

**INTERPRETIVE THEOLOGY IN PASTORAL
LIFE: A VISION FOR DOCTOR OF
MINISTRY EDUCATION**

SKIP BELL
Andrews University

Introduction

Theological study as formation for professional ministry is generally divided into four areas: Bible, theology, church history, and practices. Over time, these divisions have formed distinct definitions, hardened their boundaries, and evolved into scholarly disciplines. An underlying inference accompanying this division is the idea that theological education is a linear progression from theory to practice.¹ Conservative Christian traditions position biblical authority as the starting point and center of the progression. Regardless of how the authority of Scripture is approached, practices remains the professional application emerging out of a linear process. This idea of linear progression from theory, with Scripture as a starting point and center for theological understanding, to practice, the professional application, defines the theory-to-practice assumption in graduate theological education.

Attempts to form a more organic vision for theological education are hindered by accommodation of the four divisions and the accompanying theory-to-practice assumption. The established structures are deeply rooted and resist reform on several levels.² The four areas have diverse origins that resist integration. They carry the weight, momentum, and energy of tradition. Further, the situation presents a socioeconomic reality: faculty fill vacancies, pursue specialties, and preserve their personal economic viability within their departments. Attempts to rethink theological education are forced to fit into this historically rooted structure. As a result, the theory-to-practice assumption remains essentially unrevised.

The need to re-envision theological education is as compelling as it is challenging. The theory-to-practice assumption, with its concurrent departmentalization, is a reflection of the ubiquitous division of life itself into the realms of the spiritual and practical. We accept these premises precisely because they fit our common human perspective. If one believes life is thus divided, the prevailing premise in theological education works. But if one

¹Edward Farley describes specialization in theological education and the theology-to-practice assumption, with its influence on theological understanding, in *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 151-174.

²For a broader discussion of the compartmentalization of theological education and its resistance to reform, see Barbara G. Wheeler, "Introduction," in *Shifting Boundaries: Contextual Approaches to the Structure of Theological Education*, ed. Barbara G. Wheeler and Edward Farley (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 7-31.

reflects seriously on the question of meaning within life as it happens, an organic interpretive theology is needed. Ministers encounter this need in the experience of parishioners, but perhaps more significantly in their own.

Forming pastors for the inevitable engagement of interpretive theology takes on an urgent tone when culture is critiqued. Humans are looking outside of religious institutions for spirituality. Meaning-making captivated by theologically compartmentalized tradition distinct from life experience is approached with suspicion.

The purpose of this article is to propose an organic vision for Doctor of Ministry education—that is, to see pastors as interpretive theologians in parish life. This vision rejects the theory-to-practice linear view of theological education and offers an alternative to the stale criticisms of compartmentalization. Positioned in a minister's situation and distanced by time and place from primary theological degrees, Doctor of Ministry education has the opportunity for fresh vision. The Doctor of Ministry program can reset the structure of theological education, while not disturbing traditional approaches in primary graduate theological degrees.

The foundation for this vision is the concept of interpretive theology. I am defining interpretive theology as the reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in a particular life situation. The reflection necessarily assumes and claims an interpretive process that seeks meaning and illumination through the joined sources of Word, faith, narrative, and the situation itself.

The article first examines the idea of interpretive theology, its nature, and its contribution to a theology of ministry. Then the processes of sense-making through listening, conversation, and exhorting are explored as formative, and finally the contribution of interpretive theology to structure in Doctor of Ministry education is discussed.

A final word regarding the reach of this article is in order. As noted earlier, attempts to revise theological education have been frequent and met with universal difficulty. This article proposes to shape and influence only Doctor of Ministry education. It does not assume the ambition of reframing primary graduate theological degrees, nor does it propose to reshape doctoral work fitting one for scholarship in a theological faculty. Its purpose is only to contribute to the conversation regarding Doctor of Ministry education.

Interpretive Theology

Interpretive theology is the reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in a particular life situation. The reflection necessarily assumes and claims an interpretive process that seeks meaning and illumination through the joined sources of Word, faith, narrative, and the situation itself. Interpretive theology acknowledges God's movement in all of life; thus these sources are each respected. In interpretive theology, spiritually grounded experience is

empowered by listening, conversation, and exhortation. Interpretive theology defines the task of parish ministry. The interpretation of situations becomes an ongoing contribution, and critical thinking an ongoing part of the minister's reflective life.

Theology is not one thing, but many. This definition is not meant to narrow the breadth of theology; rather, it envisions an organic approach to theology in parish life.

For some, theology has been assigned to the vocation of faculty in theological schools, the scholarly activity that enriches life in varied ways. Outside the academy, the idea of "theology" has taken on a negative tone for many. In this view, theology may arouse the passion of professors, but have little to do with life in the real world.

It was not always so. In the early days of Protestantism, theology spoke of salvation, God, and his ways encountered by all people. With the Enlightenment, the formation of universities and the subsequent compartmentalization of the sciences helped to narrow theology and the property of the academy.

In the European Enlightenment, especially in Germany, a new kind of university arose and with it came the notion that a university is organized by its "sciences"; that is, by discrete, corporate bodies of knowledge and inquiry, each with its jargon, methods of research, and distinctive subject matter. Given these developments, it was inevitable that if theology were to have a place in the universities, it, too, would have to be a "science" in this new sense of the word.³

By the eighteenth century, theology was a scholarly enterprise with specialized disciplines. It was gradually removed to the universities and clergy rather than the Christian or his parish. The narrowing of theology was at first inclusive of clergy; then the notion of special science led to professionalization and gradual distancing from pastoral life.

As an academic field, it existed in contrast (and sometimes competition) with biblical studies, ethics, history, and practical theology. In this sense it was part of the minister's education. However, the actual exposure of the student to this very specific and sometimes formidable subject tended to be limited to one or two introductory courses. "Theology" is officially part of what clergy study. Unofficially, it has become distant and marginal.⁴

Alan E. Nelson describes the evolution of ministerial training.⁵ Jesus modeled personal apprenticeship. Augustine imposed communal life as

³Edward Farley, *Practicing Gospel: Unconventional Thoughts on the Church's Ministry* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 4.

⁴Ibid., 5.

⁵Alan E. Nelson, "Leadership Training of Ministerial Students in Evangelical Institutions of Higher Education" (D. Min. dissertation, University of San Diego, 1994), 52-54.

an enhancement of the apprenticeship for priests, the majority of whom experienced no university theological training prior to the Reformation. In 1563, the Council of Trent decreed the establishment of seminaries, where theology was taught in response to the erosion of orthodoxy.

In the post-Reformation years, those preparing for ministry in Protestant movements generally spent a year living in the home of a revivalist preacher. The practice was continued in America when Harvard was founded, with those who prepared for ministry spending up to three years in a pastor's home while completing their liberal-arts course. Harvard developed a chair of theology in 1721, followed by Yale, and distinct theological schools began to emerge. Curriculum emphasis was in theology, while preparation for ministry was in the apprenticeship. The first distinct theological seminary was founded in Andover, Massachusetts, in 1808.

By the late nineteenth century, the tradition of a four-year college degree plus a seminary experience was established. Ron Clouzet summarizes his research by stating: "It was during the last part of the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth centuries that the major institutional forms by which American Protestant clergy were trained took shape. The basic structure of ministerial education, namely, four years of college followed by three years of seminary, did not change after that."⁶

Pastors were introduced to theology, and expected to disperse a survey knowledge of theology with doctrinal clarity in their preaching and teaching (practices), while theology itself was the property and function of the theologian. The theory-to-practice linear view was thus firmly in place.

Interpretive theology is grounded in a much broader understanding of theology than typical in this tradition of theological education. Edward Farley offers this view: "Theology is a deliberate, focused, and self-conscious thinking that has its origin in faith's need to interpret itself and its situation. Theology is stirred into existence as believers struggle for clarity and understanding."⁷ Theology, then, is as essential and universal to Christian experience as is prayer, worship, and service.

What is distinctive about interpretive theology? Interpretive theology is the reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in a particular life situation. The reflection necessarily assumes and claims an interpretive process that seeks meaning and illumination through the joined sources of Word, faith, narrative, and the situation itself. Engaged in interpretive theology, every believer reflects on his or her own spiritually grounded experience. Interpretive theology acknowledges God's movement in all of life.

⁶Ron E. M. Clouzet, "A Biblical Paradigm for Ministerial Training" (D.Min. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1997), 206.

⁷Farley, *Practicing Gospel*, 3.

Interpretive theology does not of itself detract from the centeredness of inspired Scripture. It affirms that human life is transformed as the narrative of salvation is interpreted through various sources. The Word exists. To say the Word expresses its meaning when actualized within human experience is not to limit it by human experience. Interpretive theology does not remove the power center of our atonement from the Christ, but it does identify the importance of hearing the Gospel in the moment. Thus, the Gospel writers interpret the life of Jesus so that we might believe and follow in the context of our situation.

The Sources of Interpretive Theology

Scripture is the starting point and center of interpretive theology. Interpretive theology fits well with a view that absolute truth exists apart from human experience. It also acknowledges our human effort to understand absolute truth as flawed and dependent on divine guidance. A high view of Scripture, with the arguable exception of the most fundamentalist view, does not confine interpretation to a mere transporting of ancient meanings out of the past situation. The Scriptures are not magic; they do not dissolve reflective thinking in the present like the wave of a magician's wand. To illustrate, Paul's admonition regarding women or slaves must pass through a prayerful and deliberate test of truth. Thus, a high view of Scripture as inspired source coexists with reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in the midst of a particular life situation. Redemptive transformation is not efficacious without faith pursuing an interpretive process, seeking the illumination of God for the present.

Tradition is a further source. Interpretive theology is bound up with the redemptive initiative of God in our shared lives, and will thus have something to do with the history and remembered tradition that have formed the *ecclesia*, the redeemed community. Truly liberating theology that reveals the human condition and binds us to freedom is not an invention of any one human culture in isolation; it bears a historical nature.

The traditions of our Christian faith arose through the narratives, symbols, and events of those who moved through the spaces of their history. The traditions may be seen as earlier acts of interpretation; they became history. They live in the rich ambiguities and temporal meanings of human experience and summon us, the community of faith, to a reinterpretation in the time and place we experience.

Narrative provides an additional source. Narrative, in this perspective, is the meaning provided from intentional reflection on moments or passages in our lives, both personal and communal, within the influence of their larger relational setting. Interpreting meaning out of a situation requires placing it in the context of a larger narrative. The larger story provides the framework for

meaning-making in the given situation. Brad Kallenberg, in his examination of the power of narratives to form human experience, relates: “The contexts that make sense out of human action are stories or narratives. To explain an action is simply to provide the story that gives the act its context.”⁸

Throughout redemptive history, God has revealed himself to his creation within the narrative of a specific historical context, making the narrative a vehicle for inspired truth. At other times, narrative is more humble and limited from the human perspective; it can be seen as formative in the process of meaning-making, but it is not normative.

Spiritually grounded experience represents the more distinctive source in interpretive theology. Again, interpretive theology is the reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in a particular life situation. The reflection necessarily assumes and claims an interpretive process that seeks meaning and illumination through the joined sources of Word, faith, narrative, and the situation itself. Thus, spiritually grounded experience is respected as a source for theological understanding, not apart from the Word, faith, and narrative, but merged with those sources. That process, entered into in the midst of experience, both defines and provides spiritually grounded experience.

Meaning-making calls for interpretation within an experience; it is not mere assessment of Word, tradition, or narrative. Meaning-making inevitably reflects on the time, place, culture, and humanity of the situation. Theology, when contributing to how Christian faith is lived, is an interpretive process led by spiritually grounded reflection on Word, tradition, narrative, and the particular experience of our life. Thus, the spiritually grounded experience itself contributes to the redemptive and transforming effect of theology.

These four sources—Word, tradition, narrative, and spiritually grounded experience—represent the sources of interpretive theology, but they are not a close-ended list. The varied sources of interpretive theology underscore the complexity of making sense in life. Even a simple situation in one’s family requires more than habitual response, cognitive knowledge, or effortless intuition. Theology may be open and democratic, but it has a rigorous, disciplined aspect engaging diverse sources.

Pastors as Interpretive Theologians

Why does the church resist the idea of the pastor as theologian? One explanation lies in the assigned meaning developed for the professions. We tend to form the idea of the minister around specific practices such as preaching, counseling, leading, organizing, or teaching. The minister is

⁸Nancey Murphy, Brad J. Kallenberg, Mark Thiessen Nation, *Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition: Christian Ethics After MacIntyre* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 23.

defined by doing certain things. We imagine the theologians differently—as scholars and professors, who generate papers and discourses and books with peculiar-sounding titles. Just as clergy are defined by practice of ministry, so the theologian, finding his or her place in the economy of things, is defined by scholarly activity. These distinct definitions perpetuate the theory-to-practice assumption. The why and what of ministry are assigned to the scholarly disciplines of Bible, theology, and church history with the expectation that ministers apply survey knowledge to practice.

Another explanation is the broadly accepted distinguishing of professional ministry from the church membership. In Protestant Christianity, this characteristic is especially remarkable; a theology of “every believer a minister” is espoused, while in practice separation is maintained.

The idea of interpretive theology repudiates the theology-believer distinction. Again, interpretive theology is the reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in a particular life situation. The reflection necessarily assumes and claims an interpretive process that seeks meaning and illumination through the joined sources of Word, faith, narrative, and the situation itself. To remove that process from the life of the believer would be to ask them not to think, or to assign their thinking to pastors or scholars in the university. Rather, it follows that Christians, along with pastors, are also theologians, and that any believer is served by education assisting them in the pursuit of interpretive theology.

Understanding the pastor as an interpretive theologian is made easier if we contrast the attributes of the pastor who has ignored or denied this characteristic. The first attribute of such denial is a reflection of secular culture. All human life is impacted by culture. Apart from theological engagement in that process, pastoral ministry becomes a mere reflection of secular culture.

The second attribute is the captivity of the church to bureaucracy. Institutions of our society, government, business, schools, and the church take on necessary and orderly bureaucratic roles at our request. They can become a substitute for reflective theological process. Without interpretive theology, a pastor interprets success around institutional life: meetings, stewardship, or buildings. This captivity can lead a minister to abandon the meaning-making role of interpretive theologian and still be considered a success in ministry.

The third attribute is moralism. Ministers may define what should and should not be done in society to establish esteem as a good citizen. In doing this, they may be thought of as fulfilling their obligation to the congregation and community. In such moralism, the “oughts” of civility replace the more spiritually grounded characteristics of love, joy, and sacrifice.

The fourth attribute is individual salvation marked by isolation from society. Absent interpretive theology, gospel orientation is seen as separate from reflection on public issues such as education, health care, justice, and

the environment. In such separation, the witness of the gospel in community life is hindered.

Henri Nouwen calls for the restoration of theology, inseparably woven into the life of the minister.

Without solid theological reflection, future leaders will be little more than pseudo-psychologists, pseudo-sociologists, pseudo-social workers. They will think of themselves as enablers, facilitators, role models . . . , and thus join the countless men and women who make a living by trying to help their fellow human beings cope with the stresses and strains of everyday living.⁹

A pastor cannot responsibly fulfill his or her calling without engaging in interpretive theology. Ministers are people themselves who experience illness, family and economic challenges, grief, and other life issues. They must interpret their life and calling in the culture they live in. They must critically examine their experience for evidence of mere moralizing or cultural reflection. Faithfulness demands theological thinking rather than abdicating that responsibility to the institution.

The minister is called to facilitate theology itself. Craig Dykstra describes this challenge of leadership in pastoral ministry:

These insights, values, and forms of judgment are borne in Christian practices only because new perceptivities and the apprehension of distinctive, life-transforming realities give rise to them. If the ever-fresh promise in the context of these practices is that new perceptivities are shaped and life-transforming realities are made available for apprehension in each new day, then this must be the heart of what is taught. . . . The education that clergy are responsible for is education in truth and reality in and through those practices by which truth and reality may be made manifest.¹⁰

Theology is here seen from the perspective of a personal reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in a particular life situation. This is the primary and core leadership challenge of ministry. Pastoral practices—preaching, teaching, organizing, and counseling—are pursued with the view of empowering the believers to reflectively acquire the wisdom of God in their particular life situations.

Attaining Interpretive Theology in Parish Life

Interpretive theology does not result in a tenet or theory credited to a professional theologian's craft. It is the reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in the life situation by the one living a spiritually grounded experience. The spiritual presence of God as teacher and counselor is essential. Dykstra

⁹H.J.M. Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 86.

¹⁰Craig Dykstra, "Receiving Practice," in *Shifting Boundaries: Contextual Approaches to the Structure of Theological Education*, ed. Barbara G. Wheeler and Edward Farley (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 54-55.

defines theology in parish life as “wisdom, which includes, in my view, not only insight and understanding, but also the kind of judgment, skill, commitment, and character that full participation in practices both requires and nurtures.”¹¹ Those matters in life itself are the dialectic of interpretive theology.

That is not to say the matters themselves are primary in determining truth or inspired. Faith transcends them. The Word, the dogmas of our faith, the traditions of our community formed within situations preceding the moment provide reference and are tested in the current life situation. Faith finds a hearing in the events of life; in other words, in the interpretive process.

Clergy education, with its linear assumption, has not well promoted this understanding. The four areas of discipline making their way from theology to practice imply a source-to-application model and hinder effective interpretive theology. Interpretive theology has its sources, but these sources must be engaged with the present moment of life experience by the one living the life, not by professional proxy.

The engagement with the present moment employs helpful tools, which are illustrated by listening, conversation, and critical thinking. As noted earlier, pastors engage in the challenge of developing these tools within parish life by developing interpretive theologians.

How is interpretive theology attained in parish life? Listening is one powerful tool exercised by the professional minister and developed as an attribute of the membership. Within every faith community there are stories that carry the values, beliefs, and practices of the people. Identity is understood through these stories. In her extensive work on the art of listening, Nancy Ammerman calls these narratives “the building blocks of individual and collective religious identities.”¹² We accumulate these narratives and they interpret our place in the world for us. The shared parish leadership challenge is meaning-making, doing interpretive theology, through the art of interpreting those stories.

Rituals can be heard as important narratives in a faith community. Edward Farley asserts the theological process of parish life through examining ritual:

Sacramental activities include not only the typical Protestant sacraments of divine presence in the church (baptism and Communion), but ritual and liturgical activities occurring in the dramas, perils, crises, and turning points of human life (marriage, burial, sickness, departures, and so forth). Caring activities are conducted not simply toward individual members of the community of faith (of pastoral care), but include the church’s postures, agendas, and strategies toward all social corruption and oppression. . . . Any adequate account of the nature and agenda of these activities would

¹¹Ibid., 65.

¹²Nancy T. Ammerman, “Religious Identities and Religious Institutions,” in *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Michele Dillon (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 207-224.

involve the exercise of the dialectic of theological understanding toward each one.¹³

The common rituals not bound up with doctrinal experience, such as the manner of arrival for worship, greetings, governance, fellowship, and displays of hospitality, take on a narrative in themselves of the values and beliefs of a parish. They provide a ground for interpretive theology.

Conversation is a second tool. Interpretive theology acknowledges that people come to faith through judgments of their conscience shaped through open and free dialogue in the context of their life situations. Faith cannot long remain vital if it is reserved to a body of truth handed down by church authority. Faithfulness is less an expression of loyalty to the institutions of faith, priests, or pastors than an understanding of life. Conversation, therefore, must be reckoned within influencing matters of ecclesiology; the idea of faith being formed in our conversations around our situations eschews an authoritarian view of the church. Belief is formed through examining experience and testing sources within a context of community—in other words, conversation.

Conversation, understood in terms of mutuality, suggests authentic shared living. Nouwen helps us to understand the importance of mutual authentic conversation to interpretive theology: “The knowledge of Jesus’ heart is a knowledge of the heart. And when we live in the world with that knowledge, we cannot do other than bring healing, reconciliation, new life, and hope wherever we go.”¹⁴

Critical thinking is an important tool of interpretive theology. Pastors have opportunities to nurture critical thinking among believers. When a person decides not to shop where clothing produced by child labor is sold, that is critical thinking in a real-life situation. For a Christian, relating the gospel to life issues in the present world manifests critical thinking. For a pastor, the leadership challenge of meaning-making in such life issues is expressed in public and personal exhortation. The goal in exhortation is that critical thinking along the lines of interpreting the gospel becomes a part of reflective life in the parish and not mere obedience to the minister or institution. Redemptive transformation takes place through the interpretive acts directed to the corruptions and possibilities for change of both individuals and institutions that surface from this critical thinking.

A Vision for Doctor of Ministry Education

Interpretive theology is the reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in a particular life situation. The reflection necessarily assumes and claims an

¹³Farley, *Theologia*, 189.

¹⁴Nouwen, 41.

interpretive process that seeks meaning and illumination through the joined sources of Word, faith, narrative, and the situation itself. The concept of interpretive theology provides an agenda for conversation regarding Doctor of Ministry education. In this concluding section, I wish to promote such conversation by proposing a vision for Doctor of Ministry programs. By affirming the minister as an interpretive theologian, this vision offers the theological ground for doctoral-level professional theological education.

The purpose of Doctor of Ministry education is to advance an organic approach to theology that identifies the life of one presently and concurrently engaged in pastoral ministry. Identifying ministry as practice becomes inadequate. “The Christian leaders of the future have to be theologians, persons who know the heart of God and are trained—through prayer, study, and careful analysis—to manifest the divine event of God’s saving work in the midst of the many seemingly random events of their time.”¹⁵

Theological formation is the core of Doctor of Ministry education. Rather than detracting from the professional nature of Doctor of Ministry programs, this vision binds serving competently with the interpretive process that seeks meaning and illumination through the joined sources of Word, faith, narrative, and the particular situation. Tools used in the process of interpretive theology are listening, conversation, and critical thinking. Doctor of Ministry programs develop persons as theologians. Theological formation is sought, theological thinking is developed, and theological expression is nurtured. Rather than being approached as a distinct element, theological formation is integrated throughout the professional competency process in the years of a Doctor of Ministry program. Thus, the theology-to-practice assumption is rejected.

Research in Doctor of Ministry education is carried out in an in-ministry project addressing a ministry situation and primarily aimed at developing the minister as an interpretive theologian. The project blends theology and ministry. It employs tools such as listening, conversation, and critical thinking in action research with academic writing and personal reflection. After engaging personal spiritual and theological reflection, the researcher examines literature contributing to a body of relevant knowledge, then narrates and evaluates a personal intervention implemented over time, usually in a local church.

Timothy Lincoln describes the Doctor of Ministry project dissertation in ATS-approved schools: “Written for an audience of persons engaged in ministry, the project should address an issue arising out of ministerial practice, use an appropriate research model informed by the social sciences, and

¹⁵Ibid., 88.

interpret itself from the point of view of a Christian minister.”¹⁶ He notes: “The project is an exercise in *phronesis*, practical Christian wisdom.”¹⁷

The organic nature of interpretive theology is further realized in a Doctor of Ministry program by involving faculty members from diverse disciplines who are able to interact interpretively with ministers in a particular situation. In doing so, they step out of their departmental roles and specialties, eschewing the use of departmental symbols to identify courses or modules. The organic nature is also realized as faculty teams because the Doctor of Ministry program is formed both by persons within the academy and experienced colleagues in ministry outside the academy setting who have demonstrated interpretive theology.

By engaging in reflective exercise and claiming an interpretive process that seeks meaning and illumination through the joined sources of Word, faith, narrative, and the situation itself, theology and ministry are joined. The Doctor of Ministry advances interpretive theology as Christian life,¹⁸ the reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in a particular life situation.

Conclusion

This article presents a vision for Doctor of Ministry education: developing pastors to promote interpretive theology in parish life. The unique contribution is the concept of interpretive theology, the reflectively acquired wisdom of God formed in a particular life situation. The reflection necessarily claims an interpretive process that seeks meaning and illumination through the joined sources of Word, faith, narrative, and spiritually grounded experience. The tools of the reflection in a parish situation include listening, conversation, and critical thinking. Meaning-making through interpretive theology becomes an ongoing contribution of the life of ministry and a shared capacity in parish life.

¹⁶Timothy Lincoln, “Writing Practical Christian Wisdom: Genre and the Doctor of Ministry Dissertation,” *Theological Education* 36/1 (1999): 181.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 171.

¹⁸*Ibid.*