

PREDICTORS OF TRUST BETWEEN THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST PASTOR AND  
CONGREGATION

by

JARED THOMPSON

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Jared Thompson

Approved: February 9, 2023

Dr. Robert Franklin  
Dissertation Committee Chair

Dr. Jason Neill  
Dissertation Committee Member

Dr. Timothy Kotnour  
Dissertation Committee Member

Dr. Kyle J. A. Small  
Director, Center for Leadership and Organizations



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## ABSTRACT

Trust is at a low point in American life regarding institutions in general but particularly the church. This study examined the relationship between a Southern Baptist pastor and the congregants that he serves. Specifically, a model was proposed in which perceived consistency between words and actions, perceived warmth, and perceived competence predict trust in the pastor from the congregation.

To test this model, a quantitative study with a survey design was performed. A survey was created using a combination of instruments for authentic leadership, behavioral integrity, competence, warmth, and trust. The survey was distributed through digital mediums to Southern Baptist church attendees for completion. There were 347 completed surveys over a span of six weeks. After the data was collected, a stepwise multiple regression was performed to analyze the data.

The results showed that both perceived consistency between words and actions and perceived warmth have a positive relationship with trust in the pastor. Perceived competence was statically significant when tested by itself against trust in a simple regression, but it was excluded from the model when controlling for perceived warmth and consistency. Consistency was the best predictor for trust, followed by warmth.

Conclusions for this study include the importance for pastor-leaders to focus on consistency between their words and actions and warmth in their interpersonal relationships. Competence may be important for other outcomes, but it did not show to be as important for

establishing trust as the other variables. Further research around consistency and warmth are also suggested as a model for consistency should be explored further in the field of leadership.

JARED THOMPSON

PREDICTORS OF TRUST BETWEEN THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST PASTOR AND  
CONGREGATION

Under the direction of DR. ROBERT FRANKLIN

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### Background for the Study

In less than twenty years, Mars Hill went from a church plant in Seattle to one of the largest churches in the US, to dissolving. The podcast, “The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill,” tells the story of well-known pastor, Mark Driscoll, and the church he founded, Mars Hill.<sup>1</sup> The church started in Seattle in 1996, grew into one of the largest churches in the US, and then dissolved in 2015. The downfall of the church was the result of bullying tactics, angry governance, and mistreatment of elders and staff by the lead pastor, Driscoll. He reportedly became narcissistic, pushed the staff to a place of exhaustion, and eventually lost the trust of his elder board. He was fired from his position, and the church broke apart into different churches rather than one church with many locations. The first-hand accounts chronicled in the podcast give evidence of mistreatment and bullying. Through the stories recounted, it seems that Driscoll started out desiring to be a trustworthy, authentically Christian leader, but over time he developed a narcissistic personality that cause him to behave in untrustworthy ways.

It is sad enough that a story like this would happen even once within the church of Jesus Christ, especially one so highly documented and widely known. Unfortunately, this story is all too common in the American church. Stories of pastors bullying their staff, being unfaithful to their wives, and other behavior unbecoming of a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ have

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<sup>1</sup> Mike Cospers, “The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill,” n.d., <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-rise-and-fall-of-mars-hill/id1569401963>.

become extremely prevalent in the news cycle. Ravi Zacharias,<sup>2</sup> James MacDonald,<sup>3</sup> and Carl Lentz<sup>4</sup> might never have been listed in the same sentence due to their theological and methodological differences in Christian ministry. However, they now headline a list of ministry leaders whose reputation suffered decline because of moral failure. These stories have become so widespread that, according to a 2019 Gallup poll, only 37 percent of Americans say they have confidence in the institution of “the church or organized religion.”<sup>5</sup> People are hesitant to trust the church because many of the leaders of the church have shown that they are not trustworthy.

James MacDonald’s story holds the most resemblance to Mark Driscoll’s situation of these examples because he did not have a sexual moral setback as is commonly the case with high profile ministry leaders like Zacharias and Lentz. MacDonald was the founding and senior pastor of Harvest Bible Chapel in Illinois. The church eventually grew to 13,000 weekly attendees at one time in the mid-2010’s.<sup>6</sup> The church’s website describes Harvest Bible Chapel as “a non-charismatic, conservative, evangelical fellowship that welcomes all who know Jesus

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<sup>2</sup> Daniel Silliman and Kate Shellnutt, “Ravi Zacharias Hid Hundreds of Pictures of Women, Abuse During Messages, and a Rape Allegation,” News & Reporting, accessed November 1, 2022, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/february/ravi-zacharias-rzim-investigation-sexual-abuse-sexting-rape.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Kate Shellnutt, “Harvest Elders Say James MacDonald Is ‘Biblically Disqualified’ From Ministry,” News & Reporting, accessed November 1, 2022, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2019/november/harvest-elders-say-james-macdonald-biblically-disqualified.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Trepany, “Carl Lentz, Former Hillsong Pastor Who Baptized Justin Bieber, Accused of Sexual Abuse,” USA TODAY, accessed November 1, 2022, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/celebrities/2021/06/02/carl-lentz-ex-hillsong-pastor-sexual-abuse-allegations/7514807002/>.

<sup>5</sup> Gallup Inc, “U.S. Confidence in Organized Religion Remains Low,” Gallup.com, July 8, 2019, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/259964/confidence-organized-religion-remains-low.aspx>.

<sup>6</sup> “Ministry History | James MacDonald Ministries,” James MacDonald Ministries |, December 2, 2019, <https://jamesmacdonaldministries.org/history/>.

Christ as their Savior and all who are seeking Him.”<sup>7</sup> MacDonald was accused of anger issues, poor treatment of staff, and fostering a contentious work environment. He confessed to “careless and hurtful words” and “a regression into sinful patterns of fleshly anger and self-pity that wounded co-workers and others.”<sup>8</sup> MacDonald began to exhibit behavior that was inconsistent with behavior that the church elders considered necessary for Christian leadership. He was essentially deemed inauthentic and no longer worthy to be trusted for leadership in the church.

An updated Gallup poll indicated the same lack of trust in both the church and in clergy. From 2019 to 2022, trust in the church fell from the 37 percent mentioned above to just 31 percent.<sup>9</sup> That is down from 68 percent in 1975, according to data collected by using the same survey since 1973.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, in another poll, only 36 percent of people said that pastors have very high or high levels of honesty and ethics.<sup>11</sup> This data shows that distrust of the church extends to distrust of the clergy. Pastors have significant hurdles in developing relationships because of the negative stereotypes that are being formed in the current culture about them.

Furthermore, the current situation in the U.S. adds friction to the relationship between church leaders and people. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and political polarization in general,

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<sup>7</sup> “What We Believe – Harvest Bible Chapel,” accessed December 8, 2022, <https://www.harvestbible.org/what-we-believe/>.

<sup>8</sup> Shellnutt, “Harvest Elders Say James MacDonald Is ‘Biblically Disqualified’ From Ministry.”

<sup>9</sup> Gallup Inc, “Confidence in U.S. Institutions Down; Average at New Low,” Gallup.com, July 5, 2022, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/394283/confidence-institutions-down-average-new-low.aspx>.

<sup>10</sup> Aaron Earls, “Pastors and Churches Face Historic Lack of Trust,” Lifeway Research, July 12, 2022, <https://research.lifeway.com/2022/07/12/pastors-and-churches-face-historic-lack-of-trust/>.

<sup>11</sup> Gallup Inc, “Military Brass, Judges Among Professions at New Image Lows,” Gallup.com, January 12, 2022, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/388649/military-brass-judges-among-professions-new-image-lows.aspx>.

there have been real rifts in the American church. LifeWay Research reported in August 2020 that 27 percent of pastors indicated that they faced severe contentiousness in their church over their handling of COVID-19 procedures.<sup>12</sup> In July of 2020, Barna reported that 14% of churchgoers changed churches during the pandemic and 32 percent stopped going altogether.<sup>13</sup> Anecdotal evidence supports the conclusion that these trends remain. LifeWay Research also published 2021 data indicating that, while 91 percent of churchgoers claimed they would return to in-person worship in early 2021, 1 in 4 still had not as of late 2021.<sup>14</sup> Many congregants decided to go to a different church, and many decided not to go back at all.

Many pastors may be facing depression and fear of closing their doors. Chuck Lawless, noted author and church consultant, predicts that many pastors will resign when the pandemic is “over.”<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, even for pastors whose attendance and ministry are doing well, their congregations are very different than they were before the pandemic. There is also evidence to show that a large migration from more heavily populated areas of the country to more rural areas for a variety of reasons is occurring.<sup>16</sup> That means that there are great adjustments that will be

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<sup>12</sup> “5 COVID-19 Problems That Worsened for Pastors This Summer,” Lifeway Research, August 7, 2020, <https://lifewayresearch.com/2020/08/07/5-covid-19-problems-that-worsened-for-pastors-this-summer/>.

<sup>13</sup> “One in Three Practicing Christians Has Stopped Attending Church During COVID-19,” Barna Group, accessed August 11, 2021, <https://www.barna.com/research/new-sunday-morning-part-2/>.

<sup>14</sup> Aaron Earls, “Lifeway Research: 22 Vital Stats for Ministry in 2022,” The Baptist New Mexican, accessed July 13, 2022, [https://gobnm.com/other\\_news/lifeway-research-22-vital-stats-for-ministry-in-2022/article\\_efb9da42-900b-11ec-81e0-1b3d47602104.html](https://gobnm.com/other_news/lifeway-research-22-vital-stats-for-ministry-in-2022/article_efb9da42-900b-11ec-81e0-1b3d47602104.html).

<sup>15</sup> “6 Reasons Why Some Pastors May Resign Soon after the COVID Crisis | ChuckLawless.Com,” accessed August 11, 2021, <http://chucklawless.com/2020/07/6-reasons-why-some-pastors-may-resign-soon-after-the-covid-crisis/>.

<sup>16</sup> “The Great Migration of 2020: People from New York and California Moved in Drove This Year - Here Are the States That Benefited from the Mass Exodus, from Idaho to Texas,” Business Insider, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.businessinsider.in/policy/economy/news/the-great-migration-of-2020-people-from-new-york->



necessary for pastors in local congregations who are experiencing people with new worldviews move into their communities.

These data on recent complicating factors for pastors who seek to build trust with people show that it is more difficult than ever to build trust. Between the decrease in confidence in organized religion, greater political polarization, and the shifts in church attendance even among people who would claim to be “churchgoers,” building trust is a moving target for pastors in 2022. Though the challenges are different now than they have been in the past, building trust in local congregations has always faced difficulties related to societal issues. Generally, these issues are due to a crisis of trust in institutions. The church is only one of many institutions that are affected by this lack of trust. This will be further explored in Chapter 2.

### The Southern Baptist Convention

This study takes place in the context of the SBC, where churches are democratic and autonomous. While this is helpful in many ways, it does present unique difficulties in establishing trust for the pastor. First, because the churches are autonomous, pastors in today’s church climate deal with ambiguity of the role of the pastor in Southern Baptist church.<sup>17</sup> Each congregation differs on just how much of the pastor’s position entails authority on issues of leadership.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, every time the pastor moves churches or people move to the church he

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and-california-moved-in-drove-this-year-here-are-the-states-that-benefited-from-the-mass-exodus-from-idaho-to-texas/articleshow/79944894.cms.

<sup>17</sup> Larry C Ingram, “Leadership, Democracy, and Religion: Role Ambiguity among Pastors in Southern Baptist Churches,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 20, no. 2 (June 1981): 119–29.

<sup>18</sup> Ingram.

serves, he<sup>19</sup> must discover the new expectations being placed on him by the people. The pastor may then need to slowly shift those expectations or simply live by them for the duration of the pastorate. In any case, the pastor needs to establish trust with the congregation, so that whatever the expectations for leadership are, he has the social capital to encourage engagement with his leadership.

The second unique complication for the SBC pastor is that they are hired and fired directly by the local church congregation, which is the result of the churches' autonomy. The concept of autonomous churches means that the churches could be ousted by the convention for theological inconsistency, but the churches, in most cases, are not owned, supported, or otherwise held by the SBC. Therefore, the SBC is a loosely coupled system where the constituent parts of the organization are loosely connected, and many individual churches follow suit with this structure. Mainline Protestant denominations, such as the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches, differ because the pastor is not directly hired by the local congregation but is assigned to the church by a higher governing body, which is a result of their tight hierarchical structure from the denominational leadership down to the congregation. The pastor also is more accountable in a sense to the denominational leadership than to the local congregation.<sup>20</sup> Challenges for SBC pastors may not be more difficult than those of pastors in the mainline denominations, but they are certainly different concerning trust. This discussion of

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<sup>19</sup> The Baptist Faith and Message 2000, governing document of the SBC, explains, "While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture." The pastor will be described as "he" for the remainder of this paper because the study occurs in the context of the SBC.

<sup>20</sup> Peter K. Takayama and Lynn Weber Cannon, "Formal Polity and Power Distribution in American Protestant Denominations," *Sociological Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (1979): 325.

loosely coupled systems and implications for building trust in the SBC will be explored further in Chapter Two.

### Change Requires Trust

Trust is also imperative for the pastor to establish with the congregation because the culture is changing rapidly. This is assuming that the pastor desires to affect change to reach their community, which may not always be case. However, if the pastor must lead the church through any change that takes place, yet change is difficult in any organization including the church. Trust is necessary to help pastors navigate inevitable changes in the church. Given recent days, the rate at which pastors are expected to change and respond to change is unprecedented. I believe myself and other pastors to be genuine, yet it can sometimes seem as though members do not trust a pastor's judgement on a situation when he truthfully and diligently prayed about it. It is in these moments when a pastor feels that he has honestly worked to find biblical and helpful solutions for the church and then meets resistance from the people that the question becomes, "Why do they not trust me to navigate this change?" This is, at least in part, because the largest deterrent to the success of change initiatives is human resistance.

The culture at-large is changing its perspective on the trustworthiness of the institution of the church, which requires a change in ministry methodology from the church, yet change is very often met with resistance. This can be an endless cycle for churches and leaders because trust is needed to enact change, but some changes are needed to increase trust. Trust may seem like an obviously necessary component of church leadership, but it is even more necessary in today's climate because of historic levels of distrust of churches and institutions in general.<sup>21</sup> Resistance

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<sup>21</sup> Earls, "Pastors and Churches Face Historic Lack of Trust."

to change is a predictable phenomenon under Abraham Maslow's common "hierarchy of needs" paradigm. In the hierarchy, the need for safety is second only to physiological needs.<sup>22</sup> This means that people not only want but need to feel safe in their environment. There is little to disrupt that need for safety like major change, particularly in a place from which they normally find safety, like their church. Jeff Iorg in his book, *Leading Major Change in Your Ministry*, says that change is so hard for church members because they always feel the pain of loss in a change initiative.<sup>23</sup> The phenomenon of change is like bulldozing the members' home in some cases. Kotter and Schlesinger agree with the idea that change is loss by positing that people are resistant to change because they are afraid to lose something of value.<sup>24</sup> Change in the church and in many other settings will receive resistance.

The literature on change does offer some potential solutions for dealing with resistance to change. Jos H. Pieterse and colleagues show that resistance to change may be mitigated by effective communication or "professional discourse."<sup>25</sup> Choi also displays that the literature reveals some variables that can have a positive effect on attitudes of employees toward change, such as "include an organizational culture and climate characterized by employee involvement and information sharing, organizational capabilities to accommodate change, effective leadership

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<sup>22</sup> A. H Maslow and Inc Recorded Books, *A Theory of Human Motivation* (Lanham: Start Publishing LLC, 1943), 8, <http://rbdigital.oneclickdigital.com>.

<sup>23</sup> Jeff Iorg, *Leading Major Change in Your Ministry* (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group, 2018).

<sup>24</sup> John P. Kotter and Leonard A. Schlesinger, "Choosing Strategies for Change," *Harvard Business Review*, August 2008, 130–39.

<sup>25</sup> Jos H. Pieterse, Matjolein C.J. Caniëls, and Thijs Homan, "Professional Discourses and Resistance to Change," ed. Donna Carlon, *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 25, no. 6 (October 12, 2012): 798–818, <https://doi.org/10.1108/09534811211280573>.

practices, a successful history of change, participation and involvement in the decision making process or change projects, and information sharing about change implementation, to name just a few.”<sup>26</sup>

Additionally, Elrod and Tippett emphasize communication and support. This is achieved by communicating clear expectations that are achievable. They also encourage continual communication not only of the “summit” but also of every incremental step that will be required to get there.<sup>27</sup> Along those lines, Kotter and Schlesinger encourage education and communication about the change. They also add other possible factors in mitigating resistance to change, which include participation and involvement, facilitation and support, and negotiation and agreement. Kotter also explains that manipulation and coercion are tactics that are sometimes used but have negative drawbacks.<sup>28</sup> Ford points out that the change agent should not assume that they are objective in their assessment of a situation, which then causes them to assume that they are not contributing to the resistance being experienced.<sup>29</sup> Ford also encourages change agents to embrace resistance because it helps to make the change process better by forcing the change agent to communicate better, include others more, and “return to the purpose.”<sup>30</sup> Resistance to

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<sup>26</sup> Myungweon Choi, “Employees’ Attitudes toward Organizational Change: A Literature Review,” *Human Resource Management* 50, no. 4 (August 7, 2011): 479–500, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20434>.

<sup>27</sup> P. David Elrod II and Donald D. Tippett, “The ‘Death Valley’ of Change,” *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 15, no. 3 (2002): 273–91.

<sup>28</sup> Kotter and Schlesinger, “Choosing Strategies for Change.”

<sup>29</sup> Jeffrey D. Ford, Laurie W. Ford, and Angelo D’amelio, “Resistance to Change: The Rest of the Story,” *Academy of Management Review* 33, no. 2 (April 2008): 362–77, <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.2008.31193235>.

<sup>30</sup> Jeffrey D. Ford and Laurie W. Ford, “Stop Blaming Resistance to Change and Start Using It,” *Organizational Dynamics* 39, no. 1 (January 2010): 24–36, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2009.10.002>.

change is inevitable, but it can be mitigated and even embraced in many situations to bring about transformational change.

Most relevant to this study were the findings of Hay and colleagues who were able to support the hypothesis that trust in management was negatively related to resistance to change.<sup>31</sup> Having a high level of trust with the congregation is so important for the pastor because it will help him to navigate through inevitable change. Trust with the congregation can assist the pastor in mitigating resistance to the kinds of changes that are inevitable in a post-pandemic world.<sup>32</sup>

### Statement of the Problem

Trust in the church and in pastors is declining, and it is essential for pastors to know how to build trust in their communities and congregations. Pastors cannot assume that they have the trust of their local communities and congregations just because of their title. In these constantly shifting and uncertain times, it is vital that pastors discover authentic and genuine ways to establish trusting relationships between themselves and their congregations. Before going any further, this study assumes that pastors approach their roles with a spirituality of genuineness and faithfulness to God and others. This study is not intended to help insincere people manipulate others into trusting them.<sup>33</sup> Instead, this study aims to help genuinely loving and caring pastors

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<sup>31</sup> Georgia J. Hay, Sharon K. Parker, and Aleksandra Luksyte, “Making Sense of Organisational Change Failure: An Identity Lens,” *Human Relations* 74, no. 2 (February 2021): 180–207, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726720906211>.

<sup>32</sup> John M. Amis and Royston Greenwood, “Organisational Change in a (Post-) Pandemic World: Rediscovering Interests and Values,” *Journal of Management Studies (John Wiley & Sons, Inc.)* 58, no. 2 (March 2021): 582–86, <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12663>.

<sup>33</sup> There is emerging research on narcissism and pastoral ministry. This study seeks subjects who are not on the narcissism spectrum but have been tested as faithful and authentic servants in the church.

navigate this cultural climate by helping them to understand some factors that may lead to trust between themselves and their congregations.

### Biblical Framing of the Problem

Though there are new challenges for the pastor in establishing trusting relationships, this has always been a necessary element of pastoral leadership. The Apostle Paul, when writing to Titus, said that a pastor should not pursue, “dishonest gain,” and he further adds, “He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.”<sup>34</sup> This is clearly issuing the charge to Titus to behave in a trustworthy manner and share the trustworthy message. Paul also said in 1 Timothy, “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service.”<sup>35</sup> Paul implies here that the mere fact that he was appointed to service as a preacher and teacher of the gospel, he is required to be trustworthy. He assumes the trustworthiness of one who has been called to service. He does not say that this trustworthiness is innate, however. Paul goes on to say that he used to be a violent man and an unbeliever, but God’s grace made him a trustworthy servant. This fact causes the pastor never to develop a feeling of superiority because of his trustworthiness, but rather to be humbled by God’s grace, which made him trustworthy.

In his first letter to the church at Thessalonica, Paul says,

For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts. You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as

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<sup>34</sup> Titus 1:9.

<sup>35</sup> 1 Timothy 1:12.

apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. Instead, we were like young children among you.<sup>36</sup>

Paul, again, explains the necessity of pastors and preachers to be trustworthy. Paul and his colleagues did not manipulate or coerce others. They were not interested in financial gain. They were as innocent as young children and encouraged the people even though they had the spiritual authority to assert themselves. They have been entrusted with the message of the gospel that is the sole opportunity for redemption and reconciliation with God. This is a heavy burden, but an incredible opportunity. Paul goes further to say that trustworthiness is rooted in the ability of the pastor to operate without manipulative tactics or coercive authority. The pastor has an innate sense of security because of his relationship with Christ and his confidence in the mission. The pastor aims, not for compliance from congregants, but trusting relationship based on the pastor's demonstration of trustworthy behavior. Paul says, "You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous, and blameless we were among you who believed."<sup>37</sup> The pastor should be known as a person who is trustworthy.

The Apostle Peter shared that Christians in general should, "Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us."<sup>38</sup> Every Christian is called to be trustworthy and to be seen by outsiders and insiders as such. Pastors, because of their leadership position, are under even more scrutiny. 1 Timothy 3:2 says, "Now the overseer is to be above reproach."<sup>39</sup> All Christians

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<sup>36</sup> 1 Thess. 2:3-7.

<sup>37</sup> 1 Thess. 2:10.

<sup>38</sup> 1 Peter 2:12.

<sup>39</sup> 1 Timothy 3:2.



should be trustworthy, but the pastor-leader is held to that standard in an even more significant way, according to the Scriptures.

### Trust Helps the Pastor's Cause

Trust also aids the pastor in performing his God-given function. The call of the pastor is to equip other believers to do ministry.<sup>40</sup> Every believer is called to ministry. This does not indicate that every believer is called to vocational ministry, such as a pastor or full-time missionary, but every believer is called to be influencing people for the sake of Christ in their everyday life. In Jesus' parting words to His disciples before ascending into heaven, he said, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."<sup>41</sup> All followers of Jesus are called to make other disciples. It is the specific job of the pastor within the church to train followers of Jesus how to fulfill their mission.

The way in which the pastor does this is through warning and teaching. Paul says, "He [*Christ*] is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ."<sup>42</sup> The pastor is called to both admonish, or correct, the congregation, and to teach, or encourage, the congregation. There is the concept of balancing rebuke with encouragement in this section. Paul says that both are necessary to present people as

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<sup>40</sup> Ephesians 4:11.

<sup>41</sup> Matthew 28:19-20.

<sup>42</sup> Colossians 1:28.

mature in Christ. This kind of rebuke and encouragement necessarily must involve the trustworthiness factor earlier discussed.

The pastor's job is to help other believers embrace their God-given role to share the good news of Jesus with others and train them to do so. It is difficult to imagine a situation in which a pastor was able to influence the congregants in a positive way if they did not perceive him as trustworthy.

### Factors Leading to Trust

With the problem of this study being the lack of trust between a pastor and congregation, a further consideration centers on the factors that assist a pastor in developing trust with the congregation. What characteristics must the congregation see in the pastor to develop trust? There are three variables that will be analyzed in the study. They are consistency between words and actions, competence, and warmth.

Several reasons exist for the choice of these variables. First, the biblical mandate for pastors outlines these three imperatives. Chapter Two explores this in detail. Second, Kouzes and Posner, who are influential for their work on the concept of credibility in leadership, write, "...leaders are not competent to handle the tough challenges; that they are not telling the truth; and that they are motivated more by greed and self-interest than by concerns for the customer, the employees, or the country."<sup>43</sup> All three of these variables can be seen in this concern for

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<sup>43</sup> James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It* (New York, NY, UNITED STATES: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2011), xiv, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/andersonuniversity/detail.action?docID=697584>.

leaders and their ability to gain credibility. Ultimately, Kouzes and Posner say that these shortcomings in leaders result in a lack of trust.<sup>44</sup>

Additionally, Mayer and Davis present a similar model for trust using ability (competence), benevolence (warmth), and integrity (consistency).<sup>45</sup> They describe ability as a set of skills, competencies, and characteristics.<sup>46</sup> Burke expands on this model and characterizes benevolence as care and concern for others.<sup>47</sup> Finally, Mayer and Davis propose that integrity involves consistency between words and actions.<sup>48</sup> This model of trust adds further support for the choice of these variables. There is further discussion of these variables, why they were chosen, and how they are being view and studied in the context of the local Southern Baptist church below.

Consistency between words and actions is a construct that can be seen both in the Authentic Leadership Development Theory<sup>49</sup> and Behavioral Integrity Theory.<sup>50</sup> The concept of

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<sup>44</sup> Kouzes and Posner, xiii.

<sup>45</sup> Roger C. Mayer, James H. Davis, and F. David Schoorman, “An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust,” *Academy of Management Review* 20, no. 3 (July 1995): 715, <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.1995.9508080335>.

<sup>46</sup> Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, 717.

<sup>47</sup> C. Shawn Burke et al., “Trust in Leadership: A Multi-Level Review and Integration,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 18, no. 6 (December 2007): 615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2007.09.006>.

<sup>48</sup> Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, “An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust,” 919.

<sup>49</sup> Fred O. Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership: Development and Validation of a Theory-Based Measure,” *Journal of Management* 34, no. 1 (February 2008): 89–126, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206307308913>.

<sup>50</sup> Tony Simons, “Behavioral Integrity: The Perceived Alignment Between Managers’ Words and Deeds as a Research Focus,” *Organization Science* 13, no. 1 (February 1, 2002): 18–35, <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.13.1.18.543>.

consistency between words and actions includes the trustworthiness of the pastor being perceived by the congregation through regular actions that are aligned with his stated biblical beliefs. Can the congregation trust that the pastor will act in accordance with his stated beliefs, and when he fails, will he be honest about it?

For example, Mike Cosper reported in Mars Hill podcast that Mark Driscoll often spoke about the importance of a plurality of elders to help govern the church and hold him accountable, yet later in the life of the church, he amended the by-laws to allow more centralized control in his hand and fired two staff members who politely disagreed with the change. This action showed a lack of consistency between his words and his actions. This kind of behavior ultimately caused a breakdown of trust and the church.

This concept can be seen in the Scriptural mandate for pastors as well. First Timothy 3 describes the qualifications for pastor as being worthy of full respect, having a good reputation among outsiders, and being above reproach.<sup>51</sup> It is difficult to imagine a pastor that was able to garner trust with people who was not consistently acting out the beliefs they espouse from the pulpit. There is some evidence that consistency between words and actions has a positive relationship with trust.<sup>52</sup> However, these findings are not in a ministry context, so this study is important to examine these relationships in a ministry environment.

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<sup>51</sup> *1 Timothy 3.*

<sup>52</sup> Dan-Shang Wang and Chia-Chun Hsieh, “The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement,” *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal* 41, no. 4 (May 1, 2013): 613–24, <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2013.41.4.613>.

Competence is the second predictor variable of interest and is defined as “the ability to make correct decisions and avoid mistakes.”<sup>53</sup> The competence of the pastor can be considered in two ways: competence in teaching and competence in administration. Competence of the pastor’s teaching is assumed by the Scriptures. First Timothy 3 says that the pastor should be “able to teach.”<sup>54</sup> This is clearly a focus on the ability of the pastor to preach well. However, while it may be true that in the early Christian church, it was not the role of the pastor to be competent in organizational leadership outside of the teaching context, modern structure and the aforementioned ambiguity of the role of the pastor in the Southern Baptist church necessitates the pastor’s need for competence in leadership.<sup>55</sup> There are also studies outside of the church context to suggest that perceived competence in a leader influences trust in that leader.<sup>56</sup> Competence could be an important variable in the model for establishing pastoral trust. Competence in general as well as competence in preaching will be measured to examine the Scriptural and organizational competence of the pastor.

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<sup>53</sup> Florian Dreves, “How Patients Choose Hospitals: Using the Stereotypic Content Model to Model Trustworthiness, Warmth and Competence,” *Health Services Management Research* 26, no. 2–3 (August 2013): 95–101, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0951484813513246>.

<sup>54</sup> 1 Timothy 3.

<sup>55</sup> Ingram, “Leadership, Democracy, and Religion: Role Ambiguity among Pastors in Southern Baptist Churches.”

<sup>56</sup> Kyoung Yong Kim, Robert Eisenberger, and Kibok Baik, “Perceived Organizational Support and Affective Organizational Commitment: Moderating Influence of Perceived Organizational Competence,” *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 37, no. 4 (May 2016): 558–83, <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2081>; San-Fu Kao, Ming-Hui Hsieh, and Po-Lun Lee, “Coaching Competency and Trust in Coach in Sport Teams,” *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching* 12, no. 3 (June 2017): 319–27.

The last variable of interest for this study is warmth. Warmth refers to the caring, friendly, good-natured, and kind characteristics of the pastor.<sup>57</sup> Fiske’s Stereotype Content Model states that the two most fundamental aspects that people use when judging others are competence and warmth.<sup>58</sup> Scripture teaches in 1 Timothy that the pastor should have the characteristics of self-control, hospitality, and gentleness.<sup>59</sup> These characteristics capture the general idea of warmth. Warmth, along with competence, make up the Stereotype Content Model, which posits that high levels of both warmth and competence may be predictors of trust in certain demographic groups.<sup>60</sup> High levels of warmth and competence have been shown to instill brand loyalty and trust as well.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, warmth may also be an important predictor for establishing trust even in a church setting.

Other variables that may have a modulating role in this model are the congregant’s tenure under the leadership the pastor, the follower’s gender, the follower’s age, and the age church/organization size. Each of these control variables are well established as valid controls in leadership studies,<sup>62</sup> Each of these variables may mediate the relationship of each predictor

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<sup>57</sup> Susan T. Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content: Competence and Warmth Respectively Follow from Perceived Status and Competition,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 82, no. 6 (June 2002): 878–902, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.82.6.878>.

<sup>58</sup> Fiske et al.

<sup>59</sup> 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

<sup>60</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content.”

<sup>61</sup> Nicolas Kervyn, Susan T. Fiske, and Chris Malone, “Brands as Intentional Agents Framework: How Perceived Intentions and Ability Can Map Brand Perception,” *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 22, no. 2 (2012): 166–76.

<sup>62</sup> Jeremy B. Bernerth et al., “Control Variables in Leadership Research: A Qualitative and Quantitative Review” *Journal of Management* 44, no. 1 (January 2018): 131–60, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206317690586>.

variable consistency between words and action, competence, and warmth with the outcome variable trust.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to answer the question, “Do the perceived characteristics in the Southern Baptist pastor of consistency between words and actions, competence, and warmth have a positive relationship with trust in the pastor?” The study also examined how these variables interact with other factors such as church size, gender of congregant, tenure of congregant under the pastor’s leadership, and age of congregant. These effects will be measured to provide information to support pastors who want to increase their trust with their congregation.

### *Research Questions and Hypotheses*

The related research hypotheses were:

*RQ 1:* Does perceived consistency between words and actions have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

*RQ 2:* Does perceived competence have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

*RQ 3:* Does perceived warmth have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

### *Theoretical Framework*

There were three theories used to construct this potential model of pastoral trust. Consistency between words and actions was derived from two theories. The first theory is the

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Authentic Leadership Development Theory (ALD).<sup>63</sup> Within this theory, positive modeling of internalized moral perspectives, balanced processing, relational transparency, and self-awareness of the leader leads to follower authenticity, which results in the follower outcome of trust. Consistency between words and actions can be seen in the authors' proposition. "To be authentic, a leader's behavior must be consistent with felt, and espoused, end values, identities and beliefs."<sup>64</sup> Therefore, consistency between the pastor's words or espoused beliefs and his actions will cause perceived authenticity within this model, which then may lead to the follower outcome of trust in the pastor. Consistency is part of the positive modeling aspect of this model. Wang and Hsieh were also able to isolate the variable of "consistency between words and actions" from the ALD through statistical analysis.<sup>65</sup>

The next theory that adds further support for the use of consistency between words and actions is the Behavioral Integrity Theory (BI).<sup>66</sup> Behavioral integrity is defined as "the perceived alignment between managers' words and deeds. This definition is very similar to the definition given for consistency being the alignment between a pastor's words and actions. Study of behavioral integrity shows "that leader BI is in most cases a strong predictor of the follower's

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<sup>63</sup> William L. Gardner et al., "Can You See the Real Me? A Self-Based Model of Authentic Leader and Follower Development," *The Leadership Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (June 2005): 343–72, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.003>.

<sup>64</sup> Gardner et al.

<sup>65</sup> Wang and Hsieh, "The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement."

<sup>66</sup> Simons, "Behavioral Integrity."



trust in the leader”.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, behavioral integrity or consistency between words and actions leads to trust in this model. Both the ALD and BI are needed for the definition of consistency between words and actions given in this study because BI emphasizes the importance of word and deed alignment, but is void of moral considerations.<sup>68</sup> The ALD integrates the moral component of consistency of the pastor through “internalized moral perspectives,” and includes the honesty component through “relational transparency.”<sup>69</sup> All three facets of consistency of the pastor between his espoused beliefs and actions are necessary for the definition being used in this study. It is difficult to imagine a pastor being perceived as consistent between his words and actions if all three of these elements are not present.

The third theory being used in this study is the Stereotype Content Model (SCM).<sup>70</sup> The SCM was constructed by observing the stereotype content of groups toward one another, specifically regarding the variables of warmth and competence.<sup>71</sup> This model was later used in the medical context to determine hospital choice based on the variables of competence and warmth. This study implied that when people have the perception of high warmth and high

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<sup>67</sup> Tony Simons et al., “How Leader Alignment of Words and Deeds Affects Followers: A Meta-Analysis of Behavioral Integrity Research,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 132, no. 4 (December 23, 2015): 831–44, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2332-3>.

<sup>68</sup> Simons et al.

<sup>69</sup> Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

<sup>70</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content.”

<sup>71</sup> Fiske et al.

competence, it results in a reputation of high trustworthiness.<sup>72</sup> This model has also been used in many other situations, such as brand loyalty.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, this model may potentially be relevant to this study because the congregant's perception of the pastor as having high warmth and high competence could lead to a reputation of high trustworthiness. All three of these theories are elaborated upon in Chapter Two.

### Approach of the Study

Given the research purpose of exploring the possible positive relationship between the predictor variables of consistency between words and actions, competence, and warmth with the outcome variable of trust, the research approach was that of an empirical, cross-sectional, correlational survey employing the method of multiple regression to analyze the relationships between the variables.<sup>74</sup>

### Procedures

The population for the study was adults who attend a Southern Baptist church and are not a lead pastor. The reason for the choice of SBC attendees is two-fold. The first is that the SBC is the context of the researcher. The second is that there was a desire for as common an understanding of the role of the pastor and how that pastor is hired and fired as possible. Having that common understanding and theological outlook provides more reliable results for Southern

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<sup>72</sup> Dreves, "How Patients Choose Hospitals."

<sup>73</sup> Kervyn, Fiske, and Malone, "Brands as Intentional Agents Framework: How Perceived Intentions and Ability Can Map Brand Perception."

<sup>74</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Fifth edition (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2018), 147.

Baptists rather than results that may not apply generally to any specific denomination or situation. To collect data from this population, a survey instrument was created from the following existing scales: the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire and the Behavioral Integrity Scale were used to create a measurement for consistency between words and actions.<sup>75</sup> The survey instrument for competence and warmth were created using the scales for competence and warmth by Fiske and colleagues.<sup>76</sup> Trust was measured by utilizing the Trust in the Leader scale created by Podsakoff.<sup>77</sup> All questions for these constructs utilized a Likert scale.<sup>78</sup> The survey was then shared via Facebook by the principal investigator on three separate occasions approximately 2 weeks apart each. Responses were collected over a period of 6 weeks. A total of 466 responses were collected. Several the responses were incomplete, so the final sample included 347 complete responses. Multiple regression analysis methods were used to analyze the data collected to test for the validity of the hypotheses.<sup>79</sup>

### Significance of the Study

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<sup>75</sup> Tony Simons et al., “Racial Differences in Sensitivity to Behavioral Integrity: Attitudinal Consequences, in-Group Effects, and ‘trickle down’ among Black and Non-Black Employees,” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 92, no. 3 (May 2007): 650–65, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.3.650>; Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

<sup>76</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content.”

<sup>77</sup> Philip M. Podsakoff et al., “Transformational Leader Behaviors and Their Effects on Followers’ Trust in Leader, Satisfaction, and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (June 1990): 107–42, [https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843\(90\)90009-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(90)90009-7).

<sup>78</sup> Rensis Likert, “A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes,” *Archives of Psychology* 140 (1932): 1–55.

<sup>79</sup> Joseph F. Hair, *Multivariate Data Analysis*, Eighth edition (Andover, Hampshire: Cengage, 2019).

The significance of this study is that it provides empirical evidence for how a pastor can approach building trust with his congregation in a Southern Baptist setting. Most of the literature on this topic is anecdotal in nature, but this study adds empirical evidence to the conversation.

#### Contribution to Knowledge, Theory and Practice

This study brought further information to the ALD, BI, and SCM literature by examining a possible interaction of these theories related to pastoral leadership. Only one other instance of any part of the ALQ being used in a ministry context was found.<sup>80</sup> The three predictor variables of consistency between words and actions, competence, and warmth all had a positive relationship with the outcome variable of trust. However, when controlling for all three predictor variables, competence dropped out of the model. This shows that there may be more emphasis needed in the areas of consistency and warmth than competence in a ministry setting for the purpose of building trust. Further, it may show that authentic leadership, operationalized as consistency between words and actions, should legitimately be considered an important aspect of Christian ministry. Practically, pastors also often wonder about the balance between warmth, or pastoral care, and competence, or intelligence and leadership prowess, related to garnering trust with the congregation. This study will provide empirical evidence that perceived warmth is more important to establish trust than is perceived competence.

#### Limitations of the Study

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<sup>80</sup> Timothy Puls, Laverne Ludden, and James Freemyer, "Authentic Leadership and Its Relationship to Ministerial Effectiveness – The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership," *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, March 1, 2014, <https://jacl.andrews.edu/authentic-leadership-and-its-relationship-to-ministerial-effectiveness/>.

1) Limitations of this study include the limited distribution of the survey instrument. Since the principal investigator distributed the survey via his own Facebook account, Instagram account, and email to ministry leaders, it is possible that this limited the responses collected to people that are inclined to answer a survey based on a positive view of the researcher. This could impact the results by creating a narrow scope of viewpoints. This could also create a social desirability bias, but this is being accounted for by not collecting any personally identifying information, including church name.<sup>81</sup>

2) Another limitation of the study is that it is cross-sectional rather than longitudinal. Gardner said in his review of the literature on authentic leadership that it would be better to have longitudinal studies because surveys with cross-sectional designs breed social desirability bias as well.<sup>82</sup> However, the timeline needed for this study necessitate a cross-sectional design.

3) Another limitation of this study includes a focus on Southern Baptists. This will cause the results to be less generalizable to other denominations and businesses, but it is also important for relevance to the principal investigator's intended beneficiaries of the study, SBC pastors. Also, only three predictor variables of trust are being tested. There are surely many more variables that may predict the development of trust with a congregation, but for the purpose of this study, only consistency, competence, and warmth are being tested.

#### Definitions of Terms

For consistency of interpretation, the following terms are defined:

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<sup>81</sup> William L. Gardner et al., "Authentic Leadership: A Review of the Literature and Research Agenda," *The Leadership Quarterly* 22, no. 6 (December 2011): 1120–45, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.09.007>.

<sup>82</sup> Gardner et al.

*Trust:* “First, trust in another party reflects an expectation or belief that the other party will act benevolently. Second, one cannot control or force the other party to fulfill this expectation—that is, trust involves a willingness to be vulnerable and risk that the other party may not fulfill that expectation. Third, trust involves some level of dependency on the other party so that the outcomes of one individual are influenced by the actions of another.”<sup>83</sup>

*Consistency:* The concept of doing what the pastor says they will do, which is based on morality. For pastors in this study, morality is understood from an adherence to a Baptist biblical perspective.

*Competence:* Borrowing from Dreves, “The ability to make correct decisions and avoid mistakes.”<sup>84</sup>

*Warmth:* A trait that incorporates friendliness, care, and kindness.<sup>85</sup>

*Authentic Leadership Development Theory:* A theory of authentic leadership that includes the elements of balanced processing, internalized moral perspectives, relational transparency, and self-awareness.<sup>86</sup>

*Behavioral Integrity:* Alignment between words and deeds.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Ellen M. Whitener et al., “Managers as Initiators of Trust: An Exchange Relationship Framework for Understanding Managerial Trustworthy Behavior,” *Academy of Management Review* 23, no. 3 (July 1998): 513–30, <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.1998.926624>.

<sup>84</sup> Dreves, “How Patients Choose Hospitals.”

<sup>85</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content.”

<sup>86</sup> Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

<sup>87</sup> Simons, “Behavioral Integrity.”

*Stereotype Content Model: Perceptions of warmth and competence contribute to perceptions of trustworthiness.*<sup>88</sup>

### Summary and Forecast

This introductory chapter presented an overview of the study through description of the background, purpose, approach, significance, delimitations and limitations, and vocabulary of the research. Chapter Two constructs the theoretical framework of the study through a review of literature related to the research questions. Chapter Three describes the research design employed to conduct the study, with particular attention to methodology and technique applied to data collection and analysis. Chapter Four presents the study results in the form of data generated and analyzed through application of the research design. Chapter Five presents a discussion of study findings and conclusions related to the research questions and reviewed literature. This concluding chapter also addresses the implications of the findings for practice and research, as well as leadership.

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<sup>88</sup> Drevs, "How Patients Choose Hospitals."

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Trust

#### *Sociological Consideration of Trust*

There are many definitions of trust, but based on the consideration of trust as an emergent state at the leadership level, the definition that is helpful for the purposes of this study is the following:

First, trust in another party reflects an expectation or belief that the other party will act benevolently. Second, one cannot control or force the other party to fulfill this expectation—that is, trust involves a willingness to be vulnerable and risk that the other party may not fulfill that expectation. Third, trust involves some level of dependency on the other party so that the outcomes of one individual are influenced by the actions of another.<sup>1</sup>

This definition focuses on the relationship between managers and employees, and it is helpful to this study because Whitener’s model of trust in the leader includes the predictor variables of behavioral consistency, demonstration of concern, and perceived competence.<sup>2</sup> The relationship of managers and employees may not be perfectly analogous to the pastor and congregant relationship, but studies about managers and employees can help to understand the leader-follower dynamic that also applies to the pastor-congregant relationship. Limitations of this comparison are discussed below.

Whitener’s model is like the proposed model in this study. The definition itself emphasizes dependency, vulnerability, and expectation. These elements of the definition make

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<sup>1</sup> Whitener et al., “Managers as Initiators of Trust.”

<sup>2</sup> Whitener et al., 519.



sense in the context of the predictor variables. Perceived competence in the leader likely results in an ability to depend on their knowledge. Perceived warmth or concern for others likely results in a willingness to be vulnerable. Perceived consistency likely results in an expectation of follow through.

Burke and colleagues describe trust as an emergent state, which is an outcome of the interactions between leaders and followers<sup>3</sup> Though researchers have not typically classified them as such, emergent states can be considered both team inputs and proximal outcomes.”<sup>4</sup> This study examined trust from the perspective of an emergent state rather than a trait or a process.<sup>5</sup> This is important because trust as an emergent state describes expectations or beliefs about trust that result from interactions between leaders and followers. In this study, only the subset of follower trust was of interest.

Additionally, the literature on trust can be examined based on the level of trust: team level, leader level, organizational level, or interorganizational level.<sup>6</sup> This study examined trust at the leadership level or the interactions between the congregation and the pastor. Specifically, this study only looked at the congregation’s trust of the pastor and not the reverse. This study also did not pursue considerations of trust at the team level or organization level.

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<sup>3</sup> Burke et al., “Trust in Leadership,” 609.

<sup>4</sup> Michelle A. Marks, John E. Mathieu, and Stephen J. Zaccaro, “A Temporally Based Framework and Taxonomy of Team Processes,” *Academy of Management Review* 26, no. 3 (July 2001): 357–58, <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.2001.4845785>.

<sup>5</sup> Burke et al., “Trust in Leadership,” 609.

<sup>6</sup> Burke et al., 610.

Defining trust as an emergent state at the leadership level between employees and managers is helpful to clarify what is intended using trust as a construct. However, even this definition from the social science research may be limited in its applicability to a study of a church. For example, managers and employees likely have daily communication in which they must establish a deep knowledge of the tendencies and daily routines of the other person. Of the participants in this study, 67.2 percent said they interact with their pastor once per week or less. The other 32.8 percent said that they interacted more than once per week, but it is unlikely that these interactions are long enough and in depth enough to create the type of dependent relationship that exists between managers and their direct reports. In cases where the congregant does not personally interact with their pastor once per week, they still likely hear him preach once per week, which makes the relationship one-way. This potential distance is a nuance of the discussion of trust that exists in this study, and it means that the perceived trust that is formed in the mind of the congregant is more of an impression of the interactions that occur between the congregant and pastor than an in-depth knowledge of the true trustworthiness of the pastor on a day-to-day level. Though trust may be formed somewhat differently in the church than in the corporate environment, it remains a vital aspect of the relationship between congregants and the pastor because trust can encourage engagement, according to Wang and Hsieh.<sup>7</sup>

The findings of Wang and Hsieh regarding trust and engagement may be even more applicable to the non-profit sector because of the voluntary nature of non-profit affiliation.

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<sup>7</sup> Wang and Hsieh, "The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement," 619.

People engage with non-profit organizations because of “free choice”.<sup>8</sup> Some would say that attending church is not exactly a free choice for the Christian based on Scripture,<sup>9</sup> but which church they attend is a free choice. Engagement is vital in a nonprofit organization because there is research supporting the assertion that people feel more positive about their lives and themselves when they feel engaged in what the work they are doing with a non-profit.<sup>10</sup> This is an important idea for this research because, as nonprofit organizations, churches and pastors desire to help people feel positively about themselves and their lives.

Mutual trust among peers also encourages a supportive environment and leads to positive group outcomes. Dirks and Ferrin did a survey of much of the relevant literature regarding trust, and their research found that trust, whether between leaders and followers or within groups, has a positive effect on desirable outcomes and negative effect on undesirable outcomes.<sup>11</sup> For example, trust had a positive effect on outcomes such as citizenship behavior, unit performance, and satisfaction, while it has a negative effect on outcomes such as perceived probability of loss and perceived psychological contract violation.<sup>12</sup> Trust in organizations correlates to more positive outcomes and less negative outcomes.

### *Biblical Consideration of Trust*

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<sup>8</sup> María L. Vecina et al., “Volunteer Engagement and Organizational Commitment in Nonprofit Organizations: What Makes Volunteers Remain Within Organizations and Feel Happy?” *Journal of Community Psychology* 41, no. 3 (April 2013): 291–302, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21530>.

<sup>9</sup> Hebrews 10:24-25.

<sup>10</sup> Vecina et al., “Volunteer Engagement and Organizational Commitment in Nonprofit Organizations.”

<sup>11</sup> Kurt T. Dirks and Donald L. Ferrin, “The Role of Trust in Organizational Settings,” *Organization Science* 12, no. 4 (August 7, 2001): 450–67, <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.12.4.450.10640>.

<sup>12</sup> Dirks and Ferrin.

The Scriptures further support the idea that people should be able to trust the leadership of their church, and this leads to engagement in the non-profit setting of the church. This engagement through trust cannot be achieved in the Christian sense by suggesting that the church should endeavor to make people feel good about themselves as the objective, but that by obeying the Word of God, their joy will be made full. Jesus said, “If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”<sup>13</sup> The pastor is called to challenge people to be obedient to Christ and as a result, they will be more joyful than otherwise. Therefore, to help people feel good about themselves and their lives, engagement with the organization of the church through obedience to Christ is necessary, and to help people feel this engagement, trust in the leadership of the organization is vital.<sup>14</sup>

In-group trust is essential to the local church body according to Scripture. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Romans, says that the church is like a body. All the members are a part of one body. “For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”<sup>15</sup> Within this picture of the church functioning as one body, there is the inherent idea that the members of the body must be able to trust one another to cooperate. The members of the body must be able to trust that, when called upon, all will perform their function with faithfulness.

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<sup>13</sup> John 15:10-11.

<sup>14</sup> Wang and Hsieh, “The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement.”

<sup>15</sup> Romans 12:4-5.

Additionally, Hebrews 13:17 says, “Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.”<sup>16</sup> This indicates that there is at least some level of responsibility on the part of the congregation to have a lean toward trusting in the leadership of the church. This study focuses on the emergent state of trust, which is based on expectations formed through interactions. However, no one enters a relationship without expectations. They may reserve their judgement until interactions can be examined, but they can also choose a charitable spirit toward the relationship. This is not a blind trust, as will be shown in later sections, but the concepts outlined in Whitener’s definition of trust (dependency, vulnerability, and expectation) should be best exemplified with the body of Christ.

### *Why Pursue Trust?*

The focus of this study is to examine the ways in which the pastor can foster the greatest atmosphere for gaining trust. From the pastor’s perspective, what role does trust play in accomplishing the purpose of the pastor? In the Christian tradition, definitions of pastoral leadership are often examined considering the Apostle Paul’s words regarding church leadership,

Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Hebrews 13:17.

<sup>17</sup> 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

In the book of 1 Timothy, the reader clearly sees the responsibility of the pastor to be trustworthy. The word “overseer” means “to peer” or “watch over.”<sup>18</sup> The pastor is to watch over the congregation. Similarly, Acts 20:28 and 1 Peter 5:2 describe the pastor as a shepherd. A shepherd must be trustworthy because sheep cannot often understand when they are being led astray. Sheep are commonly known as unwise animals who are easily taken advantage of or eaten. This comparison is not to say that people within congregations are not smart, but it is to say that people are easily duped by a charismatic leader or convinced by cultural pressure. The pastor is one who is trustworthy as he shepherds the people of God. It is the responsibility of the pastor to keep the people, or the sheep, engaged with the body of Christ and fulfilling the mission of Christ.

Adding further support to this idea, the work of Wang and Hsieh shows that trust is an integral part of creating engagement within an organization. If employees trust their supervisor, then they are much more likely to engage with their responsibilities. If they do not trust their supervisor, then they are unlikely to do so.<sup>19</sup> The relationship of pastor and congregation is certainly different from a supervisor/line worker relationship for several reasons, not the least of which is the fact that a congregant can simply choose to leave a church much easier than they can choose to leave their job. There may be fewer consequences for leaving a church than there are for leaving a job. However, this fact may indicate that trust is even more important in the church setting than in a business setting.

### *What are the Current Challenges?*

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<sup>18</sup> Walter A Elwell and Barry J Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1596.

<sup>19</sup> Wang and Hsieh, “The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement.”

## *Identity Formation in Post-Modern American Culture*

With greater diversity of background and thought becoming more prevalent in American workplaces, trust is just as vital but perhaps more difficult to maintain.<sup>20</sup> In the current cultural climate, this prediction by Mayer and Davis that trust will become more difficult to achieve within groups came true. Political polarization in America has become more acute in recent years and has to do with the decline of trust in institutions in general. Choice about political affiliation has become less about issues of pure policy and more about a difference of conceptions of identity.<sup>21</sup> Pew Research found that those who identify as Christian in America fell 12 percent from 2007 to 2019, from 77 percent to 65 percent.<sup>22</sup> While it is true that different groups, even within Christian circles, have always worked out their faith in different ways by supporting different policies, politicians, and parties, this Pew poll does indicate that there is a major shift in identity formation occurring because less people identify as Christian. Though this study is about people who do identify as Christian and attend church, this phenomenon of apathy toward Christian commitment is relevant to church attenders. A study from 2020 indicates that “57% of U.S. adults who have attended church in the last six months admit that people they know are

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<sup>20</sup> Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, “An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust.”

<sup>21</sup> “Polarization in American Politics,” *Pew Research Center* (blog), accessed March 18, 2022, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/06/12/7-things-to-know-about-polarization-in-america/>.

<sup>22</sup> 1615 L. St NW, Suite 800 Washington, and DC 20036 USA 202-419-4300 | Main 202-857-8562 | Fax 202-419-4372 | Media Inquiries, “In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace,” *Pew Research Center’s Religion & Public Life Project* (blog), October 17, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/>.

tired of the usual type of church experience.”<sup>23</sup> General apathy toward Christian practice is growing, even inside the church.

As less people identify as Christian and adhere to that common moral framework in the U.S., it does not leave a vacuum in its wake. Every person has a conception of their own identity, so the Christian framework is simply replaced with others. When a person’s beliefs are not only opinions about policy, but are also vital to a person’s identity, it follows that it would become more difficult to trust a person who you believe to be in opposition to your identity. The philosophical underpinnings of identity formation and the impact it has on authenticity and consistency in the pastorate will be discussed in later sections.

The struggle for pastors in today’s church regarding the differing belief systems and identity formations is not limited to those outside the church. A recent Barna study showed that practicing Christians increasingly agree with ideas rooted in new spirituality, postmodernism, Marxism, and secularism.<sup>24</sup> New spirituality refers to ideas like karma, pantheism, and other beliefs rooted in Eastern mysticism. Postmodernism denies objective truth. Marxism embraces government control of property, and secularism endorses the beliefs must be proven by science to be true.<sup>25</sup> Each of these is a competing ideology to Christian teaching, yet they are growing in popularity among professing Christians.

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<sup>23</sup> “Five Trends Defining Americans’ Relationship to Churches,” Barna Group, accessed December 9, 2022, <https://www.barna.com/research/current-perceptions/>.

<sup>24</sup> “Competing Worldviews Influence Today’s Christians,” Barna Group, accessed November 3, 2022, <https://www.barna.com/research/competing-worldviews-influence-todays-christians/>.

<sup>25</sup> “Competing Worldviews Influence Today’s Christians.”



Some may think that these issues are new to Christendom, but they are not. The church has long had to overcome diversity of thought to achieve trusting relationships and unity in the church. Many of the cities where Paul established the first churches were a diverse mix of many cultures. One biblical commentary explains this fact about the city of Colossae, “The natives were Phrygian. Because of the military and commercial heritage of the valley, however, Greeks may have settled in the area during the Greek period of dominance. To this were added Jews of the Diaspora, Romans involved in politics, and various ethnic groups drawn by commercial interests.”<sup>26</sup>

Each of these groups of people would have identified themselves very differently, and these differing beliefs seeped into the church. An internal conflict within the church is indicated by the encouragements of Paul in the letter. It is clear from the text of the Scripture that they experienced infighting and false gospels, not the least of which was the idea that Jesus was not divine; a teaching that is still referred to as the “Colossian Heresy.”<sup>27</sup> Yet it is in this context that Paul writes to the church and says, “For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.”<sup>28</sup> Even through the cultural challenges facing that church, Paul says they were overcoming them, and their faith in Christ was evident.

Another example of cultural challenges leading to complications for trusting relationships in the church is in Paul’s letter to the church at Corinth. There were significant differences there,

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<sup>26</sup> Richard R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, The New American Commentary, v. 32 (Nashville, Tenn: Broadman Press, 1991), 190.

<sup>27</sup> Melick, 165.

<sup>28</sup> Colossians 2:5.

also fueled by a Jewish traditional framework combined with the Hellenistic framework of the local population. In chapter 8 of this letter, Paul addresses a conflict within the church about eating meat that has been sacrificed to idols. He basically says that there is nothing wrong with it in principle, but that the people should seek to not be a stumbling block for others. This is just another example of how the early church faced issues of differing belief systems, meaning that contentious cultural settings are no excuse to stop seeking a biblical, trusting relationship between the leadership of the church and the congregation. Paul was able, at least to some extent, to still garner trust in situations like these. He writes,

To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.<sup>29</sup>

Paul sought to become trustworthy in eyes of all people through warmth, genuine concern for other, while remaining consistent to his convictions about Christ. While the church must acknowledge the changing landscape within American Christianity, these issues can be overcome with the Spirit of Christ and trusting relationships can be achieved.

### *Loose Coupling of the Southern Baptist Convention*

A closer look at the history and structure of the SBC is helpful to understand the unique challenges that exist with regards to the pastor-leader forming trusting relationships. The constitution of the SBC indicates the following about the structure of authority within the

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<sup>29</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:20-22.

organization, “While independent and sovereign in its own sphere, the Convention does not claim and will never attempt to exercise any authority over any other Baptist body, whether church, auxiliary organizations, associations, or convention.”<sup>30</sup> The national convention does not have authority over the local churches or state conventions that are willfully associated with it. Each church is autonomous. Neither the national nor the state conventions within SBC life have control over the ordination of ministers, assignment of pastor to local congregations, or any other function of the local church.<sup>31</sup> In fact, on the frequently asked questions page of the SBC website, a question is asked regarding what authority the SBC has in cases where a local church pastor is suspected of an indiscretion. The official SBC answer is the following:

Since each local Baptist church is autonomous, the Convention has no authority to monitor or investigate the actions within that church or allegations against its pastor or any member of the church. The proper governing body to exercise discipline over any Southern Baptist is the congregation of which that Southern Baptist is a member, whether the person is the pastor of the church or any other member of the church. The SBC is not a church and has no authority to renounce, censure, investigate, or otherwise attempt to discipline members of any local church. When a church chooses to cooperate with the SBC, it does not surrender any of its local autonomy. The SBC merely exists to serve as a collaborative ministry partner with all cooperating Baptist churches for the fulfillment of specific ministry initiatives.<sup>32</sup>

The structure described here in the frequently asked questions of the SBC website can be described as a loosely coupled system.

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<sup>30</sup> “Constitution - SBC.Net,” <https://www.sbc.net/>, accessed October 6, 2022, <https://www.sbc.net/about/what-we-do/legal-documentation/constitution/>.

<sup>31</sup> “FAQ - SBC.Net,” <https://www.sbc.net/>, accessed October 6, 2022, <https://www.sbc.net/about/what-we-do/faq/>.

<sup>32</sup> “FAQ - SBC.Net.”

Warner Burke's book on organization change introduces the concept of a loosely coupled system by citing Moses in Exodus 18.<sup>33</sup> The people of Israel were all governed by God through Moses. He was the sole leader for thousands of people. The work of governance was difficult until Moses' father-in-law suggested that Moses create a hierarchy of governance.<sup>34</sup> This was a case of a loosely coupled system. Loosely coupled systems can refer to hierarchical structures that are unclear or non-existent, and they also show little to no interdependence among units within the organization.<sup>35</sup> This means that the intentions of leadership and actions of the constituency are often misaligned. Weick writes, "Given a potential loose coupling between the intentions and actions of organizational members, it should come as no surprise that administrators are baffled and angered when things never happen the way they were supposed to."<sup>36</sup>

Some Christian denominations may be structured more tightly, with clear hierarchies the national level all the way to the local church level, such as the Episcopal or Presbyterian denominations.<sup>37</sup> In these cases, diffusion of new ideas may have a clearer pathway because the hierarchy of power and authority clearly disseminates from the top to the local church level.

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<sup>33</sup> W. Warner Burke, *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*, Fifth edition (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2018), 28.

<sup>34</sup> Exodus 18:13-27.

<sup>35</sup> Burke, *Organization Change*, 260.

<sup>36</sup> Karl E. Weick, "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (March 1976): 4, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2391875>.

<sup>37</sup> James R. Wood, "Authority and Controversial Policy: The Churches and Civil Rights," *American Sociological Review* 35, no. 6 (December 1970): 1060, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2093382>.

However, the context of the Southern Baptist Convention is not structured this way. It is congregational in its polity.

Chaves presents a model in which denominations are dual structures. He posits that Protestant denominations are largely made up of two factors: religious authority and agency structures.<sup>38</sup> Chaves identified religious authority as the “control over access to religious goods.”<sup>39</sup> He also identifies the focus of religious authority as internal. For example, the religious authority of a denomination determines who appoints the pastor or what congregations believe with regards to religious behavior. In the SBC, that power of religious authority rests with the local congregation.

Chaves identified agency structures as mission agencies or publishing arms of the denomination, and these are externally focused.<sup>40</sup> Within the SBC, the resource of religious authority clearly rests with the local churches (church property, pastoral assignment, etc.) as evidenced by the statements from the SBC website. However, control of the agencies is largely in the hands of full-time convention employees, though the churches can still vote to terminate any of these people at any time. These agencies include the six SBC-owned seminaries, the International Mission Board, the North American Mission Board, the Ethics and Religious Liberties Commission, and the Executive Committee.

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<sup>38</sup> Mark Chaves, “Denominations as Dual Structures: An Organizational Analysis,” *Sociology of Religion* 54, no. 2 (1993): 154.

<sup>39</sup> Chaves, 154.

<sup>40</sup> Chaves, 155.

Noting the dual structure of denominations is important to understanding the conflicts that occur in the member churches. Churches in different denomination handle conflict and trust formation differently depending on their view of the religious authority and agency structures. In the SBC, religious authority is often given to the pastor.<sup>41</sup> The church often allows him control of the pulpit and doctrinal interpretation to a point. The church very often sees the pastor as the theological authority, but they may not see him as the authority over the agency structures of the church, like the financial resources, etc. This creates difficulty for the pastor in establishing trust in setting direction for the agency structures of the church in the SBC.

Loose coupling in the SBC was put on display when a grassroots movement of conservatives caused major shifts in control of the agency structures. Nancy Ammerman describes the events of the Conservative Resurgence in the 80's and early 90's.<sup>42</sup> Her article outlines the shift of the SBC agency structures into liberalism.<sup>43</sup> There were seminary professors and agency heads that began to put out publications and students that did not believe in the inerrancy of the Bible, even while the majority of Southern Baptists believed it was.<sup>44</sup> Then a resurgence of conservative values and beliefs came with leaders such as Jerry Vines, Adrian Rogers, Paul Pressler, and Paige Patterson. With the election of Adrian Rogers to the presidency

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<sup>41</sup> Larry C Ingram, "Notes on Pastoral Power in the Congregational Tradition," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 19, no. 1 (1980): 44.

<sup>42</sup> "Rogers' 1979 Election as Southern Baptist President Ignites Conservative Renewal," *Pathway* (blog), June 20, 2019, <https://mbcpathway.com/2019/06/20/rogers-1979-election-as-southern-baptist-president-ignites-conservative-renewal/>.

<sup>43</sup> Nancy T. Ammerman, "The SBC: Retrospect and Prospect," *Review & Expositor* 88 (1991).

<sup>44</sup> Ammerman, 12.

of the SBC, the Conservative Resurgence began its ascent to control. This control, however, was never over the local congregations or resources allocated to local congregations. Instead, this control was over the agency structures. Conservative presidents could nominate a conservative committee on committees, which could then nominate other conservatives, and this cycle continued until conservatives were in control of most of the major agencies of the SBC. Some may say that this was a hostile takeover, but this conservative resurgence largely reflected the beliefs of the local congregations. The local congregations, from megachurch to country church, were able to effectuate change at the national level, even though the national leadership of the time stood in opposition to them.

Loose coupling can be an obstacle to achieving desired outcomes such as trust formation, but it also has positive features. Weick writes of loosely coupled systems, “While the system may contain novel solutions for new problems of adaptation, the very structure that allows these mutations to flourish may prevent their diffusion.”<sup>45</sup> In other words, a loosely coupled system may make an organization more agile because the grassroots level units do not have to wait on top-down decision making to act on felt needs, but they also make diffusion of new ideas or modes of operation difficult because the power is distributed within the organization and the hierarchy of power is not strict. The SBC was able to remain agile as an organization and effectuate change from the bottom levels of the organization in large part because the hierarchy of power is distributed amongst the churches. However, this also means that all-encompassing

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<sup>45</sup> Weick, “Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems,” 7.

edicts announced from the top levels of leadership are difficult to enforce and disperse throughout the entire organization.

*The Local SBC Congregation.*

Individual churches within the SBC carry this congregational spirit and polity. Because each church is autonomous, each church has a slightly different hierarchical structure, but most embrace the congregational spirit. As a result, Takayama writes of pastors of congregational churches, “The minister may be highly educated, but there is always an assumption of spiritual equality among believers and political equality in the management of their affairs.”<sup>46</sup> From a hierarchical standpoint, a pastor in a traditional, congregational, SBC church often has little organizational authority regarding the agency structures. The church runs on a “majority rule” basis or a vote by the congregation.<sup>47</sup> This structure is based on a doctrine called the priesthood of all believers. The Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms describes the priesthood of all believers as,

The Reformation principle that declares that the privilege and freedom of all believing Christians is to stand before God in personal communion through Christ, directly receiving forgiveness without the necessary recourse to human intermediaries. As priests (1 Pet 2:5, 9), believers directly offer sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God and minister to the needs of others. Ordained pastors, in turn, are not different from other believers in spiritual status but only in function and appointment.<sup>48</sup>

To say that a congregation is loosely coupled oversimplifies the issue according to Orton and Weick. They write, “To state that an organization is a loosely coupled system is the

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<sup>46</sup> Takayama and Cannon, “Formal Polity and Power Distribution in American Protestant Denominations,” 326.

<sup>47</sup> Ingram, “Notes on Pastoral Power in the Congregational Tradition,” 40.

<sup>48</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, David Guretzki, and Cherith Fee Nordling, *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 95.



beginning of a discussion, not the end.”<sup>49</sup> They examine the elements of loose coupling such as causation, type, direct effects, compensations, and organizational outcomes. In the case of the church, loose coupling is caused by a fragmented internal environment.<sup>50</sup> This can result in a situation where people’s passion for their own department might lead to positions which may be more problematic for the whole church.

The type of loose coupling is at the subunit level.<sup>51</sup> Because people get involved and then are most passionate about the areas in which they serve, there can become competing goals. For example, the kids’ ministry believes that there should be a greater emphasis and resource allocation toward kids and their families. This determines a certain type of worship, program structure, and budgetary considerations. However, those who are passionate about pastoral care ministries, particularly to senior adults, often advocate for a different style of worship, program structure, and want greater resource allocation to that area. Weick writes of this type,

By loose coupling, the author intends to convey the image that coupled events are responsive, but that each event also preserves its own identity and some evidence of its physical or logical separateness. Thus, in the case of an educational organization, it may be the case that the counselor's office is loosely coupled to the principal's office. The image is that the principal and the counselor are somehow attached, but that each retains some identity and separateness and that their attachment may be circumscribed, infrequent, weak in its mutual affects, unimportant, and/or slow to respond.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> J. Douglas Orton and Karl E. Weick, “Loosely Coupled Systems: A Reconceptualization,” *Academy of Management Review* 15, no. 2 (1990): 219.

<sup>50</sup> Orton and Weick, 207.

<sup>51</sup> Orton and Weick, 208.

<sup>52</sup> Weick, “Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems,” 3.

The congregational church can function much the same way with the pastor, deacons, Sunday School teachers, and committees. These subgroups are attached, but they each retain their own identity and often have their own agendas.

Loose coupling has positive and negative effects on the organization. Of those who claim that loose coupling is a negative aspect and should be compensated for, shared values is a common solution.<sup>53</sup> In the church, shared values are key to the organization. In the church, there is often little to bond individuals and groups together outside of the shared value of knowing Christ and making Him known. The Apostle Paul writes of this in Galatians 3:28, “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”<sup>54</sup> Orton and Weick similarly note that shared values are often the sole basis holding together a loose coupling.<sup>55</sup>

Outcomes of loose coupling include both adaptability and persistence.<sup>56</sup> Adaptability is a positive outcome of loose coupling.<sup>57</sup> Loosely coupled systems are more likely to be adaptable than tightly coupled systems because the group level and the individual have the capacity to remain “themselves” and to perceive and respond to their environment in the way that makes sense to them while loosely remaining a part of the organization.<sup>58</sup> The church is adaptable

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<sup>53</sup> Orton and Weick, “Loosely Coupled Systems: A Reconceptualization,” 212.

<sup>54</sup> Galatians 3:28.

<sup>55</sup> Orton and Weick, “Loosely Coupled Systems: A Reconceptualization,” 212.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>58</sup> Eric M. Eisenberg, “Ambiguity as Strategy in Organizational Communication,” *Communication Monographs* 51 (1984): 230–31.

because congregants have the ability to start ministries that are, by nature of their membership with the church, a part of the church's ministry. These are often successful ministries. The membership can adapt to the environment much quicker than the church as a whole, which makes the church more adaptable by embracing group level change.

Persistence is the outcome that makes the organization resistant to change.<sup>59</sup> Meyerson and Martin found that managers have little ability to change loosely coupled systems.<sup>60</sup> The pastor is not a manager because he cannot hire and fire church members. Therefore, all the power he wields is relational. A study that interviewed 13 Southern Baptist pastors about effectiveness in ministry found that pastors place an emphasis on spending time with lay leadership so that the influence of the lay leaders will trickle-down.<sup>61</sup> The pastor does not have the managerial authority, so he must transfer his vision to the leaders so that they will follow him out of love and loyalty rather than coercion because in a loosely coupled system like the church, coercion will not work.

The SBC, its member churches, and the pastors within those churches must take the loosely coupled nature into account when seeking to build trust or affect change. Loose coupling can bring adaptability, which is helpful and has assisted the SBC in bringing about grassroots efforts to keep the convention conservative. Churches may also experience the benefits of being adaptable and resilient. However, loose coupling can also create stagnation and resistance to

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<sup>59</sup> Orton and Weick, "Loosely Coupled Systems: A Reconceptualization," 213.

<sup>60</sup> Debra Meyerson and Joanne Martin, "Cultural Change: An Integration of Three Different Views," *Journal of Management Studies* 24, no. 6 (1987): 642–43.

<sup>61</sup> Jonathan Young and Michael Firmin, "Qualitative Perspectives toward Relational Connection in Pastoral Ministry," *The Qualitative Report*, November 27, 2014, 8, <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2014.1201>.

change. The pastor must foster trusting relationships with the congregation if he is to have any impact on such a system. Weick writes,

Actors in a loosely coupled system rely on trust and presumptions, persist, are often isolated, find social comparison difficult, have no one to borrow from, seldom imitate, suffer pluralistic ignorance, maintain discretion, improvise, and have less hubris because they know they cannot change the universe because it is not sufficiently connected to make this possible.<sup>62</sup>

This describes the pastor and his challenges in the SBC setting well and demonstrates how difficult but necessary creating trust in the ministry is.

#### *What Must the Pastor Do?*

As trust is harder to come by, the fact remains that trust is an essential element in the cohesiveness of an organization. Some of the earliest studies of organizations recognized that trust is an important aspect of successful organizations. Douglas McGregor writes in his formative work that noncompliance within organizations occurs often when there is a perceived threat from a system of control within the organization. McGregor points out that one cause for the perceived threat is a lack of trust between managers and workers.<sup>63</sup> If a pastor presents himself as unworthy of trust, this creates a legitimate stumbling block for congregants who may be trying to comply.

With the understanding that trust is necessary in churches and with the understanding that pastors are to be overseers or shepherds, the function of that position comes into view. If a pastor is to be trustworthy, then what is it that they are supposed to do with the trust they have garnered? Paul writes, “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the

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<sup>62</sup> Karl E. Weick, *Making Sense of the Organization* (Oxford, UK; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 401.

<sup>63</sup> Douglas McGregor, *The Professional Manager* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 119.

pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”<sup>64</sup> The concept of “equipping his people” is the outcome for which the pastor should be striving, according to the Scriptures. The word “equip” here is the Greek word “katartismos,” which is a form of the word “katartizo.”<sup>65</sup> It means to be made complete or reconciled. The purpose of the pastor from a biblical standpoint is to make complete the people under his care by teaching them to be reconciled to Christ and others. In another letter, Paul writes, “He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.”<sup>66</sup> Paul is again speaking of the mission of pastors and preachers. He says that the mission of the pastor is to present everyone fully mature in Christ. This is a heavy charge, and it is the reason there is such a stringent requirement for pastors to be trustworthy. The pastor is responsible for the spiritual growth and maturity of the people to which he ministers.

#### *How the Pastor Must Do It*

The pastor not only has a biblical charge to be trustworthy and present himself as trustworthy, but also to bring people to spiritual maturity by preaching and teaching the Word of God. Going back to Colossians 1:28, Paul writes that a pastor must “admonish and teach” the congregation as Christ is proclaimed. This means that the pastor must correct the people and

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<sup>64</sup> Ephesians 4:11-13.

<sup>65</sup> Robert L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition*. (Anaheim, CA: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998).

<sup>66</sup> Colossians 1:28.

instruct the people in the wisdom of God’s Word. Titus 1:5-9, 2 Timothy 2:15, and 2 Timothy 4:2 command the pastor to preach and handle the Word of God before the congregation.

Consider 2 Timothy 4:2, “Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.”<sup>67</sup> In other words, the pastor should not try to gain the trust of the congregation by appealing to their consumer tendencies.

The pastor must not seek to “win them over” by being a charismatic stage presenter. Instead, the pastor’s charge is to gain the trust of the congregation through the way that he lives his life, so that when he preaches the Word, people can trust that he is preaching the whole counsel of God’s Word and not for his own gain.

The command to admonish as well as teach further emphasizes that the pastor must rebuke and correct the congregation at times. This is not often easily received, which is why the pastor must exemplify trustworthiness. If the congregation is going to receive the instruction and admonishment from the pastor, they must know that he is coming from a place of sincerity and humility. However, ultimately the Word of God does the work of building up mature followers of Jesus Christ. Isaiah writes, “so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”<sup>68</sup> If the Word of God is communicated faithfully, then it will accomplish the purpose for which God sends it. Therefore, it is not up to the pastor to force people into maturity. Instead, the way he is

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<sup>67</sup> 2 Timothy 4:2.

<sup>68</sup> Isaiah 55:11.

to fulfill the charge of bringing people into maturity is by faithfully preaching and teaching the Word of God, while living a life that shows him to be trustworthy.

The pastor must preach the Word to equip the saints so that they might attain full maturity in Christ and win as many souls to Him as possible. However, there is baseline requirement of trustworthiness for the pastor to accomplish this mission. This study will focus on the pastor's formulation of trust with the congregation for the purpose of equipping them to do works of service or ministry. They may not always like what the pastor has to say, as admonition is difficult to receive. They may not always want to hear what the Bible says, but if the pastor lives his life in a trustworthy manner and proclaims Christ faithfully, then the Word of God will accomplish the goal of bringing the people of God to maturity.

Trust is essential to the pastor-congregant relationship because more trust leads to greater engagement in any organization. It is also important because the pastor is called to bring congregations to maturity by equipping them for the work of ministry. If it is important for pastors to build trust, then it must be considered what characteristics are factor in trust formation. This study will examine three potential factors. The first of which is consistency between words and actions.

### Consistency

Consistency, for the purposes of this study, is defined as a person regularly displaying alignment between words and actions. It is the concept of doing what the pastor says he will do, which is based on their biblical adherence or morality. Consistency encompasses two parts to the definition. 1) The pastor has an inner morality driven by biblical standards, which is then acted upon. Those moral actions are then perceived as being consistent because the pastor does not vacillate with regards to his direction and leadership. 2) He can accept responsibility for mistakes

because taking responsibility for any publicly known mistake, moral or simply procedural, is an indication of a desire to be constantly transparent, while leaving no room for doubt in the pastor's authenticity. This is an important part of consistency because no person can be perfectly consistent. Everyone will make mistakes. However, by admitting one's mistakes, especially public mistakes, this can be seen as a consistent act within itself, which may lead to greater trust. There is research to suggest that admitting mistakes when the public knows about them can mitigate cynicism about the brand, or in this case, the pastor's reputation.<sup>69</sup>

Consistency between words and actions, in this case, is a positive attribute and is applied in two ways. The construct applies first to the moral convictions assumed by virtue of the pastor's appointment. This is consistency between his actions and expectations, even if he doesn't say what those are. Pastors do not have to say that "I will be a faithful husband", it is already expected by the role and examples of affairs and sexual indiscretions are seen as very inconsistent. However, consistency also applies to promises he makes interpersonally, or simply put, what he says he will do. Both applications are examined in this study and should be considered by pastors who seek to build trust. However, consistency does not insinuate that the pastor is necessarily loyal to traditions or opinions within the local church context that may or may not be helpful. In other words, the consistency does not mean "go along to get along."

When the pastor espouses a conviction, either by directly speaking the conviction from the pulpit or by his ordination as an SBC pastor in agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message

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<sup>69</sup> Fabian Prochazka and Magdalena Obermaier, "Trust through Transparency? How Journalistic Reactions to Media-Critical User Comments Affect Quality Perceptions and Behavior Intentions," *Digital Journalism* 10, no. 3 (March 16, 2022): 452–72, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2021.2017316>.



2000, the congregation must be able to see him follow through with his actions. Additionally, when the pastor makes a promise from the stage or one-on-one, the congregation should expect follow through. If there is not consistency between the pastor's espoused moral convictions and his actions, the people may see him as inauthentic.<sup>70</sup> If there is not consistency between the promises the pastor makes and his follow through on those promises, the people may see him as either over-committal or disingenuous. In either case, they are difficult to trust.

Examples of a lack of consistency between espoused morals and actions abound. Several of these examples have already been discussed in Chapter One, specifically Mark Driscoll and James MacDonald. These examples are used because they did not have the common type of moral failure like infidelity that is so often heard in the news cycle. Instead, they were deemed unfit for service because they acted inconsistently with the way in which they claimed a church should be led. They treated people poorly without the love they preached from the pulpit, and their words did not align with their actions. One small example shared in *The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill* is about Driscoll's claim that he read one entire book every single day.<sup>71</sup> Claims such as this are so unlikely to be true that it inspired people to doubt many of his other claims. This led to him being seen as an inconsistent leader.

Driscoll's motives are in question by some. However, it is possible to have pure motives and still become inconsistent. Consider a pastor who loves to give people whatever they ask for. Everyone knows that when they ask him for something, he will likely not turn them down. However, they also know that he likely will not follow through. This may not be because they

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<sup>70</sup> Gardner et al., ““Can You See the Real Me?” 23.

<sup>71</sup> Cosper, “The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill.”

believe he is immoral or has poor motives. They may believe that he has every intention to follow through, but no one can say yes to everything and still follow through on his commitments. This does not paint the pastor as immoral, but it does create a difficulty in fully trusting that when the pastor promises he will do something, it will get done.

Other researchers call consistency by the name “behavioral integrity.”<sup>72</sup> Simons defines behavioral integrity as “the perceived alignment between managers words and deeds.”<sup>73</sup> Ete and colleagues found that followers identify more strongly with leaders who have greater perceived behavioral integrity. They say, “Our results show that it is important for organizations and leaders to act consistently with their statements and keep their promises.”<sup>74</sup> The language describing consistency as outlined by Wang and Hsieh and behavioral integrity as outlined by Simons shows that they are describing the same attribute of a leader. Research into both show that they are important aspects of building followership.

Consistency is shown to be an important factor for pastors based on the Scripture referenced in the earlier discussion of trust in the church. In 1 Timothy 3, Paul writes of the pastor, “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?” This passage is a list of qualifications for the pastor.

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<sup>72</sup> Simons, “Behavioral Integrity.”

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ziya Ete et al., “Leader and Organizational Behavioral Integrity and Follower Behavioral Outcomes: The Role of Identification Processes,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 176, no. 4 (April 2022): 741–60, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-020-04728-6>.

Paul is saying that a pastor must first manage his home with integrity before he can manage a church with integrity. While this passage does not say the word, consistency, the idea is implied. He must be morally upstanding in the church, at home, in the marketplace, and everywhere else he may go. This consistency of moral leadership is especially important in the life of a pastor, because essentially everything a pastor does is viewed through a moral lens. Every area of their lives is scrutinized, and rightly so according to Scripture. The pastor is to be “above reproach” and have a good reputation even with outsiders.<sup>75</sup>

The Apostle Paul preached the same message and was the same person when he was in a large crowd or in people’s homes. In his final address to the church at Ephesus, Paul says, “I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.”<sup>76</sup> Paul is saying that his ministry was consistent. He was the same person whether he was with Jews or Greeks. No matter where he was and who he was with, he was doing exactly what he said he was there to do; preach the gospel in love. Pastors are called to follow this example of consistency in leadership. The biblical mandate of the pastor is to consistently act in accordance with their internal moral perspective, which is biblical adherence.

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<sup>75</sup> 1 Timothy 3:2.

<sup>76</sup> Acts 20:19-21.

Paul also can be regarded as a consistent leader because his biblical morality and consistent activity based on that morality required that he was honest and admit when mistakes in leadership were made. He says the following to the church in Rome.

We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do... For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.<sup>77</sup>

Paul admits that he often sins. He makes mistakes. Some leaders would view this as a negative because he is causing himself to appear weak. In fact, the literature shows that some leaders “tend to attribute positive events to their own personal characteristics but attribute negative events to factors beyond their control, presumably in an effort to maintain a positive self-image.”<sup>78</sup> However, Paul realizes that, by being honest about his activity even when he fails, people who are following him will consider him even more consistent. It is unrealistic to believe that a person could be always perfectly consistent. Therefore, if a pastor desires to be consistent, they must consistently act upon their biblical morality such that they even take responsibility when they make a mistake. It is difficult to imagine a pastor that is consistently acting on their biblical morality without the accompanying concept of repentance or accepting responsibility for poor leadership decisions. Therefore, a summary of the biblical support for consistency between

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<sup>77</sup> Romans 7:14-15.

<sup>78</sup> Mark R. Leary, “Motivational and Emotional Aspects of the Self,” *Annual Review of Psychology* 58, no. 1 (January 1, 2007): 317–44, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.58.110405.085658>.

words and actions is that the pastor acts upon his stated beliefs in biblical morality on a consistent basis both in frequency and regardless of context such that he does not vacillate but is also able to behave honestly regarding his decision-making.

Consistency is a biblical construct, but it is also supported in the secular literature. Two models add support for this definition of consistency between words and actions. The first is authentic leadership, or being true to oneself in leadership through self-awareness, balanced processing, internalized moral perspectives, and relational transparency.<sup>79</sup> The second is behavioral integrity, or the perceived alignment between managers' words and deeds.<sup>80</sup>

### *Authentic Leadership*

#### *The History of Authentic Leadership*

Authentic leadership came to be directly addressed in the literature in the 1960's.<sup>81</sup> One of the first definitions regarding authentic leadership was coined by Rome and Rome in 1967.

A hierarchical organization, in short, like an individual person, is 'authentic' to the extent that, throughout its leadership, it accepts finitude, uncertainty, and contingency; realizes its capacity for responsibility and choice; acknowledges guilt and errors; fulfills its creative managerial potential for flexible planning, growth, and charter or policy formation; and responsibly participates in the wider community.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Walumbwa et al., "Authentic Leadership," 95.

<sup>80</sup> Simons, "Behavioral Integrity," 18.

<sup>81</sup> Milorad M. Novicevic et al., "Authentic Leadership: A Historical Perspective," *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 13, no. 1 (Summer 2006): 64–76, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10717919070130010901>.

<sup>82</sup> Beatrice Rome and Sydney Rome, "Humanistic Research on Large Social Organizations," in *Challenges of Humanistic Psychology* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 184.

This early definition of authentic leadership set the general direction for future definitions. Years later, Henderson and Hoy followed by being the first to operationalize the construct.<sup>83</sup> Their definition involves three components. Salience of self over role means that a leader is more concerned with being a genuine person than strictly adhering to rigid role expectations. The second component is non-manipulation of subordinates, and the third component is accountability, which describes the leader's willingness to accept responsibility when mistakes are made.<sup>84</sup> While there were a few more researchers in the 90's that made contributions to the discussion of authentic leadership, the next, most notable contributors were Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, and May. Since 2003, some combination of these contributors is seen in many studies and papers about authentic leadership. Three of these contributed to the 2008 article that refined the academic definition of authentic leadership to include four components, which comprise the Authentic Leadership Development Theory (ALD). They are self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency.<sup>85</sup> This study also created the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, which is widely used today as a scale to measure authentic leadership.

Authentic leadership is viewed by its chief researchers as a "root" construct.<sup>86</sup> This means that many theories of leadership depend on a basic authenticity of the leader, such as

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<sup>83</sup> Gardner et al., "Authentic Leadership."

<sup>84</sup> James Henderson and Wayne Hoy, "Leader Authenticity: The Development and Test of an Operational Measure," *Educational and Psychological Research* 3, no. 2 (1983): 63–75.

<sup>85</sup> Walumbwa et al., "Authentic Leadership."

<sup>86</sup> Bruce J. Avolio et al., "Unlocking the Mask: A Look at the Process by Which Authentic Leaders Impact Follower Attitudes and Behaviors," *The Leadership Quarterly* 15, no. 6 (December 2004): 801–23, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2004.09.003>.

Transformational Leadership Theory (TL).<sup>87</sup> Transformational leadership inspires change to the status quo by influencing followers to become leaders.<sup>88</sup> In fact, Burns says that followers “might outstrip leaders.”<sup>89</sup> That is the goal of transformational leadership. Burns also contends that transformational leadership is based in morality, like ALD. A person cannot be a transformational leader if they do not have morality guiding them. Burns says, “Transforming values lie at the heart of transforming leadership, determining whether leadership indeed can be transforming.”<sup>90</sup> The goal of transformational leadership is not merely to achieve the individual goals of leaders and followers, but rather to press forward to a collective goal of advancement toward the common good. Burns adds, “Transformational leadership is more concerned with end-values, such as liberty, justice, equality.”<sup>91</sup> The contention of the developers of ALD is that a transformational leader must first be an authentic leader. Not all authentic leaders are transformational, but all transformational leaders are authentic. Therefore, if a pastor desires to move a congregation toward a particular end goal, that is more in line with Transformational Leadership Theory.<sup>92</sup> However, before the pastor can become a transformational leader, they

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<sup>87</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Open Road, 1978).

<sup>88</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Transforming Leadership: A New Pursuit of Happiness* (New York: Grove Press, 2003), 24.

<sup>89</sup> Burns, 26.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>91</sup> Burns, *Leadership*, 426.

<sup>92</sup> Burns, 426.

must earn the followership of the congregation by being an authentic leader, part of which is displayed through consistency between words and actions.<sup>93</sup>

The ALD promoted by Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, and colleagues includes the factors of self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency.<sup>94</sup> Self-awareness indicates that a person understands how they make meaning out of the world around them and how that affects the way they view themselves. Relational transparency means that a person presents their true self to others. Balanced processing indicates that the leader analyzes all relevant information before coming to a decision. Internalized moral perspective refers to a process by which the leader has a moral standard and then displays consistency by acting in accordance with that moral standard.<sup>95</sup>

#### *Internalized Moral Perspectives*

Two of the elements of the ALD contribute to the understanding of how consistency between words and actions leads to trust. The first is “internal moral perspectives.”<sup>96</sup> This study employs the approach of Gardner, Avolio, Walumbwa, Luthans, and May that authentic leadership is inherently moral.<sup>97</sup> This is important to the conception of consistency between words and actions used in this study because the role of the pastor has an inherent expectation for

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<sup>93</sup> Avolio et al., “Unlocking the Mask.”

<sup>94</sup> Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> William L. Gardner, Bruce J. Avolio, and Fred O. Walumbwa, “Authentic Leadership Development: Emergent Themes and Future Directions,” in *Authentic Leadership Theory and Practice: Origins, Effects and Development*, vol. 3, Monographs in Leadership and Management (Emerald, 2005), 387–406.



biblical morality. Therefore, not all conceptions of authentic leadership apply to this study. There are differing opinions about what constitutes authenticity and whether that includes an objective morality.

Shamir and Eilam contend that the life-story is the basis for identity and not an objective moral standard.<sup>98</sup> They argue, “as argued by Adorno 1973, a purely subjective concept of authenticity would include instances of ‘honest’ self-delusion, in our case of leaders who truly believe they have been endowed with special qualities not possessed by ordinary mortals and who act based on such a belief. History has shown that such leaders can be very dangerous.”<sup>99</sup> While few would argue with the assertion that some people throughout history have considered themselves god-like or oppressed others on the basis of divine authority, it is painting with a broad brush to then say that all those who appeal to divine authority are dangerous and that the true self defined through experience is the only reliable authority. Rejection of moral absolutes is the goal for Shamir and Eilam by their appeal to Adorno’s work.

Sparrowe concurs with Shamir and Eilam in his work by saying, “The problem in arguing that authenticity is intrinsically ethical is that ‘to thine own self be true’ is resolute in its indifference to moral postures.”<sup>100</sup> His assertion is that morality is not a necessary pursuit for an authentic leader. Discovery and consistency with the true self is the best measure for authenticity in the life of the leader.

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<sup>98</sup> Boas Shamir and Galit Eilam, “‘What’s Your Story?’ A Life-Stories Approach to Authentic Leadership Development,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (June 2005): 395–417, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.005>.

<sup>99</sup> Shamir and Eilam, 400.

<sup>100</sup> Raymond T. Sparrowe, “Authentic Leadership and the Narrative Self,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (June 2005): 419–39, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.004>.

In a sort of middle ground between the necessary objective morality of Gardner and colleagues and the absence of morality as a part of authentic leadership, Michael Kernis' presents a model of authenticity that excludes "internal moral perspectives" in favor of "behavior," but he alludes to the fact that behavior must be subject to a "core."<sup>101</sup> The four components of his definition of authenticity are awareness, unbiased processing, behavior/action, and relational orientation.<sup>102</sup> He says that authenticity is, "the unobstructed operation of one's true or core self in one's daily enterprise."<sup>103</sup> Authenticity, then, is about expressing oneself in congruence with one's true self. This is related to Kernis' research on self-esteem because he relates this authenticity to positive self-esteem by suggesting that a person may have positive self-esteem if they are able to express their true self. He notably does not include morality in his definition of authenticity, though he does make veiled references to morality. Kernis does not reject the necessity of a moral compass, but he also presents a framework that is confusing about an objective morality. For example, he says that when a person's true self comes in conflict with accepted social norms of his or her environment, they have two choices. The first is to choose not to act in accordance with their true self, at which point they may be acting in accordance with the awareness and unbiased processing levels of authenticity, but not at the behavioral level. The second option is to be true to themselves, in which case they would be acting in accordance with

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<sup>101</sup> Michael H. Kernis, "Toward a Conceptualization of Optimal Self-Esteem," *Psychological Inquiry* 14, no. 1 (January 2003): 1, [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1401\\_01](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1401_01).

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Michael H. Kernis and Brian M. Goldman, "From Thought and Experience to Behavior and Interpersonal Relationships: A Multicomponent Conceptualization of Authenticity," in *Building, Defending, and Regulating the Self: A Psychological Perspective*, 1st ed. (Taylor & Francis Group, 2004), 31–52.

the behavioral component of authenticity but not awareness and unbiased processing.<sup>104</sup> In this model of authenticity, it seems difficult to ever be truly authentic in society as it is currently constructed unless, somehow, a person's true self perfectly aligns with the expected social norms. Therefore, Kernis' model of authenticity is individualistic. He admits that this is so, even though he attempts to introduce a bit of collectivism by adding the relational component. The question then becomes, "Is authenticity simply being true to oneself no matter what that means, or is it being true to oneself provided that your core beliefs contribute to an objectively "good" and productive society?"

Kernis' model calls back to the Greeks' definition of authenticity of being true to oneself, which arose out of the decline of religiosity in that culture.<sup>105</sup> Therefore, in the absence of moral standards of religion, perhaps authenticity became its own form of morality. In other words, in the eyes of some, authenticity is not relating genuinely with others while adhering to a common moral standard, but rather it is a moral standard unto itself. Kernis denies that he is positing a purely "postmodern" definition with no core<sup>106</sup>, but it is difficult to see what that core might be if there is no objective moral standard involved. Objective morality is hardly workable in this framework unless authenticity is, itself, a moral structure.

Shamir, Eilam, and Sparrowe reject the idea that morality is necessary for authentic leadership. Kernis makes a veiled reference to morality but with difficult workability.

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<sup>104</sup> Kernis, "Toward a Conceptualization of Optimal Self-Esteem."

<sup>105</sup> Roy F. Baumeister, "How the Self Became a Problem: A Psychological Review of Historical Research," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 52, no. 1 (January 1987): 163–76, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.52.1.163>.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, and colleagues overtly include “internalized moral perspective” in their definition of authentic leadership.<sup>107</sup> They state, “With respect to our definitional reasons, we believe the construct of ‘authenticity’ as involving self-awareness and self-ownership is inconsistent with a low level of moral development.”<sup>108</sup> They believe that development of self-awareness and self-ownership is directly correlated with high moral development. However, what exactly is high moral development? Hannah, in his discussion of the moral component of authentic leadership, emphasizes virtuousness and altruism.<sup>109</sup> These differing perspectives about the presence of objective morality in the secular literature as a part of authentic leadership is relevant to this study because, for a Southern Baptist pastor, there is an assumed necessity for an objective morality that is based on the Christian conception of the self.

### *Christian Authenticity*

Christian authenticity is important in the life of the pastor, but some may wonder how the modern conception of authenticity as unobstructed expression of every inward desire can be reconciled with Christian teaching about self-denial. The following discussion explains how authenticity is important for Christians but with an appropriate view of what constitutes in the true self of a believer in Christ as Savior and Lord.

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<sup>107</sup> Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

<sup>108</sup> Gardner, Avolio, and Walumbwa, “Authentic Leadership Development: Emergent Themes and Future Directions.”

<sup>109</sup> Sean T. Hannah, Paul B. Lester, and Gretchen R. Vogelgesang, “Moral Leadership: Explicating the Moral Component of Authentic Leadership,” in *Authentic Leadership Theory and Practice: Origins, Effects and Development*, vol. 3, Monographs in Leadership and Management (Emerald, 2005), 43–81.

The Apostle Paul wrestles with the dual nature in Romans 7, and the opening three chapters detail the original goodness and the emergence of the egregious sinful nature. This means that humans are naturally sinful, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to the believer at the point of their salvation. Paul writes, “For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.”<sup>110</sup> Once the person is justified by Christ, this does not mean that they then behave perfectly while still operating in the sin-cursed world. The believer will still sin because of the sinful flesh which they still inhabit. Paul further writes,

For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!<sup>111</sup>

Paul suggested that he battled two of what might be called “selves.” He had oneself in the flesh that caused him to continue to sin, yet the self that is his deliverance from the natural, sinful self is the self which has been regenerated by Christ. At the point of justification, the Holy Spirit of God comes to indwell the believer. Paul adds,

But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Romans 5:19.

<sup>111</sup> Romans 7:22-25.

<sup>112</sup> Romans 8:10-11.

Paul is saying that, even though the believer in Christ will sin because of the flesh, the truest self which gives life to the believer, the self that must “win” in the life and heart of the believer, is the self that is animated by the Spirit of God. He additionally writes, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”<sup>113</sup> The “self” for the believer in Christ Jesus, is the Spirit of God. Therefore, any authentic expression of that self would be in congruence with Christ. Michael Kernis, from a secular view, defines authenticity as “the unobstructed operation of one’s true or core self in one’s daily enterprise.”<sup>114</sup> Since the true self of the believer in Christ, according to the Scriptures, is the Spirit of Christ, the authentic, unobstructed operation of that self should reflect and accomplish the purposes of Christ. However, this union with Christ and the Holy Spirit’s indwelling of the believer does not necessitate an absence of uniqueness in the individual or hating oneself.

In the passages above, Paul is not belittling the natural self as evil and the spiritual self as good in a sort of dichotomy that is expressed in Greek thinkers such as Plato. In Greek dualism, the physical body is evil, and the spirit is good, so “salvation” is achieved by fleeing from the physical.<sup>115</sup> This is not the view of the New Testament. The New Testament belief with regards to dualism is not that humans should flee the physical self, but that Jesus came to inhabit a physical body to redeem humanity and reconcile them to God.<sup>116</sup> All people are created in the

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<sup>113</sup> Galatians 2:20.

<sup>114</sup> Kernis, “Toward a Conceptualization of Optimal Self-Esteem.”

<sup>115</sup> George E. Ladd, *The Pattern of New Testament Truth*. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968), 13.

<sup>116</sup> Ladd, 14.

image of God. Genesis 1:27 says, “So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” Most of the Christian tradition adopts the view that people are created in God’s image, yet totally a slave to sin since the fall in Genesis 3. Romans 6:16 says, “Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?”<sup>117</sup> However, the eventual goal of the redemptive story of Jesus is that, one day, all of heaven and earth will be restored to God. Therefore, even the physical body of the believer will be renewed. Paul writes,

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.<sup>118</sup>

Paul indicates here that the physical element of all things is not evil by nature of its existence but because of the presence of sin. Therefore, the believer in Christ Jesus should not view themselves, with all the personality, talents, and gifts God created them to exercise, as bad. In other words, there is no reason for the believer in Christ to hate themselves to love the Christ that is in them.

When asked what the most important commandment is, Jesus said,

The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Romans 6:16.

<sup>118</sup> Philippians 3:20-21.

<sup>119</sup> Mark 12:29-31.

It can be seen in these verses that the believer in Christ should love God more than themselves, but they should also love themselves. Paul writes,

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ...Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body...But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.<sup>120</sup>

In this context, Paul has just finished speaking about the fact that people have different giftings in the church. Some have the gift of prophecy, some can heal, some speak in tongues, etc. Then he follows up this discussion of the different giftings by saying that every person in the body of Christ is important not only because they are a member of the body but because of their uniqueness. People in the body of Christ should not belittle their own gifts because God made them that way and placed them in their local context for His glory. Therefore, believers should not hate themselves, but they should love themselves, with the understanding that they must love Christ above all. They should love themselves because they were created in the image of God for the purpose of reflecting that image into the world. This introduces the second important element of a biblical view of the self, which is that the self has a given purpose in the world.

This belief in the purpose of the self is the teleological view posited in the fifth way of believing God's existence by Thomas Aquinas.<sup>121</sup> Aquinas writes, "Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God."<sup>122</sup> In Aquinas' version of the Christian view, God created humans and, therefore, they have a

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<sup>120</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:12,15,18.

<sup>121</sup> Carl R Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution*, 2020, 40, <http://public.eblib.com/choice/PublicFullRecord.aspx?p=6351630>.

<sup>122</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *The Complete Works of Thomas Aquinas*, Kindle Edition (Omaha, NE, 2018), 75.



purpose that is directed toward Him. Charles Taylor points out, however, that Plato before Aquinas posited this teleological view of the created order, and that scientific exploration was an enterprise in better understanding that order.<sup>123</sup> This had ramifications on the view of the self in the ancient world. As Carl Trueman puts it, “The world was what it was, and the individual needed to conform to it.”<sup>124</sup> Belief in the created order and the teleological nature of the self is not an exclusively Christian ideal, but most of the Christian tradition would agree that it is a necessary component of Christianity merely by the nature of believing that humans were created in the image of God.

Charles Taylor expressed concern in departing from this teleological view of the self in his many works. Specifically, in *The Malaise of Modernity*, he writes, “The first source of worry [in post-modern society] is individualism.”<sup>125</sup> In *A Secular Age*, he refers to this as “expressive individualism,” which he equates with the secular version of authenticity.<sup>126</sup> Taylor argues that many of the authors who have written about the rise of relativism, which he claims is very similar to individualism, have missed the important aspect of the “moral force of the ideal of authenticity.”<sup>127</sup> This moral force is that “the vigorous defense of any moral ideal is somehow off limits.”<sup>128</sup> Therefore, the only morality in the age of authenticity is espousing and defending

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<sup>123</sup> Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 125.

<sup>124</sup> Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, 40.

<sup>125</sup> Charles Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity* (Concord, Ontario: House of Anansi Publishing, 1991), 2.

<sup>126</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 299.

<sup>127</sup> Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity*, 17.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

none. This, of course, is contradictory to say dogmatically that any dogmatism is morally deficient, but Taylor says that this contradictory ideal is allowed to flourish because it has become an axiom, “something that one doesn’t challenge but also never expounds.”<sup>129</sup>

Taylor calls this “the culture of authenticity” and defines it as

The understanding of life which emerges with the Romantic expressivism of the late-eighteenth century, that each one of us has his/her own way of realizing our humanity, and that it is important to find and live out one’s own, as against surrendering to conformity with a model imposed on us from outside, by society, or the previous generation, or religious or political authority.<sup>130</sup>

Carl Trueman adds to this idea that, in this culture of authenticity, “...personal authenticity is found through public performance of inward desires.”<sup>131</sup> This is the issue at hand with the so-called “culture of authenticity” as it relates to morality; that desires are indicative of identity. There is the assumption in the modern understanding of the true self that, if a person feels a desire for something, then that thing must be a basic element of the self. This is why, as Taylor points out, expression of those inward desires becomes a moral compulsion.<sup>132</sup> Expression of those inward desires is a moral absolute in this view, and anyone who does not support the expression of those inward desires is labelled as hateful, prejudiced, and discriminatory. For example, pastors receive threats of legal action if they do not perform certain wedding ceremonies that differ from their strongly held beliefs about what constitutes a biblical

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 475.

<sup>131</sup> Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, 52.

<sup>132</sup> Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity*, 17.

marriage.<sup>133</sup> Similarly, Christian bakers were fined 135 thousand dollars for declining to bake a cake for a wedding with which they held a religious disagreement, even though they had served the couple before many times, which indicated an absence of discriminatory practices and a presence of religious conviction around one single issue.<sup>134</sup> Trueman writes, “Satisfaction and meaning – authenticity – are now found by an inward turn, and the culture is reconfigured to this end. Indeed, it must now serve the purpose of meeting my psychological needs; I must not tailor my psychological needs to the nature of society, for that would create anxiety and make me inauthentic.”<sup>135</sup> Therefore, what one considers moral is inextricably linked to their conception of who they are.<sup>136</sup>

Consequently, the relationship between authenticity and morality, and how Christianity and pastoral leadership are applicable in a discussion of authenticity, centers on two questions. The first is “What constitutes the true self that is being expressed?” The second is “What is the purpose of that expression?” With regards to the first question, Taylor writes,

To know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand. My identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or

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<sup>133</sup> Todd Starnes, “City Threatens to Arrest Ministers Who Refuse to Perform Same-Sex Weddings,” Article, Fox News (Fox News, March 5, 2015), <https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/city-threatens-to-arrest-ministers-who-refuse-to-perform-same-sex-weddings>.

<sup>134</sup> Anugrah Kumar and Christian Post Contributor 85, “Christian Bakers Fined \$135K for Not Baking Gay Wedding Cake Fundraise to Relaunch Business,” The Christian Post, June 26, 2022, <https://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-bakers-punished-for-not-baking-gay-wedding-cake-to-relaunch-business.html>.

<sup>135</sup> Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, 54.

<sup>136</sup> Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1989), 29.

what I endorse or oppose. In other words, it is the horizon within which I am capable of taking a stand.<sup>137</sup>

In Taylor's view, the self or identity is the frame or horizon within which a person determines what is good and bad. In the Christian tradition, that frame is God revealed through the person of Jesus Christ and His Word. In the post-modern, secular conceptualization of the self, that frame is whatever the natural desires are.<sup>138</sup> The second question flows from the first and is about teleology. In the Christian tradition, there is purpose and plan for the expression of the self as having been redeemed to the original intent of the creator, specifically the reflection of His image into the world. In the post-modern, secular conceptualization of the self, there is no greater purpose or plan, so the expression of the self becomes the purpose and the plan.<sup>139</sup>

If pastors and Christians in general are expected to be authentic by expressing their true inner self, which is indwelled by the Holy Spirit, then consistency between their words and actions is an important aspect of communicating that authenticity to followers. Pastors, as a major component of their position, preach, counsel, and advise others based on their internal moral convictions. They often say aloud what their convictions are. Therefore, a principal determinant of their authenticity must lie in whether their behavior reflects the internal moral perspectives that should be held based on the indwelling self of the Holy Spirit. This could be referred to as the "practice what you preach" variable. The creators of the ALD propose, "Authentic leaders serve as positive models for followers by displaying through their words and

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<sup>137</sup> Taylor, 27.

<sup>138</sup> Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, 52.

<sup>139</sup> Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity*, 17.

actions core values, positive emotions, motives, and goals and a concern for followers' growth and development."<sup>140</sup> Walumbwa and colleagues add, "Furthermore, they display authentic behavior that reflects consistency between their values, beliefs, and actions."<sup>141</sup> Therefore, consistency is the positive modeling aspect of internalized moral perspectives. Since, so often, the way in which a pastor communicates their internal moral perspective is through speech, we are specifying consistency to mean "consistency between words and actions." This definition is rooted in the work of Wang and Hsieh.<sup>142</sup>

Bill George, in his book *Authentic Leadership*, says, "Authentic leaders use their natural abilities, but they also recognize their shortcomings and work hard to overcome them. They lead with purpose, meaning, and values. They build enduring relationships with people. Others follow them because they know where they stand. They are consistent and self-disciplined."<sup>143</sup> Consistency is one of the central ways in which followers actively and consciously can perceive a leader as authentic. They can judge consistency because it is simply the leader's stability between what they say and what they do. By doing so, followers can see that the leader is working hard to recognize and overcome their shortcomings. The concept of knowing where the leader stands is also important because the follower can trust that what the leader is saying also what they intend on doing, and if that changes or goes awry, the leader will be honest about it. Northouse adds, "Because disciplined leaders are predictable in their behavior, other people

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<sup>140</sup> Gardner et al., "Can You See the Real Me?"

<sup>141</sup> Walumbwa et al., "Authentic Leadership."

<sup>142</sup> Wang and Hsieh, "The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement."

<sup>143</sup> Bill George and Warren G. Bennis, *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value*, A Warren Bennis Book (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003).

know what to expect and find it easier to communicate with them.”<sup>144</sup> This idea leads to the second component of the ALD that adds to the understanding of consistency between words and actions, which is relational transparency.<sup>145</sup>

### *Relational Transparency*

Michael Kernis, in his discussion of stable and fragile self-esteem, determined that stable self-esteem is necessary for development of authenticity in the eyes of one’s peers. In his discussion of authenticity, he adds that relational authenticity is the component of authenticity that signals genuineness to others and that “fakeness” is the result of unstable self-esteem.<sup>146</sup> Relational authenticity is the result of stable self-esteem, which leads to consistency between words and actions.<sup>147</sup> A stable, consistent leader is not threatened or afraid of admitting fault. Kernis’ model of authenticity aligns with the four-factor theoretical model of authentic leadership posited by Walumbwa et.al, which includes the factors of self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency.<sup>148</sup> However, instead of internalized moral perspectives, he includes “behavior.”<sup>149</sup> In this model, consistency aligns with the concept of relational transparency. As in the discussion of the Scriptural basis for consistency, it is also recognized here that no person can ever be truly

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<sup>144</sup> Peter Guy Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, Eighth Edition (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2019), 201.

<sup>145</sup> Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

<sup>146</sup> Kernis, “Toward a Conceptualization of Optimal Self-Esteem.”

<sup>147</sup> Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

<sup>148</sup> Northouse, *Leadership*, 202.

<sup>149</sup> Kernis, “Toward a Conceptualization of Optimal Self-Esteem.”

consistent. No person can ever act on their internalized moral perspective at every moment. Relational transparency suggests that leaders may still be regarded as consistent, even though they technically are not, if they are willing to be honest about their shortcomings, as noted by George.<sup>150</sup> Relational transparency, especially in a Christian setting, is a necessary result of a biblical internalized moral perspective.

### Consistency Leads to Trust

Several studies show that consistency can lead to trust in secular organizations. The secular literature indicates that authenticity is perceived through positive modeling of that internal moral perspective by displaying consistency between words and actions. The literature also shows that, of importance to this study, consistency between words and actions leads to trust formation.

Morrison and Robinson found that diligent employees feel betrayed when the benefits provided by the organization do not match the benefits promised by the organization.<sup>151</sup> In other words, when the organization does not do what it says it will do, it is not consistent. Morrison and Robinson also point out that feelings of betrayal, and conversely the development of trust, are influenced mostly by “beliefs and perceptions that may be biased and by judgment processes that are often flawed.”<sup>152</sup> This means that even if the leader or organization believes themselves to be consistent, the perception of the followers matters more. These findings are helpful to

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<sup>150</sup> George and Bennis, *Authentic Leadership*.

<sup>151</sup> Elizabeth Wolfe Morrison and Sandra L. Robinson, “When Employees Feel Betrayed: A Model of How Psychological Contract Violation Develops,” *Academy of Management Review* 22, no. 1 (January 1997): 226–56, <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.1997.9707180265>.

<sup>152</sup> Morrison and Robinson.

understand the impact that consistency can have on trusting relationships, but this study focuses on trust in a person and not an organization.

In one case study involving consistency, it was found that a leader who claims to give ownership of a project or some other type of authority but then continued to be just as involved and unwilling to let the workers to which this new authority was given do their job was viewed as inconsistent. This led to a lack of trust between workers and the leader because the leader did not do what he said he would do.<sup>153</sup> Workers are more likely to trust their leader if the leader does what they say they will do.

Wang and Hsieh were able to support the hypothesis that consistency between a supervisor's words and actions were positively related to employee trust formation.<sup>154</sup> In that study, there was also an exploration of the moral component of leadership. In other words, a leader that is both consistent and perceived as moral has a better opportunity to develop trusting relationships with his or her followers. This leads directly into the application of consistency in the ministry context.

#### Perception of Followers

This study cannot measure consistency, warmth, or competence objectively but only the perceptions that the congregation has of each. However, perceptions of followers have major implications for leadership. Research shows a low correlation between leader-intended behavior and employee-perceived behavior. Nishii and colleagues found that employees "interpretations,

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<sup>153</sup> Joseph A. Raelin, "Espoused Action: It's a Matter of Consistency," *Business Horizons* 37, no. 3 (June 5, 1994): 44, [https://doi.org/10.1016/0007-6813\(94\)90005-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/0007-6813(94)90005-1).

<sup>154</sup> Wang and Hsieh, "The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement."



attributions, or perceptions” of HR practices “play an important role in influencing the ultimate effect of HR practices.”<sup>155</sup> Jacobsen and Andersen further conclude, “Our findings for the first part of the research question show that leader-intended leadership and employee-perceived leadership are weakly related. Leaders tend to overrate their use of a given type of leadership relative to their employees’ assessments.”<sup>156</sup> While the actual authenticity of the leader is vital, it is not the only consideration for those who desire to be authentic leaders. Leaders, and particularly pastors, must focus on behavior that allows them to communicate their authenticity to followers in a way that is positively perceived.

With this perception in mind, it is important for pastors to focus on the “positive modeling” aspect of the Authentic Leadership Development Theory (ALD).<sup>157</sup> In the proposed model of Gardner and colleagues, positive modeling is the link between leader authenticity and follower authenticity. In their model, leader authenticity leads to positive modeling, which leads to follower authenticity. Follower authenticity leads to positive follower outcomes, one of which is trust.<sup>158</sup> Therefore, in this model, if a leader wants to instill trust within their followers, they

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<sup>155</sup> Lisa H. Nishii, David P. Lepak, and Benjamin Schneider, “Employee Attributions of the ‘Why’ of HR Practices: Their Effects on Employee Attitudes and Behaviors, and Customer Satisfaction,” *Personnel Psychology* 61, no. 3 (September 2008): 503–45, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2008.00121.x>.

<sup>156</sup> Christian Bøtcher Jacobsen and Lotte Bøgh Andersen, “Is Leadership in the Eye of the Beholder? A Study of Intended and Perceived Leadership Practices and Organizational Performance,” *Public Administration Review* 75, no. 6 (November 2015): 829–41, <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12380>.

<sup>157</sup> Gardner et al., ““Can You See the Real Me?””

<sup>158</sup> Gardner et al.

must positively model their own authenticity through consistency so that other may perceive it in them and follow them as a result.

### Stereotype Content Model

Warmth and competence are the remaining predictor variables in the proposed model of this study. These two constructs are a part of the Stereotype Content Model (SCM), developed by Fiske and colleagues, which states that the two fundamental dimensions we evaluate others on when we perceive them are competence and warmth. It was first applied to group perceptions of different demographics. Based on preexistent assumptions about different demographic groupings (rich people, feminists, Black professionals, elderly people, etc.), the researchers found that many of the stereotypes attached to those groups were “mixed, portraying groups as high competence but low warmth or low competence but high warmth.”<sup>159</sup> Further research equated the terms “warmth and competence” with “intentions and ability.”<sup>160</sup> They found that high levels of both greatly impacted brand loyalty and called this the “Brands as Intentional Agents Framework.” The SCM was even used to predict variability in behavior towards animals by humans based on their perceptions of those animals as warm and/or competent.<sup>161</sup> The SCM also expanded into the healthcare field with Drevs’ finding that the ownership status of hospitals causes a differentiation in how those hospitals were evaluated as warm, competent, and

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<sup>159</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content.”

<sup>160</sup> Kervyn, Fiske, and Malone, “Brands as Intentional Agents Framework: How Perceived Intentions and Ability Can Map Brand Perception.”

<sup>161</sup> Verónica Sevillano and Susan T. Fiske, “Stereotypes, Emotions, and Behaviors Associated with Animals: A Causal Test of the Stereotype Content Model and BIAS Map,” *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 22, no. 6 (September 2019): 879–900, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430219851560>.

trustworthy.<sup>162</sup> Drevs further establishes a model that suggests the combination of warmth and competence has an effect on trust and choice of a hospital.<sup>163</sup> In these previous cases, the SCM was studied within the context of a group's perception of another group or organization. The pastor is not the organization, but the pastor is a representative of the organization. In many cases, the success of the church is associated with the success of the pastor as well as trust. The interplay of perceptions about warmth and competence could be helpful indicators of trust in the pastor in a church setting.

### *Warmth*

According to Malone and Fiske, "Warmth is judged by assessing whether one is kind, friendly, and good-natured; whether one appears sincere, honest, moral, and trustworthy; and whether one possesses an accommodating orientation and is perceived as helpful, tolerant, fair, generous, and understanding."<sup>164</sup> Warmth is the factor in this study that is more about how a person is made to feel rather than what the leader can or will do for the person. For example, consistency between words and actions is a characteristic that must be shown over time, but warmth is perceived almost immediately. In a study, it was demonstrated that trustworthiness is perceived within 100 milliseconds of seeing a person's face.<sup>165</sup> Franklin and colleagues similarly

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<sup>162</sup> Florian Drevs, Dieter K. Tscheulin, and Jörg Lindenmeier, "Do Patient Perceptions Vary With Ownership Status? A Study of Nonprofit, For-Profit, and Public Hospital Patients," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (February 2014): 164–84, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764012458179>.

<sup>163</sup> Drevs, "How Patients Choose Hospitals."

<sup>164</sup> Chris Malone and Susan T. Fiske, *The Human Brand: How We Relate to People, Products, and Companies*, First edition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2014), 22.

<sup>165</sup> Janine Willis and Alexander Todorov, "First Impressions: Making Up Your Mind After a 100-Ms Exposure to a Face," *Psychological Science* (0956-7976) 17, no. 7 (July 2006): 592–98, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2006.01750.x>.

found that judgements of anger and joy were perceived because of facial expression angularity.<sup>166</sup> This judgement can be based on no experiential treatment of the person because the interaction has only just occurred. Studies also suggest that people with baby faces or happy faces are interpreted as trustworthy and warm.<sup>167</sup> These studies demonstrate that warmth is a fundamental way in which people evaluate others. This does not mean that a person cannot overcome first impressions. In fact, the same study showed that after longer exposure, the appearance of the face had less impact on the perception of warmth.<sup>168</sup> However, facial expressions do factor into how a person is perceived at the outset of a relationship. If the pastor wants to be perceived as trustworthy, he should consider how his facial expressions exude warmth to others.

The value of warmth in perceiving others is to some degree innate, especially in how infants and children learn to trust adults. In fact, warmth is an important part of early child development. McDonald writes, “A continuing relationship of warmth and affection between parents and children is expected to result in the acceptance of adult values by the child, identifying with the parent, and a generally higher level of compliance.”<sup>169</sup> Warmth is associated with children’s acceptance of their parent’s values. Therefore, from an early age, and

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<sup>166</sup> Robert G. Franklin et al., “Reading the Lines in the Face: The Contribution of Angularity and Roundness to Perceptions of Facial Anger and Joy.,” *Emotion* 19, no. 2 (March 2019): 209–18, <https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000423>.

<sup>167</sup> Alexander Todorov et al., “Understanding Evaluation of Faces on Social Dimensions,” *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 12, no. 12 (December 2008): 455–60, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2008.10.001>.

<sup>168</sup> Willis and Todorov, “First Impressions.”

<sup>169</sup> Kevin MacDonald, “Warmth as a Developmental Construct: An Evolutionary Analysis,” *Child Development* 63, no. 4 (August 1992): 753, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1131231>.

instinctually, humans respond to warmth by trusting the person from whom they receive warmth. This warmth inspires people to adopt the values of the person from whom they receive warmth. While congregants are not necessarily children, the fact that warmth inspires this kind of response from an early age indicates how important it is for a pastor to show warmth. Adoption of values is an important goal for the pastor. As previously discussed, the pastor's role is to equip the congregation for ministry by warning and teaching them in the ways of Scripture. Perceived warmth is an important characteristic in helping the pastor equip his followers through the adoption of Christian values.

Since it takes time to establish the other two characteristics of this study, warmth is perhaps the fastest way that a pastor or any leader can establish trusting relationships and knowing how to create early wins with people is helpful knowledge. However, not only should the pastor consider how to be perceived as warm, but Scripture suggests that genuine warmth in the life of the pastor is a part of qualification for the pastorate. The central text is, again, 1 Timothy 3:1-7. In this passage, the pastor is said to need the characteristics of self-control, hospitality, and gentleness. These characteristics align with the warmth definition given above of being "helpful, tolerant, fair, and understanding." Therefore, the warmth of the pastor is not merely something to be perceived but something that should be a part of the essential nature of the pastor. This fact is the reason for choosing to group warmth and consistency together in this study of characteristics that lead to trust. Perceived warmth is helpful to establish early trust in relationships, but if the pastor is not consistent, displaying authenticity, then trust cannot be sustained. For example, studies show that non-profits are already perceived as warm, while for profits are perceived as more competent.<sup>170</sup> If this is the case, and warmth leads to trust, then it

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<sup>170</sup> Jennifer Lynn Aaker, Kathleen Vohs, and Cassie Mogilner, "Non-Profits Are Seen as Warm and For-

seems unusual that churches are becoming less and less trustworthy in the public square <sup>171</sup>. Therefore, there must be some additional obstacles to gaining the trust of people from the church's perspective.

In Luke 6:45, Jesus says, "A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of."<sup>172</sup> This means that whatever is in a person's heart will eventually reveal itself. Leaders may use perceived characteristics like warmth to manipulate and fool a congregation for a while, but the added concept of consistency will make it more difficult for a charlatan to remain trustworthy perpetually. One way to show that the warmth is genuine is by being that warm person in almost every situation and place. It is anticipated, therefore, that warmth combined with consistency will be a strong indicator of trusting relationships between pastor and congregation.

### *Competence*

The pastor's competence has to do with his ability, intellect, and confidence. Further, this study only deals with the perception of the pastor's competence and not actual competence. The congregation should believe that their pastor is knowledgeable in the relevant fields of leadership and biblical studies. They should also believe that the pastor has the confidence to act upon that knowledge. Going back to the primary text for this study in 1 Timothy 3:2, Paul says that the pastor should be "able to teach." This is advocacy for ability or competence. The Scriptures

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Profits as Competent: Firm Stereotypes Matter," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2010, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1540134>.

<sup>171</sup> Inc., "U.S. Confidence in Organized Religion Remains Low."

<sup>172</sup> 1 Timothy 3:2.

indicate that a pastor should earn the trust of the people, in part, by his knowledge and ability to exegete the Word of God. Because of this fact, not only will this study focus on the leadership competence of the pastor, but also on the perceived competence of his preaching. It should be noted that, as with all other variables in this study, only perceived competence was measured and not actual competence.

Fiske defines competence as confident and intelligent.<sup>173</sup> In some models, competence is shown as a tradeoff (low competence and high warmth).<sup>174</sup> In other models, competence and warmth can both be high or low.<sup>175</sup> As in SCM, stereotypes often assume low warmth and high competence or low competence and high warmth.<sup>176</sup> This is demonstrated in studies done on the perception of scientists as being highly competent but cold.<sup>177</sup> Additionally, one study found that warmth was more important than competence when choosing to vote for a political candidate or evaluations of political candidates.<sup>178</sup> Competence can be defined as the ability to make correct decisions and avoid mistakes.<sup>179</sup>

The work of Kim, Eisenberger and Baik found that high levels of perceived organizational competence supported the relationship of perceived organizational support and

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<sup>173</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content,” 884.

<sup>174</sup> Aaker, Vohs, and Mogilner, “Non-Profits Are Seen as Warm and For-Profits as Competent.”

<sup>175</sup> Kervyn, Fiske, and Malone, “Brands as Intentional Agents Framework: How Perceived Intentions and Ability Can Map Brand Perception.”

<sup>176</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content.”

<sup>177</sup> Y. Fujiwara et al., “Competent and Cold: A Directed Content Analysis of Warmth and Competence Dimensions to Identify and Categorise Stereotypes of Scientists Portrayed in Meme-Based GIFs,” *International Journal of Science Education* 44, no. 4 (March 4, 2022): 694–715, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500693.2022.2050560>.

<sup>178</sup> Lasse Laustsen and Alexander Bor, “The Relative Weight of Character Traits in Political Candidate Evaluations: Warmth Is More Important than Competence, Leadership and Integrity,” *Electoral Studies* 49 (October 2017): 104, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2017.08.001>.

<sup>179</sup> Drevs, “How Patients Choose Hospitals.”

affective commitment.<sup>180</sup> In other words, the more competent employees believe their organization to be, the more that organization's attempt to support the employee leads to the employee's affection and commitment to the organization. It does little good for an employee to be supported and cared for by an organization they believe to be incompetent. Kao, Hsieh, and Lee found additionally that players on sports teams' perception of their coaches' competence was positively correlated to the trust in that coach.<sup>181</sup> The role of coaches is somewhat like that of a pastor in that the coach needs the trust of the players to shape them into better players. Therefore, if players trust their coaches more if they perceive them as competent, then perhaps congregants' trust will be positively affected by their perception of his competence. The coach and the pastor must be viewed as knowledgeable in their appropriate areas of expertise with confidence to lead in those areas. With the goal of the pastor being to "equip the saints for the work of ministry," he needs the trust of the congregants to inspire a change in behavior or belief, and the congregants' perception of his competence may be a contributing variable.

### Summary of Findings and Themes

There are several themes that consistently appear in this review that led to a new proposed model. The first theme that is evident from this review is that trust is vital to the mission of the pastor. As we noted, both the Scriptural mandate and secular research conclude that trust leads to positive outcomes for followers and organizations.<sup>182</sup> If trust is necessary for

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<sup>180</sup> Kim, Eisenberger, and Baik, "Perceived Organizational Support and Affective Organizational Commitment."

<sup>181</sup> San-Fu Kao, Ming-Hui Hsieh, and Po-Lun Lee, "Coaching Competency and Trust in Coach in Sport Teams."



pastors to be obedient to the Lord and to affect positive outcomes for followers, then there are two theories, which establish three variables, potentially leading to trust in the pastor.

The ALD is the basis for consistency between words and actions.<sup>183</sup> Consistency, also known as behavioral integrity, is the positive modeling component of the internal moral perspective of the pastor. The congregation really has no way of knowing whether the pastor believes what he claims to believe unless he is consistent in his actions. There is evidence to support the claim that consistency between words and actions leads to trust in an employer/employee relationship.<sup>184</sup> This study will expand upon these findings to test their validity in the ministry environment.

The SCM includes three variables: two antecedents of the other. The independent variables of warmth and competence, when both are perceived at high levels, are shown to lead to loyalty.<sup>185</sup> and are proposed to lead to the dependent variable of trust.<sup>186</sup> It may be true that, in ministry context, some people have differing stereotypical assumptions about pastors in general, but this study will measure the congregants' assessment of their own pastor based on experience. This study will expand upon the current literature by testing the proposal of Drevs that high levels of competence and warmth lead to trust.

This study will test the validity of a new model that combines the ALD and SCM to propose that trust between a pastor and congregations is influenced by the variables of warmth, competence, and consistency between words and actions.

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<sup>182</sup>Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust."

<sup>183</sup> Gardner et al., "Can You See the Real Me?"

<sup>184</sup> Wang and Hsieh, "The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement."

<sup>185</sup> Kervyn, Fiske, and Malone, "Brands as Intentional Agents Framework: How Perceived Intentions and Ability Can Map Brand Perception."

<sup>186</sup> Drevs, "How Patients Choose Hospitals."

### Forecasting Chapter Three

Chapter Three will be an explanation of the methodology that will be implemented to study this topic. The study design, data collection method used, and data analysis methodology will be explained. The basis for the chosen population is also an important aspect of this research, so support for this choice will be provided as well.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

This study is designed to assess the potential correlation of the predictor variables of consistency between words and actions, competence, and warmth with the outcome variable of trust. The biblical and secular literature gives reason to believe that each of these predictor variables may be related to trust formation in followers. This study was designed to further the work of Wang et al. with regard to consistency leading to trust using the Authentic Leadership Development Theory as a framework.<sup>1</sup> The study was also designed to further the work of Fiske's Stereotype Content Model.<sup>2</sup> and specifically the work of Dreves on perceptions of warmth and competence as predictors of trust.<sup>3</sup> The importance of pastoral authenticity, as studied by Puls et al., was also tested.<sup>4</sup> Pastors need to foster trust with their congregation so that they can lead them toward spiritual maturity.

This chapter will explain the methodology used to test the hypotheses by restating the purpose of the study, the population and sample, the scales used for measurement of variables, the data collection process, and an overview of the data analysis methodology.

### Research Purpose

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<sup>1</sup>Wang and Hsieh, "The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement."

<sup>2</sup>Fiske et al., "A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content."

<sup>3</sup>Dreves, "How Patients Choose Hospitals."

<sup>4</sup>Puls, Ludden, and Freemyer, "Authentic Leadership and Its Relationship to Ministerial Effectiveness – The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership."

The purpose of this study was to assess the association of consistency between words and actions, competence, warmth, and trust in a pastoral setting. Pastors need trust to carry out their biblical mandate to equip the congregation to do ministry, but trust is proving more and more difficult to foster in today's contentious cultural climate. Therefore, after a survey of Scripture and the relevant literature, the predictor variables of consistency between words and actions, competence, and warmth were determined to be worthy of study related to the outcome variable of trust. The related research questions were:

*RQ 1:* Does perceived consistency between words and actions have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

*RQ 2:* Does perceived competence have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

*RQ 3:* Does perceived warmth have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

### Research Design

The research methodology employed to resolve the hypotheses addressed by the study was that of quantitative methodology. The study features a cross-sectional, correlational, survey design.<sup>5</sup> Studies in authentic leadership have largely been quantitative, empirical studies that are survey based.<sup>6</sup> Also, the scales used to create the survey for consistency, competence, warmth,

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<sup>5</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 2018, 147.

<sup>6</sup> Gardner et al., "Authentic Leadership."

and trust all used a Likert scale, which then led the researcher toward the necessity for a quantitative methodology.<sup>7</sup>

### *Nature of the Methodology*

The nature of the hypotheses in this study required the use of a quantitative methodology.<sup>8</sup> Qualitative methods were not chosen because this study does not seek to describe a particular phenomenon but rather seeks to determine the extent to which there is a significant relationship between the variables of perceived consistency between words and actions of the pastor, perceived integrity of the pastor, perceived competence of the pastor, and trust in the pastor for the purpose of equipping the congregation for ministry. Quantitative methods are the most appropriate for exploring this type of research question.<sup>9</sup>

### *Appropriateness of the Methodology to the Research*

There are multiple factors that led to the selection of a quantitative methodology. First, quantitative methods were used in the contemporary literature with similar variables. Other studies have been done examining the relationships between authentic leadership and various outcome variables using quantitative methods.<sup>10</sup> Also, the researcher has a clear objective as a basis for this research. The study tested clear hypotheses. This clear objective stands apart from a qualitative methodology in which the research may not know or only possess a vague idea of his

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<sup>7</sup> Likert, “A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes.”

<sup>8</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Fifth edition (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2018), 147.

<sup>9</sup> K. McCusker and S. Gunaydin, “Research Using Qualitative, Quantitative or Mixed Methods and Choice Based on the Research,” *Perfusion* 30, no. 7 (October 2015): 537–42, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267659114559116>.

<sup>10</sup> Puls, Ludden, and Freemyer, “Authentic Leadership and Its Relationship to Ministerial Effectiveness – The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership.”

or her objective.<sup>11</sup> Lastly, this research is seeking to further the research of other scholars who used quantitative methodology in their research such as with Wang and Hsieh<sup>12</sup>, Puls et al.<sup>13</sup>, and Fiske et al.<sup>14</sup>

### *Nature of Survey Design*

The nature of the survey design, according to Creswell and Creswell, is a “quantitative description of trends, attitudes, and opinions of a population, or tests for associations among variables of a population, by studying a sample of that population.”<sup>15</sup> This was a cross-sectional survey, which sought to gather a snapshot of the data from the population of interest at one point in time.

### *Appropriateness of the Technique.*

The survey design is appropriate for this study because a survey design answers one of three questions: descriptive questions, questions about the relationships between variables, and questions about predictive relationships between variables.<sup>16</sup> This study seeks to answer the second of those questions as the researcher desires to know the extent to which a relationship exists between the predictor variables of consistency between words and actions, integrity, and

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<sup>11</sup> McCusker and Gunaydin, “Research Using Qualitative, Quantitative or Mixed Methods and Choice Based on the Research.”

<sup>12</sup> Wang and Hsieh, “The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement.”

<sup>13</sup> Puls, Ludden, and Freemyer, “Authentic Leadership and Its Relationship to Ministerial Effectiveness – The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership.”

<sup>14</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content.”

<sup>15</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 2018, 147.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

competence and the outcome variable of trust. This study does not manipulate a variable or variables to test the effect on the outcome as in an experimental design, which is why a survey design is best suited for this quantitative study.<sup>17</sup>

## Research Plan

### *Description of Population*

The population from which the sample for this research was taken from Southern Baptist Convention Church attendees. The reason for the selection of this population is because Southern Baptist congregations are autonomous, and they are governed by the congregation. In other words, the pastor is chosen by the congregation, is accountable to that congregation, and may be fired by that congregation. In other denominations, such as Methodist or Presbyterian, the pastors are chosen for the congregation and appointed to them. Therefore, the trust formation process may be somewhat different between these cases of church polity, and for that reason, it was important to focus on only one of these groups. This concept of congregational governance and loose coupling of the organization was explored further in Chapter Two.

Additionally, the SBC currently only allows for males to function in the role of lead pastor. For the purposes of this study, it was deemed that having a consistent definition of what a pastor is, who can be a pastor, and how that pastor is hired and fired was desirable. The population is also for adults above the age of 18. The final stipulation for participation in the survey is that the person is not currently a lead pastor. This survey was designed examine the

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 148.

perception of congregants, so the perspective of pastors was unnecessary and would potentially skew the results.

### *Description of Participants*

A total of 466 responses were collected. Of those, only 347 were usable due to missing data. The other responses were incomplete, so they were rejected without analyzing. Of those 347 participants, 234 were female (67.4 percent) and 113 were male (32.6 percent). The sample is skewed toward females. The age breakdown, in years, of the sample was 15 18-24), 68 25-34), 93 35-44), 69 45-54), 53 55-64), and 49 65+). This is not quite representative of the overall Southern Baptist Convention; according to Gallup, over half of those who identify as Southern Baptist are over those over age 55.<sup>18</sup> In this study, only 29 percent were in that age range. However, since this study was designed to help pastors understand how they might respond to the current cultural climate, and if pastors and churches desire to reach a new generation, perhaps this set of participants will be more helpful in identifying important factors to a younger generation for developing trust.

There was a varying range of church involvement among the sample as well. There were 25 that said they were a “sporadic attender,” 136 said they were a “regular attender,” 106 said they were a “regular volunteer,” and 80 said they serve in a “leadership position.” Personal interaction with the pastor was also measured. There were 52 that said they “almost never or never” interact with their pastor, 54 said “once per month,” 127 said “once per week,” and 114 said “more than once per week.” The respondents were also asked how well they feel like they

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<sup>18</sup> Gallup Inc, “A Look at Southern Baptists in the U.S. Today,” Gallup.com, June 11, 2021, <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/350987/look-southern-baptists-today.aspx>.



know their pastor. Of the respondents, 11 said “not at all,” 26 said “slightly,” 106 said “somewhat,” 130 said “well,” and 74 said “quite well.” The church size of the sample was 23 who attend a church of 0-99, 55 attend a church of 100-199, 159 attend a church of 200-499, 84 attend a church 500-1999, and 26 attend a church of 2000 plus attenders.

### *Communication with Sample*

The survey was designed in Qualtrics and distributed with the “anonymous link” sharing option within Qualtrics. No personally identifying information was collected. The link was shared on Facebook by the principal investigator, on Instagram, and via email to ministry leaders. The goal was greater than 300 participants. After the initial wave of responses, the link was again shared via Facebook two more times two weeks apart until the goal of 300 was surpassed. In each message sharing the anonymous link to the survey, it was communicated that the survey was for a PhD research project regarding SBC church attendees. It was also explained that no personally identifying information, including church name, would be collected within the survey. The collection period was March 22 through May 6, 2022.

### *Data Collection*

Within the quantitative research methodology, this study employed the techniques of a survey design to generate data relevant to the research hypotheses. The first was the creation of a survey for data collection, and the second was appropriate data analysis methods to test the hypotheses of this study.

### *Development of Reliable/Valid/Trustworthy Instrument*

#### *Consistency*

The scale for consistency combined two existing scales. The first of these existing, validated scales is the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire developed by Walumbwa and

colleagues.<sup>19</sup> The second was the Behavioral Integrity Scale by Simons and colleagues<sup>20</sup>. The behavioral integrity<sup>21</sup> and internalized moral perspectives<sup>22</sup> aspect of consistency between words and actions was measured by taking questions from the internalized moral perspectives portion of the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire<sup>23</sup> and the 8-item scale for behavioral integrity developed by Simons and condensing them down. The internalized moral perspectives section of the ALQ includes a question that says, “Demonstrates beliefs that are consistent with actions.”<sup>24</sup> The behavioral integrity measure asks questions like “My manager does what he/she says he/she will do.”<sup>25</sup> Therefore, a similar question was crafted from the influence of these measures which says, “My pastor follows through on what he says he will do.” This wording reflects the context of SBC doctrine and church setting. The next two questions measuring for our definition of consistency between words and actions address the “relational transparency” aspect. The ALQ asks questions regarding relational transparency like “Admits mistakes when they are made” and “Tells you the hard truth.”<sup>26</sup> To better reflect the context of this study, these questions were amended to say, “When my pastor makes a mistake, he accepts responsibility” and “My pastor is

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<sup>19</sup> Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

<sup>20</sup> Simons et al., “Racial Differences in Sensitivity to Behavioral Integrity.”

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Walumbwa et al.

<sup>25</sup> Simons et al., “Racial Differences in Sensitivity to Behavioral Integrity.”

<sup>26</sup> Walumbwa et al., “Authentic Leadership.”

honest, even when it is inconvenient.” The last two questions were crafted to measure the perceived regularity over time with which the congregation expects the pastor to act as described in the first three questions. These questions say, “My pastor leads the church and its ministries in a consistent direction” and “My pastor is a steady leader.” These questions incorporated a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree.<sup>27</sup> The reliability of this scale was also tested. The Cronbach’s Alpha scored for this measure was  $\alpha = .916$ . A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix B.

### *Competence and Warmth*

The instrument that will be used for competence and warmth is the scale developed by Fiske et al. in their discussion of the SCM.<sup>28</sup> This scale includes questions like “How competent are members of this group” for the competence portion of the scale.<sup>29</sup> Other adjectives use in the scale include intelligent, capable, and confident. This scale was altered slightly to reflect the context for this study to say, “How competent is your pastor?” The other adjectives were also used to measure competence. The warmth portion of the scale includes questions like “How sincere are the members of this group?”<sup>30</sup> Other adjectives used in the scale were warm and friendly. This scale was changed to, again, reflect the context of the study. The wording of the survey was “How sincere is your pastor?” Other adjectives used were friendly and caring. Caring replaced warm in the survey because it was determined that warmth, while a legitimate construct,

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<sup>27</sup> Likert, “A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes.”

<sup>28</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content.”

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

may not be clear in definition on a short survey. This scale also utilizes the Likert scale ranging from 1-not at all to 5-extremely.<sup>31</sup> The Cronbach's Alpha for the competence scale was  $\alpha = .85$ , and  $\alpha = .902$  for the warmth scale.

### *Trust*

The Trust Scale developed by Podsakoff and colleagues was used to measure for trust.<sup>32</sup> This scale has wording that reflects a secular environment such as, "I feel quite confident that my leader will always try to treat me fairly." This survey changed the term "my leader" to "my pastor." This scale also utilizes a Likert scale ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree.<sup>33</sup> The Cronbach's Alpha score for this measure was  $\alpha = .926$ .

### *Control Variables*

A study by Bernerth et al. listed common control variables in leadership research as age, gender, tenure, and organization size.<sup>34</sup> All of these control variables were included in the survey. Additional control variables were also included that were deemed relevant to this study such as the predominant race of the church and how well the congregant felt like they knew their pastor.

## Data Analysis

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<sup>31</sup> Likert, "A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes."

<sup>32</sup> Podsakoff et al., "Transformational Leader Behaviors and Their Effects on Followers' Trust in Leader, Satisfaction, and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors."

<sup>33</sup> Likert, "A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes."

<sup>34</sup> Bernerth et al., "Control Variables in Leadership Research."

Data generated by techniques previously described were subsequently interpreted through the analysis techniques/procedures of multiple regression.<sup>35</sup>

#### *Nature of Multiple Regression*

According to Hair, “Multiple regression analysis is a statistical technique that can be used to analyze the relationship between a single dependent criterion) variable and several independent predictor) variables.”<sup>36</sup> This study is testing the relationships of the three predictor variables of consistency, competence, and warmth with the outcome variable of trust. Multiple regression techniques are common in quantitative studies such as Wang and Hsieh<sup>37</sup>, Puls et al.<sup>38</sup>, and Fiske et al.<sup>39</sup> Each of these studies is related in some way to this study and served as guides in the formulation of the research plan.

#### *Biases*

The greatest concern for bias associated with this study is a sampling bias.<sup>40</sup> This bias stems from the fact that the survey was posted to the principal investigator’s personal Facebook page, Instagram, and email. Although the researcher asked for others to share the survey, which was done roughly 20 – 30 times, these shares still came from friends of the researcher. To try to

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<sup>35</sup> Hair, *Multivariate Data Analysis*, 264.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Wang and Hsieh, “The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement.”

<sup>38</sup> Puls, Ludden, and Freemyer, “Authentic Leadership and Its Relationship to Ministerial Effectiveness – The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership.”

<sup>39</sup> Fiske et al., “A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content.”

<sup>40</sup> Sible Andringa and Aline Godfroid, “Sampling Bias and the Problem of Generalizability in Applied Linguistics,” *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 40 (March 2020): 134–42, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190520000033>.

combat a response bias, the survey was totally anonymous and was communicated to be so. However, even though the survey was anonymous, it was still targeted toward people who likely have a similar set of opinions as the researcher regarding the church and its leadership. It is possible that this could skew the results.

The algorithms of these social media platforms are also unknown and the impact of those algorithms on the reach of the survey is unknown.<sup>41</sup> Also, not everyone uses Facebook or Instagram, so that further limits the reach of the survey.<sup>42</sup>

### *Chronology of Events and Procedures*

The survey was written in February and March of 2022. After that time, an IRB was submitted and approved as an exempt study because no personally identifying information was collected, the respondents had to be 18 or older, and the survey was digital and totally anonymous. Upon receipt of the signed IRB approval, the researcher shared the survey on Facebook, Instagram, and via email. After the first wave of responses failed to achieve the goal of 300 responses, the link was shared again via Facebook, two weeks later. The goal was, again, not reached, so the link was shared one more time via Facebook. This time, the desired response number of 300 was surpassed. Over the course of those 6 weeks, the researcher checked in weekly to the results in Qualtrics to examine the consistency of the results. This was done to guard against potential response bias.<sup>43</sup> The results were overwhelmingly consistent throughout

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<sup>41</sup> Simon Kühne, "Using Facebook and Instagram to Recruit Web Survey Participants: A Step-by-Step Guide and Application," 2020, <https://doi.org/10.13094/SMIF-2020-00017>.

<sup>42</sup> Kühne.

<sup>43</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 2018, 156.

the collection period. After the 466 responses were collected, of which 347 were usable, the survey was “turned off” such that no one else could respond. After this time, the data analysis procedures of multiple regression began to examine the relationship between the variables of consistency, competence, warmth, and trust in the pastor.

After the data were collected, the researcher completed data analysis methods to test the hypotheses of this study. First, the results of the study were transferred from Qualtrics to SPSS after being coded by the researcher for composite variables of consistency, competence, warmth, and trust, as well as coding for the control variables where necessary. Second, the researcher cleaned up the data by filtering out any responses with incomplete data or missing responses at all. Third, the researcher checked for reliability of the results through the Cronbach’s Alpha score.

Once these steps were completed, the researcher assessed the statistical significance of the model by performing a multiple regression in SPSS software.<sup>44</sup> Once this was performed, a check for multicollinearity, or similarity of predictor variables, was done by examining the variance inflation factor.<sup>45</sup> Finally, the researcher ran a stepwise regression to assess the best fit model by potentially excluding some of the predictor variables.<sup>46</sup>

#### *Validity/Trustworthiness*

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<sup>44</sup> Hair, *Multivariate Data Analysis*, 300.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 212.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 311.

Threats to validity and reliability included the narrow focus of the participants. Generalizability may be diminished by the fact that the researcher only surveyed Southern Baptists. The researcher sought to mitigate this by getting a relatively large sample size of 347. Another threat would be that my survey instrument did not adequately measure for the variables. Guarding against this inadequacy of instruments, they were rigorously scrutinized with the help of other scholars.

### *Limitations*

The limitations of this study include the fact that it may not be generalizable to other leadership venues. The church is a unique setting in which the congregants are attending on a volunteer basis. In this specific setting of Southern Baptist congregations, the congregation hires and fires the pastor, so the implications for other business and denominational church settings may be little.

Another limitation of the study is the ability of people to use the survey created by the researcher. This study relies on people's understanding of how to use the survey and that they were able to understand the questions. Also, the nature of the online survey and the fact that the researcher sent out the survey blindly on Facebook means that the researcher has no idea who took the survey. There is no way to know if all the participants, in fact, met the criteria of the target participants for this study.

Another limitation associated with this study is the cross-sectional design. This means that the study is limited by time. Gardner et al. suggested that more longitudinal studies be done in authentic leadership, but this study did not endeavor to undertake that.<sup>47</sup> This study was unable

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<sup>47</sup> Gardner et al., "Authentic Leadership."



to follow these congregants to measure changes in their responses over time and in response to changing climates in their churches.

### *Delimitations*

The major delimitation in this study is the scales used. There are many scales for trust and organizational trust such as Mayer and Davis' scale.<sup>48</sup> The scale from Podsakoff was chosen because of its perceived applicability to the pastoral setting. Additionally, the definition of consistency between words and actions for this study was constructed based on biblical principles. Therefore, a measurement scale that tested for those elements of action based on espoused moral principles, admitting fault when necessary, and stability over time was necessary. The definition of consistency between words and actions was a deliberate delimitation of this study to measure for the biblical indications of consistency. Therefore, the measurement scale used was taken from several other valid scales and modified to fit the context.

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<sup>48</sup> Roger C. Mayer and James H. Davis, "The Effect of the Performance Appraisal System on Trust for Management: A Field Quasi-Experiment," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 84, no. 1 (February 1999): 123–36, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.84.1.123>.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to answer the question, “Do the perceived characteristics in the Southern Baptist pastor of consistency between words and actions, competence, and warmth have a positive relationship with trust in the pastor?” The study also examined how these variables interact with other factors such as church size, gender of congregant, tenure of congregant under the pastor’s leadership, and age of congregant. These effects were measured to provide information to support pastors who want to increase their trust with their congregation.

### Research Questions and Hypotheses

The related research hypotheses were:

*RQ 1:* Does perceived consistency between words and actions have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

*RQ 2:* Does perceived competence have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

*RQ 3:* Does perceived warmth have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

The design of the study was empirical, quantitative, and correlational employing the data collection methods of a survey instrument. The study also conducted a literature review of related research and theory in the areas of authentic leadership, behavioral integrity, and the stereotype content model.

This chapter presents a summary of data generated by the study design as follows:

- 1) A description of the sample and variables,

- 2) presentation of the results, and
- 3) a summary of the findings.

## Presentation and Summary of Data

### *Respondents*

The target population for this study was Southern Baptist church attendees who were at least 18 years old and not a lead pastor of a church. The survey received 466 responses from this group through social media promotion by the principal researcher. Responses that were not completion of the survey instrument were removed from the sample. Once incomplete responses were removed, there were 347 responses remaining. This sample size is appropriate according to a G\*Power test. Creswell and Creswell cite the G\*Power test as a helpful tool in determining the statistical power of the sample size.<sup>1</sup> Following the example of Creswell and Creswell with some changes for this particular study, the G\*Power test was conducted using the following parameters: test family-exact, statistical test-linear multiple regression, type of power analysis-a priori, tails-two, H1p<sup>2</sup>-.25, H0p<sup>2</sup>-0,  $\alpha$  err prob-.05, Power (1- $\beta$  err prob)-.95, and the number of predictors was 3. This a priori test indicated that 69 participants were necessary to achieve a statistical power of .95. With 347 participants, the sample size far exceeds that necessary respondent number.

### *Descriptive Data About Sample*

#### *Reliability Analysis*

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<sup>1</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 2018, 152.

The instruments used were tested for reliability by calculating the Cronbach's Alpha scores for each. The results can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.  
*Reliability Scores for Variables*

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Consistency	0.916	5
Competence	0.850	4
Warmth	0.902	3
Trust	0.926	5

All measures were found to be reliable based on the Cronbach's Alpha score because they all meet the requirements set forward by Nunally's  $>.70$ .<sup>2</sup> Additionally, the tolerance and variance inflation factor were both within the acceptable levels according to Hair et.al. These data can be found in Table 5.

Next, the mean values and standard deviations were calculated for the predictor variables as well as the outcome variable. The skewness and kurtosis were also calculated. These descriptive statistics are listed in the table below.

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<sup>2</sup> Jum C. Nunally and Ira H. Bernstein, *Psychometric Theory*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1978).

Table 2.  
*Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Statistic	Error	Statistic	Error
Competence	347	4	20	16.9	2.66	-0.97	0.131	1.41	0.261
Warmth	347	3	15	12.73	2.49	-1.39	0.131	2.01	0.261
Consistency	347	5	25	21.23	3.86	-1.25	0.131	1.54	0.261
Trust	347	7	25	21.84	3.69	-1.48	0.131	2.41	0.261

*Regression Results*

After calculating the means and standard deviations, a simple regression test was performed to test the hypotheses. This means that each variable was tested individually to measure its predictive capacity for trust. These tests were performed using the SPSS software. Competence, warmth, and consistency between words and actions all showed to be statistically significant with a p-value of  $<.001$ . This was less than the .05 confidence interval for the test. The results of this test show initial support for all three hypotheses. The results are listed in the table below, and each line in the table represents a separate simple regression test with the outcome variable as trust.

Table 3.  
*Simple Regressions*

	R	R Square	Adj. R Square	Std. Error	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
Competence	0.67	0.448	0.447	2.7447	0.448	280.522	1	345	<.001
	0.76								
Warmth	8	0.589	0.588	2.36819	0.589	495.231	1	345	<.001
	0.85								
Consistency	1	0.723	0.723	1.94337	0.723	902.735	1	345	<.001

a. *Dependent Variable: Trust*

Though the hypotheses were supported by the simple regression test, further testing of the overall model was necessary to discover the model of best fit. A multiple regression was performed, and the results again showed that the overall model including consistency, warmth, and competence was statistically significant.

Table 4.  
*Multiple Regression Table*

	R	R Square	Adj. R Square	Std. Error	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
Model 1	0.872	0.76	0.758	1.81567	0.76	362.139	3	343	<.001

a. *Predictors: Consistency, Competence, Warmth*

b. *Dependent Variable: Trust*

The coefficient analysis of the multiple regression test showed an interesting result. In this analysis, the variable of competence was not statistically significant with a p-value of .526.

Table 5.  
*Multiple Regression Coefficients Table*

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	3.355	0.645		5.206	<.001		
Competence	0.036	0.056	0.026	0.635	0.526	0.423	2.364
Warmth	0.426	0.06	0.287	7.043	<.001	0.42	2.38
Consistency	0.587	0.046	0.614	12.716	<.001	0.3	3.331

*a. Dependent Variable: Trust*

Despite each predictor variable being significant on its own, when controlling for all three, competence is not significant. To further test for the model of best fit, a stepwise regression was performed. In the stepwise regression, competence was excluded from the model. Also, though both consistency and warmth were significant in the model, consistency showed the higher r-square value, which indicates that consistency is the greatest predictor for trust according to the results of this study. These analyses are reflected in tables 6 and 7.

Table 6.  
*Stepwise Regression Table*

	R	R Square	Adj. R Square	Std. Error	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
Model 1	0.851	0.723	0.723	1.94337	0.723	902.735	1	345	<.001
Model 2	0.872	0.76	0.758	1.81409	0.036	51.922	1	344	<.001

*Model 1. Predictors: Consistency*

*Model 2. Predictors: Consistency, Warmth*

Table 7.  
*Stepwise Regression Coefficients Table*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4.573	0.584		7.83	<.001		
	Consistency	0.813	0.027	0.851	30.046	<.001	1	1
2	(Constant)	3.554	0.563		6.308	<.001		
	Consistency	0.603	0.039	0.631	15.619	<.001	0.428	2.334
	Warmth	0.431	0.06	0.291	7.206	<.001	0.428	2.334

*a. Dependent Variable: Trust*

Additionally, potential impact of control variables was examined. The data sample was split, creating new variables for age, church size, gender, and length of relationship with the pastor. Multiple regressions were performed separately for each level of the other variables to compare the results for each of these control variables. There was no evidence found that the effects of the predictor variables changed as a function of each control variable. Tables indicating these results can be found in Appendix A.

#### Summary of Results

Based on the preceding presentation and summary of data generated by the study, a summary of findings/conclusions is as follows:

1. Finding One: Consistency between words and actions is the best predictor for establishing trust between the Southern Baptist pastor and his congregation.
2. Finding Two: Consistency between words and actions plus warmth leading to trust is the best model according to these data.



3. Finding Three: When controlling for all three predictor variables, competence is excluded from the model.
4. Finding Four: These results are the same regardless of age, church size, gender, and length of relationship with the pastor.

#### Forecasting Chapter Five

Chapter Five will examine the results of the data analysis done in chapter Four.

Discussion of these results with relationship to the literature and application to the field of leadership and ministry will be in depth in chapter five. Further, practical implications for pastors who are leading through times of distrust, particularly in an SBC setting, will be explored.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

### Overview

The purpose of this study was to understand the impact of perceived consistency between words and actions, competence, and warmth on trust in the Southern Baptist pastor. The research questions guiding the study were:

*RQ 1:* Does perceived consistency between words and actions have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

*RQ 2:* Does perceived competence have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

*RQ 3:* Does perceived warmth have a positive relationship with the trust of the congregation in the Southern Baptist pastor?

This chapter presents a discussion of findings and conclusions related to this research purpose. Further, this chapter will discuss possible implications of this study for local church pastors and leaders.

### Summary of the Study

This study investigated the potential positive relationship between consistency between words and action as derived from authentic leadership theory and trust in the Southern Baptist pastor. The study also investigated the potential positive relationship between warmth and competence as derived from the Stereotype Content Model and trust in the Southern Baptist pastor.

Chapter One introduced the research through description of the background, purpose, approach, significance, delimitations and limitations, and vocabulary of the study. The issue of trust in the local church was explored. Trust in institutions, particularly religious institutions is on the decline. Recent news has driven even further distrust within the SBC. Southern Baptist pastor must then ascertain ways to embody authentic leadership and garner trust with their congregations and communities in such a distrusting atmosphere.

Chapter Two reviewed literature about theory and research related to the study in the areas of Authentic Leadership, Behavioral Integrity, and the Stereotype Content Model. Consistency between words and actions is positively modeling the internal moral perspectives and relational transparency components of the Authentic Leadership Development Theory as well as Behavioral Integrity. Warmth and Competence are explored through the lens of the Stereotype Content Model.

Additionally, support for the concept of consistency between words and actions as a derivative of authentic leadership was presented. The application of authenticity in the field of ministry was explored with an emphasis on the conception of the self from a biblical perspective. The structure of the SBC and its member churches as a loosely coupled system was also explored to highlight the difficulties that these churches with a congregational polity may present for pastor in establishing trust.

Chapter Three detailed the design of the study through description of the sample, quantitative methodology, survey design, the measures employed, and multiple regression analysis. Chapter Four presented and summarized data generated by the study design in alignment to the study research questions.

This final chapter will discuss a summary of the findings related to the research purpose and reviewed literature. Chapter content will also discuss conclusions and implications of the study for practice, leadership for the advancement of learning, service, and research.

### Summary of Major Findings

The major finding of this study was that perceived consistency between words and actions is the best predictor of trust in the pastor-leader. In the simple regressions, the r-squared value for consistency between words and actions was .723, warmth was .589, and consistency was .448. Consistency between words and actions account for the most variance in the model.

These results show research question one related to consistency between words and actions leading to trust is supported. This is also in line with the available literature on consistency between words and actions as a component of authentic leadership.

The second finding is that in a stepwise regression, consistency between words and actions and warmth are predictors for trust in the pastor-leader and competence is not. Competence was statistically significant in the simple regression model, or when tested on its own related to trust. However, when controlling for the other predictors, consistency and warmth, competence did not account for how much a person reports trust for their pastor. This shows that research question two related to warmth as a predictor for trust is supported, but research question three about competence is not supported by the results.

The third finding is that these results remained very similar across age, gender, church size, and length of relationship with the pastor. The best model was consistency between words and actions and warmth with a positive relationship to trust, and these results were similar when comparing many different groups, which shows the universality of the findings.

### Conclusions Related to Research Purpose

### *Conclusions about Consistency*

The purpose of this study was to discover which of the perceived characteristics proposed was the best predictor for trust. Practically, what should pastors in the field emphasize in their ministry and lives to reflect their trustworthiness? According to this study, consistency between words and actions should be a major focus for pastors to inspire trust.

The conclusion that consistency between words and actions is the best predictor in this model aligns with much of the available literature. Wang and Hsieh found that consistency between words and actions as a derivative of authentic leadership had a positive relationship with trust in the leader.<sup>1</sup> However, their study was done in Taiwan in a business environment. It is interesting that Taiwanese businesspeople value consistency between words and actions in a similar way to American, Southern Baptist church attendees.

Another study mentioned in Chapter Two highlights the importance of consistency between words and actions leading to trust. The findings of the study were that employees feel betrayed when benefits provided by the organization do not match the benefits promised by the organization.<sup>2</sup> This scenario is like the scenario that I have proposed. Pastors and leaders in general often make promises that they do not keep. It may be that the promises they make are not even necessary in the eyes of followers, but when the promise is made, then it must be kept. When those promises are not kept, trust in the relationship suffers, while feelings of betrayal flourish.

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<sup>1</sup> Wang and Hsieh, "The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Employee Trust and Employee Engagement," 619.

<sup>2</sup> Morrison and Robinson, "When Employees Feel Betrayed."

The last study mentioned in chapter two with relationship to consistency and trust showed that a leader who claims to give ownership of a project or some other type of authority but then continued to be just as involved and unwilling to let the workers to which this new authority was given do their job inspired a lack of trust.<sup>3</sup> Leaders in this situation gave employees ownership and authority verbally, but when it came time to actually give up the authority necessary to allow the employees to do the job they were asked to do, the leader would not take a step back. The leaders' words did not match their actions. They were then seen as inconsistent. Pastors and other leaders need a focus on consistency between their words and actions to inspire trusting relationships. Implications for consistency will be further explored in the discussion of the findings section.

#### *Conclusions about Competence*

The second finding the study was that consistency between words and actions and warmth are the predictors that produce the best model for leading to trust. Competence is not a significant factor when controlling for the other variables. The fact that competence is statistically significant in the simple regression tests suggests that there may need to be a baseline level of perceived competence in the leader. It is not that the pastor can simply choose to abstain from bettering himself theologically, biblically, and educationally. Instead, he should seek to better himself in those ways, while understanding that he cannot expect his competence, intelligence, or leadership acumen to generate trusting relationships without the components of consistency and warmth being a major focus of his ministry. Still, trust is not the only relational

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<sup>3</sup> Raelin, "Espoused Action."

goal necessary for a pastor to serve his community well. Competence is important to fulfill other aspects of the pastor's role but does not contribute as much to trust as warmth and consistency.

This finding that the best fit model for building trust with the congregation is warmth and consistency aligns with the literature on the Stereotype Content Model and non-profits. There are studies that show non-profits are perceived as being low competence and high warmth institutions.<sup>4</sup> In the study showing this low competence, high warmth perception of non-profits, the outcome variable is willingness to purchase a product from the organization.<sup>5</sup> The study showed that people are less willing to purchase a product from a non-profit because they are viewed as less competent than for profit companies.

Similarly, studies show that brand loyalty requires high levels of competence and warmth, but this case is also associated with the purchase of a product.<sup>6</sup> Since churches are technically not selling a product, perhaps these findings show that people expect something different from church leaders than they do for secular companies. If people are stereotyping non-profits as highly warm with low competence, which would include churches, then this may explain why they do not expect the leaders of those churches to be highly competent to earn their trust.

The definition given in Chapter Two for competence is key to understanding this phenomenon. Fiske defines competence as confident and intelligent.<sup>7</sup> The pastor's competence

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<sup>4</sup> Aaker, Vohs, and Mogilner, "Non-Profits Are Seen as Warm and For-Profits as Competent," 232.

<sup>5</sup> Aaker, Vohs, and Mogilner, 232.

<sup>6</sup> Kervyn, Fiske, and Malone, "Brands as Intentional Agents Framework: How Perceived Intentions and Ability Can Map Brand Perception.," 171.

<sup>7</sup> Fiske et al., "A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content," 884.

has to do with his ability as defined by his intellect and confidence in the fields of leadership and biblical studies. The Apostle Paul says that the pastor should be “able to teach.” Competence is viewed as important for a for-profit company that sells goods or services because that is the totality of the purchaser’s association with the company. Therefore, the company must be seen as competent, or intelligent and confident to provide the good or service, to trust them enough to purchase from that company. Non-profits could be seen as competent in services such as helping ministries, but that would fall under the category of warmth in this model because the definition for competence is specific to confidence and intelligence in leadership and/or biblical studies.

The survey for this study included a question asking if the participant saw their pastor as more friendly or more intelligent and a question asking if they saw their pastor as better at preaching or better at interacting with people. The results were that 58.2 percent saw their pastor as either much more friendly or more friendly, and 41.8 percent saw their pastor as either much more intelligent or more intelligent. Interestingly, 43.8 percent said that their pastor was either much better or better at interacting with people and 56.2 percent said that their pastor was either much better or better at preaching. This shows that people may not equate intelligence or competence with ability to preach, or it could just show that people do not wish to indicate that they go to a church where the preacher is not very competent.

Further, when I split the data set to control for each of these variables in question, the results did not change. This result shows that, even for people who see their pastor as more intelligent, they still value warmth over competence. If warmth is valued over competence, then the pastor must consider how to foster this kind of perception. This topic will be explored further in the discussion of findings section.

#### *Conclusions about Control Variables*



The third finding of this study was that the results of consistency between words and actions and warmth as the best predictors for trust is the same across control variables of age, gender, church size, and length of relationship with the pastor. The results did not change based on these controls. This is not what we would have suspected.

People who attend a larger church, it was assumed, would not have as close of a relationship to their pastor. The pastor has many more congregants to attend to, and the likelihood that a pastor of a church that runs 500 has the same kind of relationships as a pastor of a church that runs 50 is unlikely. It may be that congregants expect similar character traits from their pastor no matter the size, age, gender of the congregant. However, these character traits are more easily seen in the life of a small church pastor who closely interacts with the congregants on a regular basis. This study measured a limited number of variables, and it is possible that other moderating factors exist that were not tested. Further, differences between different size churches may be more subtle and require a much larger sample sizes to examine.

## Discussion of Findings

### *Discussion of Competence in the Final Model*

The findings of this study were somewhat surprising. The hypothesized model included consistency between words and actions, competence, and warmth as predictors of trust between congregants and pastor. The stereotype content model, authentic leadership theory, and behavioral integrity theory seemed to support this model. That the final model excludes competence, a construct in the stereotype content model, is telling.

Examples of competence and warmth shown in the literature review illuminate these results. They show that, in the fields of coaching and branding, competence is important. First,

one study that showed coaches build trust with those who they coach through competence.<sup>8</sup> Also, studies show that organizational competence is important to building affective commitment.<sup>9</sup> Brands have been shown to require both warmth and competence to inspire loyalty.<sup>10</sup> However, another study mentioned in chapter two showed that voters tend to choose political candidates more based on warmth than competence.<sup>11</sup> The findings of this study show that congregants in an SBC church see their pastor as similar to a politician to the extent that SBC pastors and politicians are both subject to democratic processes. They both are elected to office, and they both maintain that office through the approval of their constituencies. Even though a pastor does not undergo reelection, the congregation has the authority to fire him at any point they wish. This is different than a coach or organizational representative. This may not be palatable finding for pastors who do not want to be seen as political, but the findings can be helpful to recognize how others see the pastor.

Two considerations emerge from this finding: how pastors in SBC churches came to be viewed somewhat as political figures rather than coaches or organizational representatives and why congregants find warmth more important than competence in the SBC church. First, the question of how pastors in SBC churches came to be viewed somewhat as political figures could

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<sup>8</sup> San-Fu Kao, Ming-Hui Hsieh, and Po-Lun Lee, “Coaching Competency and Trust in Coach in Sport Teams.”

<sup>9</sup> Kim, Eisenberger, and Baik, “Perceived Organizational Support and Affective Organizational Commitment.”

<sup>10</sup> Kervyn, Fiske, and Malone, “Brands as Intentional Agents Framework: How Perceived Intentions and Ability Can Map Brand Perception.”

<sup>11</sup> Laustsen and Bor, “The Relative Weight of Character Traits in Political Candidate Evaluations.”

be a function of the loosely coupled system of the congregational church. Chapter Two goes into detail discussing the power dynamics and ambiguity of the role of the pastor in SBC churches resulting from their loose coupling. Pastors are not appointed to local churches. Rather, they are called by local churches. They are hired and fired at the local level. The pastors in these churches are constantly navigating the power structures in these churches because the ultimate authority is the congregation itself. In the mainline denominations that have tightly coupled hierarchies, the churches cannot simply decide to hire and fire whoever they like. That is a decision left to the hierarchies that exist above the local church level.<sup>12</sup> While pastors in those tightly coupled system may need to show themselves to be “effective,” they are not necessarily beholden to the opinions of the congregants. In this case, it is possible that the pastor-leader is viewed more as an organizational representative than a political figure.

In the loosely coupled system of the SBC, however, pastor-leaders must learn how to navigate the power structures at the local level. Navigation of the power structures and conflict within organizations is a topic in Bolman and Deal’s textbook, “Reframing Organizations”.<sup>13</sup> They note that loosely coupled systems, which they call “underbounded systems,” require political skill in navigating power games and conflict as opposed to tightly coupled systems, in which power is “regulated with a firm hand.”<sup>14</sup> The pastor in the loosely coupled system of the

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<sup>12</sup> Takayama and Cannon, “Formal Polity and Power Distribution in American Protestant Denominations,” 325.

<sup>13</sup> Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership*, Seventh Edition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

SBC church is viewed as a political figure because he must engage with the politics of power games and conflict on a regular basis to establish credibility and authority in his position.<sup>15</sup>

Second, there may be a couple of reasons why congregants of SBC churches value warmth over competence. The first is the historical and abiding nature of the populist movement in American Christianity. Movements like the SBC took a different turn than the mainline denominations because they traditionally do not value the education provided by high society. Nathan Hatch, in his book *The Democratization of American Christianity*, explains the populist movement that emerged in grassroots Protestantism.<sup>16</sup> Noting the difference between the mainline Protestant denominations and Fundamentalism, a category that could apply to many Southern Baptist churches, with regards to the value placed on intellectualism, Hatch writes,

The leadership of mainline Protestant denominations is irresistibly pulled toward values and attitudes prevalent in the modern academic world. It values respectable, progressive, and inclusive faiths that can achieve plausibility in that environment. In the world of higher education, theologians and church leaders no longer operate from a position of strength. To avoid being considered second-class citizens, they are pressured to make accommodations to the secular definition of values at the core of the university. By contrast, Fundamentalists and Pentecostals share all the virtues and vices of popular culture. They have sustained their own coherent subcultures that excel in popular mobilization, leadership training, mass education (from kindergarten through college), family counseling, publications of every description, and mass media—films, radio, and television. These systems are still populist through and through, reflecting the deepest convictions of their own constituencies and anointing new leaders by virtue of their popular appeal. Following the long tradition of democratic Christianity in America, Fundamentalists and Pentecostals reject modernity as it is expressed in high culture but remain stalwart defenders of modern attitudes as they build popular constituencies with the most innovative techniques. They will not surrender to learned experts the right to think for themselves.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>16</sup> Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1989), 214.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 219.

In movements like the SBC, congregants value the ability of their pastor to connect with the congregations through the “common touch.”<sup>18</sup> Higher education came to be viewed as compromising toward the culture rather than standing for the truth of the Bible. The history of the populist movement in American Christianity may help to explain why congregants in SBC churches do not rely as heavily upon competence as they do warmth and consistency for their perceptions of trust.

While it may be true that Fundamentalists came to be wary of higher education, all Fundamentalist movements are not the same. For example, the SBC does value education. This is evidenced by the fact that the denomination owns six seminaries that are supported by its member churches. These seminaries offer discounts on tuition to members of SBC churches. However, these seminaries caused an uproar in the SBC through the 70’s and 80’s when they began to teach what was called “liberal” theology by SBC pastors. This was known as the Conservative Resurgence, and there was a grassroots movement to take back control of the seminaries and return them to conservative leadership and doctrine about the inerrancy of the bible, etc.<sup>19</sup> Even though the SBC values education, the member churches have historically kept a close watch on their institutions to ensure they do not become “liberal.”

Though the SBC owns six seminaries, the SBC does not require pastors to have any formal theological education to be ordained. According to the SBC website, there is no prescribed process for ordination. The ordination process is determined by the individual

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 216.

<sup>19</sup> Ammerman, “The SBC: Retrospect and Prospect.”

churches.<sup>20</sup> By contrast, The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America clearly states, “An intern applying for ordination shall be required to present a diploma of Bachelor or Master from some approved college or university, and also a Bachelor or Master from some approved theological seminary.”<sup>21</sup>

The SBC, however, greatly values sound biblical teaching. The whole Conservative Resurgence movement was rooted in the desire of local church pastors to have seminaries and entity heads that were promoting a conservative interpretation of the Scriptures. This is because seminaries have a great deal to do with training future pastors. People in the SBC value biblical teaching, but it may be that congregants in the SBC do not believe that intellectualism equates to sound preaching and teaching. This stands in contrast at least to the requirements of General Assembly of the PCA, which a mainline denomination. By their strict requirements, they show that at least some level of higher education is required to produce sound ministry activity in some way.

#### *Discussion about Consistency*

The findings related to consistency between words and actions were what was expected. Consistency between words and actions has a significant impact on the formation of trust between the congregant and the pastor. Chapter two discussed at length the existing literature on the importance of consistency between words and actions in establishing trust in the leader. The results of this study show that this is also true in a ministry setting. The results also show that

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<sup>20</sup> “FAQ - SBC.Net.”

<sup>21</sup> “The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America” (The Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, 2022).

consistency between words and actions is vital regardless of church size, length of relationship with the pastor, gender, or age. These results indicate that consistency between words and actions is vital for any pastor in an SBC setting.

#### *Discussion of Control Variables*

The fact that these results did not change regardless of the control variables indicates two possible factors. One possibility is that all the people who were surveyed have similar pastors. However, one question asked the participants to rate their pastor as “much more friendly, a little more friendly, a little more intelligent, much more intelligent.” Responses to this question were evenly distributed with 47, 155, 120, and 25 respectively. This result shows that the congregants did not necessarily view their pastor in the same way across the board, so this cannot account for the similarity of the results across control variables.

Another possibility for the similarity of results is the SCM. It may be that congregants stereotype their pastor in an SBC setting as low competence and high warmth. Because the pastor is stereotyped this way, gaining trust is a matter of meeting the expectations of that stereotype. It may not be the case, there is not enough data in this study to conclude this, that pastors who focus on competence cannot garner trust. It is clear, however, that pastors cannot exclusively rely on competence.

#### Conclusions

##### *Consistency is Vital*

The results of this study supported a hypothesis that I have long held as true; that a pastor or leader must be consistent between their words and their actions if they desire to garner trust from people. I have long believed that one of the best things that a person can say of a pastor-

leader is that they will always do what they say they will do, and when they can't, they are transparent and explain why it did not happen.

Pastors, at least the ones I have had the opportunity to observe, are generally men who love people immensely. They have a desire to see people grow. They also are often plagued by the mandate of their church to make sure that the church experiences growth and prosperity. These two things can often create a person who is always saying yes to everything. They do not want to disappoint people. However, sometimes when a pastor or leader says yes to everything, it becomes impossible to follow through on what they say. When they fail to follow through for long enough on enough occasions, I believe that, while the parishioner may not hold it against the pastor and they may not have a negative opinion of the pastor generally, they may lose their ability to trust that the pastor will do what they say they will do.

Being consistent between words and actions can present as a one-to-one interaction. This would look like the pastor making a promise or simply saying they will do something to an individual. It can also look like the pastor making announcements and pronouncements from the stage and then not following through. For example, if the pastor says that the church is going to do a particular thing and then it doesn't happen, it makes the pastor look inconsistent, particularly if the pastor never addresses it again.

It is important to note that I am not necessarily saying that this lack of follow through or consistency makes the pastor immoral, but I am saying that it may affect the congregant's view of the pastor trustworthiness and their authenticity. The results of this study show clearly that congregants value consistency between words and actions highly in the formation of trust. This may be because they cannot trust the pastor's authenticity.



In the previous hypothetical example of a pastor who just says yes to everything, it may get to a point where it becomes clear to the congregation that he is doing this. A person who agrees to requests or opinions merely because they do not want to displease others reveals that they are not expressing how they truly feel, so they may become viewed as disingenuous. The person may begin to walk away from conversations with their pastor wondering whether they can trust what he just said to them. Again, this may not be an indictment on the pastor's character or morality, but it could affect their ability to lead and be trusted in the leadership context.

In chapters one and two, the example of Mark Driscoll and his fall from grace at Mars Hill is shown. One notable story from the podcast that details the fall of Mars Hill is that Driscoll became narcissistic over time and began to make claims that he could read one book every day.<sup>22</sup> Of course, it is difficult to prove that he did not read one book per day, but it is so unlikely to be true that many contributors to the podcast who were in close proximity to him at the time said that it was a hindrance to their trust in the things he said. It is important for the pastor to be above reproach, but he cannot do so by painting a very likely false picture of himself with which it will be nearly impossible to be consistent. These issues related to consistency are not ones that would necessarily disqualify a pastor from serving in the role, but they do cause difficulty in gaining the trust of the congregation.

### *How to Be an Authentic Pastor*

Chapter Two contains the discussion about consistency as the positive modeling component of the Authentic Leadership Development Theory.<sup>23</sup> I also made the case in Chapter

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<sup>22</sup> Cospers, "The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill."

<sup>23</sup> Gardner et al., "Can You See the Real Me?"

Two that authenticity is relevant in Christian ministry even though it is a term often used to describe postmodern formulations of self-expression. To summarize, authenticity, or the expression of the inner self, is a positive goal for a Christian pastor or leader as long as they hold the correct definition of what the “self” is. For the believer, the true self is not the feelings and desires of the flesh. The true self is the Spirit of Christ which indwells the heart of the believer. Paul writes in Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”<sup>24</sup> The old self, or the self that is composed of fleshly, sinful desires, is crucified when a person comes to faith in Christ. The new and true self is “Christ in me.” Authentic expression in the life of a believer is Christ expression. Of course, if we are in this world, we are still subject to the presence of sin even though we are free from the penalty of sin. Therefore, we will never be perfectly authentic in this life, but that does stop us from seeking to be authentic through the power of the Holy Spirit inside us.

The summary of my argument that is in much greater detail in chapter two shows the biblical underpinnings of authenticity in Christian ministry. The question follows, “What does it look like to be authentic in Christian ministry?” If it is the Spirit of Christ that is the true self of the believer, then it is the fruit of the Spirit that should constitute the expression of that true self. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.<sup>25</sup> Consistently modeling this fruit of the Spirit will show the pastor or Christian

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<sup>24</sup> Galatians 2:20.

<sup>25</sup> Galatians 5:22-23.

leader to be authentic. However, it is also a daily focus on the fruit of the Spirit that will enable the pastor to be consistent.

In the above example of a pastor who says yes to everything and cannot follow through, it is clear that this lack of consistency between words and actions can be an issue of self-control. King Solomon wrote, “Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.”<sup>26</sup> A person who lacks self-control has a life that is chaotic. It is chaos of the mind and heart that causes a person to be inconsistent, which causes them to come across as inauthentic. The pastor should focus on self-control and pray that God will enable them to embody the fruit of the Spirit generally if he wants to show consistency between his words and actions, which will contribute to trusting relationships.

Ultimately, the pastor must be secure in his identity in Christ. I often feel that I must say yes to everyone because I really want to serve them, but I also want the church to do well. There is certainly a selfish motivation at times for overcommitting. This attitude reflects the fact that pastors are tempted to root their assessment of their success in how big their church is or how many people like them. Kent Hughes writes of his struggle with finding success in elements of ministry rather than Christ, “But imperceptibly my high Christian idealism had shifted from serving to receiving, from giving to getting. I realized that what I really wanted was a growing church and ‘success’ more than the smile of God.”<sup>27</sup> When we give so that we may get something in return, greater numbers or greater approval from people, we become prisoners to

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<sup>26</sup> Proverbs 25:28.

<sup>27</sup> R. Kent Hughes and Barbara Hughes, *Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome* (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2008), 30.

the whims of others. Instead, pastors are called to serve others for no other reason than Christ's call on our lives to do so. This is the only way that pastors can give freely without becoming cynical and without feeling the need to impress others by overextending and subsequently viewed as inconsistent.

For the pastor that desires to grow in their consistency, the process starts with displaying consistency at every level. If a person cannot be consistent in their private life, then there is little chance that they will display consistency publicly. Develop a calendar that you check every day. Establish a clear schedule for the day, week, and month. There is the adage, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail." I like to say, "If you don't manage your time, your time will manage you." Developing a schedule that you consistently follow will help establish the routine of consistency. Some may find it helpful to meet with a trusted friend or spouse to help them develop a reasonable schedule. This is important because when you adhere to a schedule, you are essentially following through on promises you made to yourself. Over time, this can help the pastor or leader begin to expect themselves to follow through on everything they put on their calendar, unless there is an exceedingly legitimate reason for failing to do so.

### *Can the Pastor be Too Authentic?*

Concerns may arise about the possibility of the pastor being too authentic. The first concern associated with too much authenticity arises from the definition of authenticity as "the unobstructed operation of one's true or core self in one's daily enterprise."<sup>28</sup> This word "unobstructed" seems dangerous to some. The true self for the believer is Christ and their inner desires consist of the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness,

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<sup>28</sup> Kernis, "Toward a Conceptualization of Optimal Self-Esteem," 13.

faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.<sup>29</sup> The issue remains, however, that sometimes love for a person requires rebuke and sometimes encouragement. Surely the pastor cannot simply express even these traits of the believer without some nuance depending on the situation. The pastor cannot simply be positive about every possible situation. Paul warns the church in Ephesus that there would be people, even from within the church, who would rise and teach falsehoods to draw people away from Christ. In that case, he tells them to be on guard.<sup>30</sup> Pastors, as shepherds of the flock, must be the first on guard for such behavior, yet guarding against such things requires pastors to be stern and even combative at times for the good of the church. How can a pastor authentically express the fruit of the Spirit of Christ while also displaying nuance appropriate to different situations?

Goffee and Jones write,

Authenticity is not the product of pure manipulation. It accurately reflects aspects of the leader's inner self, so it can't be an act. But great leaders seem to know which personality traits they should reveal to whom and when. They are like chameleons, capable of adapting to the demands of the situations they face and the people they lead, yet they do not lose their identities in the process.<sup>31</sup>

This explanation helps to visualize how a leader might alter their responses to situations while remaining true to themselves. Some consider this approach inauthentic because it is too collectivistic and subjective.<sup>32</sup> However, the perspective that pastor-leaders must authentically

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<sup>29</sup> Galatians 5:22.

<sup>30</sup> Acts 20:29-31.

<sup>31</sup> Rob Goffee and Gareth Jones, "Managing Authenticity: The Paradox of Great Leadership," *Harvard Business Review* 83, no. 12 (December 2005): 88–89.

<sup>32</sup> Jackie Ford and Nancy Harding, "The Impossibility of the 'True Self' of Authentic Leadership," *Leadership* 7, no. 4 (November 2011): 463–79, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715011416894>.

display Christlikeness even when situations call for different tones and nuances aligns with the teleological nature of the expression of the self already discussed. Christians authentically express the true self that is the Spirit of Christ for the purpose of loving God and loving others as themselves. Pursuit of the collective good is not, therefore, an inherent negative in this model of authenticity. In fact, it is a necessary good.

The second way in which the pastor may be tempted toward being “too authentic” is through the relational transparency aspect of authentic leadership.<sup>33</sup> Some may be concerned that, in the interest of being transparent and authentic in their expression, they will reveal too much about their inner struggles. This could have the opposite of the desired effect to gain trust.

#### *How Transparent is Too Transparent?*

One study that conducted 13 in-depth interviews of SBC pastors found that these pastors placed extreme value on their time in the pulpit for developing connectedness with the congregation. One pastor said, “Relating to people is important, they have to see you as a real person, and you have to speak to them in their real world.”<sup>34</sup> However, the pastors also stressed the importance of balance with this self-disclosure. They said that sermons should never become “overly dominant or using the pulpit as a means of personal story telling; to the neglect of the Word.”<sup>35</sup> Pastors should be transparent for the purpose of becoming relatable and not for the purpose of revealing every struggle or becoming narcissistic in their delivery.

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<sup>33</sup> Gardner et al., ““Can You See the Real Me?””

<sup>34</sup> Young and Firmin, “Qualitative Perspectives toward Relational Connection in Pastoral Ministry,” 6.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 6.

To this point, the Apostle Paul was very open in his writings about his past as one who despised Christians and Christ. He spoke publicly in the city of Jerusalem and said, “I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, as the high priest and all the Council can themselves testify.”<sup>36</sup> Paul was transparent about his past, which helped him identify with that Jewish audience as one who understood their hesitancy to trust in Christ. This allowed him to be relatable.

Paul also remained transparent about his current struggles, to an extent. In Romans 7, Paul admits that he still struggles with sin even as a believer. The key is that he never says which sins he struggles with. He is very general in his description of his struggles.<sup>37</sup> However, he is transparent about current external factors that have caused him difficulty in accomplishing tasks he aspired to do. In Romans 1, the reader learns that it has long been Paul’s desire to visit the church in Rome, but he later clarifies in Romans 15, “Rather, as it is written: ‘Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.’ This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you.”<sup>38</sup> Paul made a statement of aspiration, but he made it clear that there were external circumstances in his life that may make it difficult for him to follow through.

Based on the example of Paul, perhaps a good framework for appropriate transparency for the pastor is in four parts: 1) It is safe to share struggles from which the pastor has been

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<sup>36</sup> Acts 22:4-5.

<sup>37</sup> Romans 7.

<sup>38</sup> Romans 15:21-22.

forgiven, healed, and are in the past. 2) It is safe to share very general statements about the fact that the pastor does not see himself as perfect and still struggles with sin. 3) It is not wise to share specific sins that are ongoing issues for him from the pulpit. The pastor should have someone he can trust to speak with about these issues, but they should not be shared from the pulpit or with the congregation at-large in any way. This, again, would not encourage trust in the pastor. 4) Be honest about external pressures that may hinder you from fulfilling a promise. For example, if the pastor has a sick family member, it may be helpful to be transparent about that, as it may cause him some difficulty in following through on his promises or functions for a time. Wise and reasonable levels of transparency should be pursued.

Similarly, the concern may arise about which sort of mistakes the pastor should admit. The definition of consistency between words and actions employed in this study includes being able to admit mistake and inconsistencies. This, again, does not mean that the pastor should share every single time he is inconsistent. That would not inspire trust or authenticity and would take a very long time. The type of mistakes and inconsistencies referred to in this definition are when the pastor either makes a mistake that is very public or makes a promise that does not fulfill. In other words, the repentance should occur at the level of the sin. If the pastor wrongs a person and they are the only two people that know about it, then he should simply go apologize to that person. However, if the pastor's mistreatment of that person becomes widely known to the point that most of the congregation knows, then he may need to accept responsibility with the whole congregation. Other examples are less ominous, but still important. If the pastor makes a promise to the congregation that the church is going to go on 3 mission trips next year and the church does not go on any, the pastor should not just try to sweep that under the rug. He should acknowledge what he said, explain why the trips did not happen, and take responsibility to the



extent that it is his lack of follow through that caused the inconsistency between his words and actions. In short, the pastor should do what he says he will do and apologize when he doesn't at the level at which he made the promise.

### *The Spiritual Health of the Pastor*

Relevant to the discussion of consistency between words and actions is a consideration of healthy versus toxic faith. Toxic faith, according to Stephen Arterburn and Jack Felton, "is a destructive and dangerous involvement in a religion that allows the religion, not a relationship with God, to control a person's life."<sup>39</sup> Arterburn and Felton describe several different forms of toxic faith, all of which can apply to a pastor who is working to be consistent but for the wrong reasons.

Compulsive religious activity is being "driven by guilt and a desire to earn favor from God."<sup>40</sup> Pastors who are driven by this fear can become either overwhelmed by the pressure or overly dogmatic about their insecure views. Laziness is another form of toxic faith, which implies expecting God to handle difficult situations without any action being taken personally.<sup>41</sup> A pastor with this form of toxic faith may be consistent in the sense that he continues to acquiesce to others' wishes even when he knows that a different course of action is needed. He does not take the action necessary to move the ministry in a different direction.

Still another form of toxic faith is giving to get. Arterburn and Felton describe this as mainly a financial category, but there are some pastors who believe that the more they give

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<sup>39</sup> Stephen Arterburn and Jack Felton, *Toxic Faith: Experiencing Healing over Painful Spiritual Abuse* (Westminster: WaterBrook, 2001), 19.

<sup>40</sup> Arterburn and Felton, 24.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

people what they want or need, the more praise and honor the pastor should receive both from God and from the people he serves.<sup>42</sup> Pastors should never expect anything in return for their services, and they certainly should not establish a quid pro quo with the congregation or with God. Rusty Ricketson describes the danger of a quid pro quo mentality of leadership. He writes,

As a young pastor, I was somewhat naïve about all this and found myself confronted by some who had hard feeling towards me because I would not return the favor at a later time. They would remind me about votes that were taken in meetings and behind the scenes dealings on my behalf so that my agenda could be passed, and now it was my turn to do what the giver of the favor wanted me to do for them. When I was unable to comply with their request because it would have hurt the church, I was accused of not ‘playing the game.’ Such exchanges within the church are the antithesis of the grace of God which was given to purchase and establish the church.<sup>43</sup>

Quid pro quo and giving to get forms of faith can be toxic and unhelpful in pastoral leadership.

Self-obsession is another form of toxic faith and has some of the same implications as giving to get for the pastor.<sup>44</sup> When a pastor is self-obsessed, he is likely to be consistent with regards to doing what is best for him or his image. However, he cannot be trusted to be consistent between his words and actions unless what he has promised to do benefits him in some way. Extreme intolerance and addiction to religious high are the final two forms of religious faith.<sup>45</sup> Pastors with this proclivity are legalistic. They make faith in Christ into a list of activities that must be performed to gain favor with God. This legalism is dangerous because it creates a culture of performance, elitism, and harsh judgement.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>43</sup> Rusty Ricketson, *Followerfirst: Rethinking Leading in the Church*, 2014, 186.

<sup>44</sup> Arterburn and Felton, *Toxic Faith*, 27.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 28–29.

Regarding toxic faith, pastors are most often associated with the role of persecutor.<sup>46</sup> This certainly was the case with personalities like Mark Driscoll and James MacDonald, and it is the example that is most prevalent in news stories about inconsistent pastors. However, pastors, particularly in established churches, must also guard against becoming an enabler.<sup>47</sup> Many SBC pastors find themselves amidst a culture they did not create and traditions they do not endorse. It is easy to become apathetic in situations like that where the traditions and the governing board (deacons, elders, or committees) are against the pastor. Toxic faith practices like laziness and giving to get are easy traps in these situations with the pastor enabling the toxic practices of the church to continue instead of standing up against them. The pastor must guard against becoming both a persecutor and an enabler.

One potential reason for the development of toxic faith in the life of the pastor is a failure to set appropriate boundaries. Being consistent between words and actions is important but does not insinuate that the pastor should adopt self-destructive patterns to please people. In fact, the willingness to say what they will not do is just as important as following through on what they say they will do. Henry Cloud and John Townsend write, “Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me. A boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins, leading me to a sense of ownership. Knowing what I am to own and take responsibility for gives me freedom.”<sup>48</sup> Pastors often fail to set up boundaries of where they are responsible. This is what

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>48</sup> Henry Cloud and John Sims Townsend, *Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No to Take Control of Your Life*, Updated and expanded [edition] (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017), 30.

causes them to say yes to everything, which leads to inconsistency because no one can do everything. Cloud and Townsend call this compliance or “saying yes to the bad.”<sup>49</sup>

A controller is a person who does not have regard for the boundaries of others. In an established church setting, the pastor can either become a victim to controllers in the church or become a controller himself. In a church plant, because the pastor is most often the founder, he is more likely to become the controller to get what he wants in a toxic faith situation. In any case, the pastor should seek to set up boundaries in his life that make it clear to him, his family, and the church what can be expected from him. Likewise, he must be respectful of the boundaries of others.

The question for churches may be, “How do we recognize toxic faith behaviors in our pastor or potential pastor?” Arterburn and Felton give an example of a priest who embezzled 1.35 million dollars from the collection plate of the church. He lived a lavish lifestyle of gambling and general dishonesty. The parishioners in hindsight noted some of his behavior. They said that he “was personally distant, chronically unavailable outside of Mass, and constantly complaining about church finances.”<sup>50</sup> In this example, the toxic faith forms of laziness and giving to get are both apparent. The pastor was lazy in his ministry and was only concerned about what he was getting out of the congregation. The example also told that the priest had a relationship with a woman contrary to the doctrine of the church.<sup>51</sup> This shows an inability

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<sup>49</sup> Cloud and Townsend, 52.

<sup>50</sup> Arterburn and Felton, *Toxic Faith*, 16.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

to set up appropriate boundaries. These warning signs may help churches spot toxic faith in their leader.

With respect to this study, churches should look for inconsistencies in the life of the pastor. If the pastor's actions do not match the theology he preaches or the promises he makes, particularly on a chronic basis, then he may need to be approached by the leadership of the church for reconciliation and restoration. However, if there is no repentance on his part, then removal may need to be considered as a last resort. Toxic faith should not be tolerated by those who lead God's church. Churches, especially search committees of SBC churches, should be trained on spotting these issues related to toxic faith.

#### *Focus on Warmth Over Competence*

The results of this study also indicate that a pastor should focus on developing warmth over competence. Notice that I said warmth over competence and not warmth instead of competence. In the data analysis process, competence was statistically significant. Only when controlling for the other variables did it drop out of the model. This indicates that competence is likely expected at a baseline level, but it is not a strong enough consideration when including consistency and warmth to account for a large portion of the variance in the model. In other words, pastors should not stop growing in their leadership competence, academic competence, and preaching competence, but he must not allow these to be substitutes for growing the area of warmth. Warmth must be a focus for the pastor that wants to gain trust.

Paul David Tripp's book, *Dangerous Calling*, notes the importance of valuing care and concern for others above knowledge and skill. "There is a danger of thinking that the well-educated and trained seminary graduate is ministry ready or to mistake ministry knowledge, busyness, and skill with personal spiritual maturity...Maturity is about relationship to God that

results in wise and humble living. Maturity of love for Christ expresses itself in love for others.”<sup>52</sup> In other words, knowledge and skill only take the pastor so far. Some pastors may feel that they do not have the gift of warmth. They may then focus their energy on the skills they do have, which are studying or leading. While it is good to foster growth in areas of strength, it is just as important to foster growth in areas of weakness. As Paul Tripp points out, it is not enough for the pastor to focus only on knowledge and skill, or competence, while neglecting growth in warmth. While it could be true that perceptions of competence predict other desirable outcomes for pastoral leadership, that goes beyond the scope of this study. When seeking to build trust in ministry, warmth should be valued above competence.

#### *How Can the Pastor Foster Warmth in His Leadership?*

Displaying warmth requires two emphases: genuine care and concern for others and communication of that care and concern. This study assumes that the pastor genuinely cares for the congregation. That being the case, communication is the key for those who desire to grow in their expression of the warmth. First, remembering names of people is helpful in coming across as warm.

I will never forget hearing a dear friend who recently received Christ through the ministry of our church talk about the impact of remembering his name. He was against attending church for most of his life and certainly against putting faith in Christ. He had little to no experience with the church, so when his wife pressured him to go to church, he had very negative expectations, but God had other plans for him. He came and kept coming and soon after accepted

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<sup>52</sup> Paul David Tripp, *Dangerous Calling: Confronting the Unique Challenges of Pastoral Ministry* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2015), 64.

Christ as Savior. He said to me some months later, “I couldn’t believe that you remembered my name after we had only met one time. I knew then that this experience was going to be very different than what I expected.” Remembering names will not bring people to Christ. Only God is capable of that. However, remembering people’s names really does matter, and it helps people’s perception of the pastor-leader as warm.

In addition to remembering names, remembering facts about people is important to coming across as caring and concerned. For many pastors who may not have a naturally gregarious personality, the prospect of coming across as warm, caring, and concerned may feel daunting. Small talk is important to establishing a certain level of intimacy with others.<sup>53</sup> However, for some people, small talk is difficult. In this case, the pastor may come across as not being warm, but he just struggles with interpersonal relationship skills. If the pastor can remember some facts about the person with whom he is engaging, then that opens the door for him to carry the conversation and indicates to the parishioner that he cares for them. Remembering names and facts about people to come across as warm is relevant not only to pastors but leaders in general.

As previously mentioned, the result of this study show that warmth is more important than competence across the board, regardless of church size or how well the person knows their pastor. This is interesting because the question arises, “How can a person perceive their pastor as warm if they rarely have personal interaction with him?” For the pastor, perhaps this is achieved through his presence in the pulpit. In the qualitative study of pastors, one key for establishing connectedness with the congregation was from the pulpit. The pastors spoke of using personal,

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<sup>53</sup> “Why Small Talk Is a Big Deal | Psychology Today,” accessed November 19, 2022, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/out-the-ooze/202001/why-small-talk-is-big-deal>.

appropriate illustrations at times, in moderation, to connect. One pastor said, “You can get close just by your preaching.”<sup>54</sup> Especially for pastors in larger churches where they may not be able to personally connect with every attendee, coming across as warm from the pulpit is important.

The content of your preaching can lead to feelings of warmth, but also the tone and timber of your preaching can help convey warmth. A pastor that yells constantly during his preaching may have difficulty coming across as warm. A more conversational tone may foster greater feelings of warmth. Additionally, there is sometimes a temptation for pastors to treat issues that are gray as black-and-white. The ability to acknowledge nuance when appropriate can bring not only feelings of warmth, but greater impact when the pastor must take a stand on truly black-and-white issues. Simply put, do not treat non-essentially issues as essential. This may create a “boy-who-cried-wolf” persona for the pastor and cause people not to trust his assessment of real issues.

### *A Word of Warning*

Finding ways to foster greater consistency between words and actions is vital in the life of the pastor who desires to foster trust with his congregation. However, a word of warning is in order. These skills must be pursued because the pastor genuinely desires to be more consistent and warmer toward his church. If at any point the pastor treats either of these characteristics as tools to gain trust, then he is self-defeating because he is no longer pursuing them for authentic reasons. He is using consistency and warmth as utilities to get something in return rather than simply seeking to grow in his leadership and ability to come through for his congregation.

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<sup>54</sup> Young and Firmin, “Qualitative Perspectives toward Relational Connection in Pastoral Ministry,” 6.



## Future Research

This study yielded interesting and helpful results for pastors and leaders in general, but future studies can go even further to develop an in-depth model for pastors seeking to gain trust with their congregations.

### *Different Settings*

One area of future research that may be helpful is to do a similar study in a mainline denomination. This study was conducted in a loosely coupled system. The elements and implications of this were discussed at length. The mainline denominations are more tightly coupled than the SBC.<sup>55</sup> A more comprehensive model for developing trust in the church could be developed because of conducting a similar study in a mainline denomination.

Further study could also be helpful in the business setting. I wonder if the results of this study are characteristic of the church or characteristic of a loosely coupled system? If similar studies were conducted in both a mainline denomination and a loosely coupled business environment, would the results be most similar between the tightly coupled church setting or the loosely coupled business environment?

### *Success Case Study*

A possible area of further study could be to conduct a success case study with SBC pastors that are commonly viewed as authentic and warm.<sup>56</sup> Getting these pastor's thoughts not only on how to foster these characteristics in the pastorate but also their model for gaining trust could be enlightening for pastors across the country.

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<sup>55</sup> Takayama and Cannon, "Formal Polity and Power Distribution in American Protestant Denominations."

<sup>56</sup> Robert O. Brinkerhoff, *The Success Case Method: Find out Quickly What's Working and What's Not* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2003).

### *Process Study of Congregants*

This study put forward three predictor variables based on the literature for trust in the church context. This brought limitations to the results. Langley and colleagues write, “Process studies address questions about how and why things emerge, develop, grow, or terminate over time, as distinct from variance questions dealing with covariation among dependent and independent variables.”<sup>57</sup>

A process study can assist leaders to better understand how trust is formed with congregation by doing extensive interviews to hear people tell their stories related to the life of the church and how they perceive trustworthiness in ministry.<sup>58</sup> This could also include creating small groups for dialogue and reflection.

Pentland gives a framework for conducting such research and collecting narrative as empirical data: sequence in time, focal actor or actors, identifiable narrative voice, evaluative frame of reference, and other indicators of content and context.<sup>59</sup> Narratives can reveal how meaning and cultural values are being appropriated by followers,<sup>60</sup> and this information can help leadership frame a change initiative or even create change by empowering groups to initiate

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<sup>57</sup> Ann Langley et al., “Process Studies of Change in Organization and Management: Unveiling Temporality, Activity, and Flow,” *Academy of Management Journal* 56, no. 1 (February 2013): 1, <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.4001>.

<sup>58</sup> Isabelle M.M.J. Reymen et al., “Understanding Dynamics of Strategic Decision Making in Venture Creation: A Process Study of Effectuation and Causation: Understanding Dynamics of Strategic Decision Making,” *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal* 9, no. 4 (December 2015): 356, <https://doi.org/10.1002/sej.1201>.

<sup>59</sup> Brian T. Pentland, “Building Process Theory with Narrative: From Description to Explanation,” *Academy of Management Review* 24, no. 4 (October 1999): 712, <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.1999.2553249>.

<sup>60</sup> Pentland, 712.

radical change.<sup>61</sup> Open ended questions should guide the interviews in order to collect most honest data possible.<sup>62</sup>

### *Preaching Style*

A further study could also be done to examine the effects of preaching style on perceptions of consistency and warmth. Preaching styles vary in the SBC. Some pastors are storytellers. Some are great teachers. Some are loud. Some speak softly. A study that seeks to better understand the connection between preaching style and perceptions of these predictors of trust could be helpful to pastors.

### Summary and Concluding Remarks

This chapter discussed the findings of the study. The major findings were that consistency between words and action was the greatest predictor for establishing perceptions of trust. The second major finding was that warmth is more important than competence in establishing trust in the church between the pastor and congregation. The third major finding was that these results were the same across all control variables including age, gender, church size, length of relationship with the pastor.

Potential reasons for the results were explored, particularly regarding competence dropping out of the model. Possible reasons included perception of the pastor more as a political figure rather than a representative of the denominational organization. Following in kind with

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<sup>61</sup> Donde Ashmos Plowman et al., “Radical Change Accidentally: The Emergence and Amplification of Small Change,” *Academy of Management Journal* 50, no. 3 (2007): 515–43.

<sup>62</sup> Philippe Monin et al., “Giving Sense to and Making Sense of Justice in Postmerger Integration,” *Academy of Management Journal* 56, no. 1 (2013): 259.

that perception is literature showing that people prefer warmth over competence from their political figures. The final possible reason put forward for this result was the populist nature of movements like the SBC, which value the “common touch” over academic rigor from its leaders.<sup>63</sup> The results pertaining to consistency between words and actions were as expected and hypothesized.

Implications for this study centered on how a pastor might consider building perceptions of consistency and warmth in his local congregation. If these characteristics are important to building trust, then considerations for how a pastor might foster positive perceptions of both characteristics are vital.

This study came about because of years of observation and seeking to gain the trust of the people I serve as a teaching pastor. Some of the assumptions I made showed to be supported by this research. Consistency between words and actions and warmth are crucial to building trust. The result that competence was quite less important came as somewhat of a surprise, but upon further reflection, makes sense. The saying, “people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care” applies here. Pastors should always seek to become more knowledgeable and skilled as leaders. This benefits the church. However, the pastor cannot expect his vast knowledge to ever become a replacement for warmth and consistency. These showed to be much more important to developing trust with the congregation.

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<sup>63</sup> Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, 216.

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APPENDIX A

Control Variable Multiple Regression Tables

Table 8.  
*Regression Based on Age Table*

Age		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
18-44	(Constant)	1.998	1.01		1.978	0.05
	Consistency	0.528	0.069	0.538	7.652	<.001
	Warmth	0.505	0.089	0.328	5.668	<.001
	Competence	0.117	0.082	0.078	1.426	0.156
45-65+	(Constant)	3.834	0.861		4.451	<.001
	Consistency	0.614	0.063	0.648	9.734	<.001
	Warmth	0.4	0.084	0.274	4.761	<.001
	Competence	0.005	0.079	0.004	0.059	0.953

*a. Dependent Variable: Trust*

Table 9.  
*Regression Based on Church Size Table*

Church Size		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
0-499	(Constant)	3.394	0.717		4.734	<.001
	Consistency	0.595	0.055	0.631	10.893	<.001
	Warmth	0.505	0.089	0.328	5.668	<.001
	Competence	0.057	0.068	0.041	0.847	0.398
500-2000+	(Constant)	1.198	1.578		0.759	0.449
	Consistency	0.582	0.085	0.552	6.839	<.001
	Warmth	0.423	0.101	0.297	4.175	<.001
	Competence	0.143	0.114	0.087	1.252	0.213

*a. Dependent Variable: Trust*

Table 10.  
*Regression Based on Gender Table*

Gender		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Male	(Constant)	3.657	1.117		3.275	0.001
	Consistency	0.642	0.074	0.681	8.661	<.001
	Warmth	0.354	0.105	0.24	3.375	0.001
	Competence	0.015	0.105	0.01	0.146	0.884
Female	(Constant)	3.142	0.796		3.949	<.001
	Consistency	0.559	0.059	0.579	9.472	<.001
	Warmth	0.463	0.075	0.312	6.203	<.001
	Competence	0.049	0.068	0.036	0.726	0.468

a. Dependent Variable: Trust

Table 11.  
*Regression Based on Length of Relationship Table*

Length of Relationship with Pastor		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
0-4 years	(Constant)	2.661	1.048		2.54	0.012
	Consistency	0.605	0.083	0.625	7.251	<.001
	Warmth	0.307	0.111	0.21	2.75	0.007
	Competence	0.128	0.091	0.097	1.405	0.163
5-8+ years	(Constant)	3.599	0.817		4.406	<.001
	Consistency	0.594	0.056	0.623	10.642	<.001
	Warmth	0.458	0.073	0.307	6.31	<.001
	Competence	-0.005	0.072	-0.003	-0.063	0.95

a. Dependent Variable: Trust

## APPENDIX B

### Survey

In this study we will be asking some questions about the lead pastor or the pastor you think preaches the most.

**The following questions are concerned with the warmth of your pastor in interpersonal interactions.**

12. How friendly is your pastor?
13. How caring is your pastor?
14. How sincere is your pastor?

**The following questions are concerned with the competency of your pastor in his leadership of the church.**

15. How confident is your pastor?
16. How intelligent is you pastor?
17. How capable is your pastor?
18. How competent is your pastor?

**The following question is concerned with his competency as a preacher.**

19. My pastor is extremely competent in his preaching.
20. I feel like I learn a lot from my pastor's preaching.
21. I feel very inspired by his preaching.

**The following questions are concerned with your pastor's consistency between his words and actions with regards to casting vision and leading the church body.**

22. My pastor follows through on what he says he will do.
23. When my pastor makes a mistake, he accepts responsibility.

24. My pastor is honest, even when it is inconvenient.
25. My pastor leads the church and its ministries in a consistent direction.

**Trust**

26. I feel quite confident my pastor will always try to treat me fairly.
27. My pastor would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving others.
28. I have complete faith in the integrity of my pastor.
29. I feel a strong loyalty to my pastor.
30. I would support my pastor in almost any emergency.

*(All warmth, competency, consistency, and trust questions are on 5-point Likert scale.)*

**Please answer the following 7 questions about yourself.**

31. I attend a Southern Baptist church, over 18. True or False
32. Male/Female
33. Ethnicity
34. How long have you known your pastor? 0-1 years / 2-4 years / 5-8 years / 8+ years
35. How often do you personally interact with your pastor? more than once per week / once per week / once per month/ almost never or never
36. How well do you know your pastor? Not at all / somewhat / quite well 5-point Likert
37. How involved are you in your church? Sporadic attender / Regular attender / Regular volunteer / leadership position
38. How old are you? ≤40 / >40 Qualtrics 18-29 more categories
39. What size church do you attend? 0-200 / 200-500 / 500-2000 / 2000+

## APPENDIX C

### IRB Approval Form

**Anderson University  
Human Subjects Committee (HSC)  
Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

**To:** Jared Thompson and Dr. Robert Franklin

**Proposal Title:** The Formation of Pastoral Trust

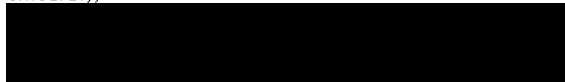
**Date:** 03/18/2022

The Human Subjects Committee (HSC) has received and reviewed the above-titled research proposal. The following committee members reviewed the proposal: Joni Criswell. The HSC decision is indicated below.

**Approved as Exempt from IRB review.** This study is approved as exempt from IRB review by meeting the exemption criteria listed at 45 CFR 46.104(d)(2) regarding "*Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior.*" The study may be conducted during the timeframe outlined in the proposal and is approved for one year from the date of this letter. Should you find it necessary to make any adjustments to the study as approved, please contact the HSC/IRB Chair in advance of implementing such changes.

If you need clarification regarding the committee's decision, please contact Dr. Joni Criswell, at [HSC@andersonuniversity.edu](mailto:HSC@andersonuniversity.edu)

Sincerely,



Dr. Joni M. Criswell  
Human Subjects Committee