

ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A DISCOVERY PROJECT ON HOW TO LEAD FROM THE SECOND POSITION
IN AN AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to discover the effectiveness of a pastoral assistant leading from the second position in an independent African American congregation. The scope of research included biblical, theological, historical and contemporary writings on service and servanthood. The design of the project included pastoral assistants and former pastoral assistants from independent African American congregations.

Noteworthy to this project, from the data, participants understood that their call to be a pastoral assistant has helped them to effectively assist their pastor. The results revealed that pastoral assistants believe that their role is to support the vision of the pastor.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND FOUNDATIONS

The purpose of this project was to discover how to lead effectively as a pastoral assistant in an African American congregation. The research question was: How does one effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an African American congregation?

Overview

The focus of this project was to discover how pastoral assistants could lead in an independent African American congregation from the second position in hierarchy to the pastor. For many congregations, the pastor is the only voice they adhere to for direction and correction.

I have been the pastoral assistant at Shiloh Christian Community Church in Baltimore, Maryland for the past sixteen years. The first two years were rough for my pastor and me because of my inexperience, which impacted my effectiveness even though I was unaware of the fact. After five years in my position, I was still learning church culture, church people and church politics. A member may not see you as their pastor until you have pastored them for at least five years. In my experience, it takes even longer for church members to accept you as the pastoral assistant of their church and begin to take leadership instructions from you.

This project was designed to discover the roles/responsibilities and the dos/don'ts of pastoral assistants while working with both pastors and congregants. It was my intent in this project to discover the positive aspects of

serving in a secondary position, even though this role often lacks the authority of a senior pastor.

Foundations

As an African American pastoral assistant, I have experienced the good, the bad, and the ugly of ministry in an independent African American congregation. I love what I do as an assistant pastor. I am a leader, a servant to the Lord and to His people, attributes that came to me naturally. There have been times in my ministry when I have questioned my future as an assistant pastor, because the challenge of doing the job well as an assistant brings the relevant question: Is this my destiny as an assistant pastor forever or will I ever operate as a pastor?

Dutch Sheets and Chris Jackson in their book *Second in Command* speak of the frustrations of an assistant pastor. They articulate the question that arises within the assistant pastor:

What about me? See, although the assistant pastor loves their leader, he's called too. While the assistant pastor is trying to be the best right-hand man, they still have some specific leadership dreams and desires that God has placed in their heart too. (Sheets and Jackson 2005, 15)

This can be difficult for any assistant pastor who believes that God has called them to lead too.

Sheets and Jackson address being a second in command like Joshua. Moses was blessed to have a Joshua assisting him. Sheets and Jackson state, "There are some associate leaders who know that they are ultimately destined to serve in the senior leadership position. They are Joshuas; they have begun as assistants but they know that they are destined to be leaders of mighty

organizations” (Sheets and Jackson 2005, 10). However, if a senior pastor can find an assistant who is loyal, a gifted leader, a skilled communicator, with a servant mentality, and content with fulfilling the second in command position, then they have found a jewel to work with. Leonard Bernstein was once asked which position in an orchestra was the most difficult to fill. After a moment’s reflection he said, “Second fiddle. It’s easy to find people who want to play the lead, but to find someone who is content to play second fiddle with excellence and enthusiasm, now that is a rare find” (Sheets and Jackson 2005, 10).

Martin E. Hawkins in *The Associate Pastor: Second Chair, Not Second Best*, speaks of the need for larger churches to have assistant pastors on staff. Hawkins says, “When the church grows to need more than a solo pastor, the associate and the assistant – with all their special gifts and talents – are necessary” (Hawkins 2005, 12). Our church was growing rapidly and my pastor needed some assistance managing all the new ministries being developed. Therefore, I was added to the church staff in January of 2000. The church’s Sunday attendance grew to eight hundred people. Hawkins states, “Churches with three hundred to five hundred members were considered large and needed additional pastoral staff” (Hawkins 2005, 13).

The foundations will include a brief summary of Shiloh Christian Community Church’s background, my personal background, and my passion for being an assistant pastor in an independent African American church. The foundations will also include a biblical summary of the importance of having an assistant as illustrated in the book of Exodus, a theological summary of the role

of an assistant pastor, and a historical summary of the monasticism rule developed by Augustine of Hippo, and the way Reverend Ralph Abernathy assisted Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the Civil Rights Movement.

Personal Foundation

In January 2000, I left my job at Schmidt's Baking Company after fourteen years of dedicated service and joined the staff of Shiloh Christian Community Church as the pastoral assistant. The title is a play on words, as it is almost the same as assistant pastor but with more responsibilities. One of the most important differences is that my job security depends upon the pastor instead of the board of trustees.

I perform various ministerial and administrative duties on behalf of Shiloh Christian Community Church. These duties include managing a staff of ten employees, assuming pastoral responsibilities when Pastor Baldwin is absent, preaching on Sundays and teaching Bible study. I also provide premarital counseling and personal counseling, visit and commune the sick and shut-in members of the church, attend civic/community group meetings as a church representative, officiate at weddings, funerals, baptisms, and child dedications, and teach regular Bible study to the seniors of our church. In addition, as Senior Associate Minister, I provide ministerial guidance, instruction and discipleship training and counsel to a team of thirteen associate ministers.

In 2009 my title changed to executive pastoral assistant. This change added to my duties, including the role of campaign director of our Stewardship Capital Campaign initiative (Enlarging the Kingdom Stewardship Campaign). I

maintain the pastors' and church's calendar throughout the year. I have held the position of Worship Team Leader, which included the oversight of every aspect of worship from the parking lot to the pulpit. Our mission was to create an atmosphere where people could express their love and gratitude to God for who He is, what He has done and what He will do in the future. My job entitles other responsibilities such as maintaining the upkeep of the church building inside and outside. However, one of my major responsibilities is in fulfilling pastoral responsibilities, lest the pastor be overwhelmed. I enjoy my job even with all the ups and downs it may have from time to time dealing with church issues and situations.

I enjoyed my job and position at Shiloh Christian Community Church and did not see myself going anywhere anytime soon. The year is April of 2012. I receive a call from my friend and mentor, which turned my world around. Dr. William H. Curtis called me and asked if I would be interested in being an Interim pastor in York, Pennsylvania. He went on to say that the Mayor of York called him and asked for his help. As a member of the church and they were currently without a pastor and needed someone to fill in and help with the spiritual aspects of the church, including Sunday morning worship, Bible study, and some administration.

I explained to Dr. Curtis that I had to talk with my pastor first and that I would get back to him. He told me to respond to him when I knew something because I was the first person he thought about and he was not going to ask anyone else until he heard back from me. I asked my pastor for a meeting that

week, as I would never make a decision like that without consulting with my pastor. I met with my pastor and brought him up to speed and he said, "This would be a good opportunity to share my ministry gifts and he believed I was fully equipped to handle the assignment." I called Dr. Curtis and told him that I was available for the interim pastor position. I went on an interview with the Board of the church and they asked if I could preach for two weeks in the month of May and then they would get back to me with their decision.

After the two weeks, I was asked to come in for another meeting to sign a contract to become the interim pastor of the church for the next sixteen months and I agreed. My passion in ministry has always been servanthood and organization. When I first arrived at the church I knew God had placed me there because one of the things they desperately needed was some structure and organization for both were wanting. The only problem for me would be: would they be willing to receive my ideas, ministry models and input? This particular church had gone through having the congregation being split in half. My first Sunday there, I preached to about thirty people.

I have always thought of myself as a good organizer, leader and builder. At my home church, Shiloh Christian Community Church, my pastor allowed me to basically run most of the church's day-to-day operations. There were times when I needed my pastor to step in and make his presence known and use his expertise to handle some situations. My pastor welcomed my ideas, ministry models and input at Shiloh. That has helped develop me into the ministry leader I am today, and I will be forever grateful to him for the opportunity to serve.

While I was at the church in York for sixteen months the church grew from thirty members to one hundred twenty-five members. They went from not having Bible study when I arrived to having a consistent thirty-five to forty people in attendance each week. After the six-month agreement, the majority of the membership wanted me to stay full-time as their pastor and I did so. We worked through negotiations and we did a good faith agreement between the two parties.

However, my season there came to an abrupt end. I immediately called my pastor and explained to him what happened to me. My pastor welcomed me back to Shiloh with my same position as pastoral assistant. He said, it was no problem because I was a good employee, I left Shiloh correctly, and I was returning through no fault of my own. Plus he never officially filled my position at Shiloh while I was gone. Since being back at Shiloh my duties have increased again. Along with my other duties, I handle Quality Assurance throughout the church and I oversee the accountability aspect of the entire leadership of Shiloh. I will admit that I work more now that I am back at Shiloh than I did at Friendship. It is good to be back home.

Biblical Foundation

In the biblical foundation we will explore Exodus 4:1-16. This will provide insight into leading from the second position through the relationship of Moses, the leader of Israel and Aaron, Moses' assistant. The biblical text of Moses and Aaron's relationship helps us to see their working relationship beginning in Exodus 3 until Exodus 17. In these chapters, we can see how the leader Moses and his assistant Aaron interacted and worked with each other. God gave Moses

a mission. Exodus 3:9-10 says, “The cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt” (Ex. 3:9-10, NIV). (Unless otherwise noted, all scripture throughout this paper will be from the New International Version, NIV). But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” (Ex. 3:11). Moses does not think he can accomplish the mission. Moses said to God, “I have never been eloquent; I am slow of speech and tongue.” God said, “What about your brother Aaron the Levite?” God sends Aaron to help Moses because it is clear that Moses needed someone to help him. God told Moses, “You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth, I will help both of you to speak and will teach you what to do” (Ex. 4:15). This was the beginning of a great partnership.

God gave Moses an overwhelming assignment. Moses was commanded to go to the King of Egypt and demand that he released his slaves, the Israelites. After ten plagues, Pharaoh granted Moses’ demand. Moses may have doubted whether Pharaoh would agree to the demand to release the people. Upon their release, Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt for the promised land of Canaan.

It is evident that Moses needed some help from Aaron. In my situation, My pastor did not have the same stress or anxieties as Moses had; however, he needed some help. The church was growing, ministries were flourishing, people were being added to the church weekly, and my pastor believed God sent me to assist him. As with Moses and Aaron, I was my pastor’s mouthpiece. Not for the same reason as Aaron was for Moses because my pastor is very articulate;

however, he could not be everywhere at the same time. My pastor would send me, instead, and I would say exactly what he told me to say.

When we look at the relationship between Moses and Aaron, we observe that it was just as important for Aaron to communicate effectively with Pharaoh and the Israelites. When Moses and Aaron faced Pharaoh, God told Moses what to say to Aaron. It is essential for the assistant pastor to deliver the correct message from their pastor. Aaron never told Moses he could perform the task at hand. Aaron never told Moses that he would see Pharaoh on his own. Aaron was Moses' assistant and he understood his role and responsibilities. When assisting a pastor or leader, one postpones his or her own desires until God moves the assistant to another assignment. Sometimes, one wonders about one's own dreams and aspirations. It is easy to lose focus thinking about how one can accomplish one's own goals. But the assisting pastor must remember his or her assignment.

Exodus 17:11-13 says,

As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword. (Ex. 17:11-13)

The pastoral assistant should support the pastor as much as possible. The pastor has so many directions that it can be draining. Pastors need their leaders to hold them up daily through prayer. Then there are times when pastors need to be lifted physically. In Exodus 17 we see that Moses needed help from Aaron and Hur in order to defeat the Amalekites. When the Amalekites came to attack

the Israelites at Rephidim, Moses told Joshua to choose some of the men and go out to fight the enemy.

During that time Moses would stand at the top of the hill with the staff of God raised in his hands. As long as Moses' hands were held up, the Israelites continue to win, but when his arms got tired and started to fall the Amalekites started winning. Therefore, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the mountain and held up Moses' arms in order for the Israelites to be victorious. Moses' hands remained steady until sunset with the help of Aaron and Hur. Joshua was able to overcome the Amalekite army with his sword.

Assistant pastors should be willing to hold up the arms of the pastor. However, the pastor has to be willing to receive help from the assisting pastor when needed. One of the common temptations in leadership today is the pressure of having to have it all together. To truly grow as a leader, one must, like Moses, be willing to embrace the support of trusted leaders. A good leader has support from his or her followers. In holding Moses' arms up, Aaron and Hur were showing their faith in Moses and they believed in what he was doing. They believed that keeping Moses' hands up would lead the people of Israel to victory. The biblical text in Exodus helped shape my thoughts about the importance of assisting the pastor. There will be times when the assisting pastor has to put his or her trust totally in the pastor, and believe that God has spoken to him or her.

Pastoral assistants must understand their place and position in relationship to the pastor just as Aaron does with Moses. Cornelius Houtman says, "Aaron is Moses' spokesman and not the one who acts on his own as

God's messenger" (Houtman 1993, 417). Aaron is Moses' assistant and he understands his role and responsibilities. God leads Aaron to Moses to fulfill God's will. Ellison explains, "Since God had apparently already told Aaron to go to meet his brother, he had probably already been chosen for the task. So often in matters of obedience we discover that God has started to work before we have said, 'Yes'" (Ellison 1982, 25). God gives special directions to pastoral assistants just as He does for pastors. God assigns Aaron to assist Moses.

God knew the importance of Moses and Aaron having a healthy working relationship. This degree of harmony is not always the case, as there are occasions where pastors and their assistants struggle to get along and co-exist. In the biblical narrative beginning in Exodus 7:1-2, Moses and Aaron provide a paradigm of what a good working relationship with the pastor and his or her assistant actually looks like. The relationship between the pastor and assistant to the pastor has to be one in which clear lines of authority have been established. God does not operate in confusion; thus, it is important that the people of God understand these lines of authority between the pastor and assistant to the pastor as well. Walter Brueggemann states: "Moses and Aaron are to share responsibility of speech, but their roles are by no means symmetrical. Aaron is to Moses as a mouth; Moses is to Aaron as a god. Moses retains unshared and unchallenged authority" (Brueggemann 1994, 717). Brueggemann's statements are helpful concerning Moses and Aaron. The same can be said that assistants to the pastor should understand that they are empowered by completing the tasks given to them by the pastor and are to fulfill all assignments as directed by

the pastor.

William Johnstone notes, “Aaron will be empowered to say only what Moses imparts to him and that will come with the full authority of God” (Johnstone 2014, 112). Even though Moses did not want the assignment God placed on him, Moses still had authority over Aaron, and understood the importance of fulfilling God’s call. Aaron accepted and embraced his role in the process of fulfilling God’s plan. As Peter Enns says, “God provided Aaron to Moses as a helper to carry out God’s plan” (Enns 123, 2000). It can be difficult, at times, for pastors to find assistants like Aaron to aid them in fulfilling the assignment God has given them. Pastors should seek God’s guidance when selecting an assistant.

Theological Foundation

In the theological foundation, we will discuss the theology applicable to the pastor and the pastoral assistant in an independent African American congregation. In Christopher A. Beeley’s book, *Leading God’s People; Wisdom from The Early Church for Today*, he speaks of the servant leader in chapter one. In that chapter Beeley quotes Augustine of Hippo as he stresses the essential character of leadership. Augustine of Hippo says,

The one who presides over the people ought to understand before he begins that he is the servant of many. And let him not disdain this role; I repeat, let him not disdain to be the servant of many, because the Lord of lords did not disdain to serve us. And the advice and warning I’m giving, I am also afraid of myself. (Beeley, 2014, 11)

A leader that presides over the people should understand that they are a servant of the people, and not the boss of the people. Many leaders feel as if

being a leader is more of a perk than it is a responsibility to serve others. Jesus gave us the perfect example of a great leader. In Mark 10:45, Jesus says, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” All leaders, especially assistant pastors, should have the heart and spirit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His servant leadership style. The assistant pastor understands that he or she does not just serve the pastor, but he or she also serves the people. The assignment of the assistant pastor would be much easier if they only had to serve the pastor, but that is not God's design for His leaders.

Servant leaders must have a strong prayer life. Karl Rahner admonishes servant leaders about what kind of prayers they should pray. He suggests praying, “Let us grow daily more and more like you through true, constant, selfless spiritual effort and struggle, O you the eternal wisdom of God” (Rahner 1968, 215). As leaders mature they realize the need to pray for their pastor daily because spiritual warfare is real. Ephesians 6:12 say, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” In the book *Intercessory Prayer*, Philip Clements-Jewery asserts:

The foundation of intercession is the belief that God and the intimate relationships, which make up the world form an organic whole. If we are thus members of one another and if God is the one in whom we live and move and have our being, then there is a basis for believing in the possibility that prayer may open ways of personal influence even at a distance. (Clements-Jewery 2005, 55)

John Calvin believed wholeheartedly in intercessory prayer. A servant leader should have a vibrant prayer life. There is power in prayer.

Karl Rahner refers to what he calls “great grace.” Rahner says, “Servant leaders exist to serve others, even if they serve badly” (Rahner 1968, 83). He states:

If we would be true to our calling we cannot keep ourselves from ourselves; now ours is a life with no rights except the great right to serve, to fight heedless, to serve even when we know that we serve badly. It is an all-consuming grace because we are delivered to men. And God himself has given himself to us, which is the final reason why this great grace is an all-consuming one. (Rahner 1968, 84)

Being an assistant pastor or servant leader means that you are called to serve your pastor’s needs and others before yours. This takes being mature in the faith because that is not an easy thing to accomplish. Understanding that serving other leaders and congregants’ needs before your own is not about neglecting your own needs, but it is more about serving God’s people first and believing God will take care of your needs in return.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer suggests that life experiences help us to grow our faith. In the book, *Liberating The Laity: Equipping All The Saints For Ministry* by R. Paul Stevens, Bonhoeffer is quoted:

I thought I could acquire faith by trying to live a holy life, was something like it. I discovered later, that it is only by living completely in this world that one learns to have faith. By this worldliness I mean living unreservedly in life's duties, problems, success and failure, experiences and perplexities. In so doing we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God, taken seriously and not our own sufferings, but those of God in the world -- watching with Christ in Gethsemane. That, I think, is faith; that is metanoia. (Stevens 1985, 93)

The difficult days in ministry have developed our faith in God whether inside the church doors or outside of it. However, many of us would not change our experiences for what we have learned about God. God has never failed us.

While in Gethsemane, Jesus prays to God, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26: 39 KJV). God would not allow the cup to pass by Jesus. We can look at this moment as a bad day for Jesus but I believe this was a defining moment in Jesus’ earthly ministry. He knew God was not going to change His mind because Jesus came from heaven to earth to die for the sins of this world. Like Jesus we will have some Gethsemane days, but I believe this is part of the metanoia process.

Historical Foundation

In the historical foundation we will consider that throughout church history there have been leaders who had assistance from other leaders to help them acquire great achievements. Men and women in history had dreams, visions, and aspirations of what they were placed on this earth to accomplish. As they set out to accomplish the impossible, they also received needed help from other leaders who would put their agenda aside to help fulfill a greater good. I will explore the history of positive and negative outcomes of having a person assisting in a leadership capacity. Within this foundation I have explored Augustine of Hippo’s monastic rule and the relationship between Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Reverend Ralph David Abernathy during the Civil Rights Movement.

The African American church has experienced a pattern of service and servanthood that is rooted in the monastic movement, which began deep in Africa (Oden 2007, 54). This historical foundation will connect the monasticism-developed rule by Augustine Hippo with the servanthood of the pastoral assistant towards the pastor. The monasticism developed rule includes service and

servanthood within the church. The historic beginning of service and servanthood in the community emerging from the monastic movement has continued into the Civil Rights Movement and the world we live in today. Augustine of Hippo is well known as the restless searcher for truth, as the convert, bishop and scholar. Augustine wrote the Rule around the year 397 (Van Bavel 1996, 4). Pastors and pastoral assistants can still employ the Rule that Augustine of Hippo wrote in year 397 in today's church.

Pastors, pastoral assistants, and members of a local assembly can subscribe to Augustine's monastic rule. Augustine of Hippo is well known as the restless searcher for truth, as the convert, bishop and scholar. Augustine wrote the Rule around the year 397 (Van Bavel 1996, 4).

In this rule, Augustine expressed the desire for servants of God to observe the precepts of love. Love is a key component in all that we do in ministry. George Lawless observes, "In the concluding chapter of his monastic Rule Augustine will, in fact, urge the servants of God who live in the monastery to observe these precepts with love as lovers of spiritual beauty" (Lawless1987, 39). As servants of God, the love that we have for God and for one another will help us to see the beauty of doing ministry as we strive to help our fellow persons.

Dr. King was the leader of this movement and Reverend Abernathy aided him for several years in the protest for equal rights for African Americans. During the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott the leader of the NAACP (Reverend Bennett) called for a meeting with other civil rights and church leaders in order to form a

committee under this movement. Those who gathered named Dr. King as the leader of the committee and named it “The Montgomery Improvement Association,” so that it would reflect the name of the city.

As a result of Dr. King being the leader of this committee, this also meant that Reverend Abernathy would stand by his side and assist Dr. King in the movement. Reverend Abernathy said, “As it turned out, this [organizational] Structure meant that Martin and I did most of the work, he as the chief officer, I as the chief organizer of activities” (Abernathy 2003, 22). Still today, we have leaders and their assistants doing most of the work in movements and ministry. When a leader takes on an assignment so does their assistant. The only difference is the leader has a choice whether to take the assignment on or not but the assistant does not.

The relationship between Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy shows that assistants to leaders can face the same highs and lows of their leader. As an assistant, Reverend Abernathy experienced the highs of victory when they won the case of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Leader and assistant were both celebrated and enjoyed victory together. However, during a march in Birmingham both men would equally also know the lows of being arrested and beaten by police officers. The history of Birmingham Alabama during the civil rights movement was known to have community violence exceeding all other Southern cities. Birmingham was known to be the most segregated cities in the South. In 1963, Albert Boutwell defeated Bull Connor in the mayoral election. Therefore, Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy flew to Birmingham to begin their campaign.

Dr. King appointed an advisory board of prominent black business and professional leaders. On Good Friday they advised Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy not to march because they would be arrested or even killed (Oates 212, 1982).

While sitting at the Gaston Motel waiting to march to City Hall, Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy, along with over two hundred people, were waiting for the go ahead to proceed. After two hours Dr. King said, "Ralph, I'm going to march regardless of what they say." Rev. Abernathy says, "If you're going to march, then I'm going to march too." Then Dr. King went to his advisors and said, "Gentleman, thank you for your words of advice, but we're going to march" (Abernathy 2003, 87). Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy led what became known as the Good Friday March. After only walking eight blocks, Bull Connor had them arrested and thrown violently into a paddy wagon (Oates 1982, 212).

Loyal assistants may face the same hardships as their leader. As an assistant pastor, I have experienced the highs and lows with my pastor. We have shared victories together from systematic strategies coming together and we have both been blamed and criticized for failures in ministry. Those whom oppose the leader will come after him and whoever is closest to the leader and that is usually the assistant.

The relationship between Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy during the Civil Rights Movement also shows us that leaders have to be wise when choosing assistants even after the movement or assignment is over. African Americans, to this day, dislike Ralph Abernathy for sharing private information

about Dr. King in his autobiography, *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down*.

Reverend Abernathy was one of the closest people to Dr. King and most people believe what happened in the confines of their relationship and the civil rights movement should have stayed private. Reverend Abernathy believed he had to discuss Dr. King's weakness for women because others have talked about it unjustly. Abernathy had only one real conversation with Dr. King on this subject.

In his autobiography Abernathy writes:

Martin, you can't really disguise the nature of certain friendships. If a man and woman are particularly close to one another, it shows in the way they behave---the way they look at one another and the way they talk. Don't sell these reporters short. So whatever your relationship is with her, you need to cool it down. With Hoover's men hiding under every bed, you just can't afford to continue the way you have. (Abernathy 1989, 474)

Reverend Abernathy should have remained quiet on the matter. Hearsay from others who dislike you is one thing but hearing these words from a reliable assistant who worked with you in the struggle for years is another. Abernathy sharing this one incident because he made it clear in his autobiography that there were more incidents did not read as a defense of Dr. King. Any great leader or not so great leader will tell you that it is hard to find a dedicated, trustworthy, and loyal assistant.

Contemporary Foundation

In the contemporary foundation we will explore how pastoral assistant leadership position is needed in our independent African American congregations. Additionally, I have highlighted contemporaries who have experience in leading effectively in independent congregations.

In Larry Taylor's journal, *The Ministry of an Assisting Pastor: Or, More Things I Learned From My Pastor*, he points out that assisting pastors are just that. They assist the pastor. There is only one pastor in the church, and at Shiloh, it is Pastor Baldwin. Now part of my task was to show and teach the people that I am not trying to be their pastor but I am trying to assist their pastor. Taylor suggests some practical points that would help assisting pastors. He suggests they be at every service, hold up the pastor's arms, and be supportive and helpful. The assistant pastor needs to correct problems, then follow up, and keep them corrected. The assistant pastor should not wear his or her feelings on their sleeves, be needy or overly sensitive, or make excuses. In the pastor's absence, it is important to run things exactly as he would if he were there. e financially frugal and ultra conservative (Taylor 1994, 9-22).

Taylor also suggests the assistant pastor apologize easily, make the pastor look good, be humble and stay humble, and create a loving environment. Finally, Taylor urges the assistant pastor to impact others positively, wash feet, pick up trash, wash windows, and serve, serve, serve (Taylor 1994, 9-22).

Taylor's points on developing the pastoral assistant are helpful and most of his points I have tried to put into practice. The members of our churches pay attention to what pastoral assistants do, a lot more than we give them credit for. As Pastor Baldwin would always say, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

In John Maxwell's book, *Leadership 101*, he speaks about the importance of members trusting their leaders. Maxwell argues that trust is the foundation of leadership. He writes:

There are three qualities a leader must exemplify to build trust: competence, connection, and character. People will forgive occasional mistakes based on ability, especially if they can see that you are still growing as a leader. But they will not trust anyone who has slips in character. In that area, even occasional lapses are lethal. All effective leaders know this truth. (Maxwell 2002, 46)

Leaders would like to believe that they do not have a difficult time exemplifying the qualities that build trust, such as competence, connection and character. However, getting the members of our churches to believe those qualities exist within a pastoral assistant is a different story.

In N. Gordon Cosby book, *By Grace Transformed; Christianity for a New Millennium*, he speaks of a Jesus model leadership. Cosby asserts:

Jesus is our example in everything, including leadership. Jesus' kind of leadership is the kind of leadership needed in our time if our society is going to survive; if the kingdom is going to come in; if the church is going to be the church that Jesus is calling the church to be. If our society is to be that new society that God longs for it to be, this kind of leadership is required. (Cosby 1999, 22)

Cosby is correct that our example in everything, including leadership should be Jesus. We have to be loving and forgiving to those who do not like us or care for our leadership. Jesus has so many quality characteristics that it would seem impossible to imitate all of them. However, if we strive to embellish as many of the character qualities of Jesus, then I believe we will be close to the kind of leaders that God longs for.

The senior pastor of Greater Allen A.M.E. Cathedral in Jamaica, New York wrote a book entitled *African-American Church Management Handbook*. He talks about managing difficult people.

Managing people entails more than just guiding those on the church staff. It also includes relating both formally and informally with members of the congregation. Virtually every congregation will have its share of EGR (Extra Grace Required) persons. Some will be more difficult than others. It behooves the pastor to be prayerful and to think of such persons not as troublemakers (though it is tempting to do so), but as people who are struggling in some areas of their lives and who from time to time need some extra attention and/or loving care. (Flake and Flake 2005, 63)

I know that over the years, I have made some mistakes as pastoral assistant at Shiloh Christian Community Church. I have tried to learn from each mistake and grow from it. My father in the flesh, Don Gould, would always say, "If you show me a man that has never made a mistake then I will show you a man that don't know anything." I believe we grow from our mistakes; however, you do not continue to make the same mistake over and over again. After a person makes a mistake they usually will analyze themselves and wonder, is this what I should be doing? For me, when I made a mistake, I would remind myself that God appointed me to my position, and to simply learn from my mistakes.

In Martin Hawkins book, *The Associate Pastor: Second Chair, Not Second Best*, he talks about the assistant being called by God for service. Hawkins says, "Assistant pastors are just as much God's priority as the primary leader or senior pastors are. Did you hear that? Just as God prepared, called, and supported Moses, he prepared, called, and supported Aaron in the role he had chosen for him" (Hawkins 2005, 34). I agree with Hawkins point of view.

Hawkins talks about the traits that a successful assistant pastor should have beyond knowing the specifics of the Sunday morning worship service. He says: "A straw poll asking several senior pastors the top five qualities they valued most in their associates reveal these answers" (Hawkins 2005, 54). He lists them as biblical soundness, loyalty, integrity, pulpit ability, walking with God, commitment, servanthood, self-starter, competence, and professionalism. Hawkins then asks, "Do these traits and qualities look like you?" (Hawkins 2005, 54-55). I agreed with all eleven qualities. I would also add that it would be helpful for the pastoral assistant to understand their place in the hierarchy of their position. In my opinion, the pastoral assistant should understand that your service to God comes first, then to your pastor, then to the church, then to the members, and then to self.

Hawkins mentions the importance of the pastoral assistant having a list of skills in order to serve in his or her position. He says, "An assistant also needs to be prepared in the following list of skills to serve in his position and meet the special needs of the congregation" (Hawkins 2005, 55). Hawkins highlights that the assistant pastor will be called upon to manage the spiritual life of the church, motivate volunteers for ministering, aid congregations in understanding and using their gifts, disciple special needs, mentor a young believer in leaders, spiritually advise the senior pastor, and organize and develop effective programs that fulfill the senior pastor's vision (Hawkins 2005, 55).

The pastoral assistant has to be prepared by God in order to do their job effectively. The pastoral assistant should hold the pastor up as much as possible.

The pastor is pulled in so many different directions that it can be draining. The pastor needs the leaders to hold him or her up daily through prayer.

Building upon the personal, biblical, theological, historical and contemporary foundations, a project was designed to consider answers to the questions raised in the purpose statement within the context of the independent African American church.

Context

The desired survey participants were for pastoral assistants and former pastoral assistants who are now pastors in an independent African American church. This survey assessed the responsibilities of the pastoral assistant and what senior pastors are looking for in an assistant to help them successfully lead their congregations. Pastoral assistants in independent African American churches from all size congregations were targeted to complete the survey.

While the research question could be addressed for any racial congregation, the key focus will be African American churches to manage the scope of the project and to connect within my personal context. I have been an assistant pastor for over sixteen years and have seen the good and bad of operating in this position. As my seminary professor, Dr. Patricia Gould-Champ used to say, "The assistant pastor has to be good enough to be the pastor but smart enough to know they're not the pastor" (Gould-Champ 2013, Introduction to Church and Ministry Lecture).

Definition of Terms

Pastoral Assistant – “They support and assist the senior pastor in his role, which has expanded beyond the capabilities of one person” (Hawkins 2005, 14).

Pastor – A senior minister in charge of a Christian church or congregation.

Second in Command – The right-hand person to the pastor.

Servant Leaders - Serving others before self

Project Goals

The purpose of this project was to discover how to effectively lead from the second chair position. The research question was: How do you effectively lead from the second chair position?

1. To discover the extent to which the understanding of their call helps them effectively operate as pastoral assistants.
2. To discover the extent to which seminary education plays a role in the success of pastoral assistants.
3. To discover what resources pastoral assistants need to become more effective.
4. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants have responsibilities with authority.
5. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants have a biblical understanding of their role.
6. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants understand their role to the pastor.
7. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants understand their role to the

church.

Design, Procedure and Assessment

The purpose of this project was to discover how to lead effectively as a pastoral assistant in an African American congregation. The research question was: How does one effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an African American congregation? The design was a discovery project in the form of a survey, which was distributed to a network of pastoral assistants and pastors in independent African American congregations.

The assessment tool was an online survey given to assistant pastors and assistant pastors who has been recently removed within the last five years of their position. The survey assisted in gathering information to meet the goals of the project. All data collected was through Survey Monkey. Many of the assistant pastors have busy schedules and other assistant pastors live in different cities, thus being the reason for online surveying. The target audience to gather data from the survey was 50-60 assistant pastors.

There were three objective, forced-choice statements, along with one subjective, open-ended question measured each of the seven goals. All twenty-one of the qualitative questions were measured on a five-point Likert Scale listed as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

The strategy for assessing the goals of the project included analyzing both the qualitative and quantitative data gained through the research. Survey Monkey compiled the information for each response.

Personal Goals

I have been an assistant pastor for sixteen years. Through my tenure at Shiloh Christian Community Church as assistant pastor I have matured as a leader and grown in confidence with my pastor. My journey has not been easy and I believe other first time assistant pastors can benefit from my experiences.

My personal goals were:

1. I will keep this project before the Lord in prayer daily.
2. I will strengthen my relationship with God through daily devotions.
3. I will share my journey with other clergy.

Plan of the Paper

The current section, chapter one, gives in outline form an overview of the dissertation. Chapter Two guides the reader through the biblical, theological, and historical foundations for this project. Chapter Three reviews the contemporary literature for this project. Chapter Four will give details about the design, procedure, and assessment instrument used to complete this project. Chapter Five will give the data from the assessment instrument for this project. Chapter Six will reflect on the data through analyzing its meaning, importance, and application in this project.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL, AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

In January 2000, I resigned my role at Schmidt's Baking Company to accept the position of Assistant to the Pastor, serving under Pastor Jimmy Baldwin Sr. at Shiloh Christian Community Church in Baltimore, Maryland. Serving in this capacity presents various challenges for those who sit in the second chair, in the role known as Assistant to the Pastor. A primary challenge is that job security is not solely based on job performance or the performance of the Senior Pastor, but also on the relationship between the Senior Pastor and the Assistant Pastor (I will use the term 'assistant pastor' interchangeably with 'Assistant to the Pastor').

In this working and spiritual relationship, it is essential that the Senior Pastor and the Assistant Pastor have a thriving, healthy relationship. After serving sixteen years as the Assistant to the Pastor of Shiloh Christian Community Church, the goal was to share some of the keys of effective leadership with other assistants to the pastor of independent African American congregations, with particular attention to those assistants who have the desire to serve at the pleasure of their pastor.

This chapter will discuss the biblical, theological, and historical foundations that relate to the responsibilities of second tier leadership in an African American congregation. We will examine the relationship between Moses and Aaron in Exodus, chapter 4:1-16, 4:27-31 and 7:1-2, as the biblical foundation for this chapter, while also taking a theological look at servant leadership. The chapter will conclude with a historical look at Augustine of

Hippo's monastic rule and the relationship of Civil Rights leaders Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Reverend Ralph Abernathy. Through these observations, we will lay the foundation of leading from second tier leadership.

Biblical Foundation

Exodus 4:1-16 frames our biblical mandate for top tier leadership within ministry structures. The relationship between Moses and Aaron highlights or affirms the need for relational connection and development between those called to lead and those serving the leader. In this passage, God initiated the working relationship between Moses and Aaron. Moses tells God that he does not want to lead Israel out of Egypt because he feels inadequate. Therefore, God assigns Aaron to assist Moses.

Similarly, some pastors today may feel inadequate to follow through with the assignments that God has given them. In those moments, it is necessary for pastors to rely on God more than they rely on their own abilities. The pastor can trust that if God gives them an assignment, God has already prepared and equipped them for that particular assignment. Despite previous victories or past failures, God can still prepare each pastor for their unique assignment as God did in the case with Moses, when God assigned Aaron to assist him in Exodus 4:1-2.

In this instance, God equipped Moses with assistance by sending Aaron. Wenham notes that God appoints Aaron, Moses' brother, to speak on his behalf. Jethro, his father-in-law, encourages him to return to Egypt. The LORD again urges Moses to return to Egypt" (Wenham 2003, 60). God's plan was to use Aaron to assist Moses in the areas where he was weak. God arranged for Aaron

to come see Moses to be of service to him in the areas where Moses was weak, such as public speaking. God told Moses, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and he will be glad to see you" (Exodus 4:14 NIV). Aaron was a gifted speaker, and his assisting Moses would allow Moses to do God's will.

Later, in chapter Exodus 7:2, the assignment is the same, but the method has changed. God said to Moses, "You are to say everything I command you, and your brother Aaron is to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his country" (Exodus 7:2). Aaron will tell the people only what Moses has given him to say. This new method allowed Moses to remain faithful to God's will, despite his weaknesses or feelings of inadequacy. Walter Brueggemann states, "While God has powerfully assured Moses of adequate speech, Moses is unpersuaded...Moses wants another sent, and God agrees to send Aaron along with him." Fretheim terms this God's "Plan B," after Moses has refused "Plan A." That is, Moses' resistance is taken seriously by God, who must adapt" (Brueggemann 1994, 716). Moses wanted to be relieved from the assignment God had given but instead of God releasing Moses, He puts a plan in place for Moses to be able to still serve Him.

God refused to force His will on Moses. Likewise, God allows us to have a free will and does not force His will upon His present-day people. After Moses explains to God his inability to speak eloquently and to stand before Pharaoh, God provides Moses with what is needed to fulfill the assignment in a different way. God gave Moses an assistant named Aaron. Douglas Stuart says, "This is

important in helping the reader understand that Aaron was genuinely, fully committed to the exodus plan; we now learn that he had been explicitly sent by God to join forces with Moses” (Stuart 2005, 156). Pastoral assistants should provide help and assistance in such a manner that encourages pastors to be more confident in the success of their God-given assignment. Likewise, pastors should make assistants feel welcomed and appreciated as a part of the fulfillment of the assignment. Aaron is fully committed to assisting and supporting Moses’ assignment from God. As promised, God sends Aaron to assist Moses.

There are times when God will speak to the pastoral assistant concerning their role and responsibilities in assisting the pastor even before God informs the pastor (Stuart 2006, 156). God spoke to Moses before speaking to Aaron concerning their assignment. Some assignments are so important that God will speak to all parties for His plan to go forward successfully. God spoke to Aaron and sent him to assist Moses. Douglas Stuart asserts:

Verse 27 begins presumptively, referring back to the call of Aaron...that is, that the events described in 4:14 (“What about your brother Aaron? He is already on his way”) came about not merely by reason of a desire on Aaron’s part to have a family visit with Moses but by a call of God, parallel to but apparently not as extensive as that of Moses’ own. Aaron’s key role as Moses’ supporter and spokesman was previously arranged in 4:14–16. (Stuart 2006, 156-157)

God told Aaron to go into the wilderness to meet Moses. God led Aaron to his assignment to assist Moses. Pastoral assistants must know and be fully confident that they are being led by God to assist their pastor.

Pastors today experience the same stress and anxiety as Moses and, as a result, need some assistance. When Moses and Aaron face Pharaoh, God tells

Moses what to say to Aaron before Aaron speaks to Pharaoh (Exodus 7:1-2). We should employ this same formula today, where God speaks to the pastor, as He did to Moses; and then the pastor passes the message to their assistant, as Moses did. The assistant is then responsible for sharing with the people the instructions from the pastor in the same way that Aaron did.

It is critical for assistants to the pastor to deliver the correct message from the pastor to the people of God. In this same regard, Fretheim asserts, “God then outlines the nature of their relationship. Moses is still to be the primary recipient of God’s word and will; Aaron is subordinate to Moses. God will teach Moses, Moses shall pass that on to Aaron, and Aaron shall in turn transmit that” (Fretheim 1991, 74).

Pastoral assistants must understand their place and position in relationship to the pastor just as Aaron does with Moses. Houtman says, “Aaron is Moses’ spokesman and not the one who acts on his own as God’s messenger” (Houtman 1993, 417). Aaron never tells Moses, “I think I can handle it now.” Aaron never tells Moses, “I will go this time and talk to Pharaoh by myself, and you can stay here.” Aaron is Moses’ assistant and he understands his role and responsibilities. God leads Aaron to Moses to fulfill God’s will. Ellison explains, “Since God had apparently already told Aaron to go to meet his brother, he had probably already been chosen for the task. Often in matters of obedience we discover that God has started to work before we have said, ‘Yes’” (Ellison 1982, 25). God gives special directions to assistants to the pastor just as He does for pastors. God assigns Aaron to assist Moses. Pastoral assistants should be

prepared to put their wants and desires on hold for a season as they help the pastor to fulfill the assignment given to them from God.

God knew the importance of Moses and Aaron having a healthy working relationship. This degree of harmony is not always the case, as there are occasions where pastors and their assistants struggle to get along and co-exist. In the biblical narrative Exodus 7:1-2, Moses and Aaron provide a paradigm of what a good working relationship with the pastor and his or her assistant looks like. The relationship between the pastor and assistant to the pastor has to be one in which clear lines of authority have been established. God does not operate in confusion; thus, it is important that the people of God understand these lines of authority between the pastor and assistant to the pastor as well. Brueggemann states: "Moses and Aaron are to share responsibility of speech, but their roles are by no means symmetrical. Aaron is to Moses as a mouth; Moses is to Aaron as a god. Moses retains unshared and unchallenged authority" (Brueggemann 1994, 717). Brueggemann's statements are helpful concerning Moses and Aaron. The same can be said, that assistants to the pastor should understand that they are empowered by completing the tasks given to them by the pastor and are to fulfill all assignments as directed by the pastor.

Johnstone notes that, "Aaron will be empowered to say only what Moses imparts to him and that will come with the full authority of God" (Johnstone 2014, 112). Even though Moses did not want the assignment God placed on him, Moses still had authority over Aaron, and understood the importance of fulfilling God's call. Aaron accepted and embraced his role in the process of fulfilling

God's plan. Peter Enns says, "God provided Aaron to Moses as a helper to carry out God's plan" (Enns 123, 2000). It can be difficult, at times, for pastors to find assistants like Aaron to aid them in fulfilling the assignment God has given them. Pastors should seek God's guidance when selecting an assistant. Jacob states, "When God gave Moses his mission of freeing the Israelites, he also made Aaron his spokesman through the words of 7.1-5. Aaron was chosen by God for his task just as Moses was for his" (Jacob 1992, 171). It is beneficial to those who are concerned for the pastor to find an assistant who does not mind being secondary to the pastor in church-related matters. Durham asserts:

Even so, in order that Moses' own preeminence not be compromised, Aaron is put in a relationship to him clearly similar to the relationship Moses has to Yahweh: Moses will speak to Aaron, and put the message into his mouth; Yahweh will be with both mouths, instruct both servants; and Aaron's speaking will be for Moses – he will function as Moses' mouth, and Moses will be as a god to him. (Durham 1987, 51)

God gives clear lines of hierarchy. Moses receives from God and Aaron will receive from Moses. Therefore, Moses' preeminence will not be compromised in his relationship with Aaron. When referring to Aaron's role and Moses' authority Dozeman says, "He is singled out for his eloquence in speaking. But he functions in a subordinate role to Moses. Yahweh speaks only through Moses" (Dozeman 2009, 145). God will lead Moses and Moses will lead Aaron. It does not matter how well Aaron performs in his assignments, he will not supersede Moses' authority. Since there is clarity from God regarding the hierarchy, and understanding and agreement between Moses and Aaron, Moses is able to fulfill God's call.

God designed the relationship between Moses and Aaron in such a way

that requires Aaron to always look to Moses. In Exodus 4:15 God tells Moses, “You will be to him as God.” Similarly, within churches, proper relationships must be established between the pastor and assistant. God speaks to pastors, as the leaders of the church, providing them with instructions on how to lead the people He has given them.

God will also speak to the person who will assist the pastor as well. Jacob says, “God spoke to Aaron directly and not through Moses” (Jacob 1992, 110). In those moments, God instructs the assistants, as He did with Aaron, of their role in relationship with the pastor, which is to help assist in fulfilling their assignment. God’s design places the pastoral assistant under the authority of the pastor. Again, God puts proper relationships in place with pastors and pastoral assistants. Victor Hamilton says, “Moses and Aaron become a tag team, but they are not equal. What Elohim is to Moses, Moses is to Aaron” (Hamilton 76, 2011). God puts proper protocol in place.

Exodus 4:27-31 provides further insight about how the Lord speaks to subsidiary leaders. The scriptures also provide understanding regarding the importance of Moses, the leader, sharing the vision with Aaron, the person in the second position.

The Lord said to Aaron, “Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.” So he met Moses at the mountain of God and kissed him. Then Moses told Aaron everything the Lord had sent him to say, and about all the signs he had commanded him to perform. Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites, and Aaron told them everything the Lord had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, and they believed. And when they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped. (Exodus 4:27-31)

God gave Aaron instructions to go in to the wilderness to meet Moses. Aaron was obedient to God's instructions. This distinction should not be overlooked because many of those who claim to be servants of the Lord do not heed all of His instructions. Aaron was faithful to God. As the leader of this duo, Moses explained to Aaron that God had spoken to him. Moses and Aaron then gathered the people together, with Aaron serving as the spokesperson, explaining to the people what the Lord has said to Moses. God brings Moses and Aaron together, and because they work well as a team, the people believed and are blessed.

James E. Smith asserts:

Moses met Aaron in the wilderness. This joyous reunion fulfilled the earlier promise of God. His brother believed all that Moses told him about what had transpired on the mount. The elders of Israel gave Moses and Aaron a favorable reception just as God had promised. (Smith 1993, 40)

God called and prepared Moses for his assignment, just as God calls and prepares pastors today. However, God was also working on Aaron's heart and called him to serve and assist Moses. God calls and prepares pastoral assistants just as He calls and prepares pastors. God promised Moses that He will send him some help, and He does so in the person of Aaron. Brevard Childs says, "Aaron is now brought into the story. His important role had already been discussed in the call of Moses (4.14). He is now commanded by God to meet Moses in the wilderness" (Childs 2004, 104). Aaron could speak well and Moses could not. Aaron had a gift of oratory that Moses needed to fulfill his assignment.

When God spoke to Aaron, God told Aaron to meet Moses in the wilderness. The wilderness is not a desirable place to go. It is not a place which people willingly seek out. If a pastor is in the wilderness he should not be alone.

Pastoral assistants should be in the wilderness with their pastor. God sends Aaron to be with Moses in an undesirable place. Moses then tells Aaron all the words of the Lord. Moses freely communicates with Aaron and does not withhold any information from him. John Van Seters speaks of God sending Aaron to the wilderness to meet Moses and how Moses reveals God's plan to Aaron, when he asserts:

God, in a simple audition, instructs Aaron to go and meet Moses in the desert, which he does at the "mountain of God." Following their reunion, Moses reveals the content of the call to Aaron. Together they assemble the elders of Israel in Egypt, and Moses reports through Aaron the words of God and the confirmatory signs. (Seters 1994, 70)

From this, we understand that it is wise for pastors to share the direction the Lord is leading them with their pastoral assistants. For pastoral assistants to work effectively with their pastor, the pastor must consistently share vital information with their pastoral assistant so that they both, pastor and assistant, can fulfill their duties efficiently and effectively. Pastors are wise to inform pastoral assistants of what the Lord has spoken to them and the role they would like the pastoral assistant to perform in the process (Gispén 1982, 65). This may allow the pastoral assistant to have a better understanding of the pastor's vision and the assignment they are being asked to accomplish.

Pastors must give pertinent details to their pastoral assistants for their assistants to have clarity concerning their assignments, duties, and responsibilities. When people have clarity concerning their assignments, duties, and responsibilities, they feel empowered and prepared. Furthermore, when pastors have done this, it puts both them and their assistant in a position to

embrace their assignment and accomplish it effectively. In the initial meeting between Moses and Aaron, Moses shared everything with Aaron. Over time, in good working relationships with pastors and assistants, the communication between them may slow down because the assistant has captured the spirit of their pastor and understands the pastor's vision. When assistants have the spirit and heart of their pastor, they become aware of what the pastor's needs are in order to accomplish their assignments.

John Durham states, "In view of what we have been told already, it is almost startling to discover Aaron not only speaking the words Moses has given him from Yahweh, but also performing the signs" (Durham 1987, 59). Aaron did his part as orator for Moses as well as performing signs. When this type of relationship develops, the pastor can trust their pastoral assistant to complete assignments, even in their absence (Hamilton 2011, 85).

Pastoral assistants are called and prepared by God to be with their pastors through each journey even if the journey takes them into a wilderness. The ministry journey does not always end in bright and sunny days with pastors and their assistants. The journey God give to pastors may, in fact, take them through the wilderness, and their pastoral assistant must be willing to journey through the wilderness with their pastor because both the pastor and the pastoral assistant are called to obey God's instructions. Thomas White asserts, "The Lord speaks directly to Aaron and commands him to go out to meet Moses... The two of them then address the elders of the people of Israel" (White 2016, 53). God appoints Aaron to be Moses' spokesperson, and Moses is appointed to perform

the miracles. God brought them together to serve His chosen people.

William Johnstone states, “Moses needs credentials and empowerment so that he can demonstrate to his audience that the message he bears comes indeed from YHWH and is authentic and reliable” (Johnstone 2014, 107). God fulfills His promises to Moses and Aaron. Aaron is instructed to share a message of deliverance to the people and Moses is instructed to perform miracles before the eyes of the people. Because of Moses and Aaron’s obedience to God’s instructions, the people are filled with hope, leading them to bow down and worship God. When the pastor and his or her assistant can work together as God has designed, then the people are certain to be filled with hope and are moved to worship God.

In the biblical section, we looked at the relationship between Moses and Aaron. Next, we will turn to the theological foundation to discuss the pastoral assistants service to the pastor, service to the people, and being secure in their position in an African American independent congregation.

Theological Foundation

This theological foundation will focus on the pastor and the pastoral assistant in an African American congregation. However; in this foundation, the reader will notice more non-African American theologians than African American theologians. During the research, it was discovered that African American theologians such as James Cone, Gayraud Wilmore, J. Deotis Roberts, and others, were more dedicated towards liberation and black theology and non-African American theologians focused more on service and servanthood. For

example, James Cone writes, “For black power was concerned with the liberation of the black poor from oppression” (Cone 1984, 32). Cone also states, “When black theology first came into being, it was the radical, prophetic voice in black churches, calling them back to their liberating nineteenth-century heritage by attacking racism and affirming black identity extending back to Africa” (Cone 1984, 111). Wilmore and Cone observed, “Black theology places our past and present actions towards black liberation in theological context, seeking to destroy alien gods; and to create value-structures according to the God of black freedom” (Cone and Wilmore 1993, 109). Black theology and liberation theology is a very important subject in the lives of African Americans but for this project the focus is guided towards the service and servanthood of the pastoral assistant.

Pastoral assistants are servant leaders who should understand that they are not the lead person and are subservient to God first. Pastoral assistants’ primary responsibility is to their pastor and to the members of the congregation. Pastoral assistants are not called to lord over the people but to serve them well. Karl Rahner asserts, “To the nature of the Church there belongs its structure as a hierarchically-organized society with a variety of offices and authorities” (Rahner 1979, 35). When servant leaders understand their roles and respect the pastor’s position over themselves then hierarchy is not a problem.

Servant Leader to the Pastor

Servant leaders and pastoral assistants understand that it is an honor to serve and they are aware of their obligation in service being first to the pastor. When servant leaders understand that they are served after everyone else has

been served then they are better equipped to carry out their responsibilities.

Servant leaders first serve God, then the pastor, then the membership of the church and, finally, themselves. Being a servant leader should not be forced on anyone. It should be a natural expression of the spiritual gifts they have received from God. Many gifts abound in the body of Christ and being one who is called to serve others is a gift. Pastors and other leaders benefit from those individuals who are born to serve others. Karl Barth writes:

In general terms, service is a willing, working, and doing in which a person acts not according to his own purposes or plans but with a view to the purpose of another person and according to the need, disposition, and direction of others. (Barth 1979, 184)

Pastoral assistants understand that they are to serve their pastor and other members in the congregation and as they serve in their gift of service, others will benefit from their unselfish service unto the body of Christ.

Pastoral assistants should be ever conscious of the fact that God has called them to leadership within the ministry. God has called assistants to serve Him, their pastor, and the people of God. Therefore, pastoral assistants must remember that they represent God, their pastor and the people of God in everything they do. Pastoral assistants should always be aware of their attitude, conduct, and behavior when relating to God and His people. Pastoral assistants' identity and vocation are important because they are based in their relationship with God. God has called pastoral assistants to serve their pastor, to be accountable to their pastor, and to respect their pastor at all times. Owens notes:

When Christians talk about leadership or ministry, we reflect on what God calls us to do, who God calls us to be, how God calls us to act and behave. Our identity and vocation are rooted in God first of all. Our identity

and vocation have everything to do with how we relate and respond to this God. (Boers 2015, 17)

Pastoral assistants are ever aware that it is God who has called them to ministry and service to their pastor.

It should be noted that pastoral assistants usually take on their pastor's ministerial struggles within the ministry. When pastoral assistants work closely with their pastor they will embrace the same successes and failures as their pastor. The pastoral assistant takes on the pastor's vision for the church and work to make the vision to become a reality. When the church is successful in its endeavors the pastor and the pastoral assistant will celebrate. Likewise, when failures occur within the ministry and goals are not accomplished the pastoral assistant will be the one to stand with the pastor to embrace the bad as well. John Macquarrie says, "Suffering is inseparable from ministry. Sometimes, indeed, all that the Christian minister can do is stand with the other, sharing his suffering and absorbing something of it" (Macquarrie 1986, 161). When you have invested time and energy into a project or vision with your pastor you become a part of the process as if it was your vision or project.

Servant Leader to the People

Pastoral assistants understand that they are in their position to serve the people instead of being served by the people. Leaders who preside over people should understand that they are servants of the people, and not bosses of the people. Many leaders feel as if being a leader is more of a benefit than it is a responsibility to serve others. Jesus has given the perfect example of a loving

and responsible leader when He says, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

All leaders, especially pastoral assistants, should have the heart and spirit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and adopt His servant leadership example. It is incumbent upon pastoral assistants to understand that they do not just serve the pastor but they also serve the people. The assignments given to pastoral assistants would be much easier if they only served the pastor but that is not God's design for His leaders. Christopher A. Beeley is not a theologian but quotes Augustine of Hippo in his book *Leading God's People: Wisdom from The Early Church for Today*, and speaks of the importance of servant leaders. Augustine of Hippo stated, “The one who presides over the people ought to understand before he begins that he is the servant of many. And let him not disdain this role; I repeat, let him not disdain to be the servant of many, because the Lord of lords did not disdain to serve us” (Beeley 2014, 11). Pastoral assistants disdain their role when they fail to embrace the fact that they are servants to many.

Karl Rahner further explains this as he refers to what he calls “great grace.” Rahner says, “Servant leaders exist to serve others, even if they serve badly” (Rahner 1968, 83). No one desires to serve badly but even when serving badly the servant leader must try to serve well. Rahner further describes:

If we would be true to our calling we cannot keep ourselves from ourselves; now ours is a life with no rights except the great right to serve, to fight heedless, to serve even when we know that we serve badly. It is an all-consuming grace because we are delivered to men. And God himself has given himself to us, which is the final reason why this great grace is an all-consuming one. (Rahner 1968, 84)

Over time pastoral assistants will develop relationships with the membership of the church. In some African-American churches, members expect their pastors, pastoral assistants, and servant leaders to be able to help them overcome difficult situations.

Pastoral assistants have many responsibilities to undergird and apart from those responsibilities they must still find time to aid in the concerns of the people within the congregation. Members in African American churches come with large and small concerns. Leaders must be able to give proper attention to both types of concerns, especially if the concerns of the people stem from changes the leader has made within the church. When these concerns arise, the people need to feel as if their concerns have been heard and taken into consideration. Rahner states, "Ultimately only one thing can give unity in the Church on the human level: the love which allows another to be different" (Rahner 1979, 65).

Pastors and pastoral assistants must be available to listen to the concerns of the members as they unite to learn and to love one another through their differences. Once these concerns are heard, it is the responsibility of the pastor or pastoral assistant to provide the best available solution or hope to their congregants. In some instances, members need someone they can confide in about their concerns; a person who can offer another point of view or give hope to a seemingly hopeless situation. Bonhoeffer says, "Christians need other Christians who speak God's Word to them, they need them again and again when they become uncertain and disheartened" (Elliston 2016, 39).

Pastors and pastoral assistants will give hope from the Word of God to

enlighten or provide help for their congregants when facing family concerns, problems or personal failures. Members expect that their pastor or pastoral assistant has the ability to be their preacher, teacher, marriage counselor, confidant, advisor, mediator, and everything else in between. Even though most pastors and pastoral assistants in African American churches do not have all the proper credentials to handle these types of affairs, the members expect their pastor or pastoral assistant to advise and counsel them on what they should do or to help them navigate through difficult decisions, therefore the pastor and pastoral assistant will use the Word of God for assistance.

Secure in Position

When serving in ministry we will encounter difficult situations which will test our faith. Dietrich Bonhoeffer suggests that life experiences help individuals to grow their faith. R. Paul Stevens, in *Liberating the Laity: Equipping All the Saints for Ministry*, quotes Bonhoeffer: "It is only by living completely in this world that one learns to have faith . . . Living unreservedly in life's duties, problems, success and failure, experiences and perplexities. In so doing we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God" (Stevens 1985, 93). Living in this world will test the believers' faith as they navigate through successes and failures, ups and downs, accomplishments and disappointments. However, all of these things teach believers to have faith in God. Believers who have overcome difficulties in ministry have learned to depend on God. As believers, we do not enjoy those difficult experiences; however, most would not go back and change their difficult experiences because of what they have learned about God through

their circumstances. Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, “In the situation of responsibility, passionate ethical struggle, confrontation by an overwhelming claim; thus, the real person grows out of the concrete situation” (Elliston 2016, 33). Bonhoeffer’s insight is helpful to the pastoral assistants’ understanding that growth within can come from going through difficult experiences.

Pastoral assistants should rely on God as their primary source in ministry. While it is important for pastoral assistants to stay aware of trends in ministry, they should be careful not to rely on those resources so much that they displace their reliance on God. God must remain the primary resource for all that pastoral assistants do in ministry. Clark Pinnock asserts, “A theology that does not inquire after God’s will for the present may be orthodox but is not really listening to God” (Pinnock 1996, 215). Pastoral assistants may feel the pressure from their pastors to produce something good or something new in ministry. This feeling may lead pastoral assistants to rely more on techniques and literature than on God. Boers quotes L. Roger Owens, “Much leadership literature promotes ‘functional atheism’: working from the unconscious assumption that if I don’t make something good happen here it never will” (Boers 2015, 9). He continues: “Relying on techniques and best practices, we may forego reliance on God; we act like atheists. We effectively deny God’s existence or efficacy” (Boers 2015, 9). The pressure to produce in some instances may drive pastoral assistants to look to other resources for help, which is fine but they should still rely on God for guidance.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer ask the question, “Where then is there still a place for God” (Dramm 2007, 213)? In their quest to accomplish their goals, pastoral assistants must continue to leave a place for God to lead and guide them.

Pinnock teaches:

God has so much more to tell us than we have grasped thus far. Humility must be the order of the day. This is how we learn and grow. Let us cast aside rigidity and that know-it-all attitude and open ourselves to more light that God can shed. (Pinnock 1996, 219)

Pinnock’s understanding of submission is helpful. When pastoral assistants humble themselves and seek God’s guidance they will learn and be successful in their assignments. In the theological section, we have looked at what it means to be a servant leader to the pastor and the people. We also examined what it means for pastoral assistants to be secure in their positions. Next, we will turn to the historical foundations that have impacted the African American church. In particular, we will look at the influence of Augustine of Hippo’s monastic rule and the Civil Rights Movement.

Historical Foundation

The African American church has experienced a pattern of service and servanthood that is rooted in the monastic movement, which began deep in Africa (Oden 2007, 54). This historical foundation will connect the monasticism-developed rule by Augustine of Hippo with the servanthood of the pastoral assistant towards the pastor. The monasticism developed rule includes service and servanthood within the church. The historic beginning of service and servanthood in the community emerging from the monastic movement has continued into the Civil Rights Movement and the world we live in today.

Augustine of Hippo is well known as the restless searcher for truth, as the convert, bishop and scholar. Augustine wrote the Rule around the year 397 (Van Bavel 1996, 4). Pastors and pastoral assistants can still employ the Rule that Augustine of Hippo wrote in year 397 in today's church.

Augustine's Monastic Rule

In this rule, Augustine expressed the desire for servants of God to observe the precepts of love. Love is a key component in all that we do in ministry. George Lawless observes, "In the concluding chapter of his monastic Rule Augustine will, in fact, urge the servants of God who live in the monastery to observe these precepts with love as lovers of spiritual beauty" (Lawless 1987, 39). As servants of God, the love that we have for God and for one another will help us to see the beauty of doing ministry as we strive to help our fellow persons.

Augustine admonishes his readers to adopt a life of prayer. Through Augustine's rule, pastoral assistants are reminded of the importance and necessity of a life committed to prayer by the believer. Lawless states, "Augustine gives attention to the prayer-life of the community. Perhaps by this priority of treatment Augustine intends to say that the prayer-life of the community will determine the quality of human relations" (Lawless 1987, 23). Pastoral assistants should be committed to a life of prayer unto God, praying for their pastor, the congregation, the community and themselves.

In addition to having a prayer-life, Augustine suggests that we should frequently study the scriptures (Lawless 1987, 40). These elements of

monasticism are helpful to the development of pastoral assistants who have a desire to draw closer to God. As pastoral assistants strengthen their prayer-life and increase their time of study of the scriptures, it will in return draw them closer to God.

As pastoral assistants strive to be closer to God and more knowledgeable in their position to serve their pastor, the pastor may become dependent on the pastoral assistant. Augustine teaches in the rule that this is not a bad situation or even a sign of weakness on behalf of the pastor. The reality is that we need each other in ministry. According to George Lawless, “Dependence upon one another is regarded as a source of spiritual strength, not a sign of indigence or weakness” (Lawless 1987, 16). Pastors should not feel less than a leader because they are dependent upon their pastoral assistant to help them. Dependence upon another person to accomplish the work of the Lord can be seen as strength. In Augustine’s rule, he wanted to strike at the root of any unwarranted independence, display of power, or egoism, which would be inherently destructive (Lawless 1987, 16).

When pastors and pastoral assistants embrace other ideas in Augustine’s rule such as service, harmony, personal compassion and forgiveness towards everyone, then the pastor and the pastoral assistant will be better equipped to fulfill the work of the church assigned to them. As the pastor and pastoral assistant work together, over time, with Augustine’s rule in mind, there will be an order of harmony between them that will exist on a deeper level of service (Lawless 1987, 22). Pastors and pastoral assistants should work together to

serve the people of God in love. Augustine says the superior of the monastery should regard himself [herself] to be fortunate as one who serves you in love, not as one who exercises authority over you (Lawless 1987, 22). The pastoral assistant serves the pastor and the members of the congregation in love. More can be accomplished when we minister and aid the people of God out of genuine love, the same love that God has for His people.

The Civil Rights Movement

Throughout history, there have been great leaders who had assistance from other leaders to help them achieve great things. Men and women in history had dreams, visions, and aspirations of what they were placed on this earth to accomplish. As they set out to accomplish the impossible, they also received needed help from other leaders who put their personal agenda aside to serve the greater good. In this section, we will look at the history of positive and negative outcomes of having a person assist in a leadership position and the difficulties of following leaders who struggle with integrity.

Within this foundation, we will explore the relationship between Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Reverend Ralph David Abernathy during the Civil Rights Movement. Dr. King was the official leader of this movement, and Reverend Abernathy aided him for several years in the protest for equal rights for African Americans. During the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott, Reverend L. Roy Bennett, the leader of the NAACP called for a meeting with other civil rights and church leaders to form a committee, which organized the boycott. Those who gathered

named Dr. King as the leader of the committee and named it “The Montgomery Improvement Association” (Paris 1995, 143).

Because Dr. King was the leader of this committee, Reverend Abernathy would stand by his side and assist Dr. King in the movement. Reverend Abernathy said, “As it turned out, this (organizational) structure meant that Martin and I did most of the work, he as the chief officer, I as the chief organizer of activities” (Abernathy 2003, 22). This type of organizational structure still exists today, with leaders and their assistants doing the majority of the work in movements and in ministry (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990, 165). When pastors take on various assignments, their pastoral assistants do as well. The only difference is that the leaders are in position to choose whether to take on a particular assignment, while their assistants do not have that luxury (Wilmore 1998, 207).

Some leaders of the Civil Rights Movement acquired their leadership skills through their involvement within the African American Church. Competent leadership was required to move the Civil Rights Movement forward. Leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rev. Ralph David Abernathy were prepared to take a leadership role in the Civil Rights Movement because of their experiences leading parishioners in the church. C. Anthony Hunt states, “There were essentially three major influences present in King’s early life that would shape his later attitudes and behaviors. These were: his black middle class family . . . the religious ethos and mores of the southern black Baptist church; and the ongoing patterns of racial segregation and discrimination” (Hunt 2005, 98).

While Dr. King may have had access to other institutions and universities, which helped him develop academically and intellectually, there was no such preparation available for other leaders in the Civil Rights Movement. Anne Pinn defines the Civil Rights Movement as, “The collective struggle for social transformation of African American rights during the late 1950’s through the late 1960’s. The Black Church played a prominent role in this movement” (Pinn and Pinn 2002,172). The leaders of the Civil Rights Movement sharpened their leadership acumen through years of doing organizational and strategic work within the African-American church (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990, 211). Learning leadership roles and responsibilities in church may not be the most conventional way of learning how to be a secular leader in present times; however, for some civil rights leaders, it proved to be beneficial as was the case of Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy.

Civil rights leaders developed their leadership skills while serving and working with people inside the church. J. Deotis Roberts asserts, “King’s witness has continued through the life and witness of those leaders who were personally inspired by him. Andrew Young and Jesse Jackson are outstanding examples” (Roberts 2005, 94). King and Abernathy spent years working with the people of God in various churches. As a result, the skills they developed within the church helped them to carry their leadership skills outside the church to be successful in the Civil Rights Movement. Roberts asserts, “King argued that his thought and action had biblical foundations. He viewed his position as being in the Jesus tradition” (Roberts 2005, 80).

Working for the Lord in church has helped leaders to hone their leadership skills to do greater works outside of the church. King, Abernathy, and other servant leaders such as Jesse Jackson, Sr. and Andrew Young are a testament of how the church has developed leaders who have made great impacts in the world. Arthur Boers explains:

I am particularly inspired by the twentieth-century civil rights movement and how that involved incredible---unusual alternative---forms of leadership. Many of its central figures learned skills and instincts in the church, especially as they may not have had access to other institutions for their own development and growth. (Boers 2015, 13-14)

The relationship between King and Abernathy also demonstrates that assistants to leaders can face the same highs and lows as their leader. As an assistant, Abernathy experienced the highs of victory when they won the case of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Both King and Abernathy were celebrated and enjoyed victory together. Lewis Baldwin notes, “Ralph D. Abernathy remained his best friend and closest colleague from the time of the Montgomery Bus Boycott until King’s death in Memphis” (Baldwin 1991, 303). However, during a march in Birmingham both men would know the lows of being arrested and beaten by police officers. Lerone Bennett Jr. states, “After indictment by Montgomery County Grand Jury on charge of participating in illegal boycott, King, accompanied by Abernathy, is booked by police officer” (Bennett 1964, 84). The history of Birmingham, Alabama, during the Civil Rights Movement was known to have community violence exceeding all other Southern cities. Birmingham was known to be one of the most segregated cities in the South. In 1963, Albert Boutwell defeated Bull Connor in the mayoral election. Following that defeat,

King and Abernathy flew to Birmingham to begin their campaign. King appointed an advisory board of prominent black business and professional leaders. On Good Friday, those who participated in the Civil Rights Movement advised King and Abernathy not to march because they would be arrested or even killed (Oates 1982, 212).

King and Abernathy, along with more than two hundred people, were sitting at the Gaston Motel waiting to march to City Hall and needed the go ahead to proceed. After two hours of waiting King said, "Ralph, I'm going to march regardless of what they say. Ralph said, "If you're going to march, then I'm going to march too." Then Dr. King went to his advisors and said, "Gentleman, thank you for your words of advice, but we're going to march" (Abernathy 2003, 87). Dr. King and Abernathy led what became known as the Good Friday March. After King and Abernathy had walked eight blocks, Bull Connor had them arrested and violently thrown into a paddy wagon (Oates 1982, 212). This further demonstrates that loyal assistants may face the same hardships as their leader. Pastors and pastoral assistants share victories together from systematic strategies coming together and are both been blamed and criticized for failures in ministry. Those who oppose the leaders will come after them and whoever is closest to that leader, which is usually the pastoral assistant.

The relationship between Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy during the Civil Rights Movement is evidence that pastors must be wise when choosing pastoral assistants even after the movement or assignment is over. Abernathy shared private information concerning King in his autobiography, *And the Walls*

Came Tumbling Down. Abernathy was one of the closest people to King.

Abernathy believed that he had to discuss or share King's weakness for women because others had talked about his indiscretions unjustly. Abernathy had only one real conversation with King on this subject. In his autobiography, Abernathy writes:

Martin, you can't really disguise the nature of certain friendships. If a man and woman are particularly close to one another, it shows in the way they behave---the way they look at one another and the way they talk. Don't sell these reporters short. So whatever your relationship is with her, you need to cool it down. With Hoover's men hiding under every bed, you just can't afford to continue the way you have. (Abernathy 1989, 474)

Every leader is flawed and Dr. King is no exception. Every leader has character defects that they would not want to be exposed to the public. If the people love their leader, they have the capacity to overlook their personal sins as suggested by J. Deotis Roberts as he asserts:

Man is a sinner. This means all men, Black as well as White. We are not only a people sinned against; we are a sinning people. Sin is self-glory. All have sinned. All men are self-centered. They are guilty of sensuality, pride, and estrangement. There is a broken relationship between man and himself, man and his brother, and man and God. All men are in need of grace to overcome this separation. All men need to be set free from sin and all men need to experience reconciliation. (Cone and Wilmore 1993, 121)

When leaders expose their flaws, as difficult as it may be, they will never know the persons they may be helping by sharing their own humanity. Abernathy exposed King's character defects. All human beings are vulnerable or subjective to being exposed. One day someone may pull the covers back and expose a character defect of Abernathy and if that happens may grace be applied to him as well.

James Cone asserts, “Ralph Abernathy’s controversial account of King’s last night . . . was not necessary to show that King was a mortal man and one area of his serious moral failings was in his dealings with women” (Cone 1991, 276). Furthermore, because Dr. King is deceased, he is unable to address the morally compromising behavior, which adds to the poor reflection on Abernathy. This situation underscores the necessity for pastors to find pastoral assistants that are dedicated, trustworthy, and loyal, even after the working relationship has ended.

The lack of writings in this area from African American theologians is closely related to the word servant. When African American leaders are placed in a position to serve another human being it may cause them to have reservations due to the many years of oppression displayed by those who have had authority over them during slavery. In the Great Awakenings, African Americans were forced to be servants against their will. Anne Pinn defines the Great Awakenings as, “The two periods, one during the mid-eighteenth century and the other during the early nineteenth century, when rivals spread across the country and large numbers joined churches” (Pinn and Pinn 2002,172). We must be mindful of the struggles that African Americans faced due to slavery and racism, as they were introduced to a new religion that came from the same people who enslaved them and prohibited slaves from receiving formal education due to a fear of the negative economic impact that might have ensued from an educated slave class. In *Fortress Introduction To Black Church History* by Anne Pinn and Anthony Pinn, they speak of Christianization of the slaves. They assert:

This Anglican Church organization did not oppose slavery, and in fact several of its ministers were slaveholders. Although its leaders worked quite clear in expressing the beneficial relationship between Christianizing Africans and the economics of slaveholding, the approach taken by the society met with some opposition because it entailed teaching slaves to read and write. It was believed that slaves who could read would also think and would develop a strong hatred for the system of slavery and thus threaten its sustainability. (Pinn and Pinn 2002, 5)

Therefore, the slaveholders wanted to introduce their slaves to Christianity but they did not want to teach their slaves how to read to better understand Christianity. This reluctance reflected the fear that teaching the slaves to read and write would ultimately undermine the slave system itself. Pastors, pastoral assistants, and leaders should never intentionally keep those who serve under them from improving themselves in every aspect of their life.

During slavery, black preachers realized that the slave owners did not want them to learn how to read or write. This refusal enabled white masters to continue to oppress black people. In their book *Defending Black Faith*, Keener and Usry state, "The first American slaveholders did not want their slaves to hear about the Bible, because they feared that the slaves would understand that Christianity made them their masters' equal before God" (Kenner and Usry 1997, 33). Therefore, the black preachers of that day, who functioned as leaders within the slave community, would educate themselves. Davis states, "The black preacher also promoted education and helped spawn other outstanding personalities to prepare the next generation to carry on the struggle for greater freedom" (Davis 2010, 15). Since whites would not educate slaves it was impressed upon the black preachers to educate themselves and then pass that

education on to the next generation. Therefore, when they educated the people they did not focus upon serving or servanthood but upon liberation.

When blacks realized the slave owners' manipulation and deceit, the slave decided to discontinue going to church with their masters. It was difficult for blacks to worship alongside whites because whites refused to acknowledge blacks' humanity. Reginald Davis asserts:

During slavery when blacks broke away from white churches, it was their way of raising a standard of throwing off the yoke of humiliation and inferiority and establishing a church of their own that would promote and acknowledge their humanity and human potential. The break with white churches helped blacks to create a forum that would communicate their desires and deep yearnings for liberation and fulfillment. (Davis 2010,14)

When leaders break the trust of those under their authority it is hard to regain their trust.

This could be one of the many reasons for African American theologians refusing to discuss serving other people or servanthood in general because they are no longer required to be servants yet we are all servants of Christ. If this is one of the reasons for African American theologians decide not write about service or servanthood in the African American church, I can understand that the thought of this may put a caustic taste in their mouths from the years of being forced to serve others.

Another area of study relates to how female pastoral assistants could help break down the stereotype of male only clergy. There are women who are qualified to be pastoral assistants but never receive an opportunity from male pastors. This behavior continues the trend of the male only clergy. Paula Nesbitt in her book *Feminization of the Clergy in America* says, "Studies have shown that

female clergy, once ordained, have not had equivalent opportunities, job placements, or treatment to that of men, even when their education, age, and prior experience may be similar” (Nesbitt 1997, 27). I believe there is a connection with the African American males’ experiences of slavery and segregation. Today, there are male pastors who still will not allow women to enter their pulpits. There are African American pastors who will give women several duties to fulfill for their benefit, but will never give them an official title with authority in the church.

It is often said that history repeats itself. If leaders are not careful, they may emulate the same type of behavior that they despise in others. Pastors must take caution to prevent the subconscious of their past from spilling over into their present, thereby causing the oppressed to become the oppressor. In African American churches, male supremacy is still present. Pastors in African American churches who feel alienated by white society because of their skin color will repeat similar biases to African American women when it comes to selecting pastoral assistants or other senior leaders in their churches. J. Roberts writes, “Male ministers who have already decided that women have a subordinate place in church...They then use these passages to deny women their rightful place in ministry” (Roberts 1994, 77). Lincoln and Mamiya agree as they observed, “The fact that traditionally in the Black Church, the pulpit has been viewed as ‘men’s space’ and the pew as ‘women’s place’” (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990, 274). African American pastors may find themselves engaging in a pattern of rejecting women from advancing in the church just as the slaveholders did years ago because of

class biases or male supremacy. In *The Stone that the Builders Rejected: The Development of Ethical Leadership from the Black Church Tradition*, Walter Earl Fluker says, “Patriarchal interests and androcentric assumptions about women and ‘women’s place’ have often required black women to demand social equality and justice as fervently from some of their black male counterparts as from their white American female and male antagonists” (Fluker 1998, 49-50).

Some pastors in African American churches may be hesitant to make African American women pastoral assistants or authoritative leaders in the church because of sexism or their comfortability with leaving them in charge in their absence. However, there are African American women who can strategize, organize, and lead just as well or better than some African American men in our churches. In *For My People: Black Theology and the Black Church*, James Cone asserts:

I should like to offer some thoughts to black male theologians and ministers whose attitudes range from indifference to mild support of the development of women’s fullest potential as human beings in the church and community. There are responsibilities that we have in the church that affect how women are received and what opportunities are made available to them for the fullest development of their potential for service to God in the church and in society. (Cone 1984, 36-137)

Pastors should remember the commandment that God gave to us, which should still be practiced today, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31). Women deserve the same opportunity to serve as pastors and pastoral assistants just as men. The Bible says, “And afterwards, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy” (Joel 2:28). The same Spirit that God has poured upon the men has been poured upon the women. Nesbitt asserts:

Although some women will attain positions of religious leadership, it is doubtful that they will increase beyond a token level in either number or influence unless current gender-segregation practices in placements and opportunities are mitigated. In short, women will continue to labor in the vineyard while the masters reap the fruits of their harvest. (Nesbitt 1997, 164)

Caucasians, how were racist, would used race-segregation practices in order to help keep African Americans from opportunities, which would allow them to have a better way of life. Likewise, some African American pastors have used gender-segregation practices to keep African American women from authoritative positions in the church that would help advance their ministry and wages.

These events have laid the historical foundation for the leadership qualities needed to effectively help lead a congregation as a pastoral assistant in an African American church. In the next chapter we will consider the review of the literature. We will discuss the pastoral assistant's spiritual priorities for the pastor, the services provided for the pastor and membership, the sacrifices performed for the benefit of the pastor, and the servant's protection of the pastor.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The church has always had assistant or associate pastors in some form or another but never so much as today. In the last half century, our idea of large has shifted. But as the associate pastor role has transitioned from volunteer or part-time to full-time to even full-time and managing his own staff, our concept of who he is and what he does has remained behind. Previously, most rural churches and other small churches had maybe fifty members. Churches with three hundred to five hundred members were considered large and needed additional pastoral help. (Hawkins 2005,13)

Pastoral assistants are needed more today than ever before, as the expectations placed upon pastors by their members are far too great for one person to manage. Pastors need pastoral assistants to help them manage the membership and the church. Whether it is a moderate sized congregation or a large congregation, pastors are benefited in their ministries by the help of pastoral assistants (Rendle and Beaumont 2007, 2). Today, the needs of members have grown past having volunteer assistance, to the point that pastors have to hire part-time and full-time pastoral assistants to help them manage the church and tend to the needs of the membership.

Once pastors hire suitable pastoral assistants, they must go over the roles and responsibilities of the pastoral assistant. Senior pastors have roles and responsibilities of their own that members are familiar with; however, many members are unaware of the roles and responsibilities of a pastoral assistants or the secondary ministers. In many churches, members are not sure how much authority the pastoral assistants have or what their responsibilities are to the pastors, to the church, and to the memberships. Martin E. Hawkins, author of

The Associate Pastor: Second Chair, Not Second Best, quotes Donald Esa as he writes:

In many churches, the Assistant Pastor's position is an ambiguous role. Considerable attention has been given to the role of the senior pastor in a church . . . However, very little has been written or taught in seminaries about the role of the secondary minister in a church. (Hawkins 2005, 14)

The pastor should share with the church membership the roles and responsibilities of the pastoral assistant. Doing so will help create a smooth transition for working relationships with the pastoral assistant and the membership of the church. Hawkins states, "Just as the Lord spelled out the individual roles for Moses and Aaron, associate and senior pastors need a foundation on which they can base their expectations of each other" (Hawkins 2005, 70). When the roles and responsibilities of the pastor and pastoral assistant are clearly defined, everyone benefits, including the membership.

In this literature review, we will discuss the pastoral assistant's spiritual priorities for the pastor, the services provided for the pastor and membership, the sacrifices performed for the benefit of the pastor, and the servant's protection of the pastor. While at least some of the authors quoted in this literature review do not use gender inclusive language, it is understood the pastoral assistant could be either male or female.

Spiritual Priority

In the book of Exodus, the Amalekites came to attack the Israelites at Rephidim. During this attack, Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands" (Ex. 17:9). When Joshua went out to fight the

Amalekites, as long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning the battle; however, whenever Moses lowered his hands, the Amalekites would start to overcome the Israelites in battle. Therefore, Moses needed some help, Ex.17:12-13 says, "When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up -- one on one side, one on the other -- so that his hands remained steady till sunset. So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword." From this scripture, Aaron and Hur show us the importance of holding up the arms of our leader.

Pastoral Assistants and Prayer

Pastors need pastoral assistants to hold up their arms to help them fulfill the assignment God has given them. However, there are different ways to hold up the pastors' arms, other than physically holding them up. When pastoral assistants condition themselves to pray for their pastors on a regular basis, they are literally holding up the arms of their leader. Ken Hemphill observes, "Notice that the first activity of the disciples was prayer. These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer" (Hemphill 1994, 67). Pastoral assistants should constantly pray for their leaders. Bill Purvis in his book, *Pray for Your Pastor: The Secret to Receiving God's Favor*, asserts:

When you commit to praying for your pastor daily, you become like Aaron and Hur. Your pastor is able to keep his hands lifted high toward heaven with your help. When his hands are lifted, the congregation, much like the Israelites, will have success. Blessings flow when your pastor is lifted in prayer. (Purvis 2008, 44)

Bob and Rusty Russell in *The Power of One Another, Developing Christian Relationships* say, "The Bible commands us to pray for one another

(James 5:16). We call it ‘intercessory prayer’” (Russell and Russell 2004, 121).

William H. Curtis, writing in *Dressed for Victory: Putting on the Full Armor of God* says, “We can’t be selfish about our prayers because, at this level of discipleship responsibility, we are all beyond just praying for ourselves. We, at this stage, are also obligated to pray for others” (Curtis 2015, 112).

There are many responsibilities that pastoral assistants are required to fulfill to help their pastor and the ministries of the church to progress. Constantly praying by faith for their pastor should be at the top of the list. Bill Purvis states, “There are four major areas that you can pray over for him everyday...ask God to protect your pastor physically, morally, mentally, and spiritually” (Purvis 2008, 44). Mike Murdock in *The Assignment: The Anointing and The Adversity* says, “Your personal intercession for your leaders can produce miraculous change” (Murdock 1996, 63). Pastoral assistants who intercede for their pastors in prayer are unselfishly lifting their leaders’ arms.

Karl Rahner admonishes pastoral assistants about the kind of prayers they should pray. He suggests that they pray: “Let us grow daily more and more like you through true, constant, selfless spiritual effort and struggle, O you the eternal wisdom of God” (Rahner 1968, 215). As pastoral assistants mature, they realize how important it is to pray for their pastor daily because of the spiritual warfare their pastors encounter. Ephesians 6:12 say, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” In the book *Intercessory Prayer*, Philip Clements-Jewery asserts:

The foundation of intercession is the belief that God and the intimate relationships, which make up the world form an organic whole. If we are thus members of one another and if God is the one in whom we live and move and have our being, then there is a basis for believing in the possibility that prayer may open ways of personal influence even at a distance. (Clements-Jewery 2005, 55)

John Calvin believed wholeheartedly in intercessory prayer (Burnett 2001, 19).

Pastoral assistants should have a vibrant prayer life that includes regular intercession for their pastor and the membership as a demonstration of their love for them.

Pastoral assistants must make prayer a vital part of their everyday lives. Prayer is an important discipline in the life of every believer. A strong prayer life is a discipline that every pastoral assistant must embrace. In Warren and David Wiersbe's book, *10 Power Principles for Christian Service: Ministry Dynamics for a New Century*, the authors state, "The most important part of your life is the part that only God sees, so let's start with your personal devotional time with the Lord" (Wiersbe and Wiersbe 1997, 85). William Curtis says, "Praying allows us to truly meditate and focus on what we hold close as strengths, what fears we need to cast aside, and just how much is riding on our ability to perform in these instances" (Curtis 2015, 114). The Wiersbes agree: "Devotion to the Word of God and prayer will give balance to our lives and to our ministries" (Wiersbe and Wiersbe 1997, 82).

Pastoral assistants should start their day with personal devotional time with God as they pray for their pastor. Having a strong prayer life will allow you to intercede for other people. Henry Blackaby says, "Consider Jesus, the perfect model of leadership. This is how he led . . . Jesus spent great amounts of time

studying Scripture and praying” (Blackaby 2001, 115). Pastoral assistants should love and care for their pastor in such a way that that praying for them becomes habitual. In *Standing in the Breach*, Michael Widmer says, “Intercessory prayer is basically petitionary prayer that is brought before God on behalf of someone else” (Widmer 2015, 3). Intercessory prayer is a loving Christ-like characteristic that all children of God should attain and develop to the fullest.

When pastoral assistants develop a habitual prayer life, it will cause them to grow spiritually and they will be more in tune with the Holy Spirit. Clark Pinnock says, “At times when the power is being poured out, we should pray for the Spirit to rest on our leaders that they be able to rule us well, for the good of the body” (Pinnock 1996, 131). Having a habitual prayer life will help pastoral assistants to grow internally because a strong prayer life will help give them a heart for the things of God. In her book, *Prayer in Action: A Growth Experience*, Miriam Murphy says, “We should develop habits of prayer that will enable us to anchor our hearts on the Lord in our growth center, where Christ reigns and where the Holy Spirit instructs” (Murphy 1979, 121). For pastoral assistants, habitually praying for their pastor daily is an indispensable part of the success of the pastor and the church.

When reaching spiritual maturity, pastoral assistants should be able to sense when their pastor needs to be prayed for. While the worship service is in progress, pastoral assistants should periodically pray for their pastors to make sure that their pastors remain focused leading up to the preaching hour. Bob Russell says, “Paul often asked his listeners to pray for him, that he might be

able to continue preaching the Word of God boldly and clearly” (Russell 2004, 121). Wiersbe and Wiersbe concur, “Important as they are, the preacher’s prayer alone can’t get the job done. He must have behind him the power of a praying church” (Wiersbe and Wiersbe 1997, 87). E. M. Bounds agrees, for in his book *The Necessity of Prayer* he states, “Prayer and preaching: preaching and prayer! They cannot be separated” (Bounds 1991, 112). Then after the worship service, the pastoral assistant should continue to pray that God would restore all of the spiritual energy the pastor has poured out from proclaiming the Word of God to the people of God.

James MacDonald, in *Vertical Church* asserts:

Prayer is the easiest thing to assume in church and the hardest thing to maintain. Prayer is the first thing our flesh stops when times get easy, and true prayer is the last thing we resort to when times get tough... Where I have succeeded, it has flowed from the place of prayer; where I have failed, a more detailed analysis revealed a prior failure in prayer. In *Vertical Church* it all comes down to the praying. If you want to see a great outpouring of God’s presence upon your life and ministry, you must go much deeper into this matter of personal and corporate prayer. (MacDonald 2012, 270-271)

When pastors are searching for a pastoral assistant and they discover while interviewing the prospective pastoral assistant that they do not have a strong prayer life, the pastor should disqualify the applicant. That is not the person that should be working in the ministry closest to the pastor. This action may sound harsh to some, but if pastoral assistants have a problem disciplining themselves to a lifestyle of prayer, as MacDonald explained earlier, then there will be a strong possibility that pastoral assistant will lack in other areas that will be detrimental to the ministry growth within the church. Croft and Fullerton,

writing in their book *Pray for The Flock: Ministering God's Grace Through Intercession*, state: "To be clear, we need counseling, preaching, and training opportunities. But we must confess that all of these are useless without the power of God unleashed through prayer" (Croft and Fullerton 2015, 24). In Aubrey Malphurs' book *Being Leaders, The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership*, he explains, "As leaders pray, God will open their eyes and help them see the needs of people and his plan for them" (Malphurs 2003, 169). Assistant pastors should pray to God for their pastor, the people, and the ministries of the church constantly as they hold up the arms of their pastor.

As a spiritual priority, it is imperative for the pastoral assistant to have Christ-like characteristics. In *Biblical Eldership*, Alexander Strauch says, "According to the New Testament, the elders of the church...who desire to lead the flock are spiritually qualified to do so" (Strauch 1995, 73). Great leaders understand that they are servants in the kingdom of God. Pastoral assistants are called to serve God, the pastor and God's people. Gene Getz in his book *Building Up One Another* says, "Our goal should be to honor Jesus Christ first, others second, and ourselves third. If we do, we will be honored in due time" (Getz 2002, 45).

Pastoral Assistants' Patience and Kindness

Effective pastoral assistants will be loving, patient, kind, and forgiving to the pastor, other leaders and the membership. Pastoral assistants lead by serving others. Pastoral assistants should take their example from Jesus, who did not come to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45). Jesus was loving, patient,

and forgiving with His disciples. Jesus is our example of how we should lead and serve God's people. In *By Grace Transformed*, N. Gordon Cosby states, "Jesus is our example in everything, including leadership. Jesus' kind of leadership is the kind of leadership needed in our time...this kind of leadership is required" (Cosby 1999, 22). In *Leadership Next: Changing Leaders In A Changing Culture*, Eddie Gibbs notes: "As church leaders model godly character and humility, believers come to a better knowledge of how they are supposed to treat one another, and how Christ-like character is related to authenticity" (Gibbs 130, 2005). Pastoral assistants who model their leadership style after Jesus understand the importance of creating and maintaining good relationships with everyone.

Jesus incorporated healthy relationships with all of His disciples, even with the one who would betray Him. Jesus, through His example, teaches all pastoral assistants that they will encounter other leaders, like Judas, who may be difficult to work with in ministry. However, when this occurs the pastoral assistant is still required to show them love. Jesus nurtured His disciples for three years to prepare them to spread the Good News to the world. Christ-like pastoral assistants are nurturing, encouraging and forgiving to all persons. In Kevin Treston's book, *Creative Christian Leadership: Skills for More Effective Ministry* he writes, "Nurturing relationships is a major element in the role of a leader" (Treston 1995, 22). Having a Christ-like leadership mentality is helpful when it comes to working with people in ministry.

Service Provided

Regarding the services provided by pastoral assistants, the person in this role should be proficient in administration. It is important for pastoral assistants to have a high level of professionalism in the services they provide for the pastor and the church. The pastoral assistant, in this sense, is holding up their pastor's arms. Alexander Strauch states, "A congregation needs leadership, management, governance, guidance, counsel, and vision. Hence all elders must be to some measure, leaders and managers" (Strauch 1995, 26). In some churches, the pastor may not be the best administrator, and they may need a pastoral assistant who can perform administrative tasks efficiently. Stan Toler and Alan Nelson write the following in *The Five Star Church, Serving God and His People with Excellence*: "The leader needs to find someone who has managerial and administrative gifts, or an assistant leader who is assigned to track the progress" (Toler and Nelson 1999, 84). This suggests that the pastoral assistant should be able to produce administratively in their services provided.

Pastoral Assistants as Administrators

The church, as an organization, must be managed well. The better the administration, the better the overall church. Church administration is a vital part in the life of the church. Therefore, church administration is a tool, which the pastoral assistant should master. One of the strengths of pastoral assistants should be church administration. Good administrators help to move and navigate the church in the right direction by ensuring that each ministry is aligned and is working cohesively to meet the goals of the church. James H. Harris explains:

Church administration is not a series of disjointed decisions and actions but rather a systematic managing of goals, aspirations, objective, potential, and power in the church. In the black church, it is a method of operating that will facilitate and enhance freedom and empowerment. (Harris 1991, 72)

Pastoral assistants who lack in administrative ability should seek immediate help to strengthen the skills needed for the edification of the church. James E. Means' book *Leadership In Christian Ministry* asserts: "Most spiritual leaders, especially pastors, of course must have some administrative responsibilities. Leaders must not use the concept of stewardship as an excuse for shoddy administration. Leaders should have administrative skills and perform administrative tasks efficiently" (Means 1989, 51). James Emery White disagrees as noted in his book, *Rethinking The Church: A Challenge to Creative Redesign in an Age of Transition*: "The pastor (or staff) has the responsibility to keep the church doctrinally sound and headed in the right direction, while the day-to-day decisions are made by the people actually doing the ministries of the church" (White 1997, 102). White believes that the laity should be responsible for the day-to-day decisions and administration details of the church instead of the pastor or staff. Floyd and Elaine Flake disagree with James White, as they outline in their book *African American Church Management Handbook*:

No matter how faithful volunteers might be, they are generally people who have full-time jobs and serve the church on the side. Professional staff are able to contribute more consistently, not only because of their training but because, as with anyone, their vocation is high on their list of priorities. Paid staff can also be held accountable to higher standards than volunteers... Adding professional staff will differ according to a church's specific needs and ministry vision. The first addition might be an assistant pastor. (Flake and Flake 2005, 16-17)

Anthony Michael Chandler also agrees with the Flakes in his book,

Blessed with Burden, when he says, “The Leader is the person who directs, administrates, organizes, makes the difficult decisions and even is the one who prepares followers for futuristic opportunities (Chandler 2012, 108). When speaking of leaders in the local church, Alexander Strauch says, “They must set goals, make decisions, give direction, correct failures, affect change, and motivate people” (Strauch 1995, 26). Calvin Miller asserts:

Followers expect a leader to face up to tough decisions. When conflict must be resolved, when justice must be defined and carried out, when promises need to be kept, when the organization needs to hear who counts – these are the times when leaders act with ruthless honesty and live up to their covenant with the people they lead. (Miller 1995, 8)

Pastors and pastoral assistants cannot continue to avoid being proficient in administration. James Harris says, “The minister is expected to be a leader with the attendant administrative responsibilities in the church” (Harris 2002, 74). There are classes and workshops available to help sharpen their administrative skills. Floyd and Elaine Flake state:

Pastors must recognize that they have two very distinct roles in their church. The first is to serve as a spiritual shepherd, prophet, priest, and preacher of the people. The pastor’s second role is that of manager. In essence, the pastor is the organization’s CEO. (Flake and Flake 2005, 19)

The pastoral assistant’s capability to assist the pastor administratively overflows to the congregation. Toler and Alan say, “One of the most important reasons for Christians to utilize their spiritual gifts is that it helps them grow as they serve others” (Toler and Alan 1999, 82). Pastors should be able to depend on their pastoral assistant to handle the special needs of their congregation. Sometimes, that consists of managing different ministries and motivating

members to volunteer and serve in a ministry so that they will become enthusiastic about the pastor's vision.

Helping the pastor find creative ways to make their vision become a reality is an invaluable asset in a pastoral assistant. Martin Hawkins states, "An assistant also needs to be prepared in the following list of skills to serve in his position and meet the special needs of the congregation" (Hawkins 2005, 55). Hawkins highlights that the assistant pastor will be called upon to perform many duties. First, they will manage the spiritual life of the church, and will be responsible to motivate volunteers for ministering to others. The assistant pastor will assist the congregation in understanding and using their gifts, and will provide discipleship in situations of special needs. Hawkins also sees the role of the assistant pastor as that of a mentor to young believers as they move into leadership. He or she will spiritually advise the senior pastor, and will also organize and develop effective programs that fulfill the senior pastor's vision (Hawkins 2005, 55).

Pastoral Assistants' Influence on the Congregation

James Means says, "Anyone who influences the lives of other church members or the decision-making process may be thought of as a leader" (Means 1989, 30). Rick Joyner says, "Great leaders have the ability to make other leaders followers. The quality of those who follow you will directly reflect the quality of your accomplishment" (Joyner 1994, 48). Pastoral assistants must have influence among church members. In this current age, pastors and pastoral assistants must be intellectual, knowledgeable, and be able to foresee the

unforeseeable to meet the expectations of the people. Robert Greenleaf, in his book *Seeker and Servant*, asserts: “The leader needs two intellectual abilities that are usually not formally assessed in an academic way: he needs to have a sense for the unknowable and be able to foresee the unforeseeable” (Greenleaf 1996, 19).

There will be situations when pastoral assistants will have to depend on their academic training and abilities to resolve problems. Pastoral assistants should be able to influence church members to work together for the betterment of the church so that the ministries within the church can grow and flourish. Pastoral assistants may acquire influence from members over a period of time, from making good decisions in crucial situations.

Pastoral Assistants Helping Pastors' Vision

Pastoral assistants provide services that will strategically help pastors' vision become realities. Pastoral assistants should not wait for crises and then propose solutions, for as Toler and Alan state, “Our goal is to be proactive, not just reactive” (Toler and Alan 1999, 83). However, when ministries fail, then it is wise to have pastoral assistants who know how to serve in a restorative role. Planning strategically and making sure the ministry is running smoothly is the desired goal. Pastoral assistants who are strategic planners create their plan of action in advance. Strategic pastoral assistants will organize the people who serve alongside them in leadership to ensure success. Ronald C. Williams' book, *Serving God with Style, Unleashing Servant Potential* states, “A committed

follower of Christ has a burning, internal desire to engage in activities that advance the kingdom of God” (Williams 2002, 43).

Leaders who know how to plan strategically will discover over time how to anticipate the needs of the ministry before they arise. They will usually have a plan of action in place to meet the needs of the people. Pastoral assistants who plan strategically will come to meetings organized and with an agenda in place. Williams says, “Creating a climate in which those who seek to serve God can reach their maximum servant potential is not always easy, but it is absolutely essential to the well-being of the ministry” (Williams 2002, 56). Kevin Treston, in his book *Creative Christian Leadership, Skills for More Effective Ministry*, observes: “Strategic planning: Effective leaders plan for the future as well as address current issues. They anticipate what needs to be done and set plans (and people) in motion” (Treston 1995, 22). Effective pastoral assistants plan for the future so that the pastor and membership are prepared in their ministries. Effective pastoral assistants plan for the present day and the future to be aware of what may come in the future for the betterment of the church” (Treston 1995, 22).

When the pastoral assistants provide services for pastors, they can become task-centered and focused on the immediate task at hand. Hans Finzel in *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make*, says, “Most successful leaders today tend toward being task-oriented. Task-oriented people are the ones who are put in charge in the first place” (Finzel 2007, 48). When approaching their task pastoral assistants are aware of their weaknesses and strive to place competent

people around them to provide support in the areas where they are weak because completing the task is the goal.

Good pastoral assistants do not allow their weaknesses to hinder them from completing their tasks but are diligent in seeking assistance to ensure that tasks are completed (Joyner 1994, 48). Good pastoral assistants are more interested in the task being completed well than in who gets the credit for accomplishing the task. Individuals who are more skillful than they are in a particular area do not threaten good pastoral assistants. Calvin Miller in his book, *The Empowered Leader, 10 Keys to Servant Leadership*, asserts:

Servant leaders are task-centered. Because they tend to pick great tasks, they always feel overwhelmed and inadequate. Because they feel inadequate, they seek to look beyond themselves for answers. They know they don't have all the answers. Their commitment to the task means that real leaders hire to their weakness. They do this constantly even when the strengths of those they hire further illuminate their own weaknesses. They know that the hiring of strong associates help them eliminate the weaknesses in their organization. Strong organizations are more important to them than egoistic reputations. They crave a strong organization above a good image. (Miller 1995, 10)

Pastoral assistants know how to humble themselves when trying to accomplish a great task. Pastoral assistants trying to accomplish a great task understand that they cannot be prideful when they are in need of another person's help. John Macquarrie states, "Perhaps in the Christian tradition the contrast between pride and humility has been drawn too starkly" (Macquarrie 1986, 107). Pastoral assistants are aware that they may not have the personal expertise to handle an area of concern but they are wise enough to seek further assistance from others (Macquarrie 1986, 112).

Sacrifices Performed

The third way in which pastoral assistants hold up the arms of their pastor is by the sacrifices performed by the pastoral assistant for their pastor. Pastoral assistants, at times, will have to sacrifice for the benefit of accomplishing the desires and aspirations of the pastor. Terry Nance, in *God's Armor Bearer Volumes 1 & 2: Serving God's Leaders*, states:

When I asked the Lord, "What about my dreams and goals, the vision You have placed in my heart?" He said to me: "Son, you are not to live for the fulfillment of your dreams or vision. Set it as your goal to achieve your pastor's dreams, and I will make sure that yours are fulfilled." (Nance 1990, 20)

Pastoral assistants will encounter moments in their ministry when they feel the need to sacrifice their own dreams for benefit of their pastor dreams. However, as Nance suggests, God will reward their sacrifice and fulfill the pastoral assistant dreams in the future (Nance 1990, 20).

Pastoral Assistants' Call to Ministry

Pastoral assistants must be sure that God is the one leading them to this position because it requires them to sacrifice. James White states, "Negative results can take place in a church when people are forced into roles they are not suited for. There is no joy in serving God when it is done for the wrong reasons" (White 1997, 72). Pastoral assistants have to be certain that God has called them to this position of serving another person's agenda above their own because if not, it is suggested that they will not last in the position for very long. James Harris suggests, "The minister is like no other professional. He is preacher, teacher, administrator, encourager, counselor, leader, and friend to all types of

individuals” (Harris 2002, 74). Curtis Wallace agrees in his book, *The Leadership Gap* as he asserts:

First, and most important, just as becoming a minister is a calling, so is working in a key leadership position in a church or ministry. If this is not where God wants you and if you don’t have a passion for what you are doing, it is not going to work. (Wallace 2011, 114)

In their book *Spiritual Leadership*, Henry and Richard Blackaby say, “People may become leaders by responding in a healthy manner to all they encounter in life, but they will not become spiritual leaders unless God calls them to this role and equips them for it” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001, 46). Anthony Chandler agrees when he says, “God-appointed leadership should remain the guide by which spiritual leadership is sanctioned. We must again understand that God chooses leaders to function in given capacities” (Chandler 2012, 107). Terry Nance agrees as he says, “God-called armorbearers are there to support the leader and to help fulfill the vision God has given him” (Nance 1990, 51). David Hopewell says, “Everyone is not called to have his or her own church or ministry; someone has to be called to bring about another person’s vision” (Hopewell 2004, 26). When God is leading and directing the pastoral assistant to fulfill ministry goals, He will give them the determination and passion they need to accomplish His will.

However, pastoral assistants should be positive that this is the path God desires for them to take and not a path they have drawn for themselves. Wallace states, “Some take the position for the wrong reason. Just because a door opens does not mean that God wants you to walk through it. Take the time to listen to God and be sure that the move is what He intended” (Wallace 2011, 115).

Anthony Chandler recognizes the source: “It remains my conviction, that leadership is God ordained” (Chandler 2012, 110).

When sacrificing for the benefit of the pastor, pastoral assistants must be mentally strong in difficult situations. Pastoral assistants, in some occasions, should sacrifice themselves for the betterment of their pastor and the church. Bob Russell says, “A genuine servant is a person who is motivated by love for others, who loves so much that he becomes more concerned about the others’ welfare than his own” (Russell and Russell 2004, 42). It is difficult for some members not to be upset with their pastor for forgetting to come to visit them in the hospital, to a funeral of a loved one, or a special function that they deemed important to them. Therefore, the pastoral assistant should deflect the blame for any mishaps or miscommunication caused on the part of the pastor whenever possible. Nance says, “I have sat with people and explained to them what my pastor meant by a statement he has made. Some people are easily offended” (Nance 1990, 26). The pastoral assistant should find ways to shift the member’s dissatisfaction from the pastor and move it towards them.

Pastoral Assistants’ Maturity

In certain situations, pastoral assistants must see the bigger picture and protect their pastor from small matters before they grow into larger problems. Heenan Bennis’ book *Co-Leaders: The Power of Great Partnerships* notes, “Healthy co-leaders are supremely self-confident people who are prepared to sacrifice for something or someone bigger than themselves” (Bennis 1999, 275). Wiersbe and Wiersbe agrees when they note:

Ministry involves sacrifice, just as parenthood involves sacrifice, although most parents confess that they're happy to pay the price to meet their children's needs. In the long run, the way we handle sacrifice is a test of character, revealing whether we're serving others or serving ourselves. (Wiersbe and Wiersbe 1997, 51-52)

There are few things worse than a pastor having a disgruntled member upset with them. Therefore, pastoral assistants must try to defuse or eliminate as many unwarranted membership issues for the pastor as possible.

Pastoral assistants are called to serve their pastors' needs before their own. This type of self-sacrificing necessitates a mature faith because this degree of sacrifice is not easy. The Flakes asserts:

Know who you are, be who you are, and understand who you are in God by virtue of your call. To demonstrate consistent, qualitative leadership, it is imperative that you are secure in knowing who you are. Know your gifts and build on them. (Flake and Flake 2005, 41)

Pastoral assistants should have the understanding that serving the leaders and congregants' needs before their own is not about neglecting one's own needs, but it is more about serving God's people first while maintaining the belief that God will take care of their needs in return.

Servant's Protection

The fourth way in which pastoral assistants hold up the arms of their pastor is by protecting their pastor. There are several ways in which the pastoral assistant can protect the pastor. Pastoral assistants protect their pastors by having integrity, being trustworthy, and being honest at all times. Sheets and Jackson says, "The fastest way to lose credibility with those who lead is to betray confidence" (Sheets and Jackson 2005, 10).

Pastoral Assistants' Integrity

Pastoral assistants who have integrity, who are honest, and who are loyal in many ways protect their pastor. In *Shoulder to Shoulder*, Dan Reiland writes, "Integrity is required twenty-four hours a day. I define integrity as doing what's right even when no one is looking...with integrity, your character stands alone under God's watchful eye" (Reiland 1997, 166). Carter says, "Integrity is a life of striving toward the good and the true. Integrity, in that sense, may be conceived as a journey rather than a destination, an effort to live according to one's sense of duty" (Carter 1996, 20). Floyd and Elaine Flake says, "If we are rooted in integrity, it follows that integrity will permeate all aspects of our pastoral ministry" (Flake and Flake 2005, 33).

Whether an individual is an employee for the church or for corporate America, a person's integrity can take them a long way in the services rendered to the company. Blackaby says, "Both secular and Christian leaders realize that integrity must be paramount in the life of a leader...Integrity in all things precedes all else" (Blackaby 2001, 105). In *Organic Leadership*, Coates asserts a person's character plays a more significant role. "In choosing leaders we must look for character, not doctrinal integrity, preaching style, or managerial skills. Character is so important because it defines who you are" (Cole 2009, 143). Integrity means not just talking about it but also actually showing evidence that you possess integral attributes (Blanchard and Hodges 2005, 205).

In *Creative Christian Leadership*, Kevin Treston gives his definition of integrity: "Integrity, soundness of moral character, honesty with self and others,

which implies that there is congruence between the leader's words and deeds" (Treston 1995, 16). Pastors and other leaders like to know and feel as if they are sure that their assistants have integrity. In his book entitled *Integrity*, Stephen Carter says, "Explaining his choice of Al Gore as running mate in 1992, Bill Clinton called Gore 'a leader of great strength, integrity and stature'" (Carter 1996, 16). Carter also reminds us as he writes, "In 1984, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, campaigning for the Democratic ticket, praised Walter Mondale for possessing 'the integrity, the intelligence and the endurance to be a true leader of the American people'" (Carter 1996, 16). Leaders look for those who serve alongside them to have a high level of integrity. Floyd and Elaine Flake assert:

Those who lack integrity might have a tremendous amount of short-term success, but over the long term their inability to build healthy relationships based on integrity will catch up, it is inevitably costly to the pastor, his or her family, and the church. (Flake and Flake 2005, 35)

Pastors expect competency and integrity from their pastoral assistants, explained as congruency between what they profess and what they do (Heuser and Shawchuck 2010, 30).

Pastoral assistants who strive to have integrity are wise. They should not let a position in the church sway their integrity. In the book of Proverbs Solomon said, "The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity" (Prov. 11:3). Reiland says, "The challenge God gave to Solomon is no different from the one He gives to you. Spiritual leadership requires godly integrity" (Reiland 1997, 167). *The Courage to Lead: Leadership in the African American Urban Church* explains, "Most young ministers are often so eager to serve in the position . . . they will sacrifice or postpone their leadership ability in

order to get the position. This becomes an ethical problem that questions the leader's integrity" (Harris 2002, 6). Pastoral assistants seeking a position in a church must start with having integrity.

Pastoral assistants should have integrity and commit to being completely honest with their pastors concerning every aspect of the ministry. Carter explains, "It is clear that one cannot have integrity without also displaying a measure of honesty" (Carter 1996, 10). In *Leadership, Management and the Five Essentials for Success*, Rick Joyner disagrees when he states, "Integrity is more than just being honest, it is doing what is right. It is doing what your conscience tells you to do even if it leaves you as a committee if one" (Joyner 1994, 62).

It is essential for the pastoral assistants to be honest with their pastors concerning every aspect of their relationship. Reiland states, "Honesty is the part of your character that makes you trustworthy. It is trustworthiness that makes a trusting relationship possible" (Reiland 1997, 172). The pastor needs someone close to them that they can trust to be completely honest with them. Aubrey Malphurs says, "The top quality that makes up a leader's credibility is honesty" (Malphurs 2003, 56). When speaking of the forthrightness of integral people Carter states, "We can trust them to say what they truly think, even at risk to themselves" (Carter 1996, 36).

Pastoral Assistants' Trust

Pastors have to be able to trust their pastoral assistant. Joanna Barsh and Johanne Lavoie suggest, "People grant you trust because of what you say or do,

not what you feel or think or even what you intend” (Barsh and Lavoie 2014, 133). Colin Powell expresses a similar thought:

So, everything you do as a leader must focus on building trust in a team. Trust among leaders, trust among the followers, and trust between the leaders and the followers. And it begins with selfless, trusting leaders. (Powell 2012, 76)

Reiland says, “Trust is like gravity; it holds everything together. Without gravity there is chaos. Gravity is strange; you can’t see it, touch it, or smell it, but you can count on it” (Reiland 1997, 172). Pastors must be able to count on their pastoral assistants to be trustworthy at all times. John Maxwell says, “I have learned that trust is the single most important factor in building personal and professional relationships” (Maxwell 1995, 67). Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges write, “We all need trusted truth-tellers...Having truth-tellers is probably the greatest resource for growth that you can have” (Blanchard and Hodges 2005, 181). Trust between pastors and pastoral assistants involve believing that a person has your best interests in mind and will not intentionally harm you. It includes being willing to be open and honest about yourself (Pyle and Seals 1995, 92).

The pastor needs a pastoral assistant who will be honest with them when it is needed and not say “yes” to every decision the pastor makes, especially the bad ones. Pastoral assistants should be able to be honest with the pastor even when they disagree. Flake and Flake suggest, “In building the pastoral staff and appointing leaders in the church, the pastor should be careful not to surround himself or herself with ‘yes people’ who will say only what they perceive the pastor wants to hear” (Flake and Flake 2005, 35). Samuel Chard in *Who’s*

Holding Your Ladder? says, “Loyalty doesn’t mean repeating, ‘Yes, yes, yes,’ no matter what the visionary says” (Chard 2003, 33). Flake and Flake also suggest, “Pastors need people in their lives whose role is to help keep them accountable, to help them see reality as it is, not merely how it is perceived” (Flake and Flake 2005, 40). In the process of building up trust between pastors and pastoral assistants, it is synonymous to making regular investments in an emotional bank account, that is, establishing trustful relations through many acts of honesty and integrity (Treston 1995, 16).

Pastoral Assistants’ Loyalty

In addition to pastoral assistants having integrity and being honest, they are expected to be loyal to their pastors. Dan Reiland asserts:

While we know that our ultimate first loyalty is to God, every church leader must settle this question? “Is my loyalty first to the mission of the church, or to the pastor?” The question is difficult and opens much debate, but the answer must be, “To the pastor.” Leaders in the church must first be loyal to the pastor, then to the mission, because the pastor is assumed to be loyal to the mission. (Reiland 1997, 169)

Terry Nance writes, “I understand my God-given duty to stand with my pastor and help him fulfill the vision God has given both of us, and to fully submit myself to him” (Nance 1990, 13). Rick Joyner says, “Loyalty is faithfulness to principles, to the plan and to people” (Joyner 1994, 66). However, Reiland asserts:

Loyalty to the pastor does not mean blindly following and agreeing with everything he says or does. It means that as long as the pastor is giving biblical leadership, as a leader, you are to support your pastor even if you might do things differently yourself. (Reiland 1997, 170)

When speaking of pastoral assistants being loyal to their pastors, Terry Nance says, “Never hide anything from your pastor. Always let him know if someone is having (or causing) a problem in the church, and what steps you are taking to resolve that situation” (Nance 1990, 24). Joyner suggest, “If we are to expect others to be loyal to us we must set the example. If we possess loyalty we will not stoop to gossip or to belittle others in leadership” (Joyner 1994, 66). There will be times when pastoral assistants will disagree with their pastors. There will be times when the pastoral assistant will receive disciplinary actions from their pastor. This is when the loyalty of the pastoral assistant is especially appreciated by the pastor. The pastoral assistant has to be loyal to the pastor through the difficult times as well. When speaking of leaders being loyal to one another, Alexander Strauch asserts:

They must be humble and lovingly relate to one another. They must be able to patiently build consensus, compromise, persuade, listen, handle disagreement, forgive, receive rebuke and correction, confess sin, and appreciate the wisdom and perspective of others, even those with whom they disagree. They must be able to submit to one another, speak kindly and gently to one another, be patient with their fellow colleagues, defer to one another, and speak their minds openly in truth and love. (Strauch 1995, 96)

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed the pastoral assistant holding up the arms of the pastor in four main points. First, the pastoral assistants’ spiritual priorities are lived out by having a strong prayer life and following the example of Jesus, which incorporates healthy relationships within the leadership. Second, the pastoral assistant effectively provides services for the pastor and membership by being adept in church administration and strategic planning. A

third way is through the sacrifices performed by the pastoral assistant as they sacrifice their desires and aspirations for the benefit of the pastor. A final way of being supportive is that the pastoral assistant protects the pastor through his or her own integrity, honesty, and loyalty.

Discerning how one leads from the second position in the models and methods of effectively leading as a pastoral assistant in an independent African American congregation as outlined in this chapter is the focus of this study. The following chapter, Chapter Four, describes the design and method of the survey project.

CHAPTER FOUR

DESIGN, PROCEDURE, AND ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this project was to discover how an assistant pastor can be an effective secondary leader in an African American congregation. The research question was: How does one effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an African American congregation?

The project was designed to create an online survey to be given to African American assistant pastors. The survey gathered information to meet the goals of the project. All materials for the survey were done online: no in-person interviews were employed. Most assistant pastors are technology savvy people. For this reason, an online survey was conducted. The target audience from which data for the survey was gathered consisted of 50-60 African American pastoral assistants mainly on the East Coast; Baltimore, Virginia, Pittsburgh, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Washington DC, Philadelphia, and Atlanta. I contacted every assistant pastor I knew personally and contacted others with whom I had a casual acquaintance. I wanted the survey to be completed by as many African American assistant pastors as possible. In doing so, I employed an online survey because it was the most convenient way to achieve the largest response.

The survey developed for this project was designed to assess two purposes. The first and foremost purpose was to discover if assistant pastors understood their role in leading from the second position in an African American church. The second purpose was to evaluate if assistant pastors personally

understand their role regarding serving the pastor and the church. The pastoral assistants who participated in this survey could play a vital role in helping other pastoral assistants decide or determine if this is their calling in ministry.

The survey was designed to discover answers to the seven goals for this project. The projects goals were:

1. To discover the extent to which the understanding of their call helps them effectively operate as pastoral assistants.
2. To discover the extent to which seminary education plays a role in the success of pastoral assistants.
3. To discover what resources pastoral assistants need to become more effective.
4. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants have responsibilities with authority.
5. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants have a biblical understanding of their role.
6. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants understand their role to the pastor.
7. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants understand their role to the church.

Context

Pastoral assistants are committed to serving God. Their duties included preaching, teaching, and leading the congregation in the worship service, when their pastor is absent. Their responsibilities also included overseeing ministries

and making sure each ministry met their ministry goals. Most of the participants have supervised their office staff and other church employees. Pastoral assistants have been responsible for the hiring and dismissing of church employees. I am honored to be the pastoral assistant of Shiloh Christian Community Church in Baltimore, Maryland.

The Shiloh Christian Community Church was born and founded out of the vision of the late Reverend George W. Baynard in 1948. With humble beginnings, services were held in the basement of the historical Emmanuel Christian Community Church in South Baltimore. After merging with Mount Carmel Church, Shiloh's membership grew from thirty-six members to a membership of over three hundred people. After several years of hard work and faithfulness to our Lord, Rev. Baynard and his congregation moved to 2500 West Lombard Street in 1961.

After the death of Rev. Baynard, God sent His servant, Reverend Jimmy C. Baldwin, Sr., to lead His people at Shiloh. Since 1985, when Pastor Baldwin assumed leadership, Shiloh has flourished and prospered to the Glory of God. The membership is currently over five hundred people. Pastor Baldwin, through his vision, strives to make Shiloh Church a place of refuge and comfort for all people. Under his direction, fifty-two ministries and programs have been established.

Shiloh Christian Community Church moved again in January 2008 to the 825 Yale Avenue location in West Baltimore. The church invites the community of Beechfield and Baltimore City in general to join us in worshipping and serving

God in the beauty of fellowship. Shiloh remains dedicated to preserving the family and serving the community. They are committed to drawing people to Christ, discipling those for Christian living, developing them for service, and deploying them in mission while demonstrating our devotion.

Shiloh is a community of believers that strives to be a place of refuge and comfort. The church seeks to win the world for Jesus Christ. The church is dedicated to what it understands to be the five-fold ministry of the church, which is, evangelism, worship, fellowship, discipleship, and service. Once members go through the five-fold ministry instruction, they are considered a part of the core leadership and are deployed for service to members and the church. One of the responsibilities of the assistant pastor at Shiloh was to track how new members were progressing from the community to core leadership. This would include keeping track of ministerial leaders as well to assure that they are doing their part in the development of members.

Participants

Sixty pastoral assistants were invited to take the survey and fifty-two participants completed the survey in September 2017. The survey questions were created in a way that the effectiveness of the strategies attached to those goals was assessed. The survey intentionally gathered information about the participants' understanding of the pastoral assistants' role to support the pastor and to aid the church. Additionally, the goal for the survey was that its questions would cause the participants to engage in self-reflection.

Overall, the expectation was that the participants would share their candid thoughts on their role and responsibilities within the church and with the pastor. The additional expectation was that the survey would allow the participants to evaluate their role and assess their participation in the larger vision of the church. The combination of these two expectations made the survey helpful for polling data. The survey and the survey goals were explained to the pastoral assistants. The participants were asked to choose the appropriate number on the survey's Likert scale and to answer all the questions. The survey was conducted through Survey Monkey so that the answers were anonymous.

The survey developed for this project was emailed to sixty individuals who were presently or had recently been an assistant pastor. I contacted every pastoral assistant whom I personally knew and contacted others with whom I had personal history. The surveys were administered online and the participants were asked to complete survey and return through email within two weeks of receiving the survey.

I chose to email online surveys to the participants because of the heavy workload of most staff pastors. It would be difficult to assemble sixty assistant pastors in a room at the same time. I informed each participant that they would have two weeks to complete the survey. Most of the participants did not feel pressured to complete the survey and thought that two weeks to complete the survey was fair. Most of the participants completed the survey in less than one week.

The survey was emailed to sixty participants, all of whom were African-American and serving in the role of pastoral assistant. The respondents provided the following demographic information. In total, fifty-two out of sixty surveys were returned. Forty-four male participants and eight female participants completed the survey. Twenty-two participants served as a pastoral assistant between one and three years. Ten participants served as a pastoral assistant between four and six years. Four participants served as a pastoral assistant between seven and ten years. Sixteen participants served as a pastoral assistant for ten years or greater.

The highest levels of education achieved by the survey participants were the following: Two participants completed high school. Four of the participants earned an associate's degree. Six participants acquired a bachelor's degree. Thirty participants acquired a master's degree. Ten participants earned a doctoral degree. The church denomination of the participants that completed the survey was forty-four Baptist participants and eight Non-Denominational participants.

Each participant, whether male or female, highly educated or less formally educated, or whichever church denomination, shared valuable information and added to the research of this project. Because each survey participant was an experienced pastoral assistant, they were able to offer sound feedback on their experiences in the position, which helped greatly.

Procedure and Assessment

This discovery project necessarily involved the creation of a survey with both quantitative and qualitative evaluation questions (see Appendix Two for the actual survey used for the project). These qualitative questions were also designed to assess the seven goals:

1. What spiritual gifts help you to be effective as you operate as an assistant to the pastor? Why?
2. Should pastors seeking an assistant look for someone with seminar education? Why?
3. What resources help you to be more effective as an assistant to the pastor?
4. What areas do you lack authority in at the church?
5. Who in the Bible was an assistant to a person in leadership?
6. What are your strengths that complement the weaknesses of your pastor?
7. How does your role impact the congregation? Why?

The survey was emailed to each participant and asked if they could complete the survey within two weeks. Online surveys allowed me to get more participation from the respondents because by using email they did not have to meet with me in person to receive the survey. I gave instructions for completing the survey online. The instructions were: The participants were asked to complete the survey within fourteen days. Additionally, each participant was asked to answer the survey as honestly and transparently as possible. Upon completion of the survey, each participant was asked to send me an email or text message to let me know that they completed the survey.

The step by step processes for my project included drafting some of the most important areas and duties of a pastoral assistant. This helped to shape the statements that needed to be included in the survey to properly gauge the most important areas. After a few submissions of the survey to the seminary, it was approved. An online survey would be the best user-friendliest way to administer the survey. Since most assistants to the pastor are overwhelmed with their daily tasks, I wanted to make the survey as easy to complete as possible. I knew that an online survey would be the best way. I researched a few to find the most reliable and affordable means. After considering a few of them, Survey Monkey seemed to be the best fit. I created the Survey Monkey account and put my survey in the online format.

Once the survey was completed in online form, I made a list of all the assistants to the pastor that I knew personally. After completing the list, I send out text message communications to them asking for them to participate in my online survey. Many responded that they would gladly participate and submitted their email address for the survey to be sent to them. I then began drafting an email to them regarding their participation in the survey. This information can be found in Appendix Two.

In the email, I thanked the contacts for their willingness to participate in the survey, included the link to the survey, and asked them to complete the survey within fourteen days of the email date. I then waited twenty-one days for the surveys to be completed in Survey Monkey. This would give enough time for those who were late on the fourteen-day window. After the twenty-one-day

period, I sent an email thanking everyone who completed the survey for their participation. Additionally, I sent an email to those who were willing to participate but did not complete the survey informing them that the survey was now closed.

After the survey was complete, I worked with Survey Monkey's system to export the data from online to my computer. Following that, I began sorting through the data to review the findings of the survey. The survey provided me with an opportunity to see confirmation to some of the items I thought as well as a new perspective on other areas. The demographic from the survey are included in this chapter and give the details of my interpretation of the findings.

Three objective, forced-choice statements, along with one subjective, open-ended question measured each of the seven goals. All twenty-one of the quantitative questions were measured on a five-point Likert Scale listed as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly
Disagree				Agree

These questions can be found in Appendix Two.

The strategy for assessing the goals of the project included analyzing both the qualitative and quantitative data gained through the research. Survey Monkey compiled the information for each response. I reviewed the initial assessment and then worked with my field consultant for further review of the assessment. My field consultant is a senior pastor who has a pastoral assistant who participated in the survey. The results of the survey were compiled into the tables

that will be reported on in Chapter Five.

Each of the project goals was addressed to show the results of the members' survey in relationship to the outcome of the project as a whole. The survey questions were put in random order to help with the effectiveness of the survey. An analysis was included for each goal in relationship to the average score of the qualitative questions. Both the qualitative and quantitative responses were addressed regarding the insight that they offered through the results given by the participants. However, in regards to the qualitative questions, participants failed to adequately fill out the qualitative question, if they filled it out at all. This created a gap in the findings because it did not leave much to assess with regard to qualitative data.

The results of the assessment will be reported in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS

The purpose of this project was to discover how to effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an independent African American congregation. The research question was: How does one effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an independent African American congregation?

The design of the discovery survey was discussed in Chapter Four. The survey served as an instrument to measure the extent to which the research questions addressed the seven project goals. The project goals are:

1. To discover the extent to which the understanding of their call helps them to effectively operate as the assistant to the pastor.
2. To discover the extent to which seminary education plays a role in the success of the assistant to the pastor.
3. To discover what resources an assistant to the pastor needs to become more effective.
4. To discover the extent to which the assistant to the pastor has responsibilities with authority.
5. To discover the extent to which the assistant to the pastor has a biblical understanding of their role.
6. To discover the extent to which the assistant to the pastor understand their role to the pastor.
7. To discover the extent to which the assistant to the pastor understands their role to the church.

The survey consisted of three forced-choice statements and one open-ended question per project goal. The quantitative statements were measured on a five-point Likert scale as follows: 5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree.

In this chapter, the results of the survey will be presented in relationship to the goals that they were designed to evaluate. Each goal will be presented in the order of prominent finding based upon the scoring of the answers.

Goal #6: Understanding My Role to the Pastor

The goal that scored the highest in prominence was: "To discover the extent to which the assistant to the pastor understand their role to the pastor."

The average score for the three quantitative statements was 4.38 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as follows: I believe my role is to support the vision of my pastor (#11). I believe my role is to alleviate my pastor's stresses (#25). I believe my role is to administer the logistics of my pastor's vision (#18). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 1. Goal #6 Understanding My Role to the Pastor

Question	Score	Responses
11) I believe my role is to support the vision of my pastor.	4.50	52
25) I believe my role is to alleviate my pastor's stresses.	4.31	52
18) I believe my role is to administer the logistics of my pastor's vision.	4.19	52
Composite	4.33	52
5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree. N=52		

The response to statement #11 ranked the highest regarding this goal. Thirty-eight participants responded strongly agree and ten responded agree. None of the participants responded to neither agree or to disagree, but four participants strongly disagree. The responses to statement #1 are noteworthy because this was the highest quantitative score in the entire survey. Assistants to the Pastor believe that their role is to support the vision of their pastor.

The response to statement #25 and statement #18 ranked second and third respectively. Though both did not rank as high as statement #11, it did show that the assistants believe that their role is to alleviate their pastor's stresses. Statement #25 ranked second highest with a score of 4.31. Thirty-two participants responded strongly agree and twelve responded agree. Four of the participants responded neutral, and four strongly disagree. Statement #18 ranked the lowest of the three quantitative statements with a score of 4.19. Even though this is the lowest among the three, it is still a high score being above the 4.00 agree number. Twenty-six participants responded strongly agree, eighteen

participants responded agree, four participants responded neither agree or disagree, and four strongly disagree.

The qualitative question for this goal was: What are the strengths that complement the weakness of the pastor? There were five responses. The responses were one or two words therefore, it is suggested that these responses were geared towards their strengths. The instructions of the survey were clear. However, pastoral assistants with their workloads may not have been afforded the time to respond to the qualitative question in-depth. The responses to the qualitative question were:

Detail oriented, reflective thinker, organized, strong administrator, task oriented, and very detailed

Goal #7: Understanding My Role to the Church

The goal that scored second in prominence was: "To discover the extent to which the assistant to the pastor understand their role to the church." The average score for the three quantitative statements was 4.19 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as follows: I believe my role positively impacts the congregation (#19). I believe that the congregation sees a benefit of the role of the assistant to the pastor (#26). I believe that in my pastor's absence I step in to fulfill their duties (#12). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 2. Goal #7 Understanding My Role to the Church

Question	Score	Responses
19) I believe my role positively impacts the congregation.	4.50	52
26) I believe that the congregation sees a benefit of the role of the assistant to the pastor.	4.12	52
12) I believe that in my pastor's absence I step in to fulfill their duties.	3.96	52
Composite	4.19	52
5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree. N=52		

For this goal, participants ranked statement #19 the highest at 4.50. More than that, this statement was tied with the statement in the previous goal for the second highest score in the entire survey. Participants believe that their role positively impacts the congregation. Thirty-six participants responded strongly agree, ten participants responded agree, and four participants responded neither agree or disagree, and two strongly disagree.

Equally as important to the finding in statement #19, is that statement #26 responses show that participants believe that the congregation sees a benefit of the role of the assistant to the pastor. Statement #26 scored 4.12. Twenty-two participants responded strongly agree, twenty-four participants responded agree, two disagree, and four strongly disagree.

Statement #12 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 3.96. There was not as much confidence in the participants that they believe that they step in to fulfill their pastor's duties in the absence of the pastor. Twenty participants responded strongly agree, twenty participants responded agree. Six participants

responded neither agree or disagree, two participants responded disagree and four strongly disagree. Though two responded strongly disagreed, the large amount of people who responded agree or strongly agree shows that many assistants can step in to fulfill duties in their pastor's absence.

The qualitative questions for this goal were: How does your role impact the congregation? Why? There were five responses. The responses were one or two words or statements therefore, it is suggested that these responses were geared towards their strengths. The instructions of the survey were clear. However, pastoral assistants with their workloads may not have been afforded the time to respond to the qualitative question in-depth. The responses to the qualitative question were:

A leader with influence, decision-making responsibilities, shared leadership, administration during the week, and serving as liaison to the pastor

Goal #5: A Biblical Understanding of My Role

The goal that scored third in prominence was: "To discover the extent to which the assistant to the pastor has a biblical understanding of their role." The average score for the three quantitative statements was 4.16 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as follows: I use the Bible as a guide when handling conflict resolution (#24). I see my role as assistant to the pastor lived out in the scripture (#10). I use the Bible to create a foundation for my role (#17). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 3. Goal #5 A Biblical Understanding of My Role

Question	Score	Responses
24) I use the Bible as a guide when handling conflict resolution.	4.35	52
10) I see my role as assistant to the pastor lived out in the scripture.	4.15	52
17) I use the Bible to create a foundation for my role.	4.00	52
Composite	4.16	52
5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree. N=52		

For this goal, participants ranked statement #24 the highest at 4.35. It showed that in this goal, participants use the Bible as a guide when handling conflict resolution. Thirty participants responded strongly agree, eighteen participants responded agree, and no participants responded neither agree or disagree. None of the participants responded disagree, but four strongly disagree. This shows that most of the participants agree that the Bible is needed for conflict resolution.

Statement #10 ranked as the second highest in this goal with a score of 4.15. It showed that second to Biblical conflict resolution that the assistant sees their role lived out in the scripture. Sixteen participants responded strongly agree, thirty-two participants responded agree, two participants responded neither agree or disagree, and two participants responded strongly disagree

Statement #17 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 4.00. Even though it is the lowest in the goal in terms of rank, the average shows that the participants believed that using the Bible to create a foundation for their role was

important. Twenty participants responded strongly agree, twenty participants responded agree, eight participants responded neither agree or disagree, and four participants responded strongly disagree.

The qualitative question for this goal was: Who in the Bible serves as an example to you and your role as a pastoral assistant? Respondents did not report data for this question to show results.

Goal #3: Resources to Become More Effective

The goal that scored fourth in prominence was: “To discover what resources an assistant to the pastor needs to become more effective.” The average score for the three quantitative statements was 3.96 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as follows: I believe an investment from the church in continued education would help me to be more effective as an assistant to the pastor (#22). I believe work related training would help me to become more skilled as an assistant to the pastor (#15). I believe an assistant would help me to be more effective as an assistant to the pastor (#8). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 4. Goal #3 Resources to Become More Effective

Question	Score	Responses
22) I believe an investment from the church in continued education would help me to be more effective as an assistant to the pastor.	4.23	52
15) I believe work related training would help me to become more skilled as an assistant to the pastor.	3.96	52
8) I believe an assistant would help me to be more effective as an assistant to the pastor.	3.81	52
Composite	4.00	52
5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree		

For this goal, participants ranked statement #22 the highest at 4.23. It showed that in this goal, participants feel that an investment from the church in continued education would help them to be more effective as an assistant to the pastor. Twenty-eight participants responded strongly agree, sixteen participants responded agree, four participants responded neither agree, and four participants responded strongly disagree. Though this statement had twenty-eight participants strongly agree, it is also noteworthy that it has four people strongly disagreed.

Statement #15 ranked as the second highest in this goal with a score of 3.96. It shows that on average participants believe work related training would help them become more skilled as an assistant to the pastor. Sixteen participants responded strongly agree, twenty-eight participants responded agree, and two participants responded neither agree or disagree. Two of the participants responded disagree, and four strongly disagree.

Statement #8 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 3.81. The low score of the participants suggests that many do not believe having an administrative assistant would help them be more effective as an assistant to the pastor. Sixteen participants responded strongly agree, twenty participants responded agree, ten participants responded neither agree or disagree, two participants responded disagree, and four participants responded strongly disagree. It is noteworthy that this statement, in prominence order, to have responses in all five areas of the Likert scale. Thirty-six participants responded positive, ten participants responded neutral, and six participants responded affirming their belief that an administrative assistant is not important.

The qualitative question for this goal was: What recourses helped you to be more effective as a pastoral assistant? There were four responses. The responses were one or two words or statements therefore, it is suggested that these responses were geared towards their strengths. The instructions of the survey were clear. However, pastoral assistants with their workloads may not have been afforded the time to respond to the qualitative question in-depth. The responses to the qualitative question were:

Relationships with other assistant pastors, conferences, the Bible, and prayer

Goal #4: Responsibilities and Authority in the Church

The goal that scored fifth in prominence was: "To discover the extent to which the assistant to the pastor has responsibilities with authority." The average score for the three quantitative statements was 3.88 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as follows: I have been given the authority to run the day-to-day operations of the church (#16). I am the immediate supervisor to staff persons other than the pastor (#23). I am able to make decisions without consulting with my pastor first (#9). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 5. Goal #4 Responsibilities and Authority in the Church

Question	Score	Responses
16) I have been given the authority to run the day-to-day operations of the church.	4.19	52
23) I am the immediate supervisor to staff persons other than the pastor.	3.81	52
9) I am able to make decisions without consulting with my pastor first.	3.65	52
Composite	3.88	52

5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree. N=52

For this goal, participants ranked statement #16 the highest at 4.19. It showed that in this goal, the average rank of the participants believe that they have been given authority to run the day-to-day operations of the church. Twenty-four participants responded strongly agree, eighteen participants responded agree, and eight participants responded neither agree or disagree, and two participants responded strongly disagree.

Statement #23 ranked as the second highest in this goal with a score of 3.81. There is not an overwhelming response from the participants that they are the immediate supervisor to staff persons other than the pastor. Twenty-four participants responded strongly agree, ten participants responded agree, six

participants responded neither agree or disagree, eight participants responded disagree, and four participants strongly disagree.

Statement #9 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 3.65. The low score of the participants suggests that they are not able to make decisions without consulting their pastor first. Ten participants responded strongly agree, twenty-four participants responded agree, ten participants responded neither agree or disagree, and six participants responded disagree, and two participants responded strongly disagree.

The qualitative question for this goal was: What areas do you lack authority in at the church? Respondents did not report data for this question to show results.

Goal #1: Understanding My Call to Serve the Pastor

The goal that scored sixth in prominence was: "To discover the extent to which the understanding of their call helps them to effectively operate as the assistant to the pastor." The average score for the three quantitative statements was 3.87 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as follows: I understand my call has helped me be effective (#6). I am effective in my role because I believe I am called to serve my pastor (#13). I am effective as an assistant to the pastor because that is the only calling I desire at this season in my life (#20). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 6. Goal #1 Understanding My Call to Serve the Pastor

Question	Score	Responses
6) I understand my call has helped me be effective.	4.58	52
13) I am effective in my role because I believe I am called to serve my pastor.	4.12	52
20) I am effective as an assistant to the pastor because that is the only calling I desire at this season in my life.	2.92	52
Composite	3.87	52
5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree. N=52		

For this goal, participants ranked statement #6 the highest at 4.58. The respondents understand their call has helped them be effective. Thirty-six participants responded strongly agree, fourteen participants responded agree, and two participants responded strongly disagree.

Statement #13 ranked as the second highest in this goal with a score of 4.12. On the five point Likert scale with an average of 4.12 participants believe that they are effective in their role because they believe they are called to serve their pastor. Twenty-six participants responded strongly agree, fourteen participants responded agree, eight participants responded neither agree or disagree, and four participants responded strongly disagree.

Statement #20 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 2.92. The low score of the participants suggests that for the most part they did not agree that the only calling they desire in their life currently is to be an assistant to the pastor. Four participants responded strongly agree, sixteen participants responded

agree, ten participants responded neither agree or disagree, sixteen participants responded disagree, and six participants responded strongly disagree.

The qualitative questions for this goal were: What spiritual gifts help you to be effective as you operate as a pastoral assistant? Why? There were five responses. The responses were one or two words therefore, it is suggested that these responses were geared towards their strengths. The instructions of the survey were clear. However, pastoral assistants with their workloads may not have been afforded the time to respond to the qualitative question in-depth. The responses to the qualitative question were:

Discernment, administration, giving, teaching, and patience

Goal #2: Role of a Seminary Education

The goal that scored lowest in prominence was: "To discover the extent to which seminary education plays a role in the success of the assistant to the pastor." The average score for the three quantitative statements was 3.80 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as follows: I believe a seminary education will be valuable to me as an assistant to the pastor (#14). I believe that seminary will help me to be an effective assistant to the pastor (#7). I believe a seminary education will play a strong role in my success as an assistant to the pastor (#21). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 7. Goal #2 Role of a Seminary Education

Question	Score	Responses
14) I believe a seminary education will be valuable to me as an assistant to the pastor.	4.00	52
21) I believe a seminary education will play a strong role in my success as an assistant to the pastor.	3.73	52
7) I believe that seminary will help me to be an effective assistant to the pastor.	3.69	52
Composite	3.80	52
5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree. N=52		

For this goal, participants ranked statement #14 the highest at 4.00. The respondents overall stated that they believe seminary education is valuable to them as an assistant to the pastor, though they ranked lower in their belief that seminary education will help them be effective as an assistant to the pastor. Eighteen participants responded strongly agree, twenty-four participants responded agree, six participants responded neither agree or disagree, and four participants responded strongly disagree.

Statement #21 ranked as the second highest in this goal with a score of 3.73. The response to the statement indicated a lower number of participants believe that a seminary education will play a strong role in their success as an assistant to the pastor. Ten participants responded strongly agree, twenty-eight participants responded agree, eight participants responded neither agree or disagree, two participants responded disagree, and four participants strongly disagree.

Statement #7 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 3.69. The response to the statement indicated a low percentage of participants believe in seminary education as a tool of effectiveness for their role as an assistant to the pastor. Fourteen participants responded strongly agree, twenty-two participants responded agree, eight participants responded neither agree or disagree, two participants responded disagree, and six participants responded strongly disagree.

The qualitative questions for this goal were: Should pastors seeking a pastoral assistant look for someone with a seminary education? Why? Respondents did not report data for this question to show results.

Conclusion

Noteworthy to this project is the fact that while respondents answered the quantitative statements on the Likert scale, there were very few responses given to the open-ended qualitative questions. The ones that did have answers have very abbreviated comments that did not give much information or data to help with the results. Additionally, the responses given did not impact the information received because of limited insight from the respondents. The overall feeling is that the respondents did not mind filling out the Likert scale but did not want to write out answers to the qualitative questions. There will be further analysis of the data collected in the survey in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND REFLECTIONS

Prior to starting this project, I knew my time at Shiloh Christian Community Church was coming to an end and that God was pulling me away from being a pastoral assistant. I fought leaving this ministry just as hard as I fought becoming a minister of the gospel. The truth is, I was comfortable in my life and I did not want God to interrupt my life again as He did with my calling to ministry.

I knew my time was running out as the pastoral assistant at Shiloh and it seemed like God would allow situations to occur to move me. My pastor and I started having difference of opinions when it came to ministry matters. I would disagree with some of his strategies for ministry believing there was a better way to do it. I had to resign from a position that my pastor assigned me to because of an outside force that he refused to handle as I thought he should. My desire to come to work was fading because I knew it was time to leave. Then a sermon point from Bishop Kevin Greshem spoke to me as he stated, “God will make you uncomfortable in a particular place because He is trying to get you to move but you will not leave.” This resonated with me and helped me to see clearly that it was time for me to leave.

This project has allowed me to reflect upon the importance of pastoral assistants. It helped me to understand the season that God had me in at Shiloh while serving as a pastoral assistant. It allowed me to stop and reflect on the growth that I experienced while I was there. God used that season of my life to prepare me for my current assignment as pastor of Gillis Memorial Christian Community Church.

Project Goals

The purpose of this project was to discover how an assistant pastor can be an effective secondary leader in an independent African American congregation. The research question was: How does one effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an independent African American congregation? The specific project goals were:

1. To discover the extent to which the understanding of their call helps them effectively operate as pastoral assistants.
2. To discover the extent to which seminary education plays a role in the success of pastoral assistants.
3. To discover what resources pastoral assistants need to become more effective.
4. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants have responsibilities with authority.
5. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants have a biblical understanding of their role.
6. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants understand their role to the pastor.
7. To discover the extent to which pastoral assistants understand their role to the church.

On a five-point forced-choice survey, none of the individual statements scored below a 2.92. The goals in order of prominence of findings were: Goal #6 (4.33), goal #7 (4.19), goal #5 (4.16), goal #3 (4.00), goal #4 (3.88), goal #1 (3.87), and goal #2 (3.80). Thirteen of the twenty-one quantitative statements in

the entire survey scored 4.0 or higher. Eight of the twenty-one quantitative statements in the entire survey scored below 4.0. Only one of the seven qualitative statements scored below 3.65. The objective findings of the survey were reported in chapter five.

Goal Six: Understanding My Role to the Pastor

It was a good sign to see that the respondents believed their role is to support the vision of the pastor in statement #11. The score for this statement was 4.50. Fifty-two out of the fifty-two respondents were in agreement that supporting the pastor's vision is important. The pastor's vision becoming a reality is a major component of a church progressing forward.

Statement #25 "I believe my role is to alleviate my pastor's stresses" scored .19 points lower than statement #1. Statement #25 related to the pastoral assistant believing their role is to help alleviate the pastor's stresses. Findings suggested that the majority of the respondents felt the need to alleviate some of the stresses that are on the pastor, even if it meant them literally taking on some of the stresses. Additionally, statement #18, "I believe my role is to administer the logistics of my pastor's vision" which was ranked .31 points lower than statement #11 and .12 points lower than statement #25, suggested that respondents believed that they performed a vital role in administering the logistics of their pastor's vision to the membership. This is positive because it suggests that the pastor's vision is important to the pastoral assistant.

The qualitative question for this goal was: What are the strengths that complement the weakness of the pastor? There were five responses. The

responses were one or two words therefore, it is suggested that these responses were geared towards their strengths. The instructions of the survey were clear. However, pastoral assistants with their workloads may not have been afforded the time to respond to the qualitative question in-depth. The responses to the qualitative question by the participants were to be detail oriented, a reflective thinker, organized, a strong administrator, to be task oriented, and very detailed. The goal information relates to the research in chapter three when Hans Finzel says, "Most successful leaders today tend toward being task-oriented. Task-oriented people are the ones who are put in charge in the first place" (Finzel 2007, 48).

Goal Seven: Understanding My Role to the Church

This goal presented some positive feedback from the respondents because it confirmed that the pastoral assistants understand that their role and responsibilities are not just to the pastor but also for the church. The statement that ranked the highest was statement #19. Forty-six of the fifty-two respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their role in the church positively impacts the congregation. This is important because there must be a cohesive working relationship between the pastoral assistant and the membership.

The statement that ranked the lowest in this goal was statement #12. In this statement, the respondents believed that in their pastor's absence they should step in to fulfill their duties. Statement #12 ranked .54 points lower than statement #19 "I believe my role positively impacts the congregation" and .16 points lower than statement #26. It is an encouraging sign in statement #26 that

the respondents believe that the congregation sees a benefit of the role of the pastoral assistant. It is a positive sign when the congregation sees the pastoral assistant as a benefit and not a liability.

The qualitative questions for this goal were: How does your role impact the congregation? Why? There were five responses. The responses were one or two words or statements therefore, it is suggested that these responses were geared towards their strengths. The instructions of the survey were clear. However, pastoral assistants with their workloads may not have been afforded the time to respond to the qualitative question in-depth. The responses to the qualitative question by the participants were to be a leader with influence, have decision-making responsibilities, shared leadership, administration during the week, and serving as liaison to the pastor. The goal information relates to the research in chapter three when Kevin Treston writes, “Nurturing relationships is a major element in the role of a leader” (Treston 1995, 22). Having a Christ-like leadership mentality is helpful when it comes to working with people in ministry.

Goal Five: A Biblical Understanding of My Role

This goal gave the respondents the opportunity to report a biblical understanding and foundation of their role. The statement that ranked highest was statement #24. Forty-eight of the fifty-two respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they use the Bible as a guide when handling conflict resolution. This information gives helpful insight that the pastoral assistant does have a source for handling conflict resolution and does not just depend on their insight. The thought is to survey if the respondents used the Bible for conflict resolution.

The next statement in rank was statement #10, which scored .20 points lower than statement #24. The responses to this statement suggest that forty-eight of the fifty-two respondents see their role lived out in the scripture. Only two respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. Statement # 17 ranked the lowest in this goal being .35 points lower than statement #24 and .15 points lower than statement #10. This statement, by respondents, suggested that they use the Bible to create a foundation for their role. This is encouraging for pastoral assistants to be biblically sound and to use the Bible as a guide in discovering their role.

The qualitative question for this goal rendered no results because participants failed to fill out the qualitative question. I believe this happened because of some time restraints of the pastoral assistant and the pastor and their busy schedules.

Goal Three: Resources to Become More Effective

This goal helped to reveal how the respondents desired continuing education an asset to their ministries. The statement that ranked highest was statement #22. Forty-four of the fifty-two respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the church should make an investment in their continued education. This statement ranked above a 4.20 on the Likert scale affirming that the majority believed this investment towards their education would help them to be more effective as a pastoral assistant.

The next statement, statement #15 ranked .27 points lower than statement #22. This statement was slightly below 4.00 on the Likert scale but still affirming

that the respondents believes work related trainings would help them to become more skilled as a pastoral assistant. Statement #8 ranked the lowest in this goal being .42 points lower than statement #22 and .15 points lower than statement #15. Statement #8 assessed if the respondents desired to have an assistant assigned to them. Thirty-six of the fifty-two respondents believed an assistant would help them to be more effective as a pastoral assistant.

The qualitative question for this goal was: What recourses helped you to be more effective as a pastoral assistant? There were four responses. The responses were one or two words or statements therefore, it is suggested that these responses were geared towards their strengths. The instructions of the survey were clear. However, pastoral assistants with their workloads may not have been afforded the time to respond to the qualitative question in-depth. The responses to the qualitative question by the participants were to have relationships with other assistant pastors, attend conferences, reading the Bible, and prayer. The goal information relates to the research in chapter three when Warren and David Wiersbe states, "Devotion to the Word of God and prayer will give balance to our lives and to our ministries" (Wiersbe and Wiersbe 1997, 82).

Goal Four: Responsibilities and Authority in the Church

It is an encouraging sign that the respondents indicated that they do have responsibilities and authority in their churches. The statement that ranked highest was statement #16. Forty-two of the fifty-two respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they have been given the authority to run the day-to-day operations of the church. The responses suggest that the majority of the participants believe

that some authority in the church has been given to them. Only two respondents strongly disagreed with statement #16.

Statement #23 and statement #9 ranked second and third respectively. Statement #23 ranked .38 points lower than statement #16 and statement #9 ranked .54 points lower than statement #16. Statement #23 showed that thirty-four out of the fifty-two respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they are the immediate supervisor to staff persons other than the pastor. Twelve of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that they are the immediate supervisor to staff persons other than the pastor. Statement #9, ranking the lowest, showed that the respondents believe that they are able to make decisions without consulting their pastor first. It is interesting that ten of the fifty-two respondents neither, agreed or disagreed with statement #9.

The qualitative question for this goal rendered no results because participants failed to adequately fill out the qualitative question, *if they filled it out at all*. This created a gap in the findings because it did not leave much to assess regarding qualitative data. I believe this happened because of some time restraints of the pastoral assistant and the pastor and their busy schedules.

Goal One: Understanding My Call to Serve the Pastor

This goal presented some positive feedback from the respondents because it confirmed their understanding that as a pastoral assistant they are called to serve their pastor. The statement that ranked highest out of all the statements in the survey was statement #6 at 4.58 out of 5.00 on the Likert scale. Fifty out of the fifty-two respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their

understanding of the call to be a pastoral assistant have helped them to be effective.

The next statement in order of prominence was statement #13. This statement affirmed that the respondents believe that they are effective in their role because of their calling to serve their pastor. The rank of 4.12 out of 5.00 on the Likert scale and forty respondents either strongly agreed or agreed showed a majority that affirmed this statement. The statement ranking the lowest was statement #20 “I am effective as an assistant to the pastor because that is the only calling I desire at this season in my life” at 2.92 out of 5.00 on the Likert scale. Twenty-one of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that they are effective as a pastoral assistant because being a pastoral assistant is the only calling they desire in this season of their life. The majority of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement. This shows that the majority of respondents have other ministry desires in the future other than continuing to be a pastoral assistant.

The qualitative questions for this goal were: What spiritual gifts help you to be effective as you operate as a pastoral assistant? Why? There were five responses. The responses were one or two words therefore, it is suggested that these responses were geared towards their strengths. The instructions of the survey were clear. However, pastoral assistants with their workloads may not have been afforded the time to respond to the qualitative question in-depth. The responses to the qualitative question by the participants were to have discernment, good administration skills, be giving, teachable, and patience. The

goal information relates to the research in chapter three when James Harris suggests, "The minister is like no other professional. He is preacher, teacher, administrator, encourager, counselor, leader, and friend to all types of individuals" (Harris 2002, 74).

Goal Two: Role of a Seminary Education

This goal ranked the lowest out of all the goals with a 3.80 out of 5.00 Likert scale. However, this is encouraging to know that pastoral assistants believe that they will more successful in their field by having a seminary education. The statement that ranked the highest was statement #14. The forty-two of the fifty-two respondents strongly agreed or agreed that a seminary education would be valuable to them as a pastoral assistant.

The next statement, statement #21 "I believe a seminary education will play a strong role in my success as an assistant to the pastor" ranked .27 points lower than statement #14. This statement was below 4.00 on the Likert scale but still affirming that the respondents believes a seminary education will play a strong role in their success as a pastoral assistant. Statement #7 ranked the lowest in this goal being .35 points lower than statement #14 and .31 points lower than statement #21. Statement #7 assessed if the respondents desired to go to seminary. Thirty-six of the fifty-two respondents believed that seminary would help them to be an effective pastoral assistant.

The qualitative questions for this goal rendered no results because participants failed to fill out the qualitative questions. I believe this happened

because of some time restraints of the pastoral assistant and the pastor and their busy schedules.

Application

The purpose of this project was to discover how to effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an African American congregation. We sought to show the importance of having a pastoral assistant on a church staff. The hope was that pastors and members would embrace the importance of having a pastoral assistant in an independent African American congregation from a biblical, theological, historical, and contemporary perspective. The aspiration was that pastors and members would better understand the servanthood and sacrifices by pastoral assistants in order for pastors to see their value. The application of this research project resulted in pastors and congregations understanding the benefits of having a pastoral assistant from a biblical, theological, historical, and contemporary model.

Additionally, the desired application of this project is to share the information in the form of leadership trainings, workshops, and teaching platforms for pastors seeking pastoral assistants, ministers seeking to become a pastoral assistant, and pastoral assistants who would like to strengthen their area of ministry. The pastoral assistant position in the African American church is fading away. Most of my experience has been in African American churches and I have noticed a decline in the number of pastoral assistant staff members. Twenty years ago, it was more common for African American congregations, whether large or small, to have pastoral assistants on their staffs. Two reasons

for this could be: African American pastors do not share with the laity of the importance of having a pastoral assistant aiding them in ministry. Secondly, some African American churches are not financially able to place a pastoral assistant on staff. In many African American churches the attendance has declined, which means giving finances have declined as well. Some pastors would like to hire a pastoral assistant but simply do not have the financial stability to do so.

I believe technology plays a part in the decline of attendance in some churches today. Churches that stream their worship services online give people an opportunity to witness their worship services without actually coming to their church in person. This is a good tool for introducing your church to people who are looking for a church home or for those who cannot physically attend in person. However, some church members have abused the technology of online streaming. They abuse it by not attending church services for their own convenience, which causes a decline in attendance and finances.

This project has helped me to become more disciplined through ministry preparation. The disciplines I have learned through this project, will be applied to all that I have learned from this project. However, there are areas that I believe need further study as it relates to this project.

Further Study

One area of study could be examined in depth because of the focus of this project. I will highlight the area for further study pertinent to my own study.

The area for further study is the need for more African American theologians to write on servanthood and service in the African American church. In my research, I noted the lack of information on servanthood and service from our African American theologians, which forced me to use European theologians. African American theologians such as James Cone, Gayraud Wilmore, J. Deotis Roberts, and others, were more focused upon liberation theology and black theology. In my research, I discovered that more non-African American theologians discussed service and servanthood. Black theology and liberation theology is a very important topic to the African American race and should be taught. However, in my research I was searching for African American theologians to aid in my research. I wanted to hear from these great African American theologian minds of their insight on servanthood and service in an African American congregation. Examining how the study of servant leadership can be addressed, using a different term than servant.

When reviewing the lack of participation I received from the open-ended questions I thought of what I could have done differently with the survey. I could have given the open-ended questions at the beginning of the survey or I could have given the survey in two parts with one part being the open-ended questions only.

Personal Goals

I have served as a pastoral assistant for sixteen years at Shiloh Christian Community Church and it was my hope through this project to help other individuals see the value in having a pastoral assistant on their ministry staff.

This project has stretched me mentally and developed me spiritually. I could not have accomplished this project without the Triune God and much prayer.

My personal goals were:

1. I will keep this project before the Lord in prayer daily.
2. I will strengthen my relationship with God through daily devotions.
3. I will share my journey with other clergy.

Goal One: Daily Prayer with the Lord

I believed that the only way I was going to complete this project would be through establishing a dependence on God. I kept this project before the Lord during my personal prayer time. I blocked out a time each morning for deliberately praying to the Lord for this project. I discovered that for me, praying in the morning worked the best for my schedule. My relationship with God has grown in so many ways because of praying daily. My knew prayer life gave me the confidence that I needed to complete this project because now I had an inner peace know that God has listened to my fears, concerns and anxieties concerning this project and through the power of prayer He has released me from those hindrances. After praying daily with the Lord about this project, each time, afterwards, I would feel the anxieties of the project start to fade away. My grandmother use to say, "Just a little talk with Jesus will make everything all right." My daily prayers started expanding beyond my doctoral project into different areas of my life. The confidence that I have gained through incorporating a daily prayer schedule for this project, knowing that God is willing and able to listen to my desires has allowed me to complete this project with joy.

Goal Two: Daily Devotions with God

I have become more disciplined in my devotions with God through implementing a time of devotions by reading scripture, three times a day. I am an early riser and before the pressures of the day would begin I would have my first devotion immediately following my daily prayer time in my office concerning this project. My second devotional period would come immediately following lunchtime. I decided if I could remember to take time out for lunch I could take time out for devotions with God. My third devotional time came before bedtime. This did not replace my nightly prayers but immensely added to them. I felt my relationship with God strengthen more through these daily devotional sessions. Invoking God's presence through my daily devotions gave me an inner peace. The Word of God has always impacted my life but these devotional sessions with God has opened my spirit in ways I could not have imagined. The Word of God has power to encourage and influence God's children. I was determined to complete my project with the help of God's Word giving me courage to do so. There were many scriptures read during my devotional sessions but my favorite scripture was Philippians 4:13, "I can do all this through Him who gives me strength." I read this scripture during every devotional session and it gave me the strength I needed to complete my project.

Goal Three: Sharing My Journey with Other Clergy

When I became an assistant to the pastor, my pastor told me, "There was no reason to reinvent the wheel, go talk to other prominent assistant pastors in the city." He was instructing me to research the things I needed to know about

the assistant pastor position. I met with three assistant pastors in the city of Baltimore who shared their beliefs and convictions of a good assistant pastor. This was beneficial to me as I started my new journey as an assistant to the pastor. Therefore, during this process I promised to give back as well and share my journey with other clergy. I have taught workshops on the duties and responsibilities of an assistant pastor to other clergy desiring to become an assistant pastor. Pastors have asked me to come to their churches to teach their staff members how to lead from the second position. It has been an honor and a privilege to facilitate workshops on leading from the second position, as I shared my convictions concerning pastoral assistants. Conducting these workshops has allowed me to give back to other clergy members just as other pastoral assistants took time out to pour into my ministry years ago.

Conclusion

As I began this doctoral journey, my desire was to be a senior pastor. However, I continued to work diligently as an assistant pastor while searching for a full-time pastorate position. I shared my desire to become a senior pastor with my pastor and he agreed that it was time for me to search out the pastorate position. I served my pastor faithfully the last six years while desiring to pastor my own church. In 2016, God blessed me to become the senior pastor of Gillis Memorial Christian Community Church in Baltimore, Maryland. I have learned that there is a distinct difference in being a pastoral assistant verses being the pastor. I have always been aware of this fact however, when you transition from leading in the second position to being in the first position you immediately

realize that the church, the leadership, and the membership are all depending on you. Every decision you make whether good or bad falls on the pastor.

Now that I am in the first position as the pastor of Gillis Memorial Christian Community Church, I now understand why my pastor would handle certain situations in ministry the way he chose to. I did not understand before hand because I only viewed from the second position. As pastor, I look back on the lessons learned from my pastor and I am thankful for his wisdom. Operating in the first position as the pastor is a blessing. In a short time of being the pastor, with all the responsibilities of the church and the surrounding community, I am aware more than ever of the need for me to hire a pastoral assistant. I wonder if it will be difficult for me to find a pastoral assistant that will be able to live up to my qualifications?

I will be in prayer concerning adding a pastoral assistant to our church staff. I will have to be patient in this process as well because even though I operated as the pastoral assistant for sixteen years I did not become effective immediately. I know exactly what to look for in a pastoral assistant. I will be looking for someone who loves God, has a strong prayer life, and understands service and servanthood. Who is willing to serve others before themselves. A pastoral assistant who will serve God, the pastor, the membership, and will be secure in their second position of leadership. My prayer is to acquire a pastoral assistant that is spiritual, sacrificial, honest, loyal, and have a high level of integrity.

It is my hope that pastors and congregations would see the need for pastoral assistants to work and aid the pastor in their ministry. I am hopeful that pastors would understand the need for pastoral assistants to help them fulfill their God given assignments just as Moses understood the need for Aaron' assistance in fulfilling his God-given assignment.

APPENDIX ONE

ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

LEADING FROM THE SECOND POSITION IN AN INDEPENDENT AFRICAN
AMERICAN CONGREGATION

A PROJECT PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY
DARRYL PHILLIPS GOULD SR.

ASHLAND, OHIO
JUNE 24, 2014

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this project is to discover how to effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an independent African American congregation. The research question is: How does one effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an independent African American congregation?

Overview

The focus of this project is to discover how pastoral assistants can lead in a church congregation from the second position in hierarchy. For many congregations, the pastor is the only voice they adhere to for direction and correction.

I have been the pastoral assistant at Shiloh Christian Community Church for the past sixteen years. The first couple of years were rough for my pastor and me because I did not know what I was doing even though I thought I did. After five years in my position I was still learning church culture, church people and church politics. Some have said, you really do not become people pastor until you have pastured them at least five years. Well, I will say, it takes even longer for church members to except you as the pastoral assistant of their church and begin to take leadership instructions from you.

This project is designed to discover the roles/responsibilities and the dos/don'ts of pastoral assistants while working with a pastor and their congregants. It is my intent in this project to discover the positive of having responsibilities for things you do not have authority over while operating in the second position.

Foundations

As an African American pastoral assistant, I have experienced the good, the bad, and the ugly of ministry in an independent African American congregation. I love what I do as an assistant pastor. I am a born leader, a servant to The Lord, and to His people, which came to me naturally. There have been times in my ministry when I have questioned my future as an assistant pastor. Because the challenge of doing your job well as an assistant brings the relevant question: Is this my destiny as an assistant pastor forever or will I ever operate as a pastor?

Dutch Sheets and Chris Jackson in their book *Second in Command*, speak of the frustrations of an assistant pastor. They speak to the question that arises within the assistant pastor: “What about me?” See, although the assistant pastor loves their leader, he’s called too. While the assistant pastor is trying to be the best right-hand man, they still have some specific leadership dreams and desires that God has placed in their heart too (Sheets and Jackson 2005, 15). This can be difficult for any assistant pastor who believes that God has called them to lead too.

Sheets and Jackson speak to finding a second in command like Joshua. Moses was blessed to have a Joshua assisting him. Sheets and Jackson state, “There are some associate leaders who know that they are ultimately destined to serve in the senior leadership position. They are Joshuas; they have begun as assistants but they know that they are destined to be leaders of mighty

organizations” (Sheets and Jackson 2005, 10). However, if a senior pastor can find an assistant who is loyal, a gifted leader, a skilled communicator, a servant mentality, and content with fulfilling the second in command position then they have found a jewel to work with. Leonard Bernstein was once asked which position in an orchestra was the most difficult to fill. After a moment’s reflection he said, “Second fiddle. It’s easy to find people who want to play the lead, but to find someone who is content to play second fiddle with excellence and enthusiasm, now that is a rare find” (Sheets and Jackson 2005, 10).

Martin E. Hawkins in his book, *The Associate Pastor: Second Chair, Not Second Best*, speaks of the need for larger church to have assistant pastors on staff. Hawkins says, “When the church grows to need more than a solo pastor, the associate and the assistant---with all their special gifts and talents---are necessary” (Hawkins 2005, 12). Our church was growing rapidly and my pastor needed some assistance managing all the new ministries being developed, therefore; I was added to the church staff in January of 2000. The church grew to 800 people attending each Sunday. Hawkins states, “Churches with three hundred to five hundred members were considered large and needed additional pastoral staff” (Hawkins 2005, 13).

The foundations will include a brief summary of Shiloh Christian Community Church background, my personal background, and my passion for being an assistant pastor in an independent African American church. The foundations will also include a biblical summary of the importance of having an assistant in the book of Exodus; a theological summary of the ecclesiology of the

role of an assistant pastor; and a historical summary of Reverend Ralph Abernathy assisting Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., during the Civil Rights Movement.

Personal Foundations

In January of the year two thousand, I left my job at Schmidt's Baking Company after fourteen years of dedicated service and joined the staff of Shiloh Christian Community Church as the Pastoral assistant. I am currently on staff as the Pastoral assistant at Shiloh. The title is a play on words it is almost the same as Assistant Pastor but with more responsibilities. One of the most important differences is that my job security lies in the hands of the pastor; instead, of the board of trustees.

I performed various Ministerial and Administrative duties on behalf of Shiloh Christian Community Church:

- Manage a staff of ten employees
- Assume Pastoral responsibilities when Pastor Baldwin is absent
- Preach on Sundays and teach Bible study.
- Provide premarital counseling and personal counseling
- Visit and commune the sick and shut-in members of the church.
- Attend civic/community group meetings as church representative.
- Officiate at weddings, funerals, baptisms, and child dedications.
- Teach regular Bible Study to the seniors of our church
- Senior Associate Minister providing ministerial guidance, instruction and discipleship training and counsel to a team of 13 associate ministers.

In 2009, my title changed to executive pastoral assistant. This added to

my duties, such as, campaign director of our Stewardship Capital Campaign initiative (Enlarging The Kingdom Stewardship Campaign). I maintain the pastors and churches' calendar throughout the year. I have held the position of Worship Team Leader. Which means, I oversaw every aspect of worship from the parking lot to the pulpit. Our mission was to create an atmosphere where people can express their love and gratitude to God for who He is, what He has done and what He will do in the future. My job entails a lot of other responsibilities such as maintaining the upkeep of the church building inside and outside. However, one of the main duties I do at Shiloh, which I do not mind doing, is anything the pastor does not want to handle or feel like doing. I really enjoy my job even with all the ups and downs; it may have from time to time dealing with church issues and situations.

I attended Saint Mary's Seminary Ecumenical Theological Seminary, which was dreadful (Catholicism). Then I tried online classes at Liberty University and that didn't go well either. I learned very quickly that I needed to be in a classroom setting. After a couple of years of being out of the classroom I decided, with a little push from my good friend Dr. Anthony Chandler. He told me that I needed to get off the golf course and stop playing around with my academic carrier. He was right; therefore, I registered and attended the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University. I will be forever grateful to Anthony for that friendly push because I graduated with honors a Masters of Divinity Degree from Virginia Union University on May eleventh two thousand thirteen.

As I stated before, I really enjoyed my job and position at Shiloh Christian Community Church and did not see myself going anywhere anytime soon. The year is April of two thousand twelve. I receive a call from my friend and mentor, which changed my world around. Dr. William H. Curtis called me and asked if I would be interested in being an Interim Pastor in York Pennsylvania? He went on to say that the Mayor of York, Kim Bracey, called him and asked for his help. She is a member of Friendship Baptist Church and they were currently without a pastor and needed someone to fill and help with the spiritual aspects of the church such as, Sunday morning worship, Bible study, and some administration.

I explained to Dr. Curtis that I had to talk with my pastor first and that I would get back to him. He told me to get right back to him when I knew something because I was the first person he thought about and he was not going to ask anyone else until he heard back from me. I ask my pastor for a meeting that week. I would never make a decision like that without consulting with my pastor, who is my spiritual covering. I met with my pastor and brought him up to speed and he said, "This would be a good opportunity to share my ministry gifts and he believed I fully equipped to handle the assignment." I called Dr. Curtis and told him that I was available for the interim pastor position. I went on an interview with the Joint Board of Friendship Baptist and they asked if I could preach for two weeks in the month of May and then they would get back to me with their decision.

Well, after the two weeks I was asked to come in for another meeting to sign a contract for me to become the Interim Pastor of Friendship Baptist Church

for the next six months and I agreed. My passion in ministry has always been servant hood and organization. When I walked into Friendship Baptist Church for the first time I knew God had placed me there because one of the things they desperately needed was some structure and organization because it was presently depleted from both. The only problem for me would be; would they be willing to receive my ideas, ministry models and input. Friendship had gone through having the congregation being split in half. My first Sunday there, I preached to about thirty people.

I have always thought of myself as a good organizer, leader and builder. At my home church (Shiloh Christian Community Church) Pastor Baldwin allowed me to basically run most of the churches day-to-day operations. Mind you, there were times when I needed Pastor Baldwin to step in and make his presence known and use his expertise to handle some situations. Pastor Baldwin welcomed my ideas, ministry models and input at Shiloh. That has helped develop me into the ministry leader I am today and I will be forever grateful to him for the opportunity to serve.

While I was at Friendship for sixteen months the church grew from thirty members to one hundred twenty-five members. They went from not having Bible study when I arrived to having a consistent thirty-five to forty people in attendance each week. However, my season there came to an abrupt end. The Mayor, Kim Bracey, who was instrumental in me coming to Friendship plotted and planned to have me removed. After the six-month agreement, the majority of the membership wanted me to stay full-time as their pastor and so did I.

We worked through negotiations and we did a good faith agreement between the two parties. After five months, I get a call from Trustee Bob Roland explaining that we have to sit down and review the contract. At that meeting, I was told that I never signed the contract and my services were no longer need because I did not attend Sunday school as often as they thought I should have. Later I found out that Kim put this plan in place because she thought I was trying to take over the original leadership of the church (The Joint Board). That was one of the hardest lessons I had to learn in church. I really could go into detail about the entire matter but for the Kingdom sake, I will not.

I immediately called my pastor and explained to him what happened to me. Pastor Baldwin welcomed me back to Shiloh with my same position as Pastoral assistant. He said, it was a no brainer because I was a good employee, I left Shiloh correctly, and I am coming back of no fault of my own. Plus, he never officially filled my position at Shiloh while I was gone. Since being back at Shiloh my duties have increased again. Along with my other duties, I handle Quality Assurance throughout the church and I oversee the accountability aspect of the entire leadership of Shiloh. I will admit that I work more now that I am back at Shiloh than I did at Friendship. It is good to be back home.

Biblical Foundations

The Holy Scriptures provides for us the insight of leading from the second position through the relationship of Moses, the leader of Israel and Aaron, Moses' assistant. The biblical text of Moses and Aaron's relationship helps us to see their working relationship in the book of Exodus, the third chapter until the golden calf

incident in chapter thirty-two. In these chapters, we can see how Moses, the leader and his assistant Aaron interacted and worked with each other. God gave Moses a mission. Exodus 3:9-11 says, "The cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" Moses does not think he can accomplish the mission. Moses said to God, "I have never been eloquent; I am slow of speech and tongue." God said, "What about your brother Aaron the Levite?" God sends Aaron to help Moses because Moses needed someone to help him. God told Moses, "You shall speak to Aaron and put words in his mouth, I will help both of you to speak and will teach you what to do." This was the beginning of a great partnership.

God gave Moses an overwhelming assignment. Moses was commanded to go to the King of Egypt and demand that he let, his slaves, the Israelites go. After many attempts because God allowed Pharaoh's heart to become hard, he would refuse Moses' request. I believe that in the back of Moses' mind he had to wonder when Pharaoh finally agrees to release the people, now I have the responsibility of leading hundreds of thousands of Israelites out of Egypt into the promise land. That is quite a tall task for anyone.

It is evident that Moses needed some help from Aaron. Now Pastor Baldwin did not have the same stress or anxieties that Moses had, however, he needed some help. The church was growing, ministries were flourishing, people

were being added to the church weekly, and Pastor Baldwin believed God sent me to assist him. Likewise with Moses and Aaron, I was Pastor Baldwin's mouthpiece. Not for the same reason as Aaron was for Moses because Pastor Baldwin is very articulate, however, he could not be everywhere at the same time. Pastor Baldwin would send me, instead, and I would say exactly what he told me to say.

When we look at Moses and Aaron's relationship we see that it was important for Aaron to communicate effectively with Pharaoh and the Israelites. When Moses and Aaron faced Pharaoh, God would tell Moses what to say to Aaron. It is essential for the assistant pastor to deliver the correct message from their pastor. Notice, Aaron never told Moses I think I can handle it now. Aaron never told Moses, I will go this time and talk to Pharaoh by myself, and you can stay here. Aaron was Moses' assistant and he understood his role and responsibilities. When assisting a Pastor or leader, one must put his or her own desires on hold until God moves the assistant to another assignment. Sometimes, you do wonder about your own dreams and aspirations. It is easy to lose focus thinking about what you could be doing to accomplish some of your goals. But the assisting pastor must remember his or her assignment and put those thoughts away.

Exodus 17:11-13 says, "As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the

other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.” The pastoral assistant should hold the pastor up as much as possible. The pastor is pulled in so many different directions that it can be draining. The pastors need their leaders to hold him or her up daily through prayer. Then there are times when pastors need to be lifted physically. In Exodus the seventeenth chapter we see then Moses needed help from Aaron and Hur to defeat the Amalekites. When the Amalekites came to attack the Israelites at Rephidim Moses told Joshua to choose some of our men and go out to fight the enemy.

During that time, Moses would stand at the top of the hill with the staff of God raised in his hands. As long as Moses hands was held up the Israelites continue to win but when his arms got tired and started to fall the Amalekites started winning. Therefore, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the mountain and held up Moses' arms in order for the Israelites to be victorious. Moses hands remain steady until sunset with the help of Aaron and Hur. Joshua was able to overcome the Amalekite army with his sword.

I would suggest, that every assisting pastor should be willing to hold up the arms of the pastor literally. However, the pastor has to be willing to receive help from the assisting pastor when needed. One of the common temptations in leadership today is the pressure of having to have it all together. To truly grow as a leader, one must, like Moses, be willing to embrace the support of trusted leaders. A good leader has support from his or her followers. In holding Moses' arms up Aaron and Hur were showing their faith in Moses and they believed and

what he was doing. They believe that keeping Moses' hands up would lead the people of Israel to victory. The biblical text in Exodus helped shape my thoughts about the importance of assisting the pastor. There will be times when the assisting pastor has to put their trust totally in the pastor, and believe that God has spoken to him or her.

Exodus 32:1-4 says, "When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, 'Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.'" Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me." So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." The scriptures show us that Aaron's approach or solution to the problem was handled wrong. Aaron conducted himself in a manner, which was uncharacteristic of his leader, Moses.

Over the years as the assistant pastor Shiloh Christian Community Church, I have learned that it is very important to operate and function as the pastor would, in his absence. Aaron's biggest mistake was failing to operate and function like Moses. Since the first day I started as the assistant pastor, I have always paid close attention to Pastor Baldwin's style of leadership. The reason being, in his absence, I needed to operate and function as he would, if he was

present. When Pastor Baldwin was absent I wanted to make sure that I operated in that same spirit.

I have learned that members and leaders will test your loyalty, leadership, and character when the pastor or first chair is absent. Some will try to boost up your ego and tell you that you are just as good or better than the pastor. Or they will openly talk bad about the pastor in your presence. In my opinion, they want to see how the assisting pastor or second chair will respond. In a situation like this, I usually disagree with them “strongly” or I would not comment at all. Aaron should have told the people, “There will not be any god making on my watch.” Furthermore, Moses will return and we will wait patiently until such time. Moses should not have returned to witness the Israelites worshiping idol gods. When Moses returned, the people should have been in the same state as when he left. Aaron’s job was to resolve all disputes by the people in Moses’ absence. His job was not to build a golden calf to be worshiped. It is vital for the pastoral assistant to understand their role and responsibilities within the position they occupy.

Theological Foundations

In Christopher A. Beeley’s book, *Leading God’s People; Wisdom From The Early Church For Today*, he speaks of the servant leader in chapter one. In that chapter Beeley quotes Augustine of Hippo as he stresses the essential character of leadership. Augustine of Hippo says, “The one who presides over the people ought to understand before he begins that he is the servant of many. And let him not disdain this role; I repeat, let him not disdain to be the servant of

many, because the Lord of lords did not disdain to serve us. And the advice and warning I'm giving, I am also afraid of myself" (Beeley, 2014, 11).

A leader that presides over the people should understand that he or she is a servant of the people, and not the boss of the people. Many leaders feel as if being a leader is more of a perk, than it is a responsibility to serve others. Jesus gave us the perfect example of a great leader. In Mark 10:45 (NIV), Jesus says, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." All leaders, especially assistant pastors, should have the heart and spirit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His servant leadership style. The assistant pastor understands that he or she does not just serve the pastor, but he or she also serves the people. The assignment of the assistant pastor would be much easier if they only had to serve the pastor, but that's not God's design for His leaders.

Servant leaders must have a strong prayer life. Karl Rahner admonishes servant leaders about what kind of prayers they should pray. He suggests praying, "Let us grow daily more and more like you through true, constant, selfless spiritual effort and struggle, O you the eternal wisdom of God" (Rahner 1968, 215). As leaders mature they realize the need to pray for their pastor daily because spiritual warfare is real. Ephesians 6:12 say, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The theologian, John Calvin says,

"Our prayer must not be self-centered. It must arise not only because we feel our own need as a burden we must lay upon God, but also because

we are so bound up in love for our fellow men that we feel their need as acutely as our own. To make intercession for men is the most powerful and practical way in which we can express our love for them.”

John Calvin believed wholeheartedly in intercessory prayer. A servant leader should have a vibrant prayer life. There is power in prayer.

Karl Rahner refers to what he calls “great grace.” Rahner says, “Servant leaders exist to serve others, even if they serve badly” (Rahner 1968, 83). He states,

If we would be true to our calling we cannot keep ourselves from ourselves; now ours is a life with no rights except the great right to serve, to fight heedless, to serve even when we know that we serve badly. It is an all-consuming grace because we are delivered to men. And God himself has given himself to us, which is the final reason why this great grace is an all-consuming one. (Rahner 1968, 84)

Being an assistant pastor or servant leader means that you are called to serve your pastor needs and others before yours. This takes being mature in the faith because that is not an easy thing to accomplish. Understanding that serving other leaders and congregants needs before your own is not about neglecting your own needs, but it’s more about serving God’s people first and believing God will take care of your needs in return.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer suggests that life experiences help us to grow our faith. In the book, *Liberating The Laity: Equipping All The Saints For Ministry* by, R. Paul Stevens. Bonhoeffer is quoted as saying,

I thought I could acquire faith by trying to live a holy life, was something like it. I discovered later, that it is only by living completely in this world that one learns to have faith. By this worldliness, I mean living unreservedly in life's duties, problems, success and failure, experiences and perplexities. In so doing we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God, taken seriously and not our own sufferings, but those of God in the world -- watching with Christ in Gethsemane. That, I think, is faith; that is metanoia. (Stevens 1985, 93)

The difficult days in ministry have developed our faith in God whether inside the church doors or outside of it. However, many of us would not change our experiences for what we have learned about God. God has never failed us. While in Gethsemane, Jesus prays to God, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26: 39 KJV). God would not allow the cup to pass by Jesus. We can look at this moment as a bad day for Jesus but I believe this was a defining moment in Jesus' earthly ministry. He knew God was not going to change His mind because Jesus came from heaven to earth to die for the sins of this world. Like Jesus we will have some Gethsemane days, but I believe this is part of the metanoia process.

Historical Foundations

Throughout history there have been great leaders who had assistance from other leaders to help them acquire great achievements. Men and women in history had dreams, visions, and aspirations of what they were placed on this earth to accomplish. As they set out to accomplish the impossible, they also received needed help from other leaders who would put their agenda aside to help fulfill a greater good. I will explore the history of positive and negative outcomes of having a person assisting in a leadership capacity. Within this foundation, I will explore the history of leaders and their assistant in the Civil Rights Movement.

I will explore the relationship between Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Reverend Ralph David Abernathy during the civil rights movement. Dr. King was the leader of this movement and Reverend Abernathy aided him for several

years in the protest for equal rights for African Americans. During the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott the leader of the NAACP (Reverend Bennett) called for a meeting with other civil rights and church leaders to form a committee under this movement. Those who gathered named Dr. King as the leader of the committee and named it "The Montgomery Improvement Association," so that it would reflect the name of the city.

Because of Dr. King being the leader of this committee, this also meant that Reverend Abernathy would stand by his side and assist Dr. King in the movement. Reverend Abernathy said, "As it turned out, this (organizational) Structure meant that Martin and I did most of the work, he as the chief officer, I as the chief organizer of activities" (Abernathy 2003, 22). Still today, we have leaders and their assistants doing most of the work in movements and ministry. When a leader takes on an assignment so does their assistant. The only difference is the leader has a choice whether to take the assignment on or not but the assistant does not.

The relationship between Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy shows, that assistants to leaders can face the same highs and lows of their leader. As an assistant, Reverend Abernathy experienced the highs of victory when they won the case of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Leader and assistant were both celebrated and enjoyed victory together. However, during a march in Birmingham both men would equally also know the lows of being arrested and beaten by police officers. The history of Birmingham Alabama during the civil rights movement was known to have community violence exceeding all other Southern

cities. Birmingham was known to be the most segregated cities in the South. In 1963, Albert Boutwell defeated Bull Connor in the mayoral election. Therefore, Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy flew to Birmingham to begin their campaign. Dr. King appointed an advisory board of prominent black business and professional leaders. On Good Friday, they advised Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy not to march because they would be arrested or even killed.

While sitting at the Gaston Motel waiting to march to City Hall Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy, along with over two hundred people, were waiting for the go ahead to proceed. After two hours Dr. King said, “Ralph, I’m going to march regardless of what they say. Ralph says, “If you’re going to march, then I’m going to march too.” Then Dr. King goes to his advisors and says, “Gentleman, thank you for your words of advice, but we’re going to march” (Abernathy 2003, 87). Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy led what became known as the Good Friday March. After only walking eight blocks, Bull Connor had them arrested and thrown violently into a paddy wagon. Loyal assistants may face the same hardships as their leader. As an assistant pastor, I have experienced the highs and lows with my pastor. We have shared victories together from systematic strategies coming together and we have both been blamed and criticized for failures in ministry. Those whom oppose the leader will come after him and whoever is closest to the leader and that’s usually the assistant.

The relationship between Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy during the Civil Rights Movement also shows us that leaders have to be wise when choosing assistants even after the movement or assignment is over. Many

African Americans, to this day, dislike Ralph Abernathy for sharing private information about Dr. King in his autobiography, *And The Walls Came Tumbling Down*. Reverend Abernathy was one of the closest people to Dr. King and most people believe what happened in the confines of their relationship and the civil rights movement should have stayed private. Reverend Abernathy believed he had to discuss Dr. King's weakness for women because others have talked about it unjustly. Abernathy had only one real conversation with Dr. King on this subject. In his autobiography Abernathy says,

"Martin, you can't really disguise the nature of certain friendships. If a man and woman are particularly close to one another, it shows in the way they behave---the way they look at one another and the way they talk. Don't sell these reporters short. So whatever your relationship is with her, you need to cool it down. With Hoover's men hiding under every bed, you just can't afford to continue the way you have" (Abernathy 1989, 474).

I believe Reverend Abernathy should have remained quiet on the matter. Hearsay from others who dislike you is one thing but hearing these words from a reliable assistant who worked with you in the struggle for years is another. Abernathy sharing this one incident because he made it clear in his autobiography that there were more, didn't come off as a defendant to what Dr. King did and why he did it. But more like a person who wanted to sell books and benefit from another man's shortcomings. Any great leader or not so great leader will tell you that it's hard to find a dedicated, trust worthy, and loyal assistant.

Contemporary Foundation

In this foundation, I will demonstrate how the pastoral assistant leadership position is needed in our independent congregations. Additionally, I will highlight

contemporaries who have experience in leading effectively in independent congregations.

In Larry Taylor's Journal "The Ministry of an Assisting Pastor: Or, More Things I Learned From My Pastor" he points out that assisting pastors are just that. They assist the pastor. There is only one pastor in the church, and at Shiloh, it is Pastor Baldwin. Now part of my task was to show and teach the people that I am not trying to be their pastor but I am trying to assist their pastor. Taylor suggests some points that would help assisting pastors:

- Be at every service.
- Hold up the pastor's arms.
- Be supportive and helpful.
- Correct problems, then follow up, and keep them corrected.
- Don't wear your feelings on your sleeve; don't be needy or overly sensitive.
- Don't make excuses.
- In the pastor's absence, run things exactly as he would and he were there.
- Be financially frugal and ultra conservative.
- Apologize easily.
- Make the pastor look good.
- Be humble; stay humble.
- Create a loving environment.
- Impact others positively.
- Wash feet, pick up trash, wash windows, and faced they; serve, serve, serve. (Taylor 1994, 9-22)

I agree with Taylor's points on developing the pastoral assistant and most of his points I have tried to put into practice. I believe the parishioners of our churches pay attention to what we do, a lot more than we give them credit. As my pastor would always say, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

In John Maxwell's book, *Leadership 101*, he speaks about the importance of members trusting their leaders. Maxwell argues that trust is the foundation of leadership. He says:

There are three qualities a leader must exemplify to build trust: competence, connection, and character. People will forgive occasional mistakes based on ability, especially if they can see that you are still growing as a leader. But they will not trust anyone who has slips in character. In that area, even occasional lapses are lethal. All effective leaders know this truth. (Maxwell 2002, 46)

Leaders would like to believe that they do not have a difficult time exemplifying the qualities that build trust, such as, competence connection and character. However, getting the members of our churches to believe those qualities existed within a pastoral assistant is a different story.

In N. Gordon Cosby's book, *By Grace Transformed; Christianity for a New Millennium*, he speaks of a Jesus model leadership. Cosby says:

Jesus is our example in everything, including leadership. Jesus' kind of leadership is the kind of leadership needed in our time if our society is going to survive; if the kingdom is going to come in; if the church is going to be the church that Jesus is calling the church to be. If our society is to be that new society that God longs for it to be, this kind of leadership is required. (Cosby 1999, 22)

Cosby is correct that our example in everything, including leadership should be Jesus. We have to be loving and forgiving to those who do not like us or care for our leadership. Jesus has so many quality characteristics that it would seem impossible to imitate all of them. However, if we strive to embellish as many of the character qualities of Jesus, then I believe we will be close to the kind of leaders that God longs for.

The senior pastor of Greater Allen A.M.E. Cathedral in Jamaica New York wrote a book titled *African-American Church Management Handbook*. He talks about managing difficult people. Flake says:

Managing people entails more than just guiding those on the church staff. It also includes relating both formally and informally with members of the congregation. Virtually every congregation will have its share of EGR (Extra Grace Required) persons. Some will be more difficult than others. It behooves the pastor to be prayerful and to think of such persons not as troublemakers (though it is tempting to do so), but as people who are struggling in some areas of their lives and who from time to time need some extra attention and/or loving care. (Flake, Flake and Reed 2005, 63)

I know that over the years, I have made some mistakes as pastoral assistant at Shiloh Christian Community Church. I have tried to learn from each mistake and grow from it. My father in the flesh, Don Gould, would always say, “If you show me a man that has never made a mistake then I will show you a man that don't know anything.” I believe we grow from our mistakes; however, you don't continue to make the same mistake over and over again. After a person makes a mistake they usually will analyze themselves and wonder, is this what I should be doing? For me, when I made a mistake, I would remind myself that God appointed me to my position, and to simply learn from my mistakes.

In Martin Hawkins book, *The Associate Pastor: Second Chair, Not Second Best*, he talks about the assistant being called by God for service. Hawkins says, “Assistant pastors are just as much God's priority as the primary leader or senior pastors are. Did you hear that? Just as God prepared, called, and supported Moses, he prepared, called, and supported Aaron in the role he had chosen for him” (Hawkins 2005, 34). I agree with Hawkins point of view.

Hawkins talks about the traits that a successful assistant pastor should have beyond knowing the specifics of the Sunday morning worship service. He says:

A straw poll asking several senior pastors the top five qualities they valued most in their associates reveal these answers:

- Biblical Soundness
- Loyalty
- Integrity
- Pulpit Ability
- Walking with God
- Commitment
- Servant-hood
- Self-starter
- Competence
- Professionalism

Do these traits and qualities look like you?" (Hawkins 2005, 54-55)

I agreed with all eleven qualities. I would also add that it would be helpful for the pastoral assistant to understand their place in the hierarchy of their position. In my opinion, the pastoral assistant should understand that your service to God comes first, then to your pastor, then to the church, then to the members, and then to self.

Hawkins mentions the importance of the pastoral assistant having a list of skills in order to serve in his or her position. He says, "An assisted also needs to be prepared in the following list of skills to serve in his position and meet the special needs of the congregation" (Hawkins 2005, 55). Hawkins highlight that the assistant pastor will be called upon to:

- manage the spiritual life of the church,
- motivate volunteers for ministering, known
- aid congregations in understanding and using the gifts,
- disciple special needs,

- mentor a young believer in leaders,
- spiritually advise the senior pastor, and
- organize and develop effective programs that fulfilled the senior pastor's vision. (Hawkins 2005, 55)

As you can see, the pastoral assistant has to be prepared by God in order to do their job effectively.

The pastoral assistant should hold the pastor up as much as possible. The pastor is pulled in so many different directions that it can be draining. The pastor needs the leaders to hold him or her up daily through prayer.

Context

The desired survey participants will be Pastors, Assistant Pastors, and Former Assistant Pastors who are now pastoring in an independent African-American church in Baltimore, Maryland. This study will assess the responsibilities of the assistant pastor and what senior pastors is looking for in an assistant to help them successfully lead a congregation. Assistant Pastors and Pastors in independent African American churches from medium and large size congregations will be targeted to complete the survey.

While the research question could be addressed for any racial congregation, the key focus will be African-American churches to manage the scope of the project and to connect within my personal context. I have been an assistant pastor for over fourteen years and have seen the good and bad of operating in this position. The assistant pastor has to be good enough to be the pastor but smart enough to know they are not the pastor.

Definition of Terms

Assistant Pastor – “They support and assist the senior pastor in his role, which has expanded beyond the capabilities of one person” (Hawkins 2005, 14).

Pastor – A senior minister in charge of a Christian church or congregation.

Second in Command – The right-hand person to the pastor.

Servant Leaders - Serve others before ones self

Project Goals

The purpose of this project is to discover how to effectively lead from the second chair position. The research question is: How do you effectively lead from the second chair position? The project goals are:

1. To discover the extent to which assistant pastors can acknowledge their call to this type of leadership.
2. To discover the extent to which assistant pastors understand their roles and responsibilities.
3. To discover the extent to which assistant pastors are loyal to their pastor.
4. To discover the extent to which assistant pastors have responsibilities without authority.
5. To discover the extent to which assistant pastors respect and uphold the office of pastor.
6. To discover the extent to which assistant pastors will lead by example.
7. To discover the extent to which assistant pastors are servants.

Design, Procedure and Assessment

The purpose of this project is to discover how to effectively lead as a pastoral assistant in an independent African American congregation in Baltimore, Maryland. The research question is: What are the leadership qualities needed to effectively help lead a congregation as a pastoral assistant in an independent African American church. The design is a discovery project in the form of a survey, which will be distributed to a network of assistant pastors and pastors in an independent African-American congregation.

The design is an online survey given to assistant pastors and assistant pastors who has been recently removed within the last five years of their position. The survey will assist in gathering information to meet the goals of the project. All materials for the survey will be done on online. Many of the assistant pastors have busy schedules and other assistant pastors live in different cities, thus being the reason for online surveying. The target audience to gather data from the survey is 20-30 assistant pastors.

Personal Goals

I have been an assistant pastor for fourteen years. Through my tenure at Shiloh Christian Community Church as assistant pastor, I have matured a leader and confidant with my pastor. My journey has not been easy and I believe other first time assistant pastors can benefit from my experiences.

My personal goals are as follows:

1. I will keep this project before The Lord in prayer daily.
2. I will strive to improve myself as a servant leader.

3. I will strengthen my relationship with God through daily devotions.
4. I will share my journey with other clergy.
5. I will continue to work diligently as an assistant pastor while searching for a pastorate position.

I will keep this project before The Lord in prayer daily by blocking out time each morning. I will strive to improve myself as a servant leader by making self-evaluations. I will strengthen my relationship with God by setting aside time for daily devotions. I will be open to share my journey with other clergy. My desire is to be a senior pastor. I will continue to work diligently as an assistant pastor while searching for a full-time pastorate position.

Calendar

Month	Year	Action
June	2014	Completion of Project Proposal
June	2014	Have Suggestions and Edits from Dawn Morton
July	2014	Make the Corrections Suggestions by Dawn Morton
August	2014	Submit Proposal to Matthew Bevere
September	2014	Make Corrections given by Matthew Bevere
October	2014	Attend DM 919 – Dissertation Writing Class
November	2014	Create Assessment Instrument
November	2018	Chapter 2 & 3 Written
March	2019	Chapter 1 & 4 Written
August	2019	Chapter 5 & 6 Written
August	2019	First Draft of Final Paper

September	2019	Final Draft of Final Paper
October	2019	Defense

Core Team

Advisor: Dr. Russell Morton, Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland Ohio

Field Consultant: Dr. William Curtis DMin, Pastor, Mt. Ararat Baptist Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Resource Persons: Dr. Dawn Morton, EdD, Associate Dean for Institutional Assessment; Assistant Professor of Christian Formation and Leadership, Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, Ohio

Dr. Matthew Bevere, DMin, Associate Doctor of Ministry Program, Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, Ohio

Dr. William H. Curtis, DMin, Senior Pastor, Mount Ararat Baptist Church, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

Dr. John W. Kinney, PhD, Dean and Professor of Theology, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia

Dr. Patricia Gould-Champ, DMin, Instructor of Practical Theology, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia

Pastor Anthony Chandler, DMin, Senior Pastor, Cedar Street Baptist Church of God, Richmond, Virginia

Support Team

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit

Nicole Gould, my wife

Don and Miriam Gould, parents

Reverend Jimmy C. Baldwin, my pastor

Dr. William H. Curtis, mentor

Drew Ross, brother in ministry and classmate in my doctoral program

Dr. John W. Kinney, PhD, my Dean

Gary Johnson, Barbara Davis, and Kendall Gould, closest friends

Michelle Gould-Murray, sister

Don P. Gould Jr., brother

Reverend Sandra Scott, prayer partner

Lee Davis, Steve Smith, Jeff Downing, James Smith, Bernard Conaway and Earl Kutherman, golf friends

Gillis Memorial Christian Community Church, my church family

Life Management Plan

When I started the Doctor of Ministry program I was the Interim Pastor at Friendship Baptist Church in York, Pennsylvania. I was wrestling with my project proposal idea. When I returned home after finishing my first doctoral class I received the news that my services were no longer needed as interim pastor. This caused me to reach out to my pastor and he informed me that I could come back to my home church and resume my position as the assistant pastor. Then I knew that my project proposal was going to be connected to the idea of leading from the second position.

I was disappointed to be released from Friendship Baptist Church but as I look back now, it may have been a blessing in disguise. At Friendship I had to preach a sermon every Sunday and teach Bible study each week. Since I have been back at Shiloh Christian Community Church I do not have those responsibilities and it has freed more time for me to work on my doctoral project. However, I still have to manage my time efficiently because my pastor gives me plenty of assignments to keep me extremely busy.

To manage my time productively, I will work on my doctoral project at St. Mary's Ecumenical Library and Dunkin Donuts three days a week. I usually golf three times a week but I will have to cut that down to once a week. I will exercise my body and mind at the gym four to five times a week in the morning to get my

day moving. I will cherish quiet and still moments throughout my week and think of ways to improve my doctoral project.

As a husband and father of two sons (twenty-one and seventeen years of age), I will continue to find quality time for my family. I will plan a date night for my wife and I bi-weekly. Even though my oldest son has reached an age of independence, my younger son is still at an age where my influence is needed. Therefore, I will plan regular outings with my youngest son and my older son can join us as he desires. I will plan a couple of short vacations for my wife and family.

Monthly, I will check in with my resources to make sure I am reaching my goals. I understand that this doctoral project is not easy and I will need to release frustrations and vent. In order to release I will go to the spa for a massage, plan fellowship with close friends, and spend time with my family. I will reward myself with an extra round of golf for completed assignments.

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APPENDIX TWO
ASSESSMENT TOOL
LEADING FROM THE SECOND POSITION IN AN INDEPENDENT AFRICAN
AMERICAN CONGREGATION

Please provide the following personal information:

Present Age:

- ☐ Less than 18
- ☐ 19-24
- ☐ 25-30
- ☐ 31-35
- ☐ 36-39
- ☐ 40-45
- ☐ 46-50
- ☐ 51-55
- ☐ 56-60
- ☐ 61-65
- ☐ 66-70
- ☐ 71-75
- ☐ More than 75

Gender:

- ☐ M
- ☐ F

Time serving as an Assistant to the Pastor:

- ☐ Less than 6 Months
- ☐ 1-3 Years
- ☐ 4-6 Years
- ☐ 7-10 Years
- ☐ 10+ Years

Education (Highest Obtained):

- ☐ High School
- ☐ Undergraduate
- ☐ Graduate
- ☐ Post-Graduate

What is the Denomination of the church you serve?

- ☐ Baptist
- ☐ African Methodist Episcopal
- ☐ United Church of Christ

- ☐ Christian Methodist Episcopal
- ☐ Non-Denominational
- ☐ Pentecostal
- ☐ Apostolic
- ☐ Disciples of Christ
- ☐ United Methodist
- ☐ Brethren
- ☐ Other (*please specify:* _____)

Please circle the number that pertains to your level of agreement on the statement. See scale below.

Likert Scale

1- Strongly Disagree

2- Disagree

3- Neutral – I neither Agree or Disagree 4- Agree

5- Strongly Agree

1. I understand my call has helped me to be effective.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I believe that seminary will help me to be an effective assistant to the pastor.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I believe an assistant would help me to be more effective as an assistant to the pastor.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am able to make decisions without consulting with my pastor first.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I see my role as assistant to the pastor lived out in the scripture.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I believe my role is to support the vision of my pastor.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I believe that in my pastor's absence I step in to fulfill their duties.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am effective in my role because I believe I am called to serve my pastor.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I believe a seminary education will be valuable to me as an assistant to the pastor.	1	2	3	4	5

10. I believe work related trainings would help me to become more skilled as an assistant to the pastor.	1	2	3	4	5
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11. I have been given the authority to run the day-to-day operations of the church.	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

Please circle the number that pertains to your level of agreement on the statement. See scale below.

Likert Scale

1- Strongly Disagree

2- Disagree

3- Neutral – I neither Agree or Disagree 4- Agree

5- Strongly Agree

12. I use the Bible to create a foundation for my role.	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

13. I believe my role is to administer the logistics of my pastor's vision.	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

14. I believe my role positively impacts the congregation.	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

15. I am effective as an assistant to the pastor because that is the only calling I desire at this season in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

16. I believe a seminary education will play a strong role in my success as an assistant to the pastor.	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

17. I believe an investment from the church in continued education would help me to be more effective as an assistant to the pastor.	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

18. I am the immediate supervisor to staff persons other than the pastor.	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

19. I use the Bible as a guide when handling conflict resolution.	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

20. I believe my role is to alleviate my pastor's stresses.	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

21. I believe that the congregation sees a benefit of the role of the assistant to the pastor. 1 2 3 4 5

22. How does your role impact the congregation? Why?

24. What are your strengths that complement the weaknesses of your pastor?

25. Who in the Bible serves as an example to you and your role as an assistant to the pastor? Why?

26. What areas do you lack authority in at the church?

27. What resources help you to be more effective as an assistant to the pastor?

28. Should pastors seeking an assistant look for someone with seminar education?
Why?

29. What spiritual gifts help you to be effective as you operate as an assistant to the pastor? Why?

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