

## CHAPTER 4

### CASE STUDIES

Considering the unhealthy state of pastoral families which the research presented in this thesis describes, a qualitative case study was undertaken to examine further the concern of various unhealthy practices resulting from stressors in ministry. The researcher formulated a series of questions to be answered during personal interviews. The subjects were selected randomly from a list of colleagues of the researcher; they included seven pastors (P), five pastor's wives (PW), and five pastor's kids (PK) of various ages, tenures in the pastoral ministry, and from three different denominational affiliations. Not all subjects were selected from the same family and the Ps, PWs and PKs were asked different questions although they related to the same general theme. To further clarify: The pastors were asked one set of questions, the pastors' wives another and the pastors' kids yet another. The intention was to gather evidence from real-life situations in order to better understand the primary concern of this thesis. That enhanced understanding assisted the researcher in developing a multiple-step strategic health plan through which pastors might survive and thrive in the pastorate.

#### **Interview Questions for the Pastor (P)**

1. State your name.
  - P1 GW
  - P2 MS
  - P3 GP
  - P4 RC
  - P5 GT
  - P6 SB
  - P7 JJ

2. What is your age?
  - P1 48
  - P2 52
  - P3 62
  - P4 55
  - P5 62
  - P6 56
  - P7 52
  
3. How many years have you been actively serving in ministry?
  - P1 25 years
  - P2 26 years; worked for John Maxwell organization to help local pastors
  - P3 32 years
  - P4 34 years
  - P5 42 years
  - P6 38 years
  - P7 38 years
  
4. What is your tenure in the pastor role?
  - P1 10 years
  - P2 26 years
  - P3 3 churches, first a youth and associate, second and third church 7 years a senior
  - P4 19 years in a lead role
  - P5 32 years as lead pastor
  - P6 29 years
  - P7 16 years pastor; 17 years full-time evangelism

5. What denomination are you affiliated with?
  - P1 Non-denominational
  - P2 24 years Independent Baptist; 2 years Non-denominational
  - P3 Independent Baptist
  - P4 Southern Baptist
  - P5 Southern Baptist
  - P6 Independent Baptist
  - P7 Southern Baptist
  
6. What country and/or state do you pastor in?
  - P1 Tennessee
  - P2 Florida, South Carolina, Texas
  - P3 Kansas, Texas, New Mexico, Washington
  - P4 W. Virginia- 7 ½ , Florida-10 ½
  - P5 For the past 28 years in Georgia
  - P6 Arkansas
  - P7 Kansas
  
7. How old were you when you first entered the pastorate?
  - P1 38
  - P2 23 years old; senior pastor at 30 years old
  - P3 25
  - P4 24
  - P5 28
  - P6 18 as youth pastor, 26 as senior pastor
  - P7 36
  
8. At that point, did you have any formal training either undergraduate or seminary training?
  - P1 Yes
  - P2 Yes, Undergraduate in Theology
  - P3 No, I was in Bible College
  - P4 Undergraduate
  - P5 Yes, both undergraduate and seminary
  - P6 Yes, completed BA and 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of Masters
  - P7 No

9. How many years had you been married at this point?

- P1 25 years
- P2 12 years
- P3 Yes
- P4 3
- P5 8 years
- P6 9 years
- P7 17 years

10. Did your spouse support your decision to accept the pastorate?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes
- P3 Yes
- P4 Yes
- P5 Yes
- P6 Yes
- P7 Yes

11. Were you a parent upon accepting the pastorate?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes, second child just born when transitioned to South Carolina
- P3 Yes
- P4 No
- P5 Yes
- P6 Yes
- P7 Yes

12. If so, how many children did you have at that point?

- P1 1
- P2 2
- P3 2
- P4 N/A
- P5 2
- P6 3
- P7 3

13. What were the sexes and ages of your children at that point?

- P1 10
- P2 Son-4 years old, Daughter 2 months old
- P3 2 girls, 5 and 6 years old
- P4 N/A
- P5 Son-6 years old, Daughter-2 years old
- P6 3 boys, 6, 4, and 1 ½
- P7 Daughter-17, Son-15, Daughter-11

14. What misconceptions if any did you have going into the pastorate?

- P1 My gifts alone could get me there
- P2 People would follow leadership easily
- P3 Much more difficult being a senior pastor than I thought
- P4 Christians were of the same mindset in building God's Kingdom and not their own. Didn't understand there were sacred cows.
- P5 I was fairly well prepared having served as an associate for 2 pastors listed in Elmer Town's book, *America's Fastest Growing Churches*. However, I did not realize how control hungry some people can be.
- P6 People would be in harmony
- P7 The nature of people. And this is quite a thing to do to your kids. The night before we launched our church plant I knew our lives would never be the same again.

15. What were/are the greatest challenges you face in ministry?

- P1 Stress, Finances
- P2 Last 5 years, taking the church to where I wanted to in context of their DNA. The church was 45-50 years old and history played a huge role in the fiber of the DNA.
- P3 People, balancing time with family and ministry; trying to live on a pastor's income
- P4 Unrealistic expectations of which some were self-imposed
- P5 Conflict resolution. I did not receive training for this, and was not well prepared to handle crucial conflict situations.
- P6 Organization and Administration
- P7 Loneliness

16. What were/are the greatest challenges you face in maintaining a balance between ministry and family?

- P1 People
- P2 Scheduling-prioritizing family along with the tension of the pastorate
- P3 Not enough hours in the day to accomplish all
- P4 Putting family first
- P5 I really don't think I had a challenge here. My family knew they came before the ministry, and the churches where I served knew my family was a high priority in my life. The birthdays, sporting/creative arts events of my children were of first order on my daily calendar.
- P6 Flawed sense of responsibilities resulting in poor time management. I believed I had to counsel, preach every service, and missed critical junctures of kids' events.
- P7 The work in never done.

17. Did you or do you ever feel and/or live as if the church must take precedence over your family?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Family always first, but certain church crisis sent a message to my family that they were not first, but deep in my heart they always were and are. I was so consumed with the church crisis my daughter said during years of crisis at last church, "I just want my old dad back!"
- P3 Absolutely
- P4 Yes
- P5 I do not think I ever felt this as a pressure, and I do not think my wife or children ever sensed they were "second fiddle" to the church
- P6 I did but I fought hard not for it to happen
- P7 Yes

18. Do you feel like you ever served the people more than you served your family?

- P1 Yes
- P2 At times, Yes, it was inevitable.
- P3 Absolutely
- P4 Yes
- P5 I do not feel this way at all.
- P6 Early on, the first five years.
- P7 Hesitated then responded yes; Knucklehead board members.

19. Did or do you ever feel overwhelmed by all the expectations of your congregants?
- P1 Yes
  - P2 Not overwhelmed, but pressured. At the last church two things stand out. (1) Is that the older folks were upset I chose not to wear a tie. (2) My sister was delivered from a lesbian lifestyle so I brought her to the church to share her testimony and against me for having her come speak.
  - P3 Absolutely
  - P4 Yes
  - P5 I think I handle a full calendar and stress reasonably well. Although the expectations from my congregants were often high, I rarely felt them to be overwhelming.
  - P6 Many times, I still do.
  - P7 Yes
20. How have you and your family adjusted to “living in the spotlight” or “under a microscope” or “in a fishbowl”?
- P1 Not well
  - P2 Easy for me, but for my two kids I was adamant that they both lived without being labeled as PK’s. They were just ordinary kids.
  - P3 Very difficult and I didn’t do an adequate job
  - P4 We didn’t. We just survived.
  - P5 Ah, now here is a tough one, and I hated it ... the expectation that “because my children were the pastor’s kids” that they were held to a higher standard. I taught them to live a high standard, but it should be because of our audience of ONE and not because of the expectations of the “church ladies”.
  - P6 Not well. Our sons resent the inability to eat in a restaurant without people talking and interrupting our meal. They are not bitter, but hurt at times. My wife and I find ourselves tired of the demands of people and are growing more weary of the past two years.
  - P7 Very difficult

## 21. Did anything take you by surprise?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Our family has a standing joke. The years at the last church were “the years from hell.” This church also had a Christian school and my kids felt pressure having to attend there with all the expectations.
- P3 Yes, the harshness that people could be on you
- P4 How quickly so called friends and leaders can turn against you when you’re not going the direction they think you should.
- P5 Many things took me by surprise: (1) That the congregants each felt “they paid my salary” (2) The people who wanted to have a say-so in where we lived, what we drove, how we dressed (3) How much time people wanted just to have you hear them out ... not wanting counsel or advice .... Just a listening ear. (4) The “church bosses” ! (5) People who attempted to buy the pastor (6) People who did not know their spiritual giftedness or talents and tried to push their way into an area of service in which they were not qualified. SHALL I GO ON ?
- P6 Demands of some people who try to control your family life.
- P7 Deception of the people.

## 22. How do you handle any criticism from congregants?

- P1 Not Good (underscored). I do not handle this well.
- P2 I tried to respond in the spirit, knowing there is usually a shred of truth in any criticism. I was taught to “respond” and not “react.” Our kids were very young during my first two pastorates. However, during the last pastorate my daughter’s spiritual life suffered greatly within 6 months of the pastorate.
- P3 Stuffed it away and went on. I let it go.
- P4 I internalized mine. My wife talked about it.
- P5 In my early years ... Internally, at first. Then, responded poorly. Now, I am older, and I would want to use more wisdom by: Considering the source; Give attention to legitimate criticism. Thank them for pointing out my short-sightedness. Fix the needed area. Move on.
- P6 First few years took it personally, but second half of my pastorate I considered the source.
- P7 I tried to confront, but most people won’t agree to any reason or confrontation.



23. Is your family dealing well with it?
- P1 No
  - P2 Wife took it tough, but it drove her to God. There were discouragement and dark days.
  - P3 Very hurtful and they became very protective of the family
  - P4 She talked about it.
  - P5 Family probably rarely deals well with the criticism of other family members. We tend to support one another and fight those who oppose them.
  - P6 No
  - P7 They are simply worn down and tired of it.
24. Have you set up boundaries to separate your professional life from your personal life? If so, please discuss these.
- P1 No
  - P2 Yes, we tried to create normality.
  - P3 No, I was taught to take care of the church and God will take care of your family-there was no such thing as boundaries back then
  - P4 Yes
  - P5 I really have not done this. Honestly, for me, the two blend together to the point that I would struggle to determine how to do it well. Even when our children lived at home, "church was life, and life was church".
  - P6 Definitely, We moved to a rural location, quit answering our home phone, quit officing at the church, refused to let people make demands of our kids, don't shake hands at back doors after service ends, discontinued Sunday night services and don't give our cell phones out.
  - P7 No, not originally, but after 15 years yes
25. Did you involve your spouse and family on the above?
- P1 No
  - P2 Yes
  - P3 None at all
  - P4 Yes
  - P5 See above
  - P6 Yes
  - P7 No, not for the first 15 years ...to my shame.

26. Would you admit to ever emotionally abandoning your spouse for the sake of the ministry?
- P1 Yes
  - P2 Unfortunately yes, but not intentionally
  - P3 Yes
  - P4 Yes
  - P5 I hope not. I hope she would not have felt this way. Though she has never expressed it “just that way”, she has felt (at times) that choosing another vocation could ease the pain that ministry sometimes causes.
  - P6 No
  - P7 Yes
27. How would your spouse rate your marriage on a scale of 1-10, 1 low and 10 high?
- P1 Great
  - P2 Today a 9, however during the church crisis years a 6 or 6 1/2
  - P3 8 or 9 back then; divorced now
  - P4 While in the pastorate a 7 and now in the pastor encouragement ministry a 9.
  - P5 On a scale of 1-10 (10 is best), she might say I’m given her an 8 marriage. When I write this, I regret that it could not be 10 ... she certainly deserves for me to be more for her.
  - P6 10
  - P7 10
28. What things do you need to work on in your marriage?
- P1 Time
  - P2 Making my wife feel protected. I do, but she doesn’t see it. Two weeks ago we were jogging. I run 5k and she does 2 1/2K. We have a rule that at night I back track to watch her and make sure she is safe. During the day I run ahead of her. That day, my neighbor was walking his pit-bull dog. I ran ahead of my wife and she stayed behind my neighbor purposefully because of the dog. I thought she was fine. When I returned to her we had heated words because she felt unprotected.
  - P3 Trying to spend adequate time together and not feeling guilt for not serving the church
  - P4 Communication
  - P5 Conflict resolution (this seems to have been my greatest short-coming in every area of relationship).
  - P6 Continually rethinking our responsibilities and how we use our time.
  - P7 Patience and play time. Graciousness-although she knows I do love her very much.

29. Have you and your spouse attended any marriage retreats?
- P1 No
  - P2 Yes and they were effective, like a shot in the arm.
  - P3 Yes, annually but I don't think they are effective
  - P4 No, but we hosted and spoke at them
  - P5 Yes, we have been blessed to attend several. I wish EVERY married couple could attend one each year. We have also hosted many marriage retreats. For 25-yrs, we hosted a 4-day, 3-night marriage retreat to Gatlinburg.
  - P6 No, Maybe 1 and we hosted one in Indiana.
  - P7 Yes and we conduct them as well. I would love to take my wife to more retreats. Sadly, our church never gave us an envelope and said, "Here pastor, take your wife and go be renewed."
30. Have you ever asked your spouse what his/her greatest need is in marriage?
- P1 Yes
  - P2 Yes, (1) providing financially for her which our first church did not. While in our church in Texas we were in a building program all 9 years. Only 4 of those years did the church provide for us financially. (2) Protection.
  - P3 Yes
  - P4 No
  - P5 Yes. It is to give lots of affirmation and listen without feeling a need to resolve all her pain.
  - P6 Yes
  - P7 Probably, but not enough.
31. Have you at any time during your pastorate taken either short-term or long-term sabbaticals for the sake of your own health or the health of your family?
- P1 Yes, need to.
  - P2 No, they were never offered. We do take vacations
  - P3 No, never heard that word when I was pastoring
  - P4 No, I was never given the opportunity
  - P5 No ... but have needed to on several occasions.
  - P6 Yes, three months, but came home on three of those Sundays.
  - P7 No, no one supported it. People put me on a guilt trip if I was gone for more than one consecutive Sunday.

32. Do you take time individually with each of your children to discuss life and ministry?
- P1 Yes, sometimes too much
  - P2 Not set times, but there are opportunities and moments
  - P3 Yes, but not qualitative or quantitative, very shallow amounts.
  - P4 N/A
  - P5 For over 20-yrs. I spent several hours each Saturday morning one-on-one with one child at a time. This provided great opportunity to teach spontaneously about life and ministry (when appropriate). Subsequently, 3 of our 4 children have served in vocational ministry, and two continue to do so today.
  - P6 Yes
  - P7 Yes, especially within the last year after sustaining a horrendous 5 year church crisis.
33. Are you aware of what “issues” either your spouse or any of your children have with the pastorate?
- P1 Yes
  - P2 A fairly good feel for their role but situations caused all of them to be wounded. My daughter has moved beyond her issues with a vengeance, but my older son is still in pain.
  - P3 Yes, but I ignored it back then
  - P4 Yes, for my wife.
  - P5 I am not. As mentioned previously, 3 of our 4 children have served in vocational Ministry. Two remain in vocational ministry, and one is now a homemaker and mother.
  - P6 No
  - P7 Not enough as there never seems to be time to get into this.
34. Have you set aside specific time away to discuss these issues?
- P1 No
  - P2 Yes, during the church crisis I wounded my son in the process. I have apologized however; he has gone through a crisis of faith because of it.
  - P3 No
  - P4 Yes
  - P5 I don't think any issues exist. My two sons currently in vocational ministry have sought counsel and advice re: their ministry positions.
  - P6 At this age it now a joke like being interrupted in the restaurants.
  - P7 No, not nearly enough

35. Have you discussed your greatest hurt in ministry with your family members?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes, we are very open about it
- P3 No
- P4 Yes
- P5 Yes. They have each, in some way, been involved in seeing it firsthand.
- P6 Yes
- P7 No, not the “greatest” hurt, but I have discussed other hurts.

36. When was the last time you laughed with members of your family? Summarize the event

- P1 Last week-we laugh a lot
- P2 We do laugh. We understand the value in a good laugh. In fact we try to keep things light. We laughed at dinner one week ago.
- P3 N/A
- P4 This past weekend as we celebrated my wife’s birthday.
- P5 This past Christmas was a wonderful “family time” with 3 of our 4 children and 4 of our 5 grandchildren. The house was filled with fun and laughter for the two days we were all together. My wife did creative things with the children. We wrestled, told stories, played “I remember when.” It was wonderful.
- P6 Yes, the last time I saw them.
- P7 Seven months ago at my youngest daughter’s second wedding. Six months ago with my little granddaughter and every weekend when I spend time with her.

37. Have you ever neglected your responsibilities to your family?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes.
- P3 Absolutely
- P4 Yes
- P5 Honestly, without sounding prideful, this may be an area of success
- P6 Yes.
- P7 Oh, Yes many times to my regret.

38. Would you admit that your marriage is a healthy one? If so please admit why and if not do you feel comfortable discussing why not?
- P1 Yes, because of recent tests
  - P2 Yes. Yes.
  - P3 As healthy as could be back then
  - P4 Yes
  - P5 I think our marriage is VERY healthy. My wife & I are “best friends” and “ministry partners”. She is the most amazing and incredible combination in a wife that every man dreams of. She is a cheerful and faithful Christ-follower, loyal wife, dedicated mother, consecrated mentor of ladies, impeccable homemaker, entertainer, ever-learning student, lover of The Word, and very capable ministry partner. We are still infectiously in love with eyes that twinkle only for one another.
  - P6 Yes.
  - P7 Yes, of course. I realize it more now than every before.
39. Is your relationship with all of your children in tact? Are they healthy relationships?
- P1 Yes
  - P2 Yes. Yes.
  - P3 Pretty much so. There is always some regret on my part
  - P4 N/A
  - P5 I currently struggle with the relationship with one of our married children. It is a situation of my child needing to “cleave to the spouse”, and the spouse does not want to have a close relationship with our family.
  - P6 Yes, Yes.
  - P7 Yes, with the two youngest, however, my eldest daughter and I are not where we once were (tears). I am closer now to my youngest daughter who has recently experienced severe trials and heartaches. I don’t know how to fix my relationship with my eldest daughter. I have tried and she is not responding. My son and I are very close.
40. Do you know the following about each of your children?  
What are their birthdates; year included?
- P1 Yes
  - P2 Son-yes: daughter-yes
  - P3 Yes, but not the years they were born
  - P4 N/A
  - P5 Son (10/13/71), Daughter (03/20/75), Son (04/02/84), Daughter (05/31/86)
  - P6 Yes
  - P7 Yes

What is their greatest insecurity?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes, Yes
- P3 Probably not, No
- P4 N/A
- P5 I'm not sure I could answer this one.
- P6 Yes
- P7 Yes

What is their favorite subject in school?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes, Yes
- P3 Yes
- P4 N/A
- P5 Son (Bible), Daughter (Speech & Drama), Son (Music), Daughter (Psychology)
- P6 Yes
- P7 Yes

Where do they struggle?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes, Yes
- P3 No
- P4 N/A
- P5 Son (Relationships), Daughter (Having to be the spiritual leader in her home) Son (Leadership), Daughter (Not being married at age 25)
- P6 Yes
- P7 Yes

What is their favorite sport?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes, Yes
- P3 Yes
- P4 N/A
- P5 Son (College Basketball), Daughter (Cheerleader – Not a sports person) Son (Baseball), Daughter (Tennis)
- P6 Yes
- P7 Yes

Do you remember when each child made a commitment to Christ? Can you discuss a few details?

- P1 Yes, both boys with their mother
- P2 Yes, Son-at 7 years old: daughter at 4 but recommitted at 6
- P3 Yes
- P4 N/A
- P5 Son (5-yrs. old in our home in Indiana. Later, the assurance in a youth service) Daughter (4-yrs. old with her Mother) Son (6-yrs. old at home) Daughter (6-yrs. old at home. Later, the assurance while in Bible College)
- P6 Yes, all around 7 years of age.
- P7 Absolutely, Yes. Daughter 7 in Chattanooga Tennessee, Son Eules Texas at 7, Daughter 7 in Wichita Kansas before a horrific snow storm.

What is your child's favorite color?

- P1 Yes, Texas Orange and Ut Orange
- P2 No, No
- P3 Yes
- P4 N/A
- P5 Son (Tennessee Orange) Daughter (Not sure) Son (Blue) Daughter (This child just loves colors)
- P6 Yes, but one is color blind
- P7 Yes

What is your child's life Scripture verse?

- P1 Neither has one
- P2 Son=yes, Daughter=no
- P3 No
- P4 N/A
- P5 Not sure
- P6 No
- P7 Yes, Ps. 84:11



What is your child's passion in life?

- P1 To be rich; To be famous
- P2 Yes, Yes
- P3 Yes
- P4 N/A
- P5 Son – Serve in ministry, change lives of students. Daughter – Be an incredible wife and mother. Son – Serve in ministry through music. Ultimately be an Executive pastor Daughter - Make a difference in the lives of autistic adults
- P6 Yes
- P7 Daughter-Worship Leader, Son –Apologist, Preacher, Evangelist, TV Personality, Author, Daughter-International Ministry

Do you know their spiritual gifts?

- P1 No, and neither do they
- P2 Yes, Yes
- P3 Yes
- P4 N/A
- P5 Son – Teaching, Preaching, Administration. Daughter – Administration, Teaching. Son – Shepherding, Helps. Daughter – Exhortation, Discernment
- P6 Yes
- P7 Daughter-Faith, Administration, Mercy; Son-Teaching, Preaching, Evangelism, Leadership, Giving; Daughter-Leadership, Preaching

Have you asked children what he or she wants to be when they grow up?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes, Yes
- P3 Yes
- P4 N/A
- P5 They are all grown, and either doing, or completing school to do what they feel God has equipped them to do.
- P6 Yes, they don't want to be involved in ministry
- P7 Yes, I helped them all fulfill that. They are all three in ministry.

How would each of your children rate you as a father/mother? A pastor? A husband/wife? A man/woman of God?

- P1 A+, A+, A+, A+
- P2 Father-7 1/2: Pastor-7: Husband-9: Man of God-8
- P3 10/10/10/10
- P4 N/A
- P5 Wow ! That's really tough. I'm going to be "general" rather than "specific" and say:
  - (1) As a father ... tuned into their life and hands on.
  - (2) As a pastor ... dedicated and caring
  - (3) As a husband ... loving to their Mother
  - (4) As a man of God ... faithful
- P6 10/10/12/10
- P7 5 or 6 (tears)/4/8/7

41. Have you ever asked your children, "Is there any way I am failing you as a dad/mom?"

- P1 Yes
- P2 My son Yes, in previous years of pastorate
- P3 No
- P4 N/A
- P5 My boys have told me (without asking). My oldest son once said he wanted me to be more involved in the lives of his children.
- P6 Yes
- P7 No to my shame.

42. Have you ever sought family counseling?

- P1 Yes
- P2 Yes, after our years at the last pastorate. Absolutely yes! Go to counseling! Previously, I underestimated the value of counseling in processing of emotions and moving beyond hurts.
- P3 Yes
- P4 No not family, but personal.
- P5 No. I'm sure it would have been a wonderful discovery.
- P6 No
- P7 No to my great regret and shame on my elders for not mandating it.

43. What prompted the decision to do so?
- P1 Recommendations by other pastors
  - P2 Crisis years at last pastorate
  - P3 A crisis
  - P4 Planted a church and 7 years in there was a hostile takeover. I went 5 times.
  - P5 N/A
  - P6 N/A
  - P7 Recently because of our daughter's marriage crash
44. Are you currently enthusiastic about your pastorate? Your calling to the ministry? Do you look forward to daily ministry?
- P1 Yes, Yes, Yes
  - P2 Yes, I have never been more enthusiastic. Leadership is my strongest gift, but I am not currently the senior pastor, but I love being the campus pastor. It is a gift fit and a passion fit for me.
  - P3 I am currently not pastoring, but my role in encouraging pastor I am not fulfilled. I am burned out from just rehearsing pastoral issues over and over again. I am not enthusiastic about my calling. I look forward to daily ministry and then I don't. It's a mixed bag of emotions for me.
  - P4 N/A, Absolutely because we now get to serve the servants, Yes, because I don't want to waste all painful experiences.
  - P5 I have stepped away from the pastorate for the past 2-yrs. and formed "Family Place Ministries, Inc." to minister to hurting pastors. The resources have been limited and I have not been able to do all I have wished to do. I would love to host FREE multi-day retreats for weary ministers where I could offer them hope and encouragement and send them back with new determination. Admittedly, I greatly miss the daily ministry of the local church (not so much being lead pastor), and will be seeking a role where I can come alongside another pastor and help him through some the hurdles he faces ... easing his load.
  - P6 Yes/Yes/No
  - P7 No/Yes-everyday/Now, as of yesterday
45. Do you have a mentor?
- P1 Yes, Jerry Johnston
  - P2 Yes, but now I have a different one than when I pastored previously.
  - P3 Yes, I did, but looking back I don't think they were qualified.
  - P4 Currently no. Toward the end of my pastorate I did.
  - P5 No. I have had a close relationship with Dr. Jack Hudson (now deceased), and Russ Shinpoo (local pastor who has moved). Both were men I felt I could trust and seek counsel from. Neither is really available at this time.
  - P6 No, not now
  - P7 It was Dr. Falwell. We were very close, but now I don't have one

46. Would you admit that you take time incorporating the necessary elements for spiritual growth in your personal life and the lives of your family members?
- P1 Yes
  - P2 Yes, I was raised Catholic and didn't understand the value of consistent daily devotions. I felt guilty if I ever missed, but now realize each time I am with God and we are together it is great and there is no guilt or duty only love.
  - P3 Yes
  - P4 Yes
  - P5 My preference is to rise early each morning before anyone else in my house and spend time in the Word, prayer, and blogging. Through the years, I have been an avid reader of books to encourage me and prepare me to help others.
  - P6 It's a constant challenge, but I try to
  - P7 During my 17 years in full time evangelism yes, but not now. The pastorate changed all that.
47. What is the one thing that gives you the greatest joy other than family or ministry?
- P1 Coon hunting
  - P2 Reading books on leadership
  - P3 Positive outlook on life, golfing, motorcycle riding and working out.
  - P4 Sitting on a beach with a good book
  - P5 Honestly, I have no other joy. I have lived for my wife, my children, and my church.
  - P6 Reading
  - P7 Reading books
48. Do you take time for the above?
- P1 Yes
  - P2 Yes
  - P3 No
  - P4 Yes
  - P5 I have been consistent in taking time for my wife, my children, and my church.
  - P6 Yes
  - P7 No

49. If you are a grandparent, do you take time with your grandchildren?

- P1 N/A yet
- P2 Yes, I try to spend every moment possible with him.
- P3 As much as possible
- P4 N/A but I have nieces and nephews I spent much time with.
- P5 I am a grandparent. None live in the same town with me, so this is difficult to do.
- P6 We do. Yes we enjoy it.
- P7 Not enough but I love it very much

50. What is the greatest desire you have for each of your family members?

- P1 To walk in the perfect will of God, not the permissive will of God.
- P2 I want each of them to know Christ and to love Him and best express Him.
- P3 To be together more
- P4 That my wife would be pain free. She has chronic physical pain from multiple back surgeries.
- P5 That they walk in obedience with God and His Word.
- P6 For them to all love God with a pure heart fervently.
- P7 To love God with all their heart, soul, and mind and to love people.

51. What would you each of your family members to say about you at your funeral?

- P1 He loved his family and he loved God.
- P2 “My dad loved us to the best of his ability and wanted us to feel that love.”
- P3 Good man that love the Lord.
- P4 He was faithful to his call. I asked my wife to put this on my tombstone, “Some people build buildings. He built people.”
- P5 I hope they would say: “*Dad loved his family more than anything else.*”
- P6 Loved me intensely, loved them intensely, we had a good life. My eldest son who I am in a bi-vocational position with and we have undertaken many ventures together, once told me he would stand over my grave and say, “Thank God it’s over” (chuckle).
- P7 We wish dad had had less stress and more time to relax with mom and wish I could have spent more time with him. Dad loved the Lord and us with all his heart.

### Interview Questions for the Pastor's Wife (PW)

1. State your name.
  - PW-1      KRW
  - PW-2      RS
  - PW-3      MT
  - PW-4      ALB
  - PW-5      RC
  
2. What is your age?
  - PW-1      47
  - PW-2      52
  - PW-3      61
  - PW-4      55
  - PW-5      53
  
3. Explain your spouse's ministry.
  - PW-1      Founding Senior Pastor Non-Denominational Bible Church-11 years
  - PW-2      Senior Pastor for 27 years, but for last 5 years in the senior pastor role with 1,000 in weekly attendance. He was also required to be the President of the churches' Christian school.
  - PW-3      My husband has been a staff member at two churches and the senior pastor at three churches.
  - PW-4      Founding Senior Pastor for 29 years of a church in the Midwest. 12,000 population, we began with a core of 7 people. We had 13 the first Sunday and now have 2,000 on the role. Not all of them show up every Sunday obviously.
  - PW-5      Has been a Pastor for 33 years and now serving in a ministry for Pastors called Care for Pastors

4. Are you actively involved?
  - PW-1 Yes, Currently Leader of Small Group Ministry
  - PW-2 Yes, being supportive to my husband, prep new couples, hospital visits, women's ministries part time, but I am an all or nothing gal so I put more hours in than I should have.
  - PW-3 I was actively involved in his ministry. I was in charge of the nurseries at all the churches, several music groups, have led choirs, planned banquets and retreats and any special event. I was over the women's ministry. My strengths are not in teaching but in music, organization and serving.
  - PW-4 Yes, we co-pastor together. I am worship leader and produce weekly services.
  - PW-5 Yes
  
5. Discuss a couple of things that surprised you or took you off guard in ministry?
  - PW-1 Amount of daily operations of church man power and man hours to run and sustain the church.
  - PW-2 People with hidden personal agendas. How vindictive people are who call themselves believers. I am not looking for perfection, but humility and instead I saw lots of pride.
  - PW-3 I was very naive and was surprised that people "played church", lied and played politics
  - PW-4 Trust issues with people because they all say they love Jesus, but then they turn on you in a heartbeat.
  - PW-5 The unrealistic expectations people put on the ministry family. The way people think they can say whatever they want to a Pastor or Pastor's wife because they feel like they own you.
  
6. What about living in a fishbowl?
  - PW-1 I don't feel like I live in one. Give my husband credit for that
  - PW-2 I lived there, but tried to establish boundaries for my family and marriage. I know it is a fishbowl, however when necessary I would pull the blinds and ask God for discernment and wisdom for our fishbowl lifestyle.
  - PW-3 Living in a fishbowl is good to an extent. If you truly are being a "doer of the Word and not just a hearer" then it's really not a problem. Normally everything was fine and even got raves about our family when our children were young and using fantastic manners that they were taught. As they got older the "gossipy church ladies" were harder to please and I will forever be looking over my shoulder for that certain look they gave.
  - PW-4 I guard myself closely. I am a PW and I really don't care. I am who I am in Christ and I hope they see Jesus. I can't pretend to be someone else...it's just too hard. Our adult kids are our best friends now and we do everything together. We trust them.
  - PW-5 Can be a very lonely life and very frustrating at times

7. What are the greatest challenges you face in that ministry?
- PW-1 Currently financial pressure, it trickles to every other areas of life. I feel it the last three years relationally with my husband. It has altered him with relationships. I help hold him up.
  - PW-2 Balancing calendar with family and ministry life. I am an open book, and very careful to protect my family.
  - PW-3 I learned too late that as Christians we should have an audience of one, which is God. Trying to please everyone, which I learned later is impossible, was one of my greatest challenges
  - PW-4 Working with staff.
  - PW-5 Time demands on your personal life as a family.
8. Do you and your spouse openly discuss these and work on solutions?
- PW-1 Yes, but the discussions lead to unhealthy discussions—we take it all home with us.
  - PW-2 Yes, weekly. Together we block off blocks of time
  - PW-3 Yes, we've always talked openly about everything. But the older we get, we have learned what better solutions there would have been.
  - PW-4 Yes.
  - PW-5 Yes.
9. How do you deal with the criticism in ministry toward your spouse?
- PW-1 If it is valid, I pray then if God directs me I will open it up for discussion with my husband. I offer support for him to grow. If the criticism is invalid, then I don't give credence.
  - PW-2 A tough question. I defend him, but a times privately agree with some of the criticism. I always show him support and defend him
  - PW-3 I didn't deal wonderfully with criticism. Now, I would weigh each criticism to see who it was coming from and could it be true?
  - PW-4 If it is truth I can handle it. If it is a lie then I really go after it. I don't want people to lie about my man and my children.
  - PW-5 Pray a lot and bite my tongue
10. Do you feel the need to continually defend him/her?
- PW-1 No, I challenge God to look and see if there is a message in it. My husband does need affirmation from me but, not for me to defend him.
  - PW-2 Yes, see above
  - PW-3 Yes, my temperament would be to defend my husband
  - PW-4 No
  - PW-5 Early in our ministry I did but as I have grown spiritually and learned to allow God to defend him



11. Do you possess any anger or frustration, sadness or loneliness as a result of ministry conflict or challenges?

- PW-1 No, only loneliness. I feel no unkindness from congregants only some unrealistic expectations on the pedestal syndrome and we are not living there so...
- PW-2 Absolutely. Last pastorate I pinched myself. Between church and Bible study I walked out and said, "Is my husband really the pastor of 'this' church?" People would be arguing during Bible study about doctrine etc. and I had just had enough of the pettiness.
- PW-3 Yes, absolutely! I have learned so much about myself and others the last few years. Now, I would not take everything personally and would even be able to spot when a person is just crying out for attention and would be challenged to meet that need and help turn them around. I needed this knowledge so much when I was young. There is definitely loneliness in the ministry as far as close friends. Circumstances cause you not to trust and not become close.
- PW-4 No. The Cross will close the mouth of the critics.
- PW-5 If I allowed my human nature to take charge I would but I constantly ask God to not allow any of those seeds to take root

12. Have you ever experienced depression as a result of the stress of ministry?

- PW-1 No, not from the ministry, but I did when I had to move away from my family.
- PW-2 No. Any I did have was unrelated to ministry. I had a thyroid issue.
- PW-3 Yes, I'm sure I've experienced depression because of the fishbowl and everything that goes with it. I didn't know it at the time because we just had to keep going to keep our ministry going that I didn't stop and realize this and get help which affected me physically, I'm sure.
- PW-4 Yes
- PW-5 Sadness but not depression

13. How do you deal with the disappointments you experience in marriage and ministry?

- PW-1 I keep quiet and stuff it until I get to a breaking point then I dump it on my husband.
- PW-2 I go straight to the Word. I was a "coaster" for a long time. I was 32 years old when my husband took his first senior pastor role and God said to me, "You can't coast now, no more." So, I now have the most intimate relationship with God now as a result. God said, "I am right here now you come to me." I can't go to anyone else.
- PW-3 Now, I talk it out and I'm not ashamed to say what I need as a person to fill me up and be healthy emotionally. When I was young there's no telling what I did. I guess I just over ate!

- PW-4 I work through it and all we have is each other. We talk and go places. Our struggles are with staff.
- PW-5 Open communication between my husband and myself and I also have close confidants I can confide. But I try to deal with them through prayer and my walk with the Lord.

14. Is your spouse willing to work on those where he/she is involved?

- PW-1 Always
- PW-2 Yes, he is very open to communication. During the first half of our pastorate my husband did not take on my feelings very well because of his own “stuff.” He didn’t try to fix my disappointments but didn’t go to bat for me.
- PW-3 He is willing to change now more than ever. We have studied the four basic temperaments by Tim Lahaye and Florence Littauer and our lives have been changed. He is a type A personality or another word is choleric. Choleric rule the world and are normally right. This is true about George. Doggone, he is normally right but it was hard for him to admit if he ever was wrong. God has changed him so much and I know it's because of our understanding of our basic temperaments.
- PW-4 Yes. The staff ride on his coattails and we want them to own their own responsibilities.
- PW-5 Yes

15. Do you have a network of pastor’s spouses that you regularly connect with?

- PW-1 No, but I wish I could I do not reach out but would like to.
- PW-2 Yes
- PW-3 No, we never have. Now, I wish we had taken time to do this.
- PW-4 No
- PW-5 Yes I do now but haven’t always had that earlier in ministry

16. Have you and your spouse taken time to attend marriage/ministry retreats?

- PW-1 No marriage retreats
- PW-2 Yes we taught a Home Builders
- PW-3 Yes
- PW-4 Yes but not many. We’ve attended 2 in 28 years. We do teach/host them.
- PW-5 Yes

17. If so, does your spouse realize this and is he/she willing to prioritize this going forward?

- PW-1 We've considered it, but do not want to go
- PW-2 Yes, our issues were never marital, but always ministry
- PW-3 Absolutely
- PW-4 Yes, all leaders are learners.
- PW-5 Yes

18. How would you rate your marriage?

- PW-1 8 or 9
- PW-2 9 ½
- PW-3 9 out of 10. He is my best friend and I would rather be with him than anyone else in the world! He treats me like gold! I would never have made it in the ministry if this wasn't true
- PW-4 10. There are truly seasons of life but it is a 10
- PW-5 Good

19. Does your spouse feel the same?

- PW-1 Yes
- PW-2 Yes
- PW-3 Yes
- PW-4 I am Jewish so I hope so. We are both such triple A leaders.
- PW-5 Yes
- 

20. Are you the main contributor to your family's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being?

- PW-1 No, my husband does, but I do the majority of the physical.
- PW-2 No. My husband and I do equally.
- PW-3 My husband has always been the provider and our strong tower. I have always taken care of our home, meals and tending to the children. When our children lived at home I always had a full meal prepared and served when George got home from work. Meal time was a special sharing time. I absolutely loved being a wife, mother and homemaker. He was the provider and our strength emotionally and spiritually.
- PW-4 Now, my husband and I are together
- PW-5 No

21. How would you rate your spouse's individual relationship with each one of your children?

- PW-1 Strong. We have 2 boys. We are having some teenage issues with our oldest currently so we have hit a bump in the road, but the relationships are still strong.
- PW-2 Extremely great.
- PW-3 He has no personal hobbies. He gave to me and his children first and then to our church all he had, which was a lot
- PW-4 We have 3 grown boys and I rate it a 10
- PW-5 We do not have children

22. Is he/she sort of an absentee parent for the sake of the ministry?

- PW-1 If I allowed it then my husband would be but I won't allow t. For short periods of time my husband has been absentee. TO our greatest regret in the last three years during our financial struggles our oldest son was the easiest one to parent and we just let him be and to our everlasting regret he has turned away from home and God for know. He has moved out of state and is currently living with another family.
- PW-2 Yes at times, but I always knew my husband would
- PW-3 Absolutely not. We knew we came first and he told our church members that. He read early in our ministry about Billy Sunday and that made him always put us first. Billy Sunday told his wife Maw that they had won the world but their children went to hell.....(I may not have this totally accurate but mostly, if not all.)
- PW-4 Never
- PW-5 N/A

23. Do you and your kids ever feel neglected?

- PW-1 No, but our youngest son has a little at times.
- PW-2 No. My husband never took off Saturdays but now he does
- PW-3 I believe I could speak for them that we never felt neglected.
- PW-4 Never
- PW-5 N/A

24. Do you wish your spouse had another occupation?

- PW-1 Sometimes I have kind of thought that might be nice, but I have not truly wanted him to have another vocation.
- PW-2 Yes- I did dream of it but not really
- PW-3 I have at times, yes. But I know that the ministry is what fulfills him
- PW-4 No although he is currently bi-vocational
- PW-5 No because I love ministry

25. Does your spouse make you a priority? In what ways?

- PW-1 Yes, he is open to my needs.
- PW-2 Yes, Friday's are date days. The kids wanted to take off school sometimes just to be with us on Fridays but my husband said, "No. This day is reserved for your mother and me."
- PW-3 Absolutely. He is a gentleman, sacrifices for me in all ways.
- PW-4 Yes, he's never wavered
- PW-5 He does now, earlier in ministry that was a struggle. We try to have date night on Fridays.

26. What is your spouse's greatest challenge in ministry?

- PW-1 He would say it is his current financial troubles, but truthfully it is his pride. It is pride for both of us. Through our recent struggles with our finances and our precious son God has revealed to us that we have pride in our lives and He has broken us. It took the situation with my son to break me.
- PW-2 Being the pastor of the Christian school exercising his God given gift to be used for His glory. He loves to lead people to Christ and disciple them into a relationship. He dislikes his position at the school and wants to lead people to Christ, but instead has to put out fires with parents at the school. It's man's verses God's role for my husband.
- PW-3 He wasn't taught to resolve conflict so we did not handle that well. Also, he had a hard time with lazy people and incompetent people because he is so competent.
- PW-4 working with a co-pastor first time and challenges of being a CEO of a company
- PW-5 Saying "No"

27. What is your spouse's greatest need?

- PW-1 Words of affirmation
- PW-2 To feel like he is making a spiritual difference.
- PW-3 To have a purpose to fulfill for God. He is not a "hang out" kind of guy but let's get the job done in an excellent way!
- PW-4 Encouragement, respect and honor
- PW-5 Time management

28. Do you openly discuss it and are you actively engaged in meeting that need?

- PW-1 No, I fall short of it. 50 percent of the time I meet this need but I must do better.
- PW-2 Yes. We prayed over it and openly discussed it. It drained us for weeks

- PW-3 We openly talk about it. I was sad to realize he can't retire because I could. But he will dry up without work and a purpose. I'm good with that now that I know it fulfills him. I want him to be happy and fulfilled.
  - PW-4 Yes, but he is so strong and good about this. I need to do more to encourage him
  - PW-5 Yes
29. Does your spouse take time off for personal and family time?
- PW-1 Very little
  - PW-2 Yes. We take an annual vacation, but not sabbaticals. They were never offered.
  - PW-3 Yes, he always has.
  - PW-4 Yes, but it is not scheduled
  - PW-5 Yes
30. What things would you say about your spouse at his/her funeral?
- PW-1 One of the most powerful and driven men, Self-motivated and self-taught. He chased God since he turned 19. He is a wonderful father and a much better husband than I am a wife. He is a wonderful person. The most wonderful I have ever known.
  - PW-2 He loves life and is very positive. What he is at home is what he lives everywhere else. He is not a fake. He is real. He was excited to face another day.
  - PW-3 He was the hardest working preacher/pastor many have ever known. He was the most selfless person I know
  - PW-4 A servant, faithful at serving the Lord, faithful, great Christian man
  - PW-5 He was a Godly husband and a wonderful caring person
31. If you had the chance, would you do it all over again in ministry?
- PW-1 Yes I would.
  - PW-2 Yes. The experiences have molded me as to not repeat the same mistakes. That last year of our final pastorate my husband lost 20 pounds. The struggles aged him terribly. One day he leaned against the wall and slid down it to sit and just started weeping that he had failed me. He always wanted to get out of bed and take on the day.
  - PW-3 Yes, so I could do many things differently.
  - PW-4 Absolutely
  - PW-5 Yes

## Interview Questions for the Adult Children of the Pastor (PK)

1. State your name.
  - PK1        DMJ-girl
  - PK2        JNM-girl
  - PK3        JDS-girl
  - PK4        CE-boy
  - PK5        JS-boy
  
2. What is your age?
  - PK1        32
  - PK2        26
  - PK3        22
  - PK4        20
  - PK5        26
  
3. Are you okay with being a PK (Pastor's Kid)?
  - PK1        Yes, but I was a junior in HS so I didn't really realize what it was all about because I went to college shortly after. It was harder later once I was married feeling like my family was not normal balanced wise. Family stuff was always centered around church.
  - PK2        Yes
  - PK3        Yes, it's hard but a blessing
  - PK4        Yes
  - PK5        Yeah
  
4. Do you enjoy your part in your father/mother's ministry?
  - PK1        Yes, I loved it especially at first. Friends were coming and Dad was spiritually impacting them.
  - PK2        Yes
  - PK3        Yes to an extent. Not the people's expectations.
  - PK4        Yes I was young then but I taught little ones and I loved it.
  - PK5        Yes
  
5. How do you handle living in the public eye?
  - PK1        Hard. But my mom was an example to me. During a first church split I remember Mom had a pastor's heart more than anyone else and Mom "I have to love people like Jesus does or I will never make it." It's been terrible lately because we have been attacked and it hurts. People judge me for public attacks we have endured and believe the lies.
  - PK2        People expect you to be superhuman and know

- PK3 Not good. I typically went against others and offended them
  - PK4 I was home schooled and pretty sheltered. I was known as a PK and people would actually fluctuate sports schedules during commitments to church because of it so it was good.
  - PK5 It didn't bother me, but I did kind of hate always being watched
6. What are the greatest challenges you face in your father/mother's ministry
- PK1 Dad! I worked for my dad for several years so 6 months before we left the church I was kind of sad and depressed. I realized I was mourning what I thought would be the loss of my relationship with my dad because everything revolved around church.
  - PK2 Your stuff gets pushed aside. Relational and emotional issues were tough. Emotionally the church is always more important. It still bothers me. Dad was always at a meeting or something. In evangelism, Dad would turn off TV and we would eat dinner together, but in pastorate his church schedule took priority. I don't have frustrating feelings toward my mother. My relationship with my Dad is important. Dad took me to the zoo and he took me on a couple trips alone and that was so important to me. I feel like I always had to do something in the ministry in order for Dad to accept me. Dad never asked me about my grades or school. I'm not mad at him, but just hurt. I have no bitterness toward him. He apologized. Dad is doing damage control for church with people leaving instead of running a 5-K with me. My stuff gets pushed aside. The Taylors took that 5-K from me and my Dad and I don't know how to get it back.
  - PK3 Not comparing God to the church, judging them, church includes messed up broken people
  - PK4 The devil attacks PK's to disqualify them. My sisters struggled
  - PK5 Our family struggles with communication
7. Is it difficult to converse with your parents about those challenges?
- PK1 No we had good communication.
  - PK2 Yes, In high school it I could throw it aside but when you are older you struggle with it. I could always talk to my parents though. I wish Dad would have sat with me and asked how I was doing.
  - PK3 No. we are very aware and supportive. They have always encouraged me to be my own person.
  - PK4 I have always been able to talk to my mom. Dad is not always so approachable, but we do have a good relationship.
  - PK5 Yes. My dad is overweight thought and I need to confront him but can't find it in me to do so.



8. Is it difficult for them to set aside adequate time to talk to you about issues you face in their ministry
- PK1 Mom was my greatest example. Dad struggled to be all present. I don't want to define 15 years at the church by the last few years.
  - PK2 Sometimes
  - PK3 No we are very communicative, family before ministry
  - PK4 No, mom is a stay at home mom. Dad took Monday's off so we had lunch breaks together.
  - PK5 My issues were not with church. We just can't communicate
9. How do you handle the criticism your pastor parent receives?
- PK1 Not well, I didn't know how to. I want my kids to see a counselor when the time is right because we are in the ministry. My brother would have been helped by it.
  - PK2 I was very angry. I became very about my friends in High School...anything to get me to not think about church. I go in defense mode. It's a vicious cycle. I want to punch them sometimes and I am a girl! People forget my dad is human and it's frustrating. I hate the lies and gossip.
  - PK3 I ignored it. I started drinking as a senior. I got sick to my stomach when I had thoughts of my dad's pain in the pastorate.
  - PK4 Dad is strong and he handled it. It never trickled down to us.
  - PK5 I felt low. First church split when I was 9. It broke all our hearts. Dad wants to be progressive and institute change and the congregants fought against him. I hold a grudge but still act kind. I kill them with kindness.
10. Has any of it resulted in an anger or bitterness issue for you?
- PK1 Yes,
  - PK2 Yes, I still get angry or bitter because of people who hurt my dad. I still want to punch them when they are fake to me. I want to hit them. When they hurt your parents you want no relationship with them.
  - PK3 In the beginning, but I am delivered of it now. When I see people who caused us pain, I immediately go to Jesus. He keeps me in check.
  - PK4 No
  - PK5 No, but just hurt for me Dad.

11. How did or do you come to terms with the consistent absenteeism of your pastor parent?

- PK1 When he was in evangelism it was tough, but when he came home he was totally all ours. When I was six I once told my mom through crocodile tears while she tucked me in for bed, “Mommy, when are all the people going to get saved so daddy can come home?” Now, as a pastor he is there, but not really there. My senior day of Basketball Dad and Mom did not show up. I was embarrassed.
- PK2 I got use to it. I placed my sister and brother-in-law in that Dad role instead. Learning how to drive etc. Feeling like you are not very important. It wasn’t constant, but I will forever have memories of certain people who took special times away from me with my dad and I will never be able to get that back. I quit focusing on what Dad was not giving me and focused on his good points.
- PK3 My senior year of high school my dad was with the people and I didn’t resent him, I resented the people.
- PK4 My dad pastored a small church so I didn’t really confront that.
- PK5 Didn’t ever like it or come to grips with it. Dad was tri-vocational and that hurt us.

12. Did you or do you ever feel like the church is mainly something that took your parent pastor away from you at crucial moments?

- PK1 No, because I understood the essential value of it.
- PK2 Yes. My dad cancelled being with me for my spring break week as a senior because of church crisis’s. I still struggle with that. When I got married during pictures Dad scheduled a board meeting because his board was in town for the wedding and it was convenient for him. I got use to it and expected it. No bitterness just hurt. It hurts when other people notice because my Dad is a great man.
- PK3 No
- PK4 No
- PK5 No not so much. But during the church split yes.

13. Do you ever feel like church always comes first with your pastor parent?

- PK1 Yes
- PK2 Yes always. It’s not a bad thing. I wish he called me more. I wish he called me more in college and asked if I liked my dorm etc., but he didn’t
- PK3 No
- PK4 No
- PK5 No

14. Do you feel like church never ends in church, it comes home?

- PK1 Yes, there is no “turn off” switch
- PK2 Yes, always. It’s 24/7
- PK3 Sometimes
- PK4 No (but hesitated) studying God’s Word for him never ends.
- PK5 Not church, but other jobs yes.

15. Do you feel like you father/mother is actively involved in the things that matter most to you?

- PK1 Only if it is related to the ministry.
- PK2 If I tell him then yes. The past few years it is getting better.
- PK3 Yes, Dad is a lover of people and that’s all he wants.
- PK4 Yes (bust hesitated)
- PK5 Dad was always there

16. Do you feel like your father/mother makes you a priority over the ministry?

- PK1 No
- PK2 Now yes, back in HS no. I can’t blame him for it alone.
- PK3 Yes
- PK4 Hesitated, sports yes.
- PK5 Yes

17. Can you talk honestly with him/her about that?

- PK1 Yes
- PK2 Yes
- PK3 Yes
- PK4 we have a good relationship and he is always there. Dad got saved later in life so he is learning.
- PK5 Yes

18. What is the one thing he/she does to make you feel special?

- PK1 When he pays attention to my children. When he seeks out special days for us.
- PK2 Reaching out to me and asking me to lunch or something. Making time for me alone.
- PK3 He calls me once a day to tell me he is proud of me and how beautiful I am.
- PK4 Over his entire life he poured himself into our lives.
- PK5 I can call him anytime and talk to him forever but only on surficial things.
- PK6

19. Do you ever feel like you are forgotten or pushed aside because of the ministry?
- PK1 Yes
  - PK2 Yes
  - PK3 No
  - PK4 No
  - PK5 No
20. Do you ever feel like your pastor parent is under pressure to meet expectations of congregants and not blow it publically?
- PK1 Yes
  - PK2 Yes
  - PK3 Yes
  - PK4 No
  - PK5 Yes
21. Are you forced to participate in almost every church event?
- PK1 Yes
  - PK2 Yes, but I always enjoyed it.
  - PK3 Yes
  - PK4 No forced to. I enjoyed it.
  - PK5 Yes and I accepted it. I did play sick though.
22. Do you feel like you and your pastor parent have a lack of family time together?
- PK1 Yes
  - PK2 Yes
  - PK3 No
  - PK4 No
  - PK5 It was priority
23. When you do have time together do you feel like your pastor parent is distracted because of the next church emergency or challenge?
- PK1 Yes
  - PK2 Yes or he is always on his phone. It's frustrating. I feel ignored.
  - PK3 Mostly no
  - PK4 No
  - PK5 Yes when he took on a third job.

24. Do you ever feel like you have your pastor parent all to yourself during family time?
- PK1 No
  - PK2 No especially if my brother is there. He always overshadows me. I love him, but I want Dad.
  - PK3 Yes
  - PK4 Yes
  - PK5 I needed more time with my dad but his third job as a corrections officer at the local prison hindered that.
25. Does your pastor parent make you a priority?
- PK1 Sometimes. When I had my second child, Dad came to the hospital for only seconds and then left with a board member and I am still mad about it.
  - PK2 Sometimes
  - PK3 Yes
  - PK4 Yes
  - PK5 Yes, but I wish he would call me first once. I always have to call him.
26. How would you rate your relationship with your pastor parent?
- PK1 Before he entered the pastorate a 9 or 10 and right now a 6
  - PK2 In high school (during the pastorate) a 5, but now during the pastorate an 8
  - PK3 A total 10
  - PK4 7
  - PK5 7
27. Where do you turn for help with any challenges you face?
- PK1 My mom
  - PK2 In high school I turned to my brother-in-law, but now my parents and husband
  - PK3 Sometimes my parents, but I used to turn to non-Christian friends who I could trust. Alcohol was my escape because I was so angry at the church.
  - PK4 My parents and good friends. My sisters and brother in law
  - PK5 Not my parents but I want to correct that.

28. If you could change one thing about your relationship with your pastor parent what would it be?
- PK1 My dad would have a mentor to teach boundaries
  - PK2 More uninterrupted time together
  - PK3 I wish I would have supported, prayed, and encouraged my dad more. I was frustrated he stuck around during painful times.
  - PK4 Communication. It's okay, but too quick to give advice and I wish he would listen more.
  - PK5 More communication
29. Do you feel like your experience as a PK has been a healthy one?
- PK1 Overall, yes.
  - PK2 Yes, I have a deep passion for ministry
  - PK3 Yes, absolutely.
  - PK4 Yes
  - PK5 Yes, I learned a lot
30. What if anything would you change about the experience?
- PK1 Finding more time with Dad
  - PK2 I wish we would have gotten family counseling. I wish promises my dad made would have meant something and been fulfilled because the little things mean a lot to me.
  - PK3 That I really believed my expectations are who I am in God and not because I am a PK.
  - PK4 having a bi-vocational parent
  - PK5 I wish my dad could have excelled more at his ministry unencumbered.
31. Do you ever wish your pastor parent had a different vocation?
- PK1 Sometimes I wish he was back in full time evangelism
  - PK2 Yes, when he got hurt and stressed out. I always wish he could change ministry vocations, but never forsake being a pastor.
  - PK3 Yes. At a church where his DNA was not the same as the congregants I was frustrated.
  - PK4 Yes, (chuckle) we had an opportunity to acquire oil fields. However, the Christian influence is more important.
  - PK5 No, because he did a lot of other things too.

32. What would you say about your pastor/parent at his/her funeral?

- PK1 He had a heart for the Lord-He has us as one should and he had an incredible heart for the lost.
- PK2 He was the greatest man I ever knew and loved. I love blogging about my Dad and who he really is. Dad never shoved the Bible on me, but exemplified the role. It was not forced. He allowed God to shape our hearts.
- PK3 I am going to cry now. He was the closest representation to the way Jesus loves me and others to the way Jesus serves his enemies. Jesus is the first person my Dad saw daily in the mirror. Paul told us to finish the race well and my Dad did that. He never lost motivation or momentum.
- PK4 He was a strong man of convictions and principles he believed in. He taught us them and he was a hard worker and loved his family and God most of all.
- PK5 He taught me about love, family and everyone. He loved us all so much.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

Examining the raw data revealed some findings that were fully expected and yet some answers that were surprising. To summarize All the pastors shared similar tenures in ministry though their time in the lead pastor role varied. Most confirmed having some biblical training such as undergraduate or Seminary education. They acknowledged all their wives were fully supportive in their accepting the pastor's position. There were varying misconceptions going into the pastorate as well as differing challenges while in the role. All struggle to find the balance between family and ministry. Each pastor admitted to at one time feeling like the church should take precedence over his family. The pastors all admitted to being overwhelmed and pressured by their parishioners' expectations, and that neither they nor their families are doing well in adjusting to the "fishbowl" lifestyle. Their families are not adjusting well to the criticism the pastors confront, and they express deep hurt over it. Some of the pastors set boundaries and some do not. It was surprising that all rated their marriages as great except during a ministry crisis. In addition, the pastors' wives rated their marriages great and pastors' kids rated

their parents' marriages as great as well. Only two of the seven pastors were offered sabbaticals and took them. All the pastors expressed regret about neglecting their families; however, amazingly, the pastors' wives and pastors' kids said their husbands and fathers never neglected them. In fact, all of the adult children had high praise for their fathers. The pastors affirmed that they enjoyed intact relationships with their kids, and their wives and children answered this question affirmatively as well. Most of the pastors did not previously nor do they currently consult professional counselors, although a few were prompted to do so after a ministry or family crisis. The majority are enthusiastic about their pastorates, regardless of the overwhelming stress they have encountered.

All the pastor's wives were or are actively involved in their husband's ministry. They all confessed to similar and yet different surprises in ministry. The PW struggles more with trust issues than does her husband, it appears. All PW admitted to anger, frustration, sadness, or loneliness as a result of the conflict and challenges faced in ministry. Feelings of depression were split right down the middle and yet all admitted to experiencing disappointments. Most of the PWs do not have a network of other PWs they connect with for support and encouragement. Every one affirmed that their husbands had a strong relationship with their children regardless of the challenges. None of the PWs express a desire for their husbands to seek alternate employment; they are committed to the pastorate. Surprisingly, each of them affirmed that if they had the chance they would do "the pastorate" all over again.

Of the PKs interviewed, three were young women and two young men. All of them expressed they were "ok" with being a PK and enjoyed their father's role as pastor; however none likes living in the public eye. Each of the PKs admitted to experiencing



different challenges as PKs. Not all of them feel comfortable conversing with their parents about issues they face regarding the ministry, and they all struggle to contend with the criticism their fathers face. Most of the PKs currently struggle with various anger and bitterness issues, and most are communicating with their parents about it. Although some wished at various times that their fathers had a different vocation, each of them declared that they enjoyed a good relationship with their father.

In conclusion, it is apparent that regardless of the amount of stress and challenges these pastoral families face, they remain very close-knit families. Overall, their relationships seem impenetrable and their outlook on ministry, minus the conflict, is good. It is surprising that all of them said they would do it again if given the chance. Satan attempts to destroy these families; however, they remain faithful to their calling. Perhaps the best way to illustrate my conclusions is by citing the familiar story of “winning one for The Gipper.”

This originated in American football. Knute Rockne was the coach of the US Notre Dame team in the 1920s and George Gipp was his star player. The story goes that Gipp fell ill and when dying he asked Rockne to promise that, when things were going badly for the team, he should inspire them by asking them to ‘win one for The Gipper.’ Ronald Reagan played the part of Gipp in the 1940 film *Knute Rockne: All American*. The screenplay has the line: And the last thing he said to me, “Rock,” he said, “sometime when the team is up against it and the breaks are beating the boys, tell them to go out there with all they've got and win just one for the Gipper.” Reagan was given the nickname Gipper, which lasted throughout his life. Reagan later used the quotation when seeking election as US president.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> [www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/win-one-for-the-gipper.html](http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/win-one-for-the-gipper.html)