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Investigating How Adult Children of Lead Pastors Experienced Parenting Practices During Their Teenage Years

By
Luke Benson Wynja

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of Covenant Theological Seminary
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Abstract

Within clergy family systems, structural complications and resilience issues make parenting a more significant challenge due to anxiety, expectations, and complicated church and family systems that interact with each other. This study explores how grown children of lead pastors describe parenting practices they found helpful during their teenage years.

The literature review focused on four areas: The teaching of the Shema and Deuteronomy 6, system's theory related to pastoral ministry, resilience issues for pastors with children, and teaching adolescents resilience.

This study used a qualitative design that implemented semi-structured interviews with seven clergy adult children between 18 and 25 who had a positive experience within the church and with their parents. These research questions were (1) What parenting practices concerning involvement in the church do adult children of lead pastors describe as helpful during their teenage years? (2) What hospitality practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years? (3) What approaches to the ministry do they describe as helpful during their teenage years? (4) What changes in parenting practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?

The research findings were that clergy members who parented by intentionally prioritizing family, engaged their children in life transitions, and effectively taught their children the doctrines of the faith as a reflection of their character and walk with God were effective in parenting their children. Recommended practices include adaption, awareness of human development, and conflict communication at age-appropriate levels.

To my wife Julie and my children Emma, Lydia, Isaac, Chloe, Keira, Layla, Joel, Elijah, James, Abby, and Anna.

“For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.”

— Hebrews 13:14 ESV

Contents

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The list is too long, and the reasons many, but that is no excuse for not trying. To God and His work in my life through Jesus; to my parents and their service in the kingdom and pastoral ministry; to my siblings who also lived as preacher's kids; to coach Dave and his insistence that if something was done well and the right way it was a whole lot more fun; to "Bruno" for countless meals, kindnesses, and friendship; to "Mr. T." and his antics and perseverance; to Covenant College; to Covenant Seminary, including my roommates, professors and the girls in 412-A; to eharmony.com for a highly compatible wife; Matt and Becca for being the best neighbors ever; to my wife Julie for saying yes and coming on a crazy journey of ministry, family, and a bit of chaos. To my children, who are each awesome and teach me countless lessons on patience; to the Hanna City Presbyterian Church and Pastor Ron Brady; the Aletheia School and Dra Wiersema, the (now former) Farmington Community Church and John Willems; First CRCNA in Sheldon, IA; Grace Covenant Church in Bloomington, MN; to the people who have come in and out of my life, making it, if nothing else, one that was never lacking in color. Special thanks to the people and families that I walked alongside at the end of life and the blessing and comfort of the gospel. Thanks for being a blessing along the way for congregants, friends, and everyone else who deserved to be mentioned, including the invaluable critics. Sola Deo Gloria.

Abbreviations

NAPARC	North American Presbyterian and Reformed Churches
CBT	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
EMDR	Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing

Chapter 1

Introduction

A May 2020 American Psychological Association survey found that 70% of people stated their work was a significant stress source.[1] Psychology professors Ann Crouter and Matthew Bumpus draw a correlation between work stress and the adjustment of children as similar to a stack of dominos, namely, that they all begin to fall if you topple one.[2] They comment that "in the long run, a parent who is chronically stressed at work and withdrawn at home may be seen by other family members as inaccessible and disengaged."[3]

There is an indirect link between work and family in many fields, but that is generally not the case in pastoral ministry. Pastor and researcher Bruce Hardy make the direct link between work and family when he comments, "The professional life of the clergy often dramatically spills over into the family to a greater degree than most other professions."[4] Professor Douglas Turton notes that in a quantitative study of clergy members, nearly 4 in 10 shared that they felt “used up” at the end of each day. Almost 3

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[1] “Stress in America™” 2020: Press Releases, American Psychological Association, May 2020. https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2020/report.

[2] Ann C. Crouter and Matthew F. Bumpus, "Linking Parents' Work Stress to Children's and Adolescents' Psychological Adjustment," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 10, no. 5 (October 2001): 156. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8721.00138.

[3] Crouter and Bumpus, “Linking Parents’ Work Stress,” 158.

[4] Bruce Hardy, “Pastoral Care with Clergy Children,” *Review & Expositor* 98, no. 4 (December 2001): 545. https://doi.org/10.1177/003463730109800405.

in 10 agreed with the statement that they worked too hard.[5] In his research on work, family, and religion, Pastor Lenore Johnson comments, "For clergy, family and personal life are brought into the workplace, and likewise the workplace bleeds into the family in complex ways that represent another layer in the struggles of contemporary families seeking to manage multiple responsibilities."[6] These observations represent the challenge of having a public and private life intertwined for clergy members. The spillover of this overlap is that children of clergy find themselves dealing with some of the same challenges. Researchers Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Rita Repetti, and Ann Crouter summarize research on work and family by stating that there was a correlation between overwork and parent/adolescent conflict.[7] Mental health researcher Linda Hileman outlines the challenges of clergy members that can spill over into parenting by identifying overwork, financial concern, a lack of separation from work, boundaries at work, and stress from the instability of place as stressful circumstances for clergy family units.[8]

Pastor Stephen Beaumont summarizes these unclear boundaries as dual relationships that "defy simple analysis."[9] Psychologists James Bleiberg and Laura Skufca, in their work on dual pastoral relationships, approach this matter by observing

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[5] Douglas W. Turton, *Clergy Burnout and Emotional Exhaustion: A Socio-Psychological Study of Job Stress and Job Satisfaction* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010), 218.

[6] Lenore Johnson, "Exploring the Relationship Between Work, Family and Religion Among Clergy Families," (PhD Diss., Loyola University Chicago, 2010),4, https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/271

[7] Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Rena L. Repetti, and Ann C. Crouter, "Work and Family in the 1990s," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 62, no. 4 (Nov. 2000): 986. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00981.x.

[8] Linda Hileman, "The Unique Needs of Protestant Clergy Families: Implications for Marriage and Family Counseling." *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health* 10, no. 2 (June 2008): 119. https://doi.org/10.1080/19349630802081152.

[9] Stephen Beaumont, "Pastoral Counseling, Anyone?: Those Troublesome Dual Relationships in Pastoral Counseling," *St Mark's Review*, 208 (May 2009): 45, https://doi.org/10.3316/ielapa.593367951331399.

that some occupations have clear boundaries. Still, clergy members often do not have ethical statements that regulate dual relationships, and at times churches celebrate them and expect them.[10] Bleiberg & Skufca offer the idea that as time goes on, boundaries tend to become firmer, indicating that a potential result of research would be that adult children of pastors may offer some perspective on their parents' growth dealing with dual relationships.[11]

Amid these underlying work and family questions, how do clergy approach parenting from a methodological perspective? There are different opinions on how to parent teenagers, but rarely are these found through surveying the experience of those who have recently been parented. Game theorists Paul Raeburn and Kevin Zollman propose that parents can use game theory and cite Abraham and Lot in Genesis as an example of the idea of "I cut, you choose."[12] Author Gary Chapman offers the concept of love languages to fill up the "love tank" of an embattled teenager.[13] While there are many different techniques these authors and a myriad of others address, this research addresses the specific context of how these perspectives on parenting can be uniquely tailored to the needs of the children of pastors through their teen years and transitions into adulthood.

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[10] James R. Bleiberg and Laura Skufca, "Clergy Dual Relationships, Boundaries, and Attachment," *Pastoral Psychology* 54, no. 1 (2005): 3, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-005-6179-5

[11] Bleiberg, and Skufca, "Clergy Dual Relationships," 20.

[12] Paul Raeburn and Kevin Zollman, *The Game Theorist's Guide to Parenting: How the Science of Strategic Thinking Can Help You Deal with the Toughest Negotiators You Know - Your Kids* (New York: Scientific American / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017), 14-15.

[13] Gary D. Chapman, *The 5 Love Languages of Teenagers: The Secret to Loving Teens Effectively* (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2016), 14.

The Bible offers specific information about parenting and gives a narrative view of when parenting went off track. Colossians 3:21 says, "Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged."[14] The Expositors Greek Testament shares, "The consequence of such foolish exercise of authority is that the child becomes discouraged; in other words, his spirit is broken."[15] The Bible also gives many narrative examples of how leaders' children did not become responsible adults. 2 Samuel 12 says that "The sons of Eli were worthless men who did not know the Lord."[16] The problem of unbelief was partially attributed to Eli's lack of parental engagement.[17] In David's life in the Old Testament, there is much conflict between King David and his children; much of it centered around David's parenting failures.[18]

Yet scripture is also positive in terms of gracious parenting. Proverbs 22 offers a descriptive rather than prescriptive way that parents who train their children will set them on a path to flourishing. In 2 Timothy 1, we read of how Timothy was built up in the faith, and Deuteronomy 6 and the Shema set up a clear paradigm of how children are to learn the goodness of the Lord from their parents and grandparents.

In terms of clergy children and their direct experiences, non-research-based biographies help give us an individual's specific experience. Barnabas Piper reflects on

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[14] Col. 3:21.

[15] A.S. Peake, "The Epistle to the Colossians," in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. William Robertson Nicoll ([1897-1910]; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1951), 3:542, https://archive.org/details/expositorsgreekt0003unse_p3z5.

[16] 2 Samuel 12

[17] 1 Kings 1:6

[18] *2* Samuel 15

his experience as a pastor's child by saying that he believes clergy children experience "unique obstacles that create an environment that can lead to significant spiritual, identity, and lifestyle challenges."[19] Researcher George Barna found that pastors' children tend to be similar to children that are a part of Christian families in faith retention.[20] Barna points out that while the data may not back up the assertion that pastor's children are more likely to be rebels,[21] the data also show that pastors' children experience a culture of higher expectations and parents who can at times be preoccupied.[22]

Pastors' families can also be unique systems within themselves. Pastors' children can experience some of what missionaries David Pollock, Michael Pollock, and Ruth Van Renken describe in their seminal work on missionary children's experiences as being a part of a neither/nor cultural background, which identifies not with a single culture but instead moving between cultures.[23] In that case, they are a part of a church culture but not entirely, part of a school culture but not thoroughly; they learn to navigate many different contexts. They further define a third culture person as someone who "frequently builds relationships to all cultures without full ownership in any."[24] What third culture children have, regardless of time and place, is a way of feeling comfortable with each other in a

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[19] Barnabas Piper, *The Pastor's Kid: What It's Like and How to Help* (Surry, England: The Good Book Company, 2020), 25-26.

[20] "Prodigal Pastor Kids: Fact or Fiction?," Research Release, Barna Group. November 11, 2013, https://www.barna.com/research/prodigal-pastor-kids-fact-or-fiction/.

[21] "Prodigal Pastor Kids: Fact or Fiction?" Barna Group.

[22] "Prodigal Pastor Kids: Fact or Fiction?" Barna Group.

[23] David C. Pollock, Ruth E. Van Reken, and Michael V Pollock, *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up among Worlds* 3rd ed., (Boston: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2009), 4.

[24] Pollock, Pollock, and Van Renken, *Third Culture Kids*, 15-16.

shared space of knowing what it is like, as Hebrews 11 expresses, to dwell in a land not your own.[25]

In response to this complicated context, clergy parents are uniquely positioned to equip their emerging children with tools. Not merely for success as adults as the broader array of parenting books would present, but more specifically with tools to navigate the way ministry impacts parenting. Writer Rachel Turner refers to these tools as windows, where parents give their children a view of effective functioning in vocational ministry.[26] In particular, this study's concern is which of these views of effective functioning helped create resilience in teens.

The challenges of ministry that often need navigating for ministry practitioners, according to pastoral sustainability researchers Robert Burns, Tasha Chapman, and Donald Guthrie, are the challenges of always being on the job, conflicting loyalties, feelings of abandonment by family members, and a lack of other confidential relationships.[27] Translated to the teenage children of ministry practitioners, it would mean they could experience the sense of always being observed, conflicting loyalties between the various roles that children of clergy are expected to fill, feeling abandoned by the priority and busyness of parental work, and a lack of close friends. These ideas form a field of inquiry about the impact of these struggles on those indirectly connected.

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[25] Hebrews 11:9

[26] Rachel Turner, *Parenting as a Church Leader: Helping Your Family Thrive* (Abingdon, UK: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2020), Kindle e-book, location 643.

[27] Bob Burns, Tasha Chapman, and Donald Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2013), 170.

Researchers Nina Guzman and Lota A. Teh zeroed in on these realities in their qualitative research of Filipino clergy families in terms of always being observed. Clergy children reported feeling like there was a different and higher standard than they were held to. The researchers found that this expectation came more from the non-clergy parent than from the clergy parent.[28] Thus, clergy couples' parenting techniques would offer significant insight into the tensions of clergy marriages and reflect the internal/external pressures that clergy children might feel.

Cynthia B. Wilson and Carol A. Darling observe more significant stress among children who grew up in pastoral homes with conflicting loyalties. Specifically, there was a lack of coherence or an inability to understand relationships in the church.[29] Even those distant from their experience found that it was carried with them in their adult life.[30]

Regarding abandonment because of parental work priority, research outside of pastoral ministry related to workaholism also contributes. In his book *Chained to the Desk*, researcher and author Bryan Robinson connects that workaholics share attributes with alcoholics, and their children can have symptoms similar to children of alcoholics.[31] Further, Robinson noted that in a survey of young adults who rated their fathers as workaholics, anxiety and depression were higher than the population at large. In general,

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[28] Nina Evita Q. Guzman, and Lota A. Tech, "Understanding the Stresses and Coping Resources of Filipino Clergy Families: A Multiple-Case Study," *Pastoral Psychology* 65, no. 4 (2016):476. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-016-0698-0.

[29] Cynthia B. Wilson and Carol A. Darling, "Understanding Stress and Life Satisfaction for Children of Clergy: A Retrospective Study," *Pastoral Psychology* 66, no. 1 (2017): 139. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-016-0720-6.

[30] Wilson and Darling, "Understanding Stress and Life Satisfaction," 140.

[31] Bryan E. Robinson, *Chained to the Desk: A Guidebook for Workaholics, Their Partners and Children, and the Clinicians Who Treat Them* Third ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 123.

they felt less control over their lives.[32] Specifically, Robinson notes feelings of "confusion, guilt, and inadequacy."[33] These findings overlap with Wilson and Darling's consensus in their research: pastors' children feel less control and more anxiety.[34]

In terms of a lack of close friends, Robinson's research shows this is another impact of workaholism on adults.[35] By default, Robinson offers that workaholism is outwardly suitable, productive, and socially appropriate to mask dysfunction.[36] However, the effect of this outward appearance can sometimes be a lack of close relationships. Pastor and writer Arthur Boers comments that he is often work-oriented as a pastor, which is not conducive to relational growth.[37] Henri Nouwen, a priest, professor, and writer, comments that "children, adolescents, and adults are increasingly exposed to the contagious disease of loneliness in a world in which competitive individualism tries to reconcile itself with a culture that speaks about togetherness."[38] Both culturally and through other influences, the potential loneliness of pastors could directly impact their children.

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[32] Robinson, *Chained to the Desk,* 123.

[33] Robinson, *Chained to the Desk,* 124.

[34] Wilson and Darling, "Understanding Stress and Life Satisfaction," 139.

[35] Robinson, *Chained to the Desk,* 124.

[36] Robinson, *Chained to the Desk,* 124

[37] Arthur P. Boers, "Everyone's Pastor, No One's Friend," *Christianity Today,* January 1991, https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/1991/winter/91l1130.html.

[38] Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life* (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1986), 178.

Purpose Statement

Pastors' children experience a more complicated transition from the teenage years to adulthood because of their parents' ministry complications, their part in that ministry, and how parental roles overlap with their home life, school life, and church life. This makes how their parents help them navigate adolescence and transition to adulthood especially important for study and understanding. This study explores how grown children of lead pastors describe parenting practices they found helpful during their teenage years.

Research Questions

These research questions were used to analyze the interview data to explore how adult children described their parents' practices during their teenage years:

1. What parenting practices concerning involvement in the church do adult children of lead pastors describe as helpful during their teenage years?
2. What hospitality practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?
3. What approaches to the ministry do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?
4. What changes in parenting practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?

Significance of the Study

This study will help pastors better understand how their children experience being a part of ministry contexts and how other pastors have been the most effective in helping transition their children through the teenage years. It will also help congregations understand how they can adapt and support the pastor's children as they become emerging adults.

The findings of this study will serve the church and the academy in various ways. The analysis will help counselors and coaches have more knowledge about best practices and will be able to apply them when pastors are struggling with their teenage children. For pastors, the study will inform how they can better parent their children and how they and their children can improve healthy interaction with the congregation and community. For those that work with clergy children in the church, whether in an informal or formal role as a church staff member or a youth pastor, this will also help them navigate the unique circumstances of clergy children within churches. In addition, it will be a helpful tool for pastors' children to understand their experience of being a part of a clergy family.

The study's other impact will add to an emerging set of data regarding how ministry leaders and their families can move towards flourishing in the pastorate. The cost of not knowing how to navigate this challenge can be spiritual trauma, rebellion, and family strife that is detrimental to ministry. However, the overall health and resilience of pastors and their families are of utmost importance because as the pastor flourishes, so often does the congregation.

Definition of Terms

In this study, key terms are defined as follows:

Emerging Adult – A young person who is transitioning to adulthood.

Role Overload – When a particular role that a person has (i.e., parenting, clergy, work) becomes all-encompassing and eclipses the other functions.

Dual Relationships – Dual relationships are complicated by the parties having multiple roles or authority structures. Dual relationships often impact pastoral ministry in that the role of the pastor conflicts with the role of friend.

Third Culture Kid – A child/individual who grew up in a place that was not their parents' home culture and therefore did not have ownership in any cultural group or setting while also having skills and gifts to adapt to many different cultures.

Fishbowl – The idea that the community and others around them watch every individual's move or action.

Internal Systems Theory – A systems theory approach treats various ideas or parts of an individual as a system that negotiates with the whole. It identifies how an individual seeks to cope with adaptive and maladaptive circumstances. Typical parts include exiles, which are parts of a personality or experiences that the individual does not desire to deal with; managers seeking to manage the individual's experience and firefighters who seek to control and extinguish feelings.

Spiritual Trauma – Trauma that an individual is either perpetuated by spiritual structure or institutions or is sustained because of unhealthy spiritual systems. Spiritual trauma occurs when sin is committed against an individual or against others closely connected to that individual, and the individual is directly or indirectly impacted.

System's Theory – A psychological theory that looks at people as part of networks and communities. Each person is a part of a family system, a community, or a faith community, among other overlapping systems that all interact with one another and define the individual's experience, which for our study, is focused on how the church system impacts the family system.

Differentiation of Self – The process by which individuals can regulate their emotions so that they are not drawn into the anxiety of those around them.

Nuclear Family Emotional System – How individuals within a family interact with each other and are connected or disconnected from one another.

Multigenerational Transmission Process – How family units often function in similar ways from one generation to the next.

Triangles – The process where two people in a relationship often draw in others because of their anxiety.

Sibling Position – How children's various family positions dictate how they operate within the system.

Emotional Cutoff – How parts within a family unit cut off other features, denying their importance or believing that a particular part of the family is the problem within the family.

Adaptive Change – A term used to refer to changing and making changes regarding situations that are not foreseen or that people or organizations do not have previous experience.

This chapter introduces and shares ideas central to the research, data, and data interpretation in what follows. The following chapter will explore literature related to resilient parenting, resilience issues for pastors, and church and family systems.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This study explores how grown children of lead pastors describe parenting practices they found helpful during their teenage years. Human development experts and resilience researchers Susan P. Phillips, Kristen Reipas, and Barb Zelek contend that resilience and adaptation can help teens through hard times and lead to lifelong well-being for teenagers.[39] To understand resilience and how parents can cultivate that resilience through effective clergy parenting practices, the literature review for this research has four different parts. The study starts by analyzing Deuteronomy 6:1-9 with a specific contextual interest in Torah instruction as a part of parental and community responsibility for cultivating resilient faith. Then three additional areas of literature were reviewed. The focus areas were the overlap of family systems theory with resilience, resilience issues for pastors in raising children, and research on teaching adolescents' resilience.

Resilient Faith in Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Deuteronomy 6:1-9 is the center of the Biblical research and study as it has faith retention across generations as a central theme. At its center is the Shema, which Old Testament Professor Daniel Block refers to as "one of the most important symbols of

[39] Susan P. Phillips, Kristen Reipas, and Barb Zelek, "Stresses, Strengths, and Resilience in Adolescents: A Qualitative Study," *The Journal of Primary Prevention* 40, no. 6 (2019): 631. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10935-019-00570-3.

Judaism."[40] Old Testament Jewish Scholar Walter Brueggemann summarizes its educational importance by saying it is at the "core of Old Testament faith."[41] The goal of the Shema in the time of the Old Testament exile was to form resilient faith among the Jewish people even as they lived among other cultures and religions. To understand the Shema, pastor and scholar Edward Woods observes that it is a summary of the Torah and directs those reciting it to the wisdom of the Torah.[42] Old Testament scholars John Walton and J. Harvey Walton propose that the Torah was seen as a gracious instrument from the Lord that Israel welcomed for their guidance.[43]

Central to the Shema is the God of Israel. In their commentary on the Pentateuch, Old Testament scholars Franz Kiel and Carl Delizsch immediately focused on God being the "absolute God."[44] Moreover, he requires that he be loved "with all the heart…soul... and strength"(Dt. 6:4). With this understanding, the Shema has both a historical and theological purpose. It brings wisdom for the task of honoring the Lord so "that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments" (vs. 2a) and "you shall teach them diligently to your children."

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[40] Daniel I. Block, "How Many Is God? An Investigation into the Meaning of Deuteronomy 6:4-5," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47, no. 2 (2004): 194.

[41] Walter Brueggemann, *Old Testament Theology: An Introduction* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 121.

[42] Edward J. Woods, *Deuteronomy,* Tyndale Old Testament Commentary (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 134.

[43] John H. Walton, and J. Harvey Walton, *The Lost World of the Torah: Law as Covenant and Wisdom in Ancient Context.* The Lost World Series (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019), 79.

[44] Franz Delitzsch and Carl Friedrich Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1857), 883.

(Dt 6:7). Central to the text are the ideas of fidelity to the Lord's word, generational faithfulness, and practical wisdom.

Three Realms in Deuteronomy 6

The first area of research in Dt. 6 is the broader environment that shapes parents and children: the public or community aspects of faith, where parents and children are directly and indirectly connected (Israel). The second is the indirect individual applications of faith of an individual, parents' faith formation on their children (you). The third is the direct application to family and successive generations, the children of ministry leaders (your son).

Community Aspects of Resilient Faith

Seminary professor S. Dean McBride looked at Deuteronomy and the Torah as unique in their time and place. He particularly noted that they were direct in speaking to all Israel as a whole as they addressed individuals who were members of that collective whole.[45] Central to understanding the one God was to understand his exclusive relationship with Israel. In addressing the Shema and what immediately follows, McBride proposes that this text is the most powerful presentation of the covenant relationship in all scripture.[46] Professor and author Meredith Kline defines this covenant as transactional, demonstrating the power of God and his ability to fulfill the covenant by "stretching forth

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[45] D. Dean McBride, "Polity of the Covenant People: The Book of Deuteronomy, in *Constituting the Community: Studies on the Polity of Ancient Israel in Honor of S. Dean McBride, Jr*. ed. John T. Strong, and Steven S. Tuell (State College, PA: Penn State Press, 2005), 26.

[46] McBride, *"Polity of the Covenant People,"* 26-27.

(his) sceptre in either blessing or curse."[47] Theology professor Robert R. Wilson comments that this covenant relationship meant the Israelites were to have clear boundaries with other groups.[48] Israel was to have a collective sense of identity that set them apart from other peoples and religions, specifically the nations' idols. Keil and Delitzsch point out that the continuing fear of the Lord alone and living according to the Torah would cause the Israelite community to prosper.[49]

When Dt. 6 addresses the covenant community, it begins with a specific concern toward the community being shaped by the commands of God. Dt. 6:1 says, "that you may do them in the land to which you are going over." The wisdom of God has a clear direction toward Israel being established as a nation in the land of Canaan. Central to that existence is for the community to understand that the Lord is the only faithful God and worship Him exclusively. Kiel and Delitzsch observe that this is not an abstract idea but one that directly refutes polytheism and syncretism.[50] Seminary professor Ronald P. Byers notes that the inheritance of land and the accompanying affluence make considerations of compromise a significant concern.[51]

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[47] Meredith G. Kline, "Law Covenant" *Westminster Theological Journal* no. 27 (1964), 6

[48] Robert Wilson, "Deuteronomy, Ethnicity, and Reform: Reflections on the Social Setting of the Book of Deuteronomy," in *Constituting the Community: Studies on the Polity of Ancient Israel in Honor of S. Dean McBride, Jr*. eds. John T. Strong, and Steven S. Tuell (State College, PA:Penn State Press, 2005), 109.

[49] Delitzsch and Keil, *Biblical Commentary,* 883.

[50] Delitzsch and Keil, *Biblical Commentary,* 884.

[51] Ronald P. Byars, "Deuteronomy 6:1–15." *Interpretation* 60, no.2: (2006): 195. Https://doi.org/10.1177/002096430606000206.

Polytheism and syncretism were significant issues for the people of Israel and were a part of the nations around them. Professors and authors Avigdor Shinan and Yair Zakovitch use Exodus 32 as an example as it confronts idolatry as the Israelites gave credit to the golden calf for their deliverance from Egypt.[52] Psalm 106:20 recounts the story by saying, “They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass," and vs. 21 comments, "They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt.” In an exclusive relationship, their formation was intended to be directed by a single God, structuring the community around God's commands.

From exhortations to remain faithful to Yahweh, practical educational structures were developed. Sociologist Lewis Wirth observes that Jewish individuals were "people of the book," and the Torah's education was considered a vital priority.[53] Specifically, Wirth observes that Jewish culture has survived because of a greater emphasis on religious education than in other cultures.[54]

These educational efforts take on a variety of expressions. For example, professor of Jewish studies James Kugel comments that the formulations of the Torah and the surrounding context of the Old Testament were designed to take the former and "pound it in." At the same time, the diversity of sayings used by the writers of Proverbs and other

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[52] Avigdor Shinan and Yair Zakovitch, *From Gods to God: How the Bible Debunked, Suppressed or Changed Ancient Myths and Legends* (Philadelphia, PA:The Jewish Publication Society, 2012): 102.

[53] Louis Wirth, “Education for Survival: The Jews,” *American Journal of Sociology* 48, no. 6 (1943): 682. https://doi.org/10.1086/219265

[54] Wirth, “Education for Survival,” 682.

literature made students think carefully and learn at a deeper level.[55] Throughout time, the Jewish community continued to find new and creative ways to teach the truths of the Torah.

These efforts to teach the Torah have continued through history. Of particular interest to our study is the effectiveness of teaching methods employed as time went on, particularly at the time of Jesus. Israeli Rabbi Lee I. Levine directs a particular focus to the system of synagogues that most scholars believe originated either during or after the Babylonian exile.[56] While their origin might be challenging to pin down, Levine states that they existed in major cities in the first century and are authenticated by ancient texts, and archeology is well substantiated.[57]

Synagogues had the general purpose of being a community center, and under that umbrella had many uses.[58] Levine notes that rabbinic literature of New Testament times set the number of synagogues in Jerusalem at 480, noting each had its school.[59] In his work on the education of Jesus, professor W.M. Ramsey asserts that the Hebrews at the time of Christ were far more educated, both poor and rich, than anyone else around them.[60] They understood the importance that if one does not grow, interpret, and listen to

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[55] Karina Martin Hogan, Matthew Goff, and Emma Wasserman. *Pedagogy in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 20-21.

[56] Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue,* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 22.

[57] Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue,* 22-23.

[58] Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue,* 137.

[59] Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue,* 144.

[60] William Mitchell Ramsay, *The Education of Christ: Hill-side Reveries* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1902), 66-67.

the scriptures, polytheism will result.[61] The hard lesson of the Babylonian exile of Israel due to idolatry is what the Shema and, more specifically, Jewish teaching sought to refute through intentional education and community identity in the synagogue.

Summary of Community Aspects of Resilient Faith

The concern and exhortations of the Shema caused communities and systems of collective identity to be set up to train the mind and the heart. As this was done, it created continuous witness in the community to the existence of the true God through His word. According to Deuteronomy 6, a resilient faith will have common community beliefs, creative and constant teaching of the documents of that faith, and a clear understanding of what sets the faith community apart from the world around it. Based on these insights, resilient faith would be a faith connected to a strong faith community that understood the Covenant structure of the Bible.

Individual Aspects of Resilient Faith

Biblical scholar Craig Blomberg asserts that there is no concept in the Bible of "lone ranger" Christians that are not a part of a Christian community.[62] Commentator Thomas Schreiner expresses this individuality within the community by saying, "each person belongs to the body individually and personally."[63] Even as a community fosters

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[61] Ramsay, *The Education of Christ*, 27.

[62] Craig L. Blomberg, *Deuteronomy*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 252.

[63] Thomas R. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 268.

faith and gives faith a context, individuals have their responsibilities within the community. Deuteronomy 6 states “that you may fear the Lord” (vs. 2), “Keeping all his commandments” (vs. 2), “It may go well with you” (vs. 3), “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (vs. 5). Deuteronomy proposes a cycle of growing resilience when the Torah forms individuals, and individual formation builds community fidelity.

A story illustration of this is provided in Joshua 7. Here, Israel is told to destroy the city of Jericho. However, one of the individuals in the camp, Achan, does not follow the specific instructions and takes some of the items devoted to destruction for himself. Theologian Anthony Daws proposes both an individual responsibility for sin and community responsibility for dealing with sin that mirrors the idea of parenting within the story.[64] In the community, each person is individually responsible, but this in no way negates the community's responsibility to "raise, punish, and take responsibility."[65] Theologian and professor Joshua Roy Porter observes that an individual is not distinguished from the group in certain places or times.[66] In the case of Joshua 7, the consequence for the actions of Achan was corporate but then was narrowed to be a particular action of the individual.

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[64] Anthony S. Daw, "Covenant and Community: A New Proposal for Understanding the Relationship Between Achan and Israel in Joshua 7,” (Paper, Evangelical Theological Society, SW Meeting, 2019). 30.

[65] Daw, “Covenant and Community,” 30.

[66] Joshua Roy Porter, "The Legal Aspects of the Concept of "Corporate Personality" in the Old Testament." *Vetus Testamentum* 15, no. 3 (1965): 361. https://doi.org/10.2307/1516783

Another way of understanding personal formation within the broader body is proposed by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:27, "Now you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it." Commentator Mark Edward Taylor writes that these verses imply that we need each other because weaker parts are indispensable, God honors all parts of the body, and what happens to one part impacts the whole.[67] Scholar and commentator Craig Keener offer the insight that Christians are more focused on the God who has given their gifts than on the gifts themselves.[68] Elaborating on the individual parts, he states that each has "its own distinctive function; if it performs that function well, it contributes to the health of the whole."[69] The spiritual strength of the body depends upon the spiritual strength of the individual.

According to Rabbi Norman Lamm, the Shema, when looked at in terms of individual recitation and use, is where the law and spirituality intersect and where the objective reality of the law is brought close to the soul.[70] Lamm explains that an individual, when reading and reciting the Shema, develops a religious imagination that they carry with them through their daily lives.[71] This is reflective of what Sociologist Randall Collins explains as the goal of religious ritual, which is a shared experience, a transient emotional stimulant, and a resulting emotional energy that re-enforces the belief

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[67] Mark Edward Taylor, *1 Corinthians: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 300.

[68] Craig S. Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 100.

[69] Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 104.

[70] Norman Lamm, *The Shema* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2000), 5.

[71] Lamm, *The Shema*, 5.

system.[72] Robert Burns, Tasha Chapman, and Donald Guthrie posit that part of individual spiritual thriving is intentional spiritual formation through spiritual disciplines for pastors.[73] Businessman and author Stephen Covey adds that central to success is that individuals do self-care for all parts of their lives, including the spiritual.[74] His chapter title, "Sharpening the Saw," is a metaphor for how it takes longer and is less effective when you are doing work with a dull instrument. He comments that he has found that meditating on scripture is an effective way to cultivate spiritual health or "sharpen the saw."[75]

Deuteronomy 6:8 proposes that "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes." Commentator Peter Craigie notes that while these commands were likely meant to be metaphorical, they were taken literally and that individuals would carry scrolls with verses to meditate through history.[76] Commentator Jack Lundbom shares the application that throughout history when Jewish males reached the age of 13 years old, they would often begin the practice of wearing a leather container with verses in it on their left wrist.[77] These were to help keep the Lord

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[72] Randall Collins, *Interaction Ritual Chains* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 48.

[73] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry*, 39-40.

[74] Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic* (Coral Gables, FL: Franklin Covey Company, Mango Publishing, 2015), Kindle e-book, location 5861.

[75] Covey, *The Seven Habits*, Kindle Location 5847, 5951.

[76] Craigie, Peter C. *The Book of Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 170-171.

[77] Jack R. Lundbom, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary* (United Kingdom: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 314.

and his work before the people and keep Jewish individuals growing in their understanding.[78]

Deuteronomy 6 promotes personal spiritual practices, which are embedded within the broader community narratives and are followed by application to immediate family. Even as individuals are a part of a community, parts of religious practice are individual responsibility. Writers Craig Dykstra and Dorothy C. Bass comment that "our daily lives are all tangled up with the things that God is doing in the world."[79] Dykstra and Bass assert that the individual's life in practicing their faith ends up being an action that sends out "ripples" to all people and places around it.[80]

Summary of Community Aspects of Resilient Faith

Through individual learning and fidelity to the Torah, God's people are engaged, and the truths of God's faithfulness embed themselves in the hearts of God's people. This process is done by individuals who intentionally seek to always bring the Lord's truth before their eyes. This is done both figuratively and literally, strengthening the broader community as God's people are part of the larger body of those set apart as the people of God. Based on these insights, individuals with resilient faith will integrate effective and perpetual systems into their lives to keep the word of God before them and in their hearts.

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[78]Lundbom, *Deuteronomy,* 314.

[79] C. Dorothy Bass, ed. *Practicing our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2019), 8.

[80] Bass, *Practicing our Faith,* 10.

Family Aspects of Resilient Faith

Deuteronomy 6:2 gets at the purpose of community and individual fidelity as it is lived out in individual family units. It presents the goal, which is "that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son, and your son's son." Verse 7 says, "you shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." In verses 20-26, we read how to communicate the work of the Lord "when your son asks you in time to come" (vs. 20).

Psalm 78 is a significant echo of both the context and the content of the Shema. Psalm 78:1-8 highlight the generational and family aspects of resilient faith when it speaks of "Things that…our fathers have told us" (vs. 3), "Tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might" (vs. 4), and "that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments" (vv. 6-7). What is in view in the scriptures is for people who are not seated at the immediate family's table to be impacted by the Torah instruction as parents faithfully tell their children of the work and the law of the Lord. Commentator Derek Kidner states that the opening verses echo the Shema and that there is "no room for parental neutrality."[81]

Central to imparting resilient faith is the idea of conversations parents have with their children, as communicated in Deuteronomy 6:19-20. Psychologist and counselor

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[81] Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73-150,* Kidner Classic Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 311.

Dan Allender commented that parents influencing children is entering into a process with their children.[82] Verse 20 assumes that children will be curious and provides a narrative of difficulty and slavery (vs. 21), signs and wonders (vs. 22), deliverance (vs. 23), fidelity to Torah (vs. 24), and blessings (vs. 25).

Allender's two fundamental questions underlie the conversation: "Am I loved?" and "Can I get my own way?"[83] In Deuteronomy 6, the first answer to these fundamental questions for parents to pass on to their children would be yes. God loved his people enough to deliver them, do miracles, and bless them. Regarding the second question, no, one cannot simply do what they desire. Instead, they must pursue what God wants. Scholar and commentator Ian Cairns comments that the story of vv. 20-24 is to provide a rationale based on the grace that enables obedience.[84] The importance of structure becomes apparent because, without that sense of being loved as a foundation, those driven by rules will, according to Allender, become dull.[85] Kiel and Delitzsch comment, "this love is altogether impossible without a living faith."[86]

When considering how to pass on the story, Cairns points out that Deuteronomy 6 uses the language of "we" and "our."[87] According to Cairns, this helps children identify

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[82] Dan B. Allender, *How Children Raise Parents: The Art of Listening to Your Family* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2005), 19.

[83] Allender, *How Children Raise Parents*, 24.

[84] Ian Cairns, *Word and Presence: A Commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1992), 88.

[85] Allender, *How Children Raise Parents*, 24.

[86] Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch. *The Pentateuch Vol. 2* (Edinburg, Scotland: T. and T. Clark, 1864), 887.

[87] Cairns, *Word and Presence*, 87.

historical events as part of their present experience.[88] Cairns further offers that this particular expression of vs. 21-23 could be an ancient creed.[89] Scholar E. Glenn Hinson offers that a creed is a way for a community to express "the theological basis of their common life."[90] Thus, the Shema, with its surrounding explanations and directions, puts before their children the message of the Torah in a memorable and repeatable way.

Of further interest to our study are the places where the family teaches its children of the Lord. In verse 7, we read, "you shall talk of them [i.e. the Lord's commands] while you sit in your house." Historian John M.G. Barclay proposes that Jewish children entered a family culture where learning to be a Jew was at the center of everyday life.[91] In particular, three parts of everyday life were not easily separated from being distinctively Jewish. Barclay presents these parts as being food, fellowship, and Sabbath.[92]

Jewish studies professor Jordan Rosenblum asserts that the Hebrew Bible has very few regulations and does not often provide a rationale for the restrictions offered when it comes to food and preparations.[93] In surveying various cultural information, Rosenblum concludes that in many cases, post-exile Jews extended food laws beyond

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[88] Cairns, *Word and Presence,* 87.

[89] Cairns, *Word and Presence,* 87.

[90] E. Glenn Hinson, "Confessions of Creeds in Early Christian Tradition," *Review & Expositor* 76, no. 1 (February 1979): 5. https://doi.org/10.1177/003463737907600102.

[91] John M.G. Barclay and Halvor Moxnes. "The Family as the Bearer of Religion in Judaism and Early Christianity," in *Constructing Early Christian Families, ed. Halvor Moxnes* (London: Routledge, 2002), 69.

[92] Barclay and Moxnes, "The Family as the Bearer," 71.

[93] Jordan Rosenblum, *The Jewish Dietary Laws in the Ancient World,* (London, England: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 9.

what the scriptures required.[94] 3 Maccabees 3:4 (RSV) comments, "But because they worshiped God and conducted themselves by his law, they kept their separateness with respect to foods." Whether practices had their basis in scripture or simply as a part of traditions, Barclay makes the point that children would have known they were different from the culture around them each time they ate, which was a significant portion of daily household life.[95]

The concept of fellowship would also have been differentiated from the surrounding culture. In the chapter immediately following the Shema, Deuteronomy 7:3 reads, "you shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons." Thus, the concern for syncretism is narrowed down to the family level from the nation as a whole. Keil and Delizsch comment on the concern for idolatry and a sense of having a "false tolerance" of unbelief through close relationships with those not of Israel.[96] Professor of Jewish studies Jacob Neusser explains that there were a wide variety of different expressions of Judaism.[97] When Jews joined particular sects they often found a need to change in the social sphere so that they could fit their "daily habits into a new and complex structure."[98] Central to this structure was an adherence to the Torah, or in many cases, how scholars had added to Torah for their particular sects to be set apart from others. Barclay notes that dietary rules inhibited

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[94] Rosenblum, *The Jewish Dietary Laws*, 4.

[95] Barclay and Moxnes, "The Family as the Bearer," 71.

[96] Delizsch and Keil, *The Pentateuch*, 887.

[97] Jacob Neusner, *Fellowship in Judaism: The First Century and Today* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 18.

[98] Neusner, *Fellowship in Judaism*, 18.

social interactions between Jews and non-Jews.[99] Very few people would enter a Jewish home for meals that were "casual visitors."[100]

Another part of everyday life that would have been distinct is the idea of the Sabbath. Professor Heather McKay describes what Sabbath was for post-exilic Jews by stating it was simply a day of rest.[101] She notes that while there are various perspectives on whether the Sabbath was a day of worship, the Old Testament emphasizes not working for the Sabbath.[102] John 10:10 reads, "So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed." At that time, some understood even basic activities such as carrying a mat from one place to another to be a violation of the Sabbath. This distinctive cultural rhythm would have been how Jewish children would have been set apart from the broader culture.

Summary of Family Aspects of Resilient Faith

Resilient faith for the family will understand God's covenant as being intended not simply for the current generation but for subsequent generations of families. Within families, there will be a clear teaching of the work of the Lord, and parents and children will meet each other in everyday life and converse with each other about the work of the Lord. Resilient faith will also be built upon the narrative of God's grace and faithfulness to have life and health within it. Further, specific practices within the family will

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[99] Barclay and Moxnes, "The Family as the Bearer," 71.

[100] Barclay and Moxnes, "The Family as the Bearer," 71.

[101] Heather A. McKay, *Sabbath and Synagogue: The Question of Sabbath Worship in Ancient Judaism,* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2001), 13.

[102] McKay, *Sabbath and Synagogue,* 18.

reinforce the beliefs of scripture and provide boundaries between a life of faith and a life of unbelief.

Summary of Resilient Faith in Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Within the practices of Judaism and the application of Deuteronomy 6:1-9, there is a clear sense of each individual being set within a family, the family being developed within the broader community, and the wider community being distinct from the world around it. In the ancient world, these systems provided a foundation for faith, a method of discipleship, and a vision for generational faithfulness.

Resilience and Family Systems Theory

Family systems theory is centered around the idea that people are a part of complex systems that inform their emotional life and family life. Psychiatrist Richard C. Schwartz offers the analogy of systems theory being like a car.[103] It has many different parts that work together. Still, it also interacts with other vehicles when used through a system of highways, roads, and other vehicles that directly impact how the vehicle operates. Within the systems are various boundaries that help define the individual parts. Still, there are also constantly changing dynamics, and changing one piece will have repercussions throughout the whole.[104]

The Bowen Center for the study of the family describes system's theory as "a theory of human behavior that views the family as an emotional unit and uses systems

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[103] Richard C. Schwartz and Martha Sweezy, *Internal Family Systems Therapy,* 2nd ed. (United Kingdom: Guilford Publications, 2019), 25.

[104] Schwartz and Sweezy, *Internal Family Systems Therapy*, 41.

thinking to describe the unit's complex interactions."[105] System theorist Patricia Comella gives key concepts of Bowenian theory: “differentiation of self, nuclear family emotional system, family projection process, multigenerational transmission process, triangles, sibling position, emotional cutoff, and emotional process in society.” [106]

Counselor and theorist Edwin Friedman explains the three families that each clergy member is part of.[107] These systems are the congregation, the families of the congregation, and immediate families.[108] In each of these systems, there can be similar processes and roles taken, and if an individual gains greater insight into one of the systems, it will result in greater insight into all the systems.[109]

There are various ways of articulating these systems. For example, developmental theorist Urie Bronfenbrenner discusses how each person is a part of immediate systems like their family, is a part of community systems one layer further out, and beyond that is added a third layer which is the systems that parents are a part of, and the child is not.[110] In particular, he asserts that one of the most significant influences on a child will be the

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[105] Michael E. Kerr, “Introduction to the 8 Concepts,” thebowencenter.org, 2002, https://www.thebowencenter.org/introduction-eight-concepts

[106] Patricia A Commela, "Observing Emotional Functioning in Human Relationship Systems: Lessons from Murray Bowen’s Writings,” in *Bringing Systems Thinking to Life*, eds. Ona Cohn Bregman and Charles M. White (New York: Routledge, 2010), 3. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203842348.

[107] Edwin Friedman, *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue* (New York: Guilford Press, 2011), 1.

[108] Friedman, *Generation to Generation*, 1.

[109] Friedman, *Generation to Generation*, 1.

[110] Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 3.

workplace or employment of their parents.[111] The actual environment of parental work is of less concern for children than their perception of it, and thus children are shaped by their perception of the systems that they do not directly interact.[112] Within this theory is another layer of complexity for children of clergy members as they are both indirectly impacted by their perception of their parent's work and personally interact with the church systems.

Internal Family System Theory (IFS) adds one more layer to the system. Schwartz defines IFS theory as embracing the idea that everyone has various parts or systems within their psyche and puts those parts into a system based on systems theory.[113] Within internal systems are what Schwartz defines as "parts" or "voices" that each has their demands, and this theory provides a systems-based answer for individuals.[114]

Three Family Systems for Clergy Members

The research around systems theory will overlap with the three established categories of individual, family, and community already established in Deuteronomy 6, which are categorized in systems theory as Internal systems (Individual), Immediate family systems (Family), and church/community family systems (Community). Internal family systems theory will be used to expand on the inner systems of the individual, and

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[111] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 4.

[112] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 4.

[113] Schwartz and Sweezy, *Internal Family Systems Therapy*, 11.

[114] Schwartz and Sweezy, *Internal Family Systems Therapy*, 12.

the sub-category of individual families within a church will be addressed under church/community family systems.

Internal Family Systems (Individual)

Internal family systems theory postulates that three parts inform the psychological system of an individual. Psychologist Richard C. Schwartz describes these parts as managers that try to control feeling and external environments; exiles, who are banished or not dealt with because of the feelings or memories associated with them; and firefighters, who seek to go into action to put out emotional fires through distraction or impulsive behavior.[115] By understanding the internal system, Schwartz proposes that a healthy individual can be self-aware and construct internal systems of self that are healthy and non-reactive.[116] The goal is to allow a more settled and objective "self" that can differentiate from the noise of other parts of the internal system.[117] Neurologist, medical doctor, and psychologist Dan Siegal fills out this picture by seeing the self as having central parts of subjectivity, agency, and perspective that are pieces of inner systems that are constantly interacting with each other as they interact socially with the world.[118]

The goal of internal family systems theory overlaps with the work of Bowen on differentiation. Within the internal system of an individual pastor, there must be, as

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[115] Richard C. Schwartz, *The Internal Family Systems Model*, (New York: Guilford Press, 1994), 265.

[116] Schwartz and Sweezy, *Internal Family Systems Therapy*, 265.

[117] Schwartz and Sweezy, *Internal Family Systems Therapy*, 45.

[118] Daniel J. Siegel, *The Developing Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are* (New York: Guilford Publications, 2020), 13.

Bowenian Family Therapy states, a sense of differentiation.[119] Counselor and pastor Ronald W. Richardson presents that differentiation is a way of avoiding reactive patterns.[120] Applying IFS theory would mean that the pastor and/or their child would deal with reactivity caused by exiles, managers, and firefighters through greater differentiation. As this differentiation occurs, they reach a level of comfort so that they act in ways that reflect core "beliefs and principles."[121] A differentiated individual can avoid the internal volatility of compliance, rebelliousness, power struggles, and distance.[122]

Another way of viewing Bowenian work on differentiation as applied to internal systems is given by psychotherapist Floren Vancea using the ideas of solid self and pseudo self.[123] The characteristics of the solid self are autonomy, the ability to understand emotional processes, and flexibility or adaptability to changing situations.[124] Vancea summarizes how non-differentiated individuals can be over-involved, reactive, or overly separated from the systems of which they are apart. [125]

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[119] Ronald W. Richardson, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor: Family Systems Theory and the Pastor's Own Family* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 15.

[120] Richardson, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor*, 15.

[121] Richardson, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor*, 15.

[122] Richardson, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor*, 15.

[123] Florin Vancea, "The Increase of the Differentiation Level of the Self Through Unifying Personal Development," *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 78, (2013): 181. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.04.275

[124] Vancea, "The Increase of the Differentiation Level," 181.

[125] Vancea, "The Increase of the Differentiation Level," 181.

Characteristics of the solid self are, according to Schwartz, being calm, confident, connected, clear, creative, courageous, and compassionate.[126] The Apostle Paul, when reflecting on the work of the Holy Spirit, offered a list of characteristics that are not at odds with these characteristics even as they explore attributes to the Holy Spirit, which are "love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control."[127] In particular, self-control is a central idea that surrounds the differentiated self within the internal systems of an individual.

Within the bounds of differentiation, there is also a system of boundaries. Psychologist John Townsend emphasizes that there need to be boundaries that clearly define who the parent is, and the central idea is for parents to communicate systems to their children.[128] While Townsend does not speak directly using the words of Bowenian theory, he does comment that what is central to effectively parenting teens are parents that have set up a personal system where they have boundaries, are honest about themselves and their experience, and are self-controlled.[129]

Pastor, consultant, and author Tod Bolsinger presents those individuals also must be willing to dismantle their systems when what worked before stops working.[130] He explains that leaders are individuals who work within systems and are ready to

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[126] Schwartz, *The Internal Family Systems Model,* 51-52.

[127] Galatians 5:22-23

[128] John Townsend, *Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 13.

[129] Townsend, *Boundaries with Teens,* 13.

[130] Tod Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 15.

restructure their methods and ways of interaction when it becomes apparent that they do not work. They lead in learning and expressing in a non-anxious way that "I do not know what to do."[131] When an individual is differentiated, they can exist within complex systems without personally taking on the anxiety of the system when there is uncertainty.[132] Schwartz works on a variation of this idea by expressing that when the self stays in the present and can interact with the other parts of the complex inner system, it can generate a more stable internal system.[133]

Bronfenbrenner's work on human development also gives insight into the formation of individual systems. It is postulated that while systems make an imprint on people, there is also a way in which people make an imprint upon systems.[134] In essence, the internal system of an individual is used in a phenomenological manner to understand the world, not as it is objectively but as it is for the individual.[135] Each system that a person interacts with, either directly or indirectly, shapes their view of the world and is a "building block" for their identity.[136]

Summary of Internal Family Systems (Individual)

Within everyone, various parts interact with each other and respond to circumstances differently. For clergy and their families, how they engage their own inner

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[131] Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains,* 22.

[132] Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains,* 22.

[133] Schwartz, *The Internal Family Systems Model,* 20.

[134] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 22.

[135] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 22.

[136] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 22.

or private life is complicated by their roles in multiple systems. The pseudo self acts contrary to well-being, even as they might satisfy a manager, exile, or firefighter, while a solid self can discern and be differentiated.

Immediate Family Systems (Immediate Family)

The specific system of the family or home is what Bronfenbrenner describes as a microsystem, which is "a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations."[137] Friedman describes it as a system where each part of a system functions based on its position within the system, and each individual will behave differently when in other systems.[138] Bronfenbrenner expands on this idea by stating that one of the most profound impacts on children is their parents' workplaces as they spill over into the immediate context of the home.[139]

Within each family system, individuals can take on different roles that are adaptive or maladaptive. Friedman offers the family categories of the identified patient, homeostasis, differentiation, family field, and emotional triangles.[140] These categories can be applied to both immediate families and church families and communities.

Friedman defines the identified patient as the individual wherein "the family's stress or pathology has surfaced."[141] Also relevant is the idea of "referred pain," which is

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[137] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 22.

[138] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 15.

[139] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 4.

[140] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 19.

[141] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 19.

that the least differentiated family member is the most likely to have the symptoms, which is also a form of the unconscious "scapegoating.[142] Friedman theorizes that "ghosts"[143] drive maladaptive behaviors in systems. Similarly, medical doctor and addictions expert Dr. Gabor Maté uses the term "Hungry Ghosts" to refer to the parts of us that need care and nurture but are unable to receive it.[144] The family members in pain do not know what is needed, and this lack of understanding causes a "haunted" existence rather than a real presence.[145]

The implications of the theory of the identified patient are, according to Friedman, a necessary de-focusing on the identified patient and a refocusing on the family. Seeing the entire system to determine if there are individuals or places where the most significant amounts of change can happen.[146] Researcher Barry Litt comments that systems-based treatment aims to look for other stressors and other dysfunctions within the system and offer treatment solutions beyond the presenting problem.[147]

Friedman also identifies the concept of homeostasis, which is the tendency of organisms or organizations to work to maintain their "principles of existence."[148] Siegal

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[142] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 20-21.

[143] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 21.

[144] Gabor Maté, *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction*, (New York, NY: Random House Digital, 2008), 2.

[145] Maté, *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts,* 2.

[146] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 23.

[147] Barry Litt, "The Child as Identified Patient: Integrating Contextual Therapy and EMDR." in *Handbook of EMDR and Family Therapy Processes*, eds. Francine Shapiro, Florence W. Kaslow, and Louise Maxfields (Hoboken, NJ, 2007), 308-309.

[148] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 23.

coined the phrase "window of tolerance," which is explained as being a range of functioning that an individual or a system can operate within.[149] Counselor and researcher Abby Hershler further explains this idea explaining that these windows are often narrowed by trauma and can be expanded through self-awareness and overcoming flight or fight tendencies when circumstances are outside the window of tolerance.[150] Siegal explains that when individuals operate outside their window of tolerance, they are more reflexive and less functional.[151] When the status quo is unhealthy, it can be helpful to get family systems outside their window of tolerance, specifically when stability hinders change and causes adaptation to complaining and other maladaptive states instead of positive change.[152] Friedman continues to express that churches are the most like families for emotional system intensity, and ultimately the families of the church, the pastors' family, and the church family are a complicated system.[153]

Friedman also identifies the family field as an essential part of how broader systems work.[154] In this, he refers to the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and others who are part of the individual's family system.[155] He comments that "sex, money, territory, drinking, separation, (and) health" tend to be duplicated in successive

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[149] Daniel J. Siegel, *The Developing Mind,* 341.

[150] Abby Hershler, Lesley Hughes, Patricia Nguyen, and Shelley Wall, eds. *Looking at Trauma: A Tool Kit for Clinicians*. Vol. 23. (State College, PA: Penn State Press, 2021), 25.

[151] Siegel, *The Developing Mind,* 348.

[152] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 24-25.

[153] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 24-25.

[154] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 31.

[155] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 31.

generations.[156] Richardson believes that one of the techniques a pastor could use would be to do family of origin groups within the congregation to become more aware of their issues or hire a professional to do them within the congregation.[157] This idea would work toward the ideal, which is, according to Friedman, to be both present and aware of issues without having them control outcomes.[158]

Of specific interest within the family field are matters of birth order. Researchers Daniel Sckstien, Kristen Aycock, Mark Sperber, John McDonald, Victor Van Wiesner, Richard Watts, and Phil Ginsburg note that Alfred Adler was one of the first psychologists to do extensive work on birth order concepts.[159] Adler centered his work around how family position impacted individual adjustment. Scholars Bernhard Shulman and Harold Mosak later categorized his work on birth order as being psychological rather than simply ordinal.[160] Popular author and psychologist Dr. Kevin Leman has written to a broader audience by categorizing birth order into the oldest/only, middle, and youngest categories.[161] While many may want to make birth order simple, it is a highly nuanced subject. Characteristics can be disrupted or changed based on a myriad of factors, including spacing, male/female sequence, death, adoption, parental birth order, criticism,

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[156] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 31.

[157] Richardson, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor,* 126.

[158] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 34.

[159] Daniel Eckstien, Kristen J. Aycock, Mark A. Sperber, John McDonald, Victor Van Wiesner III, Richard E. Watts, and Phil Ginsburg, "A Review of 200 Birth-Order Studies: Lifestyle Characteristics." *Journal of Individual Psychology* 66, no. 4 (2010): 409.

[160] Bernard H. Shulman and Harold H. Mosak, "Birth Order and Ordinal Position: Two Adlerian Views." *Journal of Individual Psychology* 33, no. 1 (1977): 114.

[161] Kevin Leman, *The Birth Order Book: Why You Are the Way You Are* (Ada, MI: Revell, 2009), 18.

family blending, and disruption.[162] Of particular interest is Leman's assertion that pastors are predominately firstborn,[163] implying that many pastors will build and work within structured systems and be more driven.

Triangles are another reality of systems theory. According to Friedman, understanding triangles helps to understand the connected emotional process of the immediate clergy family, the families within the congregation, and the congregation itself.[164] Triangles can occur with people or issues, and they are defined as parts of the family that are uncomfortable with each other, and as a response, find another issue or person to focus on to keep their relationship stable.[165] Psychologist Peter Titelman explains the triangle as two people who have a high level of anxiety in their relationship and cannot deal with each other finding another person. Subsequently, they minimize or mask their own anxiety while transferring or increasing the anxiety level in the triangulated person.[166] It is common for these patterns to be passed through organizations and families for generations, with many possible combinations of triangles.[167] Friedman offers triangles are kept in balance by a third party and the third party is not usually able to change the other two. Friedman states that when we are the person "triangled" into the relationship, it is difficult to make change because we can only change relationships of

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[162] Leman, *The Birth Order Book*, 37.

[163] Leman, *The Birth Order Book*, 21.

[164] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation*, 35.

[165] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation*, 35.

[166] Peter Titelman, *Triangles: Bowen Family Systems Theory Perspectives* (England: Routledge, 2012), 17.

[167] Titelman, *Triangles*, 17.

which we are apart.[168] Interlocking triangles can be central to clergy responsibilities to churches, spouses, and children.[169]

Richardson, addressing pastoral health, shares the following indicators for the existence of triangles. These are pursuit and distance, anxiety causing individuals to move toward or away from each other, individuals feeling compelled to take a side in a conflict, and over and under-functioning when a pastor either needs to be rescued or is trying to rescue through over-functioning. Richardson recommends a detangling from triangles and differentiation for the pastor and his family. In essence, the healthy pastor will recognize that triangles are a normal part of the ministry and work to have a "neutral" and non-anxious presence.[170]

Within the realm of emotional triangles is a paradox of sorts. Friedman explains this connected/disconnected paradox around the idea that people who are too close to each other lack relationships, just as too distant people lack relationships.[171] Within family systems, if we do not allow others to experience pain, the threshold of pain will reduce, and the individual will fall into the role of the identified patient.[172] Pastoral family unit and church health applications of differentiation in triangles would be an effective use of humor and avoiding maladaptive secrets that increase anxiety.[173]

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[168] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 36-38.

[169] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 38.

[170] Richardson, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor,* 105.

[171] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 42.

[172] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 48.

[173] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 49-64.

Summary of Immediate Family Systems (Immediate Family)

The immediate family is the most intimate system in the pastor and his children participate. It functions within broader systems and is the most intense of all systems. Differentiation is a central idea regarding the stability and maturity of systems. Often within the systems, the least differentiated person is the one that is most likely to be in crisis. Further, families have a status quo, and often when there is change within the family system, there will be counter-efforts to return to the status quo. In addition, the extended family, birth order, and parental issues that are unresolved impact the family unit and how it relates within itself and to the congregation.

Church/Community Family System

Bronfenbrenner defines an exo-system as "one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant but in which events occur that affect or are affected by what happens in that setting."[174] Clergy employment makes various systems overlap in unique ways, as Penn places religion within meso-systems and micro-systems, which are places of more direct impact.[175] Of particular interest to Bronfenbrenner is the interaction between a parental workplace and the well-being of children. Child development expert Helen Penn explains the exo-system as containing media, parental workplaces, government, school boards, and industry. Bronfenbrenner addresses how some exo-system matters are of concern not because they are in and of

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[174] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 237.

[175] Helen Penn, *Understanding Early Childhood: Issues and Controversies* (UK: McGraw-Hill Education, 2014), 45.

themselves the issue, but because they prevent or take the place of positive interaction between parents and children.[176]

Penn notes further that these various systems are constantly changing and impacting each other. One must see these various systems as dynamic rather than static.[177] As this practice is developed, a child of a clergy member is in a system where religion and parenting are more closely connected to parental employment. More importantly, their relationship with the church is mediated through their parents' position as clergy within the church. Development researcher Ulla Harkonen notes that the central idea in these situations is whether the child or adolescent sees conflict between the various systems that make up their life.[178] Bronfenbrenner hypothesizes that with supportive external links, parents will have a higher quality of interactions with their children, while systems in conflict will produce the opposite result.[179]

More broadly studied is how parental work impacts children because of time spent at work. Social scientists Jennifer Gootman and Eugene Smolensky seek to understand parental work patterns and their impact on adolescents from the perspective of what children are doing when their parents are at work. They believe that the vital issue is

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[176] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 240-241.

[177] Penn, *Understanding Early Childhood,* 47.

[178] Ulla Härkönen, "The Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory of Human Development," *Scientific Articles of V International Conference* (October, 2001): 10. http://www.oppi.uef.fi/wanda/users/uharkone/tuotoksia/Bronfenbrenner_in_%20English_07_sent.pdf

[179] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 240.

what children are doing in the absence of their parents.[180] In particular, activities and self-care, with positive outcomes associated with greater levels of self-care, whether that be at home or through the community.[181]

Counselor and consultant Peter Steinke describes church systems as being complicated and co-causal, and the study of systems in churches is to determine how they remain stable in interaction with each other.[182] Within systems, there is the principle of maintaining the status quo, and within that, there are arrangements categorized as being "complementary, contrary, and similar."[183] Appearances can be deceiving, as individuals often play contrary roles in a stable system, even playing complementary roles while in an unstable one. Steinke comments that while these roles may look very different from the outside, as parts of the system take these positions to perpetuate the system as a whole.[184] Pastor and author Robert Creech comments that "The pastor's survival may depend more on the ability to understand emotional systems than on skilled exegesis or preaching."[185] Creech comments on how anxiety in one system, i.e. the church, is often contagious, and a pastor can bring that anxiety home with him.[186] Steinke's idea that

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[180] Eugene Smolensky and Jennifer Appleton Gootman, eds., *Working Families and Growing Kids: Caring for Children and Adolescents (*Washington, D.C: The National Academies Press, 2003), 198.

[181] Smolensky and Gootman, *Working Families and Growing Kids,* 198.

[182] Peter L. Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems* (Washington, D.C.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 4.

[183] Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works,* 9.

[184] Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works,* 10.

[185] Robert R. Creech, *Family Systems and Congregational Life: A Map for Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019), 9.

[186] Creech, *Family Systems and Congregational Life,* 18.

anxiety in one system feeds anxiety in another system could leave church systems and clergy family systems stuck in a mutually destructive position.[187] He comments that because the faith community discusses things that are considered ultimate, abuse in congregations can exceed other contexts.[188] Counselor and consultant G. Lloyd Rediger attributes this abusive behavior in systems to several factors, including politics and naivete regarding evil within the community.[189]

Steinke addresses the standard systems issues of differentiation by pointing out familiar patterns in chronically anxious systems, including splitting, power groups, leadership change, and the system pushing out those who do not conform.[190] What is common to dysfunctional systems, according to congregational leadership experts Jim Harrington, Robert Creech, and Trisha Taylor, is that they are reactive rather than intentional in decision making. A sign of progress is greater choice and intentionality.[191]

Creech observes that the challenge for churches is the same as the family: it needs leaders to be committed to a "lifetime of self-regulated growth."[192] As the leader grows in

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[187] Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works,* 27.

[188] Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works,* 28

[189] Lloyd G. Rediger, *Clergy Killers: Guidance for Pastors and Congregations Under Attack* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 11-12.

[190] Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works,* 23.

[191] Jim Herrington, Trisha Taylor, and R. Robert Creech, *The Leader's Journey: Accepting the Call to Personal and Congregational Transformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020), 31.

[192] Creech, *Family Systems and Congregational Life,* 33.

their ability to care for the immediate system of their own family, they will also grow in their effectiveness to care for the church family.[193]

Beyond the church family, Bronfenbrenner proposes that a macro-system is the overarching set of values of a broader culture and the beliefs and values that hold that system up.[194] It is not enough to simply get data, but to know the environment from where the data came.[195] It is not sufficient to simply study clergy children, but to understand and reach sound conclusions regarding the data. What is most notable about clergy families is that the various systems that Bronfenbrenner presents are experienced with more fluid boundaries. Rarely in the broader world does a child interact with their parent's workplace. But in many cases, for a clergy child, they have extensive interaction. It is mediated by clergy parents and unmediated in the form of direct participation in the religious community. When the adolescent children of clergy members interact with other children and church members, an additional layer of complexity is added to the relationship, largely due to the clergy parent's pastoral leadership and family involvement.

Summary of Church/Community Family Systems

For the pastor and his family, there are multiple levels on which clergy employment impacts, directly and indirectly, the family system. If the systems appear to work together or have minimal conflict within them, then the parenting interactions are

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[193] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation,* 296.

[194] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 258.

[195] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development,* 259.

likely to be of higher quality. However, since church systems are often laden with emotion, they can be more likely to escalate conflict than other systems. Within the family and the church, pastors need to be committed to a lifetime of growth to be healthy and effective in their parenting role.

Summary of Resilience and Family System's Theory

Resilient pastors will be aware of their issues and challenges, be non-reactive and exercise self-control when dealing with situations outside of their control. They will also understand that there is overlap between their immediate family system, the church's family system, and the systems of the families within the church. If there is progress in any of these systems, that will impact all the systems, so it is beneficial to work on whichever system is most likely to change. The focus of this change for maximum impact will be a commitment to a lifetime of growth and progress.

Resilience Issues for Pastors Raising Children

The unique systems of pastors' family systems and their overlap create specific challenges within the pastors' family systems. Subsequently, resilience issues for pastors raising children is a sub-category of systems theory. Writer Rachell Campbell states that "working for God is never easy."[196] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie have identified resilience issues for pastors as spiritual formation, self-care, emotional and cultural intelligence, marriage and family, and leadership and management.[197] The challenges of

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[196] Rachel Campbell, "Pastor's Kid," *First Line* 12 no. 1 (2010): 17.

[197] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry,* 19-26.

clergy parents of always being on the job, conflicting loyalties, feelings of abandonment by family members, and a lack of other confidential relationships[198] are often handed down in some form to their children. All issues of resilience for the clergy will impact the family if the clergy member has a spouse or children.

Professor Surabhika Maheshwari executed a qualitative study of 15 to 25 year old children with well-known parents.[199] The research showed that they struggled with expectations, pressure to keep up an image, parental absenteeism, identity issues, a desire for recognition, and prominent parents provided a platform if they chose to use it.[200] Children of well-known individuals commented that they were not introduced as themselves but as the child of their parents.[201] Piper offered similar ideas in expectations and identity in his evaluation of the experiences of pastors' kids.[202]

Researchers from the Barna Group found that from the perspective of the clergy, resilience issues for their children were a culture of expectations, the negative parts of ministry, parental busyness, a lack of faith by clergy parents, peers, free will, and never making faith their own.[203] Researcher Hijme Stoffels surveyed the children of clergy in the Netherlands. They reported that there were challenges of being outsiders, loneliness

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[198] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry, 170*.

[199] Surabhika Maheshwari, "Children of Famous Parents: An Exploratory Study," *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology* 23 (2008): 350, http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.306.8813&rep=rep1&type=pdf.

[200] Surabhika, “Children of Famous Parents,” 356-358

[201] Surabhika, “Children of Famous Parents,” 355.

[202] Piper, *The Pastor’s Kid*, 145.

[203] “38% of Pastor’s Have Thought About Quitting Full-Time Ministry This Year,” Research Release, Barna Group, November 15, 2021. https://www.barna.com/research/pastors-well-being/.

among friends, acting or pretending identity issues, and the challenges of not living in the same location for their growing up years.[204] These issues can be compounded by the complex and dynamic systems of churches and clergy families. For our research, the focus categories are Relationships, Expectations, Stress/Trauma, and Boundaries/Time Management, and Stability.

Relationships

Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie point out that clergy and their children often need to navigate multiple relationships, and they note that there are dual relationships in the church, in their schools, and the children of clergy in the community.[205] For counselors, the American Psychological Association defines multiple relationships as when an individual is acting in a professional and another role, is in a relationship of a close associate or is expected "to enter into a relationship in the future."[206] The focus of whether these relationships are ethical hinges on the idea of whether the client could be exploited or whether there could be harm from them.[207] The PCUSA code of ethics for pastors addresses multiple relationships by granting that they often exist, and they should

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[204] Hijme Stoffels "'Preachers' Kids Are the Worst': Results of a Survey among Dutch Clergy Children," presented at *The Association for the Society of Religion (August 14, 2004): 4-5.*

[205] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry,* 183-184.

[206] American Psychological Association, *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2022), 3.05. www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx

[207] American Psychological Association, *Ethical Principles, 3.05.*

be monitored to ensure there is no exploitation.[208] Barnabas Piper warns that pastors should be parents to their children and not simply preach to them. [209]

While there is extensive research on dual relationships in counseling, and ethics generally discourage them, no research was found that addressed the complexity of these relationships for children of pastors in the roles they were expected to play within the church, school, and community. Professor Peggy Drexler talks about growing up in the public eye and seeking to protect children but commented that "kids take on their own burdens," and that sometimes when something happens to their parents, despite their parents' best efforts, they feel "intensely betrayed."[210]

Rob Litzinger describes his experience as a pastor's kid as highly challenging. Church fights and battles left a lasting negative impact on his view of the church.[211] Youth pastor Stephen Tighe noted in a recent study he conducted that relational conflict came up in every interview. Many of them expressed that the conflict created distrust and disillusionment.[212] He hypothesized that because PKs have indirect exposure and

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[208] Presbyterian Church (USA), *Standards of Ethical Conduct* (Louisville, KY: PCUSA, 1998), 17-18. https://www.pcusa.org/resource/standards-ethical-conduct/

[209] Piper, *The Pastor's Kid,* 95.

[210] Peggy Drexler, "The Public Figure Factor: Life with High Profile Parents," *Dujour,* 2022, https://dujour.com/news/public-figure-parents-raising-kids-in-media/

[211] Robert Litzinger. *PK: The Tragedy and Triumph of growing up as a PK (*Los Angeles, CA: Self Published, 2011), 5.

[212] Steven Tighe, "Raising Church Celebrities: A Study of Clergy Parenting Practices." (Unpublished PhD Project,, Trinity International University, 2010), 10, https://www.aymeducators.org/wp-content/uploads/Faith-Development-of-Children-of-Evangelical-Clergy-by-Steven-Tighe.pdf.

involvement in church conflict, they are less able to find resolution. Meanwhile, their clergy parents can see the conflict more holistically.[213]

Summary of Relationships

Relationships for pastor's children are complicated by multiple roles that are being played in the family, the community and the church by the clergy parent and, by extension, the child. Clergy children can feel betrayed and become disillusioned over time.

Expectations

Expectations are also central to the complex system that clergy and their children navigate. Piper calls it "a pervasive scrutiny."[214] Stoffels, in his research, found themes around clergy children reporting "always having to be an example."[215] Researchers Cynthia Wilson and Carol Darling comment that children in clergy families perceive that expectations are higher for them and emphasize that the reality of the events is directly connected to the subjective perception by the clergy children.[216] Researchers Kimberly Sparrow and Lori Sheppard sought to determine if there was a negative stereotype of clergy children by those that observed them but found that the differences were more minimal than the perception of clergy children, leading to the question as to whether

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[213] Tighe, "Raising Church Celebrities," 25.

[214] Piper, *The Pastor's Kid,* 29.

[215] Stoffels, "Preacher's Kids Are the Worst," 5.

[216] Cynthia B. Wilson and Carol A. Darling. "Understanding Stress and Life Satisfaction," 130-131.

some of the anxiety and pressure is internal.[217] Piper observes that expectations may be different across denominations or cultures, but in his experience, they seem to be universal.[218] Stoffels notes that in his research, it appeared that the "glass house" effect was present but diminished among interviewees born after 1985.[219] Tighe noted a universal sense of resentment among clergy children he interviewed because of the "glass house."[220] Langford works on the concept of expectations by commenting that pastors' children often struggle with the incompatibility of their struggles juxtaposed against the ideal sort of behavior they are supposed to model in front of others.[221]

Related to expectations is the concept of Role Ambiguity. Researchers Will Evers and Welko Tonic studied Dutch pastors. The highest levels of stress they experienced had the highest levels of role ambiguity and the lowest levels of social support.[222] Lee Cameron and Judith Iverson-Gilbert note that these “intrusive expectations” have a significant impact on clergy children and spouses.[223] When a pastor and their family lack awareness of what is expected of them, or if the expectations are different over time,

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[217] Kimberly Sparrow Strange and Lori A. Sheppard. "Evaluations of Clergy Children Versus Non-Clergy Children: Does a Negative Stereotype Exist?" *Pastoral Psychology* 50, no. 1 (September, 2001):58-59, https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1010447100488.

[218] Piper, *The Pastor’s Kid,* 40.

[219] Stoffels, “Pastor’s Kids Are the Worst,” 9.

[220] Tighe, “Raising Church Celebrities,” 26.

[221] Langford, *The Pastor’s Family,* Location 639.

[222] Will Evers and Welko Tonic, "Burnout Among Dutch Reformed Pastors,” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 31, no. 4 (Winter, 2003): 329. https://doi.org/10.1177/009164710303100403

[223] Cameron Lee and Judith Iverson-Gilbert, "Demand, Support, and Perception in Family-Related Stress Among Protestant Clergy," *Family Relations* 52, no. 3 (July 2003): 249. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2003.00249.x

researchers John M. Faucett, Robert F. Corwyn and Tom H. Poling found work satisfaction plummeted.[224]

Summary of Expectations

The challenges of role ambiguity and unrealistic expectations can create tension and anxiety for clergy members and their children. Some clergy spouses and children may place more pressure and higher expectations on themselves than clergy members. Both social support and clarity of expectations are helpful for clergy, their family, and church members.

Stress/Trauma

Darling and Wilson found that clergy children had lower life satisfaction than the control group as adolescents. However, they also found that life satisfaction generally normalized as they became adults in their teenage years.[225] They directly connected the lower life satisfaction to the higher levels of stress that clergy children experienced as adolescents, and a lower sense of coherence or understanding of the contexts and systems, believing they were "not comprehendible, manageable, or meaningful."[226] Even as an adult, the stress level that clergy children carried was higher than their non-clergy

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[224] John M. Faucett, Robert F. Corwyn, and Tom H. Poling, "Clergy Role Stress: Interactive Effects of Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict on Intrinsic Job Satisfaction," *Pastoral Psychology* 62, no. 3 (06, 2013): 291, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-012-0490-8.

[225] Darling and Wilson, "Understanding Stress and Life Satisfaction," 136.

[226] Darling and Wilson, "Understanding Stress and Life Satisfaction," 138.

peers.[227] Piper described this as heightened awareness, essentially a higher level of anxiety.[228] In their work with a group of pastors' children, researchers Rene Drumm, David Sedlacek, and Alina Baltazar found expectations were a source of anxiety. A majority of the children suffered anxiety and/or depression approximately 10% higher than the broader population.[229] Significant factors for resilience were counseling, medication, exercise, and being connected to other pastors' kids.[230] Negative coping skills usually center around some form of addiction and one respondent highlighted the relational complications that prevented him from reaching out for help.[231]

Educator Leslie Francis, pastor Patrick Laycock, and scholar Christine Brewster note that poor mental health is a concern across the realms of social services. They correlate pastoral work to social services, with both experiencing a high level of burnout.[232] Connected to working with those who have experienced trauma is the idea of secondary trauma. Psychologist Victoria Gottfried defines it as the consequence of "exposure to the traumatic experiences their clients have undergone.[233]As clergy

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[227] Darling and Wilson, "Understanding Stress and Life Satisfaction," 140.

[228] Darling and Wilson, "Understanding Stress and Life Satisfaction," 140.

[229] Rene Drumm, David Sedlaček A., and Alina M. Baltazar, "'My Life has been just Like a Big Expectation': A Retrospective Reflection of Role Expectations and Mental Health Concerns of Adult Children of Seventh-Day Adventist Pastors," *Social Work and Christianity* 47, no. 2 (Summer, 2020): 95-96, https://doi.org/10.34043/swc.v47i2.65.

[230] Drumm, Sedlaček and Baltazar, "My Life has been Just Like a Big Expectation," 96.

[231] Drumm, Sedlaček and Baltazar, "My Life has been Just Like a Big Expectation," 97.

[232] Leslie Francis, Patrick Laycock, and Christine Brewster, "Work-Related Psychological Wellbeing: Testing the Balanced Affect Model among Anglican Clergy," *Religions* 8, no. 7 (2017): 2, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel8070118.

[233] Victoria M. Gottfried, "Indirect Trauma Syndrome: Empirical Validation of a Model that Synthesizes Secondary and Vicarious Trauma." (PhD Diss., University of Louisville, 2010), 3.

members are exposed to the difficulties of their congregants, there can be various actions, from needing to manage complicated feelings to secondary stress.[234] Gottfried notes that this secondary trauma can sometimes result in diminished functioning, impaired judgment, and damage inflicted on those who are being served.[235] This issue can fall under several definitions, including "compassion fatigue," which can rise at a trauma level similar to PTSD.[236]

Trauma researchers Jill Hendron, Pauline Irving, and Brian Taylor reviewed research of secondary trauma for pastors and found that questioning beliefs were not uncommon, and of clergy surveyed on the Maslach Burnout Inventory, 57% were in the moderate to high range in areas of emotional exhaustion.[237] They note that clergy need to be informed and trained about secondary trauma and understand its impact upon them, and they suggest that clergy are not adequately aware of the impact.[238] Of particular concern for parenting is the challenge that clergy members can take on trauma without knowing how to process that trauma, resulting in less positive parenting techniques. Researchers Christie Hamilton-Giachritsis, Catharine Alves-Costa, Mark Tomlinson, and Sarah Halligan compiled data on parenting and PTSD, finding robust correlations between male parents with PTSD having lower parenting satisfaction scores linked with

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https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/indirect-trauma-syndrome-empirical-validation/docview/820914973/se-2.

[234] Gottfried, “Indirect Trauma Syndrome,” 2.

[235] Gottfried, “Indirect Trauma Syndrome,” 3.

[236] Gottfried, “Indirect Trauma Syndrome,” 3.

[237] Jill Anne Hendron, Pauline Irving, and Brian Taylor. "The Unseen Cost: A Discussion of the Secondary Traumatization Experience of the Clergy," *Pastoral Psychology* 61, no. 2 (04, 2012): 226, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-011-0378-z.

[238] Hendron, Irving, and Taylor, “The Unseen Cost,” 228.

inconsistent discipline, aggressiveness, and a higher propensity toward abuse.[239] Within mothers, observers noted less sensitivity and more controlling behaviors.[240]

One way to conceptualize this trauma and this heightened awareness is to use the idea of taking on stress from a system that leads to a lower level of differentiation, and another way is to consider Polyvagal theory. Polyvagal theorist Stephen Porges explains that the theory is built on the idea that trauma and stress narrow the window of tolerance of a particular individual, causing them to enter flight/flight/freeze.[241] For an individual who has experienced trauma and with an elevated level of stress, their ability to enter social settings and play and relax will be diminished.[242]

Summary of Stress/Trauma

Clergy children generally have lower levels of life satisfaction due to stress and anxiety and may experienced diminished parental involvement due to parents experiencing secondary stress and trauma. Parental burnout can also be a common reality that can be accompanied by clinical diagnoses of PTSD and anxiety.

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[239] H. Christie, C. Hamilton-Giachritsis, F. Alves-Costa, M Tomlinson, and S.L. Halligan, "The Impact of Parental Posttraumatic Stress Disorder on Parenting: A Systematic Review." *European Journal of Psychotraumatology,* 10, no.1 (2019): 10. https://doi.org/10.1080/20008198.2018.1550345

[240] Christie, Hamilton-Giachritsis, Alves-Costa, Tomlinson, and Halligan, "Impact of PTSD on Parenting" 10.

[241] Stephen W. Porges and Deb Dana, *Clinical Applications of the Polyvagal Theory: The Emergence of Polyvagal-Informed Therapies,* Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology. (New York: WW Norton & Company, 2018), 52.

[242] Porges and Dana, "Polyvagal Theory," 69.

Boundaries/Time Management

Darling and Wilson also comment on the issues of pastoral workload and the needs of pastoral families not being met.[243] Professor John Cattich identified three main ideas that clergy families used when thinking of work priorities: living sacrifice, faithful spouse and parent, and peacemaker.[244] Within the living sacrifice model, the ministry was primary, the faithful spouse and parent model had family as primary, and the peacemaker role sought to do as much as possible to meet the demands of both. However, Cattich notes that the peacemaker role often becomes an unintentional congregation-focused ministry as congregational priorities seem to rise higher than family.[245] When Barna asked clergy members about their regrets, a lack of time spent with children was overwhelmingly mentioned above all other factors by 42%.[246] Tighe, in his research, found that 85% of clergy children identified their parents as being at church "too much."[247]

Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie bring the simple idea that ministry "is an absorbing lifestyle."[248] Pastoral psychologist Carl Wells offered that there was a clear correlation

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[243] Darling and Wilson, "Understanding Stress and Life Satisfaction," 130.

[244] John Cattich,"Three Models of Clergy Systems: Analysis of Couple Processes and Spiritual Meaning," *Pastoral Psychology* 61, no. 2 (04, 2012): 179, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-011-0379-y.

[245] Cattich, "Three Models of Clergy Systems," 192.

[246] Barna Group, "38% of Pastor's Have Thought About Quitting,"

[247] Tighe, "Raising Church Celebrities," 16.

[248] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry,* 170.

between boundary issues and emotional stress in clergy members with children.[249] Pastors and their spouses reported boundary intrusions and that both equally shared the stress of the ministry position held by the other.[250] Wells also noted a consistent trend that clergy members with children had lower levels of emotional well-being than those without and noted that clergy members recorded less emotional well-being at ages 45-50 than when younger, and that bi-vocational clergy are both physically and emotionally healthier.[251] More bluntly, pastor and author Daniel Langford notes that if there were a headline for many pastors, it would read "Pastor abandon's family for ministry."[252]

There can also be a darker side to a lack of boundaries. Surabhika Maheshwari commented that when individuals are idolized, they often try to maintain a particular image, and in so doing, they begin to develop a double life.[253] This results in a sense that public figures and their children are "caught between their expected selves and themselves."[254]

Daniel Langford addresses another dark side that results in a lack of boundaries: co-dependency.[255] What ultimately underlies it is wanting to control others and be indispensable to them, often resulting in martyrdom and service to others even if that

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[249] Carl R. Wells "The Effects of Work-Related and Boundary-Related Stress on the Emotional and Physical Health Status of Ordained Clergy," *Pastoral Psychology* 62, no. 1 (February? 2013): 101, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-012-0455-y.

[250] Wells, "The Effects of Work-Related Stress," 101.

[251] Wells, "The Effects of Work-Related Stress," 101.

[252] Langford, *The Pastor's Family,* 190.

[253] Maheshwari, "Children of Famous Parents," 351.

[254] Maheshwari, "Children of Famous Parents,"358.

[255] Langford, *The Pastor's Family,* Kindle location 1192

service ultimately destroys oneself or the family unit.[256] Clergy members are often from families where there was trauma and addiction in their growing up years.[257] This co-dependency makes it difficult but necessary for pastors to develop the skill of saying "no" and setting firm boundaries, as those actions will often produce anxiety.[258]

Summary of Boundaries/Time Management

Clergy children will be directly impacted by their clergy parent's ability to manage time, the model of ministry they adapt, and priority structures. Clergy members are more likely than the general population to be from families that experienced mental illness. Additionally, they often have poor boundaries and demonstrate co-dependent patterns.

Stability

Stability is often a challenge within clergy families. For our research, two categories will be touched on briefly. One is frequent moving, and the other is financial stability. Pastoral well-being researchers Medlock, Moseman, and Guthrie note that among the challenges for pastors is being in a place where they advocate for their financial well-being.[259] Stoffels, in his research, found that over 60% of clergy children

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[256] Langford, *The Pastor's Family,* Kindle location 1225

[257] Langford, *The Pastor's Family,* Kindle location 1290

[258] Langford, *The Pastor's Family,* Kindle location 1559

[259] John Medlock, Bart Moseman, and Donald C. Guthrie, *Pastoral Wellbeing: PCA Pastors Reflect on the Tensions of Ministry.* (Atlanta, GA: PCA Retirements and Benefits, 2021), 42-43.

said that money was a significant issue in their family of origin.[260] While frequent moving does not affect all clergy children, researchers Marsha Frame and Constance Shehan noted that when moving, there are financial challenges, specifically elevated stress for clergy spouses, the stress associated with performance at a new job, adjusting to a new community, schools, and activities, and a changing of relationships and support structure.[261]

Summary of Stability

Finances can be a significant challenge within clergy families, and additional factors of job instability and moving can create an ongoing need to develop new relationships and build new support structures for clergy families.

Summary of Resilience Issues for Pastor's Raising Children

Complicated relationships that interact on multiple levels with many of the individuals present in a clergy child's life make confusion a regular part of their daily life. Additionally, expectations can be a moving target, from some an expectation of rebellion, and for others an expectation of perfection. Some of these issues are projected upon clergy children even as they are projected upon members of the clergy. Research shows that with less clarity of expectation, there is a higher level of stress, which corresponds with higher anxiety levels. In terms of stress and trauma, members of the clergy are often

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[260] Stoffels, "Pastor's Kids Are the Worst," 4.

[261] Marsha Wiggins V and Constance L. Shehan, "Work and Well-Being in the Two-Person Career: Relocation Stress and Coping Among Clergy Husbands and Wives." *Family Relations* 43, no. 2 (April, 1994): 196. https://doi.org/10.2307/585323

seeking to help those in difficult situations. Because of this, they are prone to compassion fatigue, which can lead to symptoms of PTSD, diminishing the quality of parenting interactions and negatively impacting differentiation. A lack of boundaries may result in children being put in second place to ministry and could also result from underlying psychological issues of co-dependency and a history of trauma. Within the clergy family, there are also issues of instability. When handled in adaptive and constructive ways, these issues can be minor. But when accompanied by significant stress, they can be especially difficult for clergy spouses.

Teaching Adolescents Resilience

Medical Doctor Kenneth R. Ginsburg and writer Martha Jablow observe that parents often look at what is immediately in front of them and define success in parenting based on their child's achievement or happiness.[262] Family researchers Christian Smith, Bridget Rist, and Michael Rotolo comment that there is uniformity among parents interviewed regarding their children: "The purpose of living is to live a happy and good life, in the dual sense of having life go well and living rightly."[263]

While notable for their cultural pervasiveness, these subjective ideas of happiness and right living are not in and of themselves an indicator of resilience. Psychology professor Angela Duckworth, researching indicators of "grit," which, while in and of

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[262] Kenneth R Ginsburg and Martha M. Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Kids Roots and Wings (*Itasca, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015), 7.

[263] Christian Smith, Bridget Ritz, and Michael Rotolo, *Religious Parenting: Transmitting Faith and Values in Contemporary America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), 15-16.

itself could be a vague term, found that critical indicators for "grit" were perseverance, learning from mistakes, and a refusal to give up.[264]

Before proceeding, it is essential to define the term resilience related to parenting and adolescence. Author and development professor Ann Masden defines resilience as "The adaptation and survival of a system after perturbation, often referring to the process of restoring functional equilibrium, and sometimes referring to the process of successful transformation to a stable new functional state."[265]

How can parents cultivate resilience within their teens? Medical doctor and parenting researcher Harold S. Koplewitz begins with the central idea of a scaffold, which is something built around a building to complete the building, and even as you build, there is a time in the future to take it down and leave the building standing strong.[266] Duckworth offers the idea of parents being supportive and having high expectations within a culture of high expectations.[267] Psychologists Muniya Khanna and Phillip Kendall echo Koplewitz, centering resilience issues around managing anxiety and taking a cognitive behavioral approach to teaching resilience.[268] Marriage and family therapist J.C. Pohl believes specific attributes contribute to resilience, including relational

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[264] Angela Duckworth, *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance* (New York: Scribner, 2016), 8.

[265] Ann S Masten, *Ordinary Magic: Resilience in Development* (New York: Guilford Publications, 2015), Kindle Location 264.

[266] Harold R. Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect: Raising Resilient, Self-Reliant, and Secure Kids in an Age of Anxiety (*New York: Harmony Books, 2021), 9.

[267] Duckworth, *Grit,* 212.

[268] Muniya S. Khanna and Philip C. Kendall, *The Resilience Recipe: A Parent's Guide to Raising Fearless Kids in the Age of Anxiety* (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 2021), 10.

connection, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.[269] Lisa Damour has a decidedly developmental approach to helping teens transition to adulthood built on Erik Erickson's developmental theories. [270]

The idea of resilience that leads to perseverance is important for clergy parents, particularly for cultivating a resilient faith. Christian Smith, Bridget Ritz, and Michael Rotolo observed that parents connected happiness for their children with the concept of faith being what grounded them.[271] Ginsburg and Jablow propose that there needs to be parenting in the present with an eye toward the future.[272] They also assert that resilience is formed with layers of support. With this framework in mind, there are three main categories of resilience that will be addressed. The first is internal resilience, the second is family resilience (with an eye toward specific techniques and applications), and finally, how resilient communities are built.

Internal Resilience

Who is a resilient person? Duckworth posits that interest, practice, purpose, and hope are internal characteristics of "gritty" people.[273] Ginsburg and Jablow list seven characteristics of resilience: competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution,

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[269] J.C. Pohl, Building *Resilient Students from the Inside Out: 5 Proven Ways to Help Students Build Self-Efficacy and Resilience* (Monee, IL: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018), 11.

[270] Lisa Damour, *Untangled: Guiding Teenage Girls Through the Seven Transitions into Adulthood* (New York: Random House Publishing Group, 2016), xv.

[271] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting,* 47.

[272] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 8.

[273] Duckworth, *Grit,* vii.

coping, and control.[274] Pohl echoes that connection and an ability to problem-solve are central ideas that build on resilience. Smith has found that parents of faith presented resilience as being able to navigate the challenges of life successfully and become their "ideal personal self."[275] These ideas will be categorized and researched under connection, practice, character, and coping to understand internal resilience.

Connection

J.C. Pohl discusses resilience from the perspective of connection, specifically the need for children and adolescents to have a meaningful connection to another adult.[276] While not within the realm of this research, attachment theory initially developed in the late 1940s is a significant contributor to the idea of connection. Carolyn Barsano noted that most research confirms that attachment promotes stability throughout the remainder of an individual's life.[277] Ginsburg and Jablow are practical in their recommendations surrounding athletics, community, and friendships as being meaningful connections,[278] and Duckworth, while emphasizing less the relational aspects, attributes perseverance and achievement in the adolescent years in extracurricular activities with ongoing success and self-esteem.[279] While not directly disagreeing, Allender asserts that the connection that should be emphasized is not activities but on parents enjoying their children's company.

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[274] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 42-45.

[275] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting,* 106.

[276] Pohl, *Building Resilient Students,* 29.

[277] Carolyn A. Barsano, "The Stability of Attachment Patterns during Adolescence." (PhD Diss., The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, 2005), 15. https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/stability-attachment-patterns-during-adolescence/docview/305373793/se-2?accountid=45088.

[278] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 44.

[279] Duckworth, *Grit*, 225.

As a culture, we have become too preoccupied with frenetic activity and less on genuine connection.[280]

Practice

Duckworth emphasizes that resilience is formed in the trenches of practicing particular skills until they become second nature.[281] Specifically, practice is to be deliberate, with specific goals and markers that gauge and guide the improvement level.[282] Ginsburg and Jablow mention the categories of competence and confidence, which are often a result of sustained effort in and practice.[283] Koplewicz asserts that adolescents should be encouraged to be tenacious and keep their commitments, maintaining connection even when they desire to disconnect.[284]

Character

Character is also a central concern, and Ginsburg and Jablow note that children must have a clear sense of right and wrong.[285] Christian Smith, Bridget Ritz, and Michael Rotolo note that character informed by faith helps adolescents discern right and wrong, gives them a sense of solidarity with those who are like-minded, and helps people constructively live in the world.[286] A similar category used by Duckworth is the idea of purpose, which is a character trait that drives people to overcome adversity and impact

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[280] Allender, *How Children Raise Parents,* 9.

[281] Duckworth, *Grit,* 117.

[282] Duckworth, *Grit,* 122-123.

[283] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 42-43.

[284] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 167-168.

[285] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 42.

[286] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting,* 63, 64, 88.

the world around them because of an intense passion or cause that is close to their heart.[287]

Coping

Ginsburg and Jablow offer the broad category of coping by describing the specific skills needed to be resilient, emphasizing skills that help overcome anxiety and stress.[288] Pohl identifies the specific skill set of problem-solving to be an essential coping skill for adolescents, helping them move from seeing problems to solving them.[289] Duckworth more abstract, also focused on the idea of hope as a skill for resilience. But the qualifier is made that the hope is driven by a sense of personal agency or action that will be taken to make life better.[290] Christian Smith, Bridget Ritz, and Michael Rotolo place faith as a significant part of coping because it gives individuals the ability to believe that there is purpose in difficulty and that God will work it out.[291]

Summary of Internal Resilience

Internal resilience is built through individuals having solid coping skills, the character that gives them a solid sense of self amid a changing world, continual work on the callings of life, and connections with others, institutions, and organizations.

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[287] Duckworth, *Grit,* 143.

[288] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 46.

[289] Pohl, *Building Resilient Students,* 96.

[290] Duckworth, *Grit,* 69.

[291] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting,* 59.

Family Resilience

Central to parenting is the family system, and central to the idea of resilience is the idea that there is difficulty, and at times even trauma that family systems go through that profoundly impacts the members of that family. Koplewitz states that resilient people help others be resilient. He encourages parents to first secure themselves, understanding that they will better care of their children, monitor their burnout levels, and realize that children have similar mental health issues to their parents.[292] Positively, Duckworth notes that many resilient people followed in the footsteps of parents who were also hardworking and resilient in similar ways.[293]

Differentiation

Koplewitz spends significant time on the parents' attributes and how they manage their own emotions in the process.[294] Ginsburg and Jablow share the vital reality of co-regulation: the calming presence of a parent amid difficulty.[295] Koplewitz encourages patience, warmth, awareness, and monitoring and encourages parents to confront their own negative bias, evaluate their emotional availability and regulation, and spend time relationally with their children.[296] Koplewitz notes that when parents lose emotional

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[292] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 17, 19, 26, 33.

[293] Duckworth, *Grit,* 216.

[294] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 36-37.

[295] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 182.

[296] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 40, 62-63.

control, their children are likely to do so as well. Emotional control and matter-of-fact speech regarding difficulties and dangers helps maintain a sense of trust and stability.[297]

Parenting Technique

Leman brings the category of authoritative rather than authoritarian parenting, which is relationally based and communicates a level of care and understanding without being uncaring.[298] Koplewitz emphasizes that any encouragement should be specifically praising behavior rather than results.[299] In this way, parents can give feedback about the behavior in a focused and helpful way.[300] Duckworth echoes that it is acceptable for children to be expected to follow the rules, giving feedback when it is needed.[301] Underlying high expectations are the ideas of "compromise, flexibility, humility, thoughtfulness."[302]

Koplewitz lists the following cautions. First, do not have children parent their siblings, validate and vacate when attacked, do not tease, stretch and push without breaking, do not ignore problems, and recognize relevant child development.[303] Duckworth notes that at times the message of support sent to children is not consistent,

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[297] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 83, 87, 88.

[298] Kevin Leman, *Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours* (Ada, MI: Revell, 2017), 40.

[299] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 65.

[300] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 67.

[301] Duckworth, *Grit,* 214.

[302] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 230.

[303] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 94, 95, 122, 131, 221.

using the example of being willing to enroll children in many activities but accompanying them only on the ones that had a parental interest.[304]

Koplewitz presents a broader paradigm for parenting for resilience, and it has three different zones of operation: the comfort zone, the growth zone, and the danger zone.[305] If children are pushed beyond their limits, they are in the danger zone, but they will not grow if they are not stretched.[306] He also encourages parents not to allow their children to prematurely give up and to push them to complete their commitments.[307] Duckworth notes that in an experiment with students, those given a chance to do better and given feedback about high expectations did far better work than those who were simply given feedback.[308]

Perseverance

Another essential component of parenting for resilience is teaching and modeling a stable attribution style that enables adolescents to bounce back. Koplewitz notes that there are three main ideas, one is internal, which self-blames; another is external, which is to blame others or circumstance; and the final one is temporary, believing that it can be overcome.[309] Ginsburg and Jablow echo these realities in their work on encouraging the

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[304] Duckworth, *Grit,* 216.

[305] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 131.

[306] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 131.

[307] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 167-168.

[308] Duckworth, *Grit,* 218-219.

[309] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 162-163.

belief that through agency, negotiation, and action, adolescents have a sense of making choices and having a level of control.[310]

What is relevant to defining the characteristics of resilience is understanding the family environments that encourage or discourage resilience. For example, while there are varieties of ways to look at risks for children and adolescents, researchers Julie Goldenson, Kitollari Iljona, and Francesca Lehman have found that adolescents that report four or more childhood traumas on an adverse childhood experiences (ACES) test have less resilience than those with fewer indicators of trauma.[311] (See Appendix A for ACES questions). While difficulty risks may look different for the children of clergy, the goal of this research, as Masden notes, is to look at a group of individuals and study that functioning in resilient ways and gain knowledge from that research to address the broader community.[312]

Duckworth notes that success is often preceded by repeated difficulty, failure, and parents who refuse to allow their children to give up.[313] Related to this idea is that waiting and re-trying results in resilience, using phrases like "I know it is hard, but I think you can handle it."[314] Duckworth noted that a central idea behind this refusal to allow the

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[310] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 331.

[311] Julie Goldenson, Iljona Kitollari, and Francesca Lehman, "The Relationship Between ACEs, Trauma-Related Psychopathology and Resilience in Vulnerable Youth: Implications for Screening and Treatment," *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma* 14 no. 1 (2021): 151. http://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-020-00308-y.

[312] Masten, *Ordinary Magic*, 624.

[313] Duckworth, *Grit,* 203.

[314] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 156.

child to give up was selflessness and support.[315] Put another way, “There is no either/or trade-off between supportive parenting and demanding parenting.”[316] In terms of specific application, Duckworth noted that participation in activities over an extended period with steady and noted progress was a mark of resilience.[317]

Embracing Reality

Another central idea is to let the punishment fit the crime. Koplewitz offers a version of reality discipline.[318] Dr. Kevin Leman defines refers to this as "letting reality be the teacher."[319] He offers the principles of having a healthy sense of authority as a parent, holding children accountable, and allowing the natural consequences of their actions to happen without the parent sheltering the child from them, and at times allowing a less ideal behavior in order to allow the child or young person to learn.[320]

Koplewitz also addresses special needs and gaps between what parents hope for and reality in terms of ability, mental health, and other considerations, offering that unconditional support is important.[321] Andrew Solomon, in his book "Far from the tree," addresses the struggle and the desire for parents to "fix" their children who do not share similar identity patterns, whether that be because of mental, physical, cultural, or

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[315] Duckworth, *Grit,* 207.

[316] Duckworth, *Grit,* 211.

[317] Duckworth, *Grit,* 231.

[318] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 189,193.

[319] Leman, *Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours,* 83.

[320] Leman, *Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours,* 83-84.

[321] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect,* 199.

developmental differences.[322] To apply his idea to Koplewitz, building a scaffold to a building built in an unfamiliar way to the parent is highly challenging when the structure is not consistent with previous hopes and expectations.

Models of Resilience

Masten proposes a primary effect model, a mediator model, and a moderator model for understanding resilience.[323] The primary effect model looks at the direct effects of difficulty and whether the assets can overcome the risks. The mediator model shows the assets as mediating the relationship between the individual and the problem. Finally, the moderator model sees the asset as silent or not part of the awareness until the difficulty and the moderator softens or moderates the impact of the difficulty. These models are not exclusive and can operate simultaneously and be both internal and external in their application.[324] Smith, Christian, Bridget Ritz, and Michael Rotolo note that everything in life has an impact, for good or bad, and can all be navigated with a well-grounded sense of self.[325] In addition, some underlie resilience with a developmental framework, with a specific application for how difficulty is processed based on the developmental level of a child or adolescent.[326]

The challenge of parenting pointed out by Christian Smith, Bridget Ritz, and Michael Rotolo is that parenting for resilience is often tested in the future rather than

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[322] Andrew Solomon, *Far from the Tree: Parents, Children, and the Search for Identity*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2012), 3.

[323] Masten, *Ordinary Magic*, 781-853.

[324] Masten, *Ordinary Magic*, 853.

[325] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting*, 47.

[326] Masten, *Ordinary Magic*, 1015.

immediately.[327] To equip for future resilience, one model of equipping and preparing for the difficulty is a cognitive-behavioral model. Proposed by Khanna and Kendall, this model teaches skills of meditation, mindfulness, and a more substantial level of self-awareness so that children and adolescents can remain present and take action amid difficulty.[328] This form of psychological education and practical resilience training can work in all three of Madsen's models of resilience and is a standard part of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

Summary of Family Resilience

There are a variety of paradigms that can be used to conceptualize how families can promote resilience. The first is for parents to understand that managing their behaviors and emotions will profoundly impact their children, so starting with self is a central parenting idea. Second, parents should recognize that they have authority over their children and exercise that authority selflessly and intentionally that is supportive and pushes their children toward growth. Third, when disciplining, the punishment should fit the crime. Finally, children should be empowered to make choices regarding their own lives and future.

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[327] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting,* 125.

[328] Khanna and Kendall, *The Resilience Recipe,* 75-90.

Community Resilience

In discussing a culture of "grit," Duckworth comments that one of the ways resilience is achieved is to join a group that models it.[329] The quickest way to be on the winning side is to be all in on the team with the most "grit" and take on that sense of "identity."[330] Ginsburg and Jablow concur, noting that expectations of communities will cause young people to adapt and live up to or down to them quickly.[331]

Church Involvement

Christian Smith, Bridget Ritz, and Michael Rotolo found that, community aspects of religious experience, lived out faith, church, Christian friends, and other families nurturing their faith were all significant.[332] While parents do not always think about parenting religiously, they believe that religion is a ground that helps with resilience and provides perspective.[333] Most parents felt like faith communities were there in a supportive role, and connecting with them was another part of how what they were seeking to teach was being re-enforced.[334] Additionally, parents saw the church as part of a solid religious foundation, giving their children a sense of grounding and a place to return if they strayed from the faith. Parents expected their children who drifted away to

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[329] Duckworth, *Grit,* 245.

[330] Duckworth, *Grit,* 250.

[331] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,*" 373.

[332] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting,* 190.

[333] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting,* 50.

[334] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting,* 169.

eventually return to the faith.[335] Researchers Marie Good and Teena Willoughby looked at adolescent adjustment. They found that attending religious activities had a broader and more significant impact on adolescents than their personal beliefs about spirituality.[336]

While religious involvement is generally a positive factor for resilience, some nuances are worth considering. For example, researchers Flavio Marsiglia, Stephanie Ayers, and Steven Hoffman found that when there was incongruence between internal and external religiosity when teens attended church frequently but did not follow the church's beliefs, the result was a propensity toward substance use.[337] Researchers Rebecca Hamblin and Alan Gross found that there was a higher level of anxiety among teens who attended a church and lived at odds with its beliefs.[338]

Positively, Dermot O'Reily and Michael Rosato looked at whether religious belief created resilience regarding suicide. They found that among those struggling with suicidal thoughts were also categorized as conservative Christians, especially at younger ages, it was a strong indicator of resilience.[339] Researchers Caroline Campbell and Sandra

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[335] Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo, *Religious Parenting*, 167.

[336] Marie Good and Teena Willoughby, "The Role of Spirituality Versus Religiosity in Adolescent Psychosocial Adjustment," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 35, no. 1 (February, 2006): 39. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-005-9018-1.

[337] Flavio Francisco Marsiglia, Stephanie L. Ayers, and Steven Hoffman, "Religiosity and Adolescent Substance Use In Central Mexico: Exploring the Influence of Internal and External Religiosity on Cigarette and Alcohol Use," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 49, no. 1-2 (03, 2012): 87. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-011-9439-9.

[338] Rebecca Hamblin and Alan M. Gross, "Role of Religious Attendance and Identity Conflict in Psychological Well-being," *Journal of Religion and Health* 52, no. 3 (09, 2013): 817. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-011-9514-4

[339] O'Reilly, Dermot and Michael Rosato, "Religion and the Risk of Suicide: Longitudinal Study of Over 1 Million People," *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 206, no. 6 (June, 2015): 467. http://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.bp.113.128694.

Bauer note that one of the strengths of resilience in religious communities is that they encourage routines that help individuals to cope with challenges faced in life.[340]

There are also benefits of church attendance that are not strictly religious. Professor Ross Stolzenberg and researchers Mary Blair-Loy and Linda Waite observe that participation in church communities helps individuals build social networks and social contexts.[341] Ginsburg and Jablow comment that part of what makes communities resilient is that rather than trying to control or manage young people, they view them as individuals who have gifts that can contribute to the life of the community.[342]

Educational Involvement

Ginsburg and Jablow emphasize that individuals and organizations that cultivate intentionality around making connections saw positive resilience outcomes.[343] Further, one of the central ideas surrounding resilience is a need for a wide variety of programs, activities, and academic opportunities.[344] Researchers Gabriel Kuperminc, Wing Yi Chan, Katherine Hale, Hannah Joseph, and Claudia Belbasso found that intentionally mentored students in a school-based group showed increases in multiple resilience

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[340] Caroline Campbell and Sandra Bauer, "Christian Faith and Resilience: Implications for Social Work Practice," *Social Work & Christianity* 48, no. 1 (2021): 34.

[341] Ross M. Stolzenberg, Mary Blair-Loy, and Linda J. Waite. "Religious Participation in Early Adulthood: Age and Family Life Cycle Effects on Church Membership." *American Sociological Review* 60, no. 1 (February, 1995): 84. https://doi.org/10.2307/2096347

[342] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 374.

[343] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 376.

[344] Ginsburg and Jablow, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens,* 377.

categories, the most notable being the ability to solve problems.[345] Researchers Ann Masden, Jeanette Herbers, J.J. Cutuli and Theresa Lafavor offer strategies for schools to promote resilience.[346] The first is to do an excellent job at what schools are supposed to do: provide constructive environments for students to develop their skills.[347] The second is to be aware of the risk factors within the community and counteract them individually with students while also working collaboratively with the broader community.[348]

Culture

Psychologist Danute Gailiene, in his research on cultural transmission of resilience, offers that those who live amid an unfriendly culture seem to have fewer adverse effects if they have a strong sense of self, while individuals with less resilience tend to go with the cultural flow.[349] Ann Masden, Jeanette Herbers, J.J. Cutuli and Theresa Lafavor comment that part of what it takes to cultivate a culture of resilience is a willingness to engage the broader community on issues and risk factors. Resilience training should be happening before problems occur rather than reacting to them.[350]

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[345] Gabriel P. Kuperminc, Wing Yi Chan, Katherine E. Hale, Hannah L. Joseph, and Claudia A. Delbasso. "The Role of School-based Group Mentoring in Promoting Resilience among Vulnerable High School Students." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 65, no. 1-2 (March, 2020): 136. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12347

[346] Ann S. Masten, Janette E. Herbers, J. J. Cutuli, and Theresa L. Lafavor, "Promoting Competence and Resilience in the School Context," *Professional School Counseling* 12, no. 2 (December, 2008): 76-84.

[347] Masten, Herbers, Cutuli, and Lafavor, "Promoting Competence and Resilience," 81.

[348] Masten, Herbers, Cutuli, and Lafavor, "Promoting Competence and Resilience," 81.

[349] Daunte Gailienė, "When Culture Fails: Coping with Cultural Trauma." *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 64, no. 4 (September, 2019): 530. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5922.12519

[350] Masten, Herbers, Cutuli, and Lafavor, "Promoting Competence and Resilience," 81.

Researchers Mahdiani Hamideh and Michael Ungar point out that one of the emphases of resilience is individuals adapting to adversity in the community rather than how environmental change might create resilience.[351] One of the challenges connected to complex ecosystems can be that benefiting one part of the system (in this case, individual resilience) could have the cost of damaging the broader cultural system.[352] They also note that children and teens who demonstrate resilience in consistently challenging environments often have symptoms of depression or PTSD. They conclude that resilience can occasionally be a trait that fails to deal with underlying psychological health.[353]

Summary of Community Resilience

Being a part of resilient communities and cultures is central to promoting resilience and being a part of organizations and communities where there is congruent belief with the culture results in greater resilience. Negatively, being a part of organizations where there is no congruent belief and consistent disregard for character and people results in increased anxiety and risk of addictive behaviors.

Summary of Teaching Adolescents Resilience

In teaching resilience, parents need to model resilience in their own lives and cultivate a sense of purpose within their children. The characteristics of individuals who demonstrate resilience are that they are connected to others, they are constantly seeking

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[351] Hamideh Mahdiani and Michael Ungar, "The Dark Side of Resilience," *Adversity and Resilience Science* (2021): 147, https://doi.org/10.1007/s42844-021-00031-z.

[352] Mahdiani and Ungar, “The Dark Side of Resilience,” 148.

[353] Mahdiani and Ungar, “The Dark Side of Resilience,” 148.

to improve their skills through practice, have a solid moral compass and act ethically, and have coping skills for the inevitable struggles. Practical skills that will help parents are learning to be fully supportive, having high expectations, using techniques of discipline that are connected to reality, and encouraging effort ahead of the result. Research has also demonstrated that adolescents connected to community organizations consistently demonstrate more significant levels of resilience.

Summary of Literature Review

Based on the literature review, the pastor as a parent should be aware of three main themes or ideas that should impact parenting. The first is that the unique family system of the pastor has stressors and relational complications that generate more resilience challenges that must be known and responded to. The second is that pastors need to be intentional about building a family system rooted in biblical discipleship for their children and providing spaces and places where their children are not under the microscope. The third is that parents with a high level of differentiation will be able to cultivate the same within their children and will be able to serve as a buffer between the anxieties of a congregation and their children.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore how grown children of lead pastors describe parenting practices they found helpful during their teenage years. The following research questions guided the analysis of the interview data on how children described their parents' practices during their teenage years.

1. What parenting practices concerning involvement in the church do grown children of lead pastors describe as helpful during their teenage years?
2. What hospitality practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?
3. What approaches to the ministry do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?
4. What changes in parenting practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?

Design of the Study

The methodology of the study was a basic qualitative research design with a constructivist approach. Professors Sharan Merriam and Elizabeth Tisdell note that the goal of this type of research is to "describe, understand, and interpret."[354] Merriam and

[354] Merriam, Sharan B, and Elizabeth J Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. Fourth ed. The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2016), 12.

Tisdell emphasize that the data is from the participants' viewpoint or an perspective.[355] Accordingly, the meaning that is being sought in the qualitative research is the meaning attributed to the particular people who are being interviewed.[356] Merriam and Tisdel define four ideas: the process of the interview, the researcher as the data gatherer, inductive work with the data, and rich descriptions of the results.[357] Expanding on these ideas makes the interpersonal interaction and interview a central part of the research, lets the data speak for itself rather than being put into absolute categories, and allows the personal experiences of individuals to be a meeting place for deep listening and understanding. This type of research was chosen for its ability to work on a challenge and gain understanding for experiences that would be difficult to quantify in a qualitative manner.

The researcher gathered the data by using an interview approach that began with specific questions and allowed the interviewer and interviewee some latitude to follow up on answers or re-state questions to gain the most descriptive understanding. The interviewer sought to use Merriam and Tisdell's principles of tolerance for the ambiguous, inductive thought, and thoughtful writing, with responsiveness to what was found during the interviews.[358] In these interviews, the goal was to understand the responses and experiences of the adult children of lead pastors.

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[355] Merriam and Tisdell, *Qualitative Research,* 16.

[356] Merriam and Tisdell, *Qualitative Research,* 16.

[357] Merriam and Tisdell, *Qualitative Research,* 15.

[358] Merriam and Tisdell, *Qualitative Research,* 18.

Participant Sample Selection

To provide this study relevant data towards best practices, participants were screened and selected for the following characteristics. First, they had been the child of a church lead pastor of a congregation between 50 and 400 people. Limiting the subjects to those whose clergy parent was a lead pastor seeks to discern the specific dynamics of being in the spotlight that other clergy roles may not experience. Further, limiting the church's size seeks to find subjects whose clergy parents dealt with similar ministry contexts to minimize variables that are not relevant to this study's focus.

Second, the participants were between the ages of 18-25 years old. Subjects were selected between these ages to get the most recent possible data set that would consider the current cultural realities that pastors and their families experience.

Third, the participant criteria require those who were currently a member of a Christian church and are self-described active followers of Jesus Christ. These limiting criteria provided the narrow focus of best practices for faith being passed successfully between generations within the nuclear family. Therefore, it provides a distinct evaluative criterion towards effective and nurturing parenting such that parenting practices were likely validating and encouraging Christian faith experiences, beliefs, and values.

Fourth, the clergy parent served a church as a member of the National Association of Presbyterian and Reformed Church (NAPARC). Subjects were chosen from these churches in order to better seek data from a similar background.

Fifth, subjects were screened on a subjective self-report that sought a more positive rather than negative experience of the church and their parents during their teenage years. This screening aimed to keep the interviews positive towards best

practices and seek interviewees that would have richly descriptive and positive insights on what was helpful in their teenage years. This reflection was central to the interviewee's ability to provide rich data for the research.

Finally, the researcher used a criterion for interview subjects who grew up in a household with one mother and one father. The parents remained married until the date of the interview. This limits the household relationship context to keep possible variables in the data limited.

The study was conducted with personal interviews of seven different subjects who met the above criterion and were identified through personal networking and resources within NAPARC denominations. They were initially contacted via email to determine interest, and those that expressed interest were asked to confirm that they met the research criteria. Each participant consented to the research through informed consent by signing a "Research Participant Consent Form" as is duplicated below.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM
FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

I agree to participate in the research which is being conducted by Luke Wynja to investigate how children of lead pastors experienced parenting practices during their teenage years for the Doctor of Ministry degree program at Covenant Theological Seminary. I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary. I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the participation results, to the extent that they can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed from the research records, and/or destroyed.
The following points have been explained to me:
1) The purpose of the research is to investigate how children of lead pastors experienced parenting practices during their teenage years.
2) Potential benefits of the research may include a better understanding of complicated clergy family systems, better parenting practices for clergy parents, a greater understanding of the personal experiences of clergy children. Though there are no direct benefits for participants, I hope they will be encouraged by the experience of sharing their experiences with a researcher that is eager to learn and listen well.

3) The research process will include seven individuals, and the interviews will be recorded and made into a transcript.
4) Participants in this research will fill out an informed consent form, a brief demographic/background form, and a form to confirm best fit for the research, and participate in a 90-minute interview if chosen. The entire process should take no more than two hours.
5) Potential discomforts or stresses: The individual may recall difficulty or challenging situations from their growing up years.
6) Potential risks: Minimal risks include Participants are asked to reveal personal information regarding individual viewpoints, background, experiences, behaviors, attitudes or beliefs, are selected to participate based upon particularly unique characteristics (e.g., they all hold the same position in an organization; they have similar training; or, they come from a similar background), or extraordinary life experience, topics or questions raised are probably politically, emotionally, culturally, spiritually, or psychologically sensitive, participants are required to reflect upon their own behavior, values, relationships, or person in such a way that one might be influenced or affected, and/or anxiety or concern might be raised regarding the subject matter of the inquiry, participants may have regrets, concerns, afterthoughts, or reactions to the interview, participants may become tired, weakened, or be mentally or physically impacted in any way from the research interview, and the research may inconvenience participants by causing a delay or intrusion into their activities and/or may take more than 20 minutes of the participants' time.
7) Any information that I provide will be held in strict confidence. At no time will my name be reported along with my responses. The data gathered for this research is confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without my prior consent, unless otherwise required by law. Audiotapes or videotapes of interviews will be erased following the completion of the dissertation. By my signature, I am giving informed consent for the use of my responses in this research project.
8) Limits of Privacy: I understand that, by law, the researcher cannot keep information confidential if it involves abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, or plans for a person to harm themselves or to hurt someone else.
9) The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the study.

_____

Printed Name and Signature of Researcher Date

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Printed Name and Signature of Participant Date

Please sign both copies. Keep one. Return the other to the researcher. Thank you.

Research at Covenant Theological Seminary, which involves human participants, is overseen by the Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding your rights as a participant should be addressed to: Director, Doctor of Ministry; Covenant Theological Seminary; 12330 Conway Road; St. Louis, MO 63141; Phone (314) 434-4044.

Data Collection

The primary tool for data collection during this qualitative research was semi-structured interviews with seven individuals. Each interview was approximately 90 minutes. The interviews were done via a secure virtual conference internet platform to ensure subject confidentiality and were also recorded for scripting. Carol Kinsey Goman comments that much of communication is based on body language including "eye contact, affirmative head nodding, leaning forward, and smiling."[359] While virtual interviews offer some shortcomings, the interviewer sought to use positive body language and looked for incongruence and congruence between the limited upper body language and what was being spoken, and were scripted within a day of the interview being conducted completed. The interviews were video recorded to allow for further analysis regarding incongruences. Because the subjects did not have to be physically present for the interviews, it allowed for tighter study participant criteria. Personal notes and observations were compiled regarding the participants' comfort, body language, and overall demeanor to further the depth of understanding the data.

Before the interviews were performed, several individuals were screened to refine the interview process and to determine the usefulness of specific questions in providing the type of data sought for the research. As a result, the interview questions were made more precise. The researcher sought to continually refine the process in order to elicit

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[359] Carol Kinsey Goman, 2008, *The Nonverbal Advantage: Secrets and Science of Body Language at Work*, (San Francisco, Calif: Berrett-Koehler Publishers), 5.

rich descriptions of the participants' experiences. These interviews were completed over a period of 10 days. After each interview, the researcher reviewed the manuscript and highlighted vital phrases and answers, wrote personal observations and key ideas, and created groupings and categorizations under the main research questions.

The interview protocol contained the following questions:

1. Tell me about a situation when your parents were particularly helpful to you in your teenage years.
2. Describe to me your parent's hospitality practices during your teenage years.
3. Describe for me how your parents approached your involvement in ministry.
4. Tell me a story about a time when your parents seemed to change their approach to parenting.

Data Analysis

Professors Sharan Merriam and Elizabeth Tisdell discuss the importance of analyzing data even as you collect it.[360] Further, they note the process of "moving back and forth from inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation."[361] This research employed this constant comparative method. Researchers Julie Green, Karen Willis, Emma Hughes, Rhona Small, Nicky Welch, Lisa Gibbs, and Jeanne Daly offer a qualitative process of coding data through immersion, coding,

[360] Merriam and Tisdell, *Qualitative Research,* 195.

[361] Merriam and Tisdell, *Qualitative Research,* 202.

categorizing, and then moving toward themes.[362] The transcripts were reviewed for data (immersion). Data was searched for common themes and ideas (open coding), followed by the narrowing to relevant data (selective coding), which led to theories being postulated (themes), which points toward the result of the project, which is the analysis of richly descriptive data.

Researcher Position

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary data collection and analysis instrument. This researcher seeks to understand the data and the subjects' experiences from a Christian perspective that values ministry work and the pastors that serve local churches. The researcher strives to understand how the Christian message is understood by those closest to those who speak the Christian message to others and their communities. The assumption is that faith retention and involvement in their faith tradition is the goal of effective parenting. This assumption is not independent of other measures of psychological health and well-being. Still, this study aims to help pastors cultivate faith in the lives of their children as they transition to adulthood.

This subject is interested because the researcher is the child of a NAPARC church pastor, having attended college and seminary at schools run by a NAPARC denomination, as an ordained minister in a NAPARC denomination, and often works with pastors and consults with churches. It is also of interest to the researcher regarding immediate family members moving through the teen years under similar circumstances.

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[362] Julie Green, Karen Willis, Emma Hughes, Rhonda Small, Nicky Welch, Lisa Gibbs, and Jeanne Daly, "Generating Best Evidence from Qualitative Research: The Role of Data Analysis*," Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 31, no. 6 (2007): 547.

The researcher brings to this subject additional interest in working in a college counseling center with ministry majors and as an adjunct psychology professor. The researcher also has a wide variety of school experiences and as a lead pastor. The researcher also desires to understand individuals' backgrounds and histories and how those experiences have positively and negatively shaped their faith formation.

These experiences give a depth and breadth of first-hand experiences that enable the research to be approached from biblical, psychological, cultural, and church systems perspectives. The immediacy of connection with youth culture and knowledge through teaching and counseling also gives me a sense of how the world is changing and is a place where adaptive change is necessary.

Being embedded in a particular culture and context can often promote bias or an overlaying personal experience upon those interviewed. The researcher sought to standardize initial questions and let the subjects answer freely with neutral prompts during the interviews to avoid this overlay. The desire was to allow the interviews to focus on the gathered data and allow those interviewed to reflect and share outlying data. In presenting the information, objectivity and accuracy were valued within the worldview of valuing faith formation and retention.

Study Limitations

Due to limited resources and time, this study is limited to participants in a particular network of denominations. Because the data is from individuals that grew up in Presbyterian and Reformed churches in the United States of America and Canada, there may be times when it is only relevant to that context. Also, because the participants' age limits the data, it would specifically apply to generation Z individuals' experience (Born

1997-2012), with many observations being relevant to the millennial generation. The researcher also noted that the individuals interviewed were primarily of majority culture. This research does not represent family structures and values from other cultures and contexts. Readers who desire to apply to other contexts should test those applications with care and cultural sensitivity.

It is also important to note that while data from the study has broader applicability, the interviews and the analysis are more focused and less generalizable. The data is descriptive of the subject's experiences and helpful because of the first-hand experience's depth. Still, because of the study's limits, the data is not prescriptive in terms of the experiences or information available in a much larger research project. Thus, the application and applicability remain the reader's responsibility related to their specific context and frame of reference.

Chapter 4

Findings

This study aimed to understand how grown children of lead pastors describe parenting practices they found helpful during their teenage years. These individuals were chosen because of their first-hand experience and fulfilling the specific denominational, age, faith, and positive self-report criteria. This chapter takes the data of the seven interviews and reports on the themes and insights that connect to the research questions. To address the purpose of this study, the following research questions informed the qualitative research:

1. What parenting practices concerning involvement in the church do grown children of lead pastors describe as helpful during their teenage years?
2. What hospitality practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?
3. What approaches to the ministry do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?
4. What changes in parenting practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?

Introductions to Participants and Context

Seven individuals between the ages of 18-and 25 whose parent was a clergy member in a NAPARC denomination were selected to participate in the research. These

individuals self-reported that they were active in the church, they followed Jesus, and that on a scale of 1-10, they rated their experience at six or above for both parents and church. The names and any identifiable information have been changed to ensure confidentiality. The participants were assured that all recordings, transcripts, and other information would be secure throughout the process. The names, identifying details, and further details have been altered to ensure this confidentiality is honored.

In his early twenties, Andrew is a college student whose parent is a clergy member of a congregation in the SW United States. In terms of birth order, he is one of the middle children in his family, and he reported a very positive experience with both his parents and the church. His clergy parent served the same congregation during his childhood and teenage years.

Joel is established in his career and life and is in his mid-twenties. His clergy parent is a moderately sized church pastor in the Midwest. He is the oldest child in his family, and he reported a very positive experience with his church and his parents. He was part of the same congregation for his growing up and teenage years.

Isaac is a college student whose clergy parent pastored one congregation until he was in the middle of high school and then has pastored another congregation. These congregations were in the southern states and the northeast. He is in his early twenties, is the oldest child in his family of origin, and reports a very positive experience with his church and parents.

James is a college student whose clergy parent pastored a church in the northeast and then re-located to the southern United States. He is a middle child and expressed positive experiences in the church and with his parents.

Emma is a college student in her early 20s whose clergy parent pastored one congregation until she was in elementary school and another congregation since then. She is one of the middle children in her family of origin. The churches her clergy parent served were in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Emma reported a positive experience with her parents and the church.

Martha is a college student in her late teens whose clergy parent has pastored in two congregations, one until she was in her mid-teens and then another since then. She is one of the middle children in her family of origin. She lived in various areas in the eastern United States and reported very positive experiences with parenting and positive experiences with the church.

In her early twenties, Angie is a college student whose clergy parent pastored the same congregation in the southern United States for all her teenage years. She is the oldest child in her family of origin and reported a positive experience with her parents and church.

Parenting Practices Concerning Involvement in the Church

The first research question sought to understand what parenting practices concerning involvement in the church do grown children of lead pastors describe as helpful during their teenage years? To facilitate the conversation, a variety of questions were asked, including:

i. Describe a situation regarding ministry involvement where your parents were particularly helpful to you in your teen years?

ii. Describe for me your parent's philosophy of parenting?

iii. Describe your family's spiritual routines?

iv. Describe for me your role in your church?

Expectations

In differing ways, the participants interacted with the idea of expectations in ministry contexts. For some participants, expectations were a well-assimilated part of their identity and were not a source of personal stress or conflict. For example, Joel, James, and Martha expressed it was just their routine everyday existence, with Joel commenting, "I do not have another experience." On the other side of the continuum, Angie felt somewhat " invisible " expectations for her. Nevertheless, whether expectations were a source of stress or not, they were present in the lives of clergy children.

Managing Expectations

While there seemed to be a variety of approaches to managing expectations, a technique that helped many of the interviewees was that clergy parents provided clarity to the expectations. Those who understood and met expectations had a greater congruence and less stress around those expectations. Joel felt that his parents ensured that "there was not an image that I had to live up to being a pastor's kid." James commented that he always thought what his family did was “normal.” Isaac shared that his parents managed others' expectations by "graciously" talking to them if the expectations were beyond what was expected of a regular "member of the church." Meeting expectations decreased stress for clergy children, and mediating expectations when they are unrealistic also contributed to a positive experience.

Another approach to expectations was to process them together as a family. Angie's parents would discuss expectations as a family, and they would sometimes use humor to help. She remembered a situation in the church where it would have been politically difficult for her parents to deal directly with the person and recalled how they talked about it and joked about it as a family. Andrew spoke about how he was teased about being a clergy child and how his parents would talk through and work with him rather than directly intervene. The specific technique that was helpful in these cases was that these expectations were on the parents' radar, and they were intentional about processing them together.

Undefined Expectations

At times expectations that were a part of the interviewees' experience came up, and they struggled to define them. Angie offered a variation in that she felt an "invisible" expectation. She thought she should be a "role model" and "participate in an extremely enthusiastic way" in ministry activities. However, she shared that she did not think "anyone meant to tell me to do that." When her parents sought to give choices to her, she did not feel the freedom to choose. Among the interviewees, she articulated the experience of having times when she felt in high school that she gravitated toward the idea that she did not fit in and found friendship with other students that "did not fit in."

Positive Expectations

Another theme that several interviewees expressed is well summarized by Andrew, who felt that there were quite a few "jokes and references" about being a clergy

child. His parents' approach was to encourage him to be unashamed of his parent being in the ministry and to appreciate the high calling of his father being a pastor. Andrew expressed that his parents made expectations for church very clear to him when needed and allowed him to be "led by the spirit." Emma said a different idea of taking on the identity of a clergy child as being extremely positive. She felt like "the celebrity of the church" in her younger years, and she embraced and appreciated that role. James summarized how his father normalized expectations, saying that "Whether you want to or not, you are representing me, and in a way, the church," and he commented, "That has never been a burden to me, but it has been something I am aware of." The effective technique of parents was to normalize the status of being a clergy child and help their children embrace appropriate expectations.

Summary of Expectations

The majority of those interviewed were parented in a way that managed expectations well. The techniques of adjusting a set of expectations to a level like other non-clergy children, allowing them to take the initiative regarding their church involvement, choices regarding church involvement, and embracing their position as a clergy child were all approaches used together or in piecemeal. Central to expectations were the techniques of parental awareness regarding specific unrealistic expectations, coaching children through situations where there was incongruence, and direct parental intervention regarding unrealistic expectations.

Communication

Another category that came up frequently around effective parenting in the ministry context was communication. In particular, the interviewees expressed that their parents were available to them and often came to them when they felt that it was necessary. However, the most potent theme was a universal sense that clergy children valued their parents taking the time to know them as individuals and communicate with them about ministry and life.

Individual Relationship

The interviewees found their parents communicated with them as part of an individual relationship. Andrew offered that having a "one on one" relationship was important. Joel commented, "I felt like I could ask my dad or mom anything," and his parents were available to "talk through" challenges he was facing. He also used the term "intentional conversations" when there were life changes or transitions. Martha expressed that one of the critical characteristics of helping children navigate life is having a solid set of communication skills and for parents to be open to whatever their children might have to say. She commented, "I could talk to them even if it were a complaint or something we did not understand." Andrew commented that his parents were in "constant communication with each other" and would initiate conversations when they sensed a need for them.

Angie commented that her parents listened "even if it was the same stuff I said last time" and their listening was "really big." James felt his clergy parent respected his opinions and wanted to know them. Emma commented that her mom was very helpful to

her in helping her "talk through" career choices and that her parents were both "really great" to talk through that and similar things as well. Without exception, the interviewees viewed communication within a one-on-one relationship to be very important for parenting.

Communication and Discipline

One of the significant issues in parenting that requires communication is discipline. Joel commented that his parents always communicated to him before and after discipline what the issues were and clearly stated that they and God loved him. Emma noted that her parents used (and maybe overused) diagrams and other communication aids around the subject of discipline to communicate well. Isaac looked to his parent's persistent counsel and patience to help him through challenging moments in life. Andrew commented that his later teen years' conversations around his behavior were "very impactful." His parents also clearly communicated the reasons for discipline and how they changed how they parented as he progressed through his teen years. James, Andrew, and Angie all identified communication between the parents regarding parenting and discipline as very important. All but one of the interviewees volunteered that they were disciplined through spanking when they were children. They also commented that other forms of discipline that involved direct communication were used as they reached their teen years.

Communication Surrounding Church

In terms of ministry, communication often took on the role of giving adequate information about the given situation. Joel commented that sometimes it was "not something you need to know," and when his parents felt it was relevant, "we would talk about it at the table." He said, "I could be legitimately curious and ask," and often, he would be given some "high-level situational awareness" regarding the situation. Angie appreciated the times her parents would come to her with ministry-related things and ask her if she would give input. She commented, "It made me feel valued, even though I was younger than them." Emma commented that her parents "protected" her and "I did not have to worry about what was going on in the church." She shared that "My parents did an outstanding job of protecting me from that hurt that could have happened during my formative years in my relationship with the church." Martha expressed a similar idea that her clergy parent communicated that some "burdens" were his to bear and gave only information his children needed. In Emma's case, as she grew up, her parents more often asked her about her opinions regarding things at church, and she was able to share honestly.

Isaac shared that his parents would sometimes explain something that would happen at church in advance to him and his siblings so that they would not be surprised and know how to respond godly. Andrew reported that his parents "Strategically released information to me," but they did not communicate much about what went on behind the scenes in ministry. However, when it impacted him, they would communicate basic information and share a more significant degree when he was older and better understood the situations. Most of the interviewees felt their parents told them more in their later

teens and could understand and process it constructively. Joel articulated the spirit of many of the interviews when he used the word “intentional” to describe how his parents had conversations and interacted with him.

Summary of Communication

Effective parenting requires intentional communication patterns that specifically relate to the unique needs and interests of individual children. Interviewees believed that parents were available and prioritized communication with their children. Positive experiences were had by interviewees whose parents had given them sufficient information about situations that directly impacted them in an age-appropriate way and sheltered their children from situations when they did not have a direct impact.

Parenting Methodology

One of the routines that came up in every interview was parenting philosophy and the practical outworking through the strategies used.

Strong Foundation

Each of the interviewees experienced very intentional teaching in their family and gave a "strong foundation." Emma expressed that her parents taught her the catechism and were "excited" to answer her questions about the Bible. Angie commented that they did "a lot," including prayer, scripture memorization, and Bible study techniques. Isaac commented that he acquired an "extensive" knowledge of the Bible and theology. Every interviewee expressed that, especially in their younger years, their family was a place where they systematically learned the basic facts of the faith. A majority said that they

felt that the church and their family worked together to solidify their faith. This foundation was cited as the basis for the techniques used in the teen years. Emma expressed that it gave her a sense of having a solid base to work from and was helpful when she was processing questions about faith, life, and other topics that happened to come up. Angie expressed that she was grateful that her parents learned about the Bible and theology and saw this as advantageous for clergy children.

Within this category but from a slightly different angle, clergy children have uniquely lived experiences with other people that are also formational. Angie expressed this as her parents offering "practical" advice and counsel based on what they saw in their ministry contexts. She and others articulated experiencing a front-row seat for many different life situations (some clergy families sat in the front row at church!). Through being a clergy child, they received positive knowledge and practical wisdom.

Transition

There were varying ways of expressing how parenting methods transitioned as time went on, but there was a similarity of understanding among the interviewees. For example, Joel said that as a young child, it was like his parents "pulled him along," then in the teen years, it transitioned to "side by side," and then toward the end of his teen years, it was one of encouragement moving toward the interviewee being on their own. James expressed this in terms of guard rails that were present at a young age and gradually taken down, and Emma characterized this transition as allowing her to "deal with the consequences" of her actions. Andrew conceptualized this dynamic by expressing that his parents would give him freedom. If he used that freedom well, it

would result in more freedom, and if he used it poorly, it would result in correction and a pulling in of those freedoms.

As these applied to the church, most clergy parents allowed their children freedom to find their place and serve. For Isaac, Andrew, and James, this meant intentionally seeking roles to teach and serve. James expressed that serving was simply "what you did." Most of the interviewees were involved in the church through their teen years and currently as well, and most reported not feeling obligated or pressured to do so. The fruit of parents giving increasing freedom resulted in ownership of the importance of church and active involvement out of choice rather than obligation. These concepts were universal and could be summarized as an effective parenting technique that increases responsibility and freedom as children enter and progress through their teen years. One of the themes that were indicative of effective parenting, according to the interviewees and articulated most clearly by Emma, was a teaching style that was strong on the fundamentals but willing to let teens come to their conclusion on matters of opinion.

For many interviewees, their parents had completed formal parenting roles and continued to support their children in their lives outside their homes. After every phone call with his parents, Andrew commented that they expressed, "We are honored to be whom you called to ask advice." When he disagreed with his parents, Andrew reported that his clergy parent said, "I want you to know how proud I am and how thankful I am for how you handled that disagreement we had." Others expressed how their parents support their education, careers, and other live activities without controlling their decisions.

Entering Struggle

Among the interviewees, many different warm-hearted expressions fit the category of what Emma expressed as "my dad is a great dad." These expressions of affection and appreciation usually circulated about how parents had entered life's struggles with the interviewees. Isaac and Joel expressed gratitude for their parent's loving engagement with them amid struggling with sin, saying their "respect" for their parents. Emma and Angie expressed appreciation for how their parents had helped them in their education. Andrew told how much he appreciated his clergy parent always willing to set aside whatever he was doing to engage him. He commented that his clergy parent "painstakingly cultivated a desire in his sons to share with him what we are struggling with." James greatly appreciated the work that he did "side by side" with his parents. Martha expressed appreciation for how her parents encouraged her to develop her gifts. It was clear that the love they felt for their parents was at least in some way set up by their experience of parents helping amid the struggles and concerns of their life, treating those concerns seriously, and using that as an opportunity to encourage them. The technique used by parents was built upon observation of their children and meeting them amid their struggles with sin, identity, and ministry, among others. The theme of treating them as unique individuals with gifts to be developed was prevalent in the interviews. It was significant that their parents prioritized them, heard them as unique individuals, and worked with them toward their goals.

Identity

Within the realm of identity, several interviewees touched directly on how their parents had helped them form a solid identity as a pastor's child. Joel addressed the issue separately from being a clergy child regarding adjustment to an educational environment. Angie addressed it directly in similar ways. Andrew addressed directly how he had been encouraged to value his identity and position as a clergy child. Emma talked about her parents encouraging her in extra-curricular activities. James seemed to have an excellent sense of who he was and his role within his family of origin. In different ways and with different expressions, each of the interviewees had developed a sense of who they were and where they fit in the world.

Summary of Parenting Methodology

Effective parenting included a foundation of scripture in younger years and a sense of greater freedom or "reality" techniques as the teenage years progressed. Especially effective parenting happens when parents take the concerns and challenges of their children and engage them in helpful ways to help them overcome those challenges. As that engagement occurs, a solid identity is formed.

Summary of Parenting Practices

Parenting practices that were helpful concerning involvement in the church were managing expectations, clearly defining what was expected, and working to have the expectations expressed clearly and embraced by clergy children. In addition, parents who prioritize communication give sufficient but not exhaustive information and, gradually, over time, fill in more details in an age-appropriate manner. In terms of methodology,

effective parents had a common technique of communicating biblical content to their children in their younger years, transitioning to freedom in applying that information as their children grew. Finally, there was a universal sense of appreciation toward parents who entered life alongside their children and helped them through challenging situations.

Helpful Hospitality Practices

The second research question sought to determine what hospitality practices they describe as helpful during their teenage years? To facilitate the conversation, a variety of questions were asked, including:

i. Describe your parent's hospitality practices?

ii. Tell me about your involvement in hospitality?

iii. Tell me how your parents approached your family's interactions with others in the church?

Hospitality Practices

In the realm of hospitality, two general categories quickly became apparent. First, it was formational in significant ways for most interviewees and informed how they were involved in ministry. Second, the way they did hospitality was impacted by the gifts of the clergy member and their family.

Giftedness

For a minority, hospitality in their immediate home was not a part of standard ministry patterns. James explained that while his family often has people coming through and does meaningful practice hospitality, his clergy parent is an introvert. Since he had

multiple responsibilities on Sunday mornings and evenings, he often felt that he needed rest. Angie explained that while her parents would often go out with others and do things in the community and practice hospitality as a part of a counseling ministry, they seemed to look at their home as a "safe haven." In these cases, clergy parents practiced hospitality differently according to their gifts and situations.

Hospitality as Ministry

For many of the interviewees, hospitality was a highlight of their ministry experience. Joel mentioned that his parent's practices were something that he has "been trying to replicate" in his own life. He commented that his parents would often have people from church and that friends were always welcome. In addition, his friends had felt welcome and would drop in to visit with his parents when he was not at home! He commented that his friends would often stay over, and his parents always liked to see them and would always make them feel at home. Andrew had similar expressions in that at holidays, the house was always full of guests who had nowhere to go, and for a season, all the church's singles would come over every Sunday evening.

Emma expressed that hospitality was her parent's "biggest thing." Her parent's love for people and hosting gave her a great desire to do the same thing when she has her own home. She commented, "It is just such a cool thing to have that kind of fellowship and prioritize that fellowship." She commented on the memories of being a "big sister" to kids that came to their home, events around sports, and how hospitality was simply an excellent way to "enjoy" people. Her parents would host friends in quarantine during

covid, bring meals to her at college, and work to use hospitality to connect and remain connected to her and the church.

Isaac felt that hospitality was one of the ways that he meaningfully connected with other people. As he built those relationships, he understood how the people he interacted with were "intentionally" reading or learning things that were of interest to him to build that relationship. He commented that as an adult, some of the favorite parts of his church involvement circulated hospitality events. In his own words, "That was one of my favorite memories from that time, having a bunch of people over and fellowshipping with them." Within all these expressions, there was a clear sense that within the realm of hospitality, clergy children felt a connection to others and could be a part of their parent's ministry in a way that was, as Emma put it, "cool."

The Lessons of Hospitality

Within the context of hospitality, clergy children learned many different lessons. For example, Andrew's parents would make sure that he and his siblings would talk to people at church that they did not know well every Sunday. He remembers his parents expressing, "You need to befriend others, even if they do not want to befriend you." This love of hospitality created a desire to be hospitable now and in the future for Emma and Joel. Several mentioned being asked to care for younger children, clean the house, help with cooking, and many other logistics that gave them a sense of "connection."

Andrew noted that through hospitality, he saw very clearly compassion in action to those outside the church; Emma said how she was able to be a part of ministry to children in her community through her parent's open-door policy. Joel noted how his

parents came to know his friends outside the church at a meaningful level through hospitality.

Summary of Hospitality Practices

The relational impact of the families that practiced hospitality as part of ministry felt deeply. Many clergy children were allowed to work side by side with their parents and relate to members of the congregation. When they did this, clergy children cited this as a positive impact on their relational and spiritual formation.

Relational Support

Related to hospitality is the idea of relational support. In giving and receiving hospitality, clergy members and their children make relational connections and develop friendships, identity, and a sense of self.

Hospitality of Peers

Hospitality served as significant support for clergy children in their friendships. Their experience was that when their parents had an open home for ministry purposes, they had an available home for peers. Emma commented, "I love bringing people to my parent's house." Joel commented that his parents were always willing to have his friends come over and how much "hanging out" happened at his parent's home. Andrew commented, "We did not even have to ask" whether friends could come over after school or other times. Clergy children whose parents had opened doors for their friends reported that this technique was highly positive for them and made them feel valued.

Clergy Social Support

Related to hospitality is the question of how clergy families receive social support. A particular pattern within the interviews developed around clergy families and clergy members receiving social support. In the case of Andrew, his clergy parent received social support from other pastors and even made specific efforts to be friendly to all people but did not have close friendships with people within the church because that might "show favoritism." Isaac's family regularly connected with other pastoral families returning to their seminary days. Emma commented that some of her parent's friends from seminary even were referred to as Aunt and Uncle, and other pastors were a significant part of her clergy parent's support system. Joel commented that other pastors and another pastoral couple were of substantial support to his parents and some key leaders in the church. Angie identified friends from before her parents entered the ministry as essential social supports for them with annual times away and commented on how her parents had some struggles related to friendships within the church they served. In the interviews, what was of particular interest was how many identified that direct social support for their parents came from long-standing relationships with people who were not an immediate part of their current ministry context and relationships before they entered the ministry. In the case of clergy spouses, relational support was alluded to as being more connected to the local church, and on occasion, those friendships ended with church conflict.

Clergy Children Social Support

Social support for clergy children seemed to be formed by the contexts in which they operated. Andrew, Angie, and James identified finding social support with others who either were clergy children or did not fit in (although not exclusively). They operated within a relational network of friends with some characteristics of third culture kids. When clergy children were involved in many community activities, they had friends from a broad cross-section of their communities. In the case of Isaac, the children of his parent's closest friends were also significant social support to him in his childhood and teenage years. Emma and others talked about having friends in their neighborhoods and communities. Regardless of where the social help came from and the various personalities of the interviewees, they all identified ways in which they received social support from community networks and churches in their teenage years.

Summary of Relational Support

All clergy families found some support from structures and people developed in their pre-ministry days or through people who were not a part of their churches. The social support of clergy children was enhanced by an open-door policy for their peers and their parents' relationships. It was further enhanced when clergy children had relationships with the broader community outside their immediate church context.

Summary of Helpful Hospitality Practices

Helpful hospitality practices, which included welcoming church members, community members, peers, and others into their homes, were significant in social and

ministry formation and identity. In addition, it was helpful for clergy couples and their children to practice hospitality for those outside of the church. In many cases, hospitality was a form of outreach for them and their families and extended their love for people.

Helpful Approaches to Ministry

The third research question was What approaches to the ministry do they describe as helpful during their teenage years? To facilitate the conversation, a variety of questions were asked, including:

i. Describe for me how your parents approached your involvement in ministry?

ii. Tell me about your parent's ministry priorities?

iii. Describe how you felt your experience was most similar to peers whose parents were not members of the clergy?

Priority of Family

While there were many different ministry techniques and methods, there was a broad sense in all the interviews that, at minimum, family and ministry were equal priorities. More often, there was a strong sense of a focus on family. Angie said there might have been "more emphasis on our family than it should have been, but I felt like I was getting the better end of the deal." Andrew commented that his clergy parent specifically taught his children how his family prioritized him more than his ministry. Joel commented that his parents were "intentional" about wanting to be present and support their children in what they were doing.

Boundaries

While interviewees did not express the concept of boundaries in words, they described it in countless ways through how clergy parents mediated challenges that could have damaged their children's relationship with the church, set aside family time and days off, and guarded family time. Isaac and Angie expressed that they took the time to teach their children of the Lord and be present in their families. Angie commented that her parents had Friday “fun night.” Andrew remembers his parents attended sports events faithfully. Emma reflected on how her parents helped her pursue her goals, and each interviewee provided many other examples. More specifically, the boundaries were made clear in how interviewees expressed the exceptions. Joel commented that his parents would communicate when a ministry-related appointment took president because the norm was for his parents being present. Isaac shared how his dad always set aside a day off except for emergencies and that his parents "desired to honor God rather than what other people in the church thought." Built into the priority of family was having time or margin so that clergy children’s concerns were of primary rather than secondary importance. By creating a margin to be with their children and families, pastors also made healthy environments for themselves. Embedded in the interviewees' families was a sense that they, as children, mattered to their parents, and no matter how crazy ministry was, they made their children a priority. Andrew summarized this by saying:

> He has never once talked to me while still typing or at the computer when I walked in the room. If he did not shut the laptop, he turned his chair completely. Moreover, everything would be done (whether it was or not), and he would look at me. He would switch out of work mode.

Side by Side

Clergy children reported many great memories when their parents included them in ministry. James stated that he thought it was customary for all families to do ministry together as a child. Angie felt a part of her parent's ministry as they involved her by asking for help or advice. Emma thought that she worked and volunteered in the church because "they were not doing anything else," but it was seen as more something she willingly did, and her parents were good, except if she did not want to participate. Martha appreciated the opportunity to help in ministry and take a role when it presented itself. Joel expressed that his dad would take a sibling or himself along when doing ministry when it was possible. Positive ministry experiences often happened when clergy families saw themselves as collectively in ministry together. While clergy children appreciated not being forced to do ministry, it was evident in the interviews that most had good experiences doing ministry side by side with their parents.

Summary of Priority of Family

Prioritizing family as the first ministry gives clergy children a sense of importance and their parents are for them. Further enhancing this dynamic are clear boundaries between family and church when needed and including children when practical.

Character

What was central to the experience of clergy children was the character of their parents. The interviewees all held respect for their parents and for the work that they had done in ministry. They also offered observations on practical approaches to ministry from a perspective as ministry overlapped with family life.

Consistency

Joel felt like his clergy parent's authenticity and genuineness in ministry were apparent. He repeated that his parents were "intentional" in parenting and ministry. Emma observed something similar in that her clergy parent had an evident sense of worship and was unwilling to compromise for expedient reasons. She echoed Martha and Andrew in her appreciation that conflict within the church was dealt with in a way that displayed integrity. James commented that his parent's consistency in teaching the scriptures was an example that he "caught" rather than something that was "taught." Andrew expressed that his clergy parent was very earnest and sincere, and this consistent pattern of seeking to minister God's word to the people of God was highly formative for both church and family. The interviewees expressed that their parents' consistency, clarity, and integrity enabled them to approach ministry effectively and enabled their parenting.

Application of Knowledge

A part of parenting where the clergy is particularly helpful is applying knowledge. Isaac acknowledged that he had to learn that knowledge did not make one godly, but at the same time, he had a great appreciation for the depth and breadth of biblical knowledge he acquired from his parents. As a parent and a pastor, Andrew greatly appreciated that his dad was passionate about applying the Bible to life and did so through teaching him and his siblings in various forms and contexts. Emma loved that her parents could be people she could refer others to for answers about the church, the Bible,

worship, and other subjects when she did not know the answer. Clergy children benefited by being "pastored" by parents who had a strong knowledge of the Bible and Christian living. As this relates to approaches to ministry, the interviewees, in discussing their parent's ministries, indirectly indicated that the way they approached shepherding their family had significant overlap with how they approached ministry.

Differentiation

There were various observations from the interviewees regarding differentiation, although that term was never used. Andrew observed that his clergy parent seemed very adept at altering his demeanor, posture, and attitude when he needed to. Angie commented that she had seen growth in her parents to differentiate their well-being from circumstances over her teen years. She commented on the importance of her parents reminding themselves, "we are not Jesus." Andrew's clergy parent talked to him about being careful about how you entered relationships with others in the church. He reflected that it "can look bad on a pastor's ministry like he might be showing favoritism or partiality, and what happens if those close friends are caught in sin?" When clergy members pursued their well-being amid stressful circumstances, and after resolving those circumstances, their children reported that parenting was enhanced.

Modeling Repentance

Another concept that came up was how repentance and apologies were tools for effective parenting. Angie appreciated her parents modeling the gospel and not trying to "make it look like they have it all together to their kids." Isaac acknowledged that his

parents often admitted that they messed up, and Joel commented, "my dad has always been quick to apologize." Joel felt that his dad was apologizing to his mom, apologizing to the family, and seeking specific forgiveness was incredibly formative. This humble approach to family and ministry helped relieve pressure on family units and created a context where families and churches could model reconciliation.

Bible Based Ministry

Within the group, there were a variety of approaches and giftings that the interviewees reported regarding their clergy parents. These included teaching, counseling, hospitality, preaching, helping people develop spiritual gifts, developing community, and many others. Central to these approaches was the theme that pastors are given to communicate the Bible. Martha mentioned the importance of having everything grounded in scripture. Isaac expressed that his clergy parent had a strong priority of communicating "the word of God to God's people." Emma commented that her clergy parent felt very strongly that "you should know what you believe" and that you should be able to "back it up." She commented, "There is a reason that our church did things the way they did." Within the ministry approaches cited, there was a firm reliance upon the word of God. What was of particular interest and reported in different ways by Andrew, Joel, and Emma, was that they visited other churches during a life transition, usually around the high school into college. As they were exposed to different types and styles of ministry, it gave them a greater appreciation for the churches they grew up in and a sense of the broader body of Christ.

Summary of Character

Clergy parents must cultivate in their own lives a sense of character that includes consistency, a straightforward application of biblical truth, and a clear understanding of who they are outside of their ministry roles. In addition, modeling repentance when they do wrong and emphasizing the transcendent reality of God's word are a strong foundation for ministry.

Summary of Helpful Approaches to Ministry

Practical approaches to the ministry were both personal and structural. They focused more on the person doing the ministry and their personal growth rather than the method of ministry. A priority structure that chose family and children as a leading priority was effective for parents, along with a strong sense of personal piety and cultivation of emotional well-being enabled by time management, boundaries, and margin.

Changes in Parenting Practices

What changes in parenting practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years? To facilitate the conversation, a variety of questions were asked, including:

i. Tell me about a time your parents seemed to change their approach to parenting?

ii. How did you experience the expectations of others, and how did your parents interact with the expectations of others?

iii. Tell me about ways you saw your parents grow personally in ministry?

iv. What are you most grateful for regarding your experience as a PK?

v. What characteristics of your parents were most important in their parenting?

vi. What things do your parents do now that they did not do ten years ago?

Adaptation

What was central to the changes in parenting and most often cited by the interviewees was adaptation. There were adaptations to developmental needs, ministry contexts, special needs within the family, the interviewees' specific needs, and parents' learning on the job. The impact of these challenges was based on the ability of the family systems to adapt and learn from them.

Adaptation to Developmental Progress

As already articulated, each of the interviewees said that their parents decreased structure as their childhood and teenage years progressed. Instead, they assumed an advisory role as their children entered adulthood. All the interviewees noted that forms of discipline changed as they went through their teenage years. Andrew said that how he was taught the faith also changed. His clergy parent expressly set aside times for his high school-age children that were more discussion-based. James stated that change occurred due to familial makeup and their specific needs.

Adaptation to Ministry Contexts

Because of the overlap of ministry and family contexts, parenting and family adaptation were a part of ministry families. When things were not going well in ministry, Martha commented that her clergy parent would be exhausted and less emotionally available to the family. Emma commented that when the church of her clergy parent was struggling with conflict, her parents had them take on some different roles in the family because of the time needed to deal with it. Andrew saw the conflict as "traumatic," and Angie felt her parents brought home challenges “too much.” As a result, there were conflicts within churches that impacted the family. The change and adaptation to deal with conflict were viewed as positive for both the family and the ministry. Martha reported that this adaptation was her clergy parent finding a ministry context that was a better fit for his "gifts." Emma said that adaptation and conflict resolution resulted in greater unity within her clergy parent's congregation. Andrew saw his parents gain depth in their relationship and communication, and Angie saw her parents become more emotionally stable. In each case, the interviewees were able to see good things that came out of the challenges. The underlying principle is that adversity, when adapted to and overcome, promotes healthier church and family systems.

Adaptation to Special Needs

Emma and Joel mentioned that they had siblings with special needs. Joel said that this had some challenging elements and put much of their parenting energy into dealing with the unique needs of his sibling. The positive side of this was that his parents realized that there were freedoms they could give their other children and ways that they could be

helpful in the situation. While highly challenging, the practical adaptation gave greater freedoms and responsibility to their other children, who saw this as a "benefit." Emma felt less of an impact because of a special needs sibling, but it required her to adapt and take on different roles within the family.

Adaptation to Specific Needs of Interviewees

Some of the adaptation reports within the family unit surrounded the interviewed individuals. For example, Isaac reported that his parents put a good deal of focus and time into helping him deal with a particular struggle with sin. Adaptation for Angie was that when she was struggling around a significant life transition into high school, her parents spent many hours seeking to help her both socially and academically. Emma shared how her parents adapted to her interests in athletics and academics. The broader trends of the interviews that are less easily quantified, but present are that effective clergy parents had both consistency and adaptability. Their children "knew what was going to happen," but they also knew, as James reported, that their parents were going to listen, and afterwards they were willing to change their approach when needed. This "negotiating" with parents, as Angie expressed, was central to the interviewees' positive experiences with their clergy parents.

Adaption by Learning on the Job

Throughout all the interviews, there was a sense that parents learning on the job resulted in what Joel called a "chill" presence as time went on. James commented that his parents believed they made many errors with an older sibling that helped them "learn on

the job." Emma commented that "they became more relaxed as we got older." Joel commented, "my younger brother gets away with a lot more than I do." Within this, there was a sense that rules were not needed or necessary as parents grew to trust their children and earned that trust. Andrew, Emma, and Joel articulated this most clearly in expressing that they were not overly monitored or given rules as their parents adapted to their teen years.

Summary of Adaptation

Adaptation to the needs of their children, church ministries, and other challenges within ministry was a key component of effective parenting and ministry. Some of that adaptation was anticipated, and some of the situations were dealt with as they appeared.

Positive Emotional Attachment

Within the interview, the interviewees were asked a form of a question that either addressed what they were most grateful for regarding being a clergy child or information they would want to share with clergy members who were parenting children. These are paraphrased and dramatically shortened to better communicate them. These short statements and the answer to the question are contextual reflections of what went right in ministry and expressions of positive emotional attachment with family and parents.

Joel

What I appreciated about my parents was how intentional they were in their interactions with me and in seeking to develop my faith in God. They would be intentional about a Bible story at the dinner table or deliberate praying for me each night

before bed. My dad has always been quick to apologize to me, my siblings, or my mom. I would say to clergy members that they should prioritize their marriage and recognize that church, family, and marriage all come together and bleed out to different areas of life. I was thankful for my parents being genuine and the same people in the context of church and home, and how the church was authentic and was not trying to pander to people. I was thankful that I did not have to put on a show of good things or struggles and could be comfortable.

Emma

When your children ask questions, say what you think and tell them where to go so they can think it through on their own, and make sure that your kids are forming their own beliefs. Give them a strong foundation, and when they ask hard questions, it is OK to say this is my answer, not the answer. Be OK with them forming their own opinions because it might surprise you how close their ideas might end up being to yours. What I appreciated about my parents was having someone to ask questions to that has answers and someone who would admit, "I do not have an answer for this yet." I appreciate how important a good church is, and I have a passion for finding a good church and being a part of a good church. The church is another community to be a part of, and I have benefited from the church community.

Isaac

Treat your children as unique human beings created in God's image with their gifts and interests. Endeavor to get to know this person and look forward to seeing how God will make himself known as your children learn to trust God and as God shows you

their gifts. There will be times when it is challenging because this is a fallen human being but keep your eyes on the goal that this child will glorify God for eternity. You must make unpleasant decisions at the moment in pursuit of that long-range goal. I appreciate and respect what my parents did, and I am thankful to God.

Martha

I appreciated how important communication is. Communication is critical for any relationship. When you make decisions for your household, make sure that they are grounded in scripture and have a good reason. Do not spank your children in anger. When approaching ministry, know how much information is enough to give to your children, and do not place burdens upon your children unnecessarily.

James

I appreciated how easy it was to be involved in everything in the church. I knew everyone and everyone knew my dad. Just knowing the person in charge is excellent. I knew that my dad loved the people, and I trusted him. I got pretty providentially lucky and hope that people realize that people and relationships are worth the effort you put in, whether your parents or others. It is worth it to not give up on those relationships, believe all things, hope all things; that is what love would do.

Angie

I am grateful for our family's spiritual lives because of being in ministry. My parents being in ministry helps them preach the gospel to us. I see or hear my friends talk

about spiritual things being more on the backburner. Faith was relevant, and Jesus was relevant, which helped me know where to turn. I am also grateful for everything my parents taught me about people. The knowledge about how people work and how to deal with conflict resolution was valuable. Pastors should guard family time and run back to the gospel when they feel like they failed. Do not fake it but be real when it is difficult or hard things are going on at church; depend on Christ in all of it, and model that for your kids.

Summary of What Mattered Most

Clergy children were encouraged by their parent's intentional faith formation, modeling the gospel, investment in their lives and the lives of others, and their love for Christ and His Church.

Summary of Changes in Parenting Practices

Clergy children appreciated family priority and observed clergy parents become more comfortable in their ministry and family roles as time went on. Many of the changes they saw in their parents were related to how they worked to adapt to the various challenges and changes that presented themselves in family life and ministry. A central part of changes in parenting practices was centered around a developmental model that taught information and provided structure in younger years with increasing freedom and responsibility as the teenage years progressed.

Summary of Findings

This chapter examined the practices of clergy regarding parenting in the context of ministry. Effective parenting managed expectations, communicated clearly around ministry and family life, and provided a strong foundation of biblical knowledge transitioning to greater freedom in the teenage years. The focus of effective parenting was often around the child's particular concerns and the parents and family unit utilizing their strengths to meet those challenges. Among the strengths that met challenges and created resilience were a priority of family, hospitality in ministry, clergy children's peers, and cultivation of a love for people. Clergy children also noticed the character of their parents and appreciated their integrity, repentance, and humility in modeling the gospel. Well-being was often connected to managing boundaries and creating margin in life and ministry to be intentional with family and one-on-one relationships. As clergy children reached high school ages, their parents were more relaxed and comfortable in ministry and family roles. They increasingly trusted their children and gave them the freedom to harness their gifts and interests in the world, workplace, and church.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendations

This study aimed to understand how grown children of lead pastors describe parenting practices they found helpful during their teenage years. In chapter two, the literature review looked at resilient faith in Deuteronomy 6 and the Shema, resilience and family systems theory, resilience issues for pastors raising children, and teaching adolescents resilience. As these topics were explored in the context of clergy members and their children, the following research questions guided the research.

1. What parenting practices concerning involvement in the church do grown children of lead pastors describe as helpful during their teenage years?
2. What hospitality practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?
3. What approaches to the ministry do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?
4. What changes in parenting practices do they describe as helpful during their teenage years?

This study reviewed relevant literature and the data from seven individuals who were children of pastors in a NAPARC denomination. In this chapter, the contents of chapter two and the literature review will be brought together with the interviews of chapter four and summarized. Finally, the research findings will be observed and analyzed, and recommendations related to application and further inquiry will be given.

Summary of the Study and Findings

This research project focused on the characteristics of resilience for the children of solo/lead pastors. The literature review researched how the Bible promotes resilient faith in Deuteronomy 6, resilience related to family systems theory, resilience issues for pastors raising children, and recent literature on teaching adolescents resilience. Seven clergy children who met the previously established criteria were then interviewed, with a specific emphasis on parenting in ministry contexts.

The literature review found that in response to Deuteronomy 6, the early Jewish community set up systematic discipleship of children that resulted in high literacy rates and gave the Jewish community a sense of being guided by the Bible and God's word. In the community after the Babylonian exile, various synagogues were set up to teach and pass on the faith to another generation in ways that included study, memorization, eating restrictions, and daily family and community habits that reinforced their status as being a set-apart people. The understood meaning of the text was that remembering God's word and passing it along to another generation was central to every part of life.

The literature on family systems theory related to resilience shows that clergy family systems navigate multiple roles in systems that impact them directly and indirectly. For family systems to be resilient, individuals need to develop a solid sense of their own identity, accurate perceptions of their position and place in the family unit, and an awareness of how the congregation's well-being impacts the clergy family.

The literature on resilience issues for clergy families revealed that relationships, expectations, stress/trauma, boundaries, and instability are all areas of potential challenge that require thoughtful engagement for clergy parents as they interact with their children.

Issues surrounding dual relationships, second-hand trauma, and expectations were significant concerns.

The literature on teaching teens resilience revealed that resilience is enabled by opportunities to succeed and master skills, community and family support, attachment and connection with parents and others, being able to persevere when there are setbacks, and a sense of being able to influence the direction of your own life.

The interviewed clergy children gave details into how this resilience was taught and lived out in their families. They identified instruction regarding the Bible and religious faith as central both to their lives and their family units. They identified how their parents helped shape identity amid family, community, and school as they progressed through adolescence. In addition, clergy parents helped their children navigate their expectations and noted how their clergy parent's ministry contexts indirectly impacted them.

Clergy children identified the importance of boundaries and the strong family priority in their clergy parent's value systems. They appreciated how their parents communicated with them and prioritized one-on-one relationships with them. In many cases, they expressed that their parent's resilience resulted in greater stability. They appreciated how they could connect relationally with others through hospitality and how being known because of their clergy parent's position also carried benefits.

Over time, they observed their parents using developmentally appropriate techniques of allowing for greater freedom and greater responsibility. In addition, they observed that as time went on, their parents learned parenting lessons that benefited them and their siblings, with trends toward giving greater freedom and autonomy.

Discussion of Findings

This project has looked at what it is like to grow up in a clergy family and the parenting techniques that are most effective in this context. It includes research on discipleship in scripture, family systems, resilience struggles, teaching resilience, and interviews on experiences within clergy families. In addition, I add my own experience as a clergy child, a lead/solo pastor, a parent, and a pastoral counselor. Discussion of these findings will provide links between the resilience research in the literature review and the experiences of building resilience referenced by the interviewees.

In reviewing the findings, a category of the research that was less present in the interviews was resilience issues for pastors raising children. My evaluation is that effective parenting strategies well mitigated these issues. Another dynamic that became apparent was that many of the techniques used by clergy parents had a strong basis in developmental theories. Of note in this regard is the work of Erik Erikson, whose developmental theories talk about trust, autonomy, initiation, industry, identity, and intimacy for the stages of development through young adulthood.[363] Author and psychology professor Kathleen Burger comments that these stages are the "foundation" for what follows, so success in human development is built on success in each stage.[364] In methodology and approach, the milestones and developmental processes in the interviewees' lives appeared to track with standard models.

Pulling together the literature review, the interviews, and my own experiences revealed three key factors that enabled resilience among clergy children. These factors

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[363] Kathleen Stassen Berger, *Invitation to the Life Span,* (New York: Macmillan, 2009), 410.

[364] Berger, *Invitation to the Life Span*, 410.

included parental engagement, Christian community identity, and human development framework.

Engagement

Relational engagement, or the process by which clergy parents learned to engage their children amid family, church, and cultural systems, was central to the research and the interviews and offered insights into how clergy families build resilience. Among the themes of relational engagement were intentionality, sheltering/exposure, and obstacles to relational engagement.

Intentionality

The concept of intentionality was thick throughout the interviews. Engaged parents are intentional. Within intentionality, four repeated themes appeared that served as answers for clergy children to the question of Dan Allender, which is "am I loved?" [365] These themes are prioritized family, time, boundaries, and communication.

Priority of Family

The evidence from the interviews suggests that the most effective way to build resilience for clergy is the priority of family. Joel and Andrew expressed that this did not mean that family always gets more time or wins when there is a conflict, nor did all the interviews articulate a clear priority structure. What was communicated was that the children of clergy parents felt that ministry did not negatively impact their family life.

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[365] Allender, *How Children Raise Parents,* 24.

Every interviewee said that while their clergy parents made mistakes, they felt valued, and ministry was an element of what made their family flourish. This echoes Friedman's observation that family systems need to work well for clergy members to thrive in ministry.[366]

In my experience, parental inattentiveness to the needs of clergy children and teens because of misplaced priority systems often results in rebellion and conflict. The perception of clergy members and their families being constantly on the job is one that churches celebrate. Still, this mentality will hurt clergy children and undermine the church's health. In the interviews, clergy children generally rated their parental experience the same as their church experience, demonstrating continuity between church and family systems.

Structures that encourage family neglect also reinforce harmful psychological pathologies. For an individual trying to deal with past trauma and co-dependency, making themselves indispensable to a church system has its own set of rewards that reinforce poor mental health. For individuals with narcissistic or sociopathic tendencies, having access to the levers of power by using their willingness to do everything with limited accountability can lend a sense of control and give the ability to manipulate. While these individuals often appear intelligent, capable, moral, and even outstanding at their job, their power can become a means to abuse others and hide that abuse. Even when abuse is not present, pastors perceived as "running everything" will be expected to stretch ethical lines and use their influence to get things done. Further, church structures that encourage workaholism set themselves up to be attractive to individuals with poor psychological

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[366] Friedman, *Generation to Generation*, 1.

health. They also promote poor psychological health in otherwise healthy pastors. Contrastingly, healthy families produced adult children committed to church involvement. Clergy families that prioritized family invested in the church's future.

Time

Closely related to priorities is time. Kopelwicz noted that one of the ways you build a relationship is to spend time relationally with your children.[367] Parents communicate what they think of their children and their activities based on their investment in time. As was noted in the research, Barna said that 42% of the clergy members had regrets about the lack of time spent with their children.[368] Tighe noted that almost all those he interviewed thought of their parents as " too much at church."[369] Clergy children noted errors regarding how their parents had parented them, their siblings, poor boundaries, and other ways, but what proved to be a mitigating factor that promoted resilience despite these parenting errors was quality time spent with their children.

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[367] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect*, 40, 62-63.

[368] Barna Group, “38% of Pastor’s Have Thought About Quitting,”

[369] Tighe, “Raising Church Celebrities,” 16.

Boundaries

Overlapping with priority and time are boundaries. Carl Wells pointed out a correlation between a lack of boundaries and emotional stress for clergy families.[370] Boundaries are essential concepts in systems as they help define individuals' limits and expectations within a system. What boundaries enable is the margin. Andrew stated that his clergy parent always set aside his work to answer his questions or to provide help. Even on busy days, he made it a point to be present at his athletic events. Boundaries reflect how effective clergy had margin and could set aside the "urgent" work of ministry to do the "more urgent" work of parenting.

Proverbs 25:18 comments, "a man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls." The character of a clergy member and their ability to practice self-control in terms of not being over-worked is essential. Without this self-control, children are open to attacks by the devil, which destroys a clergy member's effectiveness in ministry. Further, suppose the clergy member has no walls around his family. In that case, this may spill over to a lack of boundaries with church members, becoming embedded in unethical dual relationships, and more significant moral failure. While clergy members may inherit an unhealthy system when coming to a church, they cannot change a church system without being attentive to individual and family system boundaries. The exceptions proved the rule, as the interviewee's clergy parents were not flexing boundaries to the extent that their children viewed it negatively.

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[370] Carl R. Wells "The Effects of Work-Related and Boundary-Related Stress on the Emotional and Physical Health Status of Ordained Clergy," *Pastoral Psychology* 62, no. 1 (02, 2013): 101, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-012-0455-y

Of concern within the literature was the work of Maheshwari, who expressed that when someone tries to maintain a particular image they begin to develop a double life.[371] When clergy members are driven by the people around them and their demands, they have a lesser sense of personal priorities. If this is embedded, an intrinsic understanding of right and wrong is compromised, and if extrinsic situations or motivators change, they are blown toward burn-out and flame-out.

The self-care methods of clergy members were not the subject of this research, but the resulting boundaries and spiritual maturity were tangible. The character of clergy parents of those interviewed, their ability to be differentiated as systems theory would suggest, and their intentionality had a considerable impact on their children.

Communication

The interviewees particularly valued their one-on-one relationship with their parents. Their parents had shared life and communicated learned to them. The relational capital gained through listening, helping, encouraging, being present, sharing, and countless other ways left a lasting impact on the interviewees. Emma commented that because of her experience, she became convinced that there was no more impactful reality for children than to be in a family with a mom and dad. Koplewicz joined others in asserting that maintaining connection is central to resilience and should be especially emphasized at points when adolescents desire to disconnect.[372]

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[371] Surabhika, "Children of Famous Parents," 351.

[372] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect*, 167-168.

My experience is that a relational basis for parenting is a durable reality that can transcend life transitions. In most counseling scenarios surrounding parenting, a systems technique is to seek to work with the parents rather than working on the presenting problem. Clergy parents struggling with their adolescent children should start with a focus on building a relationship before seeking to fix their children's problems directly. This technique has some value for pastors who are experiencing conflict with members of their congregation. Within the interviewees, there were a series of different problems or challenges that were faced, and relational steadiness and not reacting with anxiety helped build resilience and get through these challenges.

Sheltering/Exposure

Within the realm of engagement with adolescents was an intentional effort by clergy members to mediate the potential adverse effects of ministry. These techniques operated on the general principle of mediating situations based on the age and comprehension level of the child/teen. In the case of Isaac, this was done by addressing the church's environment and, in the case of Angie, processing situations without directly intervening. They also exposed what Joel called "high-level" views of issues and what Andrew called "situational awareness."

Mediation

Central to ideas of resilience is that some tools or skills are built so that one can stand when difficulty comes. In most cases, mediation happened in response to what happened rather than equipping before a situation occurred. There are several reasons

why this might have been the case. First, the clergy members did not foresee or be aware of the types of situations their children might experience. Second, there was a challenge to pro-actively teach abstract concepts and realities to adolescents working on lower-level developmental tasks. Third, it is also possible that clergy families did not have familiarity with models or theories of systems that would have alerted them to pro-active coaching.

In my experience as a clergy teen, members of my parent's congregation had conflicts with my parents that spilled over into how they related to me in ways that I could not understand. I was being pulled into ministry situations without preparation for the complicated dynamics at stake. While clergy parents did a great job of mediation in the interviews, my experience would be that the scaffolding of the interviewees would have been enhanced if more pro-active coaching had happened around church relational dynamics.

Exposure

When it comes to exposure to adversity, the work of Koplewicz is relevant as he proposes that parents should "stretch" adolescents without breaking them.[373] Friedman identified that avoidance or complete shelter from pain is counter-productive, reducing resilience.[374] Emma was a helpful case study in how to effectively expose. There was a significant conflict in her clergy parent's church situation in her middle school years. Afterward her parents began to share details with her to enhance her understanding and awareness. Emma commented that they felt they could do so because the situation was

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[373] Koplewicz, *The Scaffold Effect*, 94, 95, 122, 131, 221.

[374] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation*, 48.

resolved, and many of the people involved were no longer present. Through effective sheltering coupled with exposure and processing, what could have been a highly negative experience is seen as one which has helped her have an even greater appreciation and respect for the church and her clergy parents. There were similar testimonies from interviewees about how conflict had a positive shaping effect for them and has helped them have a greater depth of character and resilience.

Within the research was a discussion about "windows of tolerance."[375] These are a cognitive and psychological map within which any given experience can be interpreted and assimilated. When managed effectively, conflict broadened windows of tolerance so that other challenges could be assimilated with less difficulty or trauma. Exposure to problems in a way you can understand them and being given details that fit within your "window" enables resilience in clergy adolescents.

An additional insight would be that there are events that will be outside windows of tolerance and will require support that goes beyond a well-developed support system. These can be related to ministry, e.g. a pastor being fired from his position, taking sustained abuse from members of a congregation, the unique needs of a family member, or could instead result from moral failure. In these cases, long-term counseling will be necessary to regain a solid sense of self and normalcy.

With trauma outside of a window of tolerance, the literature review tracked how parents who have PTSD are less present, and their children were more often on the

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[375] Daniel J. Siegel, "*The Developing Mind,"* 341.

receiving end of parental anger.[376] Moreover, among clergy children, destructive coping often circulated around addiction.[377] I believe that clergy members who perpetually deal with trauma outside of their windows of tolerance will be prone to addiction with adverse effects on parenting and ministry. Addiction, often private and related to pornography or substances, serves within the system of the church as a way for the pastor to blow off steam and destabilizes the clergy family even as it avoids dealing with the trauma and narrows windows of tolerance. In a wider frame, systemic pornography use in churches narrows a systems tolerance and results in systems that struggle to communicate and can create individuals that are not addicted with symptoms of addiction.

Pastors and churches must know how windows of tolerance are narrowed through addiction. Within clergy, an acceptable addiction is workaholism, although clergy members can certainly be involved in far worse ones. In the sequence, a traumatic event happens outside the window of tolerance, and the clergy member copes with that event by ignoring it or making statements about how they are OK, which are a cover for not dealing with it. The more that trauma is not acknowledged or dealt with, the more symptoms of PTSD increase. Often, the clergy member takes up more work, and they feel better for a moment in time. As addictions are patterns that trickle into many areas of life, they might view pornography or use a substance as well. What happens in a sequence is that this new behavior becomes a coping device and soon events that are less traumatic result in increased workaholism or substance abuse. Over time that strategy

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[376] Hamilton-Giachritsis, Hope, Alves-Costa, Tomlinson, and Halligan, "The Impact of Parental Posttraumatic Stress Disorder on Parenting: A Systematic Review," Abstract Paragraph V.

[377] Drumm, Sedlacek and Baltazar, "My Life Has Been Just Like a Big Expectation," 97.

becomes less effective as tolerance is developed and new strategies are sought. Without intervention, these strategies become more and more destructive.

Christian Identity in Community

Within the clergy families represented part of their ministry was to cultivate community within the churches they served. The research on resilience centered around community support and connection, and the interviews provided data on how clergy families provided social support for their children both internally and as part of a church and the broader community.

Hospitality

Hospitality is a primary means of cultivating Christian identity and connecting clergy children to others in the religious community and the broader communities where clergy lived.

Religious Community

For many clergy families, the typical hospitality realm was within the church. For example, the literature review noted that within a Jewish home, there were food rituals, including exclusivity regarding whom you would typically eat with.[378] While exclusivity was not common among clergy families, having open doors and open hearts was. Isaac's family moved to be closer to church and enhance their family's hospitality ministry, and Andrew saw this as a primary way in which he was taught to be welcoming. The real-life

[378] Jordan Rosenblum, *The Jewish Dietary Laws in the Ancient World*, 9.

connections and the genuine interest were taken in clergy children through the avenue of hospitality enabled clergy teens to participate in ministry, take an interest in others, and build a support network.

Hospitality was central to my own experiences growing up as a clergy child. Individuals who did not have family or did not have another place to go were always welcome at our home for lunch on Sunday. We had other families over for cereal or a simple meal on Sunday nights for many years. Our family would play games, eat, and have great times with whoever was at our home. My parents embodied the statement, "There are no strangers, only friends we have not met yet." The interviews brought many beautiful memories surrounding the weekly routine of having people over from church. Through hospitality, supportive relationships were cultivated for the pastor's family.

Broader Community

There were also examples of how many clergy families practiced hospitality in the broader communities in which they lived. Andrew commented that this was the context where he saw the selflessness of his parents and where it was modeled for him how to love others who, at times, were difficult to love. Emma loved that her family's home was in a place where many kids would come through their doors and that she was able to use that as a context to be a blessing to them. Hospitality was, for many, a relational training ground in addition to relational support and encouragement.

Social Support

A sub-category of hospitality is social support and how clergy families and clergy children's peers experience the hospitality of clergy parents and how clergy parents find their social support.

Peers

Of specific note to parenting is the effect of having an open-door policy for your children's friends. Joel's comment that his friends would come by even if he was not home demonstrated how his parent's developed relationships with his friends. In many cases, clergy children had peers from church, the school, and other community contexts.

My own experience was that social support outside the church is essential for clergy children. Relationships made in athletics, school, and different contexts in the broader community create spaces outside the bubble of family and church. Clergy children could learn and operate in a less complicated space and make choices and explore their gifts.

Clergy and Spouse Support

One of the themes in many interviews was that clergy members had a social support network of people they knew from seminary, other pastors in ministry, and on occasion, critical leaders within their local congregation. Angie noted some challenges surrounding friendships in the local church that her parents dealt with, and Joel pointed out that some of the friendships of his non-clergy parent were complicated or ended because of church conflicts. Through ecclesiastical networks, healthy clergy members

had a support structure outside the local church. Healthy clergy members had a support structure outside the local church through ecclesiastical networks.

In some interviews, it was also mentioned that clergy spouses appeared to have more struggles relationally within the church. I have observed this dynamic in my own life as my wife has had friendships come and go within the church for various interpersonal and political reasons, and it seems that she has less of a built-in support network. We determined that it was vital for her to establish social support separate from the church. For clergy spouses, relationships not connected to the clergy vocation are generally supportive and helpful.

Intentional Church Support

Many wonder how they can support clergy families and children within the church. Clergy children benefit from church members that bring them presents on their birthdays, notes of encouragement, and people who have taken an interest in them as people. Churches should understand that their pastor has a complicated job, and his children face relational dynamics that are more complicated than children growing up in almost all other contexts. The calling that has been placed on the life of a pastor deserves respect.

Community Discipleship

The Israelites were a people who believed in one God and were guided by the word of God. In Bible times, the overlap between church, school, community, and home

was less defined than in current times. These frameworks help understand how discipleship is a part of every sphere of life.

Home

Rituals to pass on the faith were central to religious existence in Old Testament times. Whether they circulated around food, memorization, or instructions on the basics of reading, Jewish people were "people of the book."[379] In the same way, the homes of the clergy children interviewed were driven by teaching their children to be people of the book. While the practices were diverse, every family had times when they gathered as a unit to be disciplined and learn, memorize, study, and discuss the Bible.

The vocation of clergy significantly impacted these times. Some of the clergy members would incorporate things that they were studying into the teaching, and there was a sense that clergy families best duplicated the patterns of the Synagogue. Clergy families were unique in that the clergy member played the role of a "rabbi" or subject expert and passed that on to clergy children.

In applying the system's theory, Friedman notes that behaviors and patterns tend to be duplicated in successive generations.[380] In a positive sense, clergy families functioning well have a sense of collective wisdom, knowledge, and an ability to apply that knowledge within the family unit. However, several of the interviewees also noted personal awareness of how that knowledge was not equated with maturity. There was a careful sense of wanting that knowledge to be used in a manner that was helpful and

[379] Wirth, "Education for Survival: The Jews," 682.

[380] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation*, 31.

gracious to others, suggesting that it was not simply knowledge that was passed on, but true wisdom and godly character.

In my teen years, the importance of reading the Bible at the table, learning the catechism, and having daily evening rituals with our family, which included everyone in the family praying, were formative. These practices served as markers along the way. There was a sense of loss for some interviewees when they were no longer at home and unsure how to duplicate that family context. Christianity is a worldview that tries to give answers to the most complex and most profound questions that individuals have, as well as a sense of meaning and purpose for life. Clergy families are uniquely positioned to teach their children the doctrines of the faith even as they are also uniquely placed to see the challenges that are in the world. For resilience to take hold in clergy families with their increased exposure to conflict, trauma, brokenness, and adversity, this foundation of the faith and ability to articulate a "reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15) was of great importance.

Another pattern emerged within clergy family units that contributed to the discipleship of clergy children. Often, the clergy parent sought to communicate knowledge and wisdom, and the clergy spouse served the role of being a compassionate helper. They would apply that knowledge to the lives of the children and the everyday functioning of the family unit.

Church/School

Within the Old and New Testament application of Dt. 6, the church, family, and community were not so clearly divided. However, the conclusion of the research was

unequivocal. The goal was to have the family, the church, and the school be coherent and offer the same messages to children and teens as they were growing up. Further, resilient teens are equipped to deal with areas of life that display incoherence based upon an underlying foundation that is coherent, what Schwartz describes as the "solid self."[381] Many expressed thanks to Sunday school teachers. In most cases, teaching within the church was their current and preferred way to serve within the church, which indicated a strong sense of family and church coherence.

It is also noted that there was an exclusivity to private schools and homeschooling before their teenage years. If further research was conducted, I wonder if there would be a link between the coherence of messaging between school, church, and family and resilience. For the individuals who transitioned to a different educational context for their high school years, incoherence was introduced either practically or intentionally by clergy parents. This required more intense parenting interactions around identity issues and social adaptation.

The most common technique used in parenting situations where worldview was incoherent was two-fold. The first part was to draw on previously taught knowledge and make an application. The second part was to draw on the established relationship with the child/teen. While the view of this research is toward parenting teenagers, in my opinion, the established connection and base of knowledge were indispensable for effective intervention surrounding values dissonance.

In family discipleship around educational methods, I have observed that what results in the resilience of faith is a clear sense of families being on the "journey"

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[381] Schwartz, *The Internal Family Systems Model,* 51-52.

together. If teens are attending a school hostile to faith, having a support network of other Christian friends within the school becomes an important indicator of resilience. It also means that parents will have to be culturally literate regarding the contexts in which their children operate. I appreciated one parent who realized that certain movies and pop culture expressions that did not share their family's values would be discussed among his children's peers. To be proactive, he went to watch those movies or shows with his children to help them understand what was destructive about the worldview they contained.

Individual

Within a western conception of discipleship, there is often a discussion of individual spiritual practices. Interestingly, this unique concept is more prevalent in my ministry experience in suburban contexts and is less prevalent in rural communities that have, in my view, a more community-based idea of religious practice, with the individual being secondary. Nevertheless, within the research on Dt. 6, there was a clear sense of personal responsibility intertwined with family and community, which was most clearly expressed from two angles in the interviews. One is taking responsibility in their teen years for their spiritual growth. The other is that their individual development was enhanced by their parents walking alongside them and intentionally encouraging them to apply scripture and godliness to their life situations.

Human Development

When clergy children described how their parents changed how they parented over time, one of the prevalent answers was that their parents tended to be more

comfortable in parenting and tended toward less structure over time, especially for those who observed their parents with younger siblings. However, what stood out was how their experiences modeled developmental paradigms. These categories of human development could be described as identity and transition.

Identity

While there are many different theorists, Erikson's work centers upon two other milestones for teens transitioning to adulthood: industry and identity.[382] Of particular interest within conversations was how identity was formed. For example, Angie and Joel noted that their parents helped with identity around transitioning to high school. Emma noted how much effort her mom put into helping her think through her future as related to college. Martha talked about how her parents and church enabled her to recognize her gifts and talents. Parents acknowledge their teen's need to develop their identity. The fruit of this work was seen as many of them were working to establish themselves or had established themselves as separate from their parents.

In the interviews, it also came up that the character of clergy members was particularly of note in helping their children form a solid sense of self. When parents engaged with their children about behavior, discipline, and other challenges, what was helpful was the content of their character, not merely their actions. Joel repeatedly mentioned how his parents were the same people regardless of context. He appeared to be describing that they had a consistency of who they were as people and were able to help him develop that same sense for himself.

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[382] Berger, *Invitation to the Life Span*, 410.

Transition

Andrew described freedom and re-defining relationships as key milestones with his parents. These concepts appeared in many of the interviews, and these were often communicated directly to clergy children.

Freedom

When at their most effective, clergy parents allowed their children freedom to choose how to be involved in church and make their own decisions in high school. In many cases, they did not have rules about dating, curfew, or otherwise. At their best, clergy parents communicated to their children that they trusted them, and that if freedom was not abused, they could make their own choices. There was variation in family dynamics, but clergy members gave increasing independence to their children over their teen years. Their children reported that their parents trusting them was a meaningful part of their past and current relationship.

This insight is significant for avoiding rebellion in teenagers. Clergy parents must realize that their children will become adults and controlling them will backfire. Effective parents will give freedom and even allow their children to fail when necessary. Obedient children who are not given freedom will have difficulty establishing a clear sense of identity because they are pleasing others, and rebellious children will be given a cause for rebellion if rules are abundant and viewed as unreasonable. Freedom worked effectively in clergy families in the context of loving relationships and a Biblical foundation.

Another way of describing this dynamic is that parents were able to adapt to the changing needs of their children. A "one size fits all" parenting technique was not observed among the interviewees, but rather a strong sense of adaptation to family challenges, family transitions, and changing developmental needs helped resilient parents enable resilience in their children. Developmental frameworks helped clergy parents. Erikson's framework,[383] coupled with the framework of Bronfenbrenner,[384] should be familiar territory for clergy parents as they progress through developmental stages and as their children mature. Much heartache and rebellion can be avoided when clergy parents realize reasonable developmental expectations and how normal development requires increasing freedom through the teen years.

Defining Relationships

It also appeared that, either formally or informally, many parents had intentional conversations when their children left home. They expressed that their role was changing to a consulting or advisory one, as they were now adults and responsible for themselves. Clergy who took this approach found their children appreciative, grateful, and more likely to seek their advice into adulthood because of this mutual and shared respect.

This definition of relationships is significant for launching children into new stages of life. Clergy parents would do well to mark milestones in their children's lives, such as transition into high school, college, and other meaningful milestones, with one-on-one conversations about the future. There were broader patterns that recognized that

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[383] Berger, *Invitation to the Life Span*, 410.

[384] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development, 3*.

the more clearly expectations could be laid out in church, family, and the world, the more likely those expectations were to be met. Some clergy members had a strong sense of candor in communicating to their children the high expectations and encouraged them to lean into them and be motivated by them rather than see them as oppressive. This technique was effective because the clergy member and the teen saw themselves as having a mutual interest in meeting the expectations, and the clergy parent saw it as their responsibility to coach, encourage, and treat their children's success as more important than their own.

Side by Side

Effective clergy parenting was often done through children working alongside their parents in ministry. Side-by-side ministry was a developmental building block that built confidence for their independent involvement in the church as adults. Within my own life, I can speak to how formational that has been in working at church and in ministry with my parents. I have especially appreciated how this type of ministry is meaningful for children before their teen years.

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the research, interviews, and my observations, numerous recommendations fall under promoting resilience, system's theory, professional evaluation and counseling, clergy teaching role, and pastoral recommendations. Within each of these categories are applications for churches and clergy families.

Promoting Resilience

The following analysis is offered for encouragement and awareness to enable church leaders and others to promote resilience.

Relationships

A bad sermon is better than a neglected teenager. If a clergy member avoids heresy, it will be forgotten after a short period. But a neglected teen will burden your soul for days, weeks, maybe even a lifetime. If ministry demands cannot be met concurrently with raising children to love Jesus, clergy members and churches must work together to develop better boundaries. Clergy members should check in with their families and ministry contexts to determine if the ministry is helping their family or is instead doing harm.

One of the central challenges of ministry is a lack of understanding regarding the all-encompassing realities of ministry. Pastors often wear many different hats, including pastor, chaplain, friend, employee, manager, parent, and countless others, and their children and spouses are also often given different roles. Often pastors who blur lines of professionalism are seen as genuine and friendly but can then be resented by church members and leaders when their pastoral role requires them to take on a different role. In Ephesians 6:9, we read that "there is no partiality with God." Pastors in service to God and His people do well to recognize that the primary role they are called to fill is that of a pastor, first to their family and then to their church. Other roles that could compromise their judgment or create conflicts of interest should be navigated carefully. Clergy, their spouses, and their teenage children should use caution in financial, employment, dating,

and other relationships with others in their congregation that create an appearance of partiality or conflicts of interest and should engage in informal social relationships with care.

Further, clergy should be aware of how other people might seek to use them as a triangle and try to pull them onto "their side" in congregational battles in unhealthy ways. Clergy will lose credibility if a perception of favoritism or nepotism is cultivated within formal or informal church structures. If church discipline matters and the clergy member is embedded in a dual relationship with those involved, the complications are compounded.

Given these complications, churches and clergy members should understand the necessity of defining relationships. In my experience, some levels of dual relationships are inevitable and even necessary in ministry. However, the awareness of them and monitoring them help ensure that they are not exploitative and that when conflicts of interest arise, they can be navigated with greater integrity. Churches should ensure that they are not expecting the pastor to act relationally in unhealthy ways.

Expectations

Many clergy members feel that expectations are significant issues for them and their children. The Bible says in 1 Timothy 3:2 that pastors are to be "above reproach." However, this does not mean that churches can expect to have a pastor meet all expectations, especially when these expectations are undefined. Nevertheless, within the interviews, a positive experience was had with the church when these expectations were mediated, and clergy children felt they met them. The practical application for churches

is that pastors and their spouses, particularly their children, should be given Christian freedom to pursue careers, school choices, and even attendance at different churches if that is most beneficial.

Many churches will struggle to give these freedoms as they do not fit with the traditional expectations of clergy families. Youth pastors and those that work with clergy families should encourage choice within a godly framework of faith and should avoid extra-biblical expectations for clergy adolescents.

Stress/Trauma

If there is second-hand trauma for clergy members because of their work with others, there is third-hand trauma for their children as they watch their parents' struggle. Even when clergy children have great experiences with the church and parenting, there is almost a universal sense of having lived through significant difficulty. Churches need to realize that when clergy members deal with conflict and are put in challenging positions, their children see that trauma and feel it. For example, Andrew stated that the conflict within his clergy parent's church was dealt with godly by all the people involved, yet it was still traumatic for his clergy parents.

As a clergy child, I saw this same dynamic of the stressors and challenges that my parents dealt with amid church conflicts. It became difficult for me to sit in church as a child and a teenager because of some of my knowledge about angry church members. As a pastor, I know that I was not as present at home after returning from church when dealing with conflict. No matter how well-differentiated a pastor might be, being sinned against by others causes damage. There is no technique other than the hard work of

forgiveness that can mitigate against it, with the additional help of counseling and social support being necessary as well. Mistreating a pastor is mistreating his wife and his children. Pastors should not be ignorant of how their work bleeds over into their families, and churches should realize that as much as they might like to think they can leave pastor's kids out of a conflict, they indirectly include them. As the researchers noted, this damage is more harmful to clergy children at times because they see the adverse effects and often are not directly a part of the resolution.[385]

Most clergy will experience seasons of conflict, and church leaders will walk through conflict issues with members. However, churches and their members should understand that when there are disagreements, it is of great importance for them to be dealt with in godly ways that are respectful. When conflict is judged to be irreconcilable, churches should consider how to treat pastors well who are leaving if for no other reason than to think of the faith of their spouses and children.

System's Theory

The overlapping systems of the clergy family, the church family, and the church families influence each other. There will always be "identified patients" within the church who rise to the surface as the most anxious within the system.[386] In my experience, I have seen this appear because of family conflict, a death in the family, marriage struggles, and countless other ways. Effective church leaders will realize that these issues are part of the system, resist blaming one part of the system, and focus on the system. It may well be

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[385] Tighe, "Raising Church Celebrities," 25.

[386] Friedman, *From Generation to Generation*, 19.

that the pastor lacked wisdom in dealing with a particular situation that presented within the congregation, but that does not mean the pastor caused the underlying dynamics of that situation.

Wise churches will realize that clergy members struggling with parenting probably reflect parts of a broader system with similar struggles. They will recognize that often struggles are healthy as they are disrupting an unhealthy equilibrium, and they will seek to walk through the struggle and find a place of health rather than try to blame the pastor or fix the clergy child. Unfortunately, in many churches, there are patterns of blaming the pastor or others that result in unhealthy systems that operate in cycles.

In most contexts, systems thinking is either not on the radar or is broadly rejected as an effective way to deal with challenges. At times churches seek pastors who will solve problems, and then conflict occurs because the system of ministry that continues to exist produces the same results. With an understanding of how family and church systems are linked together, clergy parents should be aware of and mediate the anxiety that they bring to their families. Systems-based solutions are often poorly received by a culture that prefers to cancel those who violate its norms rather than see how systems need to be changed and reformed but offers a greater understanding of how the sins of a culture and a community impact all people within it.

Even as every pastor should be familiar with systems theory, it is also true that systems theory has weaknesses. The most significant weakness is that it fails to deal with the reality that leaders are impacted when they experience abuse. Principled leaders who avoid bringing high levels of anxiety to the systems they inhabit are far more likely to transform those systems successfully. However, sometimes this differentiation is simply a

false front. Clergy members, at times, are abused, and denial of the trauma is unhealthy. In the interviews, clergy children understood that conflict and difficulty are painful. In my view, processing trauma is best accomplished for clergy children by seeing their clergy parents model godly character and encouraging honesty about the pain alongside graciousness towards others.

Professional Evaluation and Counseling

Pastors need to take their mental health seriously. Churches should encourage their pastors, wives, and children to receive regular counseling and plan within their budgets to have psychological evaluations done on their pastors at regular intervals. Common issues that pastors deal with are people-pleasing, depression, anxiety, conflict, struggles with boundaries, co-dependency, narcissistic tendencies, marital issues, financial challenges, pride, denial of trauma, a lack of self-awareness, burnout, and pornography addiction, among others. It may not be that formal counseling is necessary for all pastors, but all pastors should have confidential relationships to share the content of their struggles. Clergy children noted that their parents' character was formative for their own identities.

Clergy Teaching Role

Clergy are good at explaining the Bible to kids and teens. They set up biblically based systems for their families that effectively communicated knowledge and disciplining their children that mirrored the patterns of how Dt. 6 has been applied

throughout history and post-exilic times.[387] Their children were able to identify that their peers were not being given the same biblical foundation that their clergy parents gave them within the broader church. My recommendation for churches would be to think about how the pattern of discipleship used by clergy members could be made accessible. In previous generations in the Dutch Reformed tradition, the clergy had a broader role in teaching. Utilizing clergy members for teaching and discipleship in similar ways for the congregation as they do for their own families could be creatively done through technology and focused teaching about parenting.

I commend the ideas of pro-active coaching to clergy parents regarding situations that their children may face in ministry contexts. I do not think this needs to be overly specific, but some high-level age-appropriate information on how the church is run, their clergy parent's role in it, and some of the complications that clergy children might face could be helpful for teens. In my own experience, many church dynamics only made sense to me in retrospect, and some pre-emptive coaching could have been beneficial, especially when the conflict involved people with whom I was closely connected.

Pastoral Considerations

There are several applications of this information pastorally. Clergy members seeking more effective ways to disciple their teens will find the research in chapters two and four will identify helpful strategies. In some cases, clergy members may identify adverse impacts of ministry and the personal challenge of being present in their families. In addition, some may identify changes that need to be made to their ministry approaches

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[387] Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue,* 22-23.

that may be difficult for their churches to accept. I prayerfully offer the following as a framework for thinking through these and other scenarios hoping that individual pastors can apply it in their contexts.

Rebuilding

For pastors who mourn how their priorities have been damaging to their families, I would immediately apply the basic idea of intentionality. Whether your children are age five or fifteen, going to them in repentance and seeking to rebuild your relationship is a good beginning. If rebellion has already taken root, clergy families should understand that change takes time. Teens who have observed their parents act unhealthy or have bitterness toward church and ministry will be inherently skeptical of change. Clergy parents will need to be committed to the change not simply because they want their children to live differently but because they are convicted and determined through the power of the Holy Spirit. Counseling, accountability, and help should be sought and welcomed. Clergy parents should understand that their family system will change as they are committed to greater godliness in their lives rather than simply trying a new technique to "fix" their children.

Restructuring

There are times when a pastor needs to re-evaluate and restructure ministry. In these cases, I would first recommend that the pastor undergo counseling to assess their mental health. After several personal sessions, they should bring their spouse with them. This can help them process their collective mental health. It may be helpful to eventually bring teenage children into these conversations. Second, I would encourage the clergy

member and their spouse to assess change as they continue in ministry. Particular attention should be made toward being present in their family, effective boundaries, and broadening their windows of tolerance. Third, there are possible ways that poor health has generated defensiveness or unhelpful patterns in how clergy families and churches interact. An awareness of those patterns will better help their family move forward. Fourth, there is the question of whether the job description and expectations of the clergy job are sustainable. This could be because of high expectations for the clergy member or because they have set up an unsustainable structure for themselves.

For some clergy couples, counseling, priorities, and self-awareness accompanied by the work of the Spirit will enable them to continue to serve in similar but healthier ways as they determine that their current job is structurally sustainable. For others, there will be a determination that their current position is not structurally sustainable for their family. Apart from the conflict, the hours, expectations, boundaries, and tasks require too many hours or are not within their gift set. If this is the case, clergy couples can seek to engage the church's system, determining if it can be changed or if they should instead consider other places of ministry. Clergy members should realize that if they engage systems with the hope of structural change, conflict could result.

Repentance

Some pastors are compromised. In most cases, these are not issues of a public scandal but addictions to pornography and other destructive ways of dealing with a narrow window of tolerance. These pastors and their spouses and families are often afraid to get the help they need and can go on for years with a double life. Clergy in this

situation would do well to get an immediate evaluation from counselors and psychologists who are people of faith and experienced in particular issues. In some cases, with repentance and counseling, the clergy member can continue to serve in ministry with increased accountability. In other cases, the governing body will become involved, and these issues will become public. Presbyteries, church sessions, and other ecclesiastical structures are needed but are not a substitute for a professional evaluation. Rather than fearing psychological evaluation, pastors should appreciate evaluation that identifies destructive patterns and leads to repentance and spiritual growth.

Release

The most challenging question for clergy parents is whether they should leave or change ministry for their sake or their children and family. One of the considerations is if clergy members are mentally healthy enough to engage their families and continue in ministry and if, in the current context, they can take steps toward greater health.

Clergy members and their family members are not exempt from the effects of trauma. They will eventually develop symptoms of PTSD if they repeatedly deal with conflict beyond what their window of tolerance can integrate. While conflict is not sufficient reason alone, conflict outside a window of tolerance that occurs frequently and cannot be compensated for with counseling, self-care, and personal godliness will result in trauma symptoms. Suppose clergy spouses and clergy children are often experiencing events outside their window of tolerance and cannot bring them within their windows of tolerance. In that case, two paths can be taken together. First, clergy members and their families need to work hard at physical, spiritual, and psychological self-care and broaden

their tolerance windows. Second, a different context may be considered concurrently. At times, clergy spouses and/or children should seek a different congregation, even if the clergy member serves in the same context. As this relates to parenting, clergy parents may want to encourage their teenage children to visit, attend, or be a part of other churches to create a degree of separation.

There are also situations where clergy members are abused. While the line between normal church conflict and abuse is difficult to draw, abusive churches follow common pathologies. Central to abuse is manipulation, and ungodly anger is a powerful manipulation tool. Abusers like to create chaos in churches because it gives them a sense of control. They exploit conflict rather than seeking to resolve it. At times abusers are not identified as the source of the abuse because they gravitate toward mentally unhealthy people and manipulate them by making them the victims. Essentially, unhealthy individuals are groomed to be the identified patients or gatekeepers in an abusive system. Abusers are masters at manipulating rules and systems and usually know how to work them to their advantage. If this continues over months and years, eventually, the trauma will result in pastoral burnout and PTSD symptoms that are no fault of the clergy member. The trickle-down for clergy families and children is that the crisis of the Church impacts the family. Abuse is abuse, and if clergy members are abused, there will be damage. In many cases, those outside the system cannot discern the abuse as being beyond normal church conflict. Churches and regional church bodies must listen well and not minimize clergy families experiencing abuse.

While not a subject of this research, the headlines often capture clergy members who use their formal power to abuse others. Churches and governing bodies need to take accusations seriously against clergy members and protect the vulnerable.

Refreshment

It is healthy for pastors to have time away with their families for refreshment within churches. These are healthy and promote wholeness in the family system. Pastors should take advantage of vacations and sabbaticals as they are offered, realizing that encouraging change within their churches promotes health within their family system. However, a sabbatical does not change the underlying dynamics of a church system. A caution is that if pastors spend them on personal development and change, they can expect dissonance when they re-enter church systems that remained the same or reverted to previous patterns.

Rescue

Many assistant pastor positions are "rescue" positions. When lead pastors are burned out due to a poor fit or demands have changed, church leaders often think that if another pastor is hired with complimentary gifts, they will "rescue" the lead pastor and make their ministry sustainable. However, the red flag for this situation is that cases and systems are often far more complicated. If a pastor needs to be rescued, they often lack self-awareness regarding their contribution to the problem. Wise pastors will understand that they need to change how they relate to the system rather than simply giving some of their responsibilities to someone else. As this relates to parenting, clergy parents should understand that structural change in church contexts can help create a margin for

engaging their spouse and children. However, the more challenging task will be changing how they inhabit their church and family systems.

Another pattern for clergy parents to be aware of is that many churches are looking to be rescued and see pastors as rescuers. Churches that are declining can seek younger pastors with children, believing that the presence of children will build a bridge to their communities and bring in young families. Clergy members should be aware of these dynamics and the pressure they can place on their families. This context will require a robust set of priorities for caring for their family and a high level of differentiation. Members of churches will be anxious about the future of the church and will unconsciously seek to pull clergy members and their families into their collective anxiety.

Treatment Recommendations

There are many different philosophies and ideas within mental health and counseling, steeped in secular humanism and individualism. Any clergy member seeking treatment should seek a counselor who shares their faith commitments and specializes in treating the specific challenges, whether marriage and family, trauma therapy, addiction, or therapy that aims to deal with depression and anxiety. For pastors, a therapist familiar with systems theory is essential if topics related to their clergy role are explored. Clergy parents should especially work hard to screen those interacting with their adolescent children. It is appropriate to ask a therapist about their methodology or ask for an appointment to talk with a therapist to determine if they are a good fit for you and your family.

A well-developed sense of ethics governs therapy, and an ethical counselor should practice in a manner that honors the faith and beliefs. Many mental health services are driven by excellent research that can offer helpful medical, physiological, and psychological insights. Professionals might recommend cognitive-behavioral therapy, trauma-informed therapies, EMDR therapy, psychotropic medications, and other talk therapy. The clergy may find one or more of these approaches helpful. Clergy members should research and be familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of various common treatments. In addition, clergy members should be encouraged to study and explore methods that align with their goals for counseling.

Summary of Recommendations for Practice

Clergy members and families should be engaged with each other, value cultivating Christian identity in the community through hospitality, and understand and parent with an understanding of human development. Both clergy and churches should be aware of and honor the calling of a clergy member, should utilize clergy teaching and parenting gifts, and recognize and mitigate common issues of resilience. Pastors and church leaders should understand that churches are systems while acknowledging the weaknesses of system's theory. Churches, presbyteries, and denominations should make psychological evaluations familiar for those in leadership.

When ministry challenges develop, pastors and churches should be open to spiritual growth amid conflict and seek to repent, rebuild, and rework systems for the church of the clergy family, the church family, and the individual families in the church. When evaluating whether to change ministry contexts, the paradigm of a window of

tolerance could be a helpful framework for determining sustainability, and therapy can be an effective way of broadening windows of tolerance.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study focused on parenting in the context of pastoral ministry. There are limits to the depth and breadth of research with any investigation. Other topics appeared outside the scope of this study that would be worthwhile for expanding the knowledge base of clergy parents.

First, within the literature review, there was research on second-hand trauma or "compassion fatigue" that has never been carefully applied to pastors other than to observe that their levels of burnout and PTSD are equal to many who serve as first responders or in law enforcement. Further research on what effective therapeutic methods in trauma treatment are most effective for clergy members and their families would offer a greater depth of practical knowledge on how to help pastors and their children. Data on the effectiveness of EMDR is a potential area of study.

Second, several of the interviewees had been a part of clergy families that re-located during childhood or their teenage years. Several references were given within the literature review to clergy members moving more frequently and the potential negative impacts on clergy children. Further research on the effects of changing churches on clergy children would be informative. Comparing research on military families and job relocation would generate insight into the benefits of long-term ministry vs. relocation for clergy children.

Third, research on pastors suggested that most of them came from family units where there was trauma, significant difficulty, or addiction. Motivations and reasons for

entering ministry are often driven by co-dependency and other unfinished business from families of origin.[388] Filling out this research and seeking a greater understanding of the motivations of clergy members to serve would help develop better patterns of counseling and coaching for clergy members and their family unit. It would also provide denominations and seminaries data on how to help future pastors better address and deal with their past.

Fourth, in terms of ethically interacting within the church and the community clergy members operate in no-man's land. Within other helping professions, there is a greater sense of emotional distance, clear ethical guidelines, and degrees of separation between work and family. More significant research into how to ethically apply the principles of human services and counseling to pastoral ministry could generate greater insight and clarity of expectations for clergy members, churches, and their children.

Fifth, within the category of teaching teenagers resilience, some researchers warn that persistence in activities where there is little chance of success and ignoring real trauma because of a focus on a goal can result in outward success that exists concurrently with PTSD symptoms or other pathologies. Therefore, it would be worth further research to investigate how to have a holistic model of resilience that considers the potential impacts of ignoring problems in the pursuit of a goal.

Sixth, various education methods were used, including private schools, public schools, and homeschooling. The impact of these educational choices on the well-being of clergy children would make for a fascinating addition to this research.

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[388] Langford, *The Pastor's Family,* Kindle location 190.

Seventh would be how the presence of a child with special needs within a clergy family impacts the family unit. For example, two interviewees' families had siblings with special needs. In the case of more significant special needs, there were shifts and changes in parenting style and re-orientations of expectations.

Eighth would be to look at clergy families as a whole and interview all the siblings to determine if there are different experiences of parenting based on birth order. It would also be interesting to do some systems work within clergy families to determine if specific birth order characteristics, personalities, or "identified patients" cause individuals to have different experiences within the same context.

The ninth would be to interview the clergy parents to determine if their stated methodology and parenting techniques connect with how their children experienced their parenting. Comparing and contrasting the goals and values of the parents with the children would be informative and give data as to how much parenting is a technique and how much of it is character-based.

The tenth would be to interview various age ranges of clergy children to determine generational similarities and changes over time in the experiences of clergy children within the church. Alongside that, a more extensive quantitative survey could be given to many clergy children as an informative set of additional data to complement this project’s data.

Eleventh, in the interviews and research, clergy members had a more direct avenue for finding social support outside of their immediate context through other clergy members. In contrast, some interviewees reported that clergy spouses had significant relational struggles within the church. Some data suggested that clergy spouses were

more concerned about expectations and how ministry was going than the clergy members themselves. It would be interesting to incorporate clergy spouses, seeking to understand the unique dynamics they experience, and find effective ways to secure social support.

Appendix

Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Questionnaire Name:

_____ Date: _____

This Questionnaire will be asking you some questions about events that happened during your childhood; specifically, the first 18 years of your life. The information you provide by answering these questions will allow us to better understand problems that may have occurred early in your life and allow us to explore how those problems may be impacting the challenges you are experiencing today. This can be very helpful in the success of your treatment. While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often: Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? Or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often: Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? Or ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

3. Did an adult or person at least five years older than you ever: Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? Or attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

4. Did you often feel that: No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? Or Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Questionnaire 2 Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

5. Did you often feel that: You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? Or your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

7. Were any of your parents or other adult caregivers: Often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at them? Or sometimes or often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? Or ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

10. Did a household member go to prison? Yes No If Yes, enter 1 _____

ACE SCORE (Total "Yes" Answers): _____

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