

Rediscovering pastoral identity

**The influence of church role expectations in undermining
a pastor's personal ministry identity**

by

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION**1. Theme selection and conceptualisation**

This thesis explores the relationship that exists between the development and exercising of a pastor's personal ministry identity and the role expectations of his church leadership and members, with particular reference to the negative impact that these role expectations may have in undermining the integrity of such an identity.

It has been my experience during six years of pastoral ministry that one of *the* greatest challenges facing pastors today, is the development of an *authentic* personal ministry identity that will in turn facilitate,:

- A. the development of an authentic personal ministry vision, and
- B. the establishment and exercising of an appropriate pastoral \ ministerial role.

The establishment of such a ministry identity and vision is vital in clarifying the ministerial roles that a pastor will be most effective in whilst sustaining the longevity of such a ministry.

There are clearly a number of 'intrinsic' factors that have a direct and necessary influence on the formulation of such an identity. These would include spiritual gifting, passion, personality, character, natural talents and abilities as well as an understanding of a unique divine calling to a particular pastoral \ ministerial role.

However the development of such an identity does not take place in a vacuum and there are therefore a number of 'extrinsic' factors that may also have a significant influence on the formulation of this identity. Perhaps one of the most influential of these factors are the role expectations of the leadership and members within a pastor's local congregation.

A problem arises when:

1. a pastor's personal ministry identity is either not defined, or is poorly defined. This inevitably results in *role confusion* for the pastor which could cause high levels of ministry frustration.
2. a pastor's personal ministry identity is well defined but conflicts with the role expectations of the church resulting in *role conflict*.
3. as a consequence of role conflict experienced by the pastor and church, they may well collude with one another for the sake of 'keeping the peace', to compromise their own expectations of each other and thereby perpetuate an unhealthy relationship resulting in *role collusion*.

All three of these problems, role confusion, conflict and collusion occur as a direct result of an *interface of expectations* between a pastor's personal ministry identity and the role expectations of the church where there are significant differences between these two sets of expectations. Where no significant differences exist in these expectations, then the ideal of *role congruence* is achieved.

It has been my experience that many pastors experiencing role confusion and conflict, rather than seeking to address the differences in expectations underlying these problems, may be prepared to compromise their own authentic personal ministry identities and expectations for the sake of 'keeping the peace'.

Another reason why pastors allow their authentic ministry identities to be compromised, may be founded in an overwhelming need to please others, and hence meet *their* expectations. In addition to this, a striving for significance that is derived largely from the affirmation of others may also contribute to the undermining of one's authentic ministry identity.

At the heart of this problem I would suggest, is a *lack of differentiation* between who the pastor is, his personhood, and the ministry he does.

If a pastor's personal identity and self-worth, (who I am) is not sufficiently differentiated from his personal ministry identity, (what I do), then any role confusion or conflict may well undermine his personhood and hence his own personal security. To avoid this, a pastor may well be prepared to compromise his ministry identity, for

the sake of preserving his personhood. This however results in a lack of the necessary congruence between a pastor's personhood and his personal ministry identity. Even though these two dimensions need to be differentiated, it is important that the necessary congruence between what a pastor does, his ministry identity, and who he is, his personhood, exists.

It has been my experience that many of my fellow pastors have either consciously or unconsciously compromised their personal ministry identities for the sake of meeting the role expectations of the churches. As a consequence, they have, in time, become disillusioned in their ministries.

The sacrificing of this personal ministry identity is however often rationalised and justified in spiritual terms such as 'denying oneself' and sacrificing one's interests for the sake of the ministry.

The consequences of a pastor's identity being undermined and compromised by church role expectations are numerous. They may include personal frustration at an inability to realise their unique calling and ministry resulting in a lack of passion and motivation toward the ministry. Other consequences may be anger, resentment and bitterness toward the church, as well as a loss of ministry vision.

Over the last three years, I have been involved as a consultant in conflict resolution within the Baptist Union of South Africa as part of their Conflict Resolution Network. Our experience of having conducted in excess of thirty interventions in churches experiencing high levels of conflict is that the basis of most, if not all, conflict in churches is related to expectations that are not met, either from the pastor or from the church. In most instances, these expectations have never been adequately articulated or defined, communicated or agreed upon. The development of a personal ministry identity will go a long way to proactively deal with the issue of role conflict and expectations that are not met.

2. The context of building up the local church

It is important to put this research into the context of building up the local church. Nel (2004:8) defines the concept of building up the local church in the following terms.

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“Building up the local church is the ministry whereby a local church is trained and led to

?? Understand its own nature (identity) and reason for existence (purpose)

(Hermeneutical dimension)

?? Evaluate, as a body of believers, its own functions, formulate objectives accordingly, and reach these objectives in a planned manner. (**Agogical-Teleological dimension**)

?? Develop, as required and on a continued basis, structures for congregational life that will serve the Triune God and his Salvific acts in His church and in the world – to the Glory of HIS NAME.

(Morphological dimension)”

In terms of Nel’s understanding of building up the local church, it is apparent that the role and functioning of office-bearers including the pastor, are key factors in this process. Nel (2004:28) notes in this regard

“...it is necessary to stress the importance of service leaders in and to fit them into a comprehensive approach to building up the local church. A Biblical view on the offices (service leaders), their relationship to the congregation, and their leadership operations is vital to building up the local church as ministry’

Wagner (1984:61) further suggested that

“...the primary catalytic factor for growth in a local church is the pastor”(Wagner 1984:61).

Malphurs (1993:119) reflects on this statement by Wagner by observing,

“As the pastor of the church goes, so goes the church, or perhaps a better expression: As the pastor of a church grows, so grows the church”

Few would dispute the fact that the pastor as one of the key office-bearers in the local church has a vital role to play in Building up the local church and that any clarification of his role is vital and must enhance the Building up of the local church.

3. Scope of research

The scope of the observed problem is so wide that it is necessary to set certain limitations. Although it is clear that there are many factors that influence the formation of a personal ministry identity, the scope of this research will focus primarily on the influence of church role expectations on the formation of this identity. The research will focus on the experience of Baptist pastors within the Baptist Union of Southern Africa who, in the main, minister in white, urban churches.

The research problem and hypothesis are summarised below.

3.1 The research problem

My observation of pastors within the Baptist Union of South Africa indicates that many experience a compromising of their personal ministry identities due to an overwhelming pressure to meet the role expectations of their local church leadership and members and a desire to ‘keep the peace’.

The task resulting from the research problem is how to prevent the role expectations of others from significantly compromising the integrity of the personal ministry identities of pastors within the Baptist Union of Southern Africa.

3.2 The hypothesis

It is the hypothesis of this thesis that Baptist pastors in the Baptist Union of Southern Africa, allow church role expectations to undermine the exercising of their unique personal ministry identities.

4. Method of research

By way of definition, this research needs to be understood in the scope of Practical Theology that is “the empirically oriented theological theory of the mediation of the Christian faith in the praxis of modern society” (Heitink, 1999:102). In more specific terms it would fall into the category of pastoral theology \ leadership.

The method employed in this research follows that outlined by Heitink (1999:102) namely a practical theological approach that “is (a) interpreted by means of a hermeneutical theory, (b) analysed by means of an empirical theory, and (c) translated in terms of action through a strategic theory.”

It is clear that the method needs to be dialogic in terms of a dialogue between praxis and theological theory. Heitink (1999:152) notes that the nature of the dialogue needs to be that of a bipolar tension-filled combination. The nature of this dialogue is based on the premise that “Theory is in constant need of verification or falsification through praxis, while praxis must constantly be transcended by theory. Theory in the context of practical theology must always be critical theory.” (Greinacher in Heitink 1999:152).

This thesis makes use of descriptive research as means of describing the nature of the problem that will become evident from the empirical data to be collected quantitatively from Baptist pastors serving local churches within the Baptist Union of Southern Africa.

In researching the validity of the hypothesis presented, reference needs to be made to the Biblical witness, the collective research of writers on the subject, as well as the collective experience of pastors within the Baptist Union of Southern Africa.

Heitink (1999:238) summarises the method of research as follows: “observation – description – analysis – reflection – suggestions for action”.

In order to understand the research problem fully, it is necessary in Chapter 2 to explore the search for a personal identity and highlight a number of key factors critical to the discovery and understanding of that identity with particular reference to the debate surrounding personal and psychosocial influences on the development of identity.

In Chapter 3, the concept of a personal ministry identity will be explored with particular reference to the nature, development and role of a personal ministry identity.

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In Chapter 4, the specific relationship and interaction between a personal ministry identity and the expectations of church leadership and members will be explored with particular reference to the conflict that may occur as a result of this interaction.

In Chapter 5, the results of two questionnaires which have been completed by pastors serving local churches within the Baptist Union of Southern Africa is presented. An analysis of the research findings with respect to the relationship between one's personal ministry identity and church role expectations are discussed.

In Chapter 6, issues surrounding self-denial and self-esteem within the context of the development of a pastor's personal ministry identity are discussed.

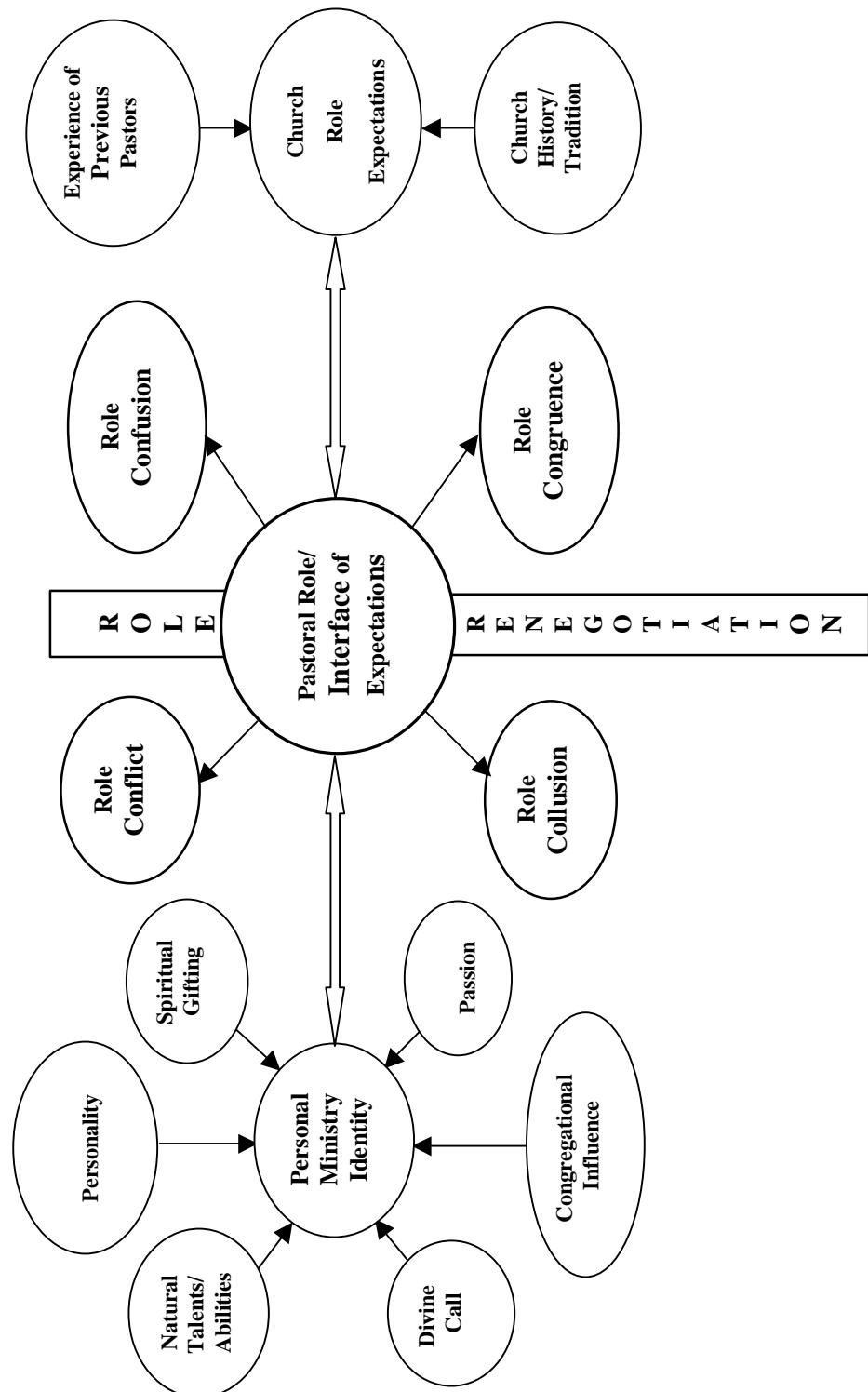
In Chapter 7, two models aimed at renegotiating pastoral roles are presented as a possible means for overcoming role conflict and facilitating role congruence.

In Chapter 8, some concluding comments and observations are made.

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Figure 1 below provides an integrated overview of the process in which the personal ministry identities of pastors are developed and possibly undermined by church role expectations.

Figure 1: Process overview



INTRODUCTION

Before considering the nature and development of a specific personal *ministry* identity, it is necessary to consider some of the key issues involved in the search for a personal identity.

For many the search for an authentic personal identity is often a life long struggle that may never be fully achieved. Nygren (1994:133) articulates this dilemma when he notes the following of his life.

“All my life I have been trying on identities like a customer trying on suits in a discount clothing store. I find one but it doesn’t fit. I try another. Sometimes I buy a style only to decide later that it is too long or too short or the color makes me uncomfortable”.

Nygren’s struggle in coming to terms with his own personal identity is not unique one but is the dilemma that many face in life.

In the debate surrounding identity formation, perhaps one of the more fundamental issues that has to be addressed is whether our identities are “discovered” by means of an introspective process of self analysis, or whether they are developed within the social context within which we function. Within a pastoral ministry context, the predominant social context would be the local church within which a pastor ministers. The fundamental question therefore that needs to be answered is simply this.

Are our identities shaped by the social context within which we function, or are they part of who we already are to be discovered through a process of self-analysis and introspection?

This question is fundamental to the thesis that suggests that the social context i.e. the local church and in particular church role expectations have a significant influence in undermining the integrity of a pastor’s personal ministry identity. This would therefore suggest that psychosocial factors are more influential in shaping personal identity than intrinsic personal factors

The purpose of this chapter is to understand the nature of an authentic personal identity by exploring some of these fundamental issues as a basis for understanding the development of a personal *ministry* identity in the following chapter.

1. THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY- PERSONAL \ INTROSPECTIVE VERSUS PSYCHOSOCIAL DIMENSIONS

Within the discipline of contemporary psychology, there exists a rather vigorous debate surrounding the issues of identity development or discovery. For the purposes of this thesis, it is important to consider some of the significant theorists in this debate. It is however important to note that given the limited scope of this thesis, one cannot even begin to do justice to the subject or to the debate.

As indicated earlier the debate within psychology as to the development or discovery of ones authentic identity falls largely into one of two groups. Firstly those who emphasize the introspective analysis in which the discovery of the true self is found within, and secondly those who emphasize the social influence in the development or discovery of our authentic identity. There are however those who would suggest that identity development or discovery incorporates both of these dimensions.

Let us begin by looking at a number of influential psychologists who focus on the personal introspective dimension of identity including Rogers, Jung and Maslow amongst others.

1.1 Rogers

Carl Rogers with his emphasis on his person-centered approach to therapy laid much emphasis on the personal dimension of identity and saw little social influence in the development of identity. Wicklund and Eckert (1992:22) note the following of Rogers' understanding of identity.

“The pushing aside of socially steered, facadelike behavior was central for Rogers (1950, 1951), whose contribution antedated that of Jourard. Rogers drew a sharp line of demarcation between the person as an embodiment of societal standards and the person as a reflection of the “true self”.....

Nowhere in Roger's writings is there any acknowledgment of society's role in building values, morals, or philosophies into the individual. All these develop, somehow naturally, out of a God-given, organic core of the self'

Carl Roger's concept of the "fully functioning person" would be someone with a self-understanding characterised by the following.

"Ability to consider one's own abilities with more objectivity.
 Perception of oneself as more independent.
 Perception of oneself as more spontaneous.
 Perception of oneself as more genuine.
 Perception of oneself as more integrated and less divided". (Wicklund and Eckert 1992:23)

Hamachek (1992:94) notes the following of Rogers' approach.

"For the most part, his ideas evolved from his very personal experiences with his clients, whom he saw developing a "self" that was uniquely their own".

1.2 Jung

Jung's approach to the development and discovery of the self is consistent with that of Rogers in the emphasis he placed on the personal introspective dimension at the expense of the social dimension. A key element to Jung's understanding of the development of the self, is the concept of "individuation". Fordham (1985:36) quotes Jung in explaining the concept of individuation as follows.

"...individuation is the process by which individual beings are formed and differentiated. In particular, it is the development of the psychological individual (q.v.) as being distinct from the general, collective psychology. Individuation, therefore is a process of differentiation (q.v.) having for its goal the development of the individual personality".

Jung's concept of individuation will be dealt with in more detail later in this chapter.

1.3 Maslow

A key concept in Maslow's understanding of identity is that of "self-actualisation" in which the individual realises their innate potential and ability through the attaining of "peak experiences". Wicklund and Eckert (1992:25) quote Maslow as follows.

"The person in the peak-experience usually feels himself to be at the peak of his powers, using all of his capacities at the best and fullest. In Rogers' nice phrase, he feels fully functioning".

Maslow's approach is consistent with both that of Rogers and Jung in that the discovery of the self is a journey inward rather than a reflection on the social context within which one is functioning. Wicklund and Eckert (1992:26) note in this regard,

"Just as with Jourard and Rogers, the self-knower here is seemingly free of the dictates and influences of everyday society. Much of the authentic contact with the self is seen as being accompanied by the discarding of socially rooted facades or false values. Self-actualized persons are thus autonomous, spontaneous individuals who have come to know their true and innate potentials".

Having considered the psychologists who emphasise the personal introspective dimension in the discovery of identity it is necessary to consider those who emphasise the psycho-social dimension. The essence of this approach is summarized by Ashmore and Jussim (1997:81) when they note,

"the personal self is very much embedded within multiple social contexts. Three historical scholars, Cooley (1902), Mead (1943), and Baldwin (1897), set the conceptual stage on which the drama of the self in social interaction was enacted. For these symbolic interactionists, the self was primarily a social construction, crafted through linguistic exchanges with others. Thus, the personal self is crafted through the incorporation of attitudes that significant others appear to hold about one's self".

Hamachek (1992:20) underlines the importance of the social dimension in identity formation when he notes,

“To some extent, our sense of identity is influenced by other people’s responses to the roles that (1) we put ourselves in by virtue of the way we behave or (2) that others put us in by virtue of their perceptions of our behavior...In other words, we tend to adopt the behaviors and attitudes expected of a person in any of those various roles. In so doing we begin to get a certain kind of feedback; this in turn reinforces how we feel about ourselves”.

A criticism levelled at the individualistic, asocial approach to identity, is well articulated by Wallach and Wallach (quoted by Wicklund and Eckert 1992:29):

“Self-actualization, self-discovering, finding the authentic self, and similar concepts can certainly be viewed as a form of egocentric or selfish behavior”

It would appear that an individualistic approach to identity fits well within a western individualistic mindset. However, within a non-western culture like that of South Africa, in which the group and community is emphasized rather than the individual, the understanding of identity appears to be very different. In South Africa the concept of Ubuntu is but one expression of a different understanding and experience of identity. At the heart of the concept of Ubuntu is the understanding that a person is a person through other persons. Shutte (2001:12) notes with regard to Ubuntu,

“The idea of community is the heart of traditional African thinking about humanity. It is summed up in the expression umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu, a person is a person through persons. This means that a person is a person depends on personal relations with others to exercise, develop and fulfil those capacities that make one a person. At the beginning of one’s life one is only potentially a person. One’s life, if all goes well, is a continual becoming more of a person through ones interaction with others. Personhood becomes a gift from other persons”.

The concept of Ubuntu however presupposes a society and community that is well integrated and stable. This is certainly an assumption one cannot make about current western society. Baumeister (1986:264) raises this very issue when he notes,

“In our culture the individual’s relation to society has become problematic. Our society is of the loose and flexible type, requiring that individuals define themselves. The individual is understood as separate from his or her place in society, and people do not trust society to provide them with fulfillment in exchange for doing their assigned tasks and duties”.

The concern that Maslow and Rogers have with the emphasis on the psychosocial influence in identity formation is that this social influence will undermine the integrity of the innate authentic identity. It is precisely this concern within the specific context of pastoral ministry, that is at the heart of this thesis. This concern is well articulated by Ashmore and Jussim (1997:81) when they note,

“there are liabilities associated with the construction of a personal self so highly dependent upon social interaction. One such liability is the potential for constructing a false self that does not mirror one’s authentic experiences. Thus, one may incorporate opinions of others toward the self that do not correspond to events as experienced. Alternatively, the demands of significant others, coupled with the need to garner their approval, may alternatively lead to the suppression of authentic opinions or behaviors and the display of what others need to observe or want to hear”.

Ashmore and Jussim (1997:100) whilst highlighting the importance of the role that interpersonal relationships play in the development of the personal self, highlight a number of problems associated with this interaction when they note,

“The emergence of the personal self is deeply embedded in the crucible of interpersonal relationships, particularly with regard to the impact of significant others on the ability to display one’s authentic self. Across numerous analyses of the development and display of false self-behavior, a central theme emerges. If significant others ignore, reject, devalue, or actively denigrate one’s authentic self, individuals – whether children, adolescents, or adults,

female or male – will be driven to suppress the true self and to display manifestations of false self-behavior. Such behaviors are motivated by attempts to obtain approval, to avoid rejection, and to maintain some form of connection. Paradoxically, however, efforts to sustain a relationship and please others that require *distortion* of the self not only lead to disconnection from one's true self but disconnection from significant others, since they also prevent an authentic relationship”.

It is apparent that there are some legitimate concerns that have been articulated with regard to the undermining effect which social input would have on the integrity of one's personal identity. However, Wallach and Wallach (quoted by Wicklund and Eckert 1992:30) feel that this concern has been overstated by particularly Maslow and Rogers and note in this regard,

“As we see it, Maslow and Rogers and many other psychologists at the present time are so concerned about potential threats to freedom and autonomy that they attempt to shield us from external influence to a degree far beyond what is in fact good for us. Although it is true that misuses of authority are legion, it does not follow that all authority is illegitimate and to be avoided – such as that of all team coaches and orchestra conductors, or that of all parents, teachers, and judges”.

1.4 Erikson

In his understanding of identity formation, Erikson (1982:72) plays a mediating role between these two dimensions when he highlights the influence of both the personal and the social dimension in noting the following,

“How is the psychosocial concept of identity related to the self- that core concept of individual psychology? As pointed out, a pervasive sense of identity brings into gradual accord the variety of changing self-images that have been experienced during childhood and that, during adolescence, can be dramatically recapitulated and the role opportunities offering themselves to young persons for selection and commitment. On the other hand, a lasting sense of self cannot exist without a continuous experience of a conscious “I”,

which is the numinous center of existence: a kind of *existential identity*, then, which (as we noted in discussing old age) in the “last line” must gradually transcend the psychosocial one”

It is clear that the debate with regard to the role which the inner self and social context play in the development and discovery of one’s personal identity is a complex one that will probably continue for many years. In assessing the merits of both approaches with their weaknesses and strengths it would appear that this issue is not an either\or issue, but a both\and issue with the psychosocial influences more influential in the formative years, with intrinsic factors more influential in the post adolescent years. It would however appear that the neglect of either one of these elements would negatively undermine both the understanding and experience of identity. Baumeister (1986:247) notes in this regard,

“An adequate view of identity must synthesize both parts, the inner self and the outer context”

Cognisance must however be taken of the threat that the psychosocial influence poses on the integrity of a persons identity and Erikson’s suggestion of a move away in the post adolescent phase from the emphasis on the psychosocial influence to the discovery of the “I” within, should be taken seriously.

Within the pastoral ministry context, the intrinsic factors in the discovery of ones identity include spiritual gifting, personality, passion and divine call as well as natural abilities. The psychosocial influences would be found within the context of the local church and in particular, the role expectations that exist within that social context. The discovery or development of a personal *ministry* identity that will be discussed in the following chapter, is the product of the interface or interaction between these intrinsic and extrinsic factors. In the context of what has been discussed before, it is suggested that whilst psychosocial influence has a role to play in the shaping of identity, more emphasis should be placed on the personal intrinsic factors.

2. KEY ISSUES IN UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF IDENTITY.

Having laid the foundation for the understanding of the development or discovery of ones personal identity, it is important to highlight a number of key dimensions pertaining to the nature of ones identity that will further enhance our understanding of it.

2.1 It seeks to answer the question, who am I?

The search for an authentic identity seeks to answer one fundamental question, Who am I? Callahan (1990:92) in his discussion on church leadership suggests that this fundamental question, Who am I? is vital in forming the basis of the understanding of our unique identities.

“Who am I? Three words sometimes said in wonder, sometimes in despair, sometimes in discovery. The psalmist wrote, “Who is man , that thou art mindful of him?” In each century, in each generation – indeed, in each day of our lives – we ask in fresh, new ways, “Who am I?” From psalmist to philosopher, from adolescent to aging person, from four-year-old to forty-year-old, from cynic to sentimental, from agnostic to Christian, these three words represent a persistent, pervasive search for individuality. This search for individuality is the search for identity and integrity, responsible autonomy and power over one’s own life and destiny. The search for individuality is the search for identity. Finally, each of us wants some sense of selfhood. We want some sense of knowing that we are a distinctive personality. While we frequently succumb to the pressures of whatever grouping has our loyalties for the moment, nonetheless each of us has a drive toward singularity. It is not simply that we want to have our own name: more profoundly, we want to have our own sense of personhood”.

It is clear that the answering of the question, who am I? is fundamental to the understanding of our unique identity. It facilitates a life based on individuality, integrity, responsible autonomy, a sense of selfhood, singularity and personhood. The answering of this question impacts directly upon our sense of purpose and meaning in

life for who we are is closely associated with the unique contribution we are called to make in life, although it is more than this.

2.2 It is the discovery of who we already are.

The discovery of ones authentic identity begins by looking within the existing-self and discovering that our authentic identity is to be found in who we already are and not in some off-the-shelf clone that our social context may expect us to be.

Sellner (1975:48) understands the search for identity in the following terms.

“ The search for identity includes the willingness, the courage, the conscious decision to become who one already is. It means embracing one’s life, one’s personality, one’s conscious and unconscious elements, one’s flesh and humanity, finiteness and sinfulness and guilt, gifts and talents and goodness. It means not trying to be someone one isn’t – like God or Jesus or anyone else”.

Sellner highlights the fact that the key to understanding our unique identity is the ability to both embrace and celebrate who we already are, who God has created us to be. An inability to do this results in the very real danger of “adopting” a more “acceptable” or “ideal” persona that undermines the integrity of our authentic identity. As pastors we run the every real danger of “adopting ideal personas” of those we esteem and admire in the ministry that are other than who we are in order to please our constituencies and be all things to all people.

Palmer (2000:4), like Sellner, begins the search for an authentic personal identity by looking within, when he offers the following advice:

“I must listen to my life and try to understand what it is truly about – quite apart from what I would like it to be about – or my life will never represent anything real in the world, no matter how earnest my intentions. That insight is hidden in the word *vocation* itself, which is rooted in the Latin for “voice.” Vocation does not mean a goal that I pursue. It means a calling that I hear. Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am. I must listen for the truths and values at the heart of my

own identity, not the standards by which I *must* live – but the standards by which I cannot help but live if I am living my own life.”

Both Sellner (1975:48) and Palmer (2000:4) offer a radical approach to vocation and ministry; one in which understanding and embracing one’s existing self is the determining factor in the nature of the ministry one should be involved in. The dilemma and frustration which Nygren (1994:133) encountered in finding his identity was that he was attempting impose a foreign, off-the-shelf identity upon himself, rather than discovering and embracing who he already was.

Many may resist this emphasis on understanding and embracing one’s self as being self-centered, narcissistic, unbiblical and hence sinful. After all, do the Scriptures not instruct us to “deny one’s-self?” This aspect of self-denial will be more fully explored in chapter six. Palmer (2000:10) in criticising the traditional understanding of vocation as something imposed from outside of one, responds to this criticism as follows.

“That concept of vocation is rooted in a deep distrust of selfhood, in the belief that the sinful self will always be ‘selfish’ unless corrected by external forces of virtue. It is a notion that made me feel inadequate to the task of living my own life, creating guilt about the distance between who I was and who I was supposed to be, leaving me exhausted as I labored to close the gap. Today I understand vocation quite differently – not as a goal to be achieved but as a gift to be received. Discovering vocation does not mean scrambling toward some prize just beyond my reach but accepting the treasure of true self I already possess. Vocation does not come from a voice “out there” calling me to be something I am not. It comes from a voice “in here” calling me to be the person I was born to be, to fulfill the original selfhood given me at birth by God.”

This understanding of identity as divine gift generates an enormous amount of freedom within the individual. It firstly frees one from the awful pressure of creating ones own identity or persona, which inevitably results in a false persona or identity, and simply allows one to discover that which already exists. Secondly, it frees one from the pressure of social conformity to a foreign identity imposed by society.

Thirdly, recognising this identity as a divine gift, it frees one to accept oneself for who one is, a creation of God in terms of his perfect design for us. This understanding may have an enormously positive impact upon one's self image and esteem.

Some may suggest that Christ's teaching in Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34 and Luke 9:23 that we as his disciples should 'deny ourselves' stands in opposition to the embracing and celebration of the self. This seeming contradiction will be dealt with by a different biblical understanding of self and self esteem discussed in chapter six.

2.3 It involves the processes of individuation and kenosis

Two processes namely individuation and kenosis play an important role in the discovery of our authentic identity. Let us take a closer look at these two concepts.

2.3.1 Individuation

"Individuation has to do with identity formation" (Nel 2003:161).

In the context of adolescent development, Nel (2003:162) building on this understanding of individuation quotes Osmer in defining the concept of individuation by noting that:

"(Individuation) involves the psychological work of disembedding the self from the various roles, relationships, and symbolic meanings that compose an adolescents world in order to construct a self that is brought to and expressed through the roles relationships, and symbolic meaning." (2003:162).

Whilst Nel is working within the context of adolescent development, it is clear that the need for individuation in the process of identity formation continues on into adulthood.

Sellner (1975:48) defines individuation in the following terms.

"The process of individuation is the courageous decision to become what one already is, to consciously assimilate and affirm all that is immanent in one's personality – and it is a process moving from ego-centredness to ego-

transcendence, directing one's life to something or someone objective, a power greater than oneself'

It is important to note, that the process begins with self-understanding that is not derived from external roles or relationships but an understanding of who we are independent of these relationships or roles. There exists however a dynamic relationship between who we are and the social environment within which we operate. We need to move from ego-centeredness to ego-transcendence in which our identities find expression in something greater than we are. This concurs with Nel's thinking in that our identity is not determined by the roles we fulfil and the relationships we have, yet our identity finds its expression precisely in the roles we fulfil and the relationships we have. Individuation should never be equated with individualism in which the importance of interaction with the social environment is minimized.

Nel (2003:163) quoting Osmer highlights the crucial role that this process of individuation plays.

"Individuation allows persons to make their way through the wide range of differentiated institutions in which they participate on the basis of a coherent and self-conscious understanding of themselves" (2003:163).

It is this self-conscious understanding of ourselves that empowers us to understand our purpose in life and hence to make life choices and set priorities in line with that unique purpose. It provides a framework within which we can relate to the wide range of differentiated institutions we are confronted with throughout our lives. Within the pastoral ministry context it empowers pastors to set boundaries in terms of the understanding of their unique ministry, flowing out of an understanding of their unique personal ministry identity.

2.3.2 Kenosis

A second important process in the discovery of ones personal identity is what Sellner (1975:49) refers to as kenosis:

“Kenosis” describes the process of emptying oneself of all ego-desires and at the same time entering into one’s own flesh, one’s humanity – becoming what one already is. Jesus was exalted, became “Lord” by his decision to enter into his own humanity – his aim was to embrace who he already was, a mortal man, instead of aiming at being God”.

Sellner (1975:49) continues:

“One must enter into who one already is: accepting one’s creaturehood, one’s limitations, and not seeking to be or play God (this is the opposite of *hubris*), embracing one’s own life, entering into one’s own flesh – and then experiencing change. Become what you are would be the modern man’s maxim”.

In applying these concepts to the pastoral context, Sellner (1975:52) gives the following advice respect of pastoral identity.

“His identity as minister is inextricably bound up with his courage to be himself, to become who he already is. His priesthood is not something one puts on like a collar, but flows out of who he is and Whose he is. Ordination was not assuming a new, “ideal” personality, but an outward sign of what was already taking place: a willingness to be available, to serve. His ministry is not based on a reaching for perfection, but a desire to center himself in God”.

This must surely be one of the greatest challenges to face all pastors: finding the courage to be who we truly are and resisting the temptation to create a false persona that is different from who we truly are. This relates to the integrity of the pastor. Integrity is a key element in the search for an authentic identity. Callahan (1990:94) notes in this regard,

“Integrity and identity go hand in hand. Integrity gives a sense of cohesiveness to one’s identity. Without the benefit of some sense of integrity, one’s identity becomes fragmented, inconsistent, widely variable, “slippery”.

Integrity is about having the courage to be true to who we have discovered ourselves to be and the courage to resist the enormous social pressures to conform to an ideal that compromises in the authenticity of our unique identity.

The emphasis that Nel and Sellner place on the process of individuation in the discovery of personal identity is extremely important. It emphasizes both the introspective search for identity as well as the expression of that identity within the social context. It is clear however that the discovery of identity begins by looking within, discovering and embracing that which is already there before it can find adequate expression within the social context.

2.4 It is the ability to differentiate between the authentic and the fictional self

The discovery of ones personal identity takes place within the context of an ongoing tension between the desire to conform to the expectations of others and compromise ones authentic identity, and the desire to embrace and maintain the integrity of ones authentic identity.

In the context of this ongoing tension, McGraw (2001:30) identifies two concepts namely the “authentic self” and the “fictional self” that assist us in understanding the dynamics of this ongoing tension.

“The authentic self is the *you* that can be found at your absolute core. It is the part of you that is not defined by your job, or your function, or your role. It is the composite of all your unique gifts, skills, abilities, interests, talents, insights and wisdom. It is all your strengths and values that are uniquely yours and need expression, versus what you have been programmed to believe that you are “supposed” to be and do”.

This understanding of one’s authentic self is contrasted by what he refers to as the “fictional self”. “He sees the fictional self” as,

“those negative experiences in your life and – perhaps more importantly – your reactions to and interpretations of those experiences (which) pull you away from who you once knew you were. The result is that you begin to ignore who and what you are and what you want and need. This self opts

instead to shape you into a nonwave-making conformist: just take it, don't make trouble, just take it. That conforming definition of you may be convenient for the world, but it can leave you frustrated and lacking hope, passion, and energy. In order to disconnect from this fictional self and reconnect with your authentic self, you must understand how both sets of influences, external and internal, have contributed to the life you're living right now, and how those influences can be controlled by you to create what you really want and need" (McGraw 2001:43)

It is the hypothesis of this thesis that many pastors embrace the fictional self precisely because it is nonwave-making and simply avoids the conflict that may arise when one asserts the integrity of ones authentic identity. What is needed is the ability to understand the nature of ones authentic self, embrace this and resist any pressure from oneself and others that may result in the acceptance of a fictional self.

2.5 The ability to discover and celebrate one's uniqueness.

A key dimension of discovering ones authentic identity is the ability to discover and celebrate one's uniqueness.

McGraw (2001:41) continues in his discussion on identity to emphasize God's equipping for a unique role and therefore the uniqueness of each individual identity.

"God is wise in so many things that we don't see. I strongly believe that He starts out each person with everything they'll ever need to successfully fulfill their role. We have the tools, we have the ingredients, we have all the things that we need to get out in the world and live as our authentic selves. And for each of us, that set of gifts is uniquely different. He gave you different gifts than He gave me. He has given you different gifts than He gave the next-door neighbour. Nevertheless, each of us, with all of our differences, has within us all of the resources we need. Those resources are found within the authentic self'.

London & Wiseman (1994:160) underline this dimension of uniqueness in pastoral identity when they note,

“When God created you, He made a blueprint of a distinctive ministry for you. He designed you to do something special for Him, something no one else does as well as you can. He likely wants it done where you now serve. Cloning is not the way God works in your ministry or in anyone else’s. No other person is capable or talented to accomplish what God has mapped out for you. God believes so much in your gifts and devotion that He chooses a risky strategy for changing His world through people like you. God allows you immense freedom to discover what ministry is suitable for you and how you will use the gifts He has given you.

Engstrom (1976:85) in his discussion on the making of a Christian leader, notes the following with regard to the role that uniqueness and individuality play in the identity of a leader.

“ Uniqueness and individuality are important qualities for a leader. They contribute toward knowing oneself. Individuality is not to be confused with rebellion or isolation or refusing interaction with others; rather, it is the process of interaction. It may also be described as the condition of a human-being-in-a-group that causes a person to be perceived by himself as distinctive within the group.”

In a culture and society in which conformity is the norm, the ability to accept one’s uniqueness and the unique role which one has to play, is critical in understanding and embracing our authentic identity. Within a church context, the pressure to conform is enormous and uniqueness and individuality are often frowned upon. When one however reflects on the Apostle Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 12 on the church as a body made up of many different parts, that teaching celebrates both diversity and uniqueness, with each part of the body fulfilling a unique function within the greater body. Paul continues on this theme in his letter to the Ephesian church when notes in Ephesians 4:11-12,

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up”

It is precisely the embracing and the celebration of diversity and uniqueness within the unified body that enhances the growth and development of that body.

2.6 The ability to differentiate between who I am and what I do

“The personhood of the pastor is frequently swallowed up in the pastoral role”
(Harbaugh 1984:72).

Many who seek to define their identity do so in terms of what they do, i.e. in functional terms, rather than by who they are i.e. their personhood. One of the problems with this approach is the lack of necessary differentiation between the person and the role.

Switzer (1979:16), reflecting on Erikson’s concept of an “occupational identity” notes the following.

“In my experience, Erikson is quite correct in placing a central focus on “occupational identity” as being crucial in the total identity development of the adolescent male (and, perhaps, increasingly, of the adolescent female). Not only is the “occupational identity” the initial expression of the needs and drives that are beginning to come together in the adolescents struggle for selfhood, it also becomes a dynamic center which then draws loose forces within the personality together and channels them in particular directions in powerful ways. Occupation continues to share a central place in the selfhood of most persons over the years. It becomes increasingly an integral part of an individual’s self-image, and for a majority an occupational crisis is also a crisis of selfhood. Most ministers not only *work* at their profession, and invest time and energy, but at the core of the self is “minister,” a bound collection of self-images, values, faith, and commitments – a person who has responded and *is responding* to a vocation, not just one who has chosen an occupation. I do not just *perform* a ministry, I *am* a minister. This is the way I think of myself, and on most occasions I act out of this awareness of my personhood”.

Nygren (1994:133) in reflecting upon his own pastoral experience was able to differentiate between who he was and what he did and offers a helpful perspective in this regard when he notes,

“although I served as a minister, enjoyed it, and was proud of what I did, I never became a minister. It didn’t define who I was. If the pulpit gown was removed, there was still a person inside, which is true of all ministers. Although some are ministers, no one can only be a minister. It is not our only identity.” (1994:133)

Beach (2001:104) in assessing the spiritual health of pastors suggests that an important element of a pastor’s spiritual health is a clear separation between a pastor’s self worth and identity and that which he does:

“Am I doing the inner work necessary to separate my self-worth and identity from what I do? All of us have a deep need for a sense of place. By that I mean we long to feel needed, significant – like we really matter. And depending on the messages we received in our early years, many of us tie our worth directly to what we do.”

This is an extremely dangerous and vulnerable place to be. As pastors we are prone to derive our significance from the positive feedback and “strokes” that we receive, and in doing so, we put our sense of self-worth in the hands of others.

Woodley (1999:35) in responding to criticism of his leadership ability also highlights the problem of not differentiating between who I am and what I do.

“The ‘good pastor, lousy leader’ dilemma strikes at the root of my identity. It hooks into my sense of shame. For me, it’s a short slide from ‘I’m a poor leader’ to ‘I’m an inadequate person’ to ‘I’m a failure in my calling and therefore as a Christian.’

Lee & Balswick (1989:114) in their assessment of the differences in approach by different pastors to the challenges of pastoral roles, conclude that the “differentiated pastor” is in a far better place to cope with the challenges and stresses of the pastorate.

“What accounts for the difference? Why might one minister view his roles as resilient and flexible while another attaches almost life-and-death significance to them? Our guess is that it is a matter of differentiation. The well-differentiated pastor’s sense of identity is more stable and does not depend on how well he fulfills expectations, whether they are his own or the congregation’s”.

They continue further,

“...the differentiated pastor is able to stand calmly in the strength of his convictions despite emotional pressures from members of the congregation. The situation is not the same for the poorly differentiated pastor. He becomes enmeshed in the ministry. His sense of identity becomes so closely entwined with the fulfillment of role expectations that instead of experiencing failure as the temporary dropping of the ball, he experiences a failure of self. Such a pastor responds to emotional pressure defensively, either by cutting-off (“I don’t care what you think, so there!”) or by becoming oversubmissive and apologetic (“I’m so sorry – just tell me what you want me to do, and I’ll do it”) (Lee & Balswick 1989:114).

This issue of differentiation is critical to the health of the pastor but it is only possible if the pastor knows who he really is based on a clear and unambiguous understanding and embracing of his unique identity and has the integrity of character and courage to resist any pressure to compromise his authentic identity.

Aleshire (1995:27) is highly critical of a “functional” definition of pastoral identity and offers the following helpful definition.

“Pastoral identity is not understood in terms of the activities of pastoral work, although it involves them, nor is it understood in terms of the study and reflections that are part of that work, although it includes them. *Pastoral identity is tied to the capacity to act and feel and think in such a way that together form a cohesive and artful theological unity.* This theological unity is central to pastoral identity”.

In a real sense Aleshire is underlining the fact that as pastors we are more than simply the sum total of what we do. It is therefore very difficult to write a specific and detailed job description for a pastor. Rather what is needed is a definition of a pastoral role in which fairly broad parameters are established. This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter seven.

Aleshire (1995:25) is critical of the approach to theological education that has the effect of fragmenting and separating the various sub-disciplines resulting in “*a lack of a center in pastoral identity*”. As a consequence of this lack of a center for pastoral identity, he observes,

“Pastors understand themselves in the context of the “capacities” or skills they have developed. They understand themselves primarily as preachers, or pastoral counselors, or community ministers, or social witness workers. Some tie their pastoral identity to a commitment to develop capacities in all of these areas so they can be the “well-rounded pastor. Obviously, my distinctions are exaggerations, and don’t deserve a serious defense. But the tendency to construe pastoral identity in these functionalist terms does exist, and those tendencies complicate an understanding of pastoral identity that provides an organizing principle for the pastoral ministry”.

Oates (1992:16) reinforces this idea by highlighting the fact that our identities or personhood should not be defined by what we do but who we are when he notes,

“With clarity of identity and integrity of being, you as a Christian pastor do and do not do many things. *What* you do is not determined by the other-direction of the most recent demand laid upon you. Your functions are determined by your inner sense of identity and integrity or lack of it. The major thrust of your dialogue in prayer with God, in conversation with yourself and your family, and in interaction with your faith community of the church is, then, the clarification of your identity and the focus of your “personhood” under God. From this you draw your guidance as to the nature of your task. By means of this you resolve conflicting expectations of yourself by others. You search for a unified perspective of your calling under God that issues in a joyous participation with the people whom you serve. If you are

able to do your work well, refreshing strength must be afforded you from a coherent vision of your identity. Instead, Christian pastors are often confused in identity. They seek to find the way between the divided camp of the contradictory social demands and personal ambitions that beset them, knowing neither who they are nor where they are going”.

Oates in the above passage articulately summarizes the major challenges that face pastors in the area of pastoral identity.

2.7 Identity is used interchangeably with the concept of self-image

Firet (1986:239), in reflecting on Crawford’s understanding of a minister’s self-image, defines self-image as “the total interior organization out of which a person functions as a spiritual being” and sees the concept of a pastoral self-image as being closely associated with a pastoral role-concept. In this regard he offers the following advice.

“for the effective fulfillment of his pastoral role, a pastor should try to become conscious of his self-image and role-concept; i.e. , he should begin to make some discoveries: this is how I see myself as the bearer of the pastoral role; this is how I believe I have to be; it is with this mind-set that I believe I have to operate. Second, he should try to discover what kind of atmosphere he generates as a result of living by the dictates of his self-image and how that affects people for whom his role-fulfillment is a context for living as human beings. Third, he must get to the point where he is willing to look at his self-image critically. “Can I be like this? Does that not make me inauthentic? Must I be like this? Is this what people, is this what God expects of me?” Perhaps if that self-scrutiny should lead him to pray “Make me right simple, Lord,” an *image* would fall apart and a *person* would be born – a person who is becoming human and who can thus minister to others in the process of becoming human”.

Firet (1986:239) above highlights the need to simply be the people that God has designed and created us to be rather than trying to perpetuate an image that is radically different from who we truly are.

Cook (1983:35) in his discussion on pastoral self-image highlights the influence of self- image when he notes,

“Images affect us significantly. The image we have of ourselves may burden us or empower us. The image others have of us also plays tunes to which we dance. Our own self-image tends to be self-fulfilling. We sometimes have self-image problems that are related to personality and other personal factors, but some of the problems have to do with the profession. Many of us experience times of identity crisis. We’re not always sure ministers are needed in the mainstreams of life”

In view of Cook’s comments on the influence self-image may have on our daily experience of life, in which we are either burdened or empowered, it is vitally important that our self-image is indeed accurate and authentic.

3. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to reflect on the nature of our personal identities with particular reference to the way in which our identities are either discovered through a personal introspective self-analysis of intrinsic qualities within us, or developed and shaped by the psychosocial influences of our social environments. Having briefly reviewed the debate in this regard, it is apparent that both of these dimensions have a significant influence in the shaping of one’s personal identity. However, caution should be exercised with respect to the expectations of others that may have the effect of undermining the personal intrinsic factors within the individual. Within the pastoral ministry context this may result in the church role expectations of the local church undermining the influence that intrinsic personal factors including spiritual gifting, passion, personality, divine calling and natural abilities should have in shaping a pastor’s personal identity. This would result in a fictional rather than an authentic identity.

In considering the nature of ones personal identity, we have discovered the following. It seeks to answer the question, who am I?

It involves:

- * the discovery of who we already are,
- * the processes of individuation and kenosis,
- * the ability to differentiate between the authentic and fictional self,
- * the ability to discover and celebrate ones uniqueness, and
- * the ability to differentiate between who I am, and what I do.

It is used interchangeably with the concept of self-image.

We have seen that personal identity is all about self-understanding which is important for life in general, but particularly important for the health of those in pastoral ministry.

Hartung (1976:309) notes in this regard,

“The task of self-understanding is never a particularly easy one, especially in areas of great emotional significance. Yet I believe for the sake of our own health this is an important task. I am suggesting, however, that this be undertaken without undue recourse to theologizing. We know theology too well, and even if our God-talk is true and accurate, it can tend to be used as a rationalization for explaining away problems. Imperative for ministerial health is that we really know ourselves”.

CHAPTER 3 - THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSONAL MINISTRY IDENTITY

INTRODUCTION

Having considered the nature and development or discovery of ones personal identity, we are now able to build on the foundation laid in the previous chapter and look more specifically at identity in the context of pastoral ministry and at the nature and development of a personal ministry identity.

1. Nature of a personal ministry identity

Malphurs (1993:48) equates a personal ministry identity with God's unique design for each person for their particular ministry. He sees it as a divine design that answers the question, 'Who am I?' In support of this understanding of identity, he makes reference to Psalm 139:13-14 highlighting the role of a sovereign creator who has brought each person into this world as a uniquely designed creation.

Whilst the nature of each individual design is unique, ministries are all made up of a number of common elements that Malphurs (1993:51) identifies as follows.

“Ministries are based on gifts, passion driven, poured through personalities, authenticated by character, and enhanced by natural talents or abilities.

Therefore to understand your design you must discover your spiritual gifts, passions, personality (temperament type), and natural talents or abilities”

In considering the elements of a personal ministry identity that Malphurs has highlighted, there are perhaps two other elements which he does not mention. The first is the unique 'divine call' on the life of a person to a particular ministry. The second accepts the reality of the psychosocial influence discussed in the previous chapter, on the formation of a personal ministry identity and the reality that ministry identities are not shaped in a vacuum. It is however precisely this influence that can undermine the integrity of a ministry identity as discussed in the previous chapter.

2. The development of a personal ministry identity

It is clear from the above that the development of a ministry identity involves the integration of a number of distinct elements giving one a sense of identity. It is therefore important to understand each of these constituent elements, if an appreciation of one's unique ministry identity is to be achieved. Let us take a closer look at these elements.

2.1 Spiritual gifting

The discovery and understanding of ones unique spiritual gifting is primary in the development of one's ministry identity. In the Apostle Paul's teaching on spiritual gifting found in 1 Corinthians 12-14, Romans 12 and Ephesians 4, it is clear that God has given to every believer at least one spiritual gift, and in some instances more than one gift. What is critical to note is that the allocation of these gifts is by God's unique design and purpose. Speaking of these gifts Paul notes in 1 Corinthians 12:11,

“All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each man, just as he determines”.

It is the combination of these spiritual gifts which constitutes the uniqueness of a ministry identity. The identification of this uniqueness is critical for identifying the area in which the recipient of these spiritual gifts would be most effective in ministry.

“...if we accept that the diversity of our gifts comes from God, we are obligated to have a clear concept of the nature of these gifts – to know who we are” (Bratcher 1984:133).

Malphurs (1993:60), like Bratcher, underlines the necessity of discovering one's uniqueness when he notes:

“God has sovereignly chosen to bestow spiritual gifts on all those who are his spiritual children (1 Cor. 12:7, 11; Eph. 4:7). This fact alone should motivate you to discover your unique gift mix and how you best fit into his service. The

knowledge of these gifts will contribute to the discovery of your ministry niche”.

Nel (1994:65) sees a close relationship between spiritual gifting and one’s divine call to ministry and suggests that the discovery of one’s unique spiritual gifting gives insight into the nature of one’s calling.

“God calls us by means of the spiritual gifts he gives us. The fact that people receive spiritual gifts is in itself a call to utilize these gifts in the congregation”
 (My translation)

Nel (1994:66) continues further:

“The receiving of spiritual gifts implies a calling to ministry. When the congregation is made aware of this through preaching and teaching, then leaders are spontaneously identified. This identification of leaders, given the principal relationship between spiritual gifting and a calling to ministry, is a reliable indication of calling to a specific office or to any form of congregational leadership”. (My own translation)

It is clear from Nel’s understanding that there can be no real understanding of one’s unique calling to ministry without an understanding of one’s spiritual gifting, for it is precisely the nature of this gifting, that determines the nature of the call. Nel highlights the important fact that one cannot separate spiritual gifting from call.

Clinton (1988:182) reinforces this idea when he highlights the relationship between spiritual gifting and the development of a philosophy of ministry.

“A ministry philosophy must be tailored to fit each leader. The biblical values of a ministry philosophy can have much in common among many leaders. Leaders who have common situations will find much in common in their ministry philosophies. But that part of a leader’s ministry philosophy that depends on the leader’s own gifts will differ greatly from other leaders. Giftedness is a set, including natural abilities, acquired skills, and spiritual gifts. Over the years, God refines an individual in the giftedness development

pattern. This involves seeing the strengths of natural abilities and how they relate to ministry effectiveness. It involves the identification and development of spiritual gifts, eventually recognizing a gift-cluster and roles that will best enhance that gift cluster. It also involves the acquisition of skills that enhance both natural abilities and spiritual gifts and that are needed in available ministries. It is easy to see that a ministry philosophy will change as a leader discovers his own identity in terms of giftedness”.

It is therefore clear that an understanding of one’s spiritual gifting is paramount in determining one’s personal ministry identity.

2.2 Passion

A second element contributing to the development of a personal ministry identity is a pastor’s “passion”.

Malphurs (1993:52) defines passion as,

“your God-given capacity to fervently attach yourself to some person or thing (a cause, idea, field of study, and so on) over an extended period of time to meet a need. It involves a fervent or strong emotional attachment”.

He also suggests that:

“ a God-given passion supplies long-term direction and motivation”(Malphurs 1993:64)

Bugbee et al (1994:56) define passion as follows:

“Passion is the God-given desire that compels us to make a difference in a particular ministry” and expands on this understanding of passion with the following helpful explanation.

“ You might think it helpful to think of Passion as an arena or context for where you would like to make a difference. Many of our passions relate to

particular groups of people such as children, young adults, teen moms, the elderly, the homeless, refugees, or those recently divorced. Other Passions relate to causes or issues such as prejudice, the environment, hunger or social injustice. Passions can also revolve around certain functions in the church such as organizing events, people, or systems, or just being available to help” Bugbee et al (1994:58).

It is this God-given passion that motivates, energizes and directs the use of the activity of spiritual gifts. Some may share the same spiritual gift mix but have a different God-given passion and it is the unique combination of these two elements that can significantly alter their respective ministry identities. One’s passion could involve a particular age grouping of people, or it may be a passion to minister in the context of a particular need, such as illness, bereavement or divorce. One’s passion may also be related to a particular cause such as the fight for justice. Finally, it may relate to a particular dimension of the pastoral ministry such as teaching, preaching, pastoral care, leadership, evangelism or church administration.

2.3 Personality

The third element that influences the development of a personal ministry identity is the personality or temperament of the pastor

“Congregational leadership is not just about the execution of certain tasks. The personhood and personality of the leader is often the decisive factor in achieving success” (Nel 1994:77) (My translation).

With the above statement Nel highlights the enormous influence which personality has on ministry performance. Malphurs (1993:64) using the term “temperament” to discuss the impact of personality on ministry identity notes,

“God-given spiritual gifts provide the special abilities for ministry, and a God-given passion supplies long-term direction and motivation for those abilities. However, God-given temperament provides unique personal character strengths for the ministry”.

Wagner (1984:97) feels that the strength of a pastor's role can be limited by his or her temperament. He says:

“Some pastors are take – charge people, and some could never bring themselves to take charge....I myself feel that each of us needs to regard ourselves as a product of God the Creator. He has not created every pastor for pastoring a large, growing church”.

It is clear from the above that a pastor's personality \ temperament has a direct impact on the way in which he or she approaches the different facets and demands of ministry. The scope of this thesis does not permit me to explore this in great depth, but the one area in which personality plays a prominent role, is in the area of a pastor's orientation to change. Malphurs (1993:89) observes the following relationship between pastoral personality and a willingness to embrace change.

“People who are often found on the cutting edge of change are of high dominance temperament, as are also those of highly influential temperaments. Both generate lots of enthusiasm, enjoy participating in a group, genuinely enjoy helping other people, are risk takers who do not like the status quo. Thus they are initiators of change by design, prefer a climate of change, and handle it well. Sensitive temperaments emphasize steadiness or stability. For them, change turns secure situations into insecure situations and their tendency is to resist change”.

A question frequently asked is whether there is an ideal pastoral personality.

Harbaugh (1984:69), in seeking to address this question, responds as follows.

“There is no one personality style that characterizes persons either in the seminary or in the parish. God can, and does, call people with quite varied histories and personalities to accomplish the many faceted work of the ministry. One need only turn to the gospel accounts to recognize the vast personality differences among the chosen apostles. The gospel stories also show that no one person is forever locked into the personality style they have developed. Faith leads to change and growth”.

Harbaugh thus highlights the dynamic element of one's personality. Far from being static and cast in concrete, personality is dynamic, having the ability to grow and develop in response to changing circumstances. The implication of this is that the influence that personality exerts on one's ministry identity will change over time and one's personal ministry identity may also change as a consequence of this. One therefore needs to continually reassess one's identity in the light of this dynamic element.

Lee (1989:62) summarises the importance of self-knowledge with respect to leadership effectiveness when he notes:

“To increase our leadership effectiveness it is helpful to know ourselves in more specific and intimate ways – to know the inclinations of our personalities and the characteristics of our style, to know the way others perceive and respond to us”.

It is as we discover ourselves that we discover the way in which we can most effectively relate to those around us, particularly within the context of pastoral leadership. Dimensions such as being extrovert or introvert, task oriented or people oriented will influence our particular style of leadership and how we effectively relate to others.

2.4 Natural talents or abilities

The fourth element that influences the development of a personal ministry identity is the natural talents and abilities that God has given to us.

In addition to the unique spiritual gift mix that we, as believers, have received, each one of us are endowed with natural talents and abilities that can have a significant influence on the way in which our ministry is exercised.

“Leaders who want to revitalize churches are wise to examine their natural characteristics and abilities”(Malphurs 1993:70).

Malphurs (1993:70) identifies some of the natural characteristics and abilities that Nehemiah demonstrated in leading the Jews in Jerusalem, as follows: he was a problem solver, a visionary, a motivator, a persuader, a risk taker, an empathizer, a perseverer, a planner, a recruiter, an organizer and finally, a delegator. It was these characteristics that enabled Nehemiah to complete the task that God had given to Him. Similarly, the natural characteristics and abilities with which a pastor has been endowed, give some indication of the type of ministry that he or she would be most effective in.

2.5 Divine call

In addition to the above four elements which are all God-given, a fifth aspect that impacts directly upon the formation of a pastor's personal ministry identity, is a sense or some understanding or experience of a divine calling to a unique ministry. The Apostle Paul makes it clear in Ephesians 4:11,

“It was he (God) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers”

indicating that within a “general” call into ministry, there may well be more specific calls to particular roles. In many ways it is difficult to separate this divine calling from the four preceding elements as these elements play an important role in the understanding of our unique call. The other difficulty relates to the fact that the experience of this ‘divine call’ is a subjective personal spiritual experience that may well differ in form and content from person to person. Perhaps it should simply be described as ‘personal spiritual conviction’.

In discussing the process involved in developing a ministry vision derived from a personal ministry identity, Malphurs (1993:54) identifies the understanding of the ‘divine call’ as being a potential problem.

“Several problems could surface before or during the process. The first is ministry vision in relation to the concept of a divine ‘call’. Often, completely committed Christians agonize as they attempt to determine what God’s will is for their ministry. Some describe this process as experiencing God’s special,

supernatural ‘call’ on their lives. They spend much time on their knees praying and waiting for an experience similar to that of Isaiah in Isaiah 6 or Paul in Acts 9. However, these two experiences were unique to God’s work in the lives of those men and do not appear to be normative. Most often, God’s will is to be found not in waiting for some special revelation but by studying both the Scriptures and how he has designed people. Therefore, those who desire to discover their ministry vision should spend much time with the Bible, which reveals his general will – how they should live, and so on. They should also detect his unique design in their lives, which reveals his personal will as to whether they should be a pastor, teacher, and so on”.

Malphurs (1993:54) rightly highlights the importance of the Scriptures in discerning the nature of the divine call upon one’s life. However, the witness of Scripture should be seen in the context of the other five influential factors that contribute toward a personal ministry identity.

2.6 Congregational influence

The final influence on the development of a personal ministry identity, is the influence of the congregations in which the pastor ministers.

In the previous chapter the influence of psychosocial factors in the development of one’s personal identity was discussed and it was noted that whilst they play an important role in the development of identity, there is the danger that they may well undermine the integrity of some of the intrinsic personal factors. In the context of pastoral ministry and the development of a personal ministry identity, these intrinsic factors would include spiritual gifting, passion, personality, natural abilities as well as divine call. The psychosocial influence would be the context of the local church and in particular the role expectations of the local church.

Lee and Balswick (1989:128) make an important contribution when they highlight the influence that the congregation has on the formation of the identity and personality of a pastor.

“The minister’s identity is forged in the context of a congregational family, much as the infant’s personality is molded by the biological family. Instead of

biological birth and entry into the world, there is the pastor's entry into the social world of the ministry. And just as the infant brings certain innate capacities to the interaction with his or her family, so the minister brings a personality – the marks of his family of origin – to the interaction with a congregational family”.

Whilst recognizing the important role that this dimension plays in the development of a pastor's personal ministry identity, there is a real danger that if undue emphasis is placed on this dimension to the detriment of the other dimensions, the pastor's authentic ministry identity may be significantly undermined. It is critical that the first five elements listed as influencing the formation of this identity, play an important mediating role with respect to congregational influences in the formation of identity.

It is the unique combination of, and interaction between these six elements that results in the development of one's personal ministry identity.

3. The purpose of a personal ministry identity

Having looked at the significant influences on the development of a personal ministry identity it is necessary to consider the need for a personal ministry identity.

“Once you have discovered who you are (your divine design) you have an understanding of your ministry identity. The next step is to use this information to determine a personal ministry vision. Ministry vision focuses on your ministry niche. It is what God wants you to do with your life in terms of ministry” (Malphurs 1993:53).

“Pastors must clearly understand who they are and what they are to do in the local church. A carefully defined role is essential in effective ministry”(Means 1993:99).

The benefit of a personal ministry identity is that it facilitates the development of a ministry vision that gives direction in terms of the important choices that have to be made in ministry. These choices relate amongst others to preparation for ministry as well as the nature and content of the ministry roles that we will fulfil throughout our

ministries. It empowers the pastor to establish boundaries that will ensure that he is ministering within his area of maximum effectiveness.

Failure to develop a ministry identity may well result in a lack of personal ministry focus and vision as well as the frustration of ministering outside of one's primary calling and gifting. The reality is that unless we define our own ministry identities, others will define them for us in terms of their own specific expectations, often resulting in role confusion \ conflict and frustration. This will be more fully explored in the following chapter.

Malphurs (1993:54) identifies the development of a personal ministry identity and vision as an important element in creating a sense of ministry significance, the absence of which may well lead to burnout. He concludes:

“Therefore, determining your personal ministry vision, as based on your divine design, is critical to the longevity of your ministry” (1993:55).

In contrast to the emphasis that has been placed on the need to develop a personal ministry identity, Dittes (1999:66) suggests a radical alternative to this approach.

“Can there be a sense of ministry and of healing that is freed of the futile and self-defeating scramble for defined roles and yet is still credible? Can a minister truly abandon the search for defined status, articulated identity, professional roles and, by the terms of such criteria as these, be nothing and still be minister? Indeed, can one be a minister just because he or she is ‘nothing’? Is there any recognizable role-less role, identity-less identity? Or must such talk be limited to ordination rhetoric-ministry of faith and not self-justifying good works, commitments and calling that transcend the social- and self-reward system that sanctions roles and professionalization, healing gospel ministry of joyful self-abandon? Is there any style or mood of ministry that forsakes roles and in that forsaking becomes ministry? If we contemplate such a style of self-abandonment in ministry, a ministry without role definition, do we feel this to be a weakness and an emptiness, an unjustified status, as it seems in the eyes of the world? ‘What *do* you ministers do to earn your money?’ Or can we credibly claim such a style as a positive, vigorous

selfhood and ministry of a new order, perhaps of a new age? Can it be such even though the world (and therefore many of us much of the time) cannot recognize it”.

At the heart of Ditte’s concern with regard to the “scramble for roles and identity” in ministry, is that these very roles or established identities may well restrict the freedom of the individual to be and become fully the unique person with a unique calling that they are and that a lack of role or identity definition will best facilitate freedom for authentic ministry. As has been argued above, the understanding of one’s personal ministry identity and the definition of a ministry role in relation to this identity, should always serve the purpose of empowering the pastor to minister effectively within his primary area of calling and gifting. Should this identity and role definition impede this, then they should be critically reevaluated. Ditte’s suggestion, whilst attractive, seems somewhat idealistic and runs the risk of resulting in a lack of pastoral vision and direction.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the development of an authentic personal ministry identity is important in defining the ministry vision, role and function of a pastor and the failure to develop such an identity, will significantly undermine the effectiveness of a pastor’s ministry. It is also apparent that there are at least six significant factors that influence the development of such an identity, including spiritual gifting, passion, personality, natural talents or abilities, divine call as well as congregational influences. However, an overemphasis on this congregational influence may have the result of undermining the integrity of this identity by marginalizing the influence of the other five important elements on the development of identity.

CHAPTER 4 - THE INTERFACE BETWEEN PASTORAL IDENTITY AND CONGREGATIONAL ROLE EXPECTATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Having looked at the nature and development of an authentic personal ministry identity, it is now necessary to consider the interface between the pastoral expectations generated as a result of this identity and vision, and the pastoral role expectations of the congregation.

In many ways the pastoral role can been seen as an ‘interface of expectations’ between the pastor and the congregation. As a consequence of this interface, one of at least four consequences could arise, namely, role confusion, role conflict, role collusion and finally role congruence. Before considering these four consequences in greater detail, it is necessary to have an understanding of the challenge that arises with the interface of expectations within the church context.

1. THE CHALLENGE OF INTERFACING EXPECTATIONS

“The ministering person is dealing constantly with peoples’ expectations.

Perhaps in no other profession, except maybe that of the politician, is a person facing so many expectations from so many people, and, to make the situation more complicated, the expectations people place upon the ministering person vary enormously” (Sanford 1982:7).

With the above statement Sanford places the challenge of the expectations associated with ministry, in the spotlight. An enormous amount of stress is generated in a pastor’s life in terms of the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of these expectations. The source of these expectations is to be found within the congregation as well as within the pastor himself. The following are but two of the more significant reasons giving rise to pastoral stress related to expectations.

1.1 The power of role expectations.

Role expectations have significant power and can influence pastors’ behaviour and choices. This power and influence can be generated from two distinct sources; externally from people within the church, and internally, from the pastor’s own life.

Within the church context, there is often an enormous amount of power wielded by significant people within the church who have specific expectations of the pastor such that they may well influence the success or failure of the pastor's ministry. Sanford (1982:8) observes the following of these influential people:

“...these people with their expectations are persons who must be reckoned with. They are the ones who pay the bills. They are the ones whose favor must be won if his work is to be successful, or, sometimes, even if he is to keep his job. They can make or break the success of his program, and they can make his life agreeable or disagreeable”.

Given this type of pressure, most pastors are tempted to compromise the integrity of their ministry identity and bow to the pressure of those who are influential within the church, for the sake job security. One consequence of not meeting these expectations might be external role conflict within the life of the church. This will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

Another source of power that exerts influence over the pastor comes from the internalised expectations that the pastor may well have of him or her self. What is important to note of these expectations, is that they may be perceived to be coming from the church environment when, in fact, they have been generated by the pastor himself and projected onto the church. Sanford (1982:35) notes in this regard:

“We want to be aware that some of the expectations we worry about may not be coming from others but from ourselves. It is as though there is a “Voice of Expectation” within us, an “Internal Monitor” or “Inner Secretary” who continuously admonishes us about what we should be doing and keeps track of all our failures and omissions...The Inner Monitor seems to speak with the voice of God. That is, we hear this voice with its ‘shoulds’ and ‘oughts’ speak with great authority. But though it poses as God, upon closer examination we will find that it is built up from the collective expectations of many people compounded with our own fear of failure and guilt”.

There appears to be a very close relationship between performance guilt within a pastor's life and their desperate need to meet expectations, both external and internal.

“One reason that the Inner Monitor has such power over the ministering person is because of the amount of guilt most religious professionals carry” (Sanford 1982:37).

It is precisely the presence of such guilt that makes the pastor open to manipulation in the area of expectations and there is the real temptation to compromise the integrity of his personal ministry identity, resulting in high levels of personal frustration.

1.2 The ambiguity of role expectations.

A second source of stress in the area of role expectations is often the ambiguous nature of these expectations. The source of this ambiguity is to be found in the diversity of expectations found within any given congregation. Oswald (1992:40) highlights this challenge when he notes:

“Gaining role clarity requires hard work over a long period. In fact, clergy probably need to work at role clarity throughout their ministries. In general, the laity is genuinely confused about what the role of the pastor should contain. Each lay person has a different expectation of her \ his pastor”.

One of the reasons for the diversity of expectations that lay persons have of their pastor, are the unique experiences or histories they have had with previous pastors that have shaped their current expectations. These may have been positive or negative but these experiences have a profound influence in shaping their current expectations.

“Expectations of you as pastor will be similar to the congregation’s past experiences with clergy – both their negative and positive experiences. Whether we like it or not, we inherit the credit and debit the parishioners have built up based on their past experiences” (Oswald 1992:41).

Even if a church reaches consensus on their expectations of a pastor, this ambiguity is further complicated by the fact that there may still exist varying expectations of *how* these expectations will be met.

“Their expectations regarding *how* they want a pastor to help them vary greatly from person to person” (Oswald 1992:43).

Given this diversity of expectation within any given church it is not surprising that role confusion and conflict are evident in so many churches. In order to respond adequately to this diversity of expectation, Oswald (1992:41) suggests that what may be needed is the negotiation of different roles with individual parishioners.

“You will need to negotiate one role with the congregation as a whole, and then a series of roles with individual parishioners, each of whom is consciously or unconsciously projecting his \ her role expectations onto you”.

The negotiation of a multiplicity of roles within the church makes the ministry of the pastor extremely complex. The whole issue of role negotiation and renegotiation will be discussed in greater depth in chapter seven.

Just as individual member’s expectations have been influenced by their experiences of previous pastors, so the expectations of the church as a whole are influenced by its own history. Oswald (1992:30) offers the following advice to a new pastor in a church.

“You need to know the parish’s sense of its own history. The thing these people consider important – be it a norm, custom or habit - has some historical event connected to it. People wish to perpetuate a certain way of doing things because they find it one way to recollect their own history”.

In seeking to manage this complex interface of expectations, it is incumbent upon the pastor to have some understanding of the influences that have shaped the collective and individual expectations within the church. However, the pastor also brings to the ministry a set of expectations in terms of his understanding of his personal ministry identity. These expectations have also been influenced by other factors that the pastor should have some understanding of. Oswald (1992:32) offers the following advice to pastors in this regard,

“Take some time now to reflect on your own history and personal experience within the church. Try to be in touch with the experiences that have made a

deep impression on you...Your past-indeed, the myths about yourself-has guided and shaped your values, patterns of behavior, and expectations”.

In order to fully understand some of the consequences of the interface of expectations discussed hereafter, a pastor must take seriously the significant influences of both his and the church’s expectations. As he does his, he will be able to highlight potential areas of confusion and conflict. Oswald (1992:33) offers the following advice:

“...take your history and compare it with the history of your new parish. As you reflect on the two histories, jot down some notes on areas of compatibility and potential tension”.

Let us now take a closer look at the four possible consequences of this interface of expectations.

2. ROLE CONFUSION

“Role confusion pervades the entire church” (Bratcher 1984:126).

The above statement highlights a major challenge facing the church today of redefining roles within the church on an ongoing basis.

Means (1993:83) highlights the issue of role confusion as one of the major challenges facing the church today when he observes:

“For all their vacillation, previous generations probably had clearer conceptions of the pastoral role than exists in America today. As we near the end of this century, widespread confusion and ambiguity about pastoral priorities handicap our clergy”

He continues:

“While no definitive new conception of pastoral ministry has emerged, uncertainty about pastoral authority, vagueness about priorities, and a confusion of sub-roles with a pastor’s primary role continue to weaken churches” (Means 1993:84).

There are a number of reasons as to why role confusion may arise. It is clear that, given the dynamic social environment in which the church seeks to minister and the need for the church to remain relevant to its ministry context, there is an ongoing need to redefine ministry roles. However a negative consequence of this ongoing redefinition of roles, is that role confusion may arise as both the pastor and congregation seek to redefine the pastoral role in terms of their own particular understanding of the ministry environment. In the past, when confusion arose with regard to the pastoral role, reference was frequently made to the Old Testament roles of Prophet, Priest and King as a Biblical model for ministry. As Means (1993:81) observes however, even this understanding has changed down through the years.

“Sometimes the preaching role (prophet) became dominant, sometimes the sacramental role (priest) became central, and at other times the governmental role (king) emerged as primary”.

Bratcher (1984:126) reinforces Mean’s observation above when he notes:

“The biblical model presents several roles including; prophet priest, evangelist, pastor, teacher. The two most often used by ministers are prophet and priest – to challenge and to comfort. Confusion for ministers arises as they try to decide which of these tasks is more important in addition to when and under what conditions they should challenge and \ or comfort”

A second reason for role confusion may be found in the multitude of differing roles and expectations that are required of a pastor. Lee & Balswick (1989:113) note with regard to these differing roles and expectations;

“Multiply the number of sources of expectations by the number of roles, and there are literally hundreds of possible combinations. And every combination can be a source of either satisfaction and fulfillment or frustration and conflict”

They conclude that:

“Perhaps more than in any other profession, the minister is expected to be ‘all things to all people’ (Lee & Balswick 1989:116).

It is clear that role confusion which is not addressed and clarified will almost inevitably result in some degree of role conflict within the church. The development of an authentic personal ministry identity is a key element in dealing with the challenge of role confusion. If role confusion is not adequately dealt with, it inevitably results in role conflict.

3. ROLE CONFLICT

As mentioned in chapter one, it has been my experience with church conflict, that often the underlying cause of this conflict is expectations that are not met by either the pastor or the church. This conflict may relate to the content and nature of the roles to be fulfilled and the priority given to the various roles, as well as the way in which the roles are conducted. Bratcher (1984:130) cites as a significant cause for conflict in the church:

“...the internalization by either the clergy or the laity of mutually incompatible values and expectations. A typical minister may experience a struggle between ministering to the personal needs of parishioners and ministering to those of his family. Or a congregation may wish to grow but believes that any stewardship, evangelistic, and outreach programs will diminish high spiritual standards. The problem is not that the expectations are wrong; the problem is that in each case the expectation is held as an absolute. When you try to cope with opposing absolutes you have conflict”

He concludes that:

“...with these kinds of mutually incompatible internalized expectations the only possible outcome is inner conflict, guilt, and a lack of self-worth”
 (Bratcher 1984:131).

In many instances, this incompatibility of expectations relates not necessarily to the nature or content of the various roles to be played by the pastor, but to the *priority* of

those roles. Pappas (1995:60), reflecting on pastoral stress that is generated by role conflict, notes in this regard:

“Stress results then when the pastor perceives himself or herself incarnating primarily one of these pastoral roles while the congregation expects a different one to be primary. Because most people do not think in terms of roles and role definitions, and most pastors do not feel a calling to an amorphous pastoral ministry but to their particular understanding or image of the pastoral ministry, much energy can be invested in this crossing. Often this energy is expressed as personal conflict. The pastor is failing (versus succeeding at a different role definition)”.

The way in which a particular role or set of roles is fulfilled may also be a source of conflict. Pappas (1995:62) notes in this regard:

“Even when there is alignment on the pastoral task, primary and secondary, stress is still a very real possibility. This is so because the pastoral task may be accomplished in a way that is unacceptable to the congregation”.

It would be useful at this point to consider two dimensions of role conflict namely *external* and *internal* role conflicts.

3.1 External role conflicts

Lee & Balswick (1989:120) define external role conflict as “incompatible expectations that come from outside of the pastor”

Thus conflict can arise out of the plurality of expectations that exist of the pastor within the church context in which he is ministering. Given this diversity of expectations, it is reasonable to anticipate that not all these expectations will be met, resulting in conflict.

“Sometimes the role conflicts for pastors come from the incompatible expectations of others. Every role is by definition a set of expectations; since the minister must fulfil so many roles, there is bound to be role conflict at

some point. It is, if you will, a hazard of the profession” (Lee & Balswick 1989:117).

It is apparent that the development of an authentic personal ministry identity may well precipitate rather than prevent an external role conflict as the expectations of the pastor derived from an understanding of his identity, may well be incongruent with the needs, and consequently the expectations, of the congregation.

3.2 Internal role conflicts

External role conflict tends to be generated from expectations within the church that are not met. In contrast internal role conflict is generated by expectations within the pastor that are not met.

“Internal role conflict arises when the minister’s various expectations of his role are incompatible or un-integrated.”(Lee & Balswick 1989:123)

Apart from this source of internal conflict, a pastor’s expectations *of himself* can also be a source of much internal conflict.

“...to some degree ministers are driven by their expectations of themselves” (Lee & Balswick 1989:124).

Internal role conflict could often be related to a poorly defined or simply undefined ministry identity resulting in enormous internal confusion and conflict.

4. ROLE COLLUSION

A third possible consequence of this interface is role collusion. The Concise Oxford dictionary defines collusion as follows.

“a secret understanding, especially for a fraudulent purpose” (Allen 1990:222) To the casual observer, given the apparent synergy between the expectations of a pastor and the congregation in a given church, it may appear as if role congruence has been achieved. Lee & Balswick (1989: 141) however issue a word of warning when they note, that:

“...just because the minister and the congregation agree on the minister’s role, it does not follow that the role is realistic. If we look closely at a congregation that seems to idealize its minister, we may find that the minister idealizes his role also. Pastor and parish collude to maintain an unrealistic role because it meets their own personal or emotional needs”.

It has been my experience that what may appear to be role congruence in a church, is simply role collusion. The reason for this collusion may relate to an overwhelming desire to ‘keep the peace’ at all costs, or simply an inability or lack of desire to deal with the role conflict that has arisen. Role collusion is fundamentally unhealthy and simply drives the conflict underground rather than dealing with it constructively.

5. ROLE CONGRUENCE

The fourth possible consequence is the situation of role congruence. Pappas (1995:57) in his definition of ‘role’ gives a clear understanding of the essence of what may be referred to as role congruence:

“...role is seen as a set of behaviors that fulfill a specific function in an organization or society *and are understood to be appropriate by both the person performing them and the persons receiving them*” (Emphasis mine).

In contrast to role confusion, conflict and collusion, role congruence is the ideal that pastors and congregations need to be working toward. Role congruence is achieved when the expectations of a pastor derived from an understanding of his authentic personal ministry identity, are compatible and congruent with the expectations of the church. It gives rise to a situation in which the pastor perceives himself to be a ‘fully functioning’ person, whilst the congregation are satisfied that he is meeting their needs.

CONCLUSION

The interaction between a pastor’s personal ministry identity and the role expectations of a congregation can result in both negative and positive consequences.

Incompatibility between these two sets of expectations may well result in role

confusion, conflict or collusion. Where a significant level of compatibility exists with regard to role expectations, then the ideal of role congruence is achieved. It is incumbent upon all role players in this process to strive to achieve role congruence for the sake of the ministry. In chapter seven we shall consider two models that could be employed in overcoming role confusion and conflict and assist in the process of achieving role congruence.

**CHAPTER 5 – THE INFLUENCE OF CHURCH ROLE EXPECTATIONS ON
A PASTOR'S PERSONAL MINISTRY IDENTITY –
AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH SURVEY****INTRODUCTION**

Having considered in the previous chapters the nature and development of a personal ministry identity, the important role that this fulfils within the life of a pastor, as well as the consequence in terms of confusion and conflict of a pastor functioning outside of his authentic ministry identity, it is now important to ascertain precisely what effect church role expectations could have on the authenticity of a pastor's personal ministry identity.

In an attempt to understand the relationship between church role expectations and the development of a pastor's personal ministry identity, an empirical research study, using the results of two questionnaires completed by 30 senior pastors, pastors and associate pastors within the Baptist Union of Southern Africa, has been completed. The respondents represent predominantly "white" and "coloured" urban pastors, both male and female who had access to electronic mail facilities across the whole country.

1. Method of survey

The survey was conducted by means of two structured questionnaires (see annexure A and B for copies of the questionnaires) that were sent to the respondents by electronic mail for completion and return by electronic mail. The second of the two questionnaires was sent to the respondent only after the completion and return of the initial questionnaire in order that the responses to the initial questionnaire would not influence the responses to the second questionnaire. There could however be no real control of this as the previous questionnaire would still be available to the respondent on his/her own computer. Respondents were however requested not to refer to the previous questionnaire. The need for this will become apparent later.

The objective of the first questionnaire was twofold. Firstly (Section A) to establish a personal ministry profile for each of the respondents by exploring their opinion on aspects of their spiritual gifting, passion, natural talents and abilities, divine call, how

they are organized, how they are energized and finally their opinion in terms of the dimensions introvert\extrovert.

The second objective of this initial questionnaire (Section B) was to establish a profile for each of the respondents in terms of their own personal understanding and experience of their church's specific role expectations of them. It is important to note that these responses are only the respondent's perceptions of the church role expectations and these have not been tested in their local churches. These perceptions should however be accepted as reality for the respondents.

The objective of the second questionnaire (Section C) was to establish a profile for each of the respondents in terms of how they currently, in the normal course of their ministry, prioritise certain ministry dimensions. In other words, their current approach to ministry in general.

The development of these two questionnaires was based on the understanding that pastoral ministry can essentially be divided into six key ministry dimensions namely,

Preaching

Teaching

Pastoral care

Evangelism

Church administration

Leadership

These six key ministry dimensions were derived from the framework developed by Nel (2004:54) for understanding the process of building up the local church in which he identifies the coordinating and integrating of the following ministries as key to building up the local church namely preaching, worship, pastoral care, management and administration, teaching, fellowship, deeds of mercy, and witnessing.

Each of the three profiles derived from these questionnaires, the pastor's personal ministry profile (Section A), church role expectations (Section B) and the pastor's normal or current approach to ministry (Section C), are based on the respondents prioritisation of each of the above six dimensions of pastoral ministry.

One of the difficulties encountered in generating these profiles was the lack of a standardized measurement instrument for these six dimensions. In order to overcome this, six lists of ministry activities clearly associated with each of these dimensions were developed. A process of random selection was then used to generate the options in Section B and Section C. In each of the ten groupings of six ministry activities found in Section B, 7.1 to 7.10 and Section C, 8.1 to 8.10 each of the six ministry dimensions referred to above, are represented by a particular activity. Therefore in effect, the prioritisation called for of the respondents in these two sections is in reality, a prioritisation within these groupings of the six key ministry dimensions.

With respect to Section A, most of the spiritual gifts listed in A 1 are easily associated with one of the six ministry dimensions. Where this was not the case, the response with regard to that particular spiritual gift was not used to establish a priority with regard to the ministry dimensions. In respect to the sub-sections pertaining to passion, natural talents \ abilities and divine call, each of the ministry activities listed under these sub-sections are easily associated with one of the six ministry dimensions. A personal ministry profile in terms of Section A could therefore be established relative to these six ministry dimensions.

With respect to Sections A 5-8, responses to these sections would not indicate a priority in terms of the six ministry dimensions, but rather a particular approach to these ministry dimensions in terms of the following criteria, structured \ unstructured, task \ people oriented and finally, introvert \ extrovert.

The key aspect of this research that needs to be closely considered in either proving or disproving the hypothesis, is the relationship between the pastor's personal ministry profile established in Section A (A1-A4), the profile of church role expectations established in Section B, and the profile of the pastor's current approach to ministry established in Section C. In other words which of the two profiles, the pastor's personal ministry profile or the profile related to church expectations has had more influence in shaping the profile of the pastor's current approach to ministry in Section C.

Once all the data had been received from the respondents, captured and verified, an analysis of the data was conducted by Dr M J van der Linde and Mr R J Grimbeek.

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Using the Friedman nonparametric ANOVA procedure, a comparison was made between the mean\median scores of Sections A, B and C. The following are the results.

2. Research results

<u>Section</u>	Preaching	Teaching	Pastoral Care	Evangelism	Administration	Leadership	Overall
Pastoral Identity	0.320 ab	0.314 a	0.530 a	0.657 a	0.553 a	0.372 a	0.458 a
Church Role Expectations	0.359 b	0.530 b	0.331 b	0.503 b	0.885 b	0.391 a	0.500 b
Current Pastoral Practice	0.297 a	0.498 b	0.495 a	0.496 b	0.823 b	0.406 a	0.503 b
P-Value	0.049 *	0.000 *	0.000 *	0.001 *	0.000 *	0.741 *	0.000 *

Non-bold numbers in blocks are the mean values

ab = means with common characters do not differ significantly by interpreting column wise. (Based on multiple comparisons of Friedman sums).

*= P-Values are significant on the 5% level

Before discussing the overall results it may be helpful to discuss each of the six ministry dimensions in terms of how they relate across the three sections.

In order to understand the interpretation and comparison of mean values across the three sections it is important to understand that given the rating scale used in the research questionnaires, the higher the mean value for a ministry dimension, the lower the priority that has been placed on it by the respondent. Consequently, the lower the mean value, the higher the priority placed on it by the respondent.

2.1 Preaching

The P-value for this dimension indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the mean values of the three sections. There were no statistically

significant differences in the mean values between the pastor's identity and church role expectations. There also appear to be no significant differences in the mean values between the pastor's identity and his current approach to ministry. The results do however indicate that there are significant differences between the mean values between church role expectations and current approach to the preaching ministry. The mean value of 0.359 for church role expectations is significantly higher than the mean value of 0.297 for current approach to ministry indicating that the current approach to ministry placed a higher priority on the preaching dimension than the church role expectations did.

2.2 Teaching

There are statistically significant differences between the mean values of the three sections. The results indicate a statistically significant difference between the mean values of the pastor's identity and the mean values of church role expectations as well as the mean values of current approach to the teaching ministry.

A mean value of 0.314 for pastoral identity is statistically significantly lower than 0.530 for church role expectations and 0.498 for current approach, indicating that pastoral identity placed more priority on teaching than did the church role expectations and current approach to ministry.

There appear to be no significant differences between the mean values of church role expectations and the mean values of the pastor's current approach to the teaching ministry.

2.3 Pastoral care

Statistically significant differences between the mean values of the three sections are indicated ($P=0.000$). The results indicate a statistically significant difference between the mean values of the pastor's identity and the mean values of church role expectations as well as between the mean values of church role expectations and the mean values of current approach to pastoral care. A mean value of 0.530 for pastoral identity is statistically significantly higher than the mean value of 0.331 for church role expectations indicating that pastoral identity places less priority on pastoral care than do church role expectations. A mean value of 0.331 for church role expectations is statistically significantly lower than a mean value of 0.495 for current practice

indicating that current practice places a lower priority on pastoral care than do church role expectations.

There however appears to be no significant statistical difference between the mean values pastor's identity and the mean values of his current approach to pastoral care.

2.4 Evangelism

Statistically significant differences between the mean values of the three sections are apparent ($P=0.001$). The results indicate that there are statistically significant differences between the mean values of pastoral identity and the mean values of church role expectations as well as between the mean values of pastoral identity and the mean values of current approach to evangelism. A mean value of 0.657 for pastoral identity is statistically significantly higher than a mean value of 0.503 for church role expectations indicating that pastoral identity places less priority on evangelism than do church role expectations. A mean value of 0.657 for pastoral identity is also statistically higher than a mean value of 0.496 for current practice indicating once again that pastoral identity places less priority upon evangelism than current practice.

There are no significant statistical differences in the mean values of church role expectations and current approach to evangelism.

2.5 Administration

There are statistically significant differences between the mean values of the three sections ($P=0.000$). In terms of the results there are statistically significant differences between the mean values of pastoral identity and the mean values of church role expectations as well as between the mean values of pastoral identity and the mean values of current approach to administration. A mean value of 0.553 for pastoral identity is statistically significantly lower than a mean value of 0.885 for church role expectations indicating that pastoral identity places a higher priority on administration than do church role expectations. A mean value of 0.553 for pastoral identity is also statistically significantly different to a mean value of 0.823 for current practice indicating once again a higher priority placed on administration by pastoral identity in comparison to current practice. There are no significant statistical differences in the mean values between church role expectations and current approach to administration.

2.6 Leadership

Statistically there are no significant differences in the mean values of the three sections ($P=0.7404$).

2.7 Overall results

Analysing the results of all of the six ministry dimensions discussed above, the following overall results have been produced.

The overall results indicate that there exist statistically significant differences between the mean values of the three sections ($P=0.000$). In terms of the mean scores for these three sections, there are statistically significant differences between pastoral identity (Section A) and church role expectations (Section B), as well as between pastoral identity (Section A) and current approach to ministry (Section C). There are no statistically significant differences between church role expectations and current approach to ministry. It would appear as if three of the ministry dimensions namely Teaching, Evangelism and Administration each of which reflect the same profile as the overall profile have had a significant influence in the development of the overall profile. In terms of the relationship between pastoral identity and current approach to ministry, in the ministry dimensions of Preaching, Pastoral Care and Leadership there are no statistically significant differences.

From the results above the following conclusions can be reasonably drawn.

- A. In terms of their current approach to ministry, the respondents' personal ministry identities are statistically significantly different to the church role expectations of the congregations within which they are currently ministering.
- B. There exists a statistically significant difference between the respondents' personal ministry identities and their current approach to ministry in general.
- C. There exists no statistically significant difference between the respondents' current approach to ministry and the church role expectations of their current congregations.
- D. In view of the three conclusions above, it is reasonable to conclude that the respondents' current approach to ministry is significantly influenced by church

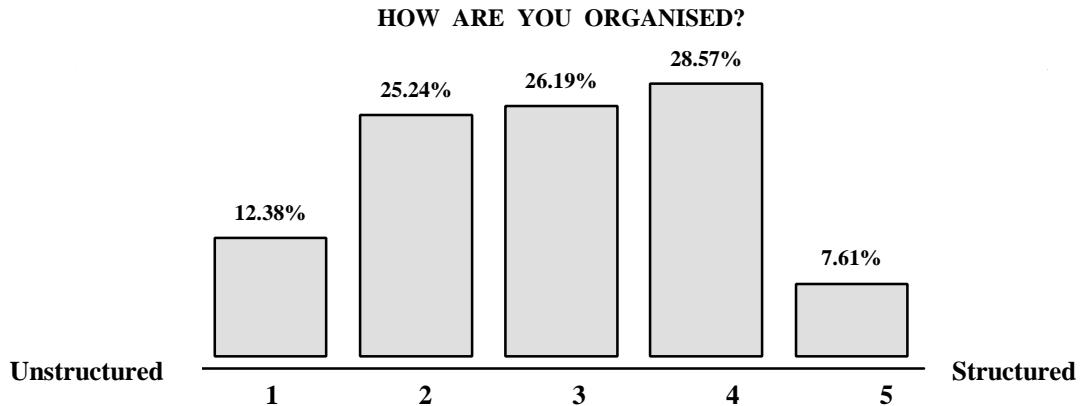
role expectations as opposed to their own personal ministry identities and that the hypothesis presented in chapter one has proven to be correct.

The implications of these research findings are as follows.

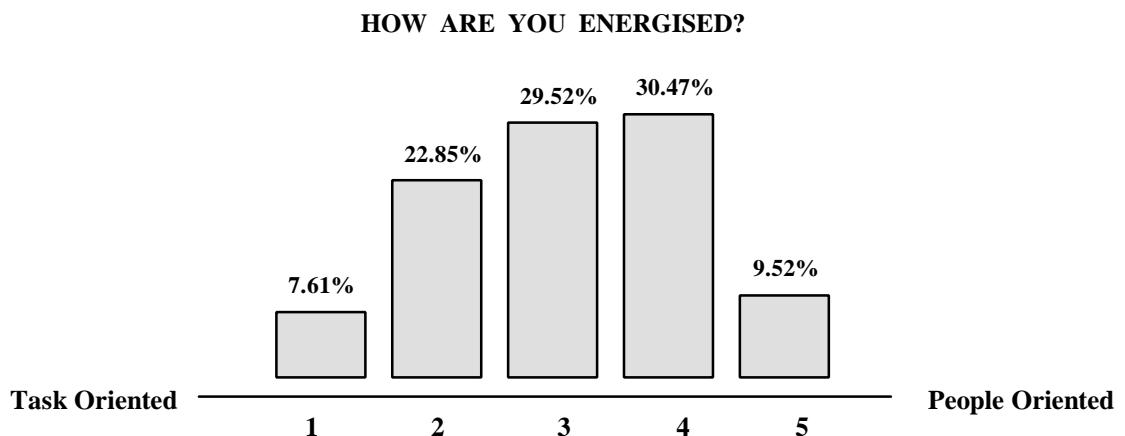
- A. Given the results that indicate the significant influence of church role expectations on current approach to ministry resulting in respondents generally ministering outside of their own personal ministry identities, one would anticipate high levels of personal frustration and a lack of ministry fulfilment amongst these pastors.
- B. Given the differences between church role expectations and the ministry identities of pastors one would anticipate high levels of conflict between the respondents and their churches. However, given the influence that church role expectations have had on the current approach to ministry, it would appear as if pastors, rather than addressing the differences in expectations, are avoiding this potential conflict and colluding with the church for the sake of keeping the peace. Whilst this may avoid conflict, it does nothing to deal with the personal frustration of pastors and the fundamental differences in expectations that exist.

The remaining factors that were explored in the research questionnaires in Section A 5-8 relate to personality factors which may well influence style and approach to ministry.

These included factors such as being structured / unstructured in approach to ministry, people or task oriented, and finally introverted or extroverted. Figures 2 and 3 below indicate the research findings.

Figure 2: How are you organized?

The results of the above table indicate a wide spread of results and consequently very varied approach to ministry in terms of being structured or unstructured with 37.62% favouring an unstructured approach, 36.18% favouring a structured approach and 26.19% alternating between the two approaches.

Figure 3: How are you energized?

The results of the above table once again indicate a varied orientation in terms of being people or task oriented with 30.46% displaying a strong task orientation, 39.99% displaying a strong people orientation and 29.52% alternating between the two orientations.

In terms of dimensions introvert and extrovert, once again there was great variance indicated with 51.28% of respondents reflecting as introverts and 48.72% as extroverts.

What the above results indicate is that even though respondents may well share common elements within their personal ministry identities such as spiritual gifting, passion, divine calling as well as natural talents and abilities, the way in which these find their unique expression will be different given the influence of personality on style of ministry. Whether one is structured or unstructured in ones approach to ministry, or people verses task oriented has a influence on the style of ones ministry. Personality factors such being introverted or extroverted also have a influence in ones approach to ministry.

CONCLUSION

The results of the empirical research survey clearly demonstrate the influence that church role expectations have in influencing the exercising of a pastor's personal ministry identity. The implications of these findings will be further explored in the concluding chapter, chapter 8.

CHAPTER 6 – SELF-DENIAL AND SELF-ESTEEM - IMPLICATIONS FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY**INTRODUCTION**

In our discussion on the search for identity in chapter two and the development of a personal ministry identity in chapter three, emphasis has been placed on the importance of both discovering as well as embracing and celebrating the unique identity \ self that God has given to each of us as an important factor in realizing the unique mission for which God has called us.

However there are some who would suggest that such preoccupation with the discovery of one's 'self' and one's identity, as well as the embracing and celebration of these, stand in stark contrast to the biblical teaching of denying oneself. They would argue that the emphasis on the development of one's self-esteem is tantamount to being egocentric, self-centred and sinful.

In the light of some of these concerns, it is necessary to have a proper understanding of the important role that both self-denial and self-esteem or self-affirmation play in the effectiveness of one's pastoral ministry. Initially it would appear as if these two concepts are contradictory, but a proper understanding of their nature and role will demonstrate that they are in fact complimentary to one another within the context of an effective pastoral ministry and should, in fact, characterize every pastor's ministry. However, there remains a dynamic tension between these two dimensions of ministry that Nouwen (1971:49) highlights in the following statement.

"Just when the minister might have discovered that he has not only a contribution to give but touches the core of life, just when he is ready to affirm himself, to feel that he is fulfilling his hopes and realizing his deepest aspiration in life, he is faced with the urgent call to deny himself, to consider himself as a servant, a useless laborer who is last in line".

Let us therefore, take a closer look at these two dimensions.

1. Self-denial

The basis for the Christian practice of self-denial is to be found in Christ's teachings in the Gospels pertaining to discipleship in (Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34-35, John 15:13, Luke 14:26-27) in which Christ's disciples are instructed to deny themselves take up their crosses and follow Him. The Apostle Paul, in Romans 6:3-6, teaches the denial of self resulting from baptism into Christ's crucifixion. Okholm (Atkinson & Field 1995:773) notes in this regard,

“Self-denial involves the disciplined refusal to gratify appetites or to give in to inclinations. In the NT it denotes something more radical – the renunciation of *self*, resulting from baptism into Christ's crucifixion (Rom 6: 3-6). This is a requirement for discipleship (Mat 16:24, and par.) and an aspect of ongoing sanctification (along with mortification of the flesh or “cross-bearing”). It is more than merely a renunciation of sins or a sinful element within us; it is the death of our selfish ego”.

However, having defined self-denial in this way, Okholm (Atkinson & Field 1995:773) is however very quick to add,

“Self-denial must not be confused with self-hatred, which can have disastrous effects when projected onto others”.

In his understanding of Christian self-denial, Okholm (Atkinson & Field 1995:773) correctly places the focus of this denial on “our selfish ego” and warns against the danger of self-hatred, an approach which some may advocate.

Hendrickson (1973:656), in his commentary on Matthew 16:24, notes the following about self-denial:

“To deny oneself means to renounce the old self, the self as it is apart from regenerating grace. A person who denies himself gives up all reliance on whatever he is by nature, and depends for salvation on God alone. He no

longer seeks to promote his own predominantly selfish interests but has become wrapped up in the cause of promoting the glory of God in his own and in every sphere of endeavor”.

It is clear that Christ demands of those who would be his disciples that they are to deny themselves and follow him. What this denial refers to and how it manifests itself within pastoral ministry is the source of much debate within Christian circles.

Rassieur (1982:39) highlights the approach adopted by many in ministry in which the self is seen as an impediment to ministry and hence all that constitutes ‘self’ must be denied.

“To be a servant clearly calls for one to deny one’s self. The function of a servant is to be in subjection and compliance. Indeed the self, with its desires, urges, and impulses, is generally viewed as the chief impediment to complete Christian life and service...The denial of one’s self, the setting aside of one’s interests, needs, and desires has become the highest goal for ministry”.

However, one can also argue that the Biblical references to the denying of self refer to the ‘old self’, the self that is apart from the regenerated self that is ‘in Christ’. It is the old self that is characterized by sinful thoughts, desires and behaviour and is motivated by selfishness and self-centredness. Implicit in the denial of the old self is the acknowledgement of the ‘new self’ that has been realized as a result of our regeneration in Christ. The Biblical teaching of self-denial never suggests that we deny who we are as the unique individuals that God has created and seek to assume an identity that is contrary to who we truly are. This would relate directly to the acceptance of one’s personal ministry identity influenced by the factors discussed in chapter three. Chave-Jones (Atkinson & Field 1995:774) notes in this regard,

“More harm and confusion have been caused by the erroneous impression that such Bible verses as ‘not I...but Christ’ (Gal 2:20,RSV) and concepts such as ‘dying to self’, imply the necessity to expunge the self and replace it with someone or some concept which is foreign to one’s essential being. Paul is the main exponent of this theme, but he is referring not to the inner core of self but to egocentricity”.

It is critical in this debate to constantly differentiate, as Chave-Jones (Atkinson & Field 1995:774) does, between egocentricity and the legitimate acceptance of our personal ministry identities.

Collins (1988:317) in his understanding of Christian self-denial reinforces this differentiation between self-acceptance and egocentricity when he helpfully observes:

“In talking to his disciples, Jesus once said, ‘If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me’. Christians are not to live self-centered, self-gratifying, self-affirming lives. Instead we are to abandon selfish personal ambition so we can serve Christ sacrificially. To deny oneself is to make God the ruling principle, more, the ruling passion, of life. The life of constant self-denial is the life of constant assent to God. It does not follow, however, that the person who denies selfish ambition or the drive for personal gratification, must also deny his or her God-given gifts. Believers have been forgiven, adopted into God’s family, and endowed with special gifts and responsibilities that enable them to serve Christ and the church more effectively. When we deny the existence of these gifts, we are engaging in self-deception rather than self-denial”.

In as much as self-affirmation refers to the unique personal ministry identity that God has given to each of us, this cannot be confused with egocentricity.

The concept of self-denial is often seen in very negative terms and yet Finley & Gonzalez (Hunter 1990:1128) see a very positive and important relationship between self-denial and self-fulfilment when they observe:

“Both psychologically and theologically, self-denial can be viewed as a form of behavior oriented ultimately toward self-fulfillment. By refusing to follow the voices within and without which offer direct or immediate gratification, we seek to affirm ourselves in another, presumably more worthy or significant way, thereby aiming implicitly or indirectly at self-fulfillment. Self-denial can, however, also be motivated by hostile, punitive attitudes toward one-self. Thus, self-fulfillment seems impossible without self-denial, but without some

form of self-affirmation and self-fulfillment as its underlying impetus, self-denial becomes pathological and life-denying”.

Self-denial and self-fulfilment are therefore not necessarily mutually exclusive. The denial of the old self with its self-centeredness is a necessary part of the process of self-fulfilment that would involve both the discovery, and embracing of the new self in Christ. This new self would incorporate our God given personality, passion, calling, spiritual gifting as well as our natural talents and abilities.

Having briefly looked at the concept of self-denial, it is important to consider the issue of self-esteem or self-affirmation within this debate.

2. Self-esteem

One of the key issues in the discussion around self-esteem, sometimes referred to as ‘self-love’, is simply the understanding of what is meant by the concept self-esteem or self-love. The following definitions or explanations will demonstrate that there are differing views as to what constitutes self-esteem.

Bixler (Benner 1985:1039) quotes Coopersmith who defines self-esteem as,

“the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself: it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy”.

Ridley (Hunter 1990:1131) defines self-esteem in the following terms.

“A self-evaluation or judgment, constituting the combined private and subjective appraisals of the self. It expresses approval and disapproval. Two major convictions – significance (worthiness) and personal efficacy (competence) – constitute self-esteem”.

Both of the above definitions place the emphasis on a scale of value by which an individual assesses their worth and the evaluation of the self would be related to the

performance of the individual rather than their innate worth as persons. The danger with this understanding of self-esteem is that it may create an unhealthy dependence upon the feedback of others in terms of one's perceptions of performance. Chave-Jones (Atkinson & Field 1995:774) gives somewhat of a different perspective on this concept when he notes,

“Self-esteem, or self-acceptance, is not some sort of scale with which we assess our value, nor is it something external to ourselves. It is an essential part of our being. The self is the inner core of personality, the almost indefinable center from which one's basic being radiates. From this focus one is able to say 'I am' (echoing the words of our creator). This 'I am' means that one can exist as a person independently of other people's affirmation and approval or opinions, though interdependence in living contact is an essential part of the enjoyment of 'I am'. The self is about 'being', not about 'doing'. The self is not found by achieving status through good and important activities, wealth, beauty, intellect or heroics of various sorts. These things will vanish away in due course, but the self remains. Much of our busyness or 'playing to the gallery' shields us from the difficulty of finding ourselves”.

The above definition of self-esteem is helpful in that it frees the concept from its dependence upon the feedback of others that places ones self-esteem in a very precarious place. A healthy self-esteem needs to be based upon who one is as a person rather than what one does. The importance of this was discussed in chapter two where the need for differentiation within the pastoral ministry between who I am and what I do was emphasized.

In discussing self-esteem in terms of self-love, Carlson (1988:12) suggests that people should be helped to find a Biblical kind of self-esteem that he defines in the following terms.

“Self-love, as I understand the concept biblically psychologically, includes the following: (1) accepting myself as a child of God who is lovable, valuable, capable; (2) being willing to give up considering myself the center of the world; (3) recognizing my need of God's forgiveness and redemption. Christian self-esteem results from translating 'I am the greatest, wisest,

strongest, best' to 'I am what I am, a person made in God's image, a sinner redeemed by God's grace, and a significant part of the body of Christ'.

Carlson (1988:12) like others has importantly placed the concept of self-love into the context of Christ's redemption.

Field (Atkinson & Field 1995:14) offers the following helpful perspective on self-love when he notes,

"If it is taken to mean self-centeredness, self-assertion or selfishness, few Christian ethicists would approve. But if it stands for self-respect, self-esteem or self-acceptance, few would dispute its value".

Narramore (1978:29) in his understanding of self-esteem emphasizes a balanced view of man when he notes:

"Compared with secular perspectives, the Christian view of self-esteem is in a category by itself. It alone elevates man above the animals. It alone provides a solid foundation on which to build self-esteem. The biblical view of man acknowledges our sins and failures, but it doesn't demean our deepest significance as creations of the living God...Because we are created in the image of God, we possess great worth, significance, and value. We are loved by God and deserving of the love of ourselves and others".

Of critical importance in understanding self-esteem within a Biblical and Christian context, is that there can be no legitimate self-esteem that is determined independently of one's regeneration in Christ and an ongoing dependence upon Christ for all that one needs for life and Godliness. It is in Christ that one is a new creation and it is this new creation in which one's old self has died and the new has come, that one derives one's self-esteem. Self-esteem that is based upon a sense of self-reliance and independence of God, cannot be regarded as legitimate.

It is precisely this understanding of self-esteem that is based on self-reliance and independence of God that raises concern about the legitimacy of the concept of self-esteem.

3. Concerns related to self-esteem

As indicated in the introduction, there are some who would suggest that self-esteem, self-acceptance and self-realization are not biblical concepts and are contradictory to the Biblical principle of self-denial. One of the main proponents of this view is Jay Adams. Adams (1986:79) notes that the Bible is not intended to “make us satisfied with ourselves as we are, but to destroy any satisfaction that may exist” and notes further, “You must treat yourself like a criminal, and put self to death everyday” (Adams 1986:106).

Bixler, (Benner 1985:1039) in reflecting on the opposition to the Christian self-esteem movement, notes the following:

“Those who are critical of the Christian self-esteem movement tend to emphasize the doctrine of total depravity, which holds that in every respect humans are inherently exploitative and self-seeking. To these critics the notion of Christian self-love is not only a contradiction in terms; it implies that self-centeredness is the solution rather than the problem”.

It is clear the Adam’s main concern with the concept of self-esteem and self-love is that it leads to a mindset of self-sufficiency and self-actualization in which our dependence upon God is undermined:

“We must become in ourselves (but not by ourselves) what we already are in Christ. This is quite distinct from self-actualization (becoming what you may be in and by yourself); sanctification is becoming in yourself (by the Spirit’s work) what you already are counted to be in Christ. This ‘third force,’ Maslow self-actualization doctrine is a dangerous, a subtle substitute for the real thing. When it is integrated into Christian circles, it fosters a fundamentally Pelagian attitude (teaching human self-sufficiency by self-help methods). Maslow’s self-actualization sees no need for either the Word or the Spirit; it is purely humanistic” (Adams 1979:263).

Elsewhere he argues with regard to attempts to foster a positive self-esteem:

“Good self-images cannot be pumped up by telling yourself how great you are in Christ or by trying to ignore the consequences of your sin before God. True, in Christ we are perfect; and that is *important*. It is even very important for a Christian to *know* that this is true. But that does not alter the fact that *in ourselves* we are far from perfect”(Adams 1979:205).

Adams’ critique of the Christian self-esteem movement, in as much as it is based on an understanding of self-esteem that is humanistic and self-sufficient, having no need of God, is understandable. However Adams fails to entertain the notion that one’s self-esteem could be based upon the regenerating work of Christ, and could be dependent upon the ongoing work of the Spirit within the person. Whilst Adams rightly notes that man is not yet perfect, he fails to recognize the importance and significance of the ‘new creation’ that has come, and the restoration that has already taken place. His assumption that self-esteem always leads to self-sufficiency is not necessarily correct.

Against the backdrop of these concerns, it is important to consider the role that a healthy self-esteem fulfils in the context of pastoral ministry.

4. Recovering self for ministry

Rassieur (1982:42), in dealing with the issue of stress and stress management within the ministry, suggests that pastors need to recover self for ministry if they are to cope effectively with the demands of the ministry. He begins by identifying what he sees as the underlying problem when he notes,

“...the overwhelming message of Protestant Christianity in this country to its clergy is clear: to be an ordained minister one becomes a servant of all, possessed by all, and no longer the possessor of one’s own self or one’s own soul....The pastor’s struggle for self-identity is a running battle with the church as to what obedience to the Lord requires. Who is really in control of the pastor’s soul? And just at the moment when the pastor thinks the battle has

been won, the words come back with the relentless reminder, “Ministry calls for the denial of yourself; do not listen to your own feelings”.

Rassieur (1982:43) suggests that the appropriate response to this problem is nothing more than the recovery and affirmation of the self by the pastor:

“...authentic and effective ministry which reflects biblical servanthood cannot be based upon the popular notion of the ‘denial of one’s self’. On the contrary, ministry that has as its purpose to express the love of God and the love of neighbor requires the basic affirmation of one’s self and care for one’s self. Ministry in the parish for Jesus Christ must begin with the recovery of self by the individual pastor. And the pastor who unashamedly affirms himself or herself will be in the best position for dealing with the multiple stresses of modern ministry”.

In our discussion in chapter three of the role of a personal ministry identity, it was emphasized that one of the key roles of a personal ministry identity is to empower the pastor to minister as effectively as possible. Rassieur reinforces this idea by highlighting the importance of affirming one’s ministry identity and avoiding the inevitable stress of ministering outside of one’s personal ministry identity.

The following are some of the positive consequences when a pastor recovers his or her ‘self’ for ministry.

4.1 Recovering self facilitates ministry based on wholeness.

It was Carl Rogers (Wicklund & Eckert 1992:23) who developed the concept of a ‘fully functioning person’ as the ultimate goal for all to attain. Within the context of pastoral ministry, the most effective minister is the one who able to become just such a ‘fully functioning person’ in which all the various dimensions of his ministry identity are realized for both his and the congregation’s benefit. This can only be achieved when the pastor both discovers and affirms his true ‘self’. When these various dimensions of the pastor’s identity are freed to operate in unison, then an enormous creative power is released for ministry.

“The Christian life has as its primary goal wholeness centering in spirit. Such a whole is indeed more possible as the self is strengthened in its capacity for making choices. Instead of being captive to drives, urges, emotions, or reason, the self exercises the power of choice so every aspect of one’s life can be given its appropriate place and freedom. The stronger the self, the wider will be the range of human experience that can be cultivated and enjoyed. It is in the centering, directing power of the self as spirit which offers such a creative possibility”. (Rassieur 1982:49)

4.2 Recovering self facilitates stress management

In chapter four it was noted that in the interface of expectations between the church and pastor, a high level of conflict often results in associated stress in the pastor’s life. One of the key factors in coping with this conflict and stress is a strong understanding of one’s unique identity and an ability to affirm that identity in the face of strong opposition.

“The root of the crisis in ministry today is with each individual pastor. The question of how to deal with stress will be decided privately as each pastor works toward a clear sense of identity and personal affirmation” (Rassieur 1982:43)

Whilst a clearer understanding of one’s ministry identity may in fact precipitate conflict with the role expectations of the church, a lack of understanding of this identity or a compromising of this identity is a great source of stress for pastors.

4.3 Recovering self facilitates self-care

As one begins to affirm oneself and realize the important role and ministry that God has called one to, the need for self-care that facilitates personal wholeness and a more effective ministry, becomes a priority in the pastor’s life. This should not be confused with self-indulgence but is rather a caring for the self in order that care may be given more effectively to others.

“ Strengthening the self and finding wholeness for one’s life and ministry is best understood as responsibly *loving and taking care of oneself*. Wholeness centered in spirit for the purpose of loving others is essentially the discipline of *loving and taking care of oneself*. Creative, effective ministry is rooted in the discipline of such a spiritual wholeness!” (Rassieur 1982:52).

4.4 Recovering self facilitates a healthy autonomy

In chapter two, Jung’s process of individuation, in which individuals are being formed and differentiated as autonomous beings, was seen as an important element in identity formation. A key factor in the success of this process is the existence of a healthy self-esteem that facilitates a healthy autonomy rather than an unhealthy dependence upon others. Rassieur (1982:54) notes with regard to this autonomy in ministry:

“autonomy for ministry does not mean a crude self-assertion or pointless adolescent rebellion. Autonomy is a person’s inner capacity to govern oneself when there must be a balance between one’s own needs and values and the demands and needs of the congregation. Autonomy that takes seriously the pastor’s own needs is in fact, according to Harris, essential to being a Christian servant”.

4.5 Recovering self facilitates fulfilment in ministry

One of the consequences of a healthy self-esteem in which one takes seriously the integrity of one’s unique identity and establishes the requisite boundaries that facilitate one becoming a fully functioning person, is a sense of personal fulfilment and satisfaction.

“I have discovered a consistent characteristic among those who find so much satisfaction in ministry. This singular characteristic can take on varying dimensions and manifest itself in a variety of ministry styles, but the essential characteristic is a strong, firm sense of self and personal ministry. These pastors are not egotists with the type of bravado that thinly veils insecurity. No, they have clear boundaries around their selfhood” (Rassieur 1982:35).

4.6 Recovering self facilitates a balance between self-affirmation and self-emptying

In this chapter we have briefly explored the dynamic relationship between self-affirmation and self-denial or self-emptying. We have noted that whilst these two concepts appear to be contradictory, that they are in fact complementary. However, achieving a balance between these two dimensions in ministry can sometimes prove to be problematic. A healthy self-esteem in which one affirms ones selfhood whilst embracing ones servanthood may assist in facilitating a balance between these two dimensions. Rassieur (1982:57) notes in this regard,

“...servant and self are not mutually exclusive, but instead are mutually dependent upon each other for their full expression in ministry. To attempt to have the servant dimension without self is to become a robot. Tragically, however, there are clergy functioning as robots because long ago they gave up all claim to their own being. Likewise, to have self without the servant dimension is to sacrifice ministry to arrogance. Neither self nor servant alone, without the other, is Christian” (Rassieur 1982:57).

Nouwen (1971:51) notes in this regard:

“Self-affirmation and self-emptying are not opposites because no man can give away what he does not have....So the identity of the pastor, as it becomes visible in his pastoral care, is born from the intangible tension between self-affirmation and self-denial, self-fulfillment and self-emptying, self-realization and self-sacrifice”.

In essence what Nouwen is suggesting is that a pastor can only practice true self-denial, self-emptying and self-sacrifice if self-affirmation, self-realization and self-fulfilment are an ongoing part of his pastoral experience. If we are to care for others, we need to begin by taking care of ourselves. Trobisch (1987:666) encapsulates this idea well in the following statement, “Self-love is the foundation of our love for others”. Nouwen (1971:51) reinforces the statement by Trobisch when he concludes:

“No one can give himself in love when he is not aware of himself. Nobody can come to intimacy without having found his identity...Through long and often painful formation and training, the minister has to find his place in life, to discover his own contribution, and to affirm his own self: not to cling to it and claim it as his own unique property, but to go out, offer his services to others, and empty himself so that God can speak through him and call man to new life”.

Cloud (1990:195), in discussing the need for establishing personal boundaries, recognizes the dynamic relationship between affirming one’s self and giving one’s self away when he observes:

“We are told in the Bible to deny ourselves, but we can only do this if we first own ourselves. People who do not own their own lives cannot give them away, for they aren’t theirs to give! We must be good stewards of our lives before we can give to others”.

In the dynamic interplay between self-affirmation and self-emptying there will inevitably be moments in which a pastor errs in terms of the emphasis on one of these two dimensions. Nouwen (1971:52) however offers a useful observation in this regard:

“There are periods in life in which the emphasis is more on one than on the other, but in general it seems that as a man becomes more mature he will become less concerned with girding himself and more willing to stretch out his hands and follow Him who found His life by losing it”.

CONCLUSION

The limited scope of this thesis does not allow for an in-depth discussion of all the aspects relating to self-denial and self-esteem. In this brief treatment of the subject it has been established that self-denial and self-esteem are not necessarily mutually exclusive and do not necessarily stand in opposition to one another. Notwithstanding the fears raised by Adams and others that an emphasis on self-esteem would inevitably lead to self-centeredness and self-sufficiency, an understanding of self-

esteem that is based upon the regenerating work of Christ and the ‘new creation’, should allay some of these fears. A number of positive consequences of a ‘healthy’ self-esteem have been identified. These include facilitating a holistic ministry, assisting in stress management, encouraging self-care, establishing a healthy autonomy, contributing toward fulfilment in ministry, whilst providing the necessary balance between self-affirmation and self-emptying in ministry.

The identification of one’s unique personal ministry identity is but the beginning of the process of achieving fulfilment in ministry. What is required is the strength and courage to embrace and celebrate this identity even in the face of opposition. A ‘healthy’ self-esteem is a critical factor in providing the strength and courage to affirm one’s unique ministry identity.

“Rarely has high positive regard for one’s self been discussed as an essential factor for faithful and effective ministry. If it is true that pastors who distinguish themselves by their enjoyment of ministry have in common a high regard for their own needs and self-identity, then the church needs to reassess the traditions and the misunderstandings that have made it taboo for the clergy to acknowledge openly that they do hold their own selves in high esteem. Perhaps having a positive regard for one’s self does not sound spiritual or religious. It has the sound of selfishness, egotism, or self-centeredness, and none of these has ever been looked upon as a positive attribute for a Christian minister. But there is too much evidence now for the church to ignore. Ministry that joyfully copes with stress is grounded in centered self-identity. The recovery of self is the essential prerequisite for all ministry” (Rassieur 1982:36)

CHAPTER 7 - ROLE NEGOTIATION AND RENEGOTIATION: RESPONDING TO ROLE CONFUSION AND CONFLICT

INTRODUCTION

Having considered the need for pastors to minister in terms of the integrity of their unique personal ministry identities, as well as the interface that occurs with the church role expectations which may result in role confusion, conflict and collusion, the ongoing process of role negotiation and renegotiation needs to be pursued to achieve the desired role congruence.

In looking at this process we shall consider two models that may be utilized in facilitating the process of role renegotiation. The Planned Renegotiation Model used by Oswald (1992:77), (Figure 4) was originally developed by Dr John Sherwood and the Role Renegotiation Model (Figure 5) used by Burton and Oakes (2002:7) is an adaptation of this same model developed by Sherwood.

Figure 4: Planned renegotiation model

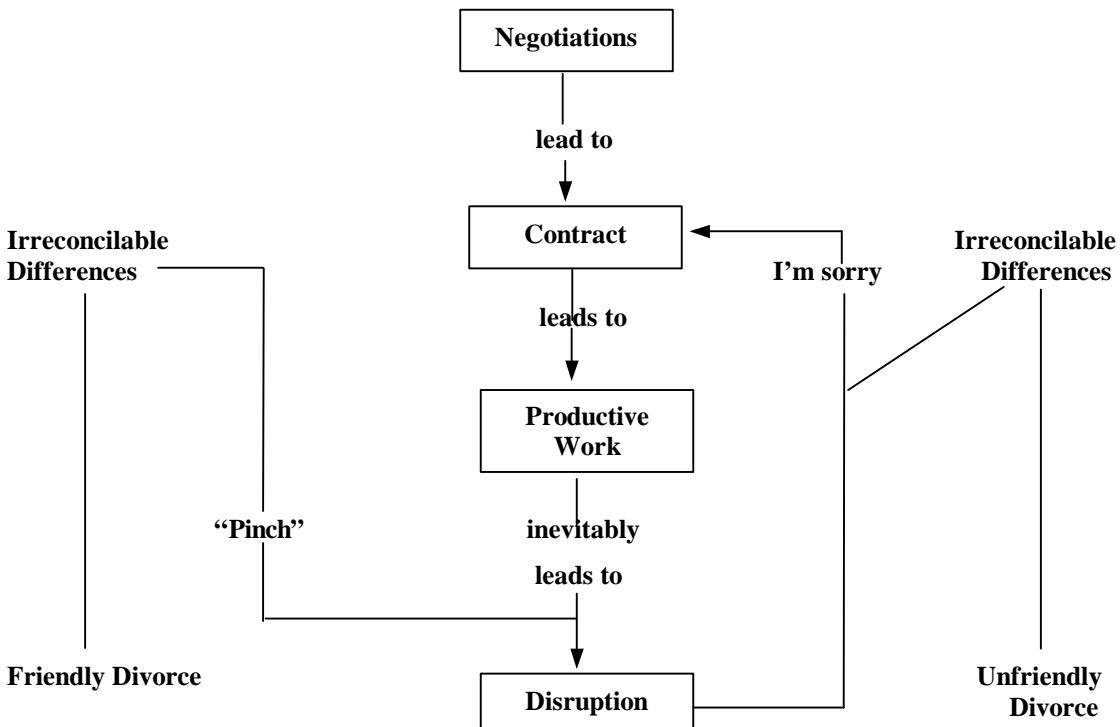
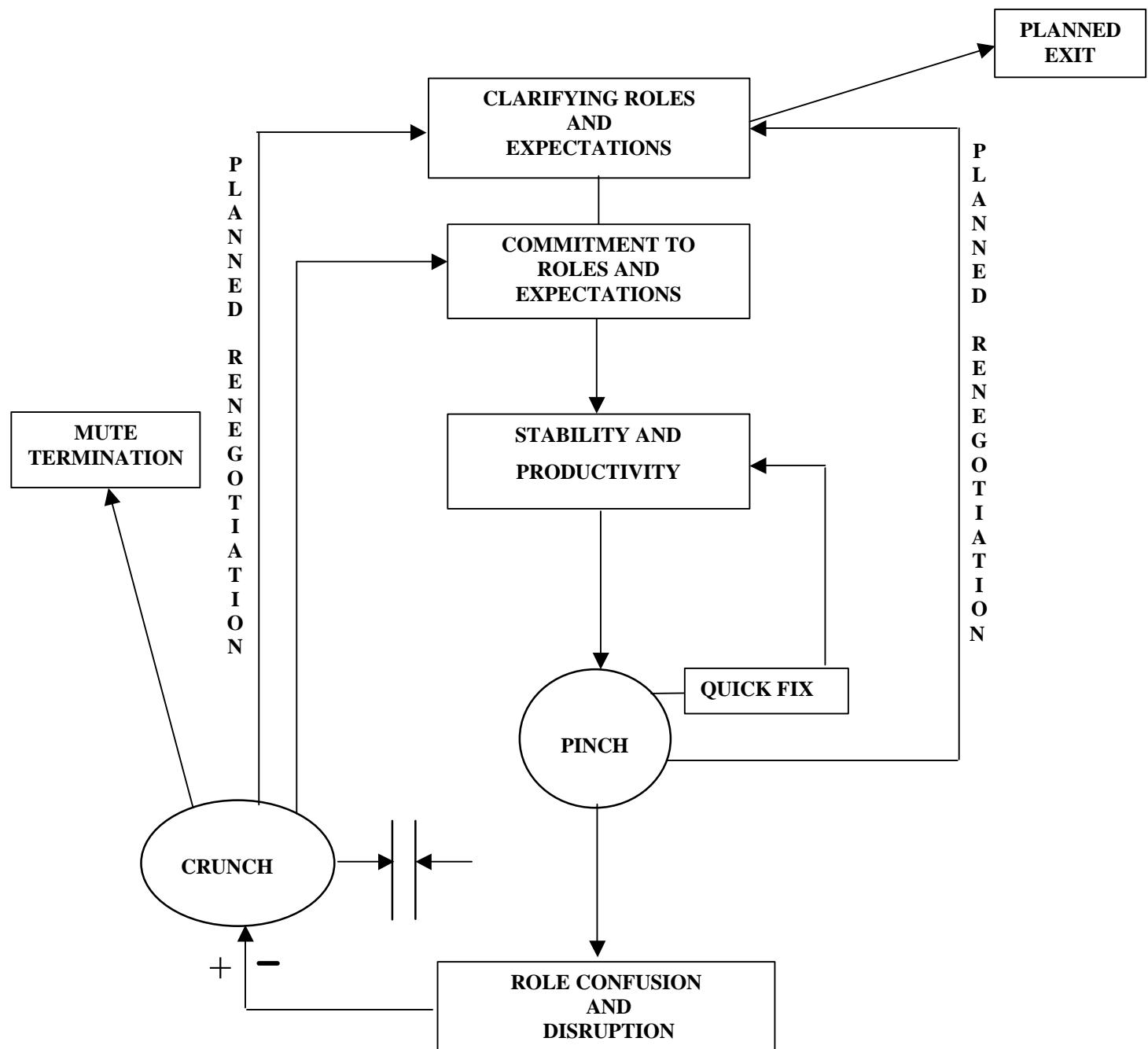


Figure 5: Role renegotiation model

1. Need for role negotiation and renegotiation

Oswald (1992:40) writing in the context of a pastor beginning his \ her ministry in a new pastorate notes the following of the need for role clarification through negotiation before commencement of one's ministry:

“A good deal of evidence supports the notion that calling a pastor fulfills a role rather than a job description. That is, if you added up all the specific tasks

a pastor normally performs, that would not adequately define the pastor's role.

Included in role definition are all the projections and expectations of the people to be served.....Instead of a job description, clergy and their parishes need role clarification. It is extremely important for a pastor to be clear about the expectations a congregation has of him \ her”.

In his understanding of this negotiation that takes place at the beginning of a new pastorate, Oswald (1992:41) understands role negotiation as encompassing the following:

“Role negotiation involves dealing as openly as possible with the differences between your own images of pastoring and their expectations. This task would be far easier if the entire congregation held similar perceptions. Don’t expect that. You will need to negotiate one role with the congregation as a whole, and then a series of roles with individual parishioners, each of whom is consciously or unconsciously projecting his\her role expectations onto you”.

If one is to manage the complex interface of expectations that exist between a pastor and his congregation within a local church, then it is critical that even prior to the acceptance of a pastoral position, the expectations of the pastor as well as the congregation are articulated, clarified and negotiated. The objective is to achieve a significant degree of role congruence at the outset of the pastor’s ministry. Without a significant degree of congruence, role confusion and conflict are guaranteed.

However, the relationship between the pastor and the congregation is dynamic and both parties are in a process of development resulting in the changing of needs and priorities, therefore apart from the initial negotiation, there exists a need for an ongoing process of role renegotiation. This process acknowledges the need to critically evaluate the role of the pastor on an ongoing basis. Failure to do so, given the dynamic environment in which ministry takes place, may give rise to a significant disruption in the relationship between pastor and church. Let us take a closer look at the process involved in role negotiation and renegotiation.

2. The process of negotiation \ renegotiation.

In both of these models there are distinct phases that exist in the process of negotiation and renegotiation and it is important to have some understanding of these phases.

2.1 Negotiation resulting in commitment and stability

The negotiation process can only begin once both parties have an understanding of their expectations of the relationship in order that they may achieve a common commitment to a common set of expectations. For the pastor this implies a good understanding of his own personal ministry identity and his ministry expectations that flow out of this identity. Oswald (1992:41) notes in this regard,

“A good place to begin is gaining clarity about one’s own role expectation. Once you know what *you* expect from your role, you then can negotiate with individuals and groups within the parish. Sharing expectations is a good way to begin”.

Obtaining consensus on the church’s expectation of the pastoral role is a far more complex matter as Oswald indicated earlier. These expectations are shaped by many different influences but perhaps the most significant being the past experiences that church members have had of pastors:

“Expectations of you as pastor will be similar to the congregation’s past experiences with clergy – both their negative and positive experiences”
(Oswald 1992:41).

A commitment to an agreed upon set of expectations forms the basis of the relationship between pastor and church. It is important that these expectations are clearly articulated for as Burton and Oakes (2002:8) note:

“Too frequently, the church and the new member do not clarify the expectations that one has of the other. Then, persons experience surprise or even anger when those expectations are not met. If they are not known, there

is little chance that they can be met or even ruled acceptable or inappropriate.

This is highly significant for a major reason. It is important to remember a basic fact about our commitments relative to expectations: *Fuzzy Expectations = Fuzzy Commitment*. We get exactly what we expect, and if we don't clarify those expectations, we get unclear commitment to the same”.

This common commitment between church and pastor provides the necessary stability within their relationship to create an environment in which productive ministry can take place.

“Out of these negotiations a pastor and congregation commit themselves to an agreement \ covenant \ contract \ promise. After the negotiation, a period of productive work usually follows. Both pastor and congregation work together in a stable way” (Oswald 1992:75).

Burton and Oakes (2002:9) characterize a church in this phase of stability as follows:

“This is seen in a church that understands who it is and what God has called it to accomplish. It is a congregation that is focused on productivity – missions, ministries and evangelism. It is focused on the tasks of the church. Since persons understand the role of self and others in the relationship, there is a stable environment. This is the church that every pastor longs to serve, and it is the church to which every member wishes to belong. It is a perfect church!”

Burton and Oakes are painting a picture of the ideal church towards which we can strive. The reality of the matter is that churches may achieve this ideal for periods of their existence but, given the dynamic nature of the relationship between pastor and church, will inevitably experience disruption to this phase of stability. Whilst this disruption can be accepted as a normal part of the relationship it also needs to be addressed.

2.2. Disruption to stability

Both of the above models accept as inevitable a disruption of the stability flowing out of the commitment phase.

“Inevitably, however, there is a *disruption* which is part of the natural cycle of human work relationships. Even with the best of negotiated contracts, disruption will occur because in a dynamic situation people change and organizations change” (Oswald 1992:75).

Burton and Oakes (2002:10) speak of this disruption in terms of “pinches” and “crunches” and note with regard to the inevitability of disruption:

“In human relationships, you cannot “not” get to the pinch....A pinch is a broken expectation. It is where something is said or done, and it is experienced painfully. Or, it is where something is not said or not done, and it is experienced painfully”.

They understand a “crunch” in the following terms.

“When pinches that begin as personal, private, one-sided affronts are not resolved, they often become known by others. That is, they go public...It is called “Crunch”. It is called that because the energy in the relationship begins to shut down around these unresolved but shared perceptions” (Burton and Oakes 2002:16).

When a disruption, be it a pinch or a crunch, is experienced in the stability of the relationship between church and pastor, there are a number of responses that may be made in an attempt to either resolve the disruption, or avoid the disruption. Some of these responses are appropriate whilst others not. In many churches, the immediate response to such a disruption is to find what Burton and Oakes (2002:13) refer to as a ‘quick fix’ to resolve the situation and restore the status quo as soon as possible. The problem with the ‘quick fix’ is that it does not deal with the fundamental breakdown of expectations giving rise to the disruption and it will therefore recur until the issue of broken expectations is dealt with. Oswald (1992:76) offers a helpful observation in this regard:

“The natural reaction is to return to ‘the way it was’. That is, we ignore or discard the ‘new information’ that impelled itself into the relationship. The drive for this response is strong, but it is a trap. In most cases the ‘new

information' will have its way – often in more intense and spectacular manner – unless it is dealt with rationally”.

Another quick fix that is often resorted to is to simply terminate the relationship either amicably or with much acrimony. Once again this approach avoids dealing with the issues giving rise to the disruption. A third option, highlighted and recommended by both models, is a process of planned renegotiation.

2.3 Planned renegotiation

Burton and Oakes (2002:3) understand planned renegotiation that will occur in the context of an ongoing existing relationship, in the following terms.

“Planned renegotiation means that there is a basic problem in the expectations that persons have of each other in the relationship. It is systemic. It goes to the foundation of the relationship. The only remedy is to go back and renegotiate the basics, if the relationship is to thrive, and then to recommit to new expectations”.

Oswald (1992:40) highlights the fact that the initial negotiation of a role is merely the beginning of ongoing negotiations and renegotiations of that role. It needs to be seen as an ongoing process rather than a single event:

“Gaining role clarity requires hard work over a long period. In fact, clergy probably need to work at role clarity throughout their ministries”.

Oswald later refers to a Grubb Institute study which found that:

“...the toughest part of the ordained ministry is coming to terms with role issues. The study suggests that the best preparation for the ministry would be three years of role negotiations. Role issues cannot be learned in a seminary classroom; the only way to come to terms with the role of religious authority in a given community is to actually be in the role”(Oswald 1992:43).

CONCLUSION

Given the dynamic and complex nature of the relationship between pastor and church, coupled with the inevitability of a disruption to this relationship, it is critical for the sake of the church that a mechanism be put into place to regulate this relationship and deal with the inevitable disruptions to minimize confusion and conflict within the church. The Planned Renegotiation model, along with the Role Renegotiation Model offer just such a mechanism. However, it is critical to accept that this is an ongoing dynamic process that needs to become part of the culture of the church, if it is to succeed.

CHAPTER 8 – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**INTRODUCTION****1. Hypothesis and research problem.**

It is the hypothesis of this thesis that pastors within the Baptist Union of South Africa allow the church role expectations of the local churches within which they serve, to undermine the exercising of their unique personal ministry identities within their local churches. The objective of the empirical research conducted was to determine the validity of this hypothesis.

2. Research findings.

The results of the research study conducted among 30 Baptist pastor's indicates conclusively that their current approach to ministry is influenced to a far greater extent by their perceptions of the church role expectations of the local churches within which they minister, than by their understanding of their own personal ministry identities. Their personal ministry identities have therefore been significantly compromised by the church role expectations of their local churches. In order to adequately address this situation and some of the negative consequences associated with it, it is necessary to fully understand the underlying factors that may be giving rise to the compromising of pastoral identity.

3. Key underlying factors compromising pastoral identity.

The following would appear to be some of the more influential factors that result in a pastor compromising his or her personal ministry identity.

3.1 Lack of self-understanding among pastors.

Perhaps the most fundamental reason for the undermining of pastoral identity is related to a lack of self-understanding among pastors. There are a number of reasons for this lack of self-understanding.

Lack of self-understanding amongst pastors may firstly be related to an incorrect understanding that one's identity is to be discovered exclusively in the social environment rather than through an introspective search for an authentic identity that already exists within the pastor. This approach often results in the adoption of a fictional identity that may be foreign to the pastor as opposed to the discovery of an authentic identity that already exists. Associated with the problem of adopting a fictional identity, is the lack of differentiation between who the pastor is, his persona, and the ministry that he fulfils, his role. The failure to differentiate between these two dimensions often results in the ministerial role swallowing up the persona of the pastor resulting in him having little self-understanding apart from the role that he fulfils. The pastor's lack of self-understanding gives rise to a number of consequences.

Firstly, it gives rise to role confusion and conflict as the pastor is unsure of the nature of the pastoral role that he should fulfil. Rather than attempting to clarify his own personal ministry identity in an attempt to deal with the confusion and conflict, a pastor may well be tempted to adopt the role expected by his local church and, in so doing, collude with the church for the sake of achieving a 'quick fix'.

Secondly, a lack of self-understanding prevents a pastor from entering into a process of negotiation and renegotiation with the church as envisaged in chapter seven. Implicit in any form of role negotiation by the pastor is a clear understanding of one's unique personal ministry identity, as envisaged in chapter three. This would imply an understanding of one's spiritual gifts, passion, divine calling, natural talents and abilities, as well as one's personality.

Thirdly, a lack of self-understanding may give rise to high levels of personal frustration as a pastor consistently ministers outside of his personal ministry identity. Loss of personal ministry vision and energy are also possible consequences of this lack of self-understanding.

3.2 Lack of understanding of the social influence on personal identity.

A second factor, which may undermine the integrity of a pastor's personal ministry identity is a lack of understanding of the influence that expectations within the pastor's ministry environment might have on the formation of a pastor's identity. In the discussion of the development of personal identity in chapter two, it was recognized that psycho-social influences play a necessary part in identity formation. In the development of a personal ministry identity, discussed in chapter three, it was also noted that congregational influence plays a necessary role in the formation of this identity. However, it was also noted that an over-emphasis on these social influences could have a detrimental impact on the authenticity of a pastor's identity. It is therefore vitally important for a pastor to be able to critically review the influences that have shaped his or her identity in order to determine whether the psycho-social influences have not compromised the integrity of his or her identity. Failure to understand the power that role expectations within the church exert on a pastor may, together with a need to please others, may lead to the compromising of a pastor's personal ministry identity.

3.3 Lack of understanding with respect to self-denial and self-esteem.

As discussed extensively in chapter six, an incorrect understanding of the biblical concept of self-denial, as well as an incorrect understanding of the concept of self-esteem, may result in a denial of self which compromises the integrity of one's personal ministry identity. An understanding of self-denial which denies the essence of who one is, ultimately denies the integrity of a pastor's personal ministry identity. Similarly, an understanding of self-esteem which does not embrace and celebrate the regeneration that has taken place in Christ, and that does not lead to a place of self-acceptance and affirmation in Christ, will mitigate against the realisation of a pastor's personal ministry identity.

3.4 A desire to avoid conflict.

A fourth reason giving rise to the undermining of a pastor's personal ministry identity may be associated with a pastor's desire to avoid conflict at all costs. This is particularly prevalent where there is a lack of differentiation between the pastor and

his pastoral role for any conflict within his pastoral role becomes a personal conflict. As a consequence of this any confrontation that may give rise to role conflict is avoided in order to keep the peace. It is in this context that role collusion arises between the pastor and the church.

3.5 A lack of structure to deal with role confusion and conflict.

Finally, many pastors who may be experiencing an undermining of their personal ministry identities resulting in role confusion or conflict, may simply tolerate this situation, given the fact that there does not appear to be any mechanism within the local church to adequately deal with the confusion and conflict.

During the course of this thesis a number of possible consequences of a pastor ministering outside of his or her personal ministry identity have been identified. The strong possibility exists that the pastor may end up feeling frustrated, tired and lacking ministry vision. The church, on the other hand, may well be frustrated that they are not getting the best out of their pastor. It would therefore be in the best interests of both the church and the pastor to reach the place of role congruence.

The following are offered as recommendations for achieving role congruence within the local church.

4. Recommendations.

Whilst not exhaustive, the following recommendations are offered to address the influence of church role expectations in undermining the personal ministry identity of pastors.

4.1 Assist pastors in discovering their personal ministry identities.

Perhaps the most fundamental step that can be taken to address this issue is for the Baptist denomination, at a national and local level, as well as the leadership of local churches, to assist pastors in discovering their unique personal ministry identities. Whilst there is undoubtedly responsibility on the part of the pastor to discover his or her ministry identity, the local church and denominational association should assist in

this regard. This assistance could take various forms such as further education or the attendance of relevant seminars and conferences. Whilst the discovery of one's personal ministry identity is probably best achieved whilst in the ministry, student pastors at seminary should already be mentored in a process of self-understanding and discovery.

Associated with this, it is also necessary that local churches be assisted in critically evaluating their role expectations of pastors. It is only as a process of self-understanding on both the part of the pastor and church is achieved, that one can begin to work toward the ideal of role congruence within the church.

4.2 Encourage pastors to affirm their unique personal ministry identities.

Having been empowered to discover their unique personal ministry identities, pastors should be encouraged by the local church to affirm who they are in terms of their understanding of their identity. This would allow them to fully realize their ministry potential within the life of the local church by exercising their unique personal ministry identities. Where this identity is incongruent with the needs of the local church, a process of role renegotiation needs to be implemented.

4.3 Implement a process of dealing with role conflict.

If the ideal of role congruence is to be achieved within a local church, then it will require a process that is able to constructively deal with role conflict within the church. The Planned Renegotiation Model and the Role Renegotiation Model discussed in chapter seven are but two possible models for such a process. Implicit in the success of such a process is firstly, a clear understanding of the expectations that both the church and the pastor have of their relationship. Secondly, a willingness to constructively negotiate the relationship in order to achieve role congruence needs to be present. This implies a willingness on the part of the local church to critically evaluate their expectations of their pastor. Thirdly, should role congruence not be possible, a pastor should consider seeking a different ministry environment in which his personal ministry identity can be fully realized, rather than compromising the integrity of his or her personal ministry identity.

5. Conclusion

By way of conclusion, it is apparent from both the literature research as well as the empirical research presented in this thesis, that Baptist pastors, as well as the local churches within which they minister, face an enormous challenge in addressing the incongruity that exists between the personal ministry identities of pastors, the role expectations of the churches, and the current approach of pastors to ministry. Both pastors and church leaderships need to recognize the need for achieving role congruency as an important factor in building up the local church. In order to do so, the factors identified in undermining the personal ministry identities of pastors need to be critically reviewed alongside the recommendations which have been made.

ANNEXURE A

QUESTIONNAIRE: ONE

THE PASTOR'S PERSONAL MINISTRY IDENTITY

Respondent number

V1 1

Please answer all questions by changing a number you choose in a shaded box to RED or by typing your answer in RED in the shaded space provided. Changing the font colour to RED is done by selecting the COLOUR RED on the “Font Colour” tab on your toolbar

Please save your completed questionnaire in MS Word under the file name benbapresa.doc and return it as an attachment to benbap@global.co.za.

Please type your name in **RED** the shaded box below

SECTION A

Please use the following code when answering the options below:

M	=	Manifest	1
N		Not manifest	2

1. Spiritual gifting

It is my understanding that God by His Holy Spirit has **given to me** one or more of the following spiritual gifts.

Spiritual gift	M	N
Teaching	1	2
Preaching	1	2
Wisdom	1	2
Knowledge	1	2
Discernment	1	2
Helps	1	2
Administration	1	2
Encouragement	1	2
Giving	1	2
Leadership	1	2
Mercy	1	2
Evangelism	1	2
Shepherding	1	2

V2	4
V3	5
V4	6
V5	7
V6	8
V7	9
V8	10
V9	11
V10	12
V11	13
V12	14
V13	15
V14	16

SECTION A (continued)

Please use the following code when answering the options below:

M	=	Manifest	1
N		Not manifest	2

1. Spiritual gifting

It is my understanding that God by His Holy Spirit has **given to me** one or more of the following spiritual gifts.

Hospitality	1	2	
Faith	1	2	
Healing	1	2	
Miracles	1	2	
Prophecy	1	2	
Tongues	1	2	
Interpretation	1	2	
Intercession	1	2	
Creative communication	1	2	

V15		17
V16		18
V17		19
V18		20
V19		21
V20		22
V21		23
V22		24
V23		25

2. Passion

Definition: *“Passion is the God-given desire that compels us to make a difference in a particular ministry”*

Please use the following code when answering the options below:

SA	=	Strongly Agree	9
A	=	Agree	7
U	=	Unsure	5
D	=	Disagree	3
SD	=	Strongly Disagree	1

God has given me a passion for...

Passion for ...	SA	A	U	D	SD
developing Bible study teaching materials	9	7	5	3	1
conducting Gospel outreach meetings	9	7	5	3	1
developing goals/objectives for the church	9	7	5	3	1
witnessing to people about the Gospel	9	7	5	3	1
developing my preaching skills	9	7	5	3	1
training others to share the Gospel	9	7	5	3	1
praying for those in need	9	7	5	3	1
counselling people in need/crisis	9	7	5	3	1
exegeting Biblical passages	9	7	5	3	1
developing my evangelistic skills	9	7	5	3	1

V24		26
V25		27
V26		28
V27		29
V28		30
V29		31
V30		32
V31		33
V32		34
V33		35

2. Passion (continued)

Definition: “*Passion is the God-given desire that compels us to make a difference in a particular ministry*”

Please use the following code when answering the options below:

SA	=	Strongly Agree	9
A	=	Agree	7
U	=	Unsure	5
D	=	Disagree	3
SD	=	Strongly Disagree	1

God has given me a passion for...

Passion for ...	SA	A	U	D	SD
developing new sermon series	9	7	5	3	1
ministering to the terminally ill	9	7	5	3	1
implementing more efficient and effective church administrative systems	9	7	5	3	1
preaching sermons	9	7	5	3	1
administering the church efficiently	9	7	5	3	1
leading Bible studies	9	7	5	3	1
ensuring that church expenditure is properly managed	9	7	5	3	1
developing my leadership skills	9	7	5	3	1
developing my administrative skills	9	7	5	3	1
chairing leadership meetings	9	7	5	3	1
developing my teaching skills	9	7	5	3	1
visiting the sick	9	7	5	3	1
developing the church’s vision/mission	9	7	5	3	1
developing new and creative ways of teaching the Scriptures	9	7	5	3	1

V34	<input type="text"/>	36
V35	<input type="text"/>	37
V36	<input type="text"/>	38
V37	<input type="text"/>	39
V38	<input type="text"/>	40
V39	<input type="text"/>	41
V40	<input type="text"/>	42
V41	<input type="text"/>	43
V42	<input type="text"/>	44
V43	<input type="text"/>	45
V44	<input type="text"/>	46
V45	<input type="text"/>	47
V46	<input type="text"/>	48
V47	<input type="text"/>	49

3. Natural talents/abilities

Please use the following code when answering the options below:

SA	=	Strongly Agree	1
A	=	Agree	2
U	=	Unsure	3
D	=	Disagree	4
SD	=	Strongly Disagree	5

I believe that God has given me the following natural talents/abilities....

Natural talents	SA	A	U	D	SD
Administration	1	2	3	4	5
Organisation	1	2	3	4	5
Communicating with large groups	1	2	3	4	5
Problem solving	1	2	3	4	5
Developing significant relationships	1	2	3	4	5
Leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching	1	2	3	4	5
Caring for those in need	1	2	3	4	5

V48		50
V49		51
V50		52
V51		53
V52		54
V53		55
V54		56
V55		57

4. Divine call

Please consider each of the ministry activities listed below. Give to each a priority where 1 is the highest priority and 6 is the lowest priority, Please do not repeat a priority. :

In terms of my understanding of God's unique call upon my life, God has called me to ...

God calls me to ...	R
preach the Word	
teach the Word	
care for those in need	
lead the church	
evangelise the unsaved	
administer the church	

V56		58
V57		59
V58		60
V59		61
V60		62
V61		63

5. How are you organized?

a. While on vacation I prefer to ...

be spontaneous	1	2	3	4	5	follow a set plan
-----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------------

V62 64

b. I prefer to set guidelines that are ...

general	1	2	3	4	5	specific
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

V63 65

c. I prefer to ...

leave my options open	1	2	3	4	5	settle things now
------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------------

V64 66

d. I prefer projects that have ...

variety	1	2	3	4	5	routine
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	----------------

V65 67

e. I like to ...

play it by ear	1	2	3	4	5	stick to a plan
-----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	------------------------

V66 68

f. I find routine ...

boring	1	2	3	4	5	restful
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	----------------

V67 69

g. I accomplish tasks best ...

by working it out as I go	1	2	3	4	5	by following a plan
----------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	----------------------------

V68 70

6. How are you energized?

a. I'm more comfortable ...

doing things for people	1	2	3	4	5	being with people
--------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------------

V69 71

b. When doing a task, I tend to ...

focus on the goal	1	2	3	4	5	focus on relationships
--------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------------------

V70 72

c. I get more excited about ...

advancing a cause	1	2	3	4	5	creating community
--------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------------

V71 73

6. How are you energized? (continued)

d. I feel I have accomplished something when I've ...

gotten a job done	1	2	3	4	5	built a relationship
--------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------------------

V72 74

e. It is more important to start a meeting ...

on time	1	2	3	4	5	when everyone gets there
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------------------

V73 75

f. I'm more concerned with ...

meeting a deadline	1	2	3	4	5	maintaining the team
---------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------------------

V74 76

g. I place higher value on ...

action	1	2	3	4	5	communication
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	----------------------

V75 77

7. If you **have** completed a **Myers Briggs Temperament Indicator**, how did you rate on the dimension introvert / extrovert? (If you **have not completed** an **MBTI** then **ignore** this Question).

Introvert	1
Extrovert	2

V76 78

8. If you **have not** completed a **Myers Briggs Temperament Indicator**, how do you see yourself in terms of being an introvert / extrovert?

Introvert	1
Extrovert	2

V77 79

SECTION B

7. Prioritize (rank) the following in terms of *your understanding of the Church's expectation of you*. (Do not rank any two terms the same. A priority of **1** is **highest** and a priority of **6** is **lowest**).

7.1

The Church expects me to ...		R
develop my preaching skills.		V78
identify, equip and send out potential missionaries from the local church.		V79
motivate staff members and church leaders.		V80
minister to the dying.		V81
ensure that church statistics are up to date and readily available.		V82
critically evaluate research sources in preparation for a Bible study.		V83

V78	80
V79	81
V80	82
V81	83
V82	84
V83	85

7.2

The Church expects me to ...		R
counsel people in spiritual and emotional need.		V84
develop my leadership skills.		V85
explain Biblical truths.		V86
witness to people about the Gospel.		V87
maintain the church membership roll efficiently.		V88
exegete a Biblical passage as preparation for preaching.		V89

V84	86
V85	87
V86	88
V87	89
V88	90
V89	91

7.3

The Church expects me to ...		R
identify care needs within the church.		V90
critically evaluate the church's administrative systems.		V91
develop my leadership skills.		V92
witness to people about the Gospel.		V93
develop my teaching skills.		V94
preach sermons.		V95

V90	92
V91	93
V92	94
V93	95
V94	96
V95	97

7.4

The Church expects me to ...		R
develop lesson plans for Bible studies.		V96
exegete a Biblical passage as preparation for preaching.		V97
develop the church's vision and mission.		V98
minister to the dying.		V99
ensure that an annual church budget is produced.		V100
think creatively of new ways to share the Gospel.		V101

V96	98
V97	99
V98	100
V99	101
V100	102
V101	103

SECTION B (continued)

7. Prioritize (rank) the following in terms of *your understanding of the Church's expectation for you*. (Do not rank any two terms the same. A priority of 1 is **highest** and a priority of **6** is **lowest**).

7.5

The Church expects me to ...		R
creatively think of new sermon illustrations.		V102
identify needs within the community as a means of sharing the Gospel.		V103
critically evaluate the church's administrative systems.		V104
develop lesson plans for Bible studies.		V105
develop the church's vision and mission.		V106
pray for those in need.		V107

V102	104
V103	105
V104	106
V105	107
V106	108
V107	109

7.6

The Church expects me to ...		R
develop an evangelistic outreach program in the church.		V108
develop a new sermon series.		V109
encourage people.		V110
motivate staff members and church leaders.		V111
develop new and creative ways of teaching the Scriptures.		V112
develop my administrative skills.		V113

V108	110
V109	111
V110	112
V111	113
V112	114
V113	115

7.7

The Church expects me to ...		R
develop the church's vision and mission.		V114
ensure that an annual church budget is produced.		V115
develop an evangelistic program in the church.		V116
creatively think of new sermon illustrations.		V117
conduct pre-marital and marriage counselling.		V118
develop participatory questions to facilitate participation in a Bible study.		V119

V114	116
V115	117
V116	118
V117	119
V118	120
V119	121

7.8

The Church expects me to ...		R
pray for those in need.		V120
develop new ways of communicating creatively from the pulpit.		V121
equip new leaders.		V122
maintain the church membership roll efficiently.		V123
critically evaluate research sources in preparation for a Bible study.		V124
develop my evangelistic skills.		V125

V120	122
V121	123
V122	124
V123	125
V124	126
V125	127

SECTION B (continued)

7. Prioritize (rank) the following in terms of *your understanding of the Church's expectation for you*. (Do not rank any two terms the same. A priority of 1 is **highest** and a priority of **6** is **lowest**).

7.9

The Church expects me to ...	R	
manage staff members.		V126 128
witness to people about the Gospel.		V127 129
develop lesson plans for Bible studies.		V128 130
creatively think of new sermon illustrations.		V129 131
counsel people in spiritual and emotional need.		V130 132
ensure that an annual church budget is produced.		V131 133

7.10

The Church expects me to ...	R	
develop my evangelistic skills.		V132 134
maintain the church membership roll efficiently.		V133 135
develop my teaching skills.		V134 136
creatively think of new sermon illustrations.		V135 137
equip new leaders.		V136 138
minister to the dying.		V137 139

Thank you for your time and co-operation

Please save your completed questionnaire in MS Word under the file name benbapresa.doc and return it as an attachment to benbap@global.co.za.

ANNEXURE B

QUESTIONNAIRE: TWO

THE PASTOR'S PERSONAL MINISTRY IDENTITY

Respondent number

V1 1

Please answer all questions by typing your answer in RED in the shaded space provided. Changing the font colour to RED is done by selecting the COLOUR RED on the “Font Colour” tab on your toolbar

Please DO NOT refer back to any answers you previously gave in Section A and Section B.

Please save your completed questionnaire in MS Word under the file name benbapresc.doc and return it as an attachment to benbap@global.co.za.

Please type your name in **RED** the shaded box below

SECTION C

8. In the **normal** course of your ministry how would you prioritize the following **ministry activities**. (Do not give any two activities the same priority. A priority of **1** is **most important** and a priority of **6** is **least important**)

8.1

Ministry activity	R
Equip new leaders.	
Co-ordinate the administrative functions of the church.	
Develop participatory questions to facilitate participation in a Bible study.	
Conduct Biblical research in sermon preparation.	
Entertain church members in my home.	
Train and develop others to share the Gospel.	

V138	140
V139	141
V140	142
V141	143
V142	144
V143	145
V144	146

SECTION C (continued)

8. In the **normal** course of your ministry how would you prioritize the following **ministry activities**. (Do not give any two activities the same priority. A priority of **1** is **most important** and a priority of **6** is **least important**)

8.2

Ministry activity	R	
Develop the church's vision and mission.		V145 147
Develop new ways of communicating creatively from the pulpit.		V146 148
Identify care needs within the church.		V147 149
Implement more efficient and effective administrative systems.		V148 150
Develop lesson materials \ hand outs for a Bible study.		V149 151
Identify needs within the community as a means of sharing the Gospel.		V150 152

8.3

Ministry activity	R	
Manage church expenditure in terms of the church budget.		V151 153
Conduct Biblical research in sermon preparation.		V152 154
Identify, equip and send out potential missionaries from the local church.		V153 155
Pray for those in need.		V154 156
Make proposals to enhance the ministry of the church.		V155 157
Interact with participants of a Bible study.		V156 158

8.4

Ministry activity	R	
Ensure church correspondence is up to date.		V157 159
Develop new and creative ways of teaching the Scriptures.		V158 160
Train and develop others to share the Gospel.		V159 161
Minister to the dying.		V160 162
Develop new ways of applying Biblical truth in preaching.		V161 163
Develop lesson materials / hand outs for a Bible study.		V162 164

8.5

Ministry activity	R	
Explain Biblical truths.		V163 165
Critically evaluate the ministry of the church.		V164 166
Critically evaluate the church's administrative systems.		V165 167
Conduct Gospel outreach meetings.		V166 168
Develop a new sermon series.		V167 169
Pray for those in need.		V168 170

SECTION C (continued)

8. In the **normal** course of your ministry how would you prioritize the following **ministry activities**. (Do not give any two activities the same priority. A priority of **1** is **most important** and a priority of **6** is **least important**)

8.6

Ministry activity	R	
Develop strategies for the attainment of the church's vision and mission.		V169
Develop a new sermon series.		V170
Develop a strategy for supporting world missions.		V171
Implement more efficient and effective administrative systems.		V172
Entertain church members in my home.		V173
Interact with participants of a Bible study.		V174

8.7

Ministry activity	R	
Counsel people in spiritual and emotional need.		V175
Develop my teaching skills.		V176
Develop strategies for the attainment of the church's vision and mission.		V177
Creatively think of new sermon illustrations.		V178
Think creatively of new ways to share the Gospel.		V179
Implement more efficient and effective administrative systems.		V180

8.8

Ministry activity	R	
Pray for those in need.		V182
Develop my leadership skills.		V183
Ensure church correspondence is up to date.		V184
Think creatively of new ways to share the Gospel.		V185
Critically evaluate research sources in preparation for a Bible study.		V186
Preach sermons.		V187

8.9

Ministry activity	R	
Think creatively of new ways to share the Gospel.		V188
Pray for those in need.		V189
Develop lesson plans for Bible studies.		V190
Creatively think of new sermon illustrations.		V191
Ensure the membership data base is kept up to date.		V192
Make proposals to enhance the ministry of the church.		V193

SECTION C (continued)

- 8.** In the **normal** course of your ministry how would you prioritize the following **ministry activities**. (Do not give any two activities the same priority. A priority of **1** is **most important** and a priority of **6** is **least important**)

8.10

Ministry activity	R	
Develop my evangelistic skills.		V194
Manage staff members.		V195
Develop my teaching skills.		V196
Manage church expenditure in terms of the church budget.		V197
Develop my preaching skills.		V198
Minister to the dying.		V199

196
197
198
199
200
201

Thank you for your time and co-operation

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ABSTRACT**Rediscovering pastoral identity**

The influence of church role expectations in undermining a pastor's personal ministry identity

By: Grant Alexander Baston

Supervisor: Prof. Malan Nel

Department of Practical Theology

Master of Arts

This thesis explores the relationship between a pastor's personal ministry identity and the church role expectations that he encounters in the local church within which he ministers and takes place in the context of "Building up the local church".

It is the hypothesis of this thesis that many Baptist pastors within the Baptist Union of Southern Africa are compromising the integrity of their own personal ministry identities in an attempt to meet the church role expectations of their local churches.

The study considers firstly the nature development of personal identity in general as a precursor to understanding the nature of development of a personal ministry identity. At least six key elements are identified as being important in the development of an authentic personal ministry identity namely, spiritual gifting, personality, natural talents\abilities, divine call, congregational influence and finally passion.

Pastoral ministry can be understood as an interface of expectations between the church role expectations of the church and the pastor's expectations derived from his personal ministry identity. The consequences of this interface of expectations may be both positive and negative and may include role confusion, conflict, collusion or congruence. Role negotiation and renegotiation may be used to address some of the negative consequences of this interface.

Empirical research results obtained as part of the study that explored the relationship between a pastor's personal ministry identity, church role expectations and the current approach to ministry, clearly indicate that church role expectations are far more influential on current pastoral practice than are the personal ministry identities,

indicating that the identities of these pastors have been undermined by church role expectations.

A correct understanding of the Biblical view of self-denial and self-esteem would result in a greater freedom on the part of pastors to resist the undermining of their personal ministry identities.

10 KEY TERMS

1. Building up the local church
2. Identity
3. Personal ministry identity
4. Church role expectations
5. Interface of expectations
6. Self-denial
7. Self-esteem
8. Role negotiation \ renegotiation
9. Role conflict
10. Role congruence