations at full church status (i.e. no companies), and (e) the investigator's fairly limited connections with administrators.

These complications did not mean a sampling would not be obtained but that the process took more vigor and tenacity than expected and be weighted more towards Carolina Conference pastors than intended. The researcher did not imagine all his connections would be exhausted when seeking to obtain an adequate sampling. On the contrary, he believed he would find many more pastors attracted given the great need of church revitalization. In truth, he believed he would have to turn some away.

Therefore, the examiner discovered during this process that he could not be preferential to which regions of the country were comprised or which types of communities the churches were located. As a result, he found a limited amount of diversity in these respects.

**Phase Five Realized: Provided Steps to a Vibrant Church: A
Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline**

Following procurement of agreeable pastors fitting all parameters who were leading declining churches, the next phase was to ensure receipt of the revitalization process. The revitalization process that was utilized was provided in the book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. The investigator was responsible for sending the book to each pastor intending to participate in the study.

For this phase there were a total of 14 pastors who received books. The book was sent to three pastors outside the Carolina Conference and 11 pastors inside. Of the three outside the Carolina Conference, two were sent to pastors within the same Mid-Atlantic conference aforementioned. One of these pastors received the book but decided against the process before progressing to phase six; this was the pastor who observed a

turnaround taking place culminating his first year. Thus, there were 13 pastors in total who moved forward through phase five.

As it turned out the book was distributed to all full-time pastors within the Southern Union (comprising all Southeast conferences) prior to the investigator commencing phase five. Therefore, all 11 Carolina pastors and more had theretofore received it. Furthermore, at the church revitalization conference in the Southeast conference, every pastor received a copy of the book who had not previously received one. This took place prior to the researcher making the recruitment announcement.

All pastors in this study received the book prior to the churches deciding whether or not to participate in the church revitalization process provided. The examiner sent the book to the two pastors in the Mid-Atlantic conference once it was determined that they and their churches fit the parameters. The same was done for the pastor in the Northeast conference who fit the parameters.

Phase Six Realized: Prospective Churches Decided on Revitalization Process

After a total of 13 prospective pastors were discovered who fit the parameters outlined and expressed interest to proceed with the project, it was time for them to present the revitalization process to the declining churches they led. Of these 13, 11 were from the Carolina Conference and two from others. Two of the 13 pastors were leading two churches that were declining. The project only allowed for one church per pastor as leading one church in a turnaround is amply intense. Of all the churches, only three had an average worship attendance of over 100 people while the majority had averages less than 50 persons each Sabbath.

As explained earlier, when the investigation could not acquire a sufficient amount of pastors by the end of the 2018 calendar year, the examiner sought to find more qualifying churches and pastors in the Carolina Conference. Although the three from other conferences were secured through phase five in 2018, the majority of the 11 from the Carolina Conference was attained early in 2019. One of the 11 originally did not agree to participate when asked late in 2018. Yet early in 2019, he contacted the investigator and requested to be included, and the researcher permitted.

Twelve of the 13 pastors presented the book and process to their churches. At this point, the Carolina Conference pastor with two declining churches decided against presenting it to the churches he led. Therefore, the total number of pastors was down to 12: 10 within the Carolina Conference and two from elsewhere. Naturally, some of the pastors shared the revitalization initiative with key leaders (e.g. elders) prior to presenting it to church boards. Although the investigator encouraged all the pastors to present this for a vote at the church business meeting level also, some of them decided church board votes were adequate.

The results of phase six were adequate for this project. Of the 13 pastors and churches that made it to this phase, seven of the pastors realized an affirmative vote by the churches. In two instances, it did not make it to the church board level due to key leaders being unsupportive. Curiously, of the churches that began this phase from the Carolina Conference but did not realize a positive vote, five of seven were in South Carolina. This meant that only churches within North Carolina were represented within this conference. Two of the pastors outside the Carolina Conference obtained votes from the churches to proceed, and the same was true for five within the Carolina Conference.

In total, there were seven churches that voted to progress. The remaining seven churches were five from North Carolina, one from a Mid-Atlantic state, and one from a Northeast state.

While churches were at the stage of the voting on the process, it was recommended that they would likewise elect their revitalization team members based upon recommendations in *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. Not all the churches decided on their revitalization team members at this point, however. Some churches decided to make their elders' council or church boards their revitalization team. This was unforeseen by the investigator and was done notwithstanding his recommendation. However, the examiner did not allow this to impede progressing further with the pastors.

Phase Seven Realized: Established Coaching Relationships
With Pastors

At this point a sampling of pastors who led declining churches were found whose churches voted to proceed with the provided revitalization process. It was now time for two key documents to be signed. The Informed Consent Form that explains the project and details risks was to be signed by the participating pastors and the investigator. This form has technical language and was a requirement of the Andrew University Institutional Review Board. The investigator requested the pastors to read through it and sign. The second document is a coaching covenant (see Appendix B) that lists the expectations of the examiner and participating pastors. This was sent to the pastors to date and sign first. Afterwards, the researcher signed and forwarded it to the respective conference presidents. After all forms were signed, the completed portions were sent

back to the pastors. This process was very smooth, and all individuals signed the forms expeditiously.

Now that it was settled who the investigator would be coaching albeit his attempts to incorporate as much diversity as possible, the outcome could be measured. There was limited diversity in types of communities and regions of the country represented. Three regions were included: five pastors who led churches in the Southeast (North Carolina); one from a Mid-Atlantic state, and one from the Northeast. In all, therefore, seven pastors were leading churches in the eastern United States. Additionally, with the exception of one of the seven, all churches in the study were located in rural settings. Urbanized areas are considered to have a minimum population of 50,000 (2010 Census, 2018). The population and names of places are not shared to conceal the identity of the churches and pastors.

The remaining churches were declining and had differing attendance averages for their five-year periods. Also, of the seven churches that progressed to this phase, all but one had an attendance average under 100 for 2018. Two churches were at 50 but under 100, and the remaining four were under 50. This was not extraordinary as many Seventh-day Adventist Christian congregations have smaller attendance averages in rural areas in the Carolina territory per attendance data.

Furthermore, while the pastors had copies of *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*, the revitalization team members did not. The researcher shared information on how to purchase them from various sources. The books were obtained by the churches directly instead of the churches receiving them gratis from the investigator.

For the sake of keeping the identities of the pastors anonymous, their gender(s) and locations of the churches they lead will be nonspecific. Table 1 presents a record of the seven pastors whom the examiner established a coaching relationship for the purpose of church revitalization. The numbers alongside the pastors in the leftmost column represent the sequence the coaching relationships were established. The commencement dates of pastors in the declining churches are shared. Lastly, the rightmost column reveals the total tenures at the time of the establishment of the coaching relationships.

Table 1. Pastor Data

	Start date in church	Tenure at outset of coaching
Pastor 1	December 2013	4 years, 11 months
Pastor 2	July 2017	1 year, 4 months
Pastor 3	January 2015	4 years, 2 months
Pastor 4	January 2017	2 years
Pastor 5	September 2009	9 years, 6 months
Pastor 6	August 2014	4 years, 10 months
Pastor 7	June 2006	13 years

Additionally, more demographical attendance data was gathered as it relates to the study. Table 2 comprises churches corresponding to the numbers belonging to the pastors and sequence in Table 1. Thus, Pastor 1 leads Church 1, Pastor 2 leads Church 2, et cetera. All churches were in the United States and their regions are described. The type of communities the churches were located are also designated. Heretofore, it was stated that churches had to have reported attendance for a minimum of three of five years for both five-year periods. As can be seen below, only one church had the minimum while the rest reported nine or more years.

Table 2. Church Profile

	Church location	Community type	Population change in 2019 from 2010	Years attendance reported
Church 1	Northeastern state	Urban	0%	10
Church 2	Mid-Atlantic state	Rural	-7.1%	10
Church 3	Eastern North Carolina	Rural	-5.0%	9
Church 4	Eastern North Carolina	Rural	-6.2%	9
Church 5	Western North Carolina	Rural	unknown	10
Church 6	Central North Carolina	Rural	-8.2%	9
Church 7	Eastern North Carolina	Rural	-3.2%	6

Note. The source of demographic information is Wikipedia and census.gov. Specific websites are not cited to preserve anonymity of pastors. Church 5 was unknown due to it being located in an unincorporated town

All seven coaching relationships were established based upon the ones fitting the strictures put in place to ensure sounder conclusions regardless of the investigator's preference. Not surprisingly, most of these churches were located in areas with population decreases.

Not only was it helpful to show how many years of average worship service attendance had been reported, but it was also beneficial to visualize the deviations year by year. Table 3 reveals this data. The averages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. This record also displays the five-year averages. Notice that all churches were assessed beginning in 2009 and culminating in 2018. All seven churches had a lower average in the more recent five-year period. While some churches began months apart from each other, all churches commenced the church revitalization process under the direction of the pastors at some point in 2019.

Table 3. Church Attendance Averages Prior to Outset of Coaching Relationships

	CH 1	CH 2	CH 3	CH 4	CH 5	CH 6	CH 7
2009-2013	104	25	57	40	282	45	24
2014-2018	88	15	50	27	237	41	20
2009	100	32	72	NR	284	37	NR
2010	120	26	NR	38	283	35	NR
2011	115	25	59	41	290	45	35
2012	110	21	54	39	286	58	25
2013	75	20	41	40	267	52	12
2014	100	18	55	18	264	53	23
2015	104	18	53	31	276	NR	23
2016	91	16	49	26	233	31	NR
2017	74	12	46	32	214	42	NR
2018	73	9	49	27	199	38	14

Note. CH = church; NR = not reported

In phase eight, the impact of routine coaching through a revitalization process was ascertained. This was primarily accomplished through measuring the attendance change from the previous years. The aim was to see if attendance decline could be halted and reversed through this initiative.

**Phase Eight Realized: Coached Pastors Routinely for
Sufficient Time through a Revitalization Process**

The function of the previous seven phases was to bring this initiative to the point of coaching pastors for church revitalization. In other words, the first seven phases were the precursor to the last two phases. The investigator wanted to discover if by coming alongside pastors like Barnabas church attendance would begin to rebound. Phase eight then was the most vital portion of the execution—specifically, coaching pastors who led declining churches through a turnaround process in the book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. The prominent features of

this phase were the frequency and time of coaching sessions and the relationship focus of the investigator.

Frequency and Time of Coaching Sessions

The goal was to coach pastors routinely and sufficiently. This was different for each pastor. The meeting times were adjusted based upon the demands on the pastors' schedules. There were ministry happenings that interfered with routine scheduling such as camp meetings, ministry trips abroad, semi-annual conference meetings, evangelistic meetings, parachurch ministry opportunities, et cetera. Furthermore, personal needs affected the meeting times (e.g. vacations, holidays, family matters, urgent transportation issues, etc.). These and other instances occurred postponing coaching appointments on occasion. Also, changes in local church revitalization team meetings affected the desired appointment times with pastors. Notwithstanding the irregularities, the approximate frequency of meeting with each pastor was monthly; this was consistent with the expectation written in the coaching covenant.

The examiner made himself available to meet as needed with the pastors. This was communicated at the first coaching meeting and beyond. There were two pastors who took advantage of this more than the other five. If requested, we had meetings sometimes within a week or two apart. This was not only requested by the pastors during the first few months of the relationship but at other times. The researcher allowed the pastors at the end of every coaching call to express when they desired to subsequently meet. As far as the time of the day the coaching calls took place, the majority of the calls were in the mornings. This seemed to fit the schedules of the pastors and investigator best.

The examiner did anticipate there would be routine coaching calls but not the average length of calls and duration of the coaching relationships. It was mentioned that it typically takes a year minimum to process through the book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. The pastors led the churches through the revitalization process therein. Furthermore, the average length of coaching appointments lasted longer than the investigator expected. Previously, he believed the time would be from 30 minutes to an hour maximum. Table 4 indicates the total number of coaching calls, average length of time per call, and duration of the coaching relationships.

Table 4. Coaching Calls and Duration

	No. of coaching calls	Average length of sessions	Duration of coaching relationship	End date of relationship
Pastor 1	10	62.1 minutes	14 months	01/10/2020
Pastor 2	16	72.9 minutes	15 months	N/A
Pastor 3	14	74.6 minutes	12 months	N/A
Pastor 4	11	50.2 minutes	13 months	N/A
Pastor 5	8	66.4 minutes	9 months	N/A
Pastor 6	7	40.5 minutes	9 months	N/A
Pastor 7	8	48.1 minutes	9 months	N/A

Nevertheless, the researcher was prepared to coach as long as was needed for each individual meeting and the duration of the coaching relationship. Otherwise, he feared undercutting the time the pastors needed to sufficiently lead the revitalization process.

Project Affected by COVID-19 Pandemic

Although the investigator planned to coach all seven pastors until the churches they led completed all eight steps of the provided revitalization process, the government-

warranted social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic inhibited the completion for six of seven of the churches. One church, however, did complete the project about four months beforehand, and the impact may be measured. The unforeseen pandemic and its impact upon the attendance of the other six churches would preclude legitimate assessments of the project irrespective of later completion due to residual effects of the pandemic. This is especially true since these churches comprised of a large percentage of seniors per the pastors, and seniors are more at risk of dying from COVID-19 (Center for Disease Control, 2020). Although the pandemic will affect church attendance for some time, the examiner still planned to proceed with coaching the pastors until the churches completed the revitalization process, circumstances permitting.

<div align="center">Relationship-focused Coaching</div>

The coaching relationships were accentuated by relationship-focused coaching. In fact, the very first coaching session with pastors began by getting to know each other better. The researcher and pastors shared how they came to know and follow Jesus as Leader and Forgiver. Next, their calls to ministry were shared. This intimate testimony sharing bound them together on an emotional and collegial level. The investigator prayed for each pastor and declining church weekly in his personal devotional prayer time for as long as the coaching relationship lasted. This was in addition to all coaching sessions opening and concluding with prayer for each other.

Due to the relationship focus of the investigator, when one of the pastors requested that the coaching calls be via FaceTime rather than by voice only, the investigator obliged. It was more apropos due to the fact that this was one of the two pastors outside the Carolina Conference and not previously known. The majority of their

calls utilized this method, especially earlier in the relationship. The times when it was not used, it was largely due to unreliable Wi-Fi.

On another note, the researcher did not envisage communicating with pastors outside coaching calls via texting as often. The examiner would consistently text the pastors requesting their preferred outcomes prior to the calls. This was used each and every time to build a list of likely questions for the coaching calls. Having always prepared in advance, the investigator was freer to focus on the needs of the coachees. This particular texting was expected but not the texting of accountability questions preselected by the pastors to help encourage or remind them. The examiner also texted occasionally, to support them in their efforts or personal lives.

By not fixating on the performance of pastors, the pastors and researcher experienced benefits owing to the relationship focus. Though he focused on following conventional coaching techniques, at times the investigator made adjustments to use consulting and teaching. This flexibility was exercised by asking permission of pastors beforehand. This was needed more with less motivated and decisive pastors. He felt the help of the Holy Spirit guiding him on how to coach the pastors in the midst of the sessions. He became emotionally close to all the pastors. These were added benefits realized as a result of the initiative.

Other Specifics

Other specifics from the coaching plan included reporting to conference presidents, different levels of motivation of the pastors, the manner of coaching sessions, and the use of NCD. Consistent with the original plan, the investigator shared reports with conference presidents for each pastor. This was completed about every three to four

months. In every instance, a preliminary report was emailed to the pastor requesting him or her to edit prior to the researcher sending it. Most often, the pastors did not suggest any edits. When they did, however, the examiner edited it exactly as the pastor recommended. When the emails were sent, they were copied to the pastors. The conference presidents did not inject themselves in the relationships per the initial plan. Sometimes the presidents would send a brief note of gratitude.

On another note, during the course of the coaching relationships the researcher grasped that two of the seven pastors were distinctly self-motivated. The coaching sessions with these two at times encompassed reporting progress and prayer while the others seem to grapple with discerning the Holy Spirit's direction and the achievement of forward momentum in the churches.

However, it took some pastors and churches several months to begin processing the very first step in the book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. The organizing of a revitalization team is achieved prior step one. Getting revitalization teams organized seemed to be a challenge for some pastors.

And thirdly, the manner of the coaching sessions included features that were the same for all pastors. For instance, all coaching sessions were by phone. In order to minimize the variables, no coaching sessions were held in person. This was true although two pastors in the Carolina Conference requested in-person sessions as an alternative earlier in the relationships. Additionally, the investigator incorporated the COACH Model® for coaching sessions. He prepared before each session listing potential questions governed by this model. Lastly, NCD was not made compulsory though it was

highly recommended in the book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*. NCD was encouraged by the examiner but ultimately left up to the pastor.

One of the seven churches (church 7) unexpectedly had two leaders desist in attending due to an interpersonal matter, choosing rather to attend another church in the church district. This occurred in the initial stages of the revitalization process. The remaining church members decided that since they were so few and unable to continue practically and financially, they would need to close the church. The investigator needed to intervene due to his responsibilities as the church revitalization director.

Different options were pursued by him and the conference ministerial directors. These included the exploration of Biblical peacemaking options and temporary support from members from other area churches. It was determined that Biblical peacemaking was not workable in this case. However, some dedicated bilingual members of nearby Spanish churches decided to commit themselves in this effort to assist the church in a turnaround. A meeting with the ministerial director, the investigator, the church leaders, and the bilingual members launched this endeavor. It is notable that prior to the decision of the area bilingual members, God sent two new couples to the church as the members were praying for direction from God on how to proceed. This occurred during the intermediary stage between the church members about to halt church services and the decision of the bilingual members. God's answer to prayers allowed church 7 to rejoin in the revitalization process.

Impact on Church Attendance

Varied results in impact were reflected in the change in average worship service attendance of the seven churches. In order to better gauge the results, Table 5 includes the first and second five-year period averages, the last two years before commencement of the coaching relationships, one year during the coaching relationship, and a comparison of the first 10 worship services of 2019 and 2020 prior to the quarantine due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to measure the impact on attendance, the researcher verified that the churches were recording and reporting attendance at different times in the coaching relationships. The investigator did not consider this verification as a part of the implementation plan but later recognized how essential the figures were to the project.

Table 5. Church Attendance Averages Before and After Coaching Relationships

	CH 1	CH 2	CH 3	CH 4	CH 5	CH 6	CH 7
2009-2013	104	25	57	40	282	45	24
2014-2018	88	15	50	27	237	41	20
2017	74	12	46	32	214	42	NR
2018	73	9	49	27	199	38	14
2019	85	7	43	24	187	49	12
1st 10 worship services in 2019	77	8	46	19	184	38	12
1st 10 worship services in 2020	84	5	40	27	207	40	9

Note. CH = church; NR = not reported

The only church that completed the process (church 1) was shown in 2020 to hold its turnaround in attendance growth, even though its average was affected by severe

weather before one of the worship services. Remarkably, church 1 increased its attendance by more than 16% during its 14-month revitalization process.

On the other hand, the other six churches were only about half way through the revitalization process. Comparing the timeframe of the first 10 worship services for 2019 and 2020, half of these six were shown to have an increased attendance and half with a decrease. Given that half of the revitalization process was unimplemented and the limited scope of attendance in the six churches, it was premature to definitively assess the impact of the project.

Phase Nine Realized: Pastors Completed DiSC® Personality Profile and MBTI® Assessments

Although phase nine occurred concurrent with phase eight, it needed to be independently emphasized given its import. The reason for this is because literature has heretofore shown personality to be the key factor in the ability of pastors to turn churches around. The two personality profiles were DiSC® and MBTI®; all pastors completed both assessments. The DiSC® assessment asked the pastors to fill it out based upon their interactions in the work environment whereas MBTI® was general in nature.

The results are displayed in Table 6, including MBTI®, DiSC®, DiSC® pattern, and the number of months following the inception of the coaching relationships in which the assessments were taken. All pastors completed the assessments during the first half of the coaching relationships. Different ones had previously mentioned how they believed their personalities unfavorably affected their abilities to lead change in the declining churches. This led to the assessments being sent earlier to two pastors. One of the two explicitly requested to complete them earlier; they were subsequently sent. There was no

perceived negative impact on the timing the assessments were completed. The pastors'

results were reviewed and discussed with them.

Only bona fide assessments were utilized. The investigator did follow through on

covering the costs of all the assessments. He too completed the assessments to determine

how his own personality results compare with the TAP temperaments.

Table 6. Pastors Personality Assessment Results

	Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®	DiSC®	DiSC® pattern	Months taken after coaching began
Pastor 1	ISFJ	CS	Perfectionist	7
Pastor 2	ISTJ	S	Specialist	7
Pastor 3	INTJ	CS	Perfectionist	4
Pastor 4	INFJ	iS	Promoter	9
Pastor 5	INFJ	CS	Objective Thinker	3
Pastor 6	ESFJ	Ci	Practitioner	8
Pastor 7	ISTJ	CS	Perfectionist	8
Investigator	ESTJ	Di	Results-Oriented	NA

Note. NA = not applicable; MBTI®: E = extrovert; I = introvert; S = sensing; I = intuitive; T = thinking; F = feeling; J = judging; P = perceiving; DiSC®: D = dominance; i = influence; S = steadiness; C = conscientiousness

The parameters were set in order to come alongside NTAPs, and the above table

shows personality results consistent with NTAPs as others have found (Ingram, 2015;

Malphurs & Penfold, 2014; Penfold, 2011; Thomas, 1989). For the MBTI®

temperaments, six of the seven pastors had NTAP temperaments. For the DiSC®, five of

the seven pastors did not have a combination temperament that included a 'D' or 'i,' and

were consistent with NTAP temperaments. The aggregate of Ingram's (2015) and

Penfold's (2011) DiSC® assessments shows that TAPs score on average 2.2 points

higher in 'D'; 1.8 points higher in 'i'; 2.3 points lower in 'S'; and 2.2 points lower in 'C'

than their NTAP counterparts. Table 7 shows that the seven NTAPs in this study were

consistent with these same two studies.

Table 7. Comparison of NTAP Average Scores Among Three Studies

	Penfold study - 2011	Ingram study - 2014	Cauley study - 2020	Total/Average
	n = 7	n = 6	n = 7	n = 20
D	2.6	2.5	2.0	2.4
i	2.1	4.3	3.3	3.2
S	5.1	5.7	5.3	5.4
C	6.6	4.5	5.7	5.7

Note. n = number of NTAPs; each score ranges from 1 to 7 with 7 as the highest; D = dominance; i = influence; S = steadiness; C = conscientiousness

Conclusion

This chapter chronicled the execution of the implementation plan. The question

this project sought to determine was this: How successful would relationship-focused

coaching be through a revitalization process with NTAPs? In other words, the initiative

wanted to discover its impact on the attendance of declining churches. Along the way, the

carrying out of the plan realized several findings. Some discoveries were related to the

process leading up to attaining interested pastors and churches that fit the parameters.

Others were associated with the coaching relationships and the personalities of the

pastors.

Of the unanticipated outcomes, there were a few that occurred in the preliminary

phases prior to the establishment of coaching relationships. First off, the researcher was

bewildered that a fair amount of administrators contacted did not offer this process to

pastors within their conferences. This was surprising because many pastors could benefit

from coaching support for church growth. Secondly, it was not expected that there would be as many conferences that did not have church attendance records for the previous 10 years. Many more possible churches and pastors were expected to be found. These factors along with the strict parameters inhibited inclusion of a more diverse cross section of churches from different regions and types of communities. In the end, only churches in the eastern United States were included with the bulk located in rural areas. Of the seven churches included, five were in North Carolina. In the end, these factors limited the study to those fitting the parameters and willing.

Other factors that were unforeseen dealt with the coaching relationship and the personalities of the seven pastors. The coaching calls on average were longer than the investigator anticipated. The COACH Model® was more effective than originally imagined. Moreover, while the examiner planned to maintain a relationship focus for the benefit of the coachees, he himself was positively impacted. At times, he felt the Holy Spirit guiding him on what to communicate or questions to ask. Indeed, his heart was bound with the seven pastors as he wanted them with God's help to succeed in turning their churches around.

The initial question this investigation sought to determine was whether or not coaching a NTAP with a revitalization process may assist him or her in realizing church turnarounds. This project established that it is indeed possible as the only church that completed the process in time turned around considerably. Although NTAPs may not have the personality needed to turn churches around by themselves, this investigation has demonstrated that providing a revitalization process and coaching throughout can result in a substantial increase in worship service attendance. Remarkably, this proved true

without a population increase where the church was located. Unfortunately, the

revitalization process was disrupted for the other six churches due to the COVID-19

pandemic, and they were not able to complete the revitalization process beforehand; thus,

the impact of the project was not able to be measured in the same way.

CHAPTER 6

PROJECT EVALUATION AND LEARNINGS

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to recapitulate the initiative, analyze findings, disclose how the researcher has been changed as a ministry professional, and propose conclusions and recommendations relating to the effectiveness of coaching for church revitalization notwithstanding personality.

Overview of the Initiative

The initiative objective was to determine the impact coaching NTAPs for revitalization would have upon the attendance of declining churches. To accomplish this, the examiner proceeded as follows: (a) he contemplated a theology of coaching from scripture; (b) he delved into the evidence of literature relating to the influence of personality in regards to pastors' ability to revitalize churches and how coaching may affect their ability; (c) he implemented a plan to address the dismal reality of church decline by working with a sampling of pastors who led declining churches; and (d) he measured the plan's impact on church attendance. There were many limitations set in order to exclusively work with declining churches—not plateauing churches—who were likely led by pastors who did not have a preferred TAP temperament.

The sampling of pastors included seven pastors from the eastern United States, specifically, five from North Carolina, one from the Northeast, and another from the Mid-Atlantic region. All churches involved were declining in attendance when comparing the two most recent consecutive five-year periods. All seven were English-speaking Seventh-day Adventist Christian churches. Each pastor was supplied the book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline,* which contains a revitalization process in a workbook format. The investigator came alongside the seven pastors via routine coaching throughout the revitalization process therein.

Summary of Conclusions

Prior to reflecting on the description of the evaluation that involves the interpretation and analysis of data, it is worthwhile to consider the theological, theoretical, and methodological conclusions.

Theological Conclusions—Chapter 2

This investigation discovered great richness in the scriptures that informed a theological basis for coaching as a conceivable remedy to church decline. By coming alongside pastors in this manner, they may receive the encouragement needed to turn declining attendance around. This is akin to Barnabas, "the son of encouragement," coming alongside Saul of Tarsus and John Mark in the early years of Christianity. The researcher was intrigued to contemplate how different Christianity would be today deprived of the coaching of Barnabas.

The positive influence of coaching was also accentuated in Old Testament wisdom literature penned by Solomon and Jesus' employment of awareness questions. Solomon's wisdom depicted one like a coach exemplifying understanding and skill in

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helping others grow by dexterously listening, encouraging, drawing out the deeper feelings and thoughts of others, providing accountability, sharpening, etc. Fascinatingly, it was revealed that the sharpening could involve one helping hone another in the area of personality. This invigorated the investigator as this was tantamount to what the initiative was attempting to ascertain. Likewise, Jesus lived all the coaching principles described by Solomon as the Master Coach. Remarkably, the investigation found that a large portion of Jesus' questions were used to create awareness in the hearers.

Theoretical Conclusions—Chapter 3

The examiner was amazed to discover from literature evidence how personality is a significant factor in a pastor's ability to turn declining churches around. Though there is some debate, the support for this conclusion is overwhelming. Research data on pastors completing three personality assessments were reviewed. These assessments were the 16PF®, DiSC®, and MBTI®. Of the three, it was discerned that the 16PF® is not as conclusive for the purposes of this initiative in identifying pastors who may or not be TAPs. However, the DiSC® and MBTI® assessments were much more determinative, especially the DiSC® according to the findings of several studies among United States Christian pastors.

Several DiSC® Profile studies involving pastors were surveyed. Robert Thomas (1989) studied 20 Baptist pastors in New England; Gordon Penfold (2011) researched 27 evangelical pastors in Rocky Mountain States; and Ingram (2015) did likewise with 26 evangelical pastors in the western United States. All three studies found very similar results, namely, that TAPs on average were higher in "D" and "i" and lower in "S" and "C." The exact opposite was true for NTAPs. Although these three studies did not

involve large amounts of pastors, Malphurs and Penfold (2014) successfully assessed 139 pastors drawn from all 50 states and found the same. In fact, Malphurs and Penfold found that 73% of pastors assessed had a combination of either a "D" or "i." Stated simplistically, the extroverted temperaments were preferred more than the introverted ones. Moreover, the DiSC® personality traits correspond to the Greek names respectively: choleric, sanguine, phlegmatic, and melancholy.

Though these findings are not 100% conclusive, a strong indication and preference is underscored for the type of pastors needed for congregations that are declining in attendance. Though perhaps it was less definitive than DiSC®, MBTI® reinforced these findings. Malphurs and Penfold (2014) also had 131 pastors complete the MBTI®. TAPs were consistent with the following MBTI® profiles: ESTJ, ENFP, ESFJ, or ISTJ. And likewise, NTAPs were consistent with INTJ, ISFJ, and ESFJ. Of the 9 remaining MBTI® personalities, they were not more decisive for either TAPs or NTAPs. What is more is that the 16PF® was congruent with the DiSC® and MBTI® results for TAPs in the following areas: dominance, social warmth, task-orientation, enthusiasm, suspicion, independence, and social boldness.

The investigation also found a substantial link between coaching pastors and church turnarounds. NTAPs may become TAPs with coaching. This link is sounder when experienced TAPs coach NTAPs, thus helping most NTAPs overcome any possible personality limitations. The most beneficial coaching aspects for church revitalization included a relationship-focus, a monthly frequency, having the calls by phone in quiet surroundings to minimize distractions, and using the COACH Model®. It was also decided that the best avenue for church revitalization would be to provide a turnaround

process to aid the pastors in leading the declining churches. The time needed for a turnaround takes around three years although the attendance may begin to increase in less than one year.

Methodological Conclusions—Chapter 4

After realizing a theological and theoretical basis for the initiative, the investigation set forth a sensible strategy to address the challenge of declining churches. The focus was to coach pastors who led such churches and then show the impact on attendance. It was supposed that this would be undertaken satisfactorily via the following nine phases:

1. Seek backing from conference administrations

2. Identify declining churches using statistical analysis

3. Eliminate churches already beginning to turn around and pastors with less than one year tenure or a likelihood of departing within two years

4. Find sampling of interested pastors to be coached through step-by-step revitalization process

5. Provide *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* (Cauley, 2016)

6. Prospective churches decide on revitalization process

7. Establish coaching relationships with pastors

8. Coach pastors routinely for sufficient time through a revitalization process

9. Pastors complete DiSC® Personality Profile and MBTI® assessments

The above sequence of nine phases was the preference of the investigator, however, it was understood that the order would vary depending on conditions. The

principle concern was that each step was covered, not the arrangement. It is noteworthy to state that during phase eight the coaching agendas were to be driven by the coachees, not by the investigator.

Description of the Evaluation

Heretofore conclusions have been drawn from the theological, theoretical, and methodological portions above. There were still more conclusions to draw from the execution of the plan, comprising the method of evaluation, the interpretation of data, conclusion of data, and relating outcomes.

Method of Evaluation

The principal mode of evaluation was quantitative as it relates to measuring the impact of coaching pastors through a church revitalization process. It was predetermined that the best way to ascertain effectiveness, although not comprehensive in scope, was the change in average annual worship service attendance. This was the chief objective of the initiative. It was deduced during the implementation of the project that the researcher needed to ensure each church was recording and reporting their worship service attendance during and after the revitalization process. This was successfully achieved although this was not in the foresight of the investigator in implementation planning. These statistics were essential to measure the result of coaching through the provided revitalization process.

Additionally, the personality assessments of the seven pastors who led declining churches were compared with the previous findings of others. What is more, the time elements of the coaching calls were considered in their relation to the primary outcomes. This was not however a previous goal of the initiative but was added.

Interpretation and Conclusions of Data (Chapter 5)

An analysis of the data yielded findings relating to the securement of pastors for the initiative. This included discoveries from the coaching relationships. An inhibiting factor in the selection of declining churches was the fact that some conferences did not solicit attendance figures from the churches. It was difficult for leaders to identify which churches are declining in attendance and therefore would benefit from the support of coaching through a revitalization process.

In addition, there were discoveries relating to the personalities of the pastors. As presumed, most of the participating pastors had NTAP temperaments consistent with the literary review findings. The aggregate of the seven pastors' personality results were lower on 'D' and 'i' and higher on 'S' and 'C' on the DiSC® profiles and were more consistent with the MBTI® profiles of NTAPs than TAPs.

What is more, the investigator's DiSC® assessment was high in both 'D' and 'i' and low in 'S' and 'C;' his MBTI® profile was ESTJ. These placed him with a TAP temperament, thereby substantiating him as possessing a TAP personality. It was shown in the literary review that the best revitalization coaches are experienced TAPs.

The investigator found his influence in finding participating pastors for the project greater within his own conference. There was a resulting substantial disparity between how many participating pastors were found within the Carolina Conference and from all other conferences combined. This may seem typical to some; however, given the significance of church decline and the investigator's rapport, he expected more administrators to respond positively to the benefits of the initiative.

Yet, it was informative to perceive any potential variations between coaching the different groups of pastors. The two groups were those the researcher had known within his own conference contrasted with those the investigator had not known from other conferences within the United States. Within this small sampling, this investigation did not find a significant difference between the two groups. It would not be extraordinary if the same were found among a much larger sampling notwithstanding previous rapport between TAP coaches and NTAPs. The pastors' level of commitment to revitalization seems to be more predictive.

Moreover, this investigation embarked to set parameters to preclude churches that were simply plateaued or declining and beginning to turn around. In other words, only churches that were very challenging to turn around were accepted. This fact accentuated the weight of pastoral leadership. It may be supposed that even pastors with temperaments best suited for revitalization may not be able to turn some churches around given how dire the circumstances.

Ultimately, the coaching calls continued longer than the examiner expected. The length of each coaching call averaged over an hour instead of 30 to 60 minutes. This was likely due to various causes. For example, the gravity of the circumstances of the churches led the investigator to be comprehensive in his coaching. Plus, the personalities of the pastors may have been a contributing influence as the participating pastors were less choleric.

There was one dynamic this investigation did not ascertain but may have been a considerable force working against church revitalization in some of the seven churches. This relates to the number of churches within the church districts. While one of the

churches had two pastors serving, the other six were led by one pastor for one or more churches. Of the seven churches, five were led by pastors leading multi-church districts. There were at most three churches in a district. Given the other aspects this investigation had undertaken, this project did not establish how significant a factor this was.

Other Outcomes of the Intervention

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was only one of the seven churches that completed the revitalization process beforehand. Although the pastor of this declining church possessed a NTAP personality, the impact of coaching through a revitalization process realized a 16% jump in attendance. The other six churches were only about half way through the revitalization process when the pandemic caused worship services to cease for a time; therefore, it was premature to definitively measure the impact of the project on them. Moreover, it would have been difficult to isolate the impact of the project from the effects of the pandemic—residual and otherwise—for these six churches after their worship services resumed.

Overarching Conclusions

This study sought to determine if coaching a sampling of NTAPs through a revitalization process may successfully turn the tide of attendance decline around in United States Seventh-day Adventist Christian churches. What it conclusively found for the church that completed the revitalization process was that it was indeed achievable. Not only was the decline halted but the attendance increased by 16% under this pastor's leadership. This occurred in an area with no population increase.

Malphurs and Penfold's (2014) maintain that 20% of pastors are not able to turn churches around notwithstanding receiving coaching from experienced TAPs; this is

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largely due to the temperament of those pastors. Within their study, however, they included not only churches in decline but plateaued ones also. Arguably, if declining churches were isolated there would be a higher percentage of pastors unable to turn them around. If true, the selection of pastors for declining churches should be more carefully chosen, based in part on their temperament and desire to be coached by an experienced TAP. Moreover, if revitalization is the goal for declining and plateaued churches, it behooves hiring entities to learn the DiSC® and MBTI® personality profiles of pastoral candidates.

Personal Transformation as a Ministry Professional

Whereas this initiative endeavored to revitalize struggling churches, it positively impacted the investigator himself. The act of consistently and frequently coming alongside pastors who led declining churches engendered caring and concern for the pastors. While the examiner expected it to be perfunctory, surprisingly, the researcher became deeply invested in not only their success in turning churches around but for them personally. This arose out of relationship-focused coaching and praying weekly for each pastor and church in personal devotion time. Also, commencing with sharing personal testimonies and the length of the relationships contributed to his emotional investment.

Furthermore, working closely with pastors who led disappointing churches altered the investigator's perspective. He became more attune to pastors' challenges and feelings personally and professionally. He became aware of how their personal lives affected their ability to engage in the emotional fray of church decline. He realized that some of the seven pastors dealt with habitual discouragement, frustration, and depression due in part to their personalities. This corresponds with the findings of several studies stressed by

Briggs (2019), showing a full 20% or more of pastors struggle with mental illness of some kind. Therefore, the investigator will relate to pastors who lead such exhausting churches differently—with more understanding, empathy, and appreciation.

Lastly, the examiner found a greater appreciation for the value of coaching. Having coached more intensely and consistently than ever before, he observed positive changes in the pastors involved. He sensed the power of the Holy Spirit at work during the coaching sessions. The Holy Spirit guided him to know what impromptu questions to ask. Furthermore, the unfolding of the coaching sessions seemed to positively impact the declining churches in their steps to revitalization. Each time the pastors realized successes in the churches, he was especially encouraged.

Strategic Recommendations for Church Organizations

The investigation calls on church leaders at every level to refuse to allow the crisis of church decline in America to go unanswered. The seriousness of the matter was accentuated by the fact that one of the churches almost closed down during this project. In order to answer the crisis, the researcher invites church leaders to proactively engage in church revitalization like never before. Thus, the investigator sets forth the following considerations for the respective levels of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as well as others who wish to engage accordingly.

Local Church

1. Worship service attendance records should be kept by local churches and shared with the appropriate department at the conference level. This aids in measuring the growth or decline of churches.

2. Prior to and in conjunction with an event-based evangelistic campaign, local churches should consider implementing a revitalization process such as provided in the book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline*.

Conference

1. Worship service attendance records should be kept by an appropriate department at the conference level (e.g. secretariat, evangelism, or church revitalization). This aids in measuring the growth or decline of churches.

2. Conference leaderships should organize a committee to oversee the church revitalization vision and its implementation (viz. Carolina Conference Church Revitalization Committee). This committee may monitor the state of churches by attendance, accessions, and tithe each year. This committee can recommend a church revitalization process for declining churches, provide coaching, and request regular reports from the pastors. The committee would need to determine beforehand the parameters (e.g. accession rates and attendance changes) that direct which churches would be followed and for how long.

3. Conferences would benefit from hosting ReGenerate! Church Revitalization Conferences (see www.regenerateconference.org) to inspire, educate, and train church leaders and members. These conferences involve both organizational leaders and church revitalization experts. The conference church growth director may also organize practicum weekends to take church revitalization teams or church boards through the beginning stages of the revitalization process.

4. Conference evangelists and evangelism directors may consider churches they will be working with to go through a revitalization process prior to or in conjunction with evangelistic preaching campaigns. Securing an evangelist could be contingent on this for declining or plateauing churches.

5. Conferences would be wise to appoint qualified and experienced TAPs as church revitalization directors who may provide the leadership needed for its field. This need not be a full-time employ but someone who already serves as a departmental director or field pastor. The conference director should only serve to empower, facilitate, and support the leadership of the pastors and laity, but not to replace in any way.

6. Prior to interviewing, conference hiring entities may invest in having pastoral candidates complete the DiSC® and perhaps the MBTI® personality assessments. This will aid in providing a more complete picture of the candidate for revitalization.

7. It is highly recommended for conference leaders to facilitate regular coaching for pastors who lead declining churches. Coaching will then serve as a guardian to empower pastors to lead declining or plateaued churches irrespective of temperament. Personnel committees may consider regularly voting the assignment of coaches along with new hires, especially for all pre-ordained pastors. This would strengthen conferences' ability to equip the pastors they expect to grow churches.

8. A conference leader or other church leader could undertake a study on how the level of spirituality of pastors correlates with declining churches turning around.

9. A conference leader or pastor could initiate a project to measure the correlation of member maturity (i.e. discipleship) and church attendance. A project could implement a plan to then develop member maturity and measure the impact on church attendance. One way discipleship could be measured in such a venture is with an assessment tool like Natural Church Development. Before and after project implementation, responses from specific questions of the NCD survey may be utilized and concentrated on.

10. A revitalization project similar to this one could be undertaken with one key difference—measuring between two groups of pastors who lead declining churches. The groups would comprise of those leading a single church district and others leading multi-church districts. The goal would be to ascertain any possible difference in impact.

Union, Division, and General Conference

1. Unions and divisions may consider sponsoring church revitalization conferences (e.g. ReGenerate! Church Revitalization Conference) in conjunction with local conferences.

2. Akin to Malphurs and Penfold's (2014) large pastoral personality study, research among Seventh-day Adventist Christian pastors leading declining and plateaued churches could be embarked upon. It would need to include DiSC® and MBTI® assessments and yearly church attendance averages before and during pastoral tenure.

3. Unions, divisions, and possibly the General Conference would serve God's mission well by appointing focused leadership on church revitalization at their

respective levels. Strategic and intentional leadership is imperative to see the aim

of church revitalization achieved. The ideal persons to serve as church

revitalization directors are experienced TAPs who are influential, godly, and

visionary. This role may be a part-time position of a leader serving already in

another capacity. However, this may not be crucial in regions of the world where

the church is thriving and successfully reaching the native-born population. As on

the conference level, the director should only serve to empower, facilitate, and

support the leadership of the pastors and laity, but not to replace in any way.

Seminaries and Schools of Religion

The investigator began reaching out to theology professors about the findings of

the project. He encouraged a professor that teaches an Introduction to Ministry class to

consider the DiSC® and MBTI® personality profiles for each theology student. This is

particularly important as the likelihood of first-time pastors beginning in a declining or

plateaued church is high. If some students who are called to enter the field of ministry

possess temperaments that will lead to personal discouragement and perpetuate church

decline, instructors may share with them other avenues of ministry than pastoral

leadership (e.g. hospital, military, or prison chaplaincy). This could be saving students

considering pastoral ministry and churches much heart-ache and time, thus benefitting the

kingdom. While people should not necessarily be discouraged from church ministry, they

will need to be intentional about receiving revitalization coaching. For the above reasons,

North American Division Evangelism Institute (NADEI) should explicitly equip pastors

in these areas in its Church Growth class. Experienced revitalization leaders can serve as

guest presenters for this class.

This is not to conclude that God does not call people without the preferred personalities into full-time pastoral leadership. Instead, awareness needs to be heightened in the minds of theology professors, hiring entities (i.e. conferences), and people sensing God's call, on the role that temperament plays as well as the significance of coaching for the revitalization of churches. With this in mind, DiSC® and MBTI® assessments are recommended by this investigation for students to complete upon enrollment into a pastoral training school. Furthermore, those who possess temperaments aligning with church revitalizers may also be persuaded to lead declining churches.

Final Thoughts

This investigation set out to discover whether or not coaching pastors through a revitalization process—with God's blessing—may result in declining churches turning around. It concludes that coaching through a revitalization process causes turnarounds. Since this affects declining churches—the most challenging type—it is expected to advance plateaued churches in growth. Along the way, the study revealed that personality is a strong predictor of the ability of pastors to turn churches around and that coaching can neutralize disadvantages associated with temperament.

Appendix

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary
Christian Ministry Department

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I am conducting a reseach study as part of my Doctor of Ministry project, in partial fullment for my DMin at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Your participation in this study is greatly a appreciated.

Research Title: "A STRATEGY TO COACH PASTORS TO REVITALIZE DECLINING CHURCHES IN THE CAROLINA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS AND OTHER CONFERENCES IN THE UNITED STATES"

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this Doctor of Ministry project is to determine the impact of coaching pastors of declining churches irrespective of their personality profiles. The task of this project is to develop, implement, and evaluate a coaching process for four pastors of churches with declining attendance in the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and likewise four pastors located in other regions the United States, to equip them to lead their congregations to revitalization.

Duration of participation in study: I understand that I will be required to particpate in the following with the researcher:

1) **Meeting Frequency:**

   Once per month for 30-60 minutes each session by phone or video with adequate privacy (e.g. a quiet place to minimize distractions).

2) **Length of Coaching Relationship:**

   One and a half to two years.

3) **Action Steps:**

   Appointments may be postponed if agreed upon action steps have not been substantially completed

4) **Periodic reports:**

   Email reports from the coach or coachee may be copied to conference administrator to keep them informed.
5) **Use of Revitalization Process:**

   The book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* will be provided to you as the pastor/coachee to be used as a guide in the revitalization process.
6) **DiSC® and Meyers-Brigg Type Indicator Personality Profiles:**

   You will complete two personality assessments at the coach's cost.

Benefits: As a result of this research, you as the pastor may become more focused in leading your church through a revitalization process. Furthermore, churches experiencing a decline in attendance may experience a turnaround in attendance. You will likely find friendship and support during the process and beyond.

Risks: Participation is completely voluntary; in fact, the research would be tainted otherwise. Refusal involves no penalty on your part as the pastor who is approached to participate in the research. In order assist you and the research itself, there will be a coaching covenant that will detail the coaching relationship; there will be three signatures: you as the pastor leading a church in a revitalization process, the principal researcher, and a local conference administrator (e.g. conference president). The conference administrator will need to sign off on the coaching relationship and may receive copies of periodic (e.g. quarterly) written summaries of the coaching calls. Due to the fact that you are leading an unhealthy church, there are no guarantees that church turnarounds will occur notwithstanding much effort; therefore, even with coaching and following a turnaround process, there are no guarantees. Ultimately, the Holy Spirit brings genuine turnarounds in churches. By signing the coaching covenant, the administrator will acknowledge that participation in this research has no negative impact on your employment.

Voluntary Participation: You should only participate if you are committed to receive coaching and lead a declining church in your district through a revitalization process. Furthermore, only churches that are willing to enter into a revitalization process will be selected. Such a process should be voted by the church. Refusal to participate involves no penalty or loss of benefit to which you are otherwise entitled, and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss to which you are otherwise entitled if you had completed your participation in the research.

Confidentiality: As it relates to confidentiality, your participation in the research will have generic identifiers only (e.g. Pastor A, Pastor B, Pastor C, etc.) in the research based upon where the church you lead is located. For instance, "Pastor C leads a church in a northern New England rural setting." Furthermore, I will share the results of your personality profile as well such as "Pastor A is a INTJ on the MBTI and a SC on the DiSC® profiles." The churches themselves will be referred to by their geographic region and type as the above.

It is expected that the Doctor of Ministry project itself will be published online within the Doctor of Ministry project available online through the James White Library at Andrews University. Furthermore, a bound copy may be printed for library and personal use. Your information of the pastors (name and contact information of pastor and church) may be held by the researcher on his Microsoft Surface and cell phone (both password protected) but will not be shared with others; these devices stay with the researcher at all times. The researcher may want to contact pastors for follow-up research.

Contact: I am aware that I can contact the advisor of Brad Cauley, Dr. Russell Burrill: 11391 Red Bud Trail, Berrien Springs, MI 49103. Furthermore, Dr. Burrill may be reached by phone at (269) 473-3738 or email: russellburrill@yahoo.com or myself at 7313 Conifer Circle; Indian Trail, NC 28079, by phone (704) 774-2800, or via email: bcauley@carolinasda.org for answers to questions related to this study. I can also contact the Institutional Review Board at Andrews University at (269) 471-6361 or irb@andrews.edu.

I have read the contents of this Consent and received verbal explanations to questions I had. My questions concerning this study have been answered satisfactorily. I hereby give my voluntary consent to participate in this study. I am fully aware that if I have any additional questions I can contact Brad Cauley (contact info above), or advisor (contact info above).

_____   _____

Signature (Subject)   **Date**

_____   _____

Researcher SignaturePhone   **Date**

APPENDIX B

COACHING COVENANT

Pastor: _____

Name of Congregation:_____

Contact Info: Phone #s: _____

E-mail:_____

Researcher: Brad Cauley

Contact Info: Phone #s: Cell: (704) 774-2800; Office: (704) 596-3200

E-mail: bcauley@carolinasda.org

Commitment of Pastor/Coachee:
To actively and consistently lead in the process of church revitalization including following through on my action steps.

Commitment of Researcher/Coach:
To come alongside, uplift, support, and encourage pastor/coachee who will lead in a process of church revitalization.

Joint commitments:

1) **Meeting Frequency:**

   We'll meet once per month for 30-60 minutes each session by phone or video with adequate privacy (e.g. a quiet place to minimize distractions)

2) Length of Coaching Relationship:

We're committing to work together in a coaching relationship for sufficient time to enable the pastor's/coachee's leadership in the revitalization process

3) Schedule:

We will respect each other's schedules by making every effort to hold rescheduling and cancellations to a minimum and give adequate notice if rescheduling (1-2 days minimum)

4) Initiative:

If I cannot meet expectations or make a meeting, I will take initiative to let you know and reschedule with as much notice as possible (24 hours minimum)

5) Action Steps:

Our appointment may be postponed if agreed upon action steps have not been substantially completed

6) Periodic reports:

Email reports from the coach or coachee may be copied to conference administrator to keep them informed

7) Use of Revitalization Process:

The book, *Steps to a Vibrant Church: A Turnaround Guide for Churches in a Plateau or Decline* will be provided to the pastor/coachee to be used as a guide in the revitalization process

8) DiSC® and Meyers-Brigg Type Indicator Personality Profiles:

The coachee will complete two personality assessments that at the coach's cost.

I commit to the above expectations in this coaching relationship.

Coaching covenant date: _____

_____   _____   _____
Pastor   Researcher   Conference President

DISC® AND MBTI® PERSONALITIES SUMMARIZED

Types	Key descriptor	Greek terminology	Orientation	Other descriptors	Greatest Need
D	Dominance	Choleric	Extroverted, task-oriented	determined, drive, demanding	Challenge
i	Inspirational	Sanguine	Extroverted, people-oriented	influencing, impressive, impressionable	Recognition
S	Steadiness	Phlegmatic	Introverted, people-oriented	stable, supportive, submissive	Appreciation
C	Conscientiousness	Melancholy	Introverted, task-oriented	competent, cautious, correct	Quality answers

C1: DiSC® Personalities Summarized – adapted from Rohm (2012)

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
"DOING WHAT SHOULD BE DONE"	"A HIGH SENSE OF DUTY"	"AN INSPIRATION TO OTHERS"	"EVERYTHING HAS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT"
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
"READY TO TRY ANYTHING ONCE"	"SEES MUCH BUT SHARES LITTLE"	"PERFORMING NOBLE SERVICE TO AID SOCIETY"	"A LOVE OF PROBLEM SOLVING"
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
"THE ULTIMATE REALISTS"	"YOU ONLY GO AROUND ONCE IN LIFE"	"GIVING LIFE AN EXTRA SQUEEZE"	"ONCE EXCITING CHALLENGE AFTER ANOTHER"
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ
"LIFE'S ADMINISTRATORS"	"HOSTS AND HOSTESS OF THE WORLD"	"SMOOTH-TALKING PERSUADERS"	"LIFE'S NATURAL LEADERS"

C2: MBTI® Personality Types Summarized – adapted from Kroeger & Thuesen (1988)

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