4-1-2004

Mentoring clergy in the black church

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MENTORING CLERGY IN THE BLACK CHURCH

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A Doctoral Dissertation
submitted to the faculties of the schools of the
Atlanta Theological Association
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Ministry
at
Interdenominational Theological Center
2004
ABSTRACT

MENTORING CLERGY IN THE BLACK CHURCH

by

Rufus L. Wood, Jr.
May 2004
129 pages

The purpose of this project was to unite experienced and less experienced clergy persons of Panama City, Florida in a family model of mentoring, thus producing self-differentiation, a measure of healing for wounds, and a higher level of professionalism in the ministry of the Black church. The project consisted of ten weeks of group and sub-group participation. The target group was composed of eleven clergy persons who completed the questionnaires and participated in all the group session activities. The two-hour sessions included audio and video presentations, therapeutic dialogue, group interactions and discussions. Each session began with a brief devotional period lasting approximately ten minutes consisting of prayer, scripture, and spiritual meditations. Each activity was designed to empower clergy persons to be more efficient and effective in Christian ministry. Moreover, the activities were designed to challenge and inspire clergy persons to serve as positive role models for the future leaders of the Black church. The overall hypothesis was as a result of linking mentors and protégés in an organized structure. The participants would successfully deal with identity issues, emotional baggage, and unprofessional conduct. While this goal was achieved it should be noted, however, that the time
allotted was insufficient. An addition of four weeks to the project would have solidified the results of the data. This unique model of ministry is ongoing in Panama City, Florida. It is empowering spiritual leaders to serve their generation and to aid in the preparation of spiritual leaders of the 21st Century.
DEDICATION

"Feelings of worth can flourish only in an atmosphere where individual differences are appreciated, mistakes are tolerated, communication is open, and rules are flexible—the kind of atmosphere that is found in a nurturing family."

Virginia Satir

I dedicate this doctoral dissertation in honor of and memory to: my mother, Martha M. Wood, for her unconditional love, moral support, fervent prayers, and continual encouragement; my sister, Almenia Laster, and other members of my immediate and extended family; the memory of the late Rufus L. Wood, Sr., my grandfather, the late Plezeana Broxton, and my great-grandfather, the late Rev. Lemon Choice Broxton. Above all, this work is done in deep gratitude to the almighty God and for the edification of the Christian family.

R. L. W., Jr.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks.”

St. Ambrose

While executing this project, God surrounded me with invaluable human resources. My life, my ministry, and this work have been enriched as a result of these human resources. I would like to express profound gratitude to and acknowledgement of many of the people who invested themselves in this project. First, I am eternally grateful to the African-American clergy persons who were at the central focus of this study. Secondly, I am grateful for the counsel and guidance of Dr. Temba Mafico, Dr. Thomas Brown, and Dr. Lynward Barnes. These persons served on my dissertation committee. Thirdly, I am most appreciative to Pattie Rush, Minister Tammy Anderson, Carolyn Bellamy, Joan Anderson, Shawn Peterson, Betty Rouse, Dallas Terrell, Tomeka Laster, Dr. Dolly Adams, Rev. Dana Davis, Rev. Dexter Thomas, and Pastor Lillie Hutchinson for the countless hours they sacrificed writing, reading, editing, researching, and typing. Fourthly, I would like to thank the persons who transported me to local and regional libraries for the purpose of research: Annie Colvins, Alfred Wagner, Elder Carlos Hutchinson, James Harden, and Marvette Middleton.
Finally, I offer thanks to my beloved colleagues in ministry: Dr. Carolyn Brooks, Bishop Russell Wright, Sr., Rev. Robert Price, Rev. Hezekiah Benton, Dr. George McRay, Rev. James F. Davis, III, and Rev. Sylvester Williams. These persons inspired, motivated, and challenged me to realize my academic goals. Furthermore, they fervently prayed for me.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ABSTRACT** .............................................................................................................. v

**DEDICATION** .......................................................................................................... vii

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** ............................................................................................ viii

**CHAPTER**

I. **INTRODUCTION** .................................................................................................... 1
   - The Ministry Issue .................................................................................................. 2
   - Intent of the Project ............................................................................................... 8
   - Key Terms ............................................................................................................. 13
   - Basic Design ........................................................................................................ 17
   - Description of Participants .................................................................................. 17
   - Methodology ....................................................................................................... 18
   - Outline of Dissertation ....................................................................................... 18

II. **FRAMING THE ISSUE** .......................................................................................... 21
   - Setting .................................................................................................................. 21
   - Motivation for the Project .................................................................................... 26
   - Historical Prospective of Mentoring Clergy ...................................................... 27
   - The King Family Legacy ...................................................................................... 28
   - The Thurston Family Legacy .............................................................................. 33
   - The Franklin Family Legacy .............................................................................. 34
   - Relationship of Issue to the Mission Orientation .............................................. 36
   - Previous Efforts to Address the Ministry Issue .................................................. 37

III. **THEORY OF MENTORING CLERGY IN THE BLACK CHURCH** ......................... 40
   - Family Model of Mentoring Clergy ................................................................... 41
   - Self-Differentiation ............................................................................................. 42
   - A Measure of Healing ......................................................................................... 44
   - A Higher Level of Professionalism ..................................................................... 46

IV. **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE** ......................................................................... 49
   - Theological Perspective ..................................................................................... 49
   - Biblical Perspective of the Old Testament ......................................................... 54
   - Biblical Perspective of the New Testament ....................................................... 62
   - Psychological Perspective ................................................................................... 66
   - Sociological Perspective ..................................................................................... 69
   - Conclusion .......................................................................................................... 125
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A little learning, indeed, may be a dangerous thing, but the want of learning is a calamity to any people.
Frederick Douglass

The research question is: “How does one develop a process in the Black church that will bridge the gap between more experienced, professional clergy and less experienced and/or unprofessional clergy, thereby resulting in self-differentiation, a measure of healing for wounds and a higher level of professionalism within the ministry?” The term “experienced” refers to the fact or state of having been affected by or gained knowledge through direct observation or participation. “Professional” refers to the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person. By these definitions, the phrase “more experienced, professional clergy” implies that one possesses the conduct, aims, or qualities marking a clergy person having gained his or her knowledge through directly observing and/or participating in ministry. My hypothesis is that mentoring to clergy will link the experienced clergy to the less experienced clergy, thereby making the churches in the Black community stronger and more effective in ministering to their parishioners.

Learning is a lifelong process. From the womb to the tomb, God provides us with diverse opportunities for learning daily. Learning is a universal experience that is not limited to nationality, culture, language, race, gender, class, or age. It is also
important that we learn from life’s experiences, both negative and positive, which produce maturity and character in individuals. Human ignorance is a reality: therefore, learning is essential. It is also essential that we learn from significant others, such as parents, teachers, preachers and peers.

While learning from significant others is essential, learning from research methodologies adds particular value and credibility to most situations and/or experiences. The Doctor of Ministry Program at the Interdenominational Theological Center challenges, motivates, and equips students to develop doctoral projects that are relevant to the era and areas in which we live. Furthermore, students are encouraged to develop projects that will have a positive and lasting impact on the Church of the 21st century and the world.

Mentoring clergy in the Black church is crucial to the future of the church. This is the critical issue that I propose to investigate and address. Moreover, my aim is to develop and implement a mentoring program that can serve as a model for other cities.

The Ministry Issue

The lack of spiritual mentoring in the ministry is a very serious problem in the African-American churches in Panama City, Florida. Elderly clergy quite often feel threatened, intimidated, and insecure by the presence of young clergy who quite often appear proud and un receptive to instruction and correction by elderly clergy. Elderly clergy tend to be more God-centered, people-oriented, interdependent, generous,
responsible, and accountable. Their worship emphasizes substance, not sound, and they have a more balanced view of traditions and recognize that some traditions are profitable while others are unprofitable. In contrast, young clergy tend to be more egocentric, independent, materialistic, irresponsible and unaccountable. Their worship emphasizes sound rather than substance, and they often have a negative view of tradition, thereby making changes that may appear unjustified and unnecessary. The result is a gap between more experienced and the less experienced clergy. The critical question that I propose to address is: “How does one develop a process in the Black church that will bridge the gap between more experienced clergy and less experienced clergy, thereby resulting in self-differentiation, a measure of healing for wounds, and a higher level of professionalism in the ministry?”

In order to differentiate between the experience levels of the clergy, it is important that one has a basic understanding of the terminology and concepts. For the purpose of this study, the “more experienced clergy” are those who have gained knowledge through direct observation, participation, and/or instruction for ten years or more, while the “less experienced clergy” are those who have received limited knowledge through observation, participation, and instruction for less than ten years. The concept of “professionalism” encompasses preaching, teaching, church administration, ethics, pastoral care, and worship.

Black churches in America originated during the dark days of slavery, evolving from the unique Black experience. The function of the Black church has
been, and remains to be, to promote liberation, to proclaim the gospel, to evangelize, to educate, and to support home and foreign missions. The Black churches have overcome many obstacles and endured severe persecution while addressing moral, social, political, and economical issues. Black preachers have always inspired, challenged and motivated the church to maximize its potential. Floyd Massey Jr. and Samuel B. McGivney stated in their book, *Church Administration in the Black Perspective*:

The Black church, the only institution Black people own under God, is constantly confronted by problems greater than its resources to meet them, and consisting of those people who must be motivated spiritually to succeed in any venture is called upon as never before to provide a base for the Black community’s actualization of its dream of self-determination. (Massey and McGivney 1976)

Although the term mentor is commonly used in our community, it should be noted that it is not a new concept. Rather, it is an old concept, which can be traced back to Greek mythology. Mentor, a character in Homer’s *Odyssey*, was a mentor (friend), left in charge of Odysseus’ household during Odysseus’ absence. He was responsible for the education and guidance of Telemachus, Odysseus’ son. Mentor served as a faithful friend, advisor, a master or sponsor. Mentor here is defined as an older experienced clergy person who serves as a role model, teacher, and sponsor of a young clergy person for the distinct purpose of facilitating learning and advancements. The terms “older” and “young” refer to the length of experience in ministry, not necessarily chronological age.
Minister means an ordained minister of the gospel, a member of the clergy, as distinct from the laity. Literally, the term means “a servant” and is derived from the vocabulary of the Apostle Paul who described himself as wanting “to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God”. (Roman 15:16)

There are many who believe that the concept of mentoring clergy in the Black church is a new phenomenon. It should be noted, however, that this concept is a myth. Black church history proves that although many early preachers of the Black church had little or no education, most of them were gifted and talented individuals. Indeed, older preachers sacrificed in order to invest in the lives of younger preachers. This strengthened the ranks of the Black clergy and ensured the future of the “Black church.”

Black preachers have always served a kind of apprenticeship, sometimes formal, but more often informal, under a known master of the craft of preaching. This was true of the priests of African traditional religion who had to serve at least three years to learn both the worship practices and the medical treatments required (Henry H. Mitchell 1990). Black preachers’ thinking is still formed to a great extent by those to whom they listen most attentively, often a parent or other significant person in the novice preacher’s life.

There are numerous mission orientations that could have been used to describe my model of the ministry. However, critical self-evaluation points to the
“wounded healer” model as the most significant one for this work. A wounded healer is a person who looks to God for a measure of personal healing, thus placing him/herself in a position to administer healing to the suffering humanity. Henri J. M. Nouwen says in his book, *The Wounded Healer*:

For the minister is called to recognize the sufferings of his time in his own heart and make that recognition, the starting point of his service. Whether he tries to enter a dislocated world, relate to a convulsive generation, or speak to a dying man, his service will not be perceived as authentic unless it comes from the heart wounded by the suffering about which he speaks. Thus, they can write nothing about the ministry without deeper understanding of the way in which the minister can make his wounds available as a source of healing.

(Nouwen 1990)

My faith was greatly strengthened by the ministry of my mentor, the late Rev. Rochester Johnson. Rev. Johnson’s sermons were both informative and inspirational. For example, in one of his sermons, entitled “Why God Takes Away,” he stated that God allows us to suffer loss for basically three reasons: First, to develop character; second, to deepen dependency on God; and third, to make us sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. Rev. Johnson’s preaching, teaching, and counseling helped to shape my theology of suffering.
My theology of suffering was also greatly influenced by the late Rev. T. J. James and the late Rev. O. L. Lewis. These two clergy can be classified as wounded healers. Both men had very unique ministries. Both were stroke victims and permanently confined to wheelchairs. Nevertheless, both were very influential, eloquent, and articulate, as well as dynamic pulpiteers. They allowed God to transform their pain into power and to administer healing to me and countless others. God administered to them and then used them to minister to humankind. Their ministries were fulfilled through 2 Corinthians 1:2-4 where it states:

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God." (NRSV).

In contemporary society there is still a need for "wounded healers" in the ministry; however, it is essential that these persons be mentored. In order to mentor wounded healers one must have a basic understanding of the wounded healer metaphor. This metaphor provides the image of a person who allows God to bring healing to him/herself after God has allowed him/her to be wounded in the experiences of life. This person is then used by God to administer healing to others. In addition to a basic understanding of the wounded healer metaphor, one must be certain that he/she has received a measure of healing for his/her personal wounds. Those who will mentor wounded healers must also be sensitive to those who have been wounded and offer counseling from their own life experiences. If more
extensive counseling is needed, the mentor should encourage the mentee by recommending him/her to seek help from persons with expertise in the needed subject area. One final step is essential in the development of wounded healers; the mentor must motivate and challenge the mentee to be God’s healing agent for other hurting people.

The Black church of the 21st century is facing many complex problems. A short list includes the AIDS epidemic, police brutality, election corruption, a failing educational system, Black-on-Black crime, substance abuse (both legal and illegal), and all the accompanying sub-sets of associated issues. There are no simple solutions to these situations. Strong leadership in the Black churches is essential. The strength of that leadership will play a major role in addressing social problems and improving the quality of life in the Black community and, ultimately, the world. In order for a new generation of pulpiteers to take up the mantle of leadership, they must have mentors from within the ranks of the clergy and outside of some traditionally acknowledged “boxes”. Mentors from outside the traditionally acknowledged boxes encompass clergy persons who veer from the norm and are daring enough to explore and implement new methodologies in ministry in order to positively impact the clergy persons of the 21st century.

**Intent of the Project**

The intent of this project is to develop a family model of mentoring in which experienced clergy persons will serve as spiritual parents or siblings to less
experienced clergy persons. The Bible provides a great framework for this position. In the early church, the Apostle Paul served as a spiritual mentor (advisor, trustee, leader) to Timothy. Paul refers to him as his child. The II Timothy 2:1 passage remains a model example: “You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” The family model of mentoring is ideal and can be most effective. This is primarily because the family model is symbolic of the oldest institution in the world, the family. Secondly, the family model is not a foreign concept to the Black community. In the Black community one will discover several iterations and models of the ways family is lived: the nuclear family, the extended family, the church family, the Masonic family, and the fraternity and sorority families. (While each of these has more specific definitions, the reference here is only to indicate the diversity that abounds in family models.) Thirdly, the family model will help mentors reflect on and deal with their origin and human development. This step is vital because clergy, like everyone else, have been affected and effected by the various family models in which they have lived, from birth into a biological family to the several other types in existence.

The critical question that can be raised is: “How does one form a family model of mentoring clergy in the Black church?” First of all, experienced pastors must identify prospective mentors and mentees (those persons who are to be taught, guided, and molded). In the Black church, experienced pastors are generally held in high esteem. Persons entering the clergy under the pastorate of a particular spiritual
leader will commonly refer to him/her as their father or mother in the ministry. In return, the pastor will commonly refer to these persons as their son or daughter in the ministry. This concept of ministerial kinship is important in forming a family model of mentoring. Experienced pastors who have spiritual sons and daughters in the ministry are responsible for their growth and development. Such pastors should select those novice clergy persons who possess potential. Furthermore, he/she should select those who are available, teachable, committed, and willing to participate in a mentoring process. If there are experienced clergy who are affiliated with the church and not pastoring, they can probably serve as prime candidates for mentoring. Nevertheless, the pastor should select experienced clergy persons who respect and follow his/her leadership, in other words, people who hold the pastor in high esteem and support the mission of the church. “Experienced clergy persons” means that one has been involved in ministry for a number of years and acquired knowledge, discipline, and wisdom as a result of their involvement. In view of the fact that the family concept is all inclusive of the body of Christ, a pastor may seek prospective mentors and mentees from other local church families. However, this should only be done with the approval and advice of other pastors. A team effort of pastors working together to locate mentors and mentees can be most beneficial. This could be done through a collaborative effort with interdenominational ministerial alliances.

The second step in forming a family model of mentoring in the Black church is the dialogical process. After perspective mentors and mentees have been located
and selected, there is a need for interpersonal communication. This step is most important to the development of a family model because no family can survive without interpersonal communication. It is quite common to have family discussions at the dinner table. This dialogical process is, in essence, bringing the mentor and mentee to the table of meaningful exchange. The coming to the table must be a dialogue, not a monologue. This phase provides an opportunity for getting acquainted. It also provides an opportunity for questions and answers. Other issues that should be discussed in detail include the family, personal family history, goals, objectives, evaluations and scheduling. This phase will most likely take more than one meeting.

The third step is adopting and implementing the extended family concept. The extended family concept is a very familiar concept in African-American communities and churches. One traditional view of the family is that it consists of husband, wife and children. In contrast, the extended family view consists not only of parents and children, but also other relatives such as uncles and aunts. In fact, the extended family concept includes non-relatives who are adopted into the family. The extended family seems to be most effective because it provides children with a strong sense of self-worth and self-determination. The African-American extended family concept derived its roots from traditional African family structure. Wallace Charles Smith points out one of the major functions of this structure saying, “The socialization of the young was a responsibility of the entire compound.” (Smith 1985)
This third phase calls for the experienced clergy person to serve as a mentor by adopting a less experienced clergy person as a spiritual child or sibling. This adoption makes the mentor responsible for the spiritual maturation of the mentee. However, it should be noted that this mentor-mentee relationship is not necessarily one of chronological age, but one of more experience in the ministry partnered with one of less experience.

The forth step in this family model is to understand and to implement relational values. Family value is a popular subject in contemporary society. It is true, on one hand, that all families do not share the same values. On the other hand, it is essential that all families have some value to ensure the welfare and stability of the family. Melba Moore concurs with this concept stating, “Your relationships with people begin in the home, where you learn values. It is the responsibility of the family.” The family-like relationship, which is established among clergy persons, is destined for failure if no values are put in place. Some of the values that are necessary in a family model include respect, restraint, responsibility, and reciprocity. These values will help to cultivate human relationships.

A fifth and final step in this family model is to monitor and to evaluate. Once all of the previous steps are put in place, the progress of the mentor and mentee relationship should be examined periodically. In order for these examinations to be meaningful, meetings, activities, and commitments should be documented. In addition to this, the status of goals and objectives should be reviewed. The progress
of participants in the mentor-mentee relationship can best be measured through observation, interviews, role-play, and oral and written exams.

The main focus of this project is to establish a network for clergy to critically examine their past. A clergy person's failure to identify and address unresolved issues can have a devastating impact on the clergy person's personal life, family members, friends, parishioners, staff, ministerial colleagues, and the community in general. Addressing these issues can help novice clergy recognize and cultivate the good that they have inherited from their families and help minimize negative situations. The primary objective point of this project is to aid clergy persons in developing a positive self-image. In addition, this project is designed to encourage, motivate, and equip clergy persons to strive for excellence in every area of the ministry.

Key Terms

(For guidance and clarification, these definitions of key terms used in this document are offered.)

Ancestor - one from whom a person is descended whether on the father's or mother's side; at any distance of time (but usually more remote than a grandparent); a progenitor; a forefather; living or dead that could have been evil or good during their lifetime.

Apprentice - one who is learning by practical experience under skilled workers, a trade, or calling.

Black church - a collective body of Black Christians from various traditional denominations that promote worship, education, fellowship and service. They also champion the causes of liberation, reconciliation, and salvation.
Black theology - described as an action-reflection engagement process in the Black church as that church seeks to understand the relevance of the Christian faith to the Black experience and to the condition of oppression experienced by Black people in America.

Calling - to order or request to undertake a particular activity or work; summon: To summon to the discharge of a particular duty; to designate for an office, or employment, especially of a religious character; often of a divine summons; as, to be called to the ministry.

Church - an organized body of Christian believers worshiping together; a building for Christian worship; a service held in it.

Church administration - the act or process of administering, managing or directing a Christian congregation or body. This includes the involvement of the church in the discovery of its nature and mission in moving in a coherent and comprehensive manner.

Clergy - a body of people ordained for religious service distinguished from the laity or non-ordained person.

Clergy person - a member of a body of people ordained for religious service, as distinguished from the laity or non-ordained person.

Contemporary - marked by characteristics of the present period, i.e.: modern, current.

Context - framework; setting.

Contextualization - the dynamic process whereby the constant message of the gospel interacts with specific, relative human situations; an examination of the gospel in the light of the respondent world view and then adapting the message, encoding it in such a way that it can become meaningful to the respondent.

Denomination - an established religious group, which has usually been in existence for many years and has geographically widespread membership. It typically unites a group of individual congregations into a single administrative body.

Descendants - one originated from, descended from another or from a common
Development - evolution of an individual ontogeny.

Elder - one of the governing officers of a church, often having pastoral or teaching functions, therefore serving as a mentor also.

Ethic - the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation.

Experience - the fact or state of having been affected by or gained knowledge through direct observation or participation.

Family model - a group of people united by certain convictions or a common affiliation: fellowship or affiliation with.

Form criticism - a method of textual criticism, applied especially to the Bible, for tracing the origin and history of certain passages through systematic study of the writings in terms of conventional literary forms, such as parables, proverbs, and love poems.

Generation - a group of individuals born and living contemporaneously.

Historical criticism - the art of distinguishing the true from the false concerning facts of the past.

Hope (Faith) - to be full of confidence, to trust.

Less experience - lack of skill resulting from experience.

Laity - the members of the church who are not in the clergy.

Leader - one who is in charge or in command of others.

Leadership - capacity or ability to be in charge or lead.

Legacy - something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor from the past.

Mentee - one who is mentored.
Mentor - a wise and trusted adviser.

Mentoring - a lifelong relationship, in which a mentor helps a protégé to reach her or his God-given talent.

Ministry - the period or act of service or office of a minister.

Novice - a person new to a field or activity, a beginner.

Parable - a usually short fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle.

Pastoral care - to enhance spiritual well being, to educate ministry, and to be a prophetic voice for personal communal and institutional wholeness.

Preaching - to proclaim or put forth in a sermon.

Process - a series of actions or operations conducive to an end.

Professionalism - the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person.

Protégé - one whose welfare, training or career is promoted by an influential person.

Pulpiteer - a preacher by profession.

Redaction criticism – process of critically analyzing how literature has been edited and reworked by the editors (or redactors) who compiled the literature.

Self-differentiation - development from the one to the many, the simple to the complex or the homogenous to the heterogeneous.

Sermon - a religious discourse delivered in public usually by a clergyman as part of a worship service.

Society - a community, nation, or broad grouping of people having common traditions, institutions, and collective activities and interests.

Source criticism - tracing the origin (source) of the text.
**Text criticism** - critically analyzing and scrutinizing various biblical texts for the purpose of ascertaining a correct reading of the text.

**Theology** - the study of God. His nature, attributes, character, abilities, revelation, etc.

**Theory** - a formal statement of the rules on which a subject of study is based, or of ideas that are suggested to explain a fact or event more general than an opinion; an explanation.

**Worship** - the obligation of God’s creation to give to Him all honor, praise, adoration, and glory due because God is the holy and divine creator.

**Wounded healer** - a person whom God has chosen and allowed to be hurt or injured: physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually in her or his personal experiences and healed them for the purpose of bringing healing to other people.

**Basic Design**

To recruit volunteers for the project, announcements were made in various denominational meeting and the Bay County Ministerial Alliance in the Panama City, Florida area. In addition, personal contact was made with local pastors.

**Description of Participants**

The age range of the participants was from 24 to 71, with the average age being 40. Of the 11 participants, eight were married, 2 were single, and 1 was widowed. There were 3 active pastors, 2 retired pastors, and 5 licensed ministers. Of the 11 participants, 6 were Baptist, 1 was Full Gospel Methodist, and 4 were Pentecostal. The participants consisted of 7 males and 4 females. Of the 11 participants, 2 had formal theological training; 4 had college education and 5 had
high school diplomas. All the participants in this group were very active in community affairs.

Methodology

The research question is: “How does one develop a process in the Black church that will bridge the gap between more experienced clergy and less experienced clergy, thereby resulting in self-differentiation, a measure of healing and a higher level of professionalism in ministry?” The title of the project proposal is “A Family Model of Mentoring Clergy in The Black Church.”

To ensure the accuracy and validity of the study, parameters were established and followed throughout the project.

Outline of Dissertation

Mentoring clergy in the Black church has been the central focus of this research. Researching this topic has been quite challenging, yet rewarding. As I shared the topic of this project with family, friends, parishioners, colleagues and even strangers, most felt that it was interesting and intriguing because it was very relative to the church and one in which research was limited. Their positive attitudes and reactions motivated me to continue my research in spite of a few problems that I encountered. One of the major problems that confronted me was the lack of information available in libraries specifically related to mentoring clergy in the Black church. Another problem that I faced was attempting gathering relevant data from
mainline denominations. It was also quite difficult to recruit local pulpiteers to participate in my project. One reason it was difficult to recruit participants is because of gender and denominational barriers, which can be attributed to prejudiced attitudes that still exist in this community. Completing this project has been a major accomplishment in my personal life and ministry. This fact is true because at age 13, I lost my sight due to glaucoma. Embodied in the previous pages of this writing are my specific views on mentoring clergy in the Black church based on what I have comprehended in classes, in the library and through my research project. I have endeavored to clearly communicate these views in this research.

In Chapter I, the ministry issue was presented in a question: “How does one develop a process in the Black church which will bridge the gap between more experienced clergy and less experienced clergy, thereby resulting in self-differentiation, a measure of healing and a higher level of professionalism in ministry?” This chapter also contains key terms, basic design, description of the participants and outline of the dissertation. In Chapter II, the topic of ministering clergy in the Black church of Panama City, Florida is contextualized. A detailed description of the political, educational, social, economical and religious status was presented. Furthermore, this chapter also included the history of the project and previous efforts to address this issue. This chapter was concluded with the relationship of this issue to the mission orientation of this author. Chapter III presented a theory of mentoring clergy in the Black church through a family model.
Chapter IV provides a review of the empirical literature that offers a wealth of knowledge regarding this author’s particular area of study. A variety of perspectives, i.e. Theological, Biblical, Psychological, Homiletical, Ethical, Pastoral Care, Church Administration, and Community Leadership were provided. Chapter V focuses on God’s command to the Israelites to teach their children the law and the blessings of God. In contextualizing this chapter, the suggestion is that African-Americans are called to share their history and their faith with their children, thereby preparing their children to serve as future leaders. Chapter VI gives a detailed summary of the doctoral project, including the target group under study, the time, the place, and activities involved in the project. Strengths and weaknesses of the project as viewed by the group and the writer are also shared. Chapter VII reveals the evaluation results of the study and the analysis.

The Doctor of Ministry Project has left an indelible mark on my life and ministry! I have grown intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually as a result of this experience. I have been exposed to new theologies, theories, ideologies and methodologies. I have expanded the quality and quantity of my library collection. Moreover, I have established new relationships and renewed old acquaintances. For these and so many other blessings, I am profoundly grateful. In spite of the many obstacles that I have encountered, I have emerged with a greater determination to be a positive role model for novice clergy in words and in deeds.
CHAPTER II

FRAMING THE ISSUE

In order to obtain a greater understanding of any social issue one must place it in its proper context. The purpose of context is to clarify by giving important background information. This background information usually answers the questions who? What? Where? And when? Words are used to paint a picture for the reader. The central focus of this chapter is the setting. This section includes a brief description of the political, educational, economical, social and theological aspects of Panama City, Florida. It also includes a glimpse of the historical perspective of mentoring clergy in the Black church. This historical review consists of the King family, the Thurston family, and the life and ministry of the late C. L. Franklin. Finally, this chapter sheds light on the past efforts to address the issue of mentoring.

Setting

Bay County is located in the northwest region of Florida in an area called the “Panhandle.” Panama City, its County seat, sits on the Gulf of Mexico and is the center of the beautiful Emerald Coast. The city attracts tourists from across the nation and Canada. Tourists are primarily attracted because of the beaches, amusement parks and seafood restaurants.

Bay County’s labor force can be divided into five primary categories: services, retail and wholesale trade, government, construction, and manufacturing.
Bay County’s economic base would not be complete without mention of Tyndall Air Force Base and the Navy Coastal Systems Station. The military is a vital part of Bay County’s economy. The employees of the various establishments receive the better salaries, nevertheless, there is a great need for better paying jobs.

Panama City has two state universities, a community college, and a vocational school. These are outstanding institutions that endeavor to eliminate ignorance in the community. Gulf Coast Community College (GCCC) and Florida State University (FSU) cooperate in a ‘two plus two’ collaboration: GCCC provides the first two years of classes toward a Baccalaureate degree and FSU provides the last two years. Troy State University offers classes at Tyndall Air Force Base where Haney Technical Center offers approximately thirty-two full-time and part-time technical programs. They also seek to equip citizens for their chosen careers. Higher education is an essential aspect of the community; however, politics is also an essential aspect. The city is very conservative in terms of its politics. Most of the elected officials are financially secure. This is problematic because local politicians tend not to empathize with the plight of the poor. These politicians do whatever is necessary to satisfy the wealthy and maintain the status quo. These actions have stunted the growth and development of the community. In addition to conservative politics, the city is also conservative in terms of its theology. There are approximately four hundred churches in the area. Seventy-five of the churches are predominantly Black. The majority of the churches focus exclusively on moral and
ethical questions. Unfortunately, only a few churches address the critical social justices and peace issues.

Another important fact about Panama City is the apathy, complacency, and despair of the masses. This has had and is having a negative impact on the communities. Many fail to maximize their full potential. This contributes to numerous social problems, e.g., drug trafficking, juvenile delinquency, teenage pregnancy, crime and school dropout.

The Love Center Missionary Baptist Church is an African-American Church, which is located in an area in Panama City known as Springfield. The congregation recently erected a new facility. Subsidized apartments and houses surround the church. Some of the tenants take great pride in their neighborhood, keeping their homes and yards clean and well kept. In contrast, some tenants have no regard for their neighborhood. These tenants neglect the cleaning and maintenance of their homes and yards.

The Love Center Missionary Baptist Church sits in the center of a neighborhood that is primarily made up of single mothers and their children. The church is currently preparing to address the specific needs of these women and children. The needs will be met because the church is a holistic ministry that is committed to addressing the physical, psychological, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual needs of humankind. Moreover, the church seeks solidarity with the masses that are oppressed and in poverty. The members believe that God is always
on the side of the oppressed and the poor. They believe this for three basic reasons. Firstly, in the Old Testament, God exemplified a special concern for the oppressed in Leviticus 19:13, “You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning.” Secondly, Jesus the Christ outlined the purpose of his ministry in Luke 4:18-19 which says, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” These verses clearly suggest that Jesus was identified with the suffering and oppressed in society and came to address their needs. Thirdly, the church understands its Christian faith and how it relates to the Black experience and to the condition of oppression experienced by Black people in America. This understanding is referred to as Black Theology. According to the Encyclopedia, “Black Theology originated in the midst of the Black struggle for liberation. Its unique objective was to do theology from a Black perspective, rather than to invent a new theology based on bankrupt European-American paradigms.” (Cully 1990) In view of this fact, the church is adamantly opposed to racism, sexism, ageism, classism, handicappism and all other forms of oppression.

The Love Center Missionary Baptist Church is comprised of the pastor, ordained elders, ordained deacons, general officers, trustees, and members. It has been my privilege to serve as pastor of this church since its inception in 1987. I have endeavored to use the professional experience that I have acquired in the past 24
years to mentor clergy persons in the fellowship and to challenge the congregation to maximize their full potential in Christian service. The clergy and the laity work cooperatively to serve suffering humanity and improve the quality of life in the community. The church accepts the awesome challenge of proclaiming God’s message of salvation, reconciliation and liberation in words and in deeds.

The Love Center Missionary Baptist Church endeavors to proclaim the liberating gospel of Jesus the Christ to a multi-cultural society. It should be noted, however, that the church is deeply rooted in the Black experience, which continues to impact the church in positive ways. One historical event that impacts the ministry is the “Emancipation Proclamation Celebration.” This celebration is held on New Year’s Day each year to mark the anniversary of the official liberation of slaves in the South - a community celebration that is led by pastors and congregations. Another event that impacts the ministry is the “Martin Luther King Jr. Festival.” This festival is held annually on the Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday and offers numerous interesting activities to the community.

“The Panama City Empowerment Day”, held annually on the second Saturday in June, is another significant event that impacts the ministry. The purpose of this event is to promote economic development in the community. All of these events provide a perfect opportunity for citizens to fellowship. Additionally, they provide a medium for information and inspiration.
Motivation for the Project

December 28, 2000 was a great and glorious day in my life and ministry. This day was very special because I celebrated twenty years of boldly proclaiming the liberating gospel of Jesus the Christ. This momentous occasion caused me to reflect on so many precious memories as I began to count the relatives, neighbors, educators, friends and foes, who helped me to get where I am in my life. I began to count the many clergy who had a positive impact on my ministry. It was at this time that I realized that the vast majority of them were deceased. I called to remembrance Acts 13:36; “For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, died, was beside his ancestors, and experienced corruption.” (NRSV) The men and women in ministries who invested in my future, like King David, served their generation and fell asleep. A list of these clergy persons includes Evangelists Catherine Anderson and Nona Wilson; the Reverends J. E. Jones, C. Wood, Rochester Johnson, J. B. Hamilton, and E. B. Williams; and Elders W. McQueen Sr., R. L. McCloud Sr., M. B. Carr, and H. W. Willis. I expressed my profound gratitude for each life and legacy. My heart was sad when I thought of their absence. Nevertheless, my heart was made glad when I thought of the Christian principles and precepts that guided their ministries and now guide my ministry. These outstanding spiritual leaders were pioneers and trailblazers of faith in the Black churches and in the Black communities.

A few weeks later while talking to a colleague in the ministry, I mentioned
the observance of my anniversary as a minister. I shared with him the sadness that I felt because of the absence of those who had served as positive role models. He said to me, “They are gone.” Then he asked me, “Do you know what that means?” I replied “No.” He then said, “It means that you are the elder now.” I knew at that very moment that God was speaking to me. God was challenging me to pass on to a new generation of preachers that which was passed on to me. This experience prompted me to critically examine the process of mentoring clergy in the Baptist church.

**Historical Perspective of Mentoring Clergy**

History provides the proof of how Black preachers have learned the craft of preaching through a type of “learn as you observe scenario”, from quite informal to more formal situations, but typically from the modeling of a known master of the craft of preaching. Growing out of the tradition of the priests of African traditional religion, who had to serve at least three years to learn both the worship practices and the medical treatments required, this practice continues in various forms across the Black preaching tradition.

There are notable historical models of mentoring. An examination of successful Black preachers from the past who mentored their natural and spiritual children in the ministry can provide valuable insights. Society will teach them of the great impact dominant white pulpiteers such as D. L. Moody and Charles Spurgeon and others. According to the Christian Biography Resources, “D.L. Moody was an
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In order for Black preachers to understand and appreciate more of their great heritage of preaching, they must know such pulpiteers as A.D. Williams, M.L. King, Sr., and M.L. King, Jr. Unfortunately, too many preachers are ignorant of the impact that one generation of Black preachers has had on the next generation. Their ignorance is causing them to be assimilated into the mainstream culture. This is occurring as a result of what they are learning in schools, at work, and society in general. They are learning practically very little about Black musicians, writers, and more importantly, Black preachers.

**The King Family Legacy**

One discovers valuable insights when carefully analyzing the relationship of the Rev. A.D. Williams and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr. (Daddy King). Rev. Williams served as pastor of the prominent Ebenezer Baptist Church of Atlanta, Georgia from 1894 to 1931. He was the father-in-law of the Rev. M.L. King, Sr. and grandfather of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. According to the Stanford encyclopedia, he was “born in Greene County, Georgia to slaves Willis and Lucrecia
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Williams. A.D.’s desire was to follow his father; ‘a slavery time preacher’, into the ministry was evident even as a child.” Martin Luther King, Sr. was born Michael King in 1897 to Jim and Linsey King. The Stanford Encyclopedia says that he changed his name from Michael to Martin Luther as a result of his travels to Berlin.

(Stanford Encyclopedia) Daddy King succeeded the Rev. Williams as pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church. I learned these facts when I visited Ebenezer in the summer of 1974. Prior to this time I knew nothing about the Rev. Williams and very little about Daddy King. My visit was both informative and inspirational. Rev. Williams was definitely supportive of Daddy King as his successor. Daddy King benefited greatly from the prudence, encouragement, motivation, and influence of his father-in-law. Daddy King’s personal experiences and the guidance of his father-in-law helped to prepare him to be an efficient and effective spiritual leader of his time.

Daddy King had great respect for his father-in-law and listened aggressively in order to learn more about the ministry, seeing the role of Rev. Williams as that of a mentor. Daddy King once stated:

The Reverend kept a close eye on me, not just because I was now family, but also because of his deep interest in the direction of ministries of younger men in Atlanta. It was through him that I came to understand the larger implications involved in any churchman’s responsibility to the community he served. Church wasn’t simply Sunday morning and a few evenings during the week. It was more than a full-time job. In the act of faith, every minister became an advocate for justice. In the South, this meant an active involvement in changing the social order all around us.

(Martin L. King, Sr, et. al. 1980)

The Rev. M.L. King Sr. established a good reputation for himself. He had a
good name in the Black community. He was undoubtedly a man of integrity. Those who knew him or knew of him loved and esteemed him highly. Younger pulpiteers accepted him as a father in the ministry. Just as his father-in-law had been a positive role model, he was a positive role model. Daddy King’s life in the ministry had an impact on many. I am convinced that it had the greatest impact on his sons, A.D. and Martin Jr., who were both clergy persons. The Rev. A.D. King had a successful ministerial career. He served in the pastoral ministry and as a civil rights activist.

King For America, a foundation website on A.D. King, provides this:

During his lifetime, Rev. King pastored four churches, Mt. Vernon Baptist Church in Newnan, Georgia; First Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama; Zion Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky; and Ebenezer Baptist Church, with his father. Rev. King is credited with organizing the Birmingham and Louisville Civil Rights Activities. (http://www.kingforamerica.com)

Martin Luther King, Jr. was one of the greatest talented and gifted pulpiteers of the twentieth century. He was an eloquent and charismatic preacher who effectively articulated a social gospel. The central focus of his message was establishment of the beloved community, social change, and social justice. Dr. King was fortunate enough to acquire a wealth of knowledge from his father in addition to his theological training. Dr. Henry Mitchell wrote in his book, *Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art*:

Martin Luther King, Sr. (“Daddy King” to many of us younger preachers), once declared from the pulpit of the Ebenezer Baptist Church of Atlanta that there was no such thing as Black preaching or Black theology. He was rightfully seeking to remove differences and draw the racial groups closer together, but such differences cannot simply be spoken out of existence. In
our conversation after the service, I quietly advised Dr. King that not all of us had such a “daddy” with his circle of pulpit giants to teach how to be effective in the pulpit of a predominantly Black congregation. Martin Jr. had been such a powerful minister, not so much on the basis of his seminary training as on the basis of what he had heard all his life. (Henry Mitchell 1990)

The Rev. Bernice King, who is the youngest of Martin Jr. and Coretta Scott King’s four children, now follows in the footsteps of her father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. She boldly proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ. Although she is young in the ministry, she travels throughout the nation and exercises her spiritual gifts. Bernice attributes much of her success to the great legacy of her father. In spite of the fact that Bernice was a very small girl at the time of her father’s assassination, her ministry has undoubtedly been greatly influenced by Dr. King.

While preaching at Gulf Coast Community College in Panama City, Florida, Bernice informed the assembly that she still sits in awe when reading her father’s addresses and sermons. Furthermore, she stated while listening to his recorded messages, a question came to mind: “Is this really my father?”

It is ironic that Dr. King had invested himself in the growth and development of his daughter’s ministry more than three decades after his demise. Although Dr. King has passed, he continues to inspire and challenge a new generation of preachers through his writings and recordings. Dr. King can be compared to Abel. Although he is dead, he continues to speak.

Hebrews 11:4 says, “By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain’s. Through this he received approval as righteous, God himself giving
approval to his gifts; he died, but through his faith he still speaks.” This verse refers to Abel who was Adam and Eve’s second-born son. His elder brother Cain, who was jealous of Abel’s superior sacrifice to God, murdered Abel. Abel was a shepherd and offered an animal sacrifice. Cain was a farmer and offered produce. It appears that God was much more concerned about the spirit in which the sacrifices were offered rather than the quantity or quality of the sacrifice. Abel’s heart was right. Therefore, God approved of his sacrifice. In contrast, Cain’s heart was not right and consequently, God disapproved of his sacrifice. Abel was an upright and honorable man who offered his sacrifices to God in faith.

The idea of Abel still speaking in death to the living is a controversial subject. There are diverse interpretations of Hebrews 11:4. There are at least two schools of thought related to this verse. One school of thought suggests that Abel’s blood cried out from the ground for vengeance. The other school of thought subscribes to the belief that by reason of his faith, Abel’s life provides an abiding influence for the good of all people. Fred B. Craddock concurs with this school of thought when he says “It is not the cry for vengeance that rises from the ground (Genesis 4:10; Rev 6:9-10). That certainly is not the message writer wants the readers to hear. Rather ‘through it’—that is, ‘through faith’—Abel still speaks.” (Craddock 1998)

Biblical heroes of faith and African-American heroes of faith who have gone on before continue to seek truth through the legacies that they have left behind.
The Thurston Family Legacy

Since many Black churches are family oriented, it is not at all uncommon to find clergy mentoring their own family members in the gospel ministry. One such family is the Thurstons, who are affiliated with the New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois. According to church records, the late Rev. Elijah Thurston succeeded the Rev. B.L. Rhodes as pastor in 1934. For many years, the Rev. John Thurston, son of the Rev. Elijah Thurston, assisted and supported his father. Rev. Elijah Thurston instructed his son in principle and in practice.

Rev. Elijah Thurston died in March of 1968. After his death, his son, Rev. John Thurston, became the pastor. As a result of walking with his father, he was equipped and prepared to assume the responsibility of pastoring. During the eleven-year tenure of Rev. John L. Thurston, his son, Rev. Stephen John Thurston, accepted his call to the ministry. Stephen later became his father’s co-pastor. He assisted his father with preaching, teaching, administering the ordinances of the church, visitations and administrative duties, etc. Stephen received on-the-job training.

On January 21, 1979, Rev. John L. Thurston passed away, and shortly thereafter Stephen succeeded his father as pastor of the church. Stephen is an outstanding spiritual leader. He was recently elected and now serves as the president of the National Baptist Convention of America, Inc. He also serves as president of the Illinois Baptist State Convention. Rev. Stephen Thurston is a charismatic preacher who preaches with simplicity, clarity, and authority.
In 1999, Stephen J. Thurston II answered the call to the gospel of the ministry and delivered his initial sermon. Stephen II is a fourth generation preacher and quite fortunate to have a great heritage of preaching. Moreover, he is fortunate to have a father who is capable of mentoring him as a result of his education and vast experience.

The Franklin Family Legacy

The King and Thurston families are two prime examples of how the process of mentoring has been successful in the Black church. Another example of mentoring can be seen in the ministry of the late Rev. C.L. Franklin who served as pastor of the famous New Bethel Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan. Rev. Franklin was one of the most prominent and gifted preachers of his day. His ministry was not limited only to the pulpit of New Bethel. He was a prophet who courageously addressed the social, political, and economical issues that affected his community and the world. He was totally committed to improving the quality of life for all people. Furthermore, Rev. Franklin frequently conducted preaching tours throughout the nation and the world. Crowds filled auditoriums and churches to hear the dynamic preaching of this man of God.

Rev. Franklin’s ministry had a positive impact on thousands across the nation. It should be noted, however, that his ministry had a special impact on countless preachers and a particular appeal to younger preachers. Many viewed him as a role model or a mentor. He mentored his son, the late Rev. Cecil Franklin. Cecil, like
others who were mentored by their fathers and grandfathers, learned firsthand the art of Black preaching and the work of Christian ministry. In addition to his son, Rev. C.L. Franklin helped to mold and to shape numerous associate clergy persons of New Bethel Church. Some of these other clergy persons were later called to pastor other congregations, while others planted churches. There were even those who enticed members of New Bethel to follow them and aid in the formation of new fellowships. All of these clergy persons are linked by one common bond—the late Rev. C.L. Franklin mentored them.

During the 50s, 60s, and 70s, Rev. C.L. Franklin served as a role model for Black preachers all across the nation. He especially had an impact on those in the southern region who listened to his weekly radio broadcast on WLAC, in Nashville, Tennessee. Many ordered his sermon albums, which were advertised, not only because they were interested in the content, but because they were also interested in studying Franklin’s unique style of preaching.

Although Rev. Franklin was a very popular preacher, he was not egotistical. He had a love for people and always took time for them. He was particularly concerned about the next generation of pulpiteers. He always inspired and challenged young preachers to be the best that they could be. Rev. Robert Smith Jr., who succeeded Rev. Franklin as pastor of New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, recalled his first and final meeting with Rev. Franklin with this statement by Rev. Franklin, “Do only what you know you can do. Never do something because
someone else is doing it.” Rev. Smith said that it was only a brief moment with Rev. Franklin, but it had a great impact. He still uses this saying to guide his career and advises others to do likewise. The late Rev. C.L. Franklin’s success in mentoring can be attributed to the fact that the late Dr. Benjamin J. Perkins who was the president of the Mississippi Baptist State Convention mentored him as a young preacher. Rev. Franklin once said, “I remember the minister that inspired me, Dr. Perkins.” The C.L. Franklin Legacy lives on today and continues to influence the preaching profession.

**Relationship of Issue to the Mission Orientation**

There are numerous mission orientations that could have been used to describe my model of a ministry. However, after conducting a critical self-evaluation, I concluded that the mission orientation which best describes my central focus is the “wounded healer” model. One may ask, what is meant by the concept of the wounded healer? A wounded healer is a person whom God chose for a measure of healing, thus placing him/herself in a position to administer healing to the suffering humanity. Henri J. M. Nouwen says in his book, *The Wounded Healer*:

> For the minister is called to recognize the sufferings of his time in his own heart and make that recognition, the starting point of his service. Whether he tries to enter a dislocated world, relate to a convulsive generation, or speak to a dying man, his service will not be perceived as authentic unless it comes from the heart wounded by the suffering about which he speaks. Thus, nothing can be written about the ministry without deeper understanding of the way in which the minister can make his wounds available as a source of healing.” Experienced clergy persons who have received healing for their wounds are called to bring healing for their wounds, are called to bring healing to a new generation of pulpiteers. (Henri J. Nouwen 1990)
Previous Efforts to Address the Ministry Issue

Case studies of mentor relationships that have worked and those that have not are also included—an essential addition. One such case many of will recognize is that of Mitch Alborn and Morris Schwartz, taken from the best-selling memoir, *Tuesday with Morrie*. This is a classic mentoring relationship between a student and his former professor, a relationship that nourished both parties at the end of Schwartz’s life. As Zachary states, mentors are now big news: “There have, of course, always been mentors, but our ability to name them as such is relatively recent. Psychologists discovered them only a generation ago; educators and the business world were not far behind.” (Zachary 1995)

Although it appears that present mentoring relationships are generally shorter than those of the past, there has emerged an increased opportunity for long-distance mentoring.” Mentors are different than family. “They see us in ways that we have not been seen before.” Or as Albert Schweitzer said so brilliantly, “They rekindle our inner light.” (www.wholesomewords.org) Zachary feels that mentors are especially necessary now, because they pass wisdom from an authoritarian teacher to a supplicant student,” but are discovered together. Thus she says, both teacher and student “stand to gain a great understanding of the workplace and the world.”

Freeman has traced the history of the mentoring movement in the United States, beginning with the program called “Friendly Visiting in the Final Quarter of the 19th Century,” which was an effort to provide middle-class role models for poor
children. Friendly Visiting had collapsed by the turn of the century, but was followed
by Big Brothers began by the Men’s Club of Central Presbyterian Church of New
York in December 1904.

Big Brothers—now Big Brother of America/Big Sister of America
(B.B.A./B.S.A)—has gradually become more professional and in 1993, consisted of
483 local affiliates in 41 states that match 70,000 young people with adult mentors.
They maintain a waiting list of approximately 40,000 minority youth in need of
“Bigs.” They also own the rights to the phrase “one-to-one” as a descriptor for a
mentoring program. (www.bbbsa.org)

The example of leadership set by Christ Jesus is still worth striving for today.
When his disciples were quarreling as to which of them was the greatest, he
explained, “For who is greatest, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is
it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.” (Luke 22:27).
Earlier, he made a similar remark: “and whosoever wishes to be first among you must
be your slave.” (Matthew 20:27) These words of Jesus are meaningful whether you
are a Christian or not. Jesus’ model of leadership requires actual spiritual power—
powered from God—to overcome physical force and immorality in its different forms.

Through God’s power alone, men and women find the courage to be humble
and the humility to be courageous. Humility involves listening to God and fearlessly
obeying the guidance we receive from God. Today we can learn to be better
followers of Jesus and to foster better world leadership. Such leadership is too
comprehensive to be confined to ritual, dogma, or creed. Nevertheless, it does require individual receptivity to thoughts and ideas coming from God. Each of us can hear God as we honestly seek the truth.
CHAPTER III

THEORY OF MENTORING CLERGY IN THE BLACK CHURCH

The Doctor of Ministry Program is unique. It is designed to aid each student in formulating, articulating, testing, analyzing and implementing his or her theory of a chosen area of study. One may ask the question, what is theory? The Cambridge Dictionary defines theory as follows: “a formal statement of the rules on which a subject of study is based, or of ideas which are suggested to explain a fact or event more generally an opinion; explanation.” (Cambridge Dictionary 2001)

The Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary says a theory is a “belief, policy, procedure, proposed or followed as the basis for action.” (2001) Theory is a very common concept and is used in numerous disciplines in our contemporary society. Professionals develop and propose various theories. Attorneys submit theories of their cases to judges and jurors. Physicians share with their patients their theories of the origin treatments and cures for diverse kinds of diseases. Historians offer theories regarding significant people, places, dates and events from the past. Mathematicians use theories to solve complex equations. The clergy profession is not excluded. On one hand some clergy persons operate their ministries based on theories that are prudent and relevant. On the other hand some clergy persons operate their ministries on theories that are erroneous and irrelevant. A clergy person’s theory is critical to his or her practical ministry. In fact it will ultimately determine their success or failure.
The Doctor of Ministry Program at the Interdenominational Theological Center is equipping me to explore my theory of mentoring clergy in the Black church. My theory in essence is an assumption or a hypothesis of the process of mentoring which must be proved or disproved. A concise summary of my theory is that the uniting of more experienced and less experienced Black clergy persons in a family model of mentoring will ultimately result in self-differentiation, a measure of healing and a higher level of professionalism in each mentee. Information on each of these follows.

**Family Model of Mentoring Clergy**

The heart of my theory is a family model of mentoring in which experience clergy persons will serve as spiritual parents or siblings to less experienced clergy persons. The family model of mentoring clergy in the church is not a new one. In the early church, the Apostle Paul served as a spiritual mentor to Timothy. Paul refers to him as his son. In II Timothy 2:1, “So you, my son, be strong by means of the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” The family model of mentoring is ideal and can be most effective. I make this claim first of all, because the family model is symbolic of the oldest institution in the world. Secondly, the family model is not a foreign concept to the Black community. In the Black community one will discover the nuclear family, extended family, church family, the Masonic family, and the fraternity and sorority families. Thirdly, the family model will help mentors reflect on and deal with their origin and human development. This step is vital because clergy like everyone else
have been affected and effected by the family from which they originated. In view of
the fact that every person is a direct product of his or her environment, it is necessary
for persons to critically examine their past. A minister’s failure to identify and
address unresolved issues can have a devastating impact on the clergy personal life,
family members, friends, parishioners, staff, ministerial colleagues and the
community in general. A spiritual parent or sibling in the ministry will aid novice
clergy in working through childhood issues. Furthermore, they will help novice
clergy recognize and cultivate the good that they have inherited from their families.
Moreover, they will help novice clergy discard the bad in which they have inherited
from their families.

**Self-Differentiation**

Howard Thurman once said, “It is the family that gives us a deep private
sense of belonging: Here we first begin to have our self defined for us.” (Thurman
19??) As small children we view ourselves based on the way our parents and other
family members view us. We are very impressionable at this early phase in life. We
eternalize both the positive and the negative. The pivotal people in our families
gradually program us for success or failure. During our formative years our parents
instilled their principles and precepts in our hearts through character conduct and
conversation. During this early stage of life, we generally conform to the beliefs,
morals, values, thoughts, ideas, fears and wishes of our parents without question.
However, as we mature we usually examine what we were taught as children.
Unfortunately, the maturation process is slow for some people. In fact some people never mature. These persons never question the principle and precepts that they inherited from their families. They do not ask critical questions because they feel their families have already provided the answers. It is a very sad and painful reality that too many people are not cognizant of the fact that they are emotional hostages to their families. This is why self-differentiation is essential. Dr. Phillip C. McGraw, Ph.D. in his book *Self Matters* states, “The authentic self is the you that can be found at your absolute core. It is the part of you that is not defined by your job, or your function, or your role. It is the composite of all your unique gifts, skills, abilities, interests, talents, insights, and wisdom. It is all of your strengths and values that are uniquely yours and need expression, versus what you have been programmed to believe that you are “supposed” to be and do. (McGraw 2000)

Self-differentiation, or the ability of an individual to acquire a unique and separate personality, in spite of the thoughts, opinions and influence of others is a major benefit in the family mentoring model. In reality we separate ourselves in order to become the distinct person that we have the potential of becoming. Self-differentiation involves the discovery of one’s identity as well as one’s destination. Edwin H. Friedman defines differentiation as the separating of one’s self that does not mean separation from one’s family for capacity of a family member to define his or her own life’s goals and values apart from surrounding togetherness pressures; to say “me” when others are demanding “you” and “we,” in his book *Generation to
Self-differentiation is essential for a quality life and an effective ministry. Far too many clergy persons are still controlled and shaped by the thoughts and opinions of their families. Quite often the problem is the child within them continues to be controlled by the parent without. These clergy persons desperately need freedom in order to determine who they are, where they are going, and what their divine purpose in life is.

Spiritual mentors who operate from the family model of mentoring will greatly aide mentees in the process of self-differentiation. This is true because a spiritual father, mother, sister or brother will be much more objective with a mentee than a blood relative. Spiritual family members see us in ways that we have not been seen before, should provide constructive criticism, and can help the mentee become self-critical.

**A Measure of Healing**

A second major benefit of the family mentoring model is that mentees will receive a measure of healing for their personal wounds. Human suffering is one of the realities of life. Every human being will eventually become acquainted with the hurts and pains of life, regardless of their nationality, race, creed, gender or class. In the process of life people experience wounding psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually. Clergy persons are not exempt from being wounded in their life and work and perhaps are more vulnerable than the average person. Since God has chosen clergy persons to minister to suffering humanity, it is imperative that they obtain a
measure of healing for their own personal wounds. This is a pre-requisite for administering healing to hurting people.

The family model of mentoring clergy will enable clergy to seek healing for both old and fresh wounds, many of which can be traced directly back to the nuclear family. It is quite common for people to be severally wounded and traumatized during their formative and adolescent years. Clergy persons cannot afford to allow damaged emotions to hinder them from being God’s healing agents. The family mentoring model is ideal for helping clergy persons deal with serious family issues. Ironically, mentors of the household of faith can ease the clergy person’s pain, which has been inflicted by his or her biological family. These mentors play a vital role in the life of their mentees. Mentors who have allowed God to transform their pain into power will bring healing to their mentees. After less experienced clergy persons have received some degree of healing in the family of God, they place themselves in a position to bring healing to their biological families, spiritual families, and the human family at large. These clergy persons can be classified as wounded healers. Henri J. M. Nouwen says in his book, The Wounded Healer,

For the minister is called to recognize the sufferings of his time in his own heart and make that recognition, the starting point of his service. Whether he tries to enter into a dislocated world, relate to a convulsive generation, or speak to a dying man, his service will not be perceived as authentic unless it comes from the heart wounded by the suffering about which he speaks. Thus, nothing can be written about the ministry without deeper understanding of the way in which the minister can make his wounds available as a source of healing. (Nouwen 1990)
Inner pain quite often causes people to behave in an irresponsible manner. For example, some people become alcoholics, workaholics, chain smokers, and nymphomaniacs. These extreme actions are their attempts to cope with their pain. Less experienced clergy who find themselves in such a dilemma, will find support from brothers and sisters of the cloth. Experienced clergy persons who serve as mentors will empathize with the plight of their mentees. In addition, the experienced clergy person will use tough love if moving the less experienced clergy person to the next level is necessary. Edwin H. Friedman states in *Generation to Generation* that

“There is, however a way to be our brother’s keeper, to manifest responsibility for a fellow human being without getting stuck in a triangle between that person and his or her failure to be responsible. It is called ‘Challenge’ but it requires one too non-anxiously tolerate pain, and sometimes even to stimulate pain, thus forcing the other to increase his or her threshold.” (Friedman 1985)

**A Higher Level of Professionalism**

A third benefit of the family-mentoring model for clergy is a higher level of professionalism in the ministry of the Black church. This is significant because the contemporary Black church is suffering greatly due to a lack of qualified spiritual leaders. It is sad but, nevertheless, true that the majority of clergy in the Black church have received little or no formal training. The family model of mentoring clergy is specifically designed to enhance the growth of novice clergy. In a biological family, good parents typically demand excellence of their children. They refuse to
accept lame excuses. These actions challenge and motivate children to maximize their full potential. In similar fashion, spiritual parents and siblings in the family model of mentoring will promote excellence among the novice clergy. Furthermore, they will encourage these novice clergy to never settle for complacency or mediocrity. It should be noted that the standard, which will be promoted in the family mentoring model for clergy, is excellence and not perfection. This point is crucial because no one can achieve perfection in the ministry. Excellence in the ministry is very important, because God is an excellent God and therefore God deserves an excellent worker.

The concept of professionalism in the ministry encompasses excellence in preaching, teaching, church administration, ethics, pastoral care and worship; these are the critical areas in which mentees of the family models will become more efficient. Personal interaction with their mentors, group sessions with other mentors and mentees, personal observations, lectures and exposure to reputable theological institutions can serve as positive ministry impacting experiences. Less seasoned clergy persons desperately need experience. This is true of both trained and untrained clergy persons. It should be noted that untrained and less experience clergy are crippling, paralyzing, and destroying some local church ministries. It should also be noted that some trained and less experienced clergy are having a devastating impact on some local church ministries. Ignorance among clergy persons is hindering the progress of the Black church. It is having a negative effect on the local
church, denominations, and the community at large. The exclusion of Blacks from the educational process has affected us socially, politically, and economically. It also affected us theologically. If clergy expect to alleviate theological ignorance, the goal must be to promote quality seminary training. According to Henry H. Mitchell:

There began in the ‘sixties’ a serious movement toward the understanding and appreciation of Black culture, including religion. Whole curricula are now available for training religious professionals to relate to the African-American masses in their own folkways and culture. It is understood that Africa-American folkways are not lower than other folkways; they are merely different. In such areas as preaching, the best of the African American tradition is good not only for Black churches but also for all churches and cultures. As a result, cultural disparities among Blacks are less important, and the old problem of placing trained pastors in free churches (denominations without bishops) has almost disappeared. (Mitchell 1990)

Highly sophisticated clergy with training serves many of the largest and fastest growing churches in Black America of great prestige. At last, Black preaching has come into its own, with the understanding that it comprises a variety of styles. Seminarians will learn more and develop more quickly if given an opportunity to work with a “master-pastor.” The day of the fledgling clergy going to the woods and preaching their way back to town is a relic of yesteryear. Seminarians under the tutelage of master pastors, on occasion, would learn more by osmosis than by absorption of some books. Not only would the young cleric add to the church staff while on assignment, but he also would develop friendships and relationships of a lifetime. Seminaries should search for these master pastors and encourage personal involvement in the life of their institutions.
CHAPTER IV

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There is nothing more important to the educational process than to have the ability to read and comprehend. It is the key. Otherwise you’re always on the outside looking in.

Wayne Bud

Reading is one of the most essential elements of research. Through reading and studying and researcher continue to grow in the development of his/her mind. As the researcher reads and studies various literatures, he/she acquires invaluable knowledge. Such knowledge can eliminate fears, enlighten, foster relationships, and make one aware of truths and correct errors. The writer has obtained a wealth of knowledge through reading and critically examining the empirical literate, which relate to the topic of mentoring clergy in the Black church. Contained in this chapter is the writer’s critical analysis of the empirical literature from various perspectives.

Theological Perspective

Faith is a universal experience that is not limited to nationality, culture, language, race, gender, class, or age. People establish their lives on their theological faith. People all around the worldview life and make sense of it based on their theological perspective. In Christianity, a Christian’s theological perspective is most significant because it has a great impact on self-identity and human relationships. Ministers who endeavor to mentor other clergy can ill afford to possess and
perpetuate erroneous theology. Sound theology is a necessity in the mentoring process. A theology of love is the basic foundation for the Christian life and the ministry.

The love of God is revealed in God’s work of creation. After God created plant and animal life, God created human life. God loved humankind and desired fellowship and intimacy with humankind. God and humankind shared fellowship and intimacy with humankind for a short while. This fellowship and intimacy were destroyed by sin. Sin alienated humankind from God. God’s love is also revealed in God’s work of reconciliation. God loved the world so much that God gave God’s son to reconcile the world to God. In II Corinthians 5:18-19, Paul states that “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting, the message of reconciliation to us.”

Only by receiving the unconditional love of God can a person be reconciled with God, self and others. Any person that is actively involved must have a clear understanding of this vital principle. This principle is vital because it directly impacts the message in the ministry and the manner in which ministry is performed. Moreover, this principle is important because a person is measured on how he or she views God, self and other individuals. Martin Luther King, Jr. was in agreement with this when he states, “Life at its best is a coherent triangle. At one angle is the
individual person. At the other angle are other persons. At the tiptop is the Infinite
Person, God. Without the development of each part of the triangle, no life can be
complete.” (King 1980)

Mentoring clergy in the Black church through a family model can be
successful if participants have a God conscientious. They need love for God and
intimacy with God. Participants also need self-consciousness. The love that one has
for God and self will prompt one to love others. A mentor and Protégé relationship
should be a loving and intimate one. It can best be initiated and nurtured through
genuine love for God and self. Only through this concept can the social order be
changed for the good. Jesus the Christ, who was God incarnate, mandated his
followers to love God, self, and others. St. Matthew 22:37-40 says, “He said unto
him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul,
and with all your mind’ . This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second
is like it; you shall love your neighbor as yourself . On these two commandments
hang all the law and the prophets.”

Mentors can have a positive and lasting impact on their mentees when they
operate in a spiritual family framework. This framework suggests at least three key
elements. First, God is my spiritual parent; second, I am God’s child; and third,
fellow believers and spiritual siblings are key. In view of these facts it is clear that
we have a special obligation to our brothers and sisters of the faith. Luther Smith
concurs with this theological view when he summarizes Dr. Howard Thurman’s Love
Ethic:

Respect for personality is the basis for love. This respect takes the focus away from the circumstances of a person’s life (i.e. race, social status, religion, nationality) and puts it on his/her inherent worth. It recognizes the individual as God’s child, and therefore, as one’s brother or sister. This recognition puts all individuals within one’s loving circle, within that ‘ethical field’ where one feels responsible for the caring of others.” “Jesus placed all meaning and hope for life upon the love-ethic. Self-love, love between individuals, and love of God are the various manifestations of love, which are the basis of community. Only love can shape, empower, and sustain community.” (Smith 1992)

In addition to a theology of love, the mentoring process requires a theology of servant-hood. Twenty-first century pulpiteers must minister in an oppressive society. People are being manipulated and dominated all around the world. There are oppressive structures, which are designed to discriminate against certain groups in society. Racism, sexism, classism, ageism, “handicappism” and capitalism are prevalent realities in the world. These social evils are as present within the church as they are without the church. Unfortunately, many pulpiteers today are being influenced by the world’s craving and abuse of power. However, clergy persons who want to maximize their full potential and motivate other clergy persons to do the same must embrace Jesus’ theology of servant-hood. Jesus the Christ who was and is God chose to sacrifice all of the royalty and riches of Heaven, in order to submit to the life of a lowly servant. The ultimate result of making such a sacrifice was His exhalation. In addition He received an honorable name. In Philippians 2:5-9, Paul exhorts the saints at Philippi by saying:
Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human-likeness, and being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name. (NRSV)

Jesus the Christ in his earthly ministry dealt with carnal disciples who were ambitious and power hungry. They failed to understand the true meaning of ministry. Jesus wanted them to clearly understand that His ministry was founded upon servant-hood with a people centered heart. Jesus’ earthy mission was to serve rather than to be served (Mark 10:45). Jesus not only spoke of servant-hood, He implemented it in his ministry. St. John 13, records how Jesus taught and illustrated the theology of servant-hood. In verses 12 - 14, Jesus said,

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done for you?' You call me Teacher and Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. (NRSV)

In essence Jesus gives us a model for mentoring the future leaders of the church. Someone mentored you so you should mentor someone else. Someone served you, so you must serve someone. It is an undeniable fact that Jesus is the perfect and supreme example of servant-hood. Contemporary spiritual leaders cannot afford to lose sight of the Christ-ology if they expect to participate in the preparation of those who will ultimately replace them in their ministerial profession. The belief of servant-hood must lead to the behavior of servant-hood. Moreover, the principle of
servant-hood must lead to the practice of servant-hood.

**Biblical Perspective of the Old Testament**

The mentoring relationship is quite common in biblical literature. In the Old Testament it is clearly seen in the relationship of Moses and Joshua. Joshua, who was a younger minister, faithfully served Moses. When Moses was the leader of Israel, he helped to prepare the leader of the next generation. Moses mentored Joshua in principal and practice. Ultimately Moses selected Joshua to be his successor prior to his death. Joshua was Moses' successor, and he was a great successor of Moses.

Few people have had such excellent successors, as did Moses.

There is a long list of Old Testament characters that appeared on the stage of biblical history. A list of these characters would include Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Nehemiah, Ruth, Ester, Deborah, David, Solomon, Daniel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Sampson and Gideon. Biblical scholars and theologians critically reflect on the writing, ministers, personalities and legacies of these biblical characters. Christians today seek to better understand these persons and endeavor to emulate their admirable traits. All of these pivotal people were great leaders in their own right. Notwithstanding this fact, there is no greater leader than Moses in the Old Testament. Moses was unique and distinguished himself from all the other leaders through his intimate relationship with God and his great accomplishments for God.

This point is made known in Deuteronomy 34:10. This verse is taken from a brief, but inspiring eulogy of Moses. The eulogy speaks of the superiority of Moses as a
prophet. Moses is undoubtedly one of the greatest men who ever lived. Some biblical scholars suggest that he was the greatest man with the exception of Christ. One such biblical scholar who supports this claim is John G. Butler who states in his book *Moses: The Emancipator of Israel*, "Leaving out of view our Lord Jesus Christ, there is no man who has left so deeply the impress of his character upon the world as the Jewish legislator." (Butler 1990)

In Moses, one can see some of the qualities that ought to characterize any Christian leader, particularly the clergy person. Like Barnabas who mentored Paul in the ministry, Moses mentored Joshua in the ministry. Joshua was referred to as Moses' minister, Joshua 1:1... Here the term "minister" implies lieutenant or a special assistant to a servant of God. This was a most honorable title that was bestowed upon those who were close aids to spiritual leaders in the Old Testament. Moses invested himself in the growth and development of Joshua. Those who will mentor pulpiteers in the 21st century can learn much from Moses' model of mentoring. One important element, which is seen in this model, is that leaders must help mentees understand their true identity. Moses changed Joshua’s name from Oshea to Joshua in Numbers 13:16. This practice was common when a person took on a royal heir. For example, in Genesis 32:28, God changed Jacob’s name from Jacob to Israel. The name Jacob was associated with his deception and cheating. The name Israel refers to the fact that Jacob would be like a prince and have power with God and humankind. In changing Joshua’s name, Moses was helping Joshua to
get in touch with his personhood and become aware of his destiny as a leader. Moses obviously saw that Joshua had the potential to become a great deliverer in the nation of Israel. This most likely justifies the name change. The name Joshua suggests salvation. In his book, *Leadership Profiles of Bible Personalities*, Earnest E Mosely states, “even the name Joshua deserves attention. It is used interchangeably with Hoshea, Jehoshua, Oshea, and Jehoshuah. The Hebrew word literally means ‘salvation.’ The name Joshua has the same derivation as the name Jesus.” (Mosely 1979)

Today, there are many laypersons that were reared in families which failed to help them to address their sense of personhood. It is regrettable that too many of these laypersons are becoming members of the clergy and are unaware that they are searching for identity. Mentors can help to develop future spiritual leaders by assisting them in the process of discovering who they are.

In addition to Moses aiding Joshua in the process of self-definition, he taught him that spiritual leaders are human and therefore vulnerable. This concept is revealed in Exodus 33:11. In this verse, an intimate dialogue between Moses and Jehovah takes place. Joshua was present and did not leave the tent. Moses petitioned God to grant him favor. Apparently Moses did not want to be embarrassed or humiliated before the congregation of Israel. Joshua saw first hand the most intimate side of Moses’ nature. This was probably one of Moses’ most vulnerable moments. Joshua witnessed for himself that Moses was vulnerable in seeking God. Future
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spiritual leaders need balance in their spirited lives. They need to see the natural side of their mentors as well as their spiritual side. Joshua apparently respected Moses more for being himself as opposed to being superhuman. Less experienced clergy persons will respect those who mentor them if they are honest about their humanity.

Another element which is seen in Moses’ mentoring model is the concept of supporting leaders who have been delegated specific responsibilities. Numbers 14:6-9 gives the account of Moses sending out the 12 spies to Canaan. Joshua was one of the 12 men who were sent to spy out the land. Perhaps this was Joshua’s first assignment. After returning from Canaan, Joshua and Caleb made their report to Moses. While they did acknowledge the obstacles in Canaan, they did remain optimistic that the land could be conquered. Joshua and Caleb’s faith was founded upon God’s promise of victory. In contrast, the other ten spies were pessimistic of the prospect of victory. Moses accepted Joshua’s report. A failure to support Joshua could have jeopardized Joshua’s influence and impact on other leaders. Delegating authority is still a vital part of spiritual leadership. Mentors expressing confidence in a mentee’s point of view can sometimes prove to be beneficial. On one hand, one may argue that mentees are not always right. While on the other hand, neither are mentors always right.

A final element in the Moses’ mentoring model is the idea of imparting the blessing. Moses became angry with the congregation. In his anger he violated the command of the Lord by smiting the rock. This resulted in God’s punishing Moses
and prohibiting him from entering the Promised Land. This was no doubt a great
disappointment. In spite of his disappointment, Moses was still very much concerned
about the future of the nation of Israel. He was also very concerned about his
successor. In Numbers 27:22-23, God told Moses to appoint Joshua to be his
successor. Furthermore, God instructed him to lay his hands upon Joshua and bless
him. The Hebrews placed special emphasis upon the imparting of the blessing. This
act primarily referred to the approval of the ancestor. The imparting of the blessing
was indicative of the fact that the person receiving the blessing was valuable.

In this modern era, children desire and need the blessing. Imparting the
blessing to children will affect their future positively. Withholding the blessing could
negatively affect their future. A number of people are entering the clergy today who
lack family affirmation. Such persons have little or no self-worth. However,
transformation is possible for these persons in a family model of mentoring clergy.
Self-acceptance, self-love, self-pride, and self-worth can be cultivated in a mentoring
relationship.

Joshua walked in the shadow of Moses, who was an exceptional spiritual
leader. Joshua’s ears were open to hear and his mind was open to learn. The training
he received from Moses was invaluable and prepared him to accept his call to be
Moses’ successor. Joshua, who was mentored by Moses, led the people of Israel
across the Jordan and into the Promised Land in - spite of obstacles.

The unique relationship that existed between Elijah and Elisha is another
perfect example of the mentoring model. Elijah was a great prophet who appeared suddenly on the stage of biblical history. Although he was very much human, God manifested God’s supernatural power in his exceptional ministry. Elisha, who was younger, needed a seasoned spiritual advisor and a positive role model. Elisha forsook parents, property, and position and became a disciple of Elijah. He faithfully served Elijah until God took Elijah away in a chariot of fire. When Elijah departed, the mantel of leadership fell on Elisha. His ministry began as soon as Elijah’s ministry ended.

There was no interim period between the ending of Elijah’s ministry and the beginning of Elisha’s ministry. One moment Elisha was an assistant and the next moment he was the master. One moment he was following Elijah, and the next moment he was on his own. Such an abrupt change can unnerve the best of men, but Elisha took it in stride. His training by Elijah and his unswerving commitment to his calling helped him to make the abrupt change with unusual success. The prophet Elijah not only served as a mentor for Elisha but also mentored countless young men who attended the seminaries or academies. These young men were known as the sons of the prophet. These young prophets had a great deal of respect for Elijah. They listened attentively to his teachings for the purpose of obtaining knowledge and wisdom. They not only listened to his teaching, but also observed a demonstration of God’s power in his ministry.

God revealed to Elijah, the elder prophet, that Elisha, the younger prophet,
would be his successor. Elijah was always cognizant of this fact and put forth great effort to adequately prepare Elisha to assume such an awesome task. The training that Elisha received was invaluable. One of the lessons that Elijah taught Elisha was the importance of a spiritual leader serving others. Elijah helped Elisha to understand that a spiritual leader must never be egotistical. Furthermore, he helped him to understand that he must place the needs of others first. It is quite clear that when Elisha left his parents, his property, and his possessions to follow Elijah, he totally committed himself to serving Elijah.

The biblical reference, 1 Kings 19: 19 -21, reveals “So he set out from there, and found Elisha son of Shaphat, who was plowing.” There were twelve yoke of oxen ahead of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle over him. He left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, “Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.” Then Elijah said to him, “Go back again; for what have I done to you?” He returned from following him, took the yoke of oxen, and slaughtered them; using the equipment from the oxen, he boiled their flesh, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out and followed Elijah, and became his servant. Elisha possessed the spirit of humility that enabled him to render such service to his leader. Elisha gained a good reputation among people because of his selfless love. He was known as the man who poured water on Elijah’s hand (2 Kings 3:11). Pouring water on the hands was a lowly task performed by a servant for his master. The servant would aid the master in cleaning his hands. The
prophet Elijah allowed Elisha to serve him. He did not allow him to serve him out of a sense of superiority. Elijah permitted such service for the purpose of teaching Elisha that service is essential to spiritual leadership.

Another lesson that Elisha learned was loyalty. Elijah, the mentor of Elisha, undoubtedly had taught the principal of loyalty in theory and practice. Shortly before Elijah’s departure from the earth he tested Elisha to remain behind in the cities where they were. It was not that Elijah did not appreciate his companionship; however, this was Elisha’s ultimate test of loyalty. Elisha passed the test by refusing to stay behind; he insisted on accompanying his mentor. Elijah was teaching Elisha that loyalty and commitment are essential.

In addition to faithful service and loyalty, Elisha learned how important it was to have spiritual priorities. Elijah knew that Elisha would have to deal with the conflict between the material and spiritual priorities. Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.” (James 5:17) Elijah made an inquiry of Elisha shortly before the Lord took him. He asked him what he would do for him before his departure. Elisha responded by requesting a double portion of Elijah’s spirit to be upon him. Elijah knew that Elisha was a younger man and could easily be tempted by greed and power. Elijah was testing his spiritual priorities. Elisha could have asked for wealth, position, or fame. However, he made the right choice by requesting a greater anointing upon his life.
Biblical Perspective of the New Testament

The mentoring relationship is also clearly seen in the New Testament. Barnabas served as a mentor for Paul. Although Paul was notoriously religious and well educated, he still needed a spiritual role model. It was quite unfortunate that even after his conversion the saints remembered his prior reputation of harming Christians. They were not convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt of his conversion. It was Barnabas who nurtured, supported, instructed and defended Paul.

"And when Saul was to come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple, but Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus (Acts 9:26 - 27, NRSV).

Paul grew in the grace and knowledge of Christ and later became a mentor for several young clergy. Although this list of clergy included Titus, Epaphroditus, Epaphrasour, and Timothy, it appears that Paul’s relationship with Timothy was the most unique of all. Paul accepted and embraced Timothy as a son in the faith. Paul instructed Timothy in creed, as well as in deeds. Paul warned Timothy of false doctrines. He also informed him of the qualifications and duties of church officers. He encouraged him to remain faithful to God in spite of opposition within and without the church. Paul trained Timothy and had great confidence in him. Paul’s confidence in him is exemplified in the fact that he sent him to Ephesus to serve as
senior pastor of the church. This was an awesome task for a young minister. He, however, successfully fulfilled his charge. Timothy was blessed to witness Paul’s great faithfulness to God even while on death row.

The greatest example of the mentoring model, which is found in the Bible, is the relationship between Jesus and his disciples. Jesus, who was the master teacher, selected twelve disciples for the purpose of continuing his work after his ascension. It is quite ironic that Jesus chose the men that most folk would not have considered. For instance, in terms of human standards, they were unqualified for ministry. Jesus invested himself in the lives of his disciples. They learned how to be effective spiritual leaders. Jesus, who was their mentor, taught them how to be humble, how to serve, how to have faith, and how to pray and preach. After three years of mentoring his disciples, Jesus prepared to make his exit from the world.

Jesus had a very unique ministry. One of the most unique things about his ministry was the fact that he chose individuals that most people would consider unqualified. Jesus chose ordinary people for extraordinary work. He chose natural men for a supernatural ministry. According to Mark 3: 13 - 19: He went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, and to have authority to cast out demons. So he appointed the twelve; Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); James son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. Then he went Home. (NRSV)

These men that were chosen by Jesus were not prominent men; none of them were affiliated with the priesthood. None of them were of royal descent.
There are numerous reasons why these twelve men would not have been selected by humankind. First, they would not have been selected because they lacked knowledge and understanding. Jesus selected men who could not boast about their academic achievements. Luke says in Acts 4:13, “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed, and recognized them as companions of Jesus.” (NRSV) Although the Disciples of Christ lacked formal theological training, Jesus took on the enormous task of equipping them for effective ministry.

Secondly, Jesus selected men who lacked humility. Most people would not have selected individuals who were egotistical; however, Jesus invited them to be a part of his ministering team because he recognized their potential. Jesus, the master teacher, focused on who his disciples would become, rather than who they were when he called them. Jesus was cognizant of the fact that the men he chose were often motivated by pride and selfishness. In spite of these faults, Jesus decided to choose and use them in his service. Jesus spent a great deal of time teaching his disciples that the spirit of humility is a prerequisite for a fruitful ministry. On one occasion, Jesus took a child and placed him or her in the midst in order to stress the need for humility. Jesus informed them that they must possess the humility of a child in order to see the kingdom of God. Jesus used this child to illustrate the significance of humility because his disciple had frequent altercations over the issue of who would become the greatest in the kingdom. (Matthew 18:1 - 5 NRSV)
Thirdly, Jesus selected men who lacked faith. Most people would not have selected individuals who lacked faith to establish a ministry. Although Jesus was the Christ, many did not believe in him. Perhaps Jesus could have found twelve men who believed in him and his ministry. Nevertheless, he decided to use men who were lacking in faith. For example, Jesus chose Nathaniel to follow him; however, Nathaniel was reluctant to follow Jesus. At first Nathaniel hesitated because he was skeptical after learning that he was from Nazareth. Nathaniel perceived that the city of Nazareth was filled with undesirables. It should be noted that Nathaniel’s faith was strengthened when Jesus told him he knew him before Philip called him. From under the fig tree Jesus informed him that because his faith was strengthened he would see greater things. (John 1:48 - 50 NRSV)

It is ironic that the charter members of the Christian faith were men who had a faith deficiency. Jesus spent quality time planting the seed of faith in their hearts. He also aided them in the growth and development of their faith. Although Jesus mentored his disciples in the faith, some continued to doubt even on the day of Jesus’ ascension. (Matthew 28: 17) After the disciples received the Holy Spirit their faith was greatly strengthened. They boldly preached, taught, healed the sick, cast out devils, challenged civil authority and raised the dead. Most of the disciples, like their mentor Jesus, became martyrs of the faith. These twelve apostles were mentored by Jesus and mentored countless others in the faith prior to their demise.
Psychological Perspective

Psychology is the study of human behavior. This most important science enables us to rationalize and modify human behavior. Psychology guides us in our search of self and the community. Moreover, it helps us to make sense of our actions and reactions in our environment. If an individual has a basic understanding of his/her psychological profile then he or she will have a better understanding of self and others. This is a vital point that directly relates to the mentor and mentee relationship. The ideal mentor must have a positive self-image. This can only be possible if the mentor has a clear understanding of his/her true understanding. In addition the mentor must know how to properly relate to the mentee.

One cannot conduct a critical study of mentoring without examining the psychological aspect. A chief task of a mentor is that of assisting the mentee in his/her social formation. The social formation of every individual is very important, with the social formation of a clergy person having particularly importance. This is true because clergy-persons will greatly influence countless lives. One of the challenges that mentors often face is that of helping their protégé deal with self-doubt and insecurities. When a mentor recognizes potential, then he or she is responsible for helping the protégé to see the potential and maximize his/her potential. Protégés have a definite need for constant encouragement and positive affirmation. Encouragement and positive affirmation is vital to the mentoring process, because many people live with a false reality of life. These false realities, which appear quite
real, can be attributed to one's environment. The theory of sane impression of reality helps us to confront the problem of insane and unhealthy realities. Nathaniel Branden, PhD, refers to this theory when he says:

To whatever extent we are rational and consistent in our dealing with other people we present them with a sane and intelligible impression of reality. Any self-respecting human being strives to offer this sanity in his/her interactions. The signal given is I'm not presenting a bewildering and contradictory impression of reality that might leave you feeling confused, impotent and powerless. (Branden 1969)

In view of the fact that the clergy life and ministry will have a lasting impact on family, friends, parishioners, ministerial staff, church employees, and colleagues, his/her perception of reality is crucial. The clergy' perception of reality is crucial because he or she spends a lifetime constructing, reconstructing or destroying other people perception of reality. An experienced minister who serves as a mentor is responsible for helping the mentee separate insane impressions of reality from sane impressions of reality. This step is necessary in the mentoring process. It has great therapeutic value and the potential to bring inner healing.

A mentee can conquer self-doubt by becoming cognizant of his/her God given potential. A mentee can best become aware of their potential by seeing others maximize their potential. A good mentor recognizes that it is eminent for him/her to set good examples for the protégé. We can only anticipate the best from people when we give them our best. It is necessary for mentors to live from the best within themselves, only then can they bring out the best in their protégés.
A less experienced minister needs to be nurtured by an experienced minister. Less experienced clergy like all human beings are faced with the pain of being broken. These clergy need healing in order to be God’s agents of healing. A less experienced minister can receive a measure of healing and learn how to administer healing to others through the positive interaction and nurturing of an experienced minister. Mentees will follow the pattern of the mentor. Dr. Edward Wimberly concurs with this ideology in his book *Relational Refugees*, when he states:

Mimetic theory allows us to expand our definition of mentoring, connecting familiar forms of teaching with a larger discussion of social formation, we begin to see mentoring as a form of learning that can heal those who find themselves relational refugees. In a strong relationship with a skilled mentor or mentors, relational refugees are drawn back into nurturing community and are enabled to develop a healthy sense of self in the context of others. (Wimberly 2000)

In essence, the ideal mentor is one who has a holistic view of the ministry. While it is important to minister to people physically, mentally and spiritually, it is equally important to minister to people emotionally. This aspect of personhood is so often overlooked and neglected. Clergy can best receive inner healing through a nurturing mentoring relationship. I make this claim because clergy cannot trust and confide in everyone. In a nurturing mentoring relationship, less experienced clergy can expose their wounds to someone who can directly identify with their pain. This kind of relationship is therapeutic and will aid the less experienced minister in bringing healing to persons, other than themselves, who are also hurting.
Sociological Perspective

Sociology is the science of society, social institutions, and social relationships. More specifically it is the systematic study of the development, structure, interactions, and collective behavior of organized groups of human beings. One can learn a great deal from the scientific analyses of five social institutions. One such institution, the family, is the oldest institution in the world. The family is a group of persons who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption and form a household. It is in the family where personality is developed, where identity is formed, and where values are learned. A second notable one is the religious institution. This religious category includes mosques, synagogues, and churches. Religious institutions promote worship, rituals, ordinances, discipline, and doctrine. Thirdly, the educational commands notice. It promotes the growth and development of the human mind and includes public and private schools and colleges and universities. Governmental institutions, the fourth in this iteration, are composed of political officials and employees on the local, state, and federal levels. The fifth type is the business institution, made of primarily of companies and corporations. These five social institutions are the basic ones in society. The mentoring process greatly impacts each of these social institutions. A new generation of leaders must be equipped and empowered in order to insure the future welfare of these institutions. The future of these unique and vital institutions must be preserved for the sake of a stable society.
The sociological studies regarding mentoring are scarce. This is true both in
the church and the secular society. There are main line denominations that have
mentoring programs for clergy. Unfortunately, they too often fail to maintain
relevant statistical data. For example, the United Methodist Church links mentors
and protégés in the ministry. However, in conferring with Bishop Larry Goodpastor,
of the Regional Episcopal Office, I was informed that the mentoring program is
ongoing but there are no statistics recorded. In the contemporary churches there is a
need for more mentoring programs for clergy. However, statistical information
should be maintained, evaluated, and shared.

The studies which have been conducted in secular society for the purpose of
assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of the mentoring process, are quite
encouraging. Although mentoring is an ancient practice, it continues to make a real
difference in the lives of those who have the potential to lead society to the next
level. One example of the positive results of mentoring is indicated in contemporary
issues in mentoring by Jean Baldwin Grossman:

Sipes found that programs incorporating the three key elements created solid
relationships, which, in turn, relative to other similar youth, improved
mentee’s attitudes toward school and their future and often improved their
behavior and performance as well, regardless of the programs explicit goals
(i.e., improvement in academic performance, decrease in drug use of
friendship). (Grossman 1998)

As the writer has fore stated, few mentoring programs have collected,
compiled, and reported relevant data. Nevertheless, it appears that there is a move to
rectify this problem. Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America (BB & BSA) provide
accurate and relevant statistical data on mentoring in stating that mentored persons are:

- Forty-six percent less likely than their peers to start using illegal drugs and twenty-seven percent less likely to start drinking
- Fifty-two percent less likely than their peers to skip a day of school and thirty-seven percent less likely to skip a class, and
- More trusting of their parents or guardians and less likely to lie to them, and likely to feel more supported and less criticized by their peers and friends.

**Homiletical Perspective**

The work of a clergy-person includes teaching, counseling, administration, Intercession, presiding, and visitation. While these functions are vital to the success of the church, it is important to note that the preaching of the gospel is the chief responsibility of the clergy-person. There is no greater task than that of standing behind the sacred desk and proclaiming the liberating gospel of Jesus the Christ.

The art of Black preaching has always played a significant role in the life and the ministry of the Black church. In years gone by, many Black preachers had little or no formal theological training, however, most were very gifted and talented pulpiteers. These pulpiteers preached a personal gospel which led to the saving of souls and the changing of lives. They not only preached a personal gospel, they also preached a social gospel which challenged the social evils in society. This social gospel inspired people and kept the hope of freedom alive during the long dark night of slavery and segregation.
Black preaching is a unique art that has been passed down from one generation to another. Mentors are needed in the area of homiletics in order to ensure the preservation and perpetuation of this distinct style of preaching. God still needs men and women who will be voices crying in the wilderness of oppression. Without proper mentoring there is a chance that these voices will be silenced. Those persons who have recently answered the call to ministry desperately need mentors who clearly understand the history and the power of Black preaching.

In terms of homiletics, the mentoring process can be seen in the relationship between the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the experienced clergymen who mentored him. Figural interpretation was in the atmosphere King breathed at Ebenezer. His learned mentors, such as Benjamin Mays, Vernon Johns and Pius Barbour, whose intellectual sermons rested on interpretive assumptions much older than the African-American Church, also mediated it to him. In a 1957 sermon, “The Birth of a New Nation”, King engaged in his own version of figural interpretation. In the first few minutes he establishes the two poles of his topology. First, there is the type, which is the Bible story of the Exodus from bondage the beauty of which was recently reinforced in the preacher’s enjoyment of Cecil B. DeMille’s, The Ten Commandments. Since emancipation, Negroes in America had been reading the Exodus as the story of their own deliverance from bondage. Before that, they had read and sung it in the hope of future redemption. In his sermon, King assumes that figural tradition without mentioning it. He moves quickly from type to the anti-type,
which is no one political program but an ontological condition of existence, “man’s explicit quest for freedom.” (King 1957)

**Ethical Perspective**

During my formative years in the church, I frequently heard the cliche, “You must lead by precept and example”. The implication of this statement is that leadership requires us to move beyond theory to practice. This is particularly true for those of us who are stewards of the gospel and of the Church of the Living God. The Apostle Peter exhorts spiritual leaders to be role models for their parishioners when he states, “Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock.” I Peter 5:3. The Christian faith is not only a faith of creeds, but is a faith of deeds. Spiritual leaders are expected to stand up and live out the true meaning of Christian Creed.

God, the church, and the world demand preachers to practice what they preach. Many preachers say this is unfair because they are being held to a higher moral code than anyone else. Regardless of whether this standard is fair or unfair, preachers are judged by it daily. Good moral and ethical conduct is a pre-requisite of an effective ministry and is crucial because it impacts the clergy’s personal life, family life, church life, professional life, and community life. It should also be noted that the lifestyle of the minister would undoubtedly have a lasting impact on novice clergy in training. Nolan B. Harmon, in *Ministerial Ethics and Etiquette*, concurs with this view when he refers to the Unitarian Code I: “The minister should set a high
A problem that confronts preachers of today is immorality and improper conduct. In recent years we have been made aware of the immoral, illegal, and unethical conduct of prominent spiritual leaders in America. A short list of these preachers includes Jim Baker, Jimmy Swaggart, Henry Lyons, and Jesse Jackson. Sex, money, and power tempted them all. They yielded to sin and damaged their reputation, influence, and ministry. The conduct of these spiritual leaders not only had a negative impact on their particular ministries, but also had a negative impact on the clergy profession as a whole. Many people began to make broad generalizations, placing all clergy profession and the entire body of Christ. Young clergy should be made aware of this fact. They should also be made aware of the high cost of disobedience to God. In the community of faith we are unfortunately witnessing a new generation of preachers who are both arrogant and immature. Many of these pulpiteers exhibit behavior that is rude, impolite, inappropriate, and unacceptable.

Immorality and improper conduct are serious problems. A major goal of any mentoring programs for clergy must be teaching ministerial ethics and etiquette. Christian clergy should not allow themselves to be squeezed into the mold of the world. “And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:2, NRSV) If contemporary pulpiteers desire to have successful ministries, they can only function effectively when they possess strong biblical
convictions. According to *Harper’s Encyclopedia of Religious Education*, “The Bible is an important source for Jewish and Christian ethics. The Torah, found in the first five books, is the basis for Jewish ethics. The Bible contains a great deal of descriptive data regarding the morality of the people of Israel and teaching of Jesus and Paul on ethical issues.” (Cully 1990) Experienced clergy must help less experienced clergy to understand that God does not require perfection of spiritual leaders; however, it is the desire of God that we are men and women of integrity.

**Pastoral Care**

The ministry of a pastor can be divided in three major areas. First of all a pastor is responsible for proclamation. Proclamation includes preaching sermons, teaching Bible lessons, and delivering public addresses. Second, the pastor is responsible for the work of administration. The function of administration includes proper supervision for office personnel, church employees, church officers, ministry leaders, and the ministerial staff. Third, a pastor must function in the area of service. The minister renders service when he or she visits those who are incarcerated, those who are hospitalized, and those who are shut-in at home. Service also involves the counseling and nurturing of parishioners. This in essence is pastoral care.

The pastoral care ministry is a major sector of the ministry. Unfortunately this vital ministry appears to be in jeopardy. This is probably true because many who are wrestling with the call to the ministry and many who have recently accepted a call to the ministry have little or no understanding of the pastoral profession.
Furthermore, some even have a distorted view of this important field of service. The establishing of mentoring relationships in the community of faith will help to enlighten novice preachers of both the burdens and the blessings of the pastoral care ministry.

There is a decline in younger persons entering the pastoral ministry. This can probably be attributed to the fact that younger clergy most often have a limited view of this ministry. David J. Woods implies that mentoring relationships in the community of faith can help younger clergy obtain a more balanced view. He raises a question in his article *Where are The Young Clergy?:* “But why in the world would a talented young person commit to a life of low salary, low prestige, long hours, no weekends, and little room for advancement?” (Woods 2000) The call to this vocation does not sound forth in a vacuum. It requires the vocal chords of congregational life and culture. Such a calling is mediated through ecclesial relationships and experiences. It requires the apprenticeship of faithful lives in the context of faithful communities. This is a calling discerned face to face, life-to-life.

**Church Administration**

The work of church administration is comprehensive. It can be defined as the act or process of administering, managing, or directing a Christian congregation or body. This includes the involvement of the church in the discovery of its nature and mission in moving in a coherent and comprehensive manner. In most Black churches, pastors serve as the chief administrator in all church business affairs.
has not always been the case in Black churches. During the first half of the 20th century, it was quite common for lay leaders to manage the business affairs of rural churches. This practice was accepted because most pastors did not live in the community where they pastored. Furthermore, most pastors were only present at church on pastoral Sundays, which were usually only once or twice a month. Many pastors served more than one church. The frequent absence of the pastor in these churches placed a great deal of responsibility upon the shoulders of the laity. For example, in *Church Administration in the Black Perspective* McKinney and Massey state that the rural Baptist pastors’ absence “created a leadership vacuum which the deacons filled. The chairman of the deacon board was often the ‘de facto pastor’.” (McKinney and Massey 1976) Some pastors, today, feel overwhelmed by the awesome responsibility of a church administrator. Consequently, some pastors and churches are hiring professionals specifically for the purpose of handling the business affairs of the church. Some of the persons who are being hired are clergy, while others are laypersons. The idea of lay people managing the business of the church in the past was a necessity. Yet in contemporary society, it is a means to alleviate some of the burdens of leadership that are placed upon the clergy.

The work of a pastor is threefold: ministry, proclamation, and administration. Since church administration is comprehensive, those who are aspiring for the pastorate should be well informed about the role of the church administrator. These pulpiteers can benefit greatly from the wisdom of successful pastors who have had
long tenures. The contemporary Black church is calling for clergy who are prepared to accept the challenges of managing the business affairs of the household of faith. Some clergy are readily accepting the challenge because an experienced clergy person has trained them. In contrast, some are accepting the challenge reluctantly because they have not had the benefit of being nurtured by an experienced clergy person. These clergy will probably learn many valuable lessons through trial and error.

One may ask, “What are the essentials in becoming an effective church administrator?” One important feature of church administration is time management. No matter how great a spiritual leader thinks he/she is, he/she is destined for failure if they neglect to budget their time. Time is like money, it is limited; therefore it must be budgeted. Carl Sandburg says, “Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.” (www.quotationspage.com2002) Those who are pursuing the pastorate must learn to seize control of their time. Seizing control of one’s time is important because it is a gift from God and should not be wasted. It is also important because parishioners and others will place demand on the church administrator’s time if it is not budgeted. Clergy persons must be able to clearly distinguish between what he/she wants to do and what he/she must do. Making this distinction will help one to utilize his/her time more wisely. An effective church administrator would be wise to include time for family, private worship; physical needs, vacation, continuing education and career development.
A second vital aspect of church administration is the possession of relevant skills. In order for any church administrator to function effectively he/she needs to acquire and develop relevant skills. Conceptual skills will help an administrator develop mission statements with the congregation. Moreover, it will help them to remain focused on their sense of divine purpose. Conceptual skills include the ability to dream, plan, organize, coordinate, motivate, and evaluate. Human relation skills will also be helpful to the church administrator. It is literally impossible for a church administrator to fulfill his/her role without dealing with people. A church administrator will most certainly have interactions with pastors, members of the ministerial staff, office staff, employees, political officials, corporate representatives, and parishioners. In view of this fact, one must be an effective communicator. It is essential that one be able to express his/her ideas, feelings and desires, both verbally and written, in a professional manner. Human relation skills are also inclusive of proper etiquette such as being polite, courteous, thoughtful, considerate, kind and appreciative when dealing with others. Moreover, conflict resolution is a part of human relation skills. In addition to conceptual and human relation skills, technical skills can be most helpful in the work of the church administrator. The church administrator can ill afford to get left behind in this advancing technological age. Church administrators in the 21st Century will have a difficult time functioning if they are computer illiterate. We as clergy are ministering to a generation known as “generation.com.” These are the ones who grew up with remote controls and
computers. If the operation of the church business affairs is to be smooth, the church administrators and the church should stay on the cutting edge of modern technology.

Another element, which is significant in the work of church administration, is properly managing the finances of the church. The church, like all other social institutions, must have money in order to function effectively. How church funds are managed can directly determine the success or failure of a local church. Most Black churches empower trustee ministries with the responsibility of managing the finances of the local church. Notwithstanding this fact, the church administrator is the chief manager and will ultimately be held accountable for all of the financial affairs of the church. It is crucial that the church administrator is cognizant of the fact that he/she will not only be held accountable to the local church, but also to the government and to God. Therefore, the church administrator should be very cautious in how he/she handles the resources that have been entrusted to his/her care.

The church administrator must set his/her own personal financial affairs in order. It is inconceivable that one can properly manage the resources of others while neglecting to manage his/her own resources. Too many people are entering the clergy professions who have bad credit and enormous outstanding debt. Moreover, the church administrator should be equipped to plan, implement and evaluate a church budget. Furthermore, a wise church administrator will become knowledgeable of both state and federal laws related to church finances. A failure to adhere to such laws will jeopardize the integrity of the church administrator and the
reputation of the church. Less experienced clergy persons can learn how to manage personal funds, the process of church budgeting and laws which relate to church financing through a mentoring relationship with an experienced church administrator.

The majority of clergy entering the profession today have no formal theological training. Their lack of theological training places them at a definite disadvantage. Nevertheless, these clergy can provide quality leadership if they are mentored by experienced clergy. The mentoring process can also greatly impact the ministries of seminarians and seminary graduates. Unfortunately, in the contemporary church many theologically trained clergy are very immature. Furthermore, they do not know how to put theory into practice. The sad reality is that many are disrupting the unity of local congregations in an attempt to do so. This is having a devastating effect on the body of Christ. Trained clergy can benefit greatly from the wisdom of experienced clergy persons. The process of mentoring clergy can greatly enhance the work of seminaries. As clergy matriculate at the Interdenominational Theological Center, Howard School of Divinity, and Virginia Union Seminary, they would be better equipped as church administrators, if they were mentored throughout their formal theological training. The value of the “master pastor” continues to resound with great merit.
Community Leadership and Involvement

The Black church is a unique institution. It has been the backbone of the Black community for many years. It has contributed greatly to the advancement of the Black race. Born at a critical time, when Blacks faced major calamity and catastrophe, providing hope, liberation, healing, and acceptance for an oppressed people in society, it grew and developed as it established schools, organizations, businesses, etc. The establishment of these institutions helped to improve the quality of life in the Black community, insuring outstanding leadership in confronting social, political, economical, educational, spiritual, and moral issues.

In retrospect, the church has survived and continues to make progress in spite of the overwhelming odds against it. It should be noted that the Black preacher played a major role in the leadership and the success of the Black church. The preacher's leadership not only had a positive impact on the Black church but also on the Black community. This can probably be attributed to the fact that Black preachers traditionally viewed the Black church and the community as one entity.

The courageous leadership of Black preachers helped to galvanize, energize, and organize the Black community. As we move forward in the 21st century we must critically question the absence of Black clergy persons as community leaders. This is a very serious problem that confronts the Black church. There is no simple solution to this problem. However, the establishing of ministerial programs can certainly help
to remedy this problem. There is a new generation of Black preachers who lead Black congregations but attempt to separate themselves from the Black community. These young preachers should realize the truth in what Dash, Jackson and Rasor say: “He or she is part of a larger whole—the community. The person becomes who he or she is in community and not as distinct from it.” (Dash, Rasor and Jackson 1997)

Perhaps experienced clergy persons can provide them with a clearer understanding of their sense of belonging within the community and the need for Black clergy as spiritual leaders in the community. Experienced clergy persons can help less experienced clergy persons to understand that America is a capitalistic society where money is extremely important to the culture. Money represents power and influence. Money, or the lack of money, impacts the lives of Americans in various ways, from the cradle to the grave. When one is cognizant of these facts, it is not difficult to understand why economical empowerment is crucial to the process of community development in the Black community.

Less experienced clergy persons must be aware of the sad fact that the masses of Black people still remain in poverty today. Nevertheless, they should also be made aware that when a community eliminates poverty, other problems disappear simultaneously. The Rev. Jesse Jackson of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, who was mentored by the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. the leader of the civil rights movement of the 60s, continues to minister to poverty-stricken communities. Rev. Jackson was one of the lieutenants of this civil rights movement. He and other
lieutenants of the movement learned much from Dr. King about economics and attempted to carry out his final project, which was the Poor People’s Campaign, a project designed to draw the nation’s attention to the plight of poverty. Stanford University’s Encyclopedia on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Papers Project states that the Southern Christian Leadership Conference “decided to launch the Poor People’s Campaign, a movement to broadly address economic inequalities with non-violent direct action.” (www.stanford.edu/group/King/about_king/encyclopedia/williams_A_D.htm)

Today, the Rev. Jackson is mentoring other Black spiritual leaders who will make a difference in Black communities that are economically deprived. The Rainbow/PUSH Coalition sponsors a program known as “1,000 Churches Connected.” This group holds an annual “Ministers on Wall Street” economic literacy conference. It is actually held at the New York Stock Exchange. During the most recent conference, the Rev. Jackson stressed the importance of knowing about economics when he said, “in our modern economy, capitol is the equivalent of water to a field. With it, comes possibility of growth. Without it, little can survive.” (www.Kingforamerica.com/adkfoundation.htm) The spiritual leaders that attended this conference perhaps can teach their parishioners and communities about the importance of economical empowerment and financial planning. Educating and empowering these spiritual leaders is a good example of mentoring clergy for community involvement.
In many African-American communities throughout America, Black churches and local citizens are forming partnerships. These collaborations are being formed for the specific purpose of community revitalization, a much needed for action in these communities. This is true because drug trafficking, crime, violence, substandard housing, inadequate lighting, unsafe streets, pollution, poor drainage systems and lack of recreational facilities are all very common problems in African-American communities. Nevertheless, as a direct result of churches and communities working together for the good of the social order, these and other negative issues are being addressed. Old communities are being transformed into new ones.

Contemporary Black spiritual leaders are being called upon to provide leadership for the partnerships between churches and communities. It is encouraging to know that some members of the clergy are responding favorably to the call and are leading people to change their own environment. One such clergy person who led in the revitalization of his community is the Rev. Ronald Nored. The Rev. Nored led his congregation and the Sandy Bottom Community in a revitalization project. As a result of his competent and capable leadership, a community in crisis was transformed into a thriving community. The Rev. Nored is committed to sharing the strengths and weaknesses of his strategies for change with other spiritual leaders. He offers a detailed account of the revitalization project from start to finish in his book, *Reweaving the Fabric*. He summarizes the purpose of the project by saying “In the final analysis, this is what the BEAT process is about—rewewing the fabric of our
shared humanity into a viable community where all can live in dignity and in hope.” (Nored 1999) In essence, Rev. Nored is mentoring other clergy persons through example, sermons, lectures and writings. He undoubtedly challenges them to be actively involved in the affairs of the community that they have been called by God to serve.

I am thoroughly convinced that mentoring future community leaders is needful; nevertheless, it will be a Herculean task. I make this claim because we are dealing with a new generation that has no living memory of slavery or segregation. They are being assimilated into mainstream culture. They are unfamiliar with the struggles, the rejection, the humiliation, the hatred and the indignities, which are a part of the Black experience in America. As a result young Black pulpiteers are uninterested and insensitive to the concerns of the Black community.
CHAPTER V
A DIVINE MANDATE TO PREPARE FUTURE GENERATIONS

Rob a people of their sense of history and take away hope.
Wyatt Walker

History is an accurate record of our past. It includes the places that we have been, the people that we have known, the activities that we have engaged in, and the experiences that we have encountered. The voice of history reminds us of our failures and successes. Moreover, the voices of history remind us of our sorrows and our joys. A failure to heed the voices of history will restrict present opportunities and will ultimately jeopardize future possibilities.

The children of Israel had a rich heritage. They were God’s chosen people, the people that God made a special covenant with. In addition to this, the children of Israel had unique customs and traditions. Furthermore, they were miraculously delivered from Egyptian bondage and led to the Promise Land. The history of the Jews was perpetuated through oral tradition. The history of African-Americans is very similar to that of the Jews. Distinct customs and traditions are a significant part of African-Americans culture. It should also be noted that slavery and oppression are a part of the Black experience. The history of African-Americans like that of the Jew has been reserved through oral tradition.

The central focus of Psalm 78 is God’s mandate for the Jews to inform their children and future generations of God’s blessings to the children of Israel. Fulfilling
this mandate will fulfill future generations to put their trust in God. This chapter is a critical examination of Psalm 78:1-8. Using the methods of historical criticism it is an exegetical study that includes context, text criticism, grammatical criticism, form criticism, source criticism, redaction criticism and contextualization. A critical analyzes of this passage is relevant to the subject of mentoring. Spiritual mentors are divinely called to help establish and strengthen the faith of their protégés. These protégés must be prepared for the uncertainties of the future, because they are the future leaders of the Black churches.

Biblical Text

Psalm 78

A Maskil of Asaph

1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old,

3 things that we have heard and known, that our ancestors have told us.

4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.

5 He established a decree in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded out ancestors to teach to their children,

6 That the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and rise up and tell them to their children,

7 So that they should set their hopes in God, and not forget the works of God, but keeps his commandments;
And that they should not be like their ancestors, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

The Book of Psalms

Biblical scholars have given numerous definitions for the word “psalms”. One such definition is given by J. Wash Watts in his book “Old Testament Teaching.” The word “psalm” in Hebrew signifies a poem to be sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments and this technical meaning restricts its application in the Hebrew Bible to a part of the Psalms. Our usage however, applies it to all, looking upon all as songs sung in praise of God. In this sense Psalms is the equivalent of Book of Praises, or Hymnbook.

Henry Morris agrees with J. Wash Watts in his book, Sampling the Psalms, the psalms means “songs”, probably implying songs that were to be sung with musical accompaniment. (Morris 1978) These technical definitions shed light on what the Psalms were and how they were used in ancient time. It should be noted however, that in contemporary times the Psalms mean different things to different people. There are some people who view the Psalms as the revelation of the awesomeness of God and Gods creation. There are others who understand the Psalms to be a book to aid them in public and private worship. There are also people who interpret the Psalms as a very practical book that provides insights on how to deal with the realities of life. “We were born with this book in our very bones. A small book: 150 poems; 150 steps between death and life; 150 mirrors of our
rebellions and our loyalties, of our agonies and our resurrections.

The book of Psalms is a very unique book. It is quite popular in the contemporary church. While it is true on one hand, there are many uncertainties regarding the book. For example, the various authors and dates of various writings remain in doubt even today. It is also true, on the other hand, that most biblical scholars agree that the book is clearly divided into five sections. The divisions of the books are as followed: Psalms 1 - 41, 42 - 72, 73 - 89, 90 - 106, and 107 - 150.

Ancient Jews had great respect for the Pentateuch and esteemed it very highly. The Pentateuch is often referred to as “The Law.” It is probably referred to as “The Law” because it contains civil, ceremonial and moral laws that were to govern the nation of Israel. The Law is divided into five books that include Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

A critical analysis of the Pentateuch and the Psalms will clearly reveal a number of similarities. First of all, ancient Jews held both the Pentateuch and the Psalms in high esteem. Secondly, the authorship of both books is still a subject for debate. Moses is generally given credit for writing the Pentateuch; while David is generally given credit for writing the Psalms. However, most biblical scholars seem to suggest that there is internal evidence to the contrary. Thirdly, both the Pentateuch and the Psalms are divided into five books. This idea is confirmed by a Christian father of the third century “be sure that this does not escape you, oh studious one, that Hebrews divided the psaltery into five books so that likewise was another
Pentateuch."

The five books of Psalms are divided as follows: Book 1, Psalms 1-41. This book ends with the doxology that is found in 41:13. The common thread, which links these 41 psalms together, is mourning. Book 2, 42-72, the common thread of mourning, which binds Book 1 together also, binds these 31 psalms in a unit. The doxology is found in 72:18-19. It should be noted here that both Books 1 and 2 are referred to as Davidical Psalms. Book 3 is 73-89. The doxology is located is 89:52. These psalms are referred to as Asaphian Psalms. The fourth book is 90-106. The book climaxes with a doxology in 106:48. The writers of this book for the most part are anonymous. Books 3 and 4 are similar in that both are comprised of 17 psalms and the theme of history. In Book 5, 107-150, the doxology is located in 150:6. The theme of the 44 psalms that comprise this book is jubilation. In reference to the authorship, this book is characterized as partly anonymous and partly Davidical.

It is essential for one to have a good understanding of how the Psalms are divided, who wrote them and what the major themes are. A failure to answer these questions can only result in one obtaining an improper interpretation of these sacred writings.

While it is true, on one hand that many biblical scholars agree on many of the details related to the five divisions of Psalms, it is true on the other hand that there are diverse opinions about how the five books evolved. Furthermore, these biblical scholars debate the role that the doxology played in dividing the Psalms. In the Word
Biblical Commentary: Psalms 1-50, Peter C Craig points out these conflicting opinions when he says “Whether the doxologies were inserted by the editor(s), or whether the presence of the doxologies in particular Psalms prompted the editor(s) to choose those points in the text of the Psalter into five books, is uncertain.” (Craigie 1983) Most often when there are critical questions related to sacred writings and how these writings were compiled, theological and ideological dispute is inevitable. In light of the fact that there are various points of view concerning the five books of Psalms, one would be wise to conduct his/her own exegetical study.

Context

It is an undeniable fact that as goes the home, so goes the society. Psalms 78 clearly indicates that Israel was to pass the torch of faith to succeeding generations, thereby assuring future allegiance to God. Robinson Crusoe places Psalms 78 in context by saying “It recapitulates the history of the exodus and God’s providential care for the people of Israel.” (www.wholesomwords.org/biographybiorpspugeon.html) In the opening twelve verses, however, the psalmist gives the reason for telling the story: by rightly hearing the story, our children may trust God. Placing Psalms 78 in it proper context is not an easy task. This is a difficult task because biblical scholars have debated the setting of this particular Psalm for many years. Moreover, they continue to do so in modern times. A critical examination of the biblical text does not reveal the original setting. I am convinced that the text of the Psalms provides clues to the historical context. In the wider biblical text there is an
implication that the temple is still standing. This is clarified in Psalm 78:69, which states; “He built his sanctuary like the high heavens, like the earth, which he has founded forever.” This seems to be an indication that the Psalm should be dated prior to the Babylonian captivity of the Jews. It is interesting to note that there are some scholars who fall into the pre-exilic camp. They date the Psalm prior to the exile period. While these scholars do agree on the era, they disagree on a specific date. For example Marvin E. Tate states in his Word Biblical Commentary that Psalms 78, despite its strong historical allusions, has generated a wide range of proposed dates. (Tate 1990) To some scholars the Psalms triumphant ending with the reign of David indicates a date of composition during that period. The earliest possible date would be in the mid-tenth century, with the argument that because the temple is not mentioned the psalm was probably composed before it was built. Campbell agrees that the origin of the psalm must be close to David’s era, but the loss of the ark and the subsequent destruction of Shiloh would have been a pressing concern in the tenth century. Although many scholars accept the idea that the Psalm should be dated during David’s era, there are still others who believe it should be dated later. According to Clarke’s Commentary of Psalms 78 “The Psalm was probably not written by David, but after the separation of the ten tribes of Israel and after the days of Rehoboam, and before Babylonish captivity”. (Clarke 1996) It appears that most scholars assent to the pre-exilic view. Nevertheless, there are a few scholars who argue that the psalm should be dated after the Babylonian captivity.
This places them in the postexilic camp. It is an undeniable fact that very little is certain about the historic context of Psalm 78. However one can be certain that this psalm clearly teaches that the Israelites were to instruct their children so they would never lose sight throughout their generations. Because of the fact that Psalm 78 is an inter-generational Psalm, I selected it because it is directly relates to the mentoring process. The text suggests that ones natural children must be prepared to face the challenges of the future spiritual children like natural children desperately need instructions and discipline. Without these important ingredients they would not be equipped for the future. This concept is especially true for clergy of the gospel. I hope Psalm 78 will provide insights that will aid in bridging the gap between less experienced clergy and the more experienced clergy. My ultimate goal is to develop a process that will link less experienced clergy with more experienced clergy thereby, resulting in a higher level of professionalism. Psalms 78 is essential for the Black church to understand. It issues a mandate to equip leaders for the future.

**Text Criticism**

When one critically examines a particular biblical text it is imperative to understand that we do not have the original text. This fact alone is a major barrier to obtaining a proper interpretation of the scripture. The truth of the matter is we only have copies of the original text. Scribes who became tired, distracted, sleepy, and discouraged handwrote these copies. Therefore their copies were not always completely accurate.
The text of Psalm 78 contains numerous textual problems. One example is found in verse 1; the Psalmist uses the phrase “my people.” Undoubtedly, Biblical Commentators are divided on the question of who is making this statement. Some commentators believe that King David made the statement. In a commentary on the Psalms of David, Apostolos Makrakis states, “In this Psalm there is a dialogue going on between God and King David, in which God commands His people through the king by telling them. “Give ear, O my people, to my law, etc.”, to which David replies on the part of the people as a whole and, by what he says, indicates that he and his like observe whatever duties they have to God”. In contrast other Biblical commentators suspect that Asaph made the statement “my people.” Matthew Poole, is one such commentator who says, “If Asaph was the composer of this Psalm, he might well call the Israelites his people, not only as he was their Prophet and teacher, but also; because they were of the same country and parentage with him. (Poole 1983)

Evaluating various translations of the Bible is quite helpful in gaining a proper interpretation of Biblical passages. I have chosen to use the following translations of the Bible in my analysis of Psalm 78: The King James Version, The New Revised Standard Version, The New English, New International, and the Jerusalem Bible. A careful reading of the text from each version reveals no major differences. For example the word father is used in verse 3. This same word is used in the King James Version, The New English, and the New International Bibles. In
contrast the New Revised Version and Jerusalem Bible both use the word ancestors. The word fathers refer to male parents of a particular generation. The word ancestors are more inclusive, and it refers to both male and female parents of a particular generation. The same principle must be applied to verse 4. The King James Version, The New International, New Revised Standard version all use the word children, this refers to the offspring of a particular generation both male and female. The Jerusalem Bible uses the word descendants, which are synonymous with children. The New English Bible uses the word sons, a literal interpretation that would apply only to male descendants.

**Grammatical Criticism**

A careful examination of key words is essential to the discovery of the true meaning of the text, this is important because a word may not mean the same now as it did in Old Testament times. Some words were poorly translated from the original language. Moreover, some words have more than one meaning. One of the key words in the text is “parable.” J.D. Crossan defines parable in the Anchor Bible parable as follows: the Hebrew word *masal* signifies properly “a comparison,” then (than) any proverb or saying in which some deeper meaning lies, to be gleamed by means of hidden comparison. In the Anchor Bible, the entire psalm is *masal*. The Mesorah Publication enlightens us by saying a parable refers to the actual words of the Torah itself (*Rashi*). (Crossan) The Torah resembles a parable because it couches eternal, ineffable truths in stories that illustrate abstract concepts in simple
human terms. "I will open", is used in conjunction with parable because a parable is a simple tale that helps to unlock complex and hidden truths, which would otherwise be too difficult to comprehend. These definitions suggest that parables are significant in transmitting spiritual truths to new generations. It is interesting to note that Jesus used parables in order to make the truth crystal clear. Some biblical scholars suggest that Jesus use in Matthew 13 is quite similar to the same usage in Psalm 78. In essence parables help people to comprehend the incomprehensible. Another key term that requires critical study in unfolding the true meaning of this text is “hope.” This term is found in verse 7. Most biblical scholars agree that this word does not mean hope in the sense of desire or expectations. A more precise definition is trust or confidence. According to Karl Paul Donfried in the Harper Bible Dictionary, hope is defined in this manner, Hebrew word, although the most frequent expression of the concept may lie with the Hebrew verbs “to wait, to expect” (kawah) and to be full of confidence, to trust “(batah). (Donfried 1985) This religious concept implies that the ultimate goal of teaching and sharing history with ones descendants is so that they will place their confidence in Yahweh.

Form Criticism

Anyone who explores an individual Psalm would be wise to attempt to place it with similar Psalms. Psalms can be placed in a special category. The various areas in which a Psalm can be categorized include suffering, victory, covenant, praise, pilgrimage, royalty, nature, care, faith, character, thanksgiving, wisdom, and
historical. Psalm 78 is sometime classified as a didactic or wisdom psalm. Scholars who classify this Psalm as a wisdom Psalm are well justified in doing so. They’re justified because the Psalm offers prudence to parents who are faced with the awesome task of preparing future leaders for the world. While it is true that this Psalm is sometime classified as a wisdom psalm it should be noted however that most biblical interpreters classify Psalm 78 as a historical Psalm. In Abiding Astonishment Walter Brueggemann classifies this psalm by saying “To read the “historical Psalms” (Psalms 78, 105, 106 and 136), is to confront vexed problems of history, historicity, historiography. Yet these Psalms are also characteristically treated in Old Testament scholarship as Psalms of historical recital, a rubric which immediately shifts our attention to speech, rhetoric, communication, and eventually literature. Thus in discussing the “The recital of the historical Psalms,” we find ourselves in the interface between “what happened” (history) on the one hand, and “what is remembered” and “how it is said” (rhetoric) on the other. (Bruggemann 1991) Psalm 78 is indeed historical. The Israelites are challenged to recite their history. This would have included the exodus, the plagues and wilderness experience. Reciting their history was significant because it would greatly impact their future.

Source Criticism

In seeking a better understanding of any Psalm, it is beneficial to the researcher to question the source of the writing. A careful review of Psalm 78 reveals
that the text is similar to a passage in Deuteronomy Chapter 6. Both the writer of Deuteronomy and the Psalmist charge the Israelites with the responsibility of transmitting their history to their children. There are biblical scholars who believe that Psalm 78 is based on Deuteronomy 6:6-8, which reads as follows:

6 Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. 7 Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. 8 Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead. (NRSV)

In Marvin E. Tate’s, *Word Biblical Commentary* he agrees with J. W. Rogerson and J. W. McKay that, the authors of Psalm 78 writings are based on Deuteronomy 6. He shares that in Deuteronomy 6, immediately after the giving of the Ten Commandments, Moses tells Israel:

Now this is the commandment--the statues and the ordinances--that the Lord your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy. (v.1) the people are told to ‘teach (these words) carefully to your children and speak of them when you walk along the way and in your lying down and in your rising up’ (v7). (Rogerson and McKay 1977)

I concur with Rogerson, McKay and Tate in their assertion that Psalm 78 is based upon Deuteronomy 6. I am convinced of this claim because the exodus, the plague, and the wilderness pilgrimage are major things in Deuteronomy 6 and Psalm 78.

**Redaction Criticism**

In addition to the Context, Text Criticism, Grammatical Criticism, Form Criticism, and Source Criticism, Redaction Criticism is a vital element in gaining a clearer understanding of the Bible. Redaction Criticism raises various questions,
how has the Biblical text been edited? Can the passage be found in other literature? How has the author reworked other literature to fit his particular usage?

Unfortunately, the data in reference to the editing of Psalm 78 is very limited. In the *Anchor Bible*, Peter C. Craigie seems to suggest that this text could have been taken from Ugaritic poetry. It notes some of the similarities. He states “Another linguistics trait of this composition—though without chronological implications as far as can be made out—is the frequent use of irony, wordplay, and ply on roots. These are all characteristics of Ugaritic poetry, this leads one to conclude that the author of the Psalms borrowed this unique style for his purpose. In addition to this, it must be noted that Psalm 78:1-8, is clearly an introduction or preface to this Psalm. (Craigie 1983)

**Contextualization**

After taking a close and critical look at Psalm 78, one may make an inquiry of what good is this study of the Psalms for the contemporary Black church? I am convinced that the psalm is relevant to the era in which we live. First of all, the psalm teaches the significant role that parents should play in the stability of the home, the church and society. The greatest problem facing the Black community is the destruction of the family. This is a sad and painful reality. Too many of our children are raised in single-parent homes. This is having a devastating effect on the family. There has been an increase on drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, teenage suicide, school dropouts, juvenile delinquency and violent crimes. The escalation in these areas can
be attributed to the destruction of the family. The Black church must develop ministries, which will aid parents in shaping the character of their children.

Secondly, the psalms challenge spiritual leaders to be faithful to the task of equipping those who have been trusted into our care. This includes both clergy and laity. However, special attention should be given to clergy persons. This is critical because young clergy persons are our future leaders of the community of faith and the word.

Thirdly, the Black church must continue to perpetuate a remembering faith. We must never forget our history as a people. Psalm 78 obligates us to proclaim God past liberation deeds. The church must not cease to proclaim this truth. Our children need to know our story as a people. They can only know their true identity when they know their origin. Moreover, they can only understand the present and the future when they understand their history. A child must learn early to believe that he or she is somebody worthwhile and that he or she can do many praiseworthy things. The baby must be made to know that he or she is wanted. The child must have the love of (the family) and the protection they give.... in order to live and flourish.
CHAPTER VI
THE PROJECT

The study design for this project was challenging as well as fulfilling. The design was a ten-week project that was held each Monday and Thursday for two hours, beginning in September 2002 and ending November 2002. Due to the limited theological training in this area, it was difficult to recruit volunteers.

The project design included videotape, audiotapes, teaching, individual presentations and self-inquiry examinations. The sessions also included devotional periods, group discussions, and ended intercessory prayer.

Videotape

No Brainers (The Video Guide to Life Public Speaking)

Audio Tapes

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People  Stephen Covey
The Psychology of High Self-Esteem  Nathaniel Branden

Consultants

Forrest Stewart Yankee, D. Phil LCSW, LMFT, BCD, was a person whom I consulted for assistance in dealing with the psychological aspects of mentoring. Carolyn Brook, D. Min., was a tremendous reservoir of invaluable resources. Ken Finch Ph.D. Counselor, who is also an ordained minister, provided valuable information regarding the inner-healing process.
Independent Presentations

Two of the participants in the project made individual presentations. One presenter informed the group of the concept of self-differentiation, based on Edwin H. Friedman’s 1985 book *From Generation to Generation*. The second presenter focused on the model of *The Wounded Healer*, based on the 1990 book by Henri J. M. Nouwen. The presentations were both informative and inspirational. Furthermore, they were therapeutic.

Generation to Generation

Minister Tammy Anderson presented a seminar on “How the Family Systems Thinking Management and Leadership Impacts Mentoring in the Ministry.” Minister Anderson utilized the book *From Generation to Generation* by Edwin Friedman as a point of reference. Friedman discusses family therapy as it applies to members of the clergy and their particular family situation. He defines the families within which clergy people operate as their own families, their congregational family, and the families within their congregation. Family systems thinking can be extended from clergy people and their families to business people and their families: their own family, their work family, and the families of the people they work with.

In her presentation, Minister Anderson, explained family systems theory as it applies to mentoring clergy and how it applies to leadership in the church. She explained what the family systems are and how they apply to mentoring. Two of the
key elements to understand family systems thinking are emotional triangles and systems perspective. These represent only a small portion of the ideas involved in family systems therapy.

One of the key elements to understanding family systems is how it applies to mentoring. Any three persons or issues may form an emotional triangle. The basic premise of an emotional triangle is that when any two parts of a system become uncomfortable with one another, they will "triangle in" or focus upon a third person, or issue, as a way of stabilizing their own relationship with one another. A triangle in the church can include the pastor, his family, and the church family.

Several laws explain the workings of emotional triangles. First, the third person in a triangle typically provides stability for the relationship between the other two. Second, the third person in a triangle cannot directly change the relationship between the other two people. One can only change a relationship which he is a part of. Third, attempts by a third party to change the relationship between the other two are not only ineffective, but, due to the inertial forces against change, such attempts often produce the opposite of the effect intended. Fourth, as the third party tries to change the relationship of the other two, the third party will likely take on the stress of the other two. Fifth, various triangles in a family system will interlock as such the inertial forces of not only the triangle at hand, but also the other triangles of the system work against change. The person involved in the most triangles in a given family is the most vulnerable, and, potentially, the most stressed. However,
understanding the laws of emotional triangles can give the person in that key position the most power.

The second key element to understanding family systems thinking lies in viewing individuals as a part of a dynamic group of people. The structure of the group, rather than the individual, is the unit of study. A problem with a family church member is seen as only a symptom of a broader problem within the relational structure of the church.

Inducing change within a family is undoubtedly difficult. According to family system thinking, problems should not be addressed by identifying the problematic person and firing him (scapegoat). Rather the problem should be resolved through an adjustment of the family system. Such an adjustment is accomplished by an adjustment in oneself. A pastor or a mentor, for example, is hard pressed to change a system by trying to change the others in the system. He or she can, however, change his own interactions within the system, thereby meddling with the inertia of the system and addressing the problem. This manner of administering change within a system, which Friedman calls, “leadership through self-differentiation,” is the basis for leadership according to family systems theory.

How does all this relate to mentoring clergy? When the mentor knows the background of the protégé it helps to create the foundation of the relationship as well as create the basis of the initial process of mentoring. This initial process deals with guiding the protégé into dealing first and foremost with their personal issues, which
could hinder their ministry. Identifying areas that could impact the effectiveness of one’s ministry is important. Once the protégé’s issues are identified then corrective measures may take place. In other words healing and cleansing can take place and self-differentiation can occur.

The first is to take responsibility for his or her position as the mentor and as the protégé. The second is self-differentiation, the definition his/her own goals and self. Power comes not from trying to triangle someone else, but from being able to resist someone else’s attempt to make a triangle of you. The difficulty arises in accomplishing the last two steps simultaneously. In self-differentiation, the protégés try to triangle their leader with them and their own status quo. The mentor can then resist triangling. The third step to effective mentoring is for the mentor to stay connected with the rest of the system. If the mentor accomplishes the third step, staying in touch, she/he will not alienate the system members. Self-differentiation must not exclude the connectedness. If the mentor clearly defines the direction he or she is going and maintains closeness with the protégé then the protégé will follow their directions.

When a person learns self-differentiation, then that person has learned their identity. When you know who you are, you can be more effective and bold in the word and more available for the work which God has purposed in your life. You will no longer be dictated or defined by man, but by God.
Wounded Healer

The story I am about to tell is true. It is my own personal story, of my own healing experience. I entered the ministry at the very tender and impressionable age of 16. No, there are no preachers in my family. I am not the son of a preacher. But, as God said to Jeremiah "In your mother’s womb, I ordained you to be a prophet.” Now I must admit, I have had some very influential mentors in my life: my pastor; my presiding elder; my maternal grand father’s pastor, who claimed he taught me the art of “whooping”; and several bishops. These men taught me to love the ministry. The one thing they did not teach me was how to overcome a broken heart. Yes, sometimes soldiers will get wounded, and I was one of them. Prior to 1994, I seemed to always be a popular pastor wherever I was appointed to serve. But in 1994, the Bishop insisted that I be appointed to a very difficult church to pastor. I was doing fine at my present church. I did not want to accept the new appointment. The new church was a predominately senior citizen congregation. The Bishop had the nerve to send a thirty something year-old preacher, fresh out of the seminary to this church. On top of that they thrust me into a difficult congregation that resented my age. I was going through personal problems with my first marriage. One would think that the Bishop, presiding elder, and church would reach out to help! But rather than help, they punctured my heart with the fiery darts. The marriage ended up in divorce, and the church decided that they did not want a “thirty-something-year-old divorced
pastor.” Well I was determined that I would not leave, so I decided to stay in hell for three years. Let me say, I did not chase the sisters, I did not become a drunk, and I just wanted to pastor the church in which I was sent to serve. As things got worse, I began to slip into depression, I did not care anymore. Here I was, a long way from home, no relatives and no close friends and the ones across the denomination turned their backs on me. My Bishop deserted me, my presiding elder deserted me, and I never really had the church on my side. Here I was a “Wounded Healer.” The one thing that helped me was that I was called a gifted and anointed preacher by the people that knew me. It would be revival every Sunday morning and then the fight would break out Monday through Saturday. What helped me begin the healing process? After a funeral service of one member, the Rev. Rufus Wood sensed my frustration. Pastor Wood and pastor Ozzie Sessions stood in front of the church. What pastor Wood used on me that day is what psychologist call tough love. He first scolded me for allowing myself to get in the shape I was in. I was an emotional wreck. Then he reminded me of my gift and my anointing. He gave me what I believe was my initial prescription for my healing. “Don’t you let that church see you cry!” “Go in there Sunday and preach the hell out of them.”

After that statement pastor Wood recommended that I purchase and read a book by Henri J. M. Nouwen, entitled *The Wounded Healer*. Well in 1996, I left Bethel Church and in 1997; I withdrew from the denomination. The Bishop barred me from the church. He threatened the pastors if they invited me to preach. What
Pastor R. L. Wood said to me and what Nouwen says in his book became the launching pad for my healing. The first thing I had to do was bandage my own wounds; nobody was going to do that for me. I had to address what I was feeling and meet it head on: “Admit I was wounded.” What I was feeling was very similar to that which Nouwen states in his book: alienation, separation, isolation, and loneliness.

My personal loneliness came from the fact that both of my parents were deceased, and my children lived now five hours away from me. My professional loneliness came from the fact that I was now separated from all of the people that I had grown up with in the church. They had turned their backs on me because of the Bishop’s threats against them. This made me angry. Nouwen suggests in his book that the wounded minister must come to terms with his loneliness. So my solution was to establish new relationships within the community and to continue to serve as a pastor. Instead of being denominationally biased, I reached across the denominational lines and embraced other brothers and sisters, in other denominations and churches. I formed what I hope will be lasting and permanent relationships.

Lastly, Nouwen suggests that as a wounded healer, and one that is overcoming his/her wounds, individuals should use hospitality as a tool to help others who have become wounded overcome their wounds. Give them a friendly space, where they may feel free to come and go, to be close and/or distant, and to rest and to play, to talk and to be silent, to eat and to fast. The paradox Nouwen says: “indeed is that hospitality asks for creation of an empty space where the guest can find his/her
soul.” (Nouwen 1990)

**Group Sessions**

The sessions were designed to enhance the participant’s thinking, feelings, and behavior. During the first session there was a time set aside for getting better acquainted. Each participant introduced him/herself and shared why they chose to participate in the process. They also shared what they would like to gain from the project. The group began to discuss the need for bridging the gap between experienced and less experienced clergy-persons. During this session the atmosphere was warm, cordial, pleasant, and relaxed. Participants left this session inquiring about the itinerary of the next session.

At the second session there was a group discussion concerning the definitions and characteristics of the terms mentor and protégé. Following this session each participants shared a brief written essay of someone who had mentored them. The reading of the essays was quite moving. Some of the presenters were moved to tears. These moments of reflections prompted a unique interaction among the group. This session ended with each less experienced minister selecting a seasoned minister to mentor him/her.

The fourth group session focused on the concept of self-differentiation. A presentation was given by one of the participants who is a minister and a professional counselor. She dealt with the concept of self-differentiation from family based on the book *From Generation to Generation*, by Edwin Friedman. (Friedman 1985) This
book is on the dynamics of organizational and religious leadership as seen through the lens of the multi-generational family systems model. Friedman uses case studies and examples drawn from his own leadership experience and used them to illustrate how leadership can be understood and transformed by having an awareness of three major systems that directly affect organizational leadership:

1. The personal multi-generational family system of the leader
2. The organization itself as a system with both functional and dysfunctional elements.
3. The family systems of those persons within the organization.

Friedman clearly shows how these three sets of systems intertwine with one another to make an organization function in a certain way. He asserts that by better understanding the dynamics of these systems and how they affect one another, leaders can move from a transactional style of leadership to one that is more transformational in the way it functions. *From Generation to Generation* is a helpful resource in seeking to gain a better understanding of one’s own family of origin issues and how these dynamics manifest themselves in our relationships throughout the life cycle. The group was prompted to think critically about their family origin. Moreover, the group was challenged to seek the individuality while yet remaining connected to their family.

The fifth session was one of the most memorable experiences during this project. A seasoned pastor made a presentation on the subject concerning, “The
Wounded Healer*, based on the book by Henri J. Nouwen's book by the same name. This pastor gave his presentation in the form of a pastoral care verbatim. He shared how his denomination taught him to love God, the church and the ministry. He then pointed out their failure to teach him how to heal a broken heart. This pastor openly exposed the wounds of his personal and professional life. Furthermore, he told of how he received a measure of healing. This unique presentation left every person present in tears. This session was therapeutic; participants began to openly expose their wounds. It was quite clear that a unique bonding had occurred in this group.

In the final session a post examination was administered. Besides this there was a time set aside for evaluating the mentor and protégé relationships in the overall project. The group expressed their desire to continue the process by establishing a permanent mentoring program in Panama City, Florida.

**Strengths of the Project**

A significant list of immediately apparent strengths was evidenced:

- The group bonded quickly;
- Participants were punctual;
- Participants communicated effectively in writing and in speech;
- Humor helped to relax the group;
- The group participated in critical thinking;
- There was more than 100 years of combined ministerial experience;
- Participants were eager and excited throughout the project;
The merits of a qualified instructor;

The participants were transparent (willing to share information and personal experiences);

Consistency was an asset;

Positive directions were given and received for all clergy;

Freedom of expression prevailed;

Communication skills were enhanced;

Experienced clergy participated.

Much of this success can probably be attributed to the fact that Black preachers traditionally viewed the Black church and the community as one entity and were eager to be associated with the effort.

**Weaknesses of the Project**

The primary weaknesses of the project surfaced as the following:

- Some of the pastors were frequently absent due to professional obligations;
- Some participants had problems staying focused on the subject matter;
- Additional time to adequately address every concern was not available;
- Material specifically related to mentoring clergy is scarce;
- Inconsistent attendance impacted results

**Limitation of the Project**

Some project limitations were:

- Limited intellect of some participants
> Closed mind-set of some attendees
> Some highly opinionated and less objective attitudes
> Age differences
> Time allotted for the project

**Reflections by Participants**

*(The following accounts provide some insight of project participants on the value and intended use of this project on their lives and/or ministries. Coming from a diverse group of persons, they represent actual comments from program participants.)*

One Wednesday night while attending a church revival, God introduced me to my Spiritual Mentor. This man would be a key figure in my growth as a minister. At that particular point in time I was trying to prepare myself for the corporate world, never realizing or having any intention of using my ability for kingdom building. This night would change not only my direction, but my focus as well.

Pastor Wood’s sermon that night was very moving and my life changed. This sermon convicted me and showed me how I was heading my life in the wrong direction. His sermon was well prepared, very informative, and, above all, anointed. I was overwhelmed that night and accepted my calling to the ministry that very evening. For five years now, Pastor Wood has been instrumental in teaching me how
to minister in the times in which we live.

I was taking college courses at the time trying to make myself more marketable for a career move. However, after my accepting my calling, the desire for seeking self-gratification changed to doing the work of the Lord. After some real soul searching, trying to come to grips with the fact that God really wanted to utilize me for kingdom building, I begin trying to understand how to be a good minister. Pastor Wood’s style of preaching was different from that of many others that I had heard before. Pastor Wood quickly showed me the difference between ministering and just standing before people and speaking. He quickly began to make me understand that preaching was just a part of the ministry. What you do away from the pulpit is what’s really important. He taught me that going out and putting faith into action was of greater importance than trying to get people to shout.

Pastor Wood emphasized the obligation of being a laborer for Christ, rather than trying to be a performer, emphasizing that one’s life lived before people will be the greatest sermon ever preached. He also stressed the need for me to be who God called me to be and not try to be someone else, remembering that God had called me for a particular work that He wanted me to fulfill. This would be a foundation that would help me understand my own ministry later.

Early on, I still could not quite get over the longing to be an effective speaker. He gave me two books that were not what I expected, one that dealt with a form of history of Black preaching found in a book called *Celebration* by Henry Mitchell.
They were not what I wanted, because I wanted to learn how to make people shout. However, the material that he shared with me allowed me to understand the ministry more, as well as, how to prepare a sermon. These first pieces of literature and guidance aided me on the course to developing into my own identity. They caused me to take a look at what ministry entails and taught me how to prepare my own sermon and not emulate someone else, in order to get a reaction from the crowd. In essence, he showed me how to fish instead of giving me a fish.

Secondly, I was in school and did not feel, at the time, that what I was studying would be relevant for the work of the Lord. I wanted to change my major to religion. Once again I went to Pastor Wood and the advice he gave me was that to be an effective minister in the era and area in which we live requires a diverse repository of skills, gifts, and graces. Adherence to this advice proved to be significant to the ministry because I would eventually take over the Human Service Corporation of my church and would need those technological skills to be effective in assisting the community.

After finishing my studies, I would end up in a secular job, which advanced quickly, but the hand of God moved in my life and caused me to seek Pastor Wood again to help me in another phase of the ministry. Though we talked often, this would be another turning point in doing the Lord’s work for me. Circumstances unfolded that allowed me the opportunity to begin working in the Church Human Service. The problem with it was that I did not understand the relationship between
community services and doing the work of the Lord. Over the course of time Pastor Wood helped me to understand that ministry goes beyond church worship. We must be effective in dealing with the social issues that affect our community. Jesus himself did not just stay in the church, but went out helping people. Pastor Wood helped me take a more holistic approach to the ministry.

Dealing with the people away from the pulpit is a lesson that I am learning more and more about, even as I participate in this mentoring program. Pastor Wood has shown me that we can do a lot of great things away from home and come up short when it comes to our own families. We can inflict hurt on our spouses and children that cannot only tear the family apart, but also possibly turn them away from God.

I remember, as a child, my father spending so much time in church that I became angry, not ever wanting to be a preacher. Many times we are being hypocrites trying to help people with their family crisis and not dealing with our own family. Pastor Wood has helped me to understand that home needs to be attended and taken as very important part of the ministry.

Pastors/Clergy many times have a lot of hats to wear, but trusting and building a strong relationship with God gives the strength through Jesus Christ to do what he or she has called us to perform.

Having shared in the mentoring project with Rev. Wood has been a most
rewarding experience. I enjoyed the fellowship of both experienced, less experienced, and inspiring clergy. We were able to bond, share information, get in touch with our personal feelings, and receive a degree of healing. The information presented was very well selected and the presenters were adequately prepared.

I feel that a hunger for knowledge has been prompted in each of us and we look forward to a permanent structured program of this magnitude for our area.

As a protégé, I was able to gain more knowledge on certain aspects of administration in the church, also developing and enhancing my self-individualism. I have also gained more knowledge about the Bible that can and will prepare me for what the Lord has in store for me in the future.

This class has been a personal blessing in my life, because being young in the ministry, there has been a lot deposited into me to help meet some challenges and goals in the ministry. I know that as a minister, this is not about us alone, but about the Lord and people in general. The additional benefit was to be able to let folk know that we are human with the same kind of hurts and feelings as other and that we are not above reproach.

I feel that this was a great class. As a young minister, the mentoring project
gave me insight on and about a lot of good issues. It helped me in dealing with others, dealing with myself, and dealing with the future. I hope that the classes can continue, so that others may be able to reap their benefit.

The Project and Goal of the Ministry

The first goal of this project was to create a process that would bridge the gap between more seasoned and less-seasoned clergy persons. Participants believed that the separation of seasoned and less-seasoned clergy persons was the major barrier to the mentoring process. Participants further stated that the gap for the most part was an inter-generational problem. Moreover, participants felt rejected and alienated from other clergy persons. However, they felt this project was timely and gave them hope in improving ministerial relationships.

The second goal was to discover if this project would enhance the growth and development of clergy persons in the area of self-differentiation, inner healing and excellence in the ministry. It is important for spiritual leaders to reflect on the impact of their family on their personal lives. Such reflection will improve the quality of the spiritual leader's life and his or her relationship with others. The spiritual leader must also present their wounds to God and seek healing. Furthermore, a spiritual leader must not settle for mediocrity, but strive for excellence in the ministry. This project was particularly designed to challenge, motivate, stimulate, affirm, and empower local clergy.

The third goal was to broaden my understanding of the mentoring process and
become a more effective mentor in the ministry. This project provided me with new perspectives on mentoring. I came to realize that everybody mentors through his or her conduct, either positively or negatively. Mentoring is not a one-sided relationship. I can truthfully say that I gained a greater knowledge and deeper appreciation for the mentoring process in the Black church.

**Future Implications for the Ministry**

I am convinced that this project has benefited me in ways that are almost indescribable. Words are inadequate to express how my life has been influenced. This project prompted me to remember that in order for my ministry to be people oriented, it must first be God centered. A mentoring relationship involves giving of yourself physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. This can only be done when you are in tune with God. This process helps to renew my faith in God and strengthen my relationship with God. I now view God as the greatest mentor, who set a perfect example for humankind in the person of Jesus the Christ. This project prompted me to rededicate myself to follow God, wherever God leads.

As a result of my learning experience, I have chosen to dedicate my time, talents, and resources to help prepare the future leaders. This project made me cognizant of the fact that I am indebted to those who have invested in me. I am indebted to my God, my family, my church, my professors, and my spiritual mentors. In view of this fact, I am inspired not only to mentor clergy, but also to continue mentoring 4th grade students at the elementary school in my neighborhood. The vast
majority of the student population is Black, come from single-parent homes, and many lack positive male role model figures in their lives. These children need and desire mentors.
CHAPTER VII
EVALUATION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT

After executing a research project, it is essential to evaluate the process. Evaluating is necessary because it provides the researcher and the participants with vital and relevant data. Assessing a project can also provide invaluable information to other researchers who are interested in studying the same or similar topics.

We now come to the conclusion of this project, attempting to measure the growth of clergy in a mentoring process, which includes self-differentiation, a measure of healing for wounds, and higher level of professionalism. This chapter includes the test results of the participants, the writers’ reflections concerning the success of failures of the project, and future implications of the writer’s ministry.

Comparison of Groups

Eleven participants completed questionnaires for evaluation. Several tables are given to depict group variances:

➢ Table 1, Age Range;
➢ Table 2, Gender;
➢ Table 3, Marital Status;
➢ Table 4, Education;
➢ Table 5, Denominations;
➢ Table 6, Ministry Status
Information obtained from entry cards that were required of each participant at the initial group session provided the following additional breakdowns.

**Table 1 - Ages of Group Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>19-29</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19-29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2 - Gender of Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3 - Marital Status of Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 - Educational Status of Each Participant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Status</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Theological School</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal College</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 - Denominational Affiliation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of God Two</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of Christ Written in Heaven</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Gospel Methodist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 - Status in Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status in Ministry</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Pastors</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired Pastors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Clergy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

After twenty-two years of preaching and eighteen years of pastoring, I am very concerned about the future leaders of the Black church. I am particularly cognizant of the fact that the leadership that I provide will directly impact many of these future leaders. In an attempt to address the lack of mentors in the ministry in the Black churches of Panama City, Florida, I chose to conduct a doctoral research project, the critical question being “How does one develop a process in the Black church which will bridge the gap between more experienced clergy and less experienced clergy, thereby resulting in self-differentiation, a measure of healing for wounds, and a higher level of professionalism in the ministry?”

Recruiting participants for this research project was not an easy task. Perhaps this can be attributed to the complacency and apathy that are so prevalent in this community. Nevertheless, the attendees who agreed to participate clearly manifested signs of growth as a result of this project. In light of the fact that the time allotted for this project was limited, the participants expressed a desire to continue their work in the areas of self-differentiation and professionalism. Moreover, they have suggested that we take the necessary steps to establish a permanent mentoring program for clergy. In view of my special love for clergy, particularly those who are new to the work, I am fully committed to invest my time, talent, and resources in order to make their suggestion and my dream a reality.
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