PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING TRAINING IN SMALL AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHURCHES

A PROJECT REPORT

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

KENNETH EZEKIEL ROGIERS

WINEBRENNER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

FINDLAY, OHIO

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ABSTRACT

PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING TRAINING IN SMALL AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHURCHES

The ministry of pastoral care and counseling has been in existence since the early days of the Church. Pastoral care is as much about meeting the physical or emotional needs of believers as it is about meeting their spiritual needs. The pastoral care ministry may vary somewhat between churches based upon denominational or other external differences; however, the problems that individual people encounter in today's society are basically the same regardless of church affiliation.

This study focused on the provision of pastoral care in the Newborn Lighthouse Churches of the Apostolic Faith (NBLC) organization. The primary question posed for the research was: "Should pastors in the NBLC be formally trained and equipped to respond to the pastoral care and counseling needs of the congregation?" The purpose of this study was to identify areas where NBLC pastors need help in addressing the care and counseling needs of their members. The qualitative research methodology employed was a phenomenological approach. Seven NBLC pastors were interviewed to determine current pastoral care and counseling practices within the organization. The information gathered from these interviews was used to identify specific areas of need for pastoral care and counseling training within the NBLC.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

The African-American church has been a place of refuge and care giving for many families and individuals over hundreds of years. In particular, small African-American churches have been a source of strength to their communities, meeting many of their needs. These churches have facilitated the spiritual birth and maturation of numerous individuals, giving them life-long hope, despite their circumstances. In addition to meeting spiritual needs, the African-American church has helped to educate, train, guide, and rehabilitate many individuals and families who would not otherwise receive such assistance. In support of this assertion, C. Eric Lincoln makes the following observation in his article, “The Black Family, the Black Church, and Transformation of Values”:

The most potent resource of the black family is the black church. The roots of the black church lie deep in the genesis of the black experience, and from the beginning, the church was the principal anvil upon which the integrity of the black family was forged. In the matter of marriage, it was the black church that led the black slave community to recognize the insufficiency of the folk ritual called “jumping the broom,” and taught instead the desirability of making God a witness and a party to the promises and plans of conjugation.

It was the black church that gave official recognition and status to the fathers of black children, despite the convenient prevailing legal fiction that “the father of a slave is unknown.” When freedom came slave millions were turned loose to face the vagaries of a critical, hostile environment without any political, social, or economic preparation whatever, again it was the black church which was the key instrument in bridging the chasm of transition,
establishing and monitoring new conventions of family manners, family morality, and family responsibility.

Later, when the black migrations from the South and the rigidity of racial conventions in the North combined to create that social monstrosity known as the Urban black ghetto, the black church was there “in the midst of them” ministering to the black family, so strained and battered in this new environment where traditional strengths were suddenly turned into bewildering problems. (Lincoln 1978, 495-496)

Although the small African-American church has been a source of spiritual, emotional, and material support to individuals, families, and communities, in many instances these churches have not had well-trained and equipped individuals in pastoral care and counseling. The small African-American church has addressed many of these needs to the best of its ability.

The pastor and the pulpit in the African-American church command great power and authority. Yet, neither is a substitute when personal and specific attention is needed regarding pastoral care and counseling concerns. Pastors in these smaller churches can find themselves under a tremendous amount of pressure when attempting to satisfy the needs of their congregations. Much of this is due in part to not having adequate resources, experience, and training to meet the demands of a congregation that faces increasingly complex situations, issues, and problems. A sermon from the pulpit might address some general concerns but may fall short of meeting individual and family needs.

Why should an attempt be made to address the matter of pastoral care and counseling in small African-American churches? Through my association with the Newborn Lighthouse Churches of the Apostolic Faith (NBLC), I have come to understand that the personal problems requiring pastoral care in these small
congregations are no different than those in large churches. People come to our churches with the same needs and concerns reported in larger churches. However, the problems can be more challenging for a pastor of a small congregation who is limited by time, training, and resources to commit to care and counseling needs. I have been a part of and associated with small African-American churches, and the NBLC in particular, for over thirty years. The NBLC is headquartered in Capitol Heights, Maryland. Because all of the pastors in the NBLC are male, all references to its pastors throughout this study are specific to that gender.

**Context of the Problem**

When a pastor of NLBC is called on to respond to the pastoral care or counseling need of a member or members of his congregation, he does so with a limited base of knowledge from which to assess the problems adequately. The pastor must also decide whether he is able to provide the level of pastoral care and counseling that individuals seek from him. What is critical is the well-being of the member and assurance that the care giving response is helpful and reliable. If the pastor's response to the need is inadequate, the member could continue to suffer needlessly.

In this section and the next, the major factors or characteristics that limit or hinder the ministry of pastoral care and counseling in the NBLC churches will be examined. For the sake of brevity, words and phrases that are commonly used by the NBLC are further defined in the *Definition of Terms* section of this chapter.

The first hindering factor is the organizational structure of the NBLC. The NBLC operates hierarchically. At the top of this structure is the office of Head
Bishop or General Overseer. There are other bishops within the NBLC that serve throughout the U.S. and report to the Head Bishop. All bishops in the NBLC are pastors, including the Head Bishop. Bishops are ordained as such from the rank of an elder. They generally preside over a specific district or region and are responsible for visiting the churches and helping local pastors in their districts.

Because of the leadership structure in NBLC, the local pastor is the primary and sometimes the first and only person that members turn to for help. Pastors hold positions of great power and authority within their congregations. Some of the NBLC congregations do not have multiple ordained elders to assist or come alongside the pastor to respond to the needs of the congregation. When a bishop is called on to help a pastor in one of the NBLC churches, he does so mainly from his own experience, with little or no formal training or teaching in pastoral care and counseling.

Based upon my years of experience with the organization, I have observed that members of NBLC are taught to revere the role of their pastor. Attempts to go beyond the pastor for help without first consulting him can be considered an act of usurping that pastor’s authority.

Based upon responses to surveys conducted for this study, some pastors are open to suggestions and recommendations from other sources that can help members. Other NBLC pastors view the Bible as their only reliable source for meeting their members’ needs. In those instances, little effort may be made to get help outside of their congregation. These types of pastors tend to rely heavily on their own experience in problem solving. Consequently, formal training in pastoral care and counseling is not sought.
Secondly, NBLC pastors are hindered in their ability to obtain adequate training in care and counseling because of time constraints. The pastors in NBLC generally are the primary, and often the only persons that members turn to for their care and counseling needs. With multiple pastoral duties to perform such as preaching, administration, baptisms, and Bible studies the pastor has less time available for care and counseling.

Thirdly, when a member in NBLC seeks pastoral care and counseling, there is no set structure or set of guidelines for pastors to follow. Since these churches are small, pastors have a great amount of latitude to respond to member needs requiring pastoral care and counseling, as they deem most appropriate. Apart from standards of doctrinal beliefs such as the mode of baptism, salvation, and marital relationships to name a few, there is no criteria set or training requirement for pastors that would enable them to respond adequately to the pastoral care and counseling needs of their members.

Because the NBLC does not have any established guidelines on how best to provide pastoral care and counseling, NBLC pastors have wide latitude and freedom to act as they deem appropriate in any such situations. It has been my experience that there is a vast difference between giving advice to someone and providing pastoral care and counseling services. Advice is generally simpler and easier to provide and may come from a formal source or from personal experience. Either will suffice if both the source and the experience utilized by the pastor are appropriate for the problem or problems at hand. The definition for pastoral care is found in the “Definition of Terms” section of this chapter.
In the thirty-plus years that I have been part of what is now the NBLC organization, little has been formally done to prepare pastors to provide adequate help to their members with complex problems requiring advanced knowledge of pastoral care and counseling. During interviews conducted for this study, all pastors interviewed stated that, as criteria for ordination, new pastors should have a minimum number of hours of training in pastoral care and counseling. All cited their own inadequacies and lack of skills to handle certain needs. The pastors interviewed also affirmed that the NBLC organization should do more to prepare pastors to address pastoral care and counseling needs. An in-depth summary and analysis of the interview results were provided in Chapter Five of this project.

The provision of pastoral care in the NBLC is further hindered by the reluctance of parishioners to seek or embrace the pastoral care and counseling ministry. This seeming indifference by members to receive pastoral care from their pastors may keep leadership from seeking to be trained in the area of pastoral care.

As a whole, African-Americans are not quick to embrace the need for formal counseling. Counseling still carries the stigma that something is wrong with individuals who seek help. It has been my experience that very few individuals and families will visit the office of a counselor, psychologist, or Christian counselor. Specifically, the African-American male is very skeptical and not open to the idea of being counseled in a formal setting. These observations are further supported by, and addressed in, an article by Lloyd C. Blue. The article is entitled, “Pastoral Counseling and Black Families.” In it Blue writes:

Most people would not want to be labeled as someone who has major problems or who cannot handle his or her own issues. The fear that one will
be so labeled often keeps one from disclosing to the pastor and/or the counseling staff the issues that are affecting one's life. I do not view this, however, as an insurmountable problem. Once people realize that their "dirty laundry" will not be aired from the pulpit on Sunday nor gossiped through the community during the week, and that it is all right for everyone (including men) to engage in counseling, they will open up and share their innermost secrets.

Additionally, we can reduce some of the stigma by presenting counseling in a positive light. We can point out that the Bible tells us to confess our faults or sins one to another (James 5:16) and to bear or demonstrate trustworthiness, and nothing does it better than reaching out with compassion to build relationships with the families of the church, especially with the husbands and fathers. (Blue, June 1991, 145)

It is not until the situation gets too far out of hand that we in the African-American community will seek help (Richardson 1996, 25-26). In my personal experience, when a husband and wife have counseling issues, it is the wife who makes the request. NBLC parishioners tend to be very proud and private people. As can be inferred from the Blue excerpt, African-Americans, in general, are not too trusting of the counseling profession. This study did not address the reluctance of members to seek pastoral care and counseling, but it is important to acknowledge this fact as a hindrance to the willingness of NBLC leadership to seek training or equipping in pastoral care and counseling.

As critical as it is for African-Americans to get more help through the counseling ministry, and despite the reluctance of NBLC members to seek the help they need, all is not lost. People still attend the NBLC churches. Visitors continue to come on Sundays to hear a choir and a sermon. Pastors who are willing to provide adequate pastoral care and counseling can make appeals directly to the congregation. Individuals and families can be told that there is help available to assist them with their problems. Pastors have a great opportunity to build rapport with parishioners
and visitors. Once this is established it is easier to recommend or invite individuals for further care and counseling. When a pastor is limited in providing adequate care he can make appropriate referrals to other Christian counseling professionals, ministries, and resources. As ministers instill Christian values and hope by showing individuals that we are willing to invest time and energy to help them, it is becoming easier to get them to take steps toward becoming more whole.

Statement of the Problem

While majority of NBLC members do not seek pastoral care or counseling, there are those who will attempt to have their spiritual and emotional needs met by their local pastors. Pastors are honored and respected for their opinions. They command great authority over members of the congregation. Because congregants naturally hold their pastors in high esteem, it is even more imperative that pastors be able to respond adequately to pastoral care and counseling matters as they occur. Members need to have confidence and assurance that their pastor will be able to provide adequate assistance with their personal problems, issues, and concerns. The matters brought to the attention of a pastor could be as simple as deciding what job a member should take. It could range from which individual to marry to dealing with crisis situations or traumatic situations.

Considering the varied needs of congregants as they relate to pastoral care and counseling matters, how are the pastors of NBLC to respond? The problem stated more succinctly is this: “Should pastors in the NBLC be formally trained and equipped to respond to the pastoral care and counseling needs of the congregation?”
A pastor’s response to member needs is vital to the spiritual and emotional health of his congregants. His response to member needs is also vital to maintaining a strong relationship with his members to ensure that their spiritual, physical, and emotional needs are being met. Failure to address the care and counseling needs of members adequately leaves members to search for solutions to their problems and concerns alone. Families may continue to live in brokenness.

When members are experiencing emotional or psychological distress, it is not enough for pastors to preach sermons to address their individual problems or issues; a sermon may not be sufficient to help those in need. The pastor who is sought to address the personal care and counseling issue of a member or a family without adequate training and equipping may be placed in a compromising position due to his inability to provide an adequate response to a parishioner’s need. Members may leave, believing the pastor to be incompetent, because their needs are not met. An improper response may diminish the member’s trust in the pastor.

The provision of pastoral care and counseling frequently requires that one spend quality time with the individual involved to obtain sufficient information to facilitate a correct assessment and diagnosis of the problem (Walker 1992, 108). Proper assessment and diagnosis is vital and must precede any recommended course of action or treatment to remedy the problem. Because of their busy schedules and limited time they have to spend with parishioners, it is crucial that pastors are properly trained and equipped to assess and diagnose problems in a timely manner.

Another contributing factor that I have found to be problematic for pastors when faced with problem solving, in general, and specifically as it relates to pastoral
care and counseling, is to admit their limited knowledge to handle the problem effectively. Since pastors are generally sought after first when their members need help, the pastor becomes the only source for troubled congregants within the church. This is true regardless of the complexity of the problem. NBLC pastors have wide reaching authority over the members of their congregations. However, authority must be seen as God-given. It must be examined with the divine wisdom and discernment that pastors possess. In Hebrews 5:1-3 the criteria for the high priest was that he was to be compassionate because he himself was beset with infirmities. Therefore, pastors must see parishioners through the eyes of their own weaknesses. There is no place for indifference when it comes to how a pastor is to respond to the care and counseling needs of a congregation.

The final contributing factor that hinders the ministry of care and counseling is the selection and ordination of pastors. The process of selecting an NBLC pastor does not require any formal training or education. The men who aspire to the position of pastor obtain credentials through several avenues. One such avenue is that the pastor has served as an associate or assistant pastor in the congregation in which he currently does ministry. Should a vacancy occur in the pastorate, this assistant or associate may become pastor of the entire church with recommendation of the Board of Elders. Pastors are also alternatively placed through a transfer as an elder from another church in NBLC. By simply joining the organization, elders from outside NBLC can be placed in a pastorate. In several instances, if there is a vacancy in the pastorate due to death, a close relative, who is an elder, is likely to succeed as the new pastor. In none of the aforementioned situations is there a requirement for formal
training or experience in pastoral care and counseling. Further, there is no external motivation to receive training, as pastors in the NBLC generally serve for lifetime tenure, unless stricken by sickness or gross misconduct while in office.

I believe that NBLC pastors want to do a good job of shepherding the flocks entrusted to their care. However, they need to be better equipped and trained to respond to the pastoral care and counseling needs of their parishioners.

*Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to identify areas where pastors need help in addressing the care and counseling needs of their congregations in the NBLC. The churches that are a part of the NBLC organization are small African-American churches with an average congregation size of seventy members. Although there may be associate pastors in some congregations, who may assist with the care of church members, the pastor is considered the primary authority for mediating and mitigating the needs of a congregation.

Because pastoral care and counseling needs are always prevalent in congregations, proper responses by pastors are imperative. Care for the spiritual, physical, and emotional health and well being of individuals and families is extremely important. I firmly believe that healthy individuals contribute to healthy families. Healthy families make for healthy congregations.

I am aware that some pastors are better trained and equipped than others to respond appropriately to pastoral care and counseling concerns. Clergy who have received training or have pastoral care counseling skills minister to the needs of their members with greater ease than pastors who are untrained or unskilled in pastoral
care and counseling. Based upon my own personal experience and conversations with area pastors, I believe it necessary that all clergy have the ability to respond appropriately to member needs. Since a pastor’s response is so critical, I have decided to look at areas in which pastors can better respond to care and counseling needs. I will recommend ways to help train and equip pastors of NBLC.

Research Methodology

This study sought to address the question of how pastors in the NBLC can be better equipped and trained to respond to the pastoral care and counseling needs of church members. The qualitative research method that this study embraced is the phenomenological approach. Merriam writes:

Phenomenology is a school of philosophical thought that underpins all of qualitative research – and herein lies much of the confusion surrounding the writing in this area. Qualitative research draws from the philosophy of phenomenology in its emphasis on experience and interpretation, but a researcher could also do a phenomenological study using the “tools” of phenomenology. In the conduct of a phenomenological study, the focus would be on the essence or structure of an experience (phenomenon). (1998, 15)

The phenomenon to be investigated is how pastors in the NBLC can provide better ministry to meet the pastoral care and counseling needs of their congregations.

Based upon the research conducted, I identified ways in which pastors can strengthen their ministry of providing adequate care and counseling to the members of their congregations that need it. This study used the qualitative research method.

To conduct this research, I made use of the responses of seven pastors in a series of specific interview questions. I also incorporated my observations of the current practices of local area pastors in responding to the care and counseling needs of their congregations. I took advantage of any written information or policies that the
NBLC organization created for pastors to refer to in given situations requiring care and counseling.

All interviews were taped for accuracy of the reporting. I interviewed the bishop and general overseer, district bishops, and local elders to gather their input. One interview per pastor was conducted, for a total of seven.

*Research Questions*

The main question of this research is, “Should pastors in the NBLC be formally trained and equipped to respond to the pastoral care and counseling needs of the congregation?” From this question, a series of inquiries were addressed, as follows:

1. What are essential areas of pastoral care and counseling needed by NBLC pastors?
2. What resources do pastors consult when called to provide pastoral care and counseling?
3. What should be done to improve pastoral care and counseling in the NBLC organization?
4. Should the criterion for ordaining new pastors include an acquisition of basic training in the areas of pastoral care and counseling?

Question One recognized that consulting adequate resources is critical if pastors are to respond properly and effectively to the needs of the congregation. Helping to identify the resources, whether limited or not, will lead to better recommendations and directives from NBLC pastors.

Question Two acknowledged that all pastors are not identically trained and equipped. Some pastors will show a greater concern for training and equipping in
specific areas of their ministry. If there is an area in which a majority of NBLC pastors need help, it must be addressed. This question helped focus on the areas that need immediate attention.

Question Three noted that there are specific needs of individual pastors as they are called on to address pastoral care and counseling needs of their congregations. This question assumes that professional growth in pastoral care and counseling is imperative. This question looks closely at what pastors need to do collectively to improve pastoral care and counseling capabilities among NBLC pastors.

Question Four recognized that the current practice of NBLC organization does not require a pastor to have any training or equipping in pastoral care and counseling to be ordained as a pastor. Stated another way, "Would a policy requiring that pastors be adequately prepared to give pastoral care and counseling result in healthier congregations and better relationships between pastors and their congregations?" The assumption is that if there were such requirements, this would result in more effective pastors and stronger congregations within the NBLC organization.

**Significance of the Study**

According to 1 Peter 5:2-3, pastors or shepherds as the scriptures refer to these men are required to feed and shepherd the flock of God, they assume responsibility, not by constraint but willingly, not for money but serving as examples to the flock of God. All this must be done while keeping in mind that pastors are responsible to the Chief Shepherd, namely Christ Jesus. This is especially important in small African-American churches because pastors are so highly regarded. Pastors have a duty to
care for the people of God. Since pastors are given this as a command, then they need to know more about pastoral care and counseling. Psalm 23 gives a classic and vivid description of how a shepherd cares for his sheep. The duty the shepherd performs is the result of great love for the flock. Verse 5 states, "He restores my soul." In the book *The Shepherd's Heart*, (Keller 1970, 49) Phillip Keller describes what it means to restore the soul of a sheep. In his description, he uses the term "cast down sheep." A sheep has turned over on its back and is unable to get up by itself again in this condition. This condition is so dangerous that if the shepherd does not arrive on the scene in a short period to get the sheep up on its feet, it will die. Likewise, some parishioners may at times become downcast due to the problems or stresses that they encounter. In these cases, the only help is the tender response of a gentle shepherd. Like a shepherd of sheep, a pastor must respond to cries of those in need.

This study is significant because it will help pastors to identify the need for training and equipping in the areas of pastoral care and counseling. It will help to identify deficiencies in the current approach that NLBC pastors currently use to address pastoral care and counseling needs. It will also strengthen and encourage pastors to continue doing the acts that lead to providing adequate care and counseling of their members.

Furthermore, the study is significant because it will help the board of bishops and elders who select candidates for pastorates to select better-equipped pastoral candidates to serve in the office of pastor. It will help to strengthen individual members, families, and congregations by giving pastors more insight and better tools
to help them respond to these groups, families, or individuals with pastoral care and counseling needs.

Assumptions and Limitations

The main assumption of this project was that NBLC pastors do not have adequate training and skills in the area of pastoral care and counseling to meet critical needs of their congregations. This study also assumed that pastors in the NBLC organization want to understand and make resources available to their members to provide adequate care for their spiritual, emotional, and counseling needs. This project assumed that the NBLC board of bishops and elders desire their pastors to have some basic understanding of pastoral care and counseling before they accept a pastorate and that the members will welcome and seek out pastoral care and counseling assistance. Finally, it assumes that the overall spiritual and emotional health of individuals and families will result in healthier congregations.

The limitations of the project included the fact that not all of the pastoral care and counseling needs were addressed. Another limitation is that not all of the pastors were interviewed, but rather a smaller sample of bishops and elders. The final limitation is that the methodology did not include any case studies in that it is primarily based on interviews, personal experience, and observations.

Definition of Terms

1. Newborn Lighthouse Churches of the Apostolic Faith (NBLC) – These churches follow a strict fundamentalist Pentecostal approach.

2. Bishop – Bishops are elders who have been ordained to the office of a bishop and are heads over particular geographic regions.
3. Small African-American Church – Churches in the NBLC organization whose average membership is predominately, but not exclusively, African-American and is comprised of seventy members or less.

4. Board of Bishops and Elders – The executive board of seven bishops and a few elders who make the primary decisions and give direction for the NBLC organization to follow.

5. General Overseer – The head bishop of the NBLC.

6. Pastoral Care – Pastoral Care may be broadly defined as spiritual care and guidance or the shepherding of human souls.

7. Pastoral Counseling – Pastoral Counseling describes a major function of the pastor who provides counseling for parishioners as one of many services offered to them.

8. Shepherd – This is the same as pastor, the one who is responsible for care and counseling for members in his congregation.

Organization of the Study

This study was organized into six chapters. Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations referenced throughout this study are from the New King James Bible.

Chapter One: Introduction to the Project

Chapter Two: Biblical and Theological Foundations

Chapter Three: Review of the Literature and Other Sources

Chapter Four: Research Methodology and Procedures

Chapter Five: Results and Analysis of the Data

Chapter Six: Summary, Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations
Chapter One began with an introduction that pointed out the important and vital role the African-American church has played in the life of the African-American community. It provided a description of the context of the problem and the basis for the study. This chapter also described the purpose of the study and the methodology used to conduct the study. Also included were questions that the study sought to address. It contained the definitions of the terms in this paper.

Chapter Two set forth the biblical and theological foundations of the study. The Bible has many references to the ministry of pastoral care and counseling. In this chapter I discussed a few of them.

Chapter Three incorporated a wider body of biblical and theological sources. Chapter three also drew on resources outside of the biblical and theological sources of information. It included information obtained from literature published by counseling professionals in secular organizations, as well as evangelical ministries and organizations.

Chapter Four detailed the research process and the questions used in the interview process. This chapter also described in detail the process of choosing the persons to be interviewed.

Chapter Five contained an analysis of the data used in the study from interviews and observations with NBLC pastors and professionals in the counseling community. In addition, an analysis of relevant documents is included in this chapter.

Chapter Six was a summary of the study. It also includes findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

It may come late at night. It may come as a discreet request after a Sunday morning service. Or it may come through the sharing of a concern for one member of the congregation by another member. What is it? It is a call for help from a church member with a problem requiring pastoral care or counseling.

Requests for pastoral care or counseling come in several forms. An anxious parishioner may report that a member of his or her immediate family was recently diagnosed with a terminal disease. A distressed wife may call a pastor because her husband has been neglecting the family and his behavior has caused tremendous strain on family relations. Another call may come from troubled parents reporting their daughter’s unwanted pregnancy. A grief stricken family may seek pastoral help following the untimely death of a close family member. A worried husband, seeking marital advice, may ask for his pastor’s counsel to preserve a troubled marriage.

These calls for help are a small representation of the variety of needs for pastoral care and counseling in congregations across this nation and specific to the members of the NBLC. Any one, or a combination, of these calls will require that clergy take action. The individual or family calling on church leadership is seeking help and expects a knowledgeable response from clergy. How does a pastor handle such requests for help? How can he adequately respond to the need of his parishioners?
Biblical Foundations

Because the pastor operates under the lordship of Christ, he must first recognize that God is the ultimate caregiver, counselor, and comforter. Therefore, the first manual any pastor should become familiar with and skillful in using is the Bible. This is the holy Word of God. Isaiah says the following:

Woe to the rebellious children, says the LORD,  
Who take counsel, but not of Me,  
And who devise plans, but not of My Spirit,  
That they may add sin to sin;  
Who walk to go down to Egypt,  
And have not asked My advice,  
To strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh,  
And to trust in the shadow of Egypt! (Isa. 30:1-2)

This passage of Scripture makes it clear that leaders in the church are not to take their counsel from the world, but from the Word of God. NBLC leaders and members view the Scriptures as the infallible and inerrant Word of God. The Bible is filled with all of the wisdom needed to meet every human need and is essential to train and equip members of the body (the congregation) to live the Christian life.

My personal experience of providing pastoral care and counseling to individuals over the years is that the Word of God is sufficient for every aspect of the Christian life. The sufficiency of God’s Word in the Holy Bible is evident. For example, Psalm 19:7 clearly states that the law of God’s Word is perfect for conversion of the soul. The Psalm further states that the testimonies of the Lord are sure, giving wisdom to the simple or the unknowing.

The statutes, another synonym for the Word of God, are right and they result in a rejoicing of the heart. There is no depth of despair into which we can fall, where God
cannot hear us or deliver us. This was David's testimony in Psalm 130:1, "Out of the depths I cried unto the Lord."

General Pauline Textual Sources

I believe that Paul's epistles are a helpful source from Scripture to instruct us in pastoral leadership. Paul told us to comfort others with the same comfort we have in Christ:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. (2 Cor. 1:3-6)

I believe that the pastor should be in the lead to fulfill this commandment and to teach other members in the body to understand and apply this passage in their lives by coming alongside other members in need. When this is done in partnership with the Holy Spirit, many of life's problems can be adequately resolved. The pastor does not have to be directly involved in the process of resolving every problem that individual church members encounter, but must be acquainted enough with the Bible and other sources to counsel those members who are not able to resolve problems themselves.

Just as the human body requires healthy cells and organs to function properly, a congregation that is made up of individuals with a variety of physical, emotional, and spiritual needs must have spiritually healthy members to minister effectively in our present world. Members of the body of Christ are called to be "salt and light" to the lost and the hopeless in our society and to help the weaker members of the body (Matt. 5:13-17). After all, God took us in as strangers and made us members of Christ's body to heal
and to restore hope, joy, and peace, as we minister to one another. No longer do we need to be silent regarding emotional pain and suffering. We are afforded, in Christ, the healing and restoration God gave to His people of old. Christ has given us access to God:

Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. (Eph. 2:11-18)

When pastors are led by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God in meeting the diverse needs of their parishioners, the result will be the spiritual growth and development of individual members of Christ’s body and the body of Christ as a whole. The members of the body of Christ who have been adequately trained and equipped to do the work of ministry will be more effective in doing God’s will in church and society.

The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:1-7 that God has given spiritual gifts, of his choosing, to the members of his body, which comprise the local church. According to Ephesians 4:7-12, Christ gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for several reasons:

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things). And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ... (Eph. 4:7-12)
These gifts are used for perfection, edification, unity, and ministry within the church. Ephesians 4:11 focuses on the body and the concerns of the individual members of the body. All members of the body walk in harmony while using their gifts.

One mistake that a pastor can make is to require everything that occurs in the church to pass through him. This is especially true in smaller churches. The pastor tends to be the sole arbitrator of power and influence issues, events, or ministry. However, when this happens, the body cannot function efficiently. To ensure proper functioning of the body, I believe that it is necessary for pastors to train and equip members to function in the body using their God-given spiritual gifts.

When pastors begin to encourage members to use their gifts to meet the needs of other members in the church, this may result in conflict that temporarily disrupts unity within the body. People are sensitive to change because it is uncomfortable. However, I believe that change is necessary and can result in growth when our differences are resolved in Christian love. One example from Scripture is when Paul instructed Syntyche and Euodias to resolve their conflicts in Philippians 4:2. This also results in a stronger church body. Conflict can be resolved when all church members and leadership are of the same mind and encourage one another to live in harmony.

The Bible suggests that a church ought to appoint multiple elders to serve the congregation. Examples include Exodus 18:13-26, Acts 1:15-26, Acts 6:1-6, Acts 14:23, Acts 16:4, 1 Corinthians 3:5-7, and Titus 1:5. Furthermore, Steve R. Bierly states, “The New Testament makes it very clear that the local church is to be shepherded by a team, not by one individual (Acts 20:17, 28-31; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1
Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:17; James 5:14” (1998, 94). In addition to a multiplicity of elders there are biblical criteria for those who are to function as such.

First, we must understand that Christ is the head of the church. He has set high standards for those who are called to rule His church. A church must never select leaders based on worldly standards. Yet, this still happens today. Some churches choose their leaders based on those who are the most successful in business affairs, those who are influential and articulate with words, people who have the most money, men who are from the ranks of professionals, and those who are politically inclined.

Men who would lead God’s church must be chosen by God and meet the criteria set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Apostle Paul’s instructions to Timothy and Titus were that they should select certain kinds of men to be ordained as leaders. In these two chapters, there are twenty qualifications given for leaders. The table below lists these qualifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leaders are to be:</th>
<th>Leaders are not to be:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Above reproach</td>
<td>Addicted to illegal substances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-woman man</td>
<td>Self-centered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temperate</td>
<td>Quick-tempered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sober-minded or prudent</td>
<td>Pugnacious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respectable</td>
<td>Contentious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitable (lover of strangers)</td>
<td>One who loves sordid gain (greedy)</td>
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<td>Able to teach</td>
<td>A new convert</td>
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<td>Gentle</td>
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<tr>
<td>One who manages his house well</td>
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<tr>
<td>One with a good reputation</td>
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<td>A lover of good things</td>
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<td>Just and devout</td>
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Leaders who do not possess these criteria are not qualified. In 1 Timothy 1:11, the Apostle Paul urged Timothy to flee certain things that are evil and pursue righteousness (i.e. godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness). This is a core value of pastoral theology in the NBLC. We as members of NBLC cannot ignore these qualifications if we intend to have committed leaders disciple men and women in the church to be followers of Christ.

Members can be stymied in the use of their spiritual gifts if their ministry must always be cleared or sanctioned by church leadership. Likewise, the use of individual talents may be thwarted. Their full benefits are never fully utilized or realized in the local church, as a pastor regulates them. Such behavior weakens the members of the body of Christ individually and collectively.

1 Corinthians 12:1-11 states that God gives gifts to individuals as he wills. This categorically means that the spiritual gifts a person receives are God-given and not to be hindered by clergy or a local church board (Bruce 1971, 118; Buttrick 1962, 435). Offices such as apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher, elder, bishop, and deacon, pertain more to the person. The gift relates to the spiritual endowment given by the Holy Spirit to the individual. For example, a divinely appointed prophet would have the gift of prophecy, or a teacher the gift of teaching. But, a person could have the gift that corresponds to an office without occupying that office. One could have the gift of prophecy without being an official prophet. Likewise, one could have the gift of teaching without having the office of a teacher.
Ministries are the specialty, sphere, or area in which one exercises their spiritual gift. For example, the gift of teaching can be used in a Sunday school class, in Bible study, in visitations, or in a one-to-one encounter. This is an example of one gift with multiple outlets for its use.

In his book on spiritual gifts, Leslie Flynn explains that ministries are the outlets for the use of spiritual gifts. If ministries are to emanate from a local church, then the corresponding spiritual gifts should be seen in those ministries. Therefore if spiritual gifts are stymied, then ministries may become stagnant (Flynn 1974, 24).

Among NBLC churches there is the need to train and equip members with better knowledge and use of spiritual gifts. For example, the NBLC has yet to address on a national level the need to teach and train clergy about spiritual gifts and their importance to the local and national church organization. The subject of spiritual gifts has never been covered in depth at annual convocations. I believe that the reason why NBLC churches do not offer training in the use of the spiritual gifts is that there is not enough understanding of their use and function in the overall work of the church.

C. Peter Wagner states, “A decent seminary library will catalog more than 50 books on the subject of spiritual gifts. Probably 90 percent of them will have been written after 1970. Previous to 1970, seminary graduates characteristically left their institutions knowing little or nothing about spiritual gifts. Now, such a state of affairs would generally be regarded as a deficiency in ministerial training” (Wagner 1994, 14).

NBLC pastors, though not seminary graduates, enter their congregations with little background or training in the use of spiritual gifts. In other words, learning how to equip our churches adequately must involve rediscovery of an old truth.
In a survey taken after the NBLC’s June 2005 convention, members were asked which seminar topics they would like addressed for the 2006 convention. The subject of “spiritual gifts” was among the highest selected, along with “money management,” the “apostolic doctrine,” “handling and avoiding temptation,” and “how to study the Bible.” The high amount of interest in the topic of “spiritual gifts” is a strong indicator that members of NBLC want to know more about the gifts of the Spirit (Lee, 2005).

There is no doubt that pastors and church leaders are gifted people. The bulk of the work of the church, as it relates to leading and shepherding of the flock of God, falls onto the pastor-teacher. He must be skilled in working with Scripture and its interpretation. Many hours of study and preparation are necessary if the pastor is to be effective in caring for the needs of his congregation. Yet, one of the greatest challenges expressed by NBLC pastors is their need for better training and equipping so that they can adequately respond to the needs of their congregations. In responding to calls for assistance from members of the body, the clergyman must assess his ability to provide the help being sought.

Applying Ephesians 4 Today

The Book of Ephesians and the text of Ephesians 4:11-16 were not just relevant to the early church at Ephesus, they apply to the body of Christ today. This is because pastors must work in partnership with other leaders to equip members of the church. In this way all Christians work as a team.

The members of every congregation seek out their clergy for their spiritual authority and use of gifts. Unfortunately, many church members are unaware of their spiritual gifts, which can hinder the ministry of the church. In Ephesians 4:11-16, God
gives spiritual gifts to every member of the body for the perfection of the saints. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that one of the pastor’s duties is to train and equip members of the local church to do the work of ministry.

According to Glen Daman, author of *Shepherding the Small Church*, Ephesians 4:12 provides the perspective that church leadership ought to equip and recruit people for the work of ministry. People need to be trained and encouraged to serve. Assistance must be given to help them discover their spiritual gift. An advantage that the small church has is that its leadership often has established personal relationships with members, making it easier to select people for specific ministries. Daman quotes Mark Senter who writes:

> The cognition of gifts also implies personal conversations with people, discussing their inclinations for service, and about people, discussing the emerging manifestations of gifts which may have not been discovered by the Christians who possess them. Perceptive pastors and Christian leaders find that the Holy Spirit provides gifted people to meet every spiritual need which he desires to have met at a given time. The problem of recruitment comes, not because of a lack of appropriate people, but because we have not activated the resources which God has provided in the local church. (Daman 1998, 199-200)

The NBLC clergy must not only begin to teach members about spiritual gifts, but help recruit and encourage them to participate in their own ministry.

According to Ephesians 4:11-12, ministers are to train and equip not only themselves, but also the members of the church body, for ministry. In 1 Timothy 5:18, Paul admonished the laborers (pastors and elders) to be partakers of the fruits that they labor to produce: one sows, another waters, as God provides increased growth.

When pastors adequately train and equip the body, the members of that body will be able to do ministry. The benefit of such an investment is that the burden of pastoral care and counseling will not fall solely upon the pastor of a church. It can be shared with other members of the body who are spiritually gifted, and equipped to minister in that
area of need. The spiritual gifts and talents of every member of the church will naturally flow to produce the works of ministry that are essential to the community of faith.

We can see that, according to Ephesians 4:12, the spiritual gifts given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are distributed for three main reasons. First, they are for the equipping of the saints. Second, they are given for the work of ministry. Third, they are for the edifying or building up of the body of Christ. For these three reasons, the operation of spiritual gifts in the NBLC, or any other church, ought to be one of its biblical objectives or goals. Christ’s role is to supply the spiritual gifts or tools necessary for His church to attain its biblical objectives. Our role as leaders is to provide the vehicle necessary to accomplish these goals. How do we equip the saints? How do we build up the church and bring its members to maturity? According to John MacArthur:

In addition to biblical goals, a church must have functional goals and objectives. Functional goals are the keys to accomplishing biblical objectives. Goals give direction and help us to realize our accomplishments. Members of our congregation must be given clear cut functional goals if they are to achieve the work of the ministry. (MacArthur 1975, Tape)

My view is that it is the role of the pastors and leaders to create an environment that builds up the local body of Christ. The pastor is the facilitator for and trainer of the church. Before learning can take place, there has to be a means for such ministry to happen. A pastor can teach the word from the pulpit to the congregation during worship services. Without special classes or learning opportunities, weekly pulpit sermons alone do not equip the saints.

Other obligations include keeping marriages intact. We must provide premarital and marital counseling assistance. Our youth must be nurtured as they deal with the
pressures brought to bear upon them by a hostile world. The sick and the elderly who are homebound need ministry from the church.

A simple Sunday sermon cannot meet all these needs. The Apostle Paul, in his instructions in 2 Timothy 2:2, told Timothy that he is to commit the teachings he had learned to faithful men. They are then to teach others. Pastors today still have an obligation to equip other Christians to do ministry. Such equipping of the saints is grounded in our understanding of Scripture.

A benefit of equipping and training members of the congregation for ministry will be lower incidents of co-dependence upon the church leadership. Ephesians 4:11 points to a vision of interdependence, rather than co-dependence. Pastors who foster co-dependent relationships with members of their congregations do not serve their spiritual growth in Christ. The Christian's faith journey is limited.

Texts such as 2 Timothy 2:15 remind church leaders that Scripture can instruct Christians with daily problems. The NBLC must become aware of their reality.

NBLC ministers can draw from Ephesians 6:10-18. These are requirements to be strengthened in the Lord Jesus Christ and in the power of his might. Paul provided helpful ideas to NBLC pastors. We are to be fully equipped with the full armor of God. Paul said:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation,
and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. (Eph. 6:10-18)

As equipped leaders, we are called to empower our members with these same spiritual tools and weapons. This is how we carry out spiritual warfare.

Pastoral Theology Concerns

The contemporary church fights its spiritual battles in several arenas. We fight against evil spiritual battles in our homes. Today's home must be armed against secular influences. Financial concerns affect homes, too. There are concerns that the spiritual health of our families are being compromised by worldly standards and violence.

Head of Household

When it comes to the presence of the male head of household, the make up of NBLC homes is not much different from the nation as a whole. In many, if not all, NBLC congregations, the number of female heads of households is significantly higher than male heads of households. The needs of these women, as they attempt to raise children and earn a living to support their family and the church, are great. In some instances, special training and equipping for these heads of families is necessary.

Studies show that fathers play a key role in the disciplining of children as they mature. How can the church help mothers respond to the needs of their teenaged boys and girls? Is there a need to provide a surrogate male influence from among the men in our congregation? I believe that the answer to that question is a resounding, "Yes!" Ministry leaders and other members of the congregation can help to provide training to single parents with male children. However, such training would be greatly enhanced if the men
of the congregation would avail themselves to assist these single parents and their
teenagers (Richardson 1996, 159-170).

Training of Parents

Are parents being trained and equipped so that their children are brought up in the
nurture of the Lord (Eph. 6:4)? Technology is changing rapidly. Vast amounts of
information are being transferred into the homes of American families via the computer,
the Internet, and cell phones. How many parents and pastors, including some in NBLC,
are technologically literate? To communicate to this generation of youth in and outside
the home will require clergy and parents to become familiar enough with the
technological tools at the disposal of today’s youth to instruct them concerning the things
that are godly versus the things that are worldly. This is important because we want to
maintain a godly influence on our children in opposition to the worldly influence (Eph.
6:4).

Influences upon Youth

Are parents and church leaders sufficiently aware of the social and cultural
influences on today’s youth? Parents and clergy need to be aware of the influences of our
society, including the influence of technology and media, on our children. An example is
found in today’s American culture, which has experienced a dramatic change in music
and entertainment trends over the past several decades. For example, some Christian
children prefer hip-hop music to traditional gospel tunes. Another example is found in the
television and radio programming that is offered by the world to our children, which
promotes worldly values rather than Christian values. What should concern Christian
parents and clergy is the fact that we may lose a generation of our children to the ways of
the world. To reverse this tide parents and clergy have to work together to become familiar with what is influencing our children.

Threat to Marriage

Another battleground that threatens families is in marriage. This battle began with Adam, the first man, and Eve, the first woman (Gen. 3). This battle persists today. NBLC families are not immune to marital and family problems. NBLC leaders have a tremendous task in training and equipping Christian families. Marriages are in a state of crisis. In a George Barna survey taken in 2004, thirty-five percent of born again adults have experienced divorce. That is the same percentage for non-born again adults. There are many reasons why marriages fail. Among those reasons are: incompatibility, financial difficulties, infidelity, and un-forgiveness. These are but a few of the major causes of marriage breakups. Yet, these problems can be dealt with through proper pastoral care and the provision of adequate training and equipping to couples who are struggling in these areas or addressed prior to the marriage ceremony.

Not only must NBLC pastors teach or view Ephesians 6:10 as mounting a defense against evil spirits that attack the family and church, but it is also necessary to be on the offensive. Paul reminded us that husbands are to love their wives, as Christ does the church (Eph. 5:25). This is a challenge today, but not impossible. Scripture reminds us that Christ empowers us to do much ministry through his strength (Phil. 4:13).

Pastoral Theological Task

The pastoral theology task of this project will be:

1. To identify the phenomenon of the clergy who are not meeting the training, equipping, and pastoral needs of congregations within the NBLC.
2. To present the results of this study to the NBLC organization.

3. To provide examples of seminars and workshops necessary to train and equip NBLC clergy in acquiring the confidence and skills needed to provide effective pastoral care for members of their congregations.

4. To identify future studies and projects that will prove helpful to the clergy and members of NBLC.

Paul's Epistles with an emphasis on Ephesians 4:7-12 is the biblical base for this project. I believe the NBLC could benefit from my project based on this text. This project is an exercise in pastoral theology within the NBLC.

Concluding Comments

This pastoral task is based on Paul’s letters as cited above. Specifically Ephesians 4:7-12 is the key passage upon which this project will draw. The needs and concerns of NBLC inform the theological task of this project.

NBLC interpret Ephesians 4:7-12 in the manner that we believe pastors, ministers, and elders are to equip the members of our congregations so that each one is to go forward and do ministry. Christians are to be maturing so that they do not become overly dependent on the leaders to solve all of their problems.
CHAPTER THREE
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND OTHER SOURCES

The primary question that this literature review seeks to answer is: "Should pastors in the NBLC be formally trained and equipped to respond to the pastoral care and counseling needs of the congregation?" The literature review integrates and critiques the findings of previously published literature on the problem presented in this project as it relates to the universal Church. This review was used to compare the theories emerging from my own research to previous literature for the purpose of establishing the relevance, urgency, and importance of this study (Merriam 1998, 51). The perspectives of four different groups were compared with the emerging theory of this study. Consequently, this chapter is divided into four sections.

The first section delineates the perspectives of secular researchers on the issue of training clergy to help people overcome the social maladies of marital and family discord, mental illness, and substance abuse. These life challenges are by no means the only problems that members of the church currently face, but they are representative of a host of other life challenges that may be addressed through pastoral care and counseling. The second section includes the insights of evangelical ministries and organizations on the training and equipping of pastors to meet the felt needs of congregants. The third section is a discussion of existing ministerial training programs within two predominantly African-American church denominations and also includes the views of African-
American scholars on the topic. Finally, the fourth section describes the pastoral training programs that are currently in place within the NBLC.

*Secular Sources*

I chose to include a review of recent literature published by secular researchers in the area of pastoral care and counseling. This was done to determine whether there was a consensus of opinion regarding the need for clergy and/or clinical counselors to be trained and equipped to serve individuals coping with major life challenges. In my review of this literature, I have found that these organizations embrace or support the need to engage the faith community in solving major life problems in the larger community, as well as in the church. While I concur with that analysis, I do not necessarily agree with all of the recommendations included in the literature of these organizations because I believe the Word of God is sufficient for meeting the needs of all people. This is especially true of those who are members of the body of Christ. However, I acknowledge the validity of the arguments, presented by secular researchers. Pastors and clergy realize that natural, as well as supernatural, interventions are often necessary to alleviate certain sufferings among parishioners. The Scriptures that support this argument are presented at the conclusion of this section.

Andrew Weaver

The Journal of Marital and Family Therapy published an article in January 1997 entitled, “Marriage and Family Therapists and the Clergy: A Need for Clinical Collaboration, Training, and Research.” The article, authored by Andrew Weaver, Harold
G. Koenig, and David B. Larson, recommends “greater collaboration between clergy and marriage and family therapists” (Weaver, et al., 1997, 13).

As stated in the first line of the article introduction, “Despite limitations in training, clergy act as de facto marriage and family counselors for millions of Americans” (Weaver, et al., 1997, 13). The authors go on to assert that, “Clergy indicate substantial interest in continuing education, particularly in family counseling issues. Marriage and family therapists can make a significant contribution to mental health care by working with and training clergy who serve families in distress” (Weaver, et al., 1997, 14).

The authors observe that, “Clergy are often unprepared to recognize the family and mental health problems of persons who seek their help” (Weaver, et al., 1997, 18). The authors further suggest that marriage and family therapists, particularly those actively involved in religious activity, could serve the faith community by “developing and implementing continuing education training designed for clergy” in the problem areas of marital discord, parenting problems, child or spouse abuse, singles counseling, premarital counseling and blended families (Weaver, et al., 1997, 18).

In addition to identifying the need for clergy training in the aforementioned areas, the article goes on to suggest that, “Clergy are going to need training and professional support from marriage and family therapists...to address the emotional and social needs of [the elderly and their families]. When clergy are offered continuing education experiences to enhance their knowledge and counseling skills with elders, they are responsive” (Weaver, et al., 1997, 20).

The researchers who authored this journal article present an argument that pastors/clergy should be formally trained to provide pastoral care to church members.
In 2005, the Multicultural Action Center (MAC) of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) published a manual entitled, *Working with Congregations to Reach African Families with Mental Illness*. The manual presents the research findings of NAMI on the role of faith communities in reaching African-American families impacted by mental illness. It was written to encourage collaboration between NAMI members and faith leaders in recognition of the stated belief that, “More African American congregations are implementing lay counseling programs and support groups to serve this population” (NAMI 2005, 4). On page four of the manual, NAMI states:

Researchers have found evidence that African Americans seek help from the clergy more frequently than from other professionals. Mental health issues are no exception. When dealing with mental illness, African American families might look for guidance, support, and understanding from their faith community. Unfortunately, often times faith leaders do not know about illness, how to help families dealing with mental illness, or they provide misguided recommendations. (2005, 6)

In the first chapter of the manual, an observation is made that despite extremely limited empirical data on the extent of clergy involvement in mental health care, there is evidence to suggest that clergy are not as confident in counseling parishioners impacted by mental illness as they are in counseling church members facing other life challenges (NAMI 2005, 7). The manual further discusses the active role that the United Methodist Church (UMC) has taken to support its members who are dealing with mental health issues, which includes UMC sponsorship of programs to educate pastors about mental illness. Additional observation is made that many UMC clergy do not believe that they have enough resources or training to help mentally ill parishioners or member families impacted by mental illness (NAMI 2005, 8).
After presenting the empirical evidence that confirms a need for the faith community to serve the mentally ill, NAMI makes recommendations outlining what the church should do to serve the mentally ill. One recommendation is for churches to “Work with organizations like NAMI to provide education and support for faith leaders and their congregations” (NAMI 2005, 26). The manual goes on to discuss the many ways that NAMI has helped church congregations in the past.

NAMI recognizes the need for church leaders to be educated to serve those members impacted by mental illness.

National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse

In their report entitled, So Help Me God: Substance Abuse, Religion and Spirituality the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) indicates that the most troubling findings of their report is that clergy acknowledge the need to provide adequate care to parishioners dealing with substance abuse problems but lack the knowledge or training on how to deal with those problems (CASA 2001, ii). The report specifically states:

CASA’s unprecedented survey reveals that 94 percent of clergy members recognize substance abuse as an important issue among family members in their congregations. Almost 38 percent believe that alcohol abuse is involved in half or more of the family problems they confront; yet only 12.5 percent of clergy completed coursework related to substance abuse while studying to be a member of the clergy and only 25.8 percent of presidents of schools of theology, including seminaries, report that persons preparing for the ministry are required to take courses dedicated to this problem. (CASA 2001, 19)

When secular organizations recognize that the faith community must receive training to provide the necessary intervention for congregants with needs that the church
is ill-equipped to handle, then pastors and clergy may benefit by similarly acknowledging this apparent deficit.

Within the African-American community there is a major problem with the use, abuse, and trafficking of drugs. This is not just a problem on the streets. Some of these individuals come into our churches seeking help and deliverance from habitual sinful behaviors and addictions. Through my years of experience in Christian counseling, I have observed that when persons with addictions seek help of their own volition, or are brought by a family member, that pastors and ministers cannot always alleviate the suffering of these parishioners by simply praying over them.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

On February 26-7, 2003, the National Association for Children of Alcoholics and the Johnson Institute convened an expert panel on seminary education to discuss the needs of people with substance abuse problems. This collaboration was sponsored by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which is part of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The panel focused specifically on how the faith community might best respond to those needs within the church and the local community. The result of that collaboration was a report entitled, *Core Competencies for Clergy and Other Pastoral Ministers in Addressing Alcohol and Drug Dependence and the Impact On Family Members*. The report states, in part:

Participants emphasized that the role of the clergy in addressing alcohol and drug dependence is not and cannot be simply a matter of “referring out” to treatment. While referrals may be appropriate, alone they are insufficient. The clergy or other pastoral minister should ensure that appropriate support continues to be available to the individual and family members, and should take an active role in
reintegrating the individual and family members into the faith community during the process of recovery.

Participants also pointed out that the ability to make referrals to the most appropriate treatment or to peer support groups is not a simple task. Clergy must find ways to help the individual and family find treatment resource that their individual needs and means. To do so, he or she must have contact with individuals knowledgeable about available programs and must be sufficiently aware of the circumstances of the affected individual and family to help assure a good match.

A consistent message by participants was that children in families experiencing alcohol or drug abuse or dependence need attention. They may be growing up in homes in which the problems are either denied or covered up; these children need to have their experiences validated. They also need safe, reliable adults in whom to confide and age-appropriate support services to meet their special needs. Research evidence continues to suggest that chronically high stress family environments are a risk factor for potential substance abuse, and both mental and physical health problems in children. They need early interventions from nurturing, supportive individuals and institutions to help change the risk equation. (Center for Substance Abuse Treatment 2003, 7)

The panelists identified and recommended a set of core competencies for inclusion in the curriculum of this nation's seminaries. This observation provides further credence to the necessity of training and equipping of clergy to minister to members of their congregations who face the challenges of substance abuse.

Conclusion

I believe in the sufficiency of Scripture to address every need of church parishioners. However, I acknowledge the validity of the arguments set forth by secular researchers. Church leaders must be trained and equipped to recognize the signs of emotional, social, psychological, and physical dysfunction among church members and to treat those dysfunctions by natural as well as spiritual means. I have identified several Scriptures to support the idea that the church can provide for the needs of parishioners in ways that are not strictly spiritual.
For example, in James 2:15-16, we read that if a brother comes into an assembly
of believers "naked and destitute" and we simply pray for him, then send him on his way
without providing whatever may be needed to meet that person's material need, the love
of God is not in us. This suggests that there are times when we have to use natural means
of intervention to bring wholeness and healing to individuals and families.

Another example is found in 1 Timothy 5:23. In this passage we read that the
Apostle Paul told Timothy to use a little wine to treat his frequent infirmities. Paul could
have told Timothy that all he needed to do was pray about his condition but his sickness
apparently did not require a spiritual remedy. Although prayer could have been used to
address his friend's sickness, Paul determined that Timothy could best be treated with
wine because of its medicinal properties. The use of wine was a natural approach to
treating Timothy's condition.

Finally, in Philippians 2:25-30, Paul told the church of Philippi that Epaphroditus
could not come to them because he was sick and needed time to get well. In this case, the
Apostle Paul's response helps us to understand that sickness may, at times, have to run its
natural course. Although Epaphroditus' ailment was apparently life-threatening, Paul
does not mention or suggest the necessity of prayer to invoke divine intervention for
Epaphroditus' healing. Despite this fact, Paul states in verse 27 that God was merciful to
his friend and he recovered. Although God was merciful, it does not appear that
Epaphroditus' was restored instantaneously. This serves as a reminder for leaders and
ministry helpers as we serve parishioners, that their recovery will not always be
immediate. Recovery may simply take time.
Evangelical Ministries and Organizations

George Barna Research Group

In research conducted in 1998, the George Barna Research Group reported that nearly two-thirds of parents (63%) said that their church should take on an increased role in assisting parents. In the same year, George Barna reported that 54% of pastors surveyed claim that they do an above average job in counseling (rating themselves as good or excellent).

In other words, this research group found that over half of the church members surveyed in 1998 wanted their churches to assist them in their role as parents. However, of the pastors surveyed, more than half rated their job of counseling their parishioners as less than good or excellent. These statistics further illuminate the need for clergy to be trained in pastoral care and counseling in general and among those church members who are parents.

FamilyLife Today

FamilyLife Today (FamilyLife) is a ministry that offers conferences, seminars, and a variety of other resources to pre-married and married couples. The ministry was originally founded in 1951 to meet the needs of Campus Crusade for Christ staff members. Service was made available to the public in 1976. Since then, more than 1.5 million people have attended FamilyLife seminars and an even greater number of people have used FamilyLife resources and materials.

FamilyLife also broadcasts a daily radio program that can be heard on many Christian radio stations across the country. The program provides practical, biblical answers to the issues that Christian couples and families face. In a broadcast that aired on
July 10, 2006, the program hosts, Dennis Rainey and Bob Lepine, interviewed Steve Grissom on the topic of divorce. As revealed in the interview, Steve Grissom was divorced several years ago and found that the pastor and leaders of his church were not adequately equipped to assist him through his marital difficulties. As a result of his experience, Steve Grissom founded a ministry to help equip pastors to deal with the issues of marital problems and divorce within their congregations.

Steve Grissom’s ministry, known as Church Initiative, provides a curriculum for pastors and lay people to come alongside couples and families considering, going through, or recovering from divorce. Church Initiative also provides materials that equip pastors and parishioners to assist those facing life challenges other than divorce support and recovery. In the words of Mr. Grissom: “Church Initiative is a church-equipping ministry. We believe very strongly that the work of the local church is central in God’s plan. So what we try to do is provide tools for churches to help them in some really difficult areas of ministry—divorce recovery, divorce prevention, for prisoners and addicts, we’re working on a project for grief recovery” (FamilyLife transcript 2006, 3).

The following excerpt, from the transcript of the FamilyLife broadcast on July 10, 2006, is particularly germane to this thesis:

**Bob:** You know, Dennis, the church has struggled in this area for years. You’ve felt a part of it. It’s a struggle in no way wanting to condone divorce but, at the same time, not knowing exactly how to respond to folks who are in the middle of it.

**Dennis:** You know, we’re not down on the church. We’re doing these broadcasts because we want to help the church better address these issues, and we’re not saying that we’ve got a corner on the truth at this point. I just know the kind of training that the average seminarian, prior to moving into the pastorate, receives. They are not prepared to face the onslaught of issues from this dysfunctional culture.
In fact, I was up late last night talking with a pastor and his wife just about how his church is so overwhelmed with the needs of people who are either going through a divorce or coming out of divorce. And so here you've got this huge onslaught of people who are coming to the church with all these needs, and the pastor has got little or no training, and it takes him 15, 20 years to get the experience under his belt to be able to address it and, by that time, he's exhausted.

That's why I think something like what you've done, Steve, is so important. You have put together a package, an entire curriculum of material that is intended to come alongside a pastor and actually equip laymen to be able to assist him in rescuing these marriages from divorce and preventing divorce in the church, isn't that right?

**Steve:** That's right, and I want to underscore what you said. I've committed the rest of my life to ministering to churches and helping equip them in some very difficult types of ministry, and so I am not down on the church at all. My experience was a learning experience, which has helped us do that.

But divorce and marriage problems are not solved in two or three counseling sessions. No pastor, with the schedule they keep, can sustain an ongoing counseling/friendship/mentoring relationship necessary. It takes sometimes two, three, four years to get a person stabilized after a divorce. You can't expect that of a pastor or even a staff pastor.

So you've got to look at another mechanism, and that's what we tried to do with these materials. (FamilyLife transcript 2006, 5-6)

It is important to note that the hosts of the FamilyLife program (a nationally recognized and syndicated Christian radio ministry) are in agreement with their guest, Steve Grissom. Seminarians and pastors are not adequately trained to help parishioners face the life challenges of marital discord and divorce. FamilyLife recognized the need to address the issue in their broadcast. Mr. Grissom's testimony and ministry further affirm the need for adequate pastoral training in the area of marital relations.

**Equipping Ministries International, Incorporated**

Equipping Ministries International, Incorporated (EMI) is a non-profit inter-denominational Christian ministry based in Cincinnati, Ohio. Its mission is to equip lay
people for life-changing ministry. For years, EMI has trained church leaders and members to do effective ministry.

EMI conducts a number of training programs and equipping seminars annually. Among its course offerings is one entitled, “Your Church as a Caring Community”. According to EMI, the goal of this training is “to help you improve your ability to promote caring community, effective discipleship, and fruitful outreach” (EMI 2001, 3).

EMI has recognized that training is vital for church leaders and congregants. The organization acknowledges that the “forces that impact society also impact churches.” EMI further indicates that some of the forces impacting U.S. churches are: (1) more broken marriages, (2) more troubled youth, (3) fewer men and women willing to serve, (4) less time dedicated to spiritual things, and (5) self-centeredness and spiritual shallowness (EMI 2001, 8).

EMI is accurate in its assessment of the impact and specific affects that societal forces have on our churches. As NBLC pastors, we need training such as that provided by EMI and other Christian institutions. Such training will enable us to deal with similar issues facing churches throughout the United States. Because NBLC churches are not immune to the societal forces that impact other churches, the training offered by organizations such as EMI is critical to the provision of effective ministry to address the societal issues previously listed.

One example is the area of broken marriages. Preventative care and counseling may greatly assist many NBLC congregants who are merely considering divorce. When NBLC pastors are adequately trained, they are better equipped to help couples experiencing trouble in their marriages. With regard to the issue of troubled youth, young
people are bombarded by television and radio programming that is increasingly violent, sexually explicit, and immoral. If pastors and other leaders within the NBLC churches are better equipped to assist today’s youth with present day issues and temptations, the kingdom of Christ will greatly benefit. Because of the existing societal forces impacting our churches, pastors need as much preparation as possible to confront such influences (Eph. 6:10-12).

Why should pastors be trained and equipped to deal with the forces that are impacting the church? In Section two of the aforementioned EMI booklet, there is a discussion of the ministry principles, ministry processes, and ministry tools that are vital in training and equipping the church. EMI states the following:

Effective Tools are the specific methods, skills and short-term strategies we use to accomplish each part of any given process. The tools we use must be versatile enough to adjust to our changing needs and shifts in the culture of the target audience. Good ministry tools are “geared to the times but anchored to the Rock.” Leaders often confuse changeable ministry tools with essential ministry processes and principles. The result is ministry stagnation. (EMI 2001, 15)

Not only is it vitally necessary that the proper tools be placed in the hands of clergy, but also the training necessary to use those tools is equally important. In addition to using the proper ministry tools, EMI points out that churches need adequate organizational processes in place. In other words, pastors cannot take upon themselves all of the roles and jobs to be performed within the church. In Section Three of the booklet, EMI quotes Charles Shields, of Brentwood Presbyterian Church, “Pastors should not see their jobs as running the church, but as empowering people to be the ministers they are called to be” (EMI 2001, 18).
In addition to having adequate processes, EMI points to the need for balancing the processes. EMI believes that a leader's strengths or weaknesses will be projected onto the members. The following quote is found in Section Three of EMI's Class Manual:

Churches and ministry organizations naturally tend to take on the strengths and the weaknesses of their leaders. This leads unavoidably to roles that limit the health and wholeness God intends for His Church. (EMI 2001, 20)

In describing the pastor's role as a teacher, evangelists, leader, nurturer, and worship leader, EMI points out that leaders are usually ineffective in more than three of these essential roles. The key to keeping congregations healthy is seeking out and equipping leaders who are strong in areas where members are less effective. This creates balance within the ministries of the church. Pastors and church leaders who lack resources for continuing education in these areas are encouraged to participate in EMI or other similar Christian ministry training events.

From the review of the EMI material and training program, it is apparent that this ministry is in agreement with one of the assumptions of this project (i.e., that pastors/clergy need to be adequately trained to provide effective pastoral care for the members of their congregations).

Lighthouse Christian Counseling

Lighthouse Christian Services, Inc. of Columbus, Ohio (Lighthouse) is a faith-based non-profit agency. It was established in 1982 to provide Christian counseling by combining the biblical principles of care giving with clinical methods. I have been a member of the Lighthouse staff as both a pastoral counselor and teacher.

Lighthouse recognized many years ago that simply counseling members of local church congregations or providing care for the mental, emotional, and other problematic
family issues of its clients was not enough. Although its counseling services have been well received by local churches and the central Ohio community, there remained a need to provide pastors and members with counseling and care-giving skills through training and equipping. Consequently, the agency’s mission was expanded and now incorporates the equipping of both ministers and lay people with the basic skills and knowledge necessary to minister effectively to the members of their home churches who have care and counseling needs.

In order to train and equip these individuals with the care-giving skills necessary to assist their churches, Lighthouse established two branches of operations. The first branch is The Lighthouse Academy (The Academy). The Academy was established in 1996 to help professionals and non-professionals develop or further hone effective biblical counseling skills. The Academy accomplishes its mission through a multi-level training program that is led by licensed or certified instructors. The Academy Principle is illustrated, as follows:

![Diagram](image)

Some areas of training offered by The Academy are: Marriage Enrichment, Parenting Skills, Biblical Care-giving, Grief Management, Conflict Resolution, Finding Quick Resources in Time of Need, Financial Planning, and Addiction and Recovery Tools.
The second branch of Lighthouse operations is The Lighthouse Care-Giving Church Program. This program involves a partnership agreement between Lighthouse Christian Services, Incorporated, and central Ohio churches, regardless of denominational affiliations, that share the agency's mission "to heal the hurting and equip the healed." This program was developed by the Academy to come alongside busy pastors and to assist them with their counseling, mentoring, and support group needs.

To determine which pastors can benefit from the Lighthouse Care-Giving Church Program, the following questions are asked of pastors: Could you use help with your counseling load? Have you ever wished you were even better equipped to deal with the mental and emotional, as well as the spiritual, needs of your members? Do you have members who long to minister to broken, hurting people, but do not really know how?

Lighthouse long ago recognized that, because of their busy schedules and minimal pastoral care and counseling skills, many pastors need the training provided by Lighthouse and similar organizations to be ready to assist their parishioners and the community with life's challenges. The Lighthouse ministry is also in agreement with, and fully supports, the concept that pastors/clergy need to be formally trained to provide adequate pastoral care and counseling to the members they serve.

African-American Churches and Authors

African Methodist Episcopal Church

The African Methodist Episcopal Church, hereinafter referred to as AME, has its headquarters in Nashville, TN. In the 2000 edition of the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church manual (DDM), the requirements for ordination of elders are specified in the first four sections of Part Five of the manual. In Section Two of
the DDM, "Preachers Admitted on Trial", the following statement concerning ordination is made: "A candidate for ordination as itinerant elder must be a graduate of a seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools or similar accrediting agencies."

Further requirements for the training of elders are found in Part Five, Section Three of the DDM, "Ministerial Education: Conference Course of Study":

The annual Conference shall appoint annually, to act at Conference one year later, a Board of Ministerial Training Examiners on the studies of each of the five series (admissions, first year, second year, third year and fourth year). This Committee should begin work of examination at the site of Annual Conference one day before the Conference opens. It shall not examine any preacher for admission, advancement, or orders who has not studied the required works. Preachers in course must each year obtain their books within the first quarter, and all of them before the end of the second quarter. Examining committee persons should, as far as possible, be relieved of other committee work until they report the results of the examinations. They should not recommend to the Conference any preacher who has not made an average of sixty-five on a basis of one hundred or who has fallen below fifty in any study. (AME 2000, 98)

AME ministerial candidates must be admitted to the church's Annual Conference prior to enrollment in a four-year minimal course of study prescribed by the AME church. The course of study, as outlined in Part Five, Section Four of the DDM includes a series of required texts for each year of the four-year program. Pastoral candidates are required to read Edward Wimberly's book entitled, African American Pastoral Care, during the fourth year of the program. The DDM also provides a lengthy bibliography of suggested readings for ministerial candidates desiring further study in the area of Pastoral Care and Counseling. The inclusion of coursework in pastoral care and counseling in the AME DDM supports the assumptions in this paper: that clergy should be adequately trained to provide pastoral care and counseling for church members.
Many of the pastoral care and counseling books recommended by the AME were not available to me while conducting this literature review. However, I was able to obtain and review the second volume of The Pastor's Manual.

The Pastor's Manual is a two-volume set. Part Three of the second volume includes five papers authored by AME clergy. The first paper, written by Carolyn L. McCrary, Ph.D., is entitled “Pastoral Care and the Local Church.” It identifies the necessary components for providing pastoral care on pages 148 and 149: listening, empathy, and confidentiality. The author goes on to define each component.

McCrary identifies and describes three models of the pastoral caregiver on pages 152 and 153: the Shepherding Approach, the Wounded Healer Approach, and the Storyteller Approach. According to McCrary, the shepherding approach is signified by a relationship between the pastor and congregants, whereby the pastor is likened unto an earthly “shepherd.” The author bases her description of the wounded healer approach on a classic book, by the same title, authored in 1970 by Henri Nouwen. Finally, the storyteller approach is borrowed from the African-American experience in which pastor serves as teller of community narratives in caring for and affirming hurting parishioners.

The paper offers several definitions of Pastoral Counseling. McCrary defines the term in greatest detail on page 154 of her paper:

Pastoral Counseling is a specialized discipline under the overarching discipline of pastoral care. Pastoral counseling is offered in response to individuals, couples and families who are experiencing pain in their lives and who seek pastoral help in order to deal with it.

The remaining papers in the pastoral care section of volume two of the AME manual address: the need for pastoral leaders to serve the body of Christ, ministerial ethics, care for the physical health and welfare of clergy, and care for the emotional
health of clergy. These papers were more general in nature and did not specifically discuss the means by which clergy might meet the pastoral care needs of AME church members.

As previously mentioned, the prerequisites for ministerial ordination set forth in the AME Pastor's Manual includes a set curriculum for prospective elders which includes a prescribed course of study to equip and train ministry candidates with a basic level of knowledge concerning pastoral care and counseling.

The AME manual is the most comprehensive of all the organizational materials researched for this literature review. I am in agreement with the general requirement of the AME church for training ministerial candidates prior to ordination. Furthermore, I believe that the AME church's four-year practicum of study, which includes study of pastoral care and counseling, is noteworthy and exemplary. This AME program of study for ministerial candidates further supports the need for clergy to be formally trained in pastoral care and counseling.

Church of our Lord Jesus Christ

The Church of our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Incorporated (Church of our Lord Jesus Christ) is headquartered at 2081 Adam Powell Jr., Boulevard. in New York, New York. It is an international organization with many churches in the United States of America and throughout the world. The doctrinal beliefs and organizational structure of this denomination is very similar to that of the NBLC.

The Church of our Lord Jesus Christ has as its discipline the requirement that its ministers be trained in several areas of study, including pastoral care and counseling. A section of its discipline book entitled, "Credentials for Ordained Elders" states the
following: "At least one year, or thirty semester hours, of training through the Church of Christ Bible Institute is required prior to a new minister’s ordination" (Woolfolk 1991, 48). Bishop Fred Rubin, the Apostle of Education of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, verbally clarified that the required ministerial training includes at least one course in pastoral care and counseling. A prospective minister may attend the organization’s William Bonner Bible College, located in Columbia, South Carolina, or other accredited institutions.

Of all the materials reviewed by the various organizations included in this literature review, the doctrinal beliefs of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ are closest to the beliefs of the NBLC organization. However, it is worth noting that the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ supports the premise that pastors should receive adequate training in pastoral care, as evidenced by the statements of the Apostle of Education.

Newborn Lighthouse Churches of the Apostolic Faith

The NBLC organization has made significant progress in promoting and encouraging its pastors to be better trained and equipped in the area of pastoral care and counseling. However, the need still exists for pastors to have some formal training in this area. Apart from standard doctrinal beliefs, there is no criteria or training requirement for pastors.

Time constraints faced by NBLC pastors, as mentioned in Chapter One, hinders them from obtaining adequate training. A number of the pastors cannot afford to take time away from their congregations to pursue the training needed to assist parishioners. These pastors find themselves fulfilling multiple roles in dealing with spiritual as well as
natural issues. Those who do ministry without the aid of other ordained elders or ministers are more constrained in their efforts to obtain the training they need.

On page four of the NBLC’s reference manual, which is entitled, *The Discipline Book*, the following passage of Scripture is found:

Go through, go through the gates; Prepare ye the way of the people; Cast up, cast up the highway; Gather out the stones; Lift up a standard for the people. (Isa. 62:10)

As pastors, we must lead the people we serve. We are called by God to remove obstacles that impede growth within the church. The members of the church need to be empowered. One biblical example is to lift up a banner for them. Song of Solomon 2:4 states that the Lord’s banner over His people is love. The leaders are challenged to raise a banner of love and caring over the people of God. We do this in response to God’s unconditional love for us.

A closer look at the table of contents of our doctrine and discipline book does not reveal any references to educating or training the clergy of the NBLC organization (see Appendix). On page 128 of *The Discipline Book*, in Chapter X that is entitled, “Installation of a Pastor,” there is not a stated requirement that clergy complete a formal course of study in pastoral care or counseling prior to installation.

Also, on page 130, in a section entitled, “Ordination of an Elder,” pastors are not required to receive any formal training prior to ordination. The biblical criteria found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 is used as the basis for the person’s ordination along with the recognition and recommendation of his pastor and bishops. Also, there is no fulfillment of an education curriculum needed before a person is ordained as an elder or a bishop in the
NBLC (NBLC 2002, 130). As recent as the July 2, 2006 convocation, no discussion has been held to train NBLC leaders or any level of ministry.

In Chapter One of this book, all of the NBLC pastors interviewed for this project indicated that NBLC should establish a minimum number of hours of training in pastoral care and counseling. Furthermore, those interviewed indicated that the NBLC organization should do more to prepare pastors to meet the pastoral care and counseling needs of their parishioners.

This literature review for the NBLC suggests that the NBLC organization should establish a criteria that recognizes and addresses the need for our clergy to be formally trained to provide adequate pastoral care and counseling to the members of the church, so that the whole body of Christ would be better served.

Summary

This literature review affirms the need for pastors or clergy to be adequately trained in the area of pastoral care and counseling. Although there is some variation in the recommendations offered by the organizations studied, the overall view is that formalized training in pastoral care and counseling is essential. NBLC clergy would benefit from such training.

In undertaking this review, the sources mentioned in this chapter included organizational publications and Internet websites, as well as scholarly published literature on the topic of equipping and training clergy without seminary training, to provide pastoral care and counseling to congregants. I believe that the materials collected were sufficient to answer the primary question set forth at the beginning of this chapter.
The materials collected in the literature review reveal the necessity of further equipping clergy to provide pastoral care and counseling to parishioners. This literature review has established the need for such training. It has also identified organizations and ministries that recognize the need to equip pastors to meet such challenges. Identifying this phenomenon and proposing some solutions is the focus of this project.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

In order to study the main problem of whether pastors in the NBLC should be formally trained and equipped to meet the pastoral care and counseling needs of the congregation, it seemed most prudent to select those NBLC pastors with the greatest likelihood of having provided pastoral care and counseling to their parishioners over the span of many years. In addition, it was necessary to determine how their knowledge and understanding of pastoral care was obtained.

The methodology used in conducting this study was interviewing. The pastors selected for interviews were contacted, either by telephone or in person, to solicit their participation in the interviews. All of the pastors were quite amenable and welcomed the opportunity to speak with me.

Designing the Interview Questions

Because the type of research that I would be gathering is considered qualitative, I decided to develop open-ended interview questions (Merriam 1998, 74). "Open-ended interviews are built around areas (or ‘items’) that are believed to be critical to the practice of the ministry under consideration" (Myers 2000, 50). The interview questions posed to each interviewee are listed below:
1. What resources do pastors consult when attempting to counsel (e.g., Bible, private sources, social service agencies, counseling services)?

2. How do pastors handle the following types of needs:
   a. Crisis counseling and intervention or accident/serious injury
   b. Addictions
   c. Premarital (is there a set number of hours?)
   d. Marital
   e. Elder/senior care and counseling
   f. Abuse/spousal and other
   g. Youth and young adults
   h. Financial
   i. Death and bereavement

3. Is there an established care team in the church?

4. What are the criteria for ordination of new pastors? Should pastors have a minimum number of hours of training in pastoral care and counseling?

5. How would you define pastoral care and counseling? What is your idea of pastoral care and counseling?

6. What would make in your church for an ideal pastoral care and counseling situation?

7. Some say that pastors preach at problems when counseling is needed. What would you say to that?

8. A. What would you say to the level of pastoral care and counseling training you received through NBLC church? B. The structure of our organization is
such that young men can immediately become ministers without having to learn any particular skills in pastoral care and counseling before ordination as an elder. C. How should this be addressed? What can be one to improve pastoral care and counseling at NBLC?

9. What types of pastoral care and counseling training would you like to have?

10. How many members including other leaders in your congregations are equipped to handle care and counseling needs of the people?

11. Do you have anything you would like to add?

12. What is the size of your congregation?

In developing the interview questions, I reflected on my own knowledge and experience in providing pastoral care and counseling. This resulted in the identification of three major areas of investigation for purposes of addressing the phenomenon being studied for this paper.

The first series of interview questions were designed to identify what, if any, existing resources each respondent consulted when faced with the need to provide pastoral care and counseling to their members. The second set of questions was designed to discover the current pastoral care practices of the pastors interviewed. This series of questions included a listing of several major pastoral care and counseling topics. To be specific, I selected those topics or issues that I understood to be core, or essential, to providing minimal pastoral care and counseling at any church. The intent in including this topical listing was to extract information about each respondent’s experience with and knowledge of the issues identified.
The final series of questions were designed to obtain a general overview of the extent of individualized training that each respondent had already received through the NBLC organization, to determine the extent to which the pastors interviewed desired further training, and to determine whether those interviewed would recommend formal training for pastoral candidates. Included in this set were questions designed to determine each pastor’s knowledge of the requirements for ordination of elders in the NBLC and to solicit their opinions as to whether elders should have experience or training in pastoral care and counseling before they are ordained.

This manner of questioning was designed to allow each pastor to reflect upon and readily respond to the issues and problems that are typically addressed in providing adequate pastoral care and counseling. A general question concerning current practices related to pastoral care may or may not have elicited a comprehensive response to what is typically considered to be pastoral care.

*Defining and Selecting the Sample*

The NBLC is a small organization. Therefore, the total number of clergy serving the organization as pastors of NBLC churches is comprised of twenty-nine men. Of the twenty-nine, seven were selected to participate in the interviews conducted for this project.

In defining and selecting a sample of NBLC clergy to interview, I limited my focus to those bishops who are actively serving the NBLC organization. This was done to draw upon their expertise and knowledge of pastoral care and counseling,
with the expectation that their experience in providing pastoral care would be more extensive than most NBLC pastors.

This sampling methodology is commonly referred to as purposive or purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling enables the investigator to gain insight through a selection of interview subjects from whom “the most can be learned” (Merriam 1998, 61). William Myers describes the purposive sampling technique as follows:

What goes into the “purposive choice” of certain persons to be interviewed is determined by the nature of what is being explored. A purposive sample, therefore, is done for certain named reasons. For example, persons are purposively chosen who may be (1) aware, (2) “typical” of the group, (3) politically savvy, or (4) generally knowledgeable. Persons also might be interviewed because (1) they fit certain demographics, (2) they were chosen by someone else, (3) they have a reputation, or (4) they represent those “in” and “out,” or “for” or “against.” Purposive samples often are based on convenience; i.e., “these are the folk I could interview, given where I was located.” (Myers 2000, 48)

In keeping with Merriam’s and Myers’ descriptions of purposive sampling, the individuals that I selected for interviews were those that I believed to be the most knowledgeable about the ministry of pastoral care and counseling within the NBLC churches. I also interviewed bishops because of their oversight of many NBLC churches within their respective districts. Finally, I selected those pastors who would be at the site where the interviews were conducted.

The sampling technique employed was not only purposeful but, more specifically, unique and convenient. I chose those individuals with the most knowledge about the phenomenon under study. Also I had to consider the time and monetary constraints to gathering the information required for this study (Merriam 1998, 62-63).
In addition, I consulted with the presiding bishop of the NBLC concerning my selection criteria to get his input, suggestions, and direction concerning the proposed sample. In this way, I employed a networking sampling technique, which ensured that I would receive useful information from the individual (i.e., the presiding bishop) with the most knowledge about the NBLC as an organization (Merriam 1998, 63). The bishop agreed that limiting my sample to the organization’s bishops would be the most helpful in identifying and addressing any pastoral care and counseling deficiencies within the organization.

The selection of the interview sample ensured collection of the information necessary to assess the adequacy of the resources and training that are currently available to NBLC clergy. This will assist them in providing adequate pastoral care and counseling. The assessment is to be made with a view toward identifying problem areas in this area of ministry that may be addressed by the NBLC organization in the future.

Finally, by limiting the sample to NBLC bishops, any problems related to the provision of pastoral care and counseling within the organization would become apparent through the interview of those individuals with the authority to affect any changes necessary within the NBLC organization.

There are nine bishops in active service in the NBLC. However, three of the bishops were not available during the time of the convocation in 2004 when the interviews were held. Consequently, I selected one elder to fulfill my sample size requirement. I considered the elder who was selected to be more knowledgeable
about the structure and operation of the organization than most of the other elders in the organization.

All but two of the seven pastors selected for interviews had served as pastors for over ten years and were quite familiar with the structure of the NBLC. Furthermore, all of the pastors interviewed had been ordained by the NBLC.

*Profile of Interview Subjects*

The clergy interviewed have congregations that represent a cross-section of congregations throughout the NBLC organization. The pastors interviewed reported that their membership rosters ranged in size from just over two hundred parishioners to as few as thirty. Four of the pastors interviewed have congregations ranging in size from seventy to one hundred seventy active members.

All but one of the seven pastors selected for interviews held the title of bishop. A pastor who does not hold the office of bishop is a church elder. In the NBLC, all bishops are elders before they are ordained to the office of bishop.

The six bishops interviewed represent the core leadership of the NBLC. Their decisions affect how the organization functions and how it conducts its business. Throughout the course of the year, and at the national convocation in June or July of every year, these bishops assess the functions and operations of the NBLC.

All interviewees selected are actively serving; none were retired. In addition to their duties as pastors and decision makers within the NBLC, these bishops serve as overseers of churches in several regions of the country. One of the five bishops interviewed is the overseer of churches in Jamaica.
The majority of pastors selected were from the southern region of the United States. Most of the NBLC churches are located in this region of the U.S. One pastor is from Jamaica, West Indies.

There are twenty-six churches in the NBLC organization. The churches are organized into five districts. The pastors who were interviewed for this study oversee districts comprising the majority of states in which NBLC churches are currently operating. Specifically, the pastors interviewed represent three of the five major districts within the NBLC. The East Central district includes the states of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and the District of Columbia. The North Central district includes the states of Ohio and Kentucky, as well as Canada. Finally, the South Central district is comprised of the states of Tennessee, Missouri, Mississippi, and Arkansas.

As previously noted, the bishops who oversee the other two districts were not available to be interviewed during convocation week. These bishops oversee the two remaining NBLC districts. The Northeast district is comprised of the states of New York and Connecticut, as well as New England. The Southeast district is made up of the states of Florida and Georgia.

Three of the bishops interviewed oversee the East Central, North Central and South Central districts. Three other pastors interviewed are state bishops. One oversees the state of Missouri and the other oversees the state of Arkansas. State bishops oversee all of the NBLC churches in the states where they preside. The sixth bishop interviewed supervises two NBLC churches in Jamaica, West Indies. The
NBLC's presiding bishop pastors a church in Columbus, Ohio and supervises the North Central district.

All of the pastors interviewed were male. This is because one of the criteria for ordination within the NBLC is that the candidate be male. The youngest pastor interviewed is in his late 40s and the oldest pastor interviewed is in his mid-70s. All respondents are married and have families.

All but two of the interview subjects have been pastors for many years and for most of their adult lives. One bishop interviewed has served as pastor for eight years and his ministry is his second career. The elder who was interviewed also chose pastoral ministry as a second career.

Most pastors interviewed serve urban populations with some serving some rural congregations. The majority of the interviewees serve as solo pastors due to small sizes of their congregations. None of the pastoral ministers interviewed have had formal training, such as seminary or Bible college. I have personally known all of the pastors interviewed for many years.

**Conducting the Interviews**

I decided to interview each pastor at the June 2004 NBLC national convocation for the sake of time and ease of travel. All of the interviews were conducted over a period of two days. Approximately one-half of the interviews were held during one day of the convocation and the other half were held the following day.

Some of the pastors were telephoned ahead of time to solicit their agreement to being interviewed at the convocation. The remaining interviews subjects selected
were asked face-to-face to participate in the interviews during convocation week. I did not disclose the questions to be asked beforehand, but explained the subject and purpose of the interview project. In addition, I did not address any specific questions beforehand. The interviews were designed in this way to elicit responses that were not thought out beforehand.

When initially contacted, each pastor was told that the time frame for his interview would be approximately forty-five minutes. All of the information gathered from the NBLC pastors was obtained from face-to-face interviews. Written surveys or questions were not provided to the pastors beforehand. I thought it best to hear and record first hand what each pastor had to say without requiring him to labor intensively over providing answers to a written survey or questionnaire.

Before each interview, pleasantries and conversation of a general nature were shared. Each pastor was told just prior to the interview the number of questions to be asked. Permission was then obtained from each pastor permitting the interview to be audio taped.

I wanted the pastors interviewed to be relaxed and at ease while responding to the questions, therefore each pastor was interviewed individually in face-to-face meetings in a room at the premises where the convocation was held. I sought meeting rooms where the interviews could be conducted free from any breaks, interruptions or distractions. Although each interview was tape-recorded, I simultaneously wrote brief notes of each interviewee’s responses to the interview questions (Myers 2000, 54). All of the interviewees were very cooperative, enthusiastic, and forthcoming with information and responses.
The interview itself was conducted in the following manner. I asked questions and listened to each response. After the response was given, the respondent was given a chance to provide further clarification. To do this, it was often necessary after questioning to rephrase the previous question asked to elicit more information from the respondent. Furthermore, at the end of the interview each pastor was given an opportunity to elaborate or provide additional insights concerning the topics discussed during the interview. After their interviews, the pastors were very encouraging and shared their belief that the project would be helpful to the NBLC.

The only document reviewed was the NBLC’s *Discipline Book*. The *Discipline Book* contains the organization’s bylaws, organizational structure, and ordination criteria, among other topics.

*Analysis of Interview Data*

After the interviews were completed, I listened to each recording and wrote summaries of each interviewee’s response, in lieu of preparing a fully transcribed interview. This was necessary because of the lack of time and expertise to produce a verbatim transcript of each recording (Merriam 1998, 88 & 91). The information collected was recorded on what I call interview summaries rather than interview logs. Merriam suggested interview logs in her book on qualitative research (Merriam 1998, 92). The interview summaries contain more information than Merriam’s interview logs.

To ensure that all of the major points had been captured in the summary, each interview summary was compared with the notes taken during the course of each interview. Use of the interview summaries also helped to protect the confidentiality of
each respondent by eliminating the possibility of identification through characteristic speech patterns.

Also, for the sake of maintaining anonymity, each pastor was assigned a letter from H through N. The alphabetic designation for each respondent appears at the top of each interview summary sheet, along with a corresponding cassette tape number.

Finally, for ease of future reference, it was necessary to create a legend, on which I listed the assigned letter designation for each interviewee. Each question asked was also coded with the corresponding tape number and tape counter number noted in the column for each interviewee (Merriam 1998, 88 & 91).

After reviewing the interview summaries, I categorized the responses into the three major areas or categories specified earlier in this chapter. Within each of the three major categories, I identified as many as three subcategories for ease of data summarization and analysis. All of the major categories, as well as the corresponding subcategories, are discussed in detail in the following chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

An argument can be made that many of the maladies plaguing people in today's society have their root in the sin nature. This is also true for the members of the body of Christ. As a pastor, I tend to base most of my care ministry on the words of the Bible. My operating assumption is that sin is at the root of most problems within the congregation. Authentic care and healing occurs within the community of faith. This truth is confirmed in Scripture. Specifically, James 5:16 says to “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” While I believe in miraculous and supernatural healings as recorded in Scripture, I also believe God uses other means of restoration. Such is often the case with persons beset by addictions.

A recovering drug or alcohol abuser may need to be in a regimented program to help the individual break the habit and to learn about the effects of addictive substances on their bodies. The ministerial staff of a church could refer members with substance abuse problems to a twelve-step program. This would provide the necessary support and accountability for those who struggle with addiction. Twelve-step recovery programs and church participation work in tandem with one another. Therefore, it is necessary that clergy have a basic understanding of the treatment and recovery processes used by non-church organizations.
Another example is the area of financial management. Individuals and families can sometimes find themselves deep in debt and out of financial control. A pastor's ability to address effectively such an issue may be beyond his capability or training. Therefore, it would be necessary for that pastor to recommend that individuals facing such challenges seek help from financial counselors and/or financial institutions to bring spending habits under control and to equip their members to manage their finances better.

Addictions and financial mismanagement are not the only behavioral problems for which pastors must provide care and counseling. A complete listing of the societal issues considered for purposes of this study are provided in the following section.

My research revealed that there are a variety of secular organizations that address the social concerns and ills impacting the church. However, while I do not always advocate secular therapy in the treating of spiritual problems, I do recognize and acknowledge the need for clergy and pastors to be trained and equipped to employ a variety of intervention methods that have been proven to help individuals suffering the ill affects of substance abuse and other dysfunctional behaviors.

*Categorization of Research Data*

This study is intended to examine all of the ways in which pastors may effectively minister to their congregations. The primary question that I have sought to answer in this study is: "Should pastors in the NBLC be formally trained and equipped to respond to the pastoral care and counseling needs of the congregation?" In the previous chapter I explained how the study was developed and the research
conducted. In this chapter I summarize the information gathered through interviews conducted with seven NBLC pastors.

The information collected through the interviews has been organized into three major categories. The three categories are entitled: Existing Pastoral Care Resources, Current Pastoral Care Practices, and Synopsis of Pastoral Care Training. These three major categories are further divided into subcategories, which are described in the initial paragraphs that following each major category subheading.

**Category One: Existing Pastoral Care Resources**

The first category, which I entitled “Existing Pastoral Care Resources,” identifies the resources that NBLC pastors currently refer to in providing pastoral care and counseling to their parishioners. This category consists of responses to the first interview question. Its subcategories are: The Bible and Other Written Materials, External Counselors and Organizations, and Personal Experience.

The first subcategory includes materials authored by NBLC pastors or other ministries. The second subcategory includes written materials and services provided by secular counselors or social service organizations. The third subcategory refers to the degree of personal expertise revealed by the seven pastors interviewed. My analyses of the data collected in each subcategory are presented in the sections that follow.

**The Bible and Other Written Materials**

Every pastor interviewed cited the Bible as his primary source for addressing the pastoral care needs of their parishioners. Three of the seven pastors refer to manuals and other written materials obtained from other NBLC pastors or external
sources. One pastor revealed that he wrote a manual for his church that addresses the general issues his congregation confronts. This pastor also uses a manual written by another NBLC pastor on relational issues.

External Counselors and Organizations

Four of the pastors have access to or have consulted with external social service organizations and counselors. One pastor has referred members of his church to social service agencies for clinical counseling needs. The same pastor has referred congregants to a non-profit human needs organization for professional counseling.

Another pastor made use of the materials and information provided to him by a licensed professional counselor in meeting certain congregant needs. This pastor affirmed that he has consulted with and made referrals to external agencies when he believed that the needs of his parishioners were greater than his ability to address them.

Personal Experience

The third subcategory summarizes the extent to which the NBLC pastors interviewed currently rely on personal experience in meeting the pastoral care needs of their parishioners.

All of the pastors interviewed had varying degrees of personal experience in handling the issues presented and discussed in the second major category. A summarization of the extent of the pastors' overall experience in handling those issues is presented in the following major category.
Category Two: Current Pastoral Care Practices

The second major category is entitled, "Current Pastoral Care Practices." This category consists of responses to interview questions 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7. It provides an overview of the personal experience of the NBLC pastors in each of four subcategories.

The first subcategory is entitled, "Pastoral Care Issues." It includes the following nine items: Crisis Counseling and Intervention, Addictions, Pre-marital, Marital, Senior Care, Abuse (spousal and other), Youth and Young Adults, Financial and Death and Bereavement.

The second subcategory is the "Pastoral Care Organization." This subcategory refers to the care structure that each pastor interviewed has in place for his congregation.

The third subcategory is "Pastoral Care Definition." It refers to each pastor's definition of pastoral care and counseling.

The final subcategory is "Pastoral Care Ideal." It refers to the interviewees' opinions concerning how pastoral care can ideally be ministered to congregants. This subcategory includes a summarization of the interviewees' responses to the practice of preaching at problems when counseling is needed. My analysis of the data collected in each subcategory is presented in the sections that follow.

Pastoral Care Issues

Crisis Counseling and Intervention

All seven pastors indicated that if they were to learn of an accident involving serious injury, they would seek opportunities to meet with the family of the victim.
However, after initially meeting with families impacted by a crisis, each pastor reported different means of following through with these parishioners. One pastor advised that he initially sought direction from the Lord through prayer, and consulted a grief manual to assist him in ministering to the families. Three pastors explained that they assessed the situation to determine how they should proceed in meeting family needs. Several pastors mentioned specific and practical means of meeting family needs in these situations. One pastor revealed that he does whatever is necessary to help the family through the crisis. Another pastor stated that he offered the family prayer, along with assistance to meet financial needs, as necessary. A third pastor said that he referred his parishioners to “the best care facility for the need that they have.” He maintained contact with the family and the care facility to determine how the church could assist the family. The fourth pastor indicated that he not only offers support for spiritual needs, but offered comfort and support for the more tangible needs of his congregants. A fifth pastor said that he comforted families through the sharing of Scripture passages that were appropriate to their unique circumstances.

Addictions

Three of the seven pastors advised that they have had only minimal, if any, exposure to this problem. One pastor had very limited exposure to addiction issues within his congregation. This pastor has addressed the issue of addiction by telling parishioners what the Scriptures say about such behaviors. It is his belief that the Bible is adequate to deal with potential addiction concerns. The second pastor also believed that the Bible is sufficient for meeting the needs of addicted members and
their families. This pastor indicated that meditation on the Word of God would enable addicted individuals to overcome that problem. The same pastor and a third pastor revealed a willingness to refer their parishioners to outside sources. These pastors recognized their limitations in handling this pastoral care issue.

Among the four pastors who have encountered the problem of addiction, two pastors indicated that they use the Bible and prayer to address the needs of those with or impacted by addictions. One of the two pastors has addicted members “go through a cleansing process involving fasting and prayer.”

The two remaining pastors are in the process of implementing programs to help addicted members and their families. The sixth pastor says that he pairs addicted members with other members who have overcome similar addictions. The last of the seven pastors related that he is in the process of setting up a program that will keep the addicted member “involved in the church and in the community.”

Premarital

All seven pastors have had experience with this issue. Each pastor has his own program for counseling couples prior to marriage. One pastor stated, “What we’re doing now is putting together a pre-marital manual, as well as a marriage counseling manual.” This pastor is the only one of the seven to initiate creation of his own manual for internal use within his church.

Marital

All seven pastors have had experience in providing pastoral care for marital issues. However, one pastor indicated, “Most of the members [of his congregation]
don’t have marital problems.” One of the pastors stated, “Problems generally revolve around three categories: personal, emotional and financial.” Another pastor uses a manual that his church developed to address pre-marital and marital counseling issues.

Senior Care

All seven pastors have had experience in providing pastoral care to senior citizens. Care ranges from inpatient and home visitations to providing for the basic physical needs of the senior citizens.

Abuse (Spousal and Other)

Two of the seven pastors stated that they have not encountered this problem within their congregations. One of the two pastors stated that his church attempts to prevent the problem through teachings from the Bible.

The second pastor stated that he would deal with abuse issues from a biblical perspective and refer the parties involved to “outside professional services.” A third pastor indicated that he referred to the manual that his church created concerning relational issues.

Of the remaining pastors interviewed, all expressed sufficient understanding of the complexities of the problem and experiential knowledge of how to resolve the problem.

Youth and Young Adults

All but one of the pastors interviewed have designated church leaders (i.e., deacons or ministers) to deal with the young people in their congregations. These
pastors also indicated that they were available to the youth when the designated youth ministers encountered circumstances that they are not able to deal with on their own.

Only one of the pastors interviewed said that he dealt with the youth directly by encouraging them to “plan for the future and to remain pure.” This pastor also ministered to the youth of his church by listening to them and teaching them what the Bible says about their issues.

Financial

Three of the seven pastors reported that they have set aside funds, or taken up special collections, to assist congregants who encounter temporary, or minimal, financial setbacks. Two of these pastors, along with three other pastors, indicated that they offer financial counseling and/or money management classes/workshops for the members of their churches.

The seventh pastor said that he “encourages members to be good stewards over their money and to tithe.” The same pastor encourages his members to “meet their financial obligations, pay their tithes and maintain good credit.”

Death and Bereavement

Five of the seven pastors minister to grieving families by being available to them for prayer, comfort and/or counseling. One pastor reported that he refers to a grief manual prior to ministering to bereaved family members.

Another pastor reported that his church provided monetary and living assistance (e.g., meals) to grieving families. The same pastor said that the church worked with each family for three to four months, if necessary. This was part of the
church's "after funeral care program." Similarly, a third pastor reported that his church provided monetary assistance to families who needed money to meet emergency expenses following the death of a family member.

Pastoral Care Organization

Of the seven pastors interviewed, only two have established formal care teams within the churches they pastor. Two of the four pastors without care teams have established informal networks for communicating the pastoral care needs of the congregation to the pastors.

The other two pastors indicated that they do not have care teams because their congregations are small. The churches they serve do not have the problems that are found in churches with larger congregations.

Pastoral Care Definition

Two of the pastors interviewed indicated the pastoral care involves meeting the needs of their parishioners. One of those two pastors and a third pastor stated that pastoral care requires prayerfulness and seeking the Lord's direction in ministering to the needs of the people. One pastor further explained that "counseling requires prayerfulness, because the Lord can direct you in what to say and how to say it in a counseling situation."

Another pastor also explained, "If the pastor is hearing from God, He will give him the way to take care of the problems his congregants encounter. The pastor is just like a shepherd taking care of his flock, looking to the Chief Shepherd who alone can provide all of the answers needed in any situation."
Three pastors indicated that pastoral care involves ministering to the needs of the total person in recognition of the fact that humans are tripartite beings. One pastor’s idea of care and counseling is to “love, encourage and comfort his [church] members.” He further explained that pastoral care has a preventative element to it in that the pastor informs his parishioners of the temptations that they may encounter in life and wants his members to avoid potential problems.

Pastoral Care Ideal

Four of the pastors interviewed indicated that they would welcome the training of ministerial staff (i.e., associate pastors and ministers) to meet the pastoral care needs of their parishioners because the members generally look to the pastor to meet all of their needs. The remaining pastors provided very different responses to the question posed.

One pastor stated that he would like to see:

The re-establishment of the five-fold ministry in the local church. Pastoral care is dealing with the ministry that Jesus left with the apostles. We need the gifts operating in the church. Without those gifts the church is not operating, as it should. This church is not perfected as it ought to be.

Another pastor stated that clergy must be “concerned with the needs of the people” because there are too many people serving the church in the office of pastor who are more concerned with saving souls than ministering to the needs of the whole person. All seven pastors interviewed agreed that pastoral care and counseling should not be exclusively provided through a sermon to the general congregation, as is the practice of some churches. These pastors believe that the ministry of pastoral care and
counseling should be personalized and provided in face-to-face private consultations with the pastor and/or trained ministry leaders within the church.

Category Three: Synopsis of Pastoral Care Training

The third and final major category is “Synopsis of Pastoral Care Training.” Interview questions 4, 8, and 9 solicited each respondent’s opinion concerning the training that they have received through the NBLC, the types of training they would like to have, and their suggestions for improving pastoral care and counseling training in the NBLC churches. Correspondingly, the final category is further divided into the following three subcategories: “Training Received,” “Training Desired,” and “Training Suggested.”

Training Received

None of the pastors interviewed have received training from the NBLC in providing pastoral care and counseling. All agreed that the organization does not currently make such training available to candidates for ordination. Two of the pastors interviewed indicated that they had received counsel and assistance on providing pastoral care from other elders within the NBLC.

Training Desired

All of the pastors interviewed, except two, wanted to receive pastoral care and counseling training in specific areas. Of the six, one pastor wanted to learn more about marital problems, abuse, and mental illness. The second pastor also indicated that he would like to learn more about marital and abuse counseling. The third pastor would like training on such topics as spousal abuse and sexually active youth. The
fourth pastor wanted to learn more about ministering to the needs of "the whole person." The fifth pastor said that he would like to know about the legal ramifications of providing such care to his church members.

Of the two pastors who did not express an interest in receiving pastoral care and counseling training in a specific area, one pastor acknowledged an interest in receiving more training but believed that he is too old to benefit from such training. The other pastor believes that God will enable him to do whatever is necessary to provide pastoral care for the individuals he pastors. While I agree with what this pastor said, I believe that God, at times, may use other people to enable us to minister to those with pastoral care needs.

Training Suggested

All but one of the pastors interviewed believe that ordination candidates should receive some formal training in pastoral care and counseling.

Concluding Remarks and Observations

Of the seven pastors interviewed, all had years of experience in providing care and counseling to individuals and families with issues common to every church (e.g., crisis intervention, marital, financial). However, only two of the pastors interviewed had experience in ministering to individuals struggling with addictions. These pastors are developing programs, within the churches they serve, to meet the needs of addicted individuals. Several of the other interviewees acknowledged their limitations in ministering to such individuals, while the remaining respondents believed that
Scripture, prayer, and fasting would adequately address the needs of people with this problem.

Clearly, the NBLC must find a means to train and equip clergy who encounter this specific pastoral care issue. The problem of substance abuse and addiction is pervasive in African American communities, especially among youth. NBLC clergy must be trained and equipped to address this issue, especially as it impacts young adults, if the organization is to be a viable entity in the community.

In addition to addressing the obvious need for training in the area of addictions, most of the pastors interviewed were interested in receiving training in one or more of the following pastoral care areas: marital relations, abuse, teen promiscuity, and mental illness. Three of the interviewees said that they would like to receive training to minister to people with marital issues. The NBLC may also want to consider providing training to clergy with an interest in this area.

Finally, based upon interviewee responses to other questions, as well as my own experience in working with the NBLC organization and clergy, I believe that the NBLC could benefit from offering some formal training to its leaders in all areas of pastoral care.

To be more specific, it was previously noted that none of the pastors interviewed have received formal training in the ministry of pastoral care and counseling. The majority of the interviewees are the sole providers of pastoral care for their congregations. Consequently, most of the interviewees indicated that they would welcome the training of other leaders within their churches to assist them in ministering to the pastoral care needs of their congregants. In fact, many of these
respondents have referred, or are willing to refer, their parishioners to external secular agencies to receive pastoral care for needs that exceed their individual levels of expertise.

These observations, and the fact that all of the pastors interviewed believe that ordination candidates should receive some formal training in pastoral care and counseling, have led me to develop specific recommendations to train and equip interested NBLC clergy in all areas of pastoral care and counseling ministry. Should these recommendations be adopted, the organization will be in a better position to ensure that every NBLC minister will provide our members with adequate pastoral care in their areas of need. My recommendations, with regard to the equipping and training of NBLC clergy in all areas of pastoral care and counseling, will be presented and discussed in detail in the final chapter of this project.
CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The primary question to be answered for purposes of this study is: "Should pastors in the NBLC be formally trained and equipped to respond to the pastoral care and counseling needs of the congregation?" This problem was studied through a series of three research methodologies. The first involved a careful review of Scripture to identify biblical foundations for the conclusions and recommendations presented in this project. The second research methodology involved a thorough investigation of current literature to determine whether a consensus of opinion could be reached on the problem under investigation. The final methodology involved the conducting of interviews to determine the existing practices among NBLC churches for equipping pastors to provide adequate pastoral care and counseling for church members.

To address the biblical and theological foundations for the primary question posed, Scripture clearly sets forth the necessity of equipping church members for the work of ministry. The biblical foundation for this study is Ephesians 4:7-12. The passage refers specifically to the various offices within the body of Christ. It also refers to the mandate for the individuals functioning in one or more of those ministry offices to equip the other members of the body for ministry.
In the literature review, I sought to identify the present consensus among secular organizations and advocacy groups, as well as evangelical organizations and ministries. My review of the secular literature further supported the necessity of training and equipping clergy to meet the pastoral care needs of individuals struggling with substance abuse, mental illness, and marital issues.

In addition to training clergy, the literature review also affirmed the need to train laypersons in the provision of pastoral care. The ministries and organizations identified in the literature review are available to assist pastors by training laypersons to minister pastoral care to church members. They also exist to provide pastoral care to individuals with specific needs that cannot be met in the local churches.

Both the biblical foundations for this study, as well as the literature review, establish the need to equip NBLC clergy and lay people to minister to individuals with pastoral care and counseling needs. My suggestions for how the NBLC might train its leaders to minister pastoral care to our congregants are presented in the “Recommendations” section of this chapter.

The data collected from my interviews with the seven NBLC pastors were used to identify problem areas within the NBLC organization in the provision of pastoral care to NBLC church members. To facilitate analysis of the data collected through interviews of NBLC pastors, it was necessary to categorize the responses into three major categories: Existing Pastoral Care Resources, Current Pastoral Care Practices, and a Synopsis of Pastoral Care Training. Each of these three categories was further subdivided to assist me in answering the four secondary research
questions posed in the introduction of this paper and further discussed in the following section.

Findings

In response to the primary question posed for purposes of this study, my primary finding is that every problem requiring pastoral care and counseling is not exclusively spiritual in nature. This finding is based upon the consensus of opinion that emerged from the literature review. It is a widely held belief, within the body of Christ, that addictions, sexual promiscuity, and alcoholism have their root in the sin nature. However, Bible-based remedies may not be the only way that a person suffering the ill effects of these behaviors may secure their healing. This finding forms the basis for my primary conclusion and recommendations. However, a thorough review and summarization of the data collected reveals secondary findings that affirm the relevancy of the conclusions, as well as the necessity of incorporating the recommendations delineated later in this chapter.

In my study of how NBLC pastors currently make decisions in ministering pastoral care and counseling to church members, I elected to investigate the four primary research questions presented in the first chapter of this paper. The first question asks, “What are the essential areas of pastoral care and counseling needed by the NBLC pastors?” This question was answered in interview responses collected and categorized as “Current Pastoral Care Practices.” Of the pastors interviewed, few had extensive experience with and consequently little knowledge of how to minister to persons with addictions. Therefore, my first finding is that there may be a need for the
NBLC to provide pastoral care and counseling training to its clergy who may minister to the needs of addicted individuals who may attend NBLC churches.

While the interview responses only affirm one specific area of need in pastoral care and counseling training, a more thorough review of data collected from the third data category, "Synopsis of Pastoral Care Training," leads to a second and more expansive finding than the first. To be specific, none of the interview respondents received formal training in pastoral care and counseling from the NBLC, or from any other organization. Also, most of the pastors interviewed acknowledged their need for training in a variety of pastoral care areas, including substance abuse or addictions, marital issues, and sexually active youth. My finding, in response to the third research question, is that NBLC clergy are not currently being trained in all areas of pastoral care and counseling and most acknowledge their need for such training. Therefore, there is a need for training in a variety of pastoral care areas to enhance clergy knowledge in the areas with which they have not previously been exposed.

The second research question asks, "What resources do pastors consult when called to provide pastoral care and counseling?" My finding concerning this question is based upon responses to the first interview data category: "Existing Pastoral Care Resources." Most, if not all, of the pastors interviewed stated that the primary source that they consult in providing pastoral care and counseling to their congregants is the Bible. Of the pastors interviewed, all indicated that they also rely upon their own personal experience, or the experience of other NBLC pastors, to meet the pastoral care needs of their parishioners. A few of the pastors interviewed have authored manuals that address specific pastoral care areas or use those manuals to minister to
their parishioners. Finally, some interviewees indicated that they had or would refer parishioners to external sources for needs that exceeded their level of expertise. My finding in response to the first research question is that NBLC pastors primarily use the Bible in ministering pastoral care to congregants. These pastors have also relied on personal experience, internal written resources, and external secular resources in meeting the needs of their parishioners.

The third research question is, “What should be done to improve pastoral care and counseling in the NBLC organization?” My finding concerning this question is once again taken from the second interview data category: “Current Pastoral Care Practices.” Only two pastors have established formal pastoral care teams within their churches. Many of the pastors were receptive to training lay leaders to meet the pastoral care needs of their congregants. Finally, all respondents believed that pastoral care and counseling must be provided to parishioners on an individualized basis. Based upon these responses, I believe that there may be a need to delegate some of the duties of pastoral care and counseling to lay leaders to ensure optimal care to all NBLC church members. This may improve the ministry of pastoral care throughout the NBLC.

The fourth and final research question posed is, “Should the criterion for ordaining new pastors include acquisition of basic training in the areas of pastoral care and counseling?” The responses collected and categorized under the subheading of “Training Suggested” in the “Synopsis of Pastoral Care Training” category provide the answer to this question. All of the pastors interviewed indicated that future candidates for ordination should be required to take courses in pastoral care and
counseling. Consequently, my finding in response to the final question is that the NBLC should require its ordination candidates to be trained in all areas of pastoral care and counseling.

Though the questions were not asked directly of the interview respondents, one can infer from their responses that NBLC clergy do not presently minister pastoral care in a consistent or uniform manner. Of course, every pastoral care need is unique and necessitates differing levels of ministry that are as varied as the individuals seeking assistance. However, it has been my experience that there are certain basic and generally accepted degrees of care that may be considered prudent and essential before additional care can be offered in any given pastoral care area.

Furthermore, this organization must not assume that every pastoral care minister will provide the basic level of care to our members, given that the NBLC does not currently offer any formal training to its ordination candidates. My finding, with regard to this observation, is that there is a need for consistency and uniformity in ministering pastoral care and counseling among the NBLC churches.

In the literature review, I found that the Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ requires its ordination candidates to take thirty semester hours of formal training, which includes some courses in pastoral care and counseling, through their Church of Christ Bible Institute. This fellowship is similar to the NBLC in that both organizations share the same fundamental doctrine.

Also, in the literature review, I found that the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) curriculum included a course of study on pastoral care and counseling in its Pastor’s Manual. The AME manual may serve as a model for any revisions that
the NBLC may make to its *Discipline Book*, should the organization elect to incorporate my recommendations for training ordination candidates in pastoral care in the future. My finding concerning this aspect of the literature review is that other church denominations, of similar doctrine and membership, have adopted specific courses of study in pastoral care and counseling for their ordination candidates.

**Conclusions**

Conclusions drawn in this section of the paper are based on the results of my investigation, as well as my own personal experience and formal training in providing pastoral care and counseling over a period of many years.

My primary conclusion, in response to the primary question posed for this study, is that NBLC clergy may benefit from learning to minister pastoral care to individuals with problems that are not exclusively spiritual in nature. The responses to my interview questions revealed that NBLC pastors are knowledgeable in ministering to individuals with spiritual needs. However, it is not evident that all NBLC clergy have sufficient knowledge or expertise to minister to church members with emotional or physical problems, though those problems may be the consequence of an individual’s spiritual condition.

The NBLC pastors interviewed rely primarily upon the Bible to help them meet the pastoral care needs of their congregants. Although many of these pastors are not formally trained, they still rely on the Word of God to help their parishioners to the best of their ability.

NBLC pastors have been able, to the best of their God-given ability, to assist their parishioners with their pastoral care issues. However, their gifting may be
further enhanced, and their ministry benefited, by receiving more formal training in the area of pastoral care and counseling. Because the pastors interviewed acknowledged the need for training and being better equipped to provide pastoral care and counseling, it is safe to conclude that NBLC pastors would benefit from training in the area of pastoral care and counseling.

Because the Bible is the primary written source used to assist NBLC pastors in their provision of pastoral care to church members, and has proven to be a reliable source, it should continue to remain the major resource for the provision of pastoral care to NBLC congregants. In addition, based upon the finding that there is currently no consistency or uniformity in ministering pastoral care and counseling to NBLC church members, I conclude that the organization could benefit from the development and use of manuals or other internally or externally created resources that address a variety of pastoral care issues for clergy needing such resources. In fact, several of the pastors interviewed indicated that they had already developed some formal programs or created manuals to address specific pastoral care and counseling needs.

The findings state that most of the NBLC pastors interviewed had not established formal care teams within their churches. Some were receptive to referring their parishioners to external secular agencies to receive pastoral care. Many clergy wanted other lay leaders to be trained to provide pastoral care to church members. This is indicative of the fact that many NBLC pastors are in the lone position of meeting all of the pastoral care and counseling needs of their congregants. It is my belief that pastors ought not bear the total burden of preaching, teaching, and training parishioners by themselves. The burden of church ministry must be shared among all
members of the church body. Consequently, although this project addresses the need for pastoral care and counseling training among NBLC pastors, it is not to conclude that other members within the congregation should be excluded from such training.

NBLC pastors should avail themselves of the spiritual gifts, talents, and callings of the other ministers of their churches who have the time and the ability to provide an adequate level of care for parishioners. NBLC pastors could avail themselves of the spiritual gifts and availability of these individuals to help them provide pastoral care to their members in as timely a manner as possible. Therefore, it would be necessary to see that the training in pastoral care and counseling be made available to all members of the NBLC churches.

The biblical basis for delegating ministerial duties among the members of the church body is supported by several Scriptures that were previously cited and are further explained in the paragraphs that follow. In Exodus 18:13-26, Moses’ father-in-law observed that Moses was overly burdened with the task of judging the people of Israel himself. Consequently, Jethro advised Moses to delegate some of his duties to other men, with the ability to judge, leaving the more difficult cases for Moses to handle.

In Acts 1:15-26, the early church selected candidates to fill the office left vacant following Judas’ demise. Their selection was made from among the disciples who met their criteria for apostleship. Also, the apostles summoned the disciples to request that they choose seven men from among themselves to meet a specific ministerial task that the apostles did not have the time to do (Acts 6:1-6). Acts 14:23
indicates that multiple elders were appointed in every church. Finally, the apostles and elders jointly rendered decisions concerning the early churches in Acts 16:4.

Such biblical accounts suggest a necessity and mandate to establish a plurality of elders within the congregation for the purpose of maintaining balance when unexpected ministerial tasks present themselves. On the basis of the above biblical precedents, I conclude that the NBLC would benefit from delegating ministerial duties among all of its church members with the spiritual gifts and ability to become church leaders.

The primary Scriptural basis for equipping the members of the NBLC churches to assume various ministerial duties is found in Ephesians 4:7-12. We can conclude from this and other passages of Scripture that there is clearly a biblical tradition for equipping the members of the body of Christ to minister to one another, as well as to those outside the church.

In 1 Corinthians 3:5-7, we find that Apollos and Paul worked together to facilitate the work of ministry. Therefore, we can conclude that all of the members of the body of Christ are to work together to facilitate the work of ministry. This is another point borne out by Scripture as Paul instructed Timothy to teach others so that they can become teachers also (2 Timothy 2:2). When the apostle Paul told Timothy to commit this training to faithful men, he inferred that training and equipping should not cease with the pastor but that others in the body must be trained and equipped also. Consequently, I conclude that any training programs or manuals developed or adopted by the NBLC should provide information in all areas of pastoral care and
counseling to all NBLC clergy and laypeople with the spiritual gifts and skills to serve in that ministry.

Although the pastors interviewed did not mention specific problems concerning their seniors, it is my belief that the organization needs to engage seniors, as well as youth, so that they may become a part of the ministry of the local church. Doing so may facilitate the delegation of pastoral duties among all parishioners for the edification of the entire church body.

In order to delegate the duties of the pastoral care ministry to other members in the church body, I conclude that it will be necessary to train designated NBLC members to meet the needs of other church members in the overall provision of pastoral care and counseling ministry. Therefore, it may be necessary for existing NBLC pastors to identify those church members with the spiritual gifts and God-given abilities to minister pastoral care to other church members. It may also be necessary for some NBLC pastors to be trained to identify the spiritual gifting of their members who may be willing to serve in the pastoral care ministry.

Recommendations

My primary recommendation is for the training and equipping of NBLC clergy in all areas of pastoral care and counseling. Although NBLC pastors are extremely knowledgeable about using the Bible to provide basic pastoral care, more formalized training to help meet certain specific pastoral care needs is necessary. My second major recommendation is for the delegation of pastoral care ministerial duties among other members of the church organization. These primary recommendations are made to prevent pastors from being overwhelmed as the sole providers of all of
the needs of congregants. The recommendations that follow emanate from and further facilitate the implementation of these two primary recommendations.

To accomplish the task of training NBLC pastors in pastoral care and counseling, I recommend that the NBLC develop and offer courses, workshops, and seminars at organizational meetings or through on-site weekend training. Specifically, these workshops could be offered during the annual convocation, at the scheduled annual meetings of NBLC pastors, or at district meetings. During these meetings, all churches within the region are in attendance. The offering of on-site workshops or seminars would facilitate the training and equipping of NBLC clergy who want to learn more about ministering in specific areas of pastoral care.

At present, the NBLC is not in a position to offer the training programs or workshops needed to equip its clergy in the provision of pastoral care. Therefore, until such time as the NBLC can offer its own in-house training programs, I recommend that the NBLC require some formal training in pastoral care and counseling through courses taken at NBLC recommended Bible colleges or through off-site or correspondence training programs.

There are a number of local and national ministries in existence that offer curricula for study and training to equip clergy in every area of pastoral care ministry. Several of these were mentioned in the literature review. The NBLC may want to make use of such training programs until in-house curricula can be developed and offered to NBLC clergy.

Another option may be for the NBLC to collect and disseminate training materials and information from nationally recognized evangelical ministries to
interested pastors. This training option will also provide time for the NBLC to develop its own curriculum while addressing the current need for training within the organization.

To address the pastoral care needs cited earlier in this study, as expeditiously as possible, temporary use of external programs that minister to those specific areas of needs may be necessary. For example, in recognition of the need to provide pastoral care in the area of addictions, I recommend that the NBLC become familiar with recognized and successful training programs, such as the twelve-step programs. This will expedite ministry to church members who may presently struggle with habitual problems and/or addictions.

Concerning marital issues, I recommend that the NBLC either produce its own or acquire a uniform manual or guidelines for its pastors and clergy and those assisting in the area of facilitating and maintaining healthy marital relationships. This is crucial in that, if we want healthy churches within the NBLC, we will have to have healthy families. Healthy families and relationships produce vibrant churches. Furthermore, there may be a need to develop other manuals that will address a variety of pastoral care issues for NBLC clergy needing such resources.

To accomplish the task of delegating pastoral care ministerial duties, I believe that it will be necessary for NBLC pastors to identify those members within their congregations who are gifted and able to assist them with that ministry. Pastors are like general contractors in that they must be familiar enough with the gifts God has given members who can assist them in ministering pastoral care to other church
members. In their unique role, the pastor can then ensure proper functioning of the entire church body.

As inferred in Ephesians 4:12, the result of proper training and equipping of the members renders the entire body more effective in doing the work of ministry. Therefore, I recommend that workshops or training on the topic of identifying spiritual gifts be offered to pastors. Once members of the local church body are aware of their spiritual gifts, they can better assist their pastor in meeting the pastoral care needs of other church members.

The NBLC may also want to take advantage of the skills available from those pastors with the knowledge and expertise to train other pastors in the ministry of pastoral care and counseling. Therefore, I recommend that the organization create an organizational care team to which NBLC pastors can refer difficult pastoral care cases and from which to obtain timely resolutions. This team would consist of those elders and ministers with the training and/or experience to answer difficult questions concerning pastoral care that NBLC pastors may encounter at any given time.

The members of the organizational care team could act as conduits to help facilitate the training or equipping of NBLC pastors in the future. They could help to develop seminars and workshops. They could also be the primary source to spearhead or facilitate the administration of pastoral care and counseling training programs throughout the organization. Finally, they could disseminate information and provide referrals for the NBLC’s local churches.

I also recommend that the NBLC churches establish local care teams within their individual churches to assist with minor pastoral care issues (1 Corinthians 12,
Acts 6). This will ensure accountability and facilitate feelings of ownership among members. For example, the local NBLC churches may want to consider implementing programs whereby youth may minister to youth, seniors may minister to seniors, and seniors may mentor youth. This would help these groups to take ownership within the local congregation and relieve the pastor’s burden to do all of the work of ministry.

Finally, one area of need cited by all pastors was a change in the NBLC’s ordination requirements. The organization can benefit at present, and in the future, by incorporating the same or similar ordination standards as the AME Church delineates in its manual. Therefore, my final recommendation is that the NBLC bishops/leaders consider revising or expanding the current NBLC Discipline Book. The NBLC revision should be in a manner that is consistent with the Manual of Discipline published by the AME church. This would broaden the focus of the NBLC and open the door to equip and train NBLC leaders in the future.

In closing, the NBLC is a good organization that has been striving to help its pastors help its members. I believe that with the findings, conclusions and recommendations presented in this project, that the NBLC could go forward as an even stronger organization to be a better resource to its clergy, its members, and the community at large. I say this because as NBLC clergy are equipped and assisted to minister pastoral care to its members, the entire church will be edified to go forth to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the surrounding community.

For Further Research

In this study of how pastors in the NBLC can provide better ministry to meet the pastoral care and counseling needs of their parishioners, I concentrated on the
current practices of NBLC pastors. One of my goals, after establishing the need for improving pastoral care within that organization, was to identify specific ways of doing so. For further research, I recommend a review of the most recent literature available on pastoral care and counseling published by evangelical ministries and secular organizations. This may be helpful in determining the extent to which progress has been made in identifying and addressing the problems of providing adequate pastoral care in small African-American churches.

I also recommend that this study be expanded beyond the NBLC organization. It may be useful to research the provision of pastoral care in small churches in general, without regard to ethnicity or denomination, to determine whether their practices could be improved and to identify specific ways of doing so.

In conducting such research it may be most beneficial to consider the current pastoral care practices in larger churches, regardless of ethnicity or denomination. A determination could then be made as to whether the pastoral care practices in the larger churches might be suitable for adaptation and use in meeting the pastoral care needs in smaller churches.
APPENDIX

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SEMINAR
SEMINAR INTRODUCTION

No pastor should be without the knowledge and understanding of spiritual gifts. Pastors are to help train and equip the body of Christ. How can pastors help the work of the ministry if they are not aware of what spiritual gifts are and what gifts God has given to the members in the congregation? The work of the ministry is hindered when members do not know or understand what gift God has given them.

Pastors without facilitating and training members about spiritual gifts run the risk of having to assume ministry offices that God has not gifted them to operate. Because members have little knowledge of identifying what their gifts are, the pastors shoulder most of the responsibilities in ministry.

Pastors have their own gifts. They cannot do adequate pastoral care and ministry if they are too busy doing the work that other members should be doing. This then hinders the pastor. It prevents him from using his own gifts. Clergy hinder the members from fully using or not using their God-given gifts at all.

A pastor is like the conductor of a great orchestra. He must understand how each section of the orchestra brings their contribution to the work of that orchestra. Like the conductor of an orchestra, the pastor does not need to know how to play every instrument. But he must fully understand the part that each instrument contributes to the orchestra as a whole.
Spiritual Gifts Seminar

Prepared & Presented By:
Kenneth E. Rogiers
Introduction

*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal* — 1 Corinthians 12:7

*But unto everyone is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ* — Ephesians 4:7
Introduction (Continued...)

Gifts in the body are like:

An orchestra where each instrument brings its own special sound.

A good soup where no ingredient is insignificant.
Purpose of the Seminar

➢ To learn what spiritual gifts are
➢ To help every saint learn how they may be gifted
➢ To study the function of gifts

The body doctrine (using the natural body as an example of how the spiritual body functions – 1 Corinthians 12:14)

Note: Throughout this seminar, think of the gifts as vital organs, limbs and features that help the body to function properly.
Contents

LESSON ONE - "You have Spiritual Gift(s)"
LESSON TWO - "What is a Spiritual Gift?"
LESSON THREE - "How Many Gifts are There?"
LESSON FOUR - "How are Gifts Being Used?"
LESSONS FIVE thru TWELVE - "Description of 17 Spiritual Gifts"
LESSON THIRTEEN - "How Can I Know my Spiritual Gift?"
LESSON FOURTEEN - "Development and Use of Spiritual Gifts"

Notes:
Lesson #5 - apostleship & prophecy
Lesson #6 - evangelism & shepherding
Lesson #7 - teaching & exhortation
Lesson #8 - tongues/interpretation & faith
Lesson #9 - healing & working of miracles
Lesson #10 - discernment & wisdom and knowledge
Lesson #11 - helps & administration (government)
Lesson #12 - giving, hospitality & mercy
LESSON ONE: You Have Spiritual Gifts

*Unto everyone is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.* (Eph. 4:7)

**DEFINITION OF SPIRITUAL GIFT** - From the Greek word “charismata” meaning gifts of grace. *Gift* is from the Greek word “charisma” which means spiritual endowment. *Grace* is from the Greek word “charis” which means undeserved kindness.

A gift is a divinely ordained spiritual ability given through Christ, which makes the church (body of Christ) effective in its work.
LEsson one: You have
Spiritual Gifts (continued...)

➢ Who gives Spiritual Gifts? Spiritual Gifts are given by God alone. (1 Cor. 12:7; 12:11)
➢ When are Spiritual Gifts given? At the new birth
➢ Does one’s background have any bearing on the gift? 1 Cor. 6:9-11
➢ Gifts vary but work in harmony (1 Cor. 12:14)

Note: in 1 Corinthians 12:11 the words “dividing” and “severally.”

Note: no believer should put another on a pedestal because of their gifts (1 Cor. 3:3-7, 21-23)
LESSON ONE: You Have Spiritual Gifts (Continued...)

PURPOSE OF YOUR GIFT: for the saints in ministry in the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12)

➢ Gifts are not for your personal glory
➢ Gifts are to be used and not stored up (Romans 12:11, 1 Peter 4:10)
LESSON TWO: What Is a Spiritual Gift?

FACTS ABOUT GIFTS:
➢ Given by the Holy Spirit
➢ Spiritual ability, endowment, power
➢ Given for spiritual service, ministry, edification
LESSON TWO: What is a Spiritual Gift? (Continued...)

GIFTS ARE NOT TALENTS
➢ Gifts are spiritual endowments (1 Peter 4:11)
➢ Talents depend on natural abilities
➢ Talents help exercise natural abilities
➢ Gifts allow for supernatural work of God

Example: singing can be done by both saved and unsaved.
LESSON TWO: What is a Spiritual Gift? (Continued...)

**GIFTS AND TALENTS ARE RELATED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TALENT</th>
<th>GIFT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source: Common grace of Spirit</td>
<td>Spiritual grace of Spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When: Natural birth</td>
<td>Spiritual birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature: Natural ability</td>
<td>Spiritual ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: Instruction, entertainment, Natural inspiration</td>
<td>Spiritual growth Christian service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: singing (natural ability); exhortation and encouragement (spiritual ability)

Note: Gifts may build on the natural foundation
LESSON TWO: What is a Spiritual Gift? (Continued...)

*It is better to be godly than to be gifted!*

- **Relation of Gifts to Office** - A gift is not an office
- **Relation of Gifts to Ministries** - A ministry is not a gift but an outlet for your gift
- **Relation of Gifts to Fruit** - Gifts are not fruit.

  - Gifts relate to spiritual service. Fruit relates to Christian character (Gal. 5:22,23).
  - Gifts are what the saint has. Fruit is what the saint is.

Example: Office of Bishop & Deacon (1 Tim. 3), A person in the office may (should) have the gift of teaching, but one with the gift of teaching may not occupy either office.

Note: A person in an office should have the corresponding gift.

Example: Gifts remain the same but ministries change (Acts 21:19). In Romans 15:15, Paul was sent to minister to the Gentiles but ministered to the Jews first.

Note: Ref. (1 Timothy 3:1-12, Tit. 1:6-9) The qualifications of Elders and Deacons deal almost exclusively with character. Teaching is the only gift mentioned. A saint may have only one gift, but is required to have all the fruit of the Spirit. The Corinthian church seemed to possess many gifts, yet the church had several problems (1 Cor. 5).
LESSON THREE: How Many Gifts are There?

A Total of 18 Gifts!

**Romans 12:3-8** – prophecy, ministering (helps), teaching, exhorting, giving, government (ruling), mercy.

**1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28-30** – word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healing, prophecy, discernment, tongues, interpretation, apostleship, teaching, ministration (helps), government (ruling).

**Romans 4:11** – apostleship, prophecy, evangelism, pastoring, teaching

Note: The appearance of a gift in one list does not change its meaning in another.

Note: prophecy and teaching are the only gifts in all three lists.

A question may be asked if these are all the gifts? Some writers believe that the listing is not complete. Also, some believe that other gifts can be classified under these.

Hospitality (1 Peter 4:9, 10) and Singleness (1 Cor. 7:7).
LESSON THREE: How Many Gifts are There? (Continued...)

CLASSIFICATION OF GIFTS

Gifts can be classified in many different ways!

Speaking – apostleship, prophecy, evangelism, pastoring, teaching, exhorting, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, tongues, interpretation

Serving – ministration, hospitality, government, showing mercy, faith, discernment, miracles, healing

Signifying – miracles, healing, tongues, interpretation

Note: the sign gifts are not recorded in Romans and Ephesians.

Concerning ranking of the gifts, no specific ranking except what is seen in 1 Cor. 12:28 and Eph. 4:11

Note: Paul ranks prophecy superior to tongues (1 Cor. 14:1-5)

Do gifts overlap? Are certain gifts limited to men or women?

Note: Not having a particular gift does not excuse us from being obedient to God’s word.

Ex. Gift of Discernment (1 Thess. 5:14: “prove all things”)

Ex. Gift of Faith (Mk. 11:22-24 “Have faith in God”; Ja. 5:16)
LESSON FOUR: Employment of Gifts

Gifts are given by God as He wills, to the people He chooses, to use in the place(s) and area(s) where He chooses (1 Cor. 12:7,11; Acts 9:15;13:1-5, 6-15, 44-48).

➢ UNEMPLOYMENT - Lack of employment. Reasons: can't find work; don't want to work; not enough reward or recognition.

➢ UNDEREMPLOYMENT - Inadequately employed. Reasons: fear, opposition, criticism (1 Timothy 4:14-16; 2 Timothy 1:7&8); not ready for full use (2 Timothy 2:20-21).

➢ OVEREMPLOYMENT - Too much employment. Reasons: willing to stay in one place for too long.
LESSON FIVE: The Gifts of Apostleship & Prophecy

DEFINITION OF APOSTLE – From Greek word meaning “to send”; one who is sent out.

Apostle vs. Missionary - Missionary comes from the Latin word meaning to send. Apostle comes from the Greek word meaning to send.

The title “apostle” occurs 75 times in the New Testament, in 19 of the 27 books.
LESSON FIVE: The Gifts of Apostleship & Prophecy (Cont...)

FORMAL VIEW OF APOSTLES

➢ With Jesus from the beginning; accompanied Christ during His earthly ministry (Acts 1:21, 22)
➢ Personal call from Christ (Mk. 3:14, Jn. 20:21)
➢ Eyewitnesses of the resurrection (Acts 1:22)
➢ Laid doctrinal foundation of Church (Jn. 14:26; 16:13)
➢ Laid structural foundation of Church; opened the Gospel to Jews & Gentiles (Mat. 16:18, 19; Acts 8:18; 10:44-48).
➢ Power to work miracles (Acts 2:43; 5:12; 8:18; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:4)
LESSON FIVE: The Gifts of Apostleship & Prophecy (Cont...)

INFORMAL VIEW OF APOSTLES

Others besides the original Twelve were called “Apostles”:

- Barnabas (Acts 14:14)
- James the Lord’s brother (Gal. 1:19)
- Silas and Timothy (1 Thess. 1:1, 2)
- Andronicus and Junia (Rom. 16:7)
- Paul (Rom. 1:1; 12:1; Acts 9:15; 1 Cor. 1:1; 15:1-11; Gal. 1:1

Note: Paul was a special apostle, sent to the Gentiles. He was not one of the Twelve.

Note: the last official gathering of the apostles mentioned in Scripture is found in Acts 15:2-6, 23; 16:4.
LESSON FIVE: The Gifts of Apostleship & Prophecy (Cont...)

FOUR CONCEPTS OF APOSTLESHIP:
- Sent
- Transcultural
- Church planters
- Suffering & persecution

Note: Transcultural refers to the ability to take on different cultures (not just visit) and the gifting in other areas to accompany their ministry (teaching, evangelism, service, helps).

Note: Church planting involves conversion, baptism, growth (Rom. 15:20; 1 Cor. 3:10).
LESSON FIVE: The Gifts of Apostleship & Prophecy (Cont...)

DEFINITION OF PROPHECY – In the Greek means to foretell. The capacity to receive and speak forth truth which has been given by direct revelation from God (1 Cor. 14:29-32)

➢ The message of the prophet may be past, present or future.
➢ The message may instruct, warn, promise or rebuke.
➢ The message of the Old Testament Prophets was primarily reformatory.
➢ The message of the New Testament Prophets was primarily futuristic (Acts 13:1; 15:32; 1 Cor. 14:3, 4).

Note: the Office of Prophet is first identified in Deut. 18:18; the prophet speaking for God must always be correct 100% of the time. No exceptions.

LESSON FIVE: The Gifts of Apostleship & Prophecy (Cont...)

OTHER FACTS CONCERNING PROPHETS

➢ The prophet was sometimes referred to as a seer (1 Sam. 9:9)
➢ Prophets are appointed by God (Jud. 9:6)
➢ Women also prophesied (Jud. 4:4-6; 2 Kings 22:14-20; Luke 2:36)
➢ Prophets may be called from birth (Jer. 1:5)
➢ Prophets were ordinary humans (Ja. 5:17)
➢ False prophets exist (Jer. 2:8; 23:13; 1 Kings 1:22)
➢ The test of true prophets (Deut. 18:21; 13:1-5; Gal. 1:18)
LESSON SIX: The Gifts of Evangelism & Shepherding

DEFINITION OF EVANGELIST – Being able to proclaim the good news of salvation effectively, so that people respond to the claim of Christ in conversion and discipleship.

➢ PROCLAMATION – The Gospel (Christ’s death, burial & resurrection) is spoken. Proclamation may be combined with service.

➢ GOOD NEWS – What is proclaimed has intellectual content (Gospel). “Gospel” in the Greek means “well announcement”; it has well content.

➢ EFFECTIVELY – Proclaiming the Good News effectively results in conversion and discipleship.

Note: The word Evangelist occurs 3 times in the N.T. (Acts 21:8, Eph. 4:11, 2 Tim. 4:5). It is one of the speaking gifts.

Note: Good News – through the blood of Christ we are declared righteous (Justification by faith. Teaching is used because some people want understanding before they accept Christ. Evidence is presented; it is not just a leap in the dark.

Note: Conversion – the heart responds (Acts 2:37; 8:5-13, 26-40; 14:1).

Note: Good news is proclaimed not just to make converts, but to make disciples.
LESSON SIX: The Gifts of Evangelism & Shepherding (Cont.)

FOUR CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EVANGELIST:
> Passion for souls (the unsaved)
> Clear understanding of the Gospel
> Able to present the Gospel clearly
> Joy in seeing people come to a personal saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Note: The Gospel is “God” centered and not “man” centered.

Note: Men need God to save them from sin, not just to bless them.

Note: Gospel must be presented clearly so that people are assured of who Christ is.
LESSON SIX: The Gifts of Evangelism & Shepherding (Cont...)

DEFINITION OF SHEPHERDING (PASTORING) –
The word “Pastor” comes from the Hebrew verb to
Shepherd or feed (Jer. 2:8, 3:15, 10:21; 12:10; 23:1-4)

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PASTORING (1 Tim 3:1-7)
➤ Must be willing to take on the task (2 Tim. 4:2-5)
➤ Must be humble (1 Pet. 5:1-5)
➤ Must be a model for others (1 Pet. 5:3)

Note: in the N.T. the office is a bishop or elder
LESSON SIX: The Gifts of Evangelism & Shepherding (Cont...)

THREE BASIC CHARACTERISTIC OF PASTORING OR SHEPHERDING:

The characteristics of a good shepherd are found in Psalm 23:
- GUARDING (Jn. 10:11-15; 1 Sam 17:34-37; Acts 20:28-31)
- COMFORTING/GUIDING (Jer. 3:15)
- INSTRUCTION/FEEDING (Jer. 3:15)

Notes: on “guarding” – the sling of the Shepherd was used to fight wild animals and warn the sheep of danger. The rod was used to fight wild animals; not to beat the sheep it guides.

Notes: on “comforting/guiding” – Genuine concern for the sheep in times of sickness, sorrow, distress and travail (Lk. 15:4-7).

Notes: on “instruction/feeding” – The major duty of the shepherd is to feed the sheep and also to understand them (Jn 21:15; Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2).
LESSON SEVEN: The Gifts of Teaching & Exhortation

DEFINITION OF TEACHING: The supernatural ability to explain clearly and apply effectively the truth of the word of God (Matt. 28:19-20)

- Supernatural ability – the power to bless and advance students spiritually (Mk 7:28-29)
- Clear Communication – the use of simplicity in teaching to reach people where they are
- Effective Application – students become involved in the subject
- Truth of the Word – teaching of Biblical truths beyond emotional involvement and excitement. Zeal must be directed by knowledge.

The gift of teaching is one of only two that is found in all three listings (see Lesson three).

Note: an example of clear communication is found when Jesus used the parable (Matt 7)

Note on application: Five levels of involvement: a. Memory Response; b. Recognition Response; c. Restatement Response; d. Discovery of personal meaning; e. Personal Application of biblical precepts.
LESSON SEVEN: The Gifts of Teaching & Exhortation (Cont...)

UNDERSTANDING THE GIFT OF TEACHING:

➢ The teacher, unlike the prophet who gives original revelation, explains what has been given.

➢ The teacher helps to empower the saints (Acts 20:18-21).

➢ The teaching gift is key in the chain of biblical communication (2 Tim. 2:2; Acts 2:42; 11:26; 19:10; 20:20).

Note: the teaching gift is a requirement for pastors (1 Tim. 3:1-7; 2 Tim. 2:24-25).

Note: Many outlets for teaching: Sunday School, Bible studies (home, church).

Note: Role for women in teaching (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15; Tit. 2:4).
LESSON SEVEN: The Gifts of Teaching & Exhortation (Cont...)

THE TEACHER MUST:

➤ Love the saints: strives to understand their spiritual ignorance and to equip them.

➤ Love to study God's word: keeps sharpened.

➤ Love to deliver truth: guards against error.

➤ Love teaching with simplicity (e.g., parables)

Warning to teachers (James 3:1-2)

Encouragement for teachers (Rom. 12:7; Gal 6:6)
LESSON SEVEN: The Gifts of Teaching & Exhortation (Cont...)

DEFINITION OF EXHORTATION – The word “Exhort” means to comfort or to encourage. It is the supernatural ability to help strengthen, reassure, make steady, console, encourage, motivate & offer hope.

➢ The Exhorter is a helper.
➢ The Exhorter has great insight into the needs of people.
➢ The Exhorter knows how to tactfully confront and to restore one to the Lord (Prov. 27:6, Gal. 6:1)
➢ The Exhorter may be a person behind the scenes.
➢ The Exhorter persists in offering encouragement.

Note: this gift is often confused with using one’s hand to pound, point, or wave, typically associated with preaching. However, this gift is much like the Comforter (Jn. 4:16) and Advocate (1 Jn. 2:1). Comforter and Advocate in the Greek are translated “Paraclete” which means “one who is called alongside.”
LESSON SEVEN: The Gifts of Teaching & Exhortation (Cont...)

EXAMPLES OF EXHORTERS IN THE BIBLE:


➤ **AQUILLA & PRISCILLA** (Acts 18:24-28)

➤ **PAUL** (Acts 16:40; 14:21-22; 20:17-35)

➤ **JUDAS & SILAS** (Acts 15:31-32)

➤ **PETER** (1 Peter 5:1-2)

Notes on Barnabas: (1) helped the needy saints (Acts 4:36); (2) assisted Paul after his conversion by preparing his way before the Apostles and saints at Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-31); (3) assisted the early Christians who were persecuted (Acts 11:19-26); (4) assisted in the development of Paul’s ministry (Acts 12:24-25; 13:1-5).
LESSON EIGHT: The Gifts of Tongues/Interpretation & Faith

DEFINITION OF TONGUES – the supernatural ability to speak a known language having never studied it. One with this gift is able to speak the language of others so that they can understand God's message. The word “tongues” comes from the Greek word “glossa” which means “his own language.” The gift of tongues was given as a sign and is not given to every believer. (1 Cor. 12:10, 19, 30; 14:5, 12, 21)

DEFINITION OF INTERPRETATION – the supernatural ability to interpret (translate) what is said in one language (tongue) into another. It is the ability to translate into one’s own language what was spoken.

Note: Unless there is an interpreter in the congregation, the gift of tongues were not to be used because they would not edify the body.
LESSON EIGHT: The Gifts of Tongues/Interpretation & Faith
(Cont...)

DEFINITION OF THE GIFT OF FAITH – The Spirit-given ability to see something that God wants done and to sustain the believer with unwavering confidence that God will do it regardless of the odds or obstacles. (1 Corinthians 12:9)

➢ The Gift of Faith gives the recipient the ability to discern God’s will, pursue with remarkable confidence, and thereby lay hold of God’s promises with tremendous results.

➢ The Gift of Faith is not logical and seems senseless. It operates or specializes in that which seems impossible.

➢ The person with this gift will desire the things that God wants, and the person’s desires will be according to God’s will.

Note: the gift is different than the faith we must have for salvation (Eph. 2:8; Col. 2:6; 2 Cor. 5:7).

Note: for the gift of faith to work, the believer must first be sure that (s)he is doing God’s will, and the projects set aside must be in accordance with God’s will. Only then can the believer pray in confidence despite the odds and see God bring the results to pass (Jn. 11:41-42).

LESSON NINE: The Gifts of Healing & Miracles

DEFINITION OF THE GIFT OF HEALING – the supernatural ability to heal diseases and restore health miraculously (1 Cor. 12:28).

Where we see this gift at work, the healings (physical or mental) are:

- **Immediate** (Matt. 9:35, Mk. 1:42; Acts 3:1-1)
- **Complete** (Luke 17:12-19, Matt. 9:20-22)
- **Permanent** (Acts 3:6-8, Acts 14:8-10)

Note: gifts of healing refer to healing of the mind, body, soul and/or spirit.

Note: complete healings are noted in Scripture by the word “whole” which is translated from the Greek word “sozo.” “Sozo” means to deliver.

Examples: one of the ten lepers not only received a physical healing but a spiritual healing (salvation). The woman with the issue of blood was not only healed physically, but emotionally and spiritually.
LESSON NINE: The Gifts of Healing & Miracles (Cont...)

FACTS ABOUT THE GIFT OF HEALING:

➢ Does not depend on the sick person’s faith (Jn. 9:1-3, 25; Mk. 2:5)

➢ Not everyone gets healed (Phil. 2:25; 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20)

➢ Healings cannot take place apart from God’s will (2 Cor. 12:7-10)

➢ Healing is separate from the natural process of recovery.

Note: there is sometimes a direct relationship between sickness and sin (2 Sam. 11-12; 1 Cor. 11:27-31).
LESSON NINE: The Gifts of Healing & Miracles (Cont...)

DEFINITION OF GIFTS OF MIRACLES – the Spirit-given ability to perform an act(s) contrary to or beyond nature or the laws of nature. (1 Cor. 12:28)

➢ A miracle is the supernatural intervention into nature, its laws or things in nature, causing a change(s) which produces a desired result.

➢ To qualify as a miracle, nature has to be interfered with.

➢ A miracle must have an affect on one or more of the five senses; it must be seen, heard, touched, smelled or tasted.

Note: Not all miracles are divine in origin (Ex. 7:8-12, 19-22; 8:1-7, 16-19; Matt. 7:21; Acts 8:5-13; 13:8-10), but the use of demonic powers to perform miracles, cast spells, etc. Magic/sorcery comes from the Greek word “megeia”- magical arts or magic. Another word that is translated sorcery is the Greek word “periergos (Eph. 19:19) which means to interfere with other by obtaining psychic control over them. This is the same word used in 1 Tim. 5:13 which is translated “busybody”.

Note: God strictly forbids His people from engaging in these powers of the occult (Dt. 18:10-14; Lev. 19:26, 20:27; Is. 8:19).
LESSON NINE: The Gifts of Healing & Miracles (Cont...)

THE PURPOSE OF MIRACLES
➢ To establish God Almighty as being all powerful.
➢ To fulfill covenants.
➢ To give knowledge of God (Ex. 7:5)
➢ To bring judgment (Ex. 12:12)
➢ To inspire faith (Matt. 8:23-27)
➢ To authenticate believers as being divinely sent (Mk. 16:17-18)

Note: Miracles are not to be used as a substitute for faith and belief in God (Lk. 11:29).
Examples of miracle workers: Moses, Elijah and Elisha, Jesus, Peter and Paul.
LESSON TEN: The Gifts of Discernment, Wisdom & Knowledge

THE GIFT OF DISCERNING OF SPIRITS — is a God-given ability to determine (distinguish) the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. It is the ability to determine whether a minister is being guided by his own spirit or is under the influence of an evil spirit(s). One with the gift can spot genuineness as opposed to falsehood. (1 Cor. 12:10)

EXAMPLES OF THE USE OF THIS GIFT:

> Jesus (Matt. 17:17)
> Peter (Acts 5:1-10)

Note: the word “discern” in 1 Cor. 12:10 comes from the Greek word “anakrino” meaning to judge closely or to examine. The word is also used in 1 Cor. 2:14 and comes from the Greek word “diakrisis” which means an appraisal or an evaluation. Another use of the word is found in Acts 8:20-23 and means to perceive.

Note: all believers are called to exercise a degree of discernment (1 Jn. 4:1-5, Heb. 5:13-14; Eph. 6:12). However, we are not to judge by appearance (Jn. 7:24); the Lord does not see as man sees (1 Sam. 16:7).
LESSON TEN: The Gifts of Discernment, Wisdom & Knowledge (Cont...)

THE GIFT OF THE WORD OF WISDOM – is the supernatural ability to rightly apply divine knowledge and truth. This gift enables believers to weigh the true nature of situations through exercising spiritual insight into the rightness and wrongness of given situations. (1 Cor.12:8)

EXAMPLES OF THE USE OF THIS GIFT:
> Defense before rulers (Mt. 10:19-20; Acts 4:8, 5:29, 6:10, 23:1)
> Answer to unbelievers arguments (Mt. 22:21, Lk. 20:39-40, Acts 17:17)
> Aid in solving problems (Acts 6:3, 1 Cor. 6:5)

Note: the gift also helps believers to relate truth to the problems of life and to apply knowledge in complex situations.
LESSON TEN: The Gifts of Discernment, Wisdom & Knowledge (Cont...)

THE GIFT OF THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE – is the supernatural ability that enables a believer to search, systematize and summarize the teachings of the word of God. This gift also enables a believer to acquire deep insight into divine truth. (1 Cor. 12:8)

EXAMPLES OF THE USE OF THIS GIFT are found in Acts 19:9-10 and 1 Cor. 1:5.
LESSON ELEVEN: The Gifts of Helps & Administration

THE GIFT OF HELPS - is the Spirit-given ability to serve the church in any supporting role, usually temporarily. It carries the meaning of support and to give assistance. The help can be natural or spiritual. (1 Cor. 12:28)

EXAMPLES OF THE USE OF THIS GIFT
- John Mark was a helper of Paul and Barnabus (Acts 13:5)
- Timotheus and Erastus were helpers of Paul (Acts 19:22)
- Phoebe helped many in the church, including Paul (Rom. 16:1-2)
- Epaphroditus helped Paul (Phil. 2:25)

Note: this is a “behind the scenes” gift.

Note: this gift even though it ministers to the needy in the natural things (primarily), results in the freeing up of those who need to carry out the spiritual workings and needs of the body of Christ (see Acts 6:2-7).

Note: This is the same gift mentioned in Romans 12:7.
LESSON ELEVEN: The Gifts of Helps & Administration (Cont...)

THE GIFT OF ADMINISTRATION – is referred to as the gift of government and ruling (leading). The word "government" comes from the Greek word meaning one who steers or pilots a ship. The word "rule" comes from the Greek word which means to stand over or preside. (1 Cor. 12:28, Rom. 12:28)

USES OF THIS GIFT:
➢ Presiding over meetings, helping with order (1 Cor. 14:26-40)
➢ Helping with discipline matters (1 Cor. 5:4; 1 Thess. 5:12)
➢ Helping with future planning

Note: the word “rule” is not to be taken as the concept of ruling over someone, but one who can stand before and one who can lead. Leadership of this kind is one of serving (Mk. 1:42-45).

Note: Christian leadership is never to be dogmatic, demagogic, nor dictatorial. It is leadership that uses wisdom, tact, and serves by example (1 Pet. 5:3, Acts 6:3). These leaders are to be spiritual administrators and not bosses (Heb. 13:7, 17). These leaders embrace humility; not pride and arrogance.

LESSON TWELVE: The Gifts of Giving, Hospitality & Mercy

THE GIFT OF GIVING -- invokes giving freely, delightfully, generously, and liberally to the work of God and to God’s people.

➢ It is giving with simplicity and generosity (Rom. 12:8).
➢ It is giving without looking for anything in return and giving cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7).
➢ It is giving without pretense or hidden motives (Acts 5:1-2).
➢ It is giving inconspicuously (Mt. 6:3).

Note: The word “simplicity” means without fold (cloth unfolded). It means with singleness of mind, mental honesty, and without pretense.

Note: Giving should start with the giving of the tithe. However, just giving the tithe is not an indicator of the gift of giving. The tithe (or 10%) is only the minimum.

LESSON TWELVE: The Gifts of Giving, Hospitality & Mercy (Cont...)

THE GIFT OF HOSPITALITY – is the supernatural ability to provide housing, shelter, and warm welcome to those in need of food and lodging. It relates closely to the gift of Helps, and like that gift is a serving gift. (1 Peter 4:9)

EXAMPLES:

- The widow and Elijah (1 Kings 17:8)
- The Shunammite and Elisha (2 Kings 4:9-15)
- Simon the Tanner (Acts 9:43)
- Cornelius (Acts 10:48)
- Lydia (Acts 16:15)

Note: believers are to be given to hospitality (Rom. 12:13, 3 Jn. 8).

Note: hospitality should not be given just for the hope of getting something in return (Lk. 14:12-14).

Note: special blessings are given to those extending hospitality (Lk. 19:9, Acts 28:7-8).

Note: widows qualified to receive assistance if they showed hospitality and served others in the church (1 Tim. 5:9-10).
LESSON TWELVE: The Gifts of Giving, Hospitality & Mercy (Cont...)

THE GIFT OF SHOWING MERCY – is the Spirit-given ability to show practical, compassionate, cheerful love to members of the body of Christ and others who are suffering. The gift is directed toward the saint in distress, the outcast, the poor, the deprived, and the afflicted. The word “mercy” is translated from a word which means to pity, to have compassion on, and to show graciousness to. (Rom. 12:8).

Note: There is a difference between the gift of mercy and the gift of helps. The gift of helps is directed toward Christian workers needing release from natural tasks to minister spiritual things. The gift of mercy is directed to those with physical, emotional or spiritual needs.

Example: the good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37).
LESSON THIRTEEN: How Can I Know My Spiritual Gifts?

Not knowing your spiritual gift is like not realizing that you are the recipient of a large sum of money written in someone's will. God has willed spiritual gifts to every believer in the body of Christ (Eph. 4:8).

STEPS TO KNOWING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT(S):

➢ Familiarize yourself with the gifts described in this seminar.
➢ Realize that gifts are vital to the health of the body of Christ.
➢ Seek God in prayer for His direction in discovering your gift(s).
➢ Seek God's direction in leading you to the work and individuals that will help manifest your gift(s).
LESSON THIRTEEN: How Can I Know My Spiritual Gifts? (Cont...)

STEPS TO KNOWING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT(S) – Ask yourself the following questions:

➢ What areas of service are you naturally drawn to or interested in?
➢ Are you currently serving in an area that uses one or more of the gifts described in this seminar?
➢ Do others discern a particular gift(s) in you?
➢ Does your service and ministry bring fulfillment to others?
➢ Do you find enjoyment, delight and fulfillment in particular areas of ministry and service given that you have the right motive for serving?
LESSON FOURTEEN: Development and Use of Spiritual Gifts

Every believer has different gifts (Romans 12:5-8). Do not to neglect the spiritual gift that is in you (1 Tim. 4:14). This calls for exercise of the gift (1 Tim. 4:15).

- Evaluation of the gift helps to improve the quality of your ministry.
- Cultivation of the gift may require education or formal training. Be willing to exercise, evaluate, and educate yourself in the area of your gift.
- Don’t refuse to serve in areas that are not where you are gifted.
- Don’t stop using your gift because conflicts arise or due to a lack of appreciation.

Note: In developing your gift, the right attitude is important. Do not think that your gift is the most important, or the least important, of the gifts. Think in terms of its use in edifying the body of Christ. Also, remember that gifts are not ranked in terms of one being better than the other (1 Cor. 12:18-25).

Note: be careful of self esteem (pride) or self abasement.
LESSON FOURTEEN: Development and Use of Spiritual Gifts

➢ Be diligent in the exercise of your gift.
➢ Be faithful. Your gift is an investment that God saw fit to give you. Be committed and use it.
➢ Think long-term, not short-term, in the use of your gift.
➢ Don't think that you are indispensable. Approach using your gift with a humble attitude. (God has more soldiers and servants besides us.)
➢ Honesty and integrity should always be maintained.
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