

*work completely. However, due to my children's education, I cannot move right now. I will make a plan when they graduate from high school. In addition, if the opportunity is given to me to preach as an English-speaking minister, I would want to do it. Even though the language problem may exist, if God guides me, I have confidence that God will give me the ability. I think that Korean ministers can work at American churches and do English-speaking ministry. Currently, many Korean immigrant churches need ministers who speak English freely. However, there are few workers in English-speaking ministry. I also want to participate in the work and prepare it. A new age is coming when the English-speaking ministry will be an essential ministry. Therefore, it is necessary to understand such trends and prepare for the future.*

### **3.3 Findings: Thematic analysis**

The following chapter contains the thematic findings that are based on my interpretation of the four Korean-American pastors' data and my effort to find meaning in their pastoral stories. Each narrative that emerged from the interviews in the previous part was abstracted and crafted by the individual themes, and each one reflects the Korean-American pastor's sufferings and hopes in relation to their ministry. Each theme contains some characteristics that are general and that occur across all of the participants' stories. Additionally, each individual theme might resound with other participants.

Data analysis in a qualitative study has been defined as a "process which entails an effort to formally identify themes and construct hypotheses as they are suggested by data and an attempt to demonstrate support for the themes and hypotheses" (Bogdan & Taylor 1975:79). The overall goal of the data analysis is to discover the meaning from the whole data and the work leads to integrate several themes. In this study, two complementary methods to data analysis were utilized: constructing

narratives and thematic interpretation. The thematic interpretation may be presented across participants. There were various processes to interpret the data such as identifying, describing, and codifying the data. After collecting the data, analysis has been processed by the several stages that was continuously re-examined and reviewed in a cyclical method (Crabtree 1999:147). Above all, the final work of analysis was conducted after completing all interviews and collecting all data. I referred to my interview transcripts and analytic memos about emerging themes while gathering and processing the data.

Each interview was audio-taped and each tape was also transcribed verbatim. While working with the tape and transcribed material, I was able to understand the content of the interview. Each transcribed interview is approximately ten pages in length and I also recorded my impressions there. I adopted across-case interpretation that means to discover common meanings from the narratives of the participants when multiple cases are in each narrative (Creswell 1998:153-157).

There are some stages to process the data interpretation from the interviews. The first stage for the interpretation of data is to construct their narratives and themes. The second stage is to focus on the overall thematic interpretation and to identify themes across the four Korean-American pastors. Following the identification of themes that characterized their unique pastoral suffering in relation to the ministry, the next stage constituted arranged descriptions. Each theme can be viewed as the apparent characteristics of their sufferings and hopes in relation to the ministry. This thematic interpretation may include and present my interpretation. With regard to selected and arranged themes, Ely says (1997:206), “the selected themes seem most salient or most relevant to the story we have chosen to tell.” Therefore, it is important to condense the data in what I felt was salient and relevant way.

Above all, my approach to analyzing the data was to convey my understanding and interpretation of the data for the four Korean-American pastors as a group. I would

like to reveal the Korean-American pastor's past and current difficulties and hopes that they meet in their pastoral context or life situation. I collected their interviews, condensed, and analyzed the data. As a result, I was able to discover that they have serious problems in relation to the conflicts with their church members and financial difficulty. On the contrary, the Korean-American pastor did not hesitate to indicate the comfort from God and the professional pastoral counselor or the spiritual mentor as the necessary pastoral care. In addition to pastoral care for them, the Korean-American pastor wanted to be supplied with the sufficient financial assistance from their local churches and the denominations to which they belong.

*Sufferings. The third theme, "We hope in God's comfort and encouragement," is*

This part is organized around two themes from their sufferings in relation to ministry that I found in all four of the Korean-American pastors' stories. The first theme is their sufferings in relation to ministry "We're struggling with authority versus submission" conveys the sufferings that came from the conflicts of pastoral context with church members. The second theme is, "We're trying to solve financial problems". Here the Korean-American pastors revealed their inferior status financially while ministering and living in the United States.

*3.3.1 Their ministry-related sufferings. The next section*

The following three themes also reflect issues addressed by the four Korean-American pastors' hopes for pastoral care. The first theme, "We hope in God's comfort and encouragement", expresses how spiritual pastoral care from God is provided in the pastoral lives of these Korean-American pastors. The second theme is "We hope in counselors or mentors who help us". Here I mention that they earnestly need pastoral counselors or spiritual mentors, who will listen to the Korean-American pastors' individual agonies or difficulties, understand their current minds or emotions, heal their inner hurts, and encourage them. In addition, the supports or pastoral cares from their denominations were expressed by the four Korean-American pastors, and are presented in this chapter. The third theme, "We hope for appropriate financial assistance" describes financial problems that they experience in their lives, as well as their hopes that they will be able to minister

effectively because of sufficient financial supplies. The themes outlined throughout this chapter are from the interviews and are interpreted by the researcher with direct quotations to illustrate main points.

Consequently, the interpretation of all four Korean-American pastors' themes will represent the emergence of their sufferings and hopes in relation to their pastoral context. The first theme, "We're struggling with authority versus submission," and the second theme, "We're trying to solve financial problems" seem most effective at capturing the present efforts of the Korean-American pastor's ministry-related sufferings. The third theme, "We hope in God's comfort and encouragement," the fourth theme, "We hope in counselors or mentors who help us," and the fifth theme, "We hope for appropriate financial assistance" reflect the Korean-American pastors' earnest hopes for their present and future ministry, including their ordinary life. I thus have a confidence that these themes are most representative of the thoughts and feelings of the Korean-American pastors in my study.

### 3.3.1 Their ministry-related sufferings: Thematic analysis

#### 3.3.1.1 Theme #1: "We're struggling with authority versus submission."

The most apparent ministry-related suffering among the four Korean-American pastors was the conflict of the pastoral context with church members. All four Korean-American pastors talked a great deal about experiencing church conflicts in relation to pastoral authority.

Pastor Lee described his first experience of ministry in the United States as the greatest hurt in his life. *The ministry in L.A was my first ministry experience in the United States. However, there were some conflicts between the members of the*

*congregation. In such conflict, I had to confront many obstacles to foster church growth. I realized that the immigrant ministry is more difficult than ministry in my homeland. Lee came to realize that the Korean immigrant ministry would never be the same as the ministry in his homeland.*

There were many causes of the conflicts in the church because the Korean immigrant church itself includes multiple functions such as religious and social functions. In other words, in relation to the Korean immigrant church, it can be said that a meaning of the church is a place that can accept and express various desires and expressions of Korean immigrants. After all, the conflicts may hinder the original purpose of the church. *The conflicts between the elder's groups continued, and the conflict made the church deteriorate, and some members had to leave.*

What is the major reason for conflicts in the church? It may be the headship of the church. Traditionally, Korean pastors have regarded the headship in the relationship with church members as an important pastoral authority. In their thoughts, the headship in the church should belong to the pastor, and it connects the pastoral authority directly. Therefore, Korean-American pastors also think that the pastoral authority should be given to them naturally. On the other hand, general lay people may think differently. If they are the original members who established the church, they may never want to be subordinate to pastors. Furthermore, they want to maintain their power continually in the church. Here severe causes of the conflicts occur.

*One of the serious problems was the resistance of elders towards the pastor. They were the original members who had established the church and were essential groups to maintain the church so they did not want to reduce their power or authority in the church. In the Han In church, there were many past similar cases that the pastor was forced to resign, if the pastor did not accept the elders' opinion. I could not understand how God's church was operated this way. This is never a faithful situation.*

The strong resistance and pressure from the original members are the biggest barriers to ministers in the Korean immigrant church. When we compare Korean immigrant churches to the context of the Korean homeland church, respect toward pastoral authority still remains in the Korean church. However, due to the special characteristics in relation to the various functions of the Korean immigrant church that go beyond religious ones, it is certain that there is a difference between the Korean homeland church and the Korean immigrant church.

Furthermore, the original and essential church members may regard the pastor as employers; they think that pastors should minister according to their requests. *I tried to minister with confidence and assurance based on the pastoral principle. I told the elders that they had to love the church above all, and they sometimes seemed to receive my request. However, their thinking toward the church was that it had to accept their opinion, and a pastor also had to accept their thinking.* In this respect, Pastor Lee would like to have real partnership and joint ownership in ministering in the Korean immigrant church. The congregation members' and pastor's trust and confidence for each other may be meaningful resources to reduce several conflicts in the Korean immigrant church. *I frequently experienced that small distrust can be a source of the church's serious conflicts. Thus, such distrust became a serious obstacle to stop the church's growth.*

*In addition, church itself in the Korean immigrant community can be a place where* Pastor Lee mentioned the conflicts of the Korean immigrant church relating to the system of the church. *Like Korean immigrant churches, the church works are not operated by some special persons, and the power or authority of the church never concentrates on such persons. Therefore, the American church is democratically owned and managed by all church members.* He found that the American church is managed democratically and all church members can participate in church activities. It is a significant point that the Korean immigrant church should consider the above system. Although Pastor Park ministers in an American church, he had ministry experience in the Korean immigrant church for years, including ministry

in Korea. His thoughts may provide good comparatives between the two cultures. On the other hand, what is the context of the Korean immigrant church? In fact, the Korean immigrant church has spent a great deal of energy in struggling with where the headship of the church belongs. Due to the energy consumptions, an image of the Korean immigrant church has been damaged in the Korean immigrant community, and it lost its original mission without the certain purpose as the church of God.

Furthermore, because almost all the conflicts affect the emotions, the church sometimes ends in separation, or the church itself disappears. *The situation of Korean immigrant churches is very different. When the same problem happens in the Korean church, the difference of thought affects many things in the church. It sometimes provides the cause of conflict and the church may be harmed. For example, people who are concerned about the conflict might leave or even the church itself could divide into some smaller churches. In fact, the cases are frequent and I saw many such cases in the immigrant pastoral context.* As a matter of fact, it is undeniable that there were more cases that new immigrant churches were established by the separation of churches than cases in which the Korean immigrant churches were established by the pure mission to save unbelievers.

In addition, church itself in the Korean immigrant community can be a place where various human relationships combine. Consequently, Korean immigrant churches may be more closed to a human association than to God's divine place. Thus, some Korean immigrant Christians sometimes leave their initial church because of the conflict that occurred from human relationships.

In retrospect, Pastor Park also thought that the problems of the conflict in the church come from headship related issues. *The reason why the above conflicts are very serious in Korean immigrant churches is that the persons concerned regard the problem as one kind of the conflict of headship. If the person concerned yields*

*at others' insistence, they think that they failed at the fight of headship. Sometimes, they may think of the church not as the public place where their faith is confessed, but as the place where they express and achieve their own individual ambition as they would through a secular job.* Opportunities for Korean immigrants to express their desires or thoughts are restricted in American society, because the immigrants have many handicaps such as language problems, a cultural gap, and the disadvantage of being a minority. Furthermore, Korean immigrants' lives are not stable, and their economic situation is not enough for them to live the lives they hope for. The church is the only place where their thoughts can be presented freely. Pastor Park told me about the reason why Korean immigrants gather at church.

*The special characteristics of the Korean immigrant church have various meanings beyond the religious function; the Korean immigrant church is regarded as the symbolic place where various people's positions or thinking should be accepted. In fact, one of several reasons why people gather at church is to pursue their individual profit or to pursue human relationships. Although there are some faithful characteristics in the Korean immigrant church, once the profitable relationships in the congregation occur, they may become the most important keys in influencing the existential purpose of the church.*

Sometimes, the intention of the pastor who wants to lead the church as a religious center collides with each member's desires to pursue their individual profit or human relationships. This is also one of the potential causes of the conflicts.

Pastor Choi, like Pastor Lee, said that *in immigrant churches, the social function as well as the religious function is very important. The Korean immigrant church has both the character of faithful community and the character of Korean community.* The struggle of headship in the church influenced the election for the important church positions. The persons who want to be elected as elders or deacons in the church are sometimes confusing the main position of the church. They may have different purposes than the pure and faithful purposes that God wants and that the church requires. This means that they want to have a significant position in the



church, such as elder or deacon, in order for the church to accept or respond more actively to their thoughts. This may be because human desires differ from faithful motivations. *Some people their social status in the church to be recognized, because it connects to the election to decide the main positions in the church. This may be a source of conflicts and may cause pastors to experience many difficulties.*

The conflicts in ministering in church may be connected to the pastoral philosophy. Pastors have a strong confidence and calling that comes from God. This calling is the purpose or intention of the pastor which is based on the Bible. However, when it collides with the desires of the elder or deacon, pastors come to struggle with church members about whether they will give up their thoughts or not. This means that pastors either have to follow the congregation members' requirements unconditionally and go without the pastoral confidence, or pastors obstinately maintain their pastoral will, although there may be some serious troubles in the church.

After all, the issue relates to pastoral authority. *I am one of the original members who established this church, so my sufferings in the ministry may be different than other Korean-American ministers who became pastors in an established church. When I established this church it was based on my pastoral principles. Thus, there were not such management conflicts in relation with the pastoral authority.* Fortunately, in Pastor Choi's case, he is one of the original members who established his church. In this regard, his situation may be different from another pastor, because it is very the important founder of the church.

One of the reasons why many Korean-American pastors have to experience some ministry-related sufferings in relation to the pastoral authority is if they were called as senior pastors after the church was established by some people. The Korean-American pastors are not always the initial members who established the church. Here, all causes of conflict have begun, and pastors have to minister while

continually having the potential problems.

Pastor Choi felt that it was necessary for the church to change or renovate in order for pastors to minister in the church without any tension or conflicts.

*It is undeniable that the struggle of pastoral authority is a serious burden to pastors. On the contrary, because I participated in establishing this church, the church could be managed by my pastoral principles and congregation members had to agree on it. However, I learned the democratic process and methods in ministering at an American church, and I want to introduce them to Korean immigrant churches. I try to respect their suggestions and accept their requests. In fact, it is necessary to establish such a democratic environment in the Korean immigrant church.*

Furthermore, because the situation of the Korean immigrants' lives is not stable and they always have changeable minds, it is not easy for Korean-American pastors to minister safely and with certain pastoral philosophy. As mentioned earlier, the immigrants' economic situations are too poor to manage for themselves, and they almost all occupy positions in lower level businesses such as dry cleaners, small shops, and grocery stores. Therefore, their lives are tiring and very hard. There is not enough time to enjoy their leisure with their family; furthermore they have to work during the weekdays and they even sometimes work on weekends. They go to work very early in the morning and go back to their home late.

They participate in the Sunday service and they have their spare time in the afternoon on Sunday. Due to their social and cultural limitations, their hobby lives and entertainment are also few. This is the reality of their lives. Some Korean-American pastors think that the church should help to reduce immigrants' hard burdensome lives, so they sometimes offer various programs to help immigrants in the church. However, because the church has limitations, these trials ended in failure or resulted in frustration to the pastors. *I planned many programs to build up the church and I offered various community activities for immigrants in the church.*

*Although these were very effectual, it was sometimes difficult to manage them, and I felt burned out and tired. Currently, the many church programs have been reduced.*

In addition, the Korean-American pastors sometimes feel frustration or disappointment because of Korean immigrants' unclear minds and actions. *The Korean immigrants are fickle. This means that they switch their minds and thinking according to the given situation. I sometime cannot understand them or know how to treat them.* When Korean immigrants arrive in the United States, they first go to the Korean church, because they know if they go the Korean church, the Korean-American pastor will help them adjust to the new environment and take care of them until they can manage their immigrant lives for themselves. The Korean-American pastors welcome the new immigrants and help them adjust in the United States.

However, after receiving much help from the Korean-American pastors, there were some cases in which the Korean immigrants leave the Korean-American pastor who helped them when they arrived in the United States. Many Korean-American pastors may experience a great deal of disappointment or betrayal from the Korean immigrants. The ministry to Korean immigrants is harder than any other countries' immigrant ministry. *I have agonized about my pastoral identity and calling. Furthermore, I have struggled about why God called me here and what His will is.* The endless tension and complicated emotions exist in the context of the Korean immigrant church. Therefore, it is necessary for the Korean-American pastors to learn the attitudes of a servant unconditionally and without any rewards. Strictly speaking, the attitude of endless service is absolutely required in the Korean immigrant pastoral context.

For Pastor Kim, the conflicts with the church members seemed to be about his shorter experience in the Korean ministry. Unlike Pastor Lee, Park, and Choi,

Pastor Kim did not talk about his ministry-related suffering longer than the other three Korean-American pastors. He indicated another reason why there are conflicts between the pastor and congregation members. The conflicts may come from the gap between the congregation members' expectations toward their pastor and the human and personal characteristics of the pastor. Because pastors are humans, they may have many weaknesses and problems.

However, the Korean immigrants think differently. They have a tendency to think that pastors have to live very holy lives because their job is not a secular job but God's divine job. When these thoughts are in their minds, they don't accept any mistakes of the pastor. *When little mistakes occur in the pastoral context, Korean immigrant Christians do not accept their pastors' mistakes and they believe that pastors have to be perfect people. Pastors are humans, so they can make a mistake and they may have many faults. I do not understand why pastors' mistakes cannot be accepted. Ironically, people sometimes do not respect pastors as divine Christian workers.*

Therefore, when pastors do make some mistakes, although they are very small things to be disregarded, congregation members enlarge the mistakes, and they do not hesitate to blame the pastor. In the situation, there is never the pastoral authority or any respectful thoughts toward pastors. *Ironically, people sometimes do not respect pastors as divine Christian workers. Furthermore, some disregard pastors as one of the common church workers. Nevertheless, people require that a pastor has to walk on the right road and his attitudes or behaviors have to be holy. It is a paradoxical situation, and it is undeniable that this is the biggest burden to pastors.*

Above all, Pastor Kim experienced many cases in which his personality was damaged, including his pastoral identity. It was possible to think that congregation members should regard pastors as secular employees. When they think of the

position of the church, the church may be businesses place the same as they manage their business in the secular world. If they are the boss of their business, pastors have to be one of their employees. They think that the employees should respect their boss's indication and obey his authority. Therefore, the congregation members who occupy the main position in the church never accept the pastor's authority. Like secular business, pastors have to operate by their intentions, and congregation members never approve of pastors' excessive use of authority. This can form a relationship of tension between the pastor and congregation members, and as a result, the church faces severe dangers that result in the separation of the church.

### 3.3.1.2 Theme #2: "We're trying to solve financial problems."

According to all four Korean-American pastors' stories, a financial problem was indicated as one of the severe ministry-related sufferings that shrunk their ministry activities. Traditionally, Korean pastors have thought that it was natural for pastors' families to live very hard financially. Therefore, up to a few decades ago, pastors' families have lived poorly and another member of the family had to be sacrificed for the parents' or husband's ministry. However, pastors currently have made much of their families as well as their ministry, and financial support is very important in order to minister effectively and stably. In this respect, Pastor Lee, Park, Choi, and Kim all said that they experienced or are experiencing financial suffering in their pastoral lives.

For Pastor Lee, the financial problem was a practical issue. When he arrived in the United States, his status was student visa. He had to register in an English language center as a full time student, and he was alone. However, he did not come to the United States under a sufficient financial situation. When he made a decision to study in the United States, he transferred his ministered church to his fellow

minister without any condition.

Furthermore, his family lived in Korea and it took more time to join with his family in the United States. *I had to do many jobs like newspaper delivery and cleaning in order to maintain my life.* Pastor Lee had to earn his living cost and tuition by himself, because his family in Korea could not support him financially and he had to be responsible for his family's life. *I had to work for my life and I could not spend enough time learning English. Moreover, due to the separation from family, I experienced much loneliness.*

Meanwhile, it was very hard for him to join with his family, and once they reunited, they lived in L.A where many Korean immigrants lived. When his family arrived in the United States, Pastor Lee was called as a senior pastor to a middle size Korean immigrant church in L.A. However, even though he ministered at the Korean immigrant church, his wife had to work at a small factory, because his wages were not enough to support his family. *As soon as my wife arrived in the United States, she had to work to solve financial problems. Although the church paid me wages, it was not enough for my family to live.* In fact, two thirds of all Korean-American pastors' families may be the same. Of course, some of the biggest churches can support their pastors without any financial difficulty; however, average Korean immigrant churches are weak financially.

Therefore, one of the pastors' family members has to work and almost all the pastor' wives work a part time job. *I thought that either most Korean immigrant pastors or their wives had jobs to earn their living costs, except the pastors of the big immigrant churches. Although most Korean immigrant churches are under poor financial situations, it is absolutely necessary that churches be responsible for their pastor's living.*

To Pastor Lee, ministry always seemed to involve God's work and a strong

confidence that the job as a pastor could never be the same as a secular job. Due to his assurance and pride, it seemed that he could be capable of ministering in his hard pastoral life. *The job as a pastor is different than a secular job. Pastors are called by God, and they should be for God. Therefore, they should remember their calling by God, and should have a mind that maintains God's church rightly.* Although I understood his speech as a joke, it was sad at a point that his wife became a worker in a hard job.

The financial pattern of Pastor Park has been better than other pastors. He ministers at an American church, and there was financial room, so his life has not had any financial difficulties. *My American church provides enough financial supports. There are various kinds of wages so that it is not difficult to live.* However, when I compare him to other Korean-American pastors, Pastor Park's case is not general. I think that the church should at least be responsible for the living of the pastor. If they have financial problems, their ministry will be restricted. As a result, the Korean Christian immigrants' faith can develop no longer, because the pastors should use their energies to earn the living cost more than to minister to their church.

Furthermore, if pastors are devoted in ministering for years, they may experience some burnout or deteriorations. In order to prevent this, pastors should be continually supplied both spiritually and theologically. However, there is no spare time or money for pastors, because they have to work for their living. *Korean immigrant pastors do not have enough time and money to spend for the extended education. As mentioned earlier, they have to work a secular job in addition to pastoral duties.* Above all, if the financial supplies are guaranteed, pastors can enjoy the benefits. *It is necessary to participate in various seminars to develop their pastoral minds. If churches cannot support pastors in extended education, their spirituality will be exhausted.* Therefore, many Korean-American pastors never dream of any leisure, spare time, relaxation, or extended theological

education. Rather, they want to minister without any fear toward financial barriers.

For Pastor Choi, he did not experience much financial difficulty, because he received some financial supplies from his denomination. *The support of the United Methodist denomination was very helpful to establish and maintain the church. They assisted me financially and promised the assistance continually until the new church could be maintained by us without any help.* It seemed that his church could offer various social facilities and manage several ministry activities. As a result, he was able to be devoted in ministering. Pastor Choi's case is different from other pastors' cases. Although Pastor Park ministers in an American church which provides him with enough financial supplies, other pastors experienced or are experiencing financial difficulties. However, Pastor Choi's denomination, the United Methodist denomination, has enough finances, and the same denominational pastors can benefit.

Pastor Kim is only a semi-full-time minister, because he has another job. In fact, as soon as he arrived in the United States, he had to work. *I was able to go to the United States and study at Calvin Seminary. However, due to financial problems, I had to work part time jobs to support my family and maintain my studies. My wife also worked. I studied and worked so that my life was very strict and I had no free time.* At that time, there were many cases in which students abroad worked a part time job along with their schooling. Pastor Kim was not an exception. He also did not have enough financial resources from his homeland, so there were no supports from his family in Korea.

Meanwhile, he established a new Baptist church in accordance with the suggestion of a director of the Western Baptist conference. Although he began to minister at the new Baptist church, his ministry job was not full time. *We gather only one time on Sunday and there are no other church meetings during weekdays, because I have to work another job. My other job is to manage the laundry, so my pastoral*



*work is not full time work.* Like Pastor Kim, almost all students abroad work in the laundry or small delivery food shop. Furthermore, his church did not have enough to support him.

### 3.3.2 Their ministry-related hopes: Thematic analysis

*I was a full time minister, however my church was too poor financially to support me, and I experienced many difficulties, so I had to get a part time job. As a result, I got this job and have done it ever since as well as working as a part time minister on Sunday. On the other hand, because I have another job, I can minister without financial obstacles. I know this truth very well--that the part time ministry never is devoted for God's ministry and I have to pay attention to the secular job without the pastoral work. This is my dilemma.*

Pastor Kim explained that he previously felt uncomfortable about ministering as a semi-full-time pastor. He now feels a serious dilemma, and he wants to have a committed total ministry as well as a close relationship with his parishes and families. *I often agonize about my pastoral identity--whether or not my present position is right in front of God. If I really trust God, I will have to entrust the financial parts to God; however, my reality is not and I want to minister as a full time pastor.* Pastor Kim said that he did not have enough spare time with his family and worked a great deal for years. Furthermore, due to his busy work, he cannot be totally devoted to ministering. *Due to the busy work, I cannot share my times with my family. Because I have to work during the summer, I cannot enjoy vacation with my family. Furthermore, I have to wake up earlier in the morning and I get home late every day. I have to minister on Sunday and I can rest only on Saturday.*

Therefore, due to the poor financial situation in each local church, Korean-American pastors have to have another job or one of the pastor's family members has to work. Like the case of Pastor Kim, the wives of the pastor usually work. In fact, when we see the situation of the Korean immigrant church, the wives of the pastors are one of the necessary sources for the development of the church. Furthermore, almost all wives of Korean-American pastors are highly educated people. However, they sometimes think their sacrifices are natural because they

have to support their families' lives and help their husband's pastoral ministry.

### 3.3.2 Their ministry-related hopes: Thematic analysis

#### 3.3.2.1 Theme #1: "We hope in God's comfort and encouragement."

If life is a work in progress for which there are various scripts provided by our culture to help guide our path, the Korean-American pastors often feel as if they are without a script to follow. The Korean-American pastors are forced to revise the place of ministry in their pastoral lives and have hopeful feelings about self, family, and church. Reaffirming their ministry in God as God's servants may be a process to find their identities and calling from God. The Korean-American pastors in my study were continuously figuring out ways to solve their ministry-related sufferings and to find meaning in their relationship with God. Their trials and devotions toward God were very sincere and they have tried to examine all pastoral problems in God.

In addition, I know that the Korean-American pastors' original faith is centered on God. In fact, the problems that happen in the church can be clarified as the human issues of relationships. Therefore, it is a possibility that human methods have to be utilized to solve these human problems. However, the Korean-American pastors in my study focused on the relationship with God in all pastoral problems. It is very interesting. It does not matter what their theological tendencies are, or if their theological backgrounds are conservative or liberal. Consequently, their basic pastoral and theological thoughts show that they have a significant conservative faithful color, and these are the same as the Korean pastors in the homeland.

Furthermore, their thoughts toward the Bible commonly believe that the Bible is

the word of God and is inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Korean-American pastor usually believes in the Divine authority and Sufficiency of Scripture. The theological thoughts of Korean-American pastors still remain in the Korean immigrant church context.

Pastor Lee learned theological studies and trainings in Korea, and his theological thought was conservative. He showed us his hard experience in Korean immigrant ministry. However, his thoughts of God were very helpful to overcome the difficulties. *Though I experienced some sufferings at the first immigrant church, I could learn an important teaching that God never gave up me, and He always guided me to the best place. This was a valuable help to my ministry at a Korean immigrant church in the future.* In fact, whenever he moved to a church, he requested God's guidance, and he thought that pastors had to obey the command of God.

Pastor Lee explained that he has no need to have his doubt toward God, because it would be disruptive for the relationship with God, because God knows us correctly and guides us by His divine will. Pastor Lee's devoted thoughts about God help to renew his ministry. He described how well his relationship with God has deepened. *I had to pray for the guidance of God, and I realized gradually that I had to obey God's order if God commanded me to go to the Han In church.* His relationship with God has seemed to fulfill a sense of important motivation of his ministry.

In addition to solving his ministry-related sufferings, Pastor Lee actively asked God's help and grace.

*When the sufferings came on me like a big wave, there were many times when I agonized; however, the unlimited grace from God became the most valuable resource to be able to overcome the sufferings and agonies. Because of the encouragement and comfort from God, I was able to recover from the difficulties and these were pastoral cares for me. The spiritual recovery and*

*pastoral care from God became my only foundation to be able to maintain God's works in the difficult ministry. Although other pastoral cares are important to maintain the health of ministry, it is undeniable that the encouragement and comfort from God are the best pastoral cares for God's works.*

His original and important pastoral care was the spiritual care provided by God. It is certain that the most important pastoral care is God's care, because it was a special pastoral care for the Korean-American pastor, and their main theological background is from a conservative theological environment. According to Pastor Lee, the conflicts in the church are not the primary problems of human relationships. Instead, his focus is on the relationship with God. Conflicts do, however, provide an opportunity to examine the relationship between God and him. Most problems with which he has been involved are in the spiritual field. *The problem of relationship is not human relationships, but the problem of the divine relationship. Therefore, when problems happen, we do not find comfort from human relationships, but from the relationship with God. However, many people focus on human problems and try to solve them.*

Pastor Lee realized that what has been successful in structuring and creating a satisfying ministry is trying. He attributes some of his pastoral care to the fact that we should pursue comfort and compassion from God. *In order to receive such pastoral care from God, we need to pursue it. People who experienced God's pastoral care can offer pastoral care for others.* Pastor Lee expressed that he must rely more on his own resources to structure and fill his life and ministry. He recently was forced to resign his senior pastor job from his church after interviewing with me. When I met him again after he resigned, his emotions were filled with a great deal of frustrations and hurts. It seemed that he walks on the road of severe suffering. Nevertheless, he tried to have certain confidence from God and is devoted to his sincere attitude toward God.

Pastor Park presently desires to receive God's care. He came to feel this while he ministers in an American church. Although there are some spiritual resources in the American church, he described being in search of the spiritual supplies to fill the spiritual void, and he focused on creating a more active ministry now that he is on his own. *The spiritual power seems to be weak in the American church. Although there are spiritual meetings and events, they do not seem to be as strong as in the Korean church. I sometimes feel that the spiritual supports are very necessary when I progress or plan something.* However, the opportunity to receive meaningful resources was restricted and was not readily apparent to him. When Pastor Park described trying to find God's care to anchor his ministry in the American church, his mind was the most important aspect of his thought of spiritual care. *Pastors have to maintain appropriate spirituality and pastoral mind.*

Pastor Choi is currently struggling with his ministry because his church has been suffering in relation to church construction for three years. I found that he seemed to doubt God's plan for him due to his hard situation. Pastor Choi described being in search of God's will as being the same as trying to find our situation in the dark. *I have struggled about why God called me here and what His will is.* However, he told me that his ministry was organized around guiding God's will and pursuing God's purpose. *I learned through important pastoral teachings that the best priority has to be for God. We have to receive the guidance of God and try to pursue God's purpose in the pastoral context.* Thus, Pastor Choi is in the process of trying to recover his ministry. He wants to structure his ministry to explore his own calling from God. In terms of creating a new ministry, Pastor Choi strongly felt that God's care is absolutely necessary, and that pastors should try their best to experience God's care.

*I trust it and God encourages and comforts me, when I suffer with the problems of relationships. Thus, the best pastoral care for me is God's encouragement and comfort. I always think of the existence of God in my life and pray for my current problems in order to receive God's answer and solve*

*them by a faithful method. I actually experienced many graces from God that can sustain my ministry and are the motivation to be powerful.*

In Pastor Kim's view, ministry provides not only structure but discipline in their pastoral lives. He explained that the structure provided by ministry means that pastors have sure confidence that God will be responsible for everything and for their future. *The best pastoral care that I receive at present is to rely on the word of God and to pray to God. Currently, I sing a song. The name is "God will make a way." I also read a book, "God opens the way." The similar theme of the song and book is that God always guides my way and He is responsible for me. I cannot know my future correctly, so I do not know how to prepare for the future. However, through God's guidance for me, I can be sure that God is never disappointed in me and that He will let me know His good will.*

Pastor Kim effectively focused on finding God's sure calling toward us. Moreover, he wants to move to another church, and then he has a dream of challenging English-speaking ministry in the American church. He has enjoyed his current ministry, although his ministry work is not as a full-time minister because of the financial problem. He hopes that he will be able to minister without the financial barriers that he has now, and he would like to devote his life to God's work completely.

All of the four Korean-American pastors in my study appeared to be striving to create their current Korean immigrant ministry that was provided for by God's encouragement and comfort. The connection with God is the most significant thing to them, and they described the trial of examining their pastoral vocation and identity. Pastoral care provided by God is an original motivation to manage their hard immigrant ministry, and if they do not recognize the assurance of God's care, they continually have to struggle to find something else in their lives to affirm their identity as pastors and their vocation as God's divine workers.

### 3.3.2.2 Theme #2: “We hope in pastoral counselors or mentors who help us.”

Pastor Park, Choi, and Kim all seemed to be struggling with issues about being alone. They expressed reasons that they desired to receive appropriate pastoral care from another person such as a pastoral caregiver, spiritual mentor, or adviser. The four Korean-American pastors fought with conflicting feelings and thoughts. They described their spiritual deterioration, burnout, ministry related stress, and loneliness as the most common disadvantages of living and ministering.

Pastor Lee pointed out that being alone does not necessarily mean being lonely. He explained that when he has felt lonely the connection with God was not sure. He shared how pastors coped with loneliness and what the best method is. On the other hand, three of the four Korean-American pastors (Pastor Park, Choi, Kim) expressed their desire to have companionship and encouragement from another pastoral caregiver.

Pastor Park was in the best situation among the four Korean-American pastors with regard to being connected to various sources of pastoral care, because his church’s resources provide him with necessary pastoral care. While ministering at the local church, Korean-American pastors sometimes may experience loneliness, and they can not speak their oppressed minds to others at random. Although they have a great deal of oppressive cases or events, they cannot seek the necessary counseling from anybody. Certainly, pastors should receive appropriate counseling from pastoral caregivers. However, the Korean immigrant pastoral context is not the place where Korean-American pastors can share or open their personal stories.

As mentioned in Pastor Kim’s case, Korean immigrant Christians hope that their pastors should be perfect people who have no mistakes or faults. In fact, pastors have many disadvantages as humans. Acceptance and tolerance are not allowed;

rather, the faults or mistakes of pastors can be sources to blame or damage them. Thus, pastoral caregivers or mentors are very necessary to Korean-American pastors.

Above all, the pastoral care-givers can maintain confidentiality as much as they can, and pastors can share and open their inner hurts or stories frankly. *I think that pastors need counselors who know how to counsel pastors. In fact, pastors cannot speak their inner feelings or emotions to others frankly. Therefore, they have to put their hurt emotions in their inner mind. This can be a serious stress to pastors. They look for a person who will listen to their hurt stories. In this regard, any groups or people with knowledge of pastoral care are absolutely necessary to pastors.* As the proverb says, if we compare the inner mind of the pastor to something, it is like an old tree, because there are empty spots in the old tree. Like an old tree's inside, the inner mind of the pastor may be empty. Thankfully, Pastor Park has two mentors and he has received appropriate help when he is in need.

*I have two mentors. One of them is a retired pastor of my church, and another is an older and experienced education pastor at another American church. I meet the retired pastor regularly one time per week. Because he has deep knowledge, experiences, and a kind manner, he is called a modern saint. Through meeting with him, I learn the basic attitudes and personal characteristics of an effective pastor. I seek his advice, and he sometimes counsels my problems. Currently, we have time to read and discuss the book, "Pastor and Sermon". The time is very valuable time to obtain spiritual insight. The other pastor has worked in the church education ministry for years. I also meet him once per month. As an education pastor, when I meet with him, I gain enough knowledge and wisdom from him. His sincere attitudes and various experiences in church education are very helpful in the practical context of church education. Like my cases, I think that pastors need such experienced spiritual mentors.*

Whenever he has some problems or wants to seek necessary advice, his mentors have provided useful insights to deepen Pastor Park's pastoral viewpoint and also have played a role to help maintain his spirituality regularly.



Pastor Choi has another useful resource from his denomination apart from financial assistance. He explained that his denomination's welfare system for their denominational pastors possesses more than other denominations. His denomination, the United Methodist Church, considers the position of the pastor well. Furthermore, it tries to help each pastor who belongs to the United Methodist Church. *The United Methodist denomination's system to assist the denomination's ministers is very good, and the denomination itself is consistently interested in its ministers' welfare.*

Pastor Choi has been joined with the Korean Minister Association in the United Methodist Church since he was ordained in it, and he has participated in the regular meeting. One of the advantages in joining the meeting is to take necessary extended education for the pastoral context. *The Korean minister association holds regular seminars during the summer of every year. The participation in these seminars is a very good opportunity to re-charge spiritually, and the seminars are free to present minister.* In fact, these can provide significant motivations to renew their ministry and help to apply them to the pastoral context practically.

However, above all, the seminars are opportunities for them to share the difficulties that they experienced in the pastoral context, and to open their inner hurt to participants without any fears. He told me that it is wonderful to be able to receive healing, compassion, and encouragement from others. *We share each others' problems, encourage, and comfort each other. We experience our unity in the Lord and feel each person is very valuable.* Pastor Choi has always seemed to expect the regular meeting. However, he expressed feelings that more professional pastoral care-givers should be provided to the Korean-American pastors systematically. In addition, he suggested that the general Christian association beyond each denomination is necessary in order for pastors to receive pastoral care.

Contrary to Pastor Park and Choi, Pastor Kim longed to have a companion, and he

depicted loneliness as the primary disadvantage of ministering for him. *The loneliness and isolation sometimes may be pushed into the minds of pastor.* Therefore, he copes with feelings of loneliness. *Pastors also need friends because the pastoral job is lonely. Pastors want to receive warm interest from congregation members and respect as God's divine workers.* Pastor Kim described his mentor as a listener. *Pastors need counselors to whom they can speak frankly. Pastors want to open their hearts deeply and share with others. Pastors are people. I sometimes want to open my own emotions or feelings to others.* Similar to Pastor Choi, Pastor Kim said that he desires Christian counselors for pastors as well as spiritual mentors in order to sustain his pastoral thoughts.

In addition to their hopes that they need pastoral care-givers or mentors for them, all of the four Korean-American pastors in my study stressed that their families gave them a sense of connection, belonging, support, and affirmation. The concept of family has the most valuable potential of pastoral care for them. It is certain that the most important origin to manage their ministry may be the family, and they find creative power to be able to overcome any sufferings or hurts.

*Although the church paid me wages, it was not enough for my family to live. I thought that other most Korean immigrant pastors in their wives had jobs to work their lives.*

**3.3.2.3 Theme #3: "We hope for appropriate financial assistance."**

Pastor Lee, Park, Choi, and Kim all seemed to be at a turning point in their lives. They are not only at a time in their lives when they work very actively for the purposes of their lives, but they want to live stably and be responsible for their families and themselves. Levinson (1978:7), in his study of adult development, described the mid-life transition period as a time when the meaning of life is of special importance to individuals, and when the end of early adulthood transfers to the next period of middle adulthood. This period involves reappraisal and modification of each personal life. The meaning of being a mid-life is to respect their past life and to view their future life (Sherman 1987:8).

Rather, regardless of their hard past lives, the person who faces mid-life may desire the strong stable life structure in his current individual life. In this regard, it can be said that mid-life brings an opportunity to view life with a fresh perspective. Thus, all of the Korean-American pastors in my study seemed to have reached a turning point in their lives. In all of the four Korean-American pastors' stories, there is evidence that they were searching for the meaning of their lives, and they are consequently all in the process of restructuring the components of their lives such as ministry, church, family, and their own desires. However, their transitions to a mid-life may be related to their financial situations. It is undeniable that sufficient financial independence helped them to process their lives.

Pastor Lee was the oldest of the four Korean-American pastors I interviewed, turning 50 within a few years. He stresses the fact that Korean immigrant churches cannot support their pastors without any fears of financial problems. *Although most Korean immigrant churches are under poor financial situations, it is absolutely necessary that churches be responsible for their pastor's living.* In addition, at turning age 50 he was dealing with issues surrounding his individual experience. *Although the church paid me wages, it was not enough for my family to live. I thought that either most Korean immigrant pastors or their wives had jobs to earn their living costs, except the pastors of the big immigrant churches.*

In contrast to Pastor Lee and Kim, Pastor Park and Choi indicated that they received financial support from their church or denomination. In Pastor Park's case, because his church, an American church, is responsible for his individual ministry cost and living cost, he does not feel any difficulties in doing ministry. Through the various supports from his church, he has many opportunities to develop his ministry activities and to be able to process his mid-life well. *Churches should provide the necessary financial support and time consideration. If I have an intention to apply for the extended education, my church should be able to support me to study. I have actually participated in several seminars and obtained*

*necessary skills to minister.*

However, if the financial supplies that can cover all necessary costs for ministering are not possible, at least the minimum costs for a pastor's daily life should be guaranteed by the church in order for pastors to be devoted to their ministry. *The financial independence of Korean immigrant churches may not be enough to be responsible for their pastors' economic realities.*

Pastor Choi also did not feel any financial difficulties in relation to the support from his denomination. *The support of the United Methodist denomination was very helpful to establish and maintain the church. They assisted me financially and promised the assistance continually until the new church could be maintained by us without any help.* He is coping with mid-life in an optimistic and reflective way. Currently, he is preparing to move his church to a new place and his denomination approved his plan to develop his church, as well as promising financial support during ten years. *Thankfully, my denomination--United Methodist--has supported me financially since I established this church. Once the financial problems can be solved, I can maintain the church work without any financial difficulties.* He is actively trying to minister for his church and to find God's will to fulfill his needs.

The above two cases, Pastor Park and Choi, said that the church has to provide firsthand support to pastors' individual necessary costs, and then each denomination that a pastor belongs to should guarantee to pay for pastors' activities and lives.

When I met Pastor Kim, it seemed that he had a regretful mind because of his given situations. *Due to my other job, I do not have serious financial problems; however I often agonize about my pastoral identity--whether or not my present position is right in front of God.* Pastor Kim referred to another job, and he doubted his pastoral identity seriously because he was unemployed as a full time minister for

years and is upset about “Calling from God”. He described the difficulties of his present feeling:

*I have to work another job. My other job is to manage the laundry, so my pastoral work is not full time work. Two years ago, I was a full time minister, but my church was too poor financially to support me, and I experienced many difficulties, so I had to get a part time job. As a result, I got this job and have done it ever since as well as working as a part time minister on Sunday. On the other hand, because I have another job, I can minister without financial obstacles. I know this truth very well--that the part time ministry never is devoted for God's ministry and I have to pay attention to the secular job without the pastoral work. This is my dilemma.*

The financial importance never is disregarded for them who were in the period of transition in life. Pastor Kim cited health insurance and emphasized the necessity of a financial supply. When one of his family members is sick, Pastor Kim feels burdened due to financial issues. The payment for health insurance is too expensive and there is no assistance in his church or denomination. He described how he often feels frustration and agony for when the cases happen. He has to take care of his family members to prevent sickness. At this point in Pastor Kim's pastoral experiences perhaps being an adjunct to the individual life presented his insufficient life pattern.

### 3.4 Summary

In this chapter, each participant's narrative based on the interview has been introduced. These narratives contained the description of their family background information, educational information, special reasons or motivations for why they believed in Jesus Christ, their vocation for ministry, immigration background, and descriptions of the experiences of Korean-American ministry. Their narratives have described the four Korean-American pastors' pastoral sufferings in relation

to the ministry that they experienced in the past and present, and their hopes for the future.

Then, the ministry-related sufferings and hopes of the Korean-American pastor have been examined by the thematic interpretation. The ministry-related sufferings of Korean-American pastor are identified as the two themes; “We’re struggling with authority versus submission” and “We’re trying to solve financial problems.” Here the Korean-American pastors revealed their struggling in relation to the pastoral authority in their pastoral context, and their inferior status financially while ministering and living in the United States.

The cores of the following themes were also identified and focused around three themes that have been related to their hopes: “We hope in God’s comfort and encouragement”, “We hope in counselors or mentors who help us,” and “We hope for appropriate financial assistance.” The Korean-American pastors still view comfort from God as the best pastoral care. However, if various pastoral care resources are permitted to them, they need pastoral counselors or spiritual mentors helping them. Furthermore, in accordance to their financial difficulty, the Korean-American pastor reveals that financial assistance from the church or denomination is absolutely necessary for their stable ministry and life.

These themes will now be used as significant sources to propose the alternative approach of pastoral care for the Korean-American pastor after reviewing the existing approach for Korean-American pastoral care. The alternative approach of pastoral care for Korean-American pastors is completely dependent upon how they described, interpreted, and responded to the themes of their sufferings and hopes in relation to ministry.