An overview of the effects of Burnout and Stress in the lives of Ministers

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An overview of the effects of Burnout and Stress in the lives of Ministers

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<u>In Dedication to my</u>

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My family and church

Living Faith Ministries

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<u>ABSTRACT</u>

It is a well-known fact that:

a) Ministers conduct their work under enormous pressure

b) They carry a burdensome workload trying to meet unrealistic expectations from their congregations and the community at large

c) This also impacts negatively upon their own families who tend to suffer neglect and lack of quality time.

The inevitable result is descent into a state of burnout and stress.

This dissertation:

1) Analyses this predicament

2) Suggests ways of overcoming it.

3) It draws on the insights of both secular wisdom and Biblical scripture.

4) It aims to bring about healing and restoration to the beleaguered minister so that he can once again resume his life's calling in a state of wholeness.

RESEARCHER'S FOREWORD

In completing this Masters Degree, I certainly owe a great debt of gratitude to numerous people who have assisted me during my research. Firstly, I would like to thank the Lord Jesus Christ for the great things He has done in my life.

Secondly, I would like to thank my precious wife Kogie for her support and inspiration that has allowed me to achieve so much.

Thirdly, my special word of thanks goes to my two dear children Augustina and Solomon for giving me their undivided attention and assistance whilst I conducted my research.

Fourthly, would like to place on record a great sense of appreciation to my faithful church, Living Faith Ministries for their support and understanding during my research. May God bless you.

Fifthly, I would like to thank my initial supervisor, Professor JA Smit. The many years that he has lectured to me in my postgraduate studies have shaped the way that I think. He has taught me the skill of thinking critically as an academic scholar; also for the priceless advice and direction that he has given me in methodology.

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CHAPTER ONE

AN OVERVIEW OF THE EFFECTS OF BURNOUT AND STRESS IN THE LIVES OF MINISTERS

1.1 Introduction

As a concerned pastor and the Chairperson of the Phoenix Ministers Fraternal comprising of approximately seventy pastors in the Phoenix Community (Phoenix is a suburb located in Durban, South Africa.) I have a deep admiration for those in ministry and their families. I count it an honour to share this research with pastors and other leaders.

In my observation, it appears that the high calling leads to high levels of stress. In the 21st century, pastors feel the weight of enormous pressure bearing down on them. Increasingly such terms as 'stress', 'burnout' and 'marital breakdown' are being used in reference to pastors. It seems that no institution is exempt from the negative and positive impact of stress, but each experience of stress is experienced in different ways. This is certainly true of pastors, contrary to the perception among some that ministers work intensely on Sundays only while they relax the rest of the week.

In my capacity as principal and facilitator of the Bible college in the Phoenix community, radio speaker on Highway Radio, television ministry on View Africa, executive member of the coalition of the Phoenix Forum, as Chairperson of The Phoenix Ministers Fraternal, as a student at KwaZulu - Natal University and senior pastor of a flourishing church, and also involved in the building project of our new house, I constantly experience pressure. Many other pastors have similar experiences and we know that these may all lead to stress.

There are four other reasons for my writing on this subject. Firstly, my concerns of the struggles, strains and pains that pastors undergo that lead to stress.

The second motivating factor for writing on this subject of stress is to help the reader to prevent marital and family turmoil, sometimes spilling over into the ministry, work place and other settings.

Thirdly, I desire that these writings will help readers view these various aspects from a predominantly Biblical point of view. From these perspectives we may be able to forge a positive response to stress related problems that will be of benefit to the clergy.

I also desire that this subject on 'the effects of Burnout and Stress in the lives of Ministers' will provide interested pastors a tool that will stimulate discussion and workshops, seminar and conferences on the above topic. I have never heard a single message preached on the subject of 'the effects of Burnout and Stress in the lives of Ministers'.

In my conclusions the reader will find that I derive some of my research from my years in the ministry, counselling and the study of scriptures. This study will conclude by summing up the main strands of my thesis i.e. develop relevant knowledge concerning burnout and stress and its effect on the clergy.

The scriptures I use do not only give us didactic (instructive) teaching about the subject, but they are filled with examples of how people handled stress, both negatively and positively within both Old and New Testament.

1.2 Vignette

The following vignette by Anderson[1] provides a useful introduction to my research into Pastors' stress and burnout.

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--Dec. 1, 1995, is a day Len Turner will never forget. It was the day his world came tumbling down around him.

The 48-year-old pastor of a leading Southern Baptist church in South Georgia seemed to be on top of the world. Under his leadership, the church was flourishing. Hundreds of lost people were saved, membership had quadrupled, and countless numbers were being baptised. The income of the church had grown phenomenally. His success reached levels that pastors usually dream of.

But on that winter day three years ago, without warning, Turner relinquished everything and walked out the church doors. His abrupt actions shocked his church, family and fellow pastors. Rumours of scandal and misconduct abounded. Eventually the truth behind his departure revealed that the 'pastor who seemed to have it all on the outside was falling apart on the inside, a consequence of ministry burnout, exhaustion and stress'.

This crisis led to the 'Strength under Stress' seminar held on 11 January 1996 at which the issue of pastoral stress was addressed. Many testimonies were heard that identified with Turner's problem and solutions were suggested. In Turner's case medical advice suggested a year's sabbatical; moreover, Divine help was sought.

The story of Turner is one of many that ministers can identify with and leads me to the background of my research.

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[1] Stella Anderson's article is found in http:// jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/8291.htm

1.3 Aim of research

Background to research

The average human expectation of the 21 Century is for long life and good health. This expectation is greater now than ever before. There is a great need for peace and composure in the midst of the demands and pressures life seems to impose upon us.

Many social workers, and ministers of religion, and many others, find themselves dealing with stress-related problems as part of their professional work. It is my desire that this research will be of interest and value to all who read it.

Stress is a *demand* made upon the body's *'capacities'.* It is our nature that determines our response to the demand. Just as demands can vary from situation to situation, *so* capacities can vary from person to person. (Fontana 1989:2-3)

At one end of the scale, stress represents those challenges that excite us and keep us on our toes, and without which life for many people would become dull and ultimately not worth living. At the other end of the scale, stress represents those conditions under which individuals have demands made upon them that they cannot physically or psychologically meet, and that lead to breakdown at one or other of these levels. At one end of the scale, therefore, stress is a life-saver, at the other a life-destroyer. (Fontana 1989: 2-3)

Stress is a natural and unavoidable feature of life. In underdeveloped communities, stressors can be related primarily to the need for physical survival, to finding food and shelter and safety. In the developed culture of the modern Western world, stress has less to do with the need for survival, and rather more to do with social success, with the increasing standards of living, and with meeting the expectations of ourselves and

others. (Fontana 1989:4)

We sometimes put ourselves under pressure by leaving things to the last moment; not just the unpleasant things, but even the pleasant things that we enjoy doing or things that are necessary if we are to feel fulfilled and valued. Then there are many who can only do their best work when they are under pressure. Such pressure is reflected in the pace and demands imposed upon people in modern times. There may also be an element in some people of enjoying putting others under stress.

There are generic as well as contextual and sociologically specific reasons for this study. Generically, pre-modern societies are characterised by conditions in which human beings had a sense of belonging, had to live according to prescribed roles and statutes, with few psycho-mental challenges. Modern life can be characterised as a condition in which people have started to live according to the clock, lost a sense of community and a sense of meaning and belonging, and became ever more vulnerable to the effects of continuous change, the information and knowledge explosion, the ever-escalating demands of working life and performance – both at work and at home – the ever-increasing possibilities of selection and choice, and what we may call the malleability of life. All these elements of modern life contribute to the creation of modern stress – which may be good for performance, or negative causing illness (Fontana 1989: 7).

The context and sociologically-specific reasons for this study derive from the changes which have taken place since South Africa's (and KwaZulu-Natal's) transition to democracy. Politically, our still young democracy promises much for the development of quality of life of all people. Yet, empirically, the transition to our new dispensation is a process which has brought much greater hardship for many. This includes people who have lost their work – through retrenchments and early retirements – and people who have to deal with under-staffed job-situations, stress generated by public pressure aimed at enhancing performance levels, the taking on of study programmes in addition to daily diaries which are

already too full, and so on. To this may be added the increase in different kinds of crime to which anyone is exposed all the time. The counter-perspective is that stress and stressful working environments cost money. From this very brief overview, it is evident that stress is a very real experience for many, making the study necessary.

Primary Aims

Against this background of stress and burnout in ministry, the main objective of this dissertation is to develop relevant knowledge concerning stress, contextual factors generating stress, stress-related diseases, mental and physical coping mechanisms for stress, the different kinds of (religiously-, culturally- or medically-based) programmes and burnout in ministry. There is also the possibility of bringing together a coherent body of knowledge which may serve people in the helping professions in their endeavour to cope with stress themselves. This could also assist others who experience stress as a challenge or disease.

Scholarly works enable one to acquire better insight into the nature of stress, and therapies, psychological and clinical, necessary in overcoming these problems.

My interaction with various ministers and ministries exposed me to divergent views of the relationship between pastors and stress. Some have rejected the notion that pastors do undergo stress. For them it undermines the dignity and status of the ministry and is not becoming of a servant of God to suffer thus. In my opinion this is due to ignorance and naiveté and lacks understanding of the complexities of such a serious calling. There are others who have a realistic view of the nature and challenges confronting the minister. With them I share a concern and compassion for leaders and pastors under stress.

I have also noted a serious gap in the field of academic research in South Africa. Much of the literature used appear to be imported from the

West and so does not directly address the situation and culture of this country. It is my hope that this dissertation will compensate for this shortcoming. Hence the importance of this study.

As the former chairperson of the Grandmore Primary and Grove End Secondary School's Governing Body, I have observed that there are some educators who are also in the ministry and noted their busy schedules.

Secondary aims

To have a coherent 'Introduction' serving as research design:

- To study and describe the nature of burnout and stress;
- To review empirical studies, drawn from my earlier research, dealing with people under stress (signs and symptoms of stress; contextual factors and stress; stress-producing circumstances, etc.);
- To analyse existing studies on pastors, burnout, stress and counselling;
- To study existing knowledge(s) on stress therapies and practical examples to overcome burnout and stress;
- To study materials on 'Biblical Perspectives on Burnout and Stress'. (Anderson, Beasley, Harbaugh, Hart, Irvine, Louw, Oates, Daniel & Rogers, Sanford, Ellison & Matilla, Maslach & Leiter, Morris & Blanton, Throop, Warner & Carter, Iacovides, Lackey, McNeill, Morelli, Neumann, Oden, Wells).

1.4 Methodology

My method is to analyse and integrate existing research on each of these aims and objectives, to produce a theoretical study in this area of research.

This is a largely theoretical study drawing from the availability of abundant literature from credible writers and researchers on the subject of burnout and stress. Among them are Selye, Sanford, Powell & Enright, John Adams, Murray Beasley, Benner, Coleman, Fontana, Wainwright & Calnan, Harbaugh, Gibbons & Newton, Paine, McCulloch & Prins, Hartley, Oates, and others. These authors have made intensive research into the field of study including historical background, definitions, analyses, stress management and practical guides to dealing with the malady of stress.

My approach is theoretical because I am studying as much existing scholarly material on my topic as possible to offer a substantial review of the topic.

1.5 Problem Identification

Key research problem
The key research question in this paper is how do pastors in particular, overcome the burden of burnout and stress and maintain good health to perform their ministerial tasks effectively?

Problem Identification and Rationale for Research

At appropriate places in the dissertation I would like to identify the problems that pastors experience and what the contributing factors are towards a stress-related life as well as to identify problem areas and the changes and challenges that pastors face on a daily basis.

I shall endeavour to provide definitions on burnout and stress and its causes, its nature, symptoms, as well as the various consequences and impact on behaviour. This will be followed by suggestions and possible solutions and ways to overcome this malady.

The insights of psychologists and other helping professions will be integrated with Biblical perspectives in a multi-disciplinary approach in the quest for the peace, calm and composure in a stress-ridden world. Particular emphasis will be placed on the impact on pastors and Christian religious leaders in general. This dissertation is written with them in mind.

As a result of the increasing recognition of the demands in the pastorate, there has been a growing interest in work-related stressors for clergy (Malony, 1988; Morris & Blanton, 1994). The burnout syndrome found among human service professionals has been associated with the pastorate as well (Daniel & Rogers, 1982; Sanford, 1982; Hall, 1997). Identified problem areas for clergy include lack of time, stress, frustration, loneliness, social isolation, and diminished marital adjustment (Ellison & Mattila, 1982; Warner & Carter, 1984). Burnout among the clergy may well touch upon the heart of one's spiritual life and identity (Oswald 1991). Maslach and Leiter (1997) wrote that 'Burnout is the index of dislocation between what people are and what they have to do. It represents erosion in values, dignity, spirit, and will, an erosion of human soul' (p.17). Burnout among the clergy may represent a threat not only to one's vocation, but to one's sense of life calling and identity as a pastor. Pastors struggling with burnout often face a growing sense of cynicism and disillusionment (Oswald, 1991; Sanford, 1982) that threaten to undermine the very convictions which define their calling.

Oswald (1991) called burnout 'a deeply religious issue' (p.71) in that it calls the pastor to confront the issue of personal commitment.[2]

Burnout among clergy was previously treated with little consideration regarding its uniqueness. As recognition thereof increased, there was more interest in work-related stresses from clergy (Malony,1988; Morris & Blanton, 1994). The burnout syndrome among human service

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[2] The writers make this comment in Journal of Psychology and Theology:2004, Vol. 32, No.2, 115-125.

professionals has been associated with the pastorate as well (Daniel & Rogers, 1982; Sanford, 1982; Hall, 1997). Problem areas include lack of time, stress, frustration, loneliness, social isolation and diminished manual adjustment (Ellison & Mattila, 1983; Warner & Carter, 1984). Hall (1997) found that the current research lacked an assessment of pastors' spirituality as it related to personal and interpersonal functioning.[3].

To create an awareness that the experience of ministry has fundamentally changed over the past 30-40 years. Halaas,[4] a project of the Ministerial Health and Wellness Programme, a major new initiative by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to improve the health of Lutheran pastors and other church leaders, gives us a remarkable case history as follows;

a. In the 1950's, she says, a major study began following a large cohort of clergy. The researchers found that clergy had lower rates of disease for virtually every possible diagnosis and lived longer and healthier lives than any other professional group.

b. Later, two other studies, cited by well (2002), emerged that were conducted on an entirely different and later generation of clergy. The first, published in 1983, found that protestant clergy had the highest overall work –related stress of various religious professionals and the next-to-lowest amount of personal resources to cope with the strain. The second, published in 1999, found that clergy had one of the highest death rates from heart disease than any other occupation. These startling statistics is a matter of grave concern for the ministry as whole.

Clergy tend to address their own needs, if at all, only after dealing with all the needs of their congregation, after they have made out the church budget, visited the sick, counselled, etc.

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[3] Hall writes in Journal of Psychology and Theology: 2004, Vol. 32, No. 2, 115-125.
[4] Halaas is cited by Wells in Magazine of Duke Divinity School: 2002.

Awareness concerning clergy wellness should be made a church priority. Faced by overwhelming need and filled with a genuine desire to help, many pastors, consciously or not, set themselves up for problems.

These three studies suggest to us that the experience of clergy has changed over the past few decades.

Halaas (in Wells: 2002) contends that today's clergy have greater demands and less support – both physical and emotional – from staff and volunteers. The same sweeping changes that have rocked American society in the past 50 years have also radically altered the nature of ministry globally.

Both clergy and laity need to understand that the body is a precious gift from God that has to be cherished.

Clergy health raises important theological issues about care of the self and one another. At the same time, it's challenging both clergy and laity to rethink and re-envision the entire nature of ministry.

The result of stress will ultimately result in burnout and depression.

Maslach & Leiter (1997) wrote that burnout is the difference between what people are and what they have to do. It also represents an eroding of values, dignity, spirit, and will, and of the human spirit. Oswald (1991) called burnout 'a deeply religious issue' because it calls the pastor to confront the issue of personal commitment. Bulka (1984) said that the answer to burnout may be found in self-transcendence. Their spirituality, which is their basic attribute, might form a buffer against the negativity of burnout. Spiritual transcendence involves the ability to move beyond oneself and connect with an ultimate that is seen as greater than him or herself.

Hypothesis

Stress and burnout in ministry lead to a lack of spiritual well-being for both minister and his/her congregation, and allows for inadequate leadership from the minister.

A question to be focused on is: What is needed to prevent stress and burnout in the leadership of the parish?.

.1.6 The focus on pastors

The focus on pastors derive from the fact that, apart from themselves experiencing these stresses and strains, they play a very significant role in the counselling of others who experience different forms of stress. **'**Pastors' refers to those who are full-time in the ministry as well as lay ministers. Ministers often face formidable challenges to deal with and overcome the pressures that characterise their life and work. 'Personal stress may well cause a crisis in pastoral ministry', Harbaugh (1985:57). In some sense, he adds, it is an identity crisis as it confronts the pastor with who he or she is. (1985:57). However, overcoming stress is not just a once off event but a constant challenge to our lives and ministry. As Irvine puts it in his book, *Between Two Worlds '….* overcoming unwanted stress is not a destination, but rather a process on the journey of life' (1985:59).

My aim is to enable many ministers, from this information, to find a way of transformation in the midst of stressful situations. I will endeavour to establish some causes and effects of stress and the preventive and precautionary measures one could take.

The ministry of a pastor is varied and complex. The task and responsibility, problems and privileges that belong to the pastor can be overwhelming. I hope that the insights in this paper will provide a better understanding of the issues discussed and enable ministers to cope

effectively. Ministers, in terms of their calling, are constantly called to solve problems. People have problems arising from different sources, such as spiritual, psychological, emotional, physical and social. It is the task of the shepherd to help people address their problems and contribute to solutions. But who solves the problems of the minister? Helping people is the lifestyle of ministers. Never was a job created with more conflicting expectations. To minister well one must be honest, to minister in existing structures one must be trusted. Rarely do these attributes work hand in hand. A pastor is expected to be an exciting teacher, able administrator, compassionate counsellor, friend to all and available at a moment's notice. If he or she is not all of these, criticism will be faced. The diverse concerns of congregation, staff, community, peers and denominational leaders all press in from different directions. The minister must be all things to all people.

In my observation, borne of personal experience as a lay minister for fifteen years, a husband, student, father, who erected a church and a house with limited resources, together with my association with ministers locally, nationally, and internationally I have noted that most pastors were hard working and operated on hectic schedules. My concern and compassion is for pastors who undergo enormous pressures, pain and problems. The role of the pastor has become more and more demanding over the years. God did allow me to experience many trials in many ways for which I am grateful, through which I have grown. My association with the high income economic group in Gauteng and low income economic community on the outskirts of the same province of South Africa revealed various forms of stress. In my personal observation I have witnessed brilliant and dedicated ministers become ineffectual. Coping mechanisms have not been adequate. The ministry is more overloaded and more stressful now than in the 1990's. Pastors are not exempt from burnout and stress.

Often success in Evangelical churches is measured by statistics such as the numerical strength of the church, number of churches built and

financial prosperity. Decisions, demands and expectations increase and preserving success stories are often more stressful than gaining it. Institutional demands and power-plays are infamous in exerting undue pressures on the minister. This does seem to conflict with the vocational needs of the one called to lead, feed, guide and guard the people of God. It is no wonder that ministers fight feelings of inadequacy, guilt, loneliness and pride; all of which lead to burnout and stress. Pressure is so inevitable that it would seem only fair to count stress as 'fellowshipping in His suffering'. (Phil 3:10).

There are some general factors which influence the clergy family and which, in so doing, present the risk of burnout and stress. There are stressors which are more evident for the clergy than for other professionals because they are rooted in image, appearance and control and power. There are some specific factors which have been recurrent themes in my research and in my broader based conversations with clergy and their family. These may not apply to all clergy families.

Public, family and private life

Being the clergy family in the community is a little like being one of the 'Royals'. The business of the clergy family is public domain and open for public approval or criticism. According to Irvine (1997:132), of the 131 spouses surveyed in the study of the Church of Scotland some 62 percent indicated they felt, to varying degrees, that their family was treated differently because they were viewed as being the clergy family.

Public ownership of the clergy family has been evidenced in a number of different ways. This may range from the indirect criticism of the children or child-rearing practices to direct disciplinary comments of the children themselves. It is akin to the interference of grandparents in child-rearing situations, except without the family ties. The concept that, a group of people outside the immediate family have a say in the way in which the

family operates, or what is appropriate behaviour, is one of the primary causes of burnout and stress.

Equally, this affects the way in which the spouses of the clergy are viewed within church and community. The spouse of the minister cannot be just an ordinary member of the congregation. Everyone has feelings about how the minister's wife should behave or be involved in the church. The same attitudes go on to speak of the minister's family as being idealised. The family is about the Lord's business therefore the highest standards have to be maintained. There is little wonder that the family of the minister feel like public property, shaped by the expectations of others (Irvine 1997:132/49). This often leads to stressful situations.

Lack of privacy

One minister commented how he would not put in a garden – gardening was one of his favourite activities, because of the constant teasing he received from some members of his predominantly farming community church. Another family ceased to sunbathe in 'their' backyard because 'observers' thought this was unsuitable for the minister's family. These, of course, are extreme examples, but do point to the invasion of privacy, abuse of mind body and freedom. This becomes a very wearying experience if constantly experienced. Even an opportunity to enjoy a family 'braai' in the backyard presents the risk that the boundary will be violated and that someone will opt to enter into the property to which they claim ownership. For the family of the clergy, there can be no claim of 'this is our home'.

Fortunately, the trend is being overcome. The rationale given for private home ownership by the clergy is the value of entering the market of thus allowing the development of a housing equity. This is a valid reason. To live in a home where permission is not required to paint the outside or make changes, for fear of criticism serves to establish a family unit which

has a place to call its own. I personally and wholeheartedly identify with the above situation, having lived for seven years in a ministers' manse. For many in the traditional church, ownership by others continues to be reality. For the household of the clergy it becomes a source of frustration and tension.

After all, the Apostle Paul spoke constantly about the sufferings the ministry created for him – shipwrecks, stoning, deprivation of food, dangers in his travels, rejection by people and even from the 'daily pressure' of his concern from all the churches. But look closely, when Paul spoke of his mental and physical state he always spoke of peace, 'contentment in every situation' and sufficient provision. Is stress then 'sharing in His suffering'? (2 Cor. 12:10). Sleepless nights and tense days may not be all one's own doing. After all ministers are bearing the burdens of others in desperate need (2 Cor.11:25).
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This research is focused mainly on the stressful situations experienced by pastors in their life and ministry. I have no doubt that other interested readers may also benefit from it. It must be added that victory over stress is not an instant event. It is an ongoing challenge, Irvine (1997:10).

 It is clear from observation and media exposure as well as the vast amount of scholarly works on the subject that this problem is a pandemic of global proportions (Irvine 1997:132, 51).

 The pastoral ministry in the 21century is characterised by burnout and stress more than ever before. Busy pastors need to be insightful and not ignorant concerning this fact.   In these pages I would like to hold out a beacon of hope on how to cope with the demands and pressures that weigh them down and also lead to premature and sometimes fatal illnesses.

This research will not only raise and explore issues which contribute uniquely to high stress factors among the clergy, but it will also assist the reader in identifying areas of unrealistic demands imposed by congregants. Therefore the following people who may benefit from the study may be identified.

Firstly, pastors have to cope with the generic and contextual stressors impacting on their lives – which in turn may impact on their own stress levels.

Secondly, many of the people in the helping professions are Christians and form part of the congregations of pastors in the Greater Durban Metro Region –e.g. policemen and medical personnel. Pastors need to have the knowledge and skills to assist and counsel such people.

Thirdly, many managers are in the congregations, and pastors need to train them to be adequate managers who do not cause additional stress, but manage in a way that meets the abilities of each person they are responsible for. Finally, as much literature attests, any kind of transformation brings about burnout and stress. (Lackey: 2000, Wells: 2002, Neumann: 1996 and Croucher: 1982).

This study will focus on burnout and stress as depression is a vast subject. Due to its importance as well, will require a study on its own.

It is necessary at this juncture to elaborate on the definitions of burnout and stress.

1.7 Definitions of burnout and stress

I would like to explore and explain the various definitions of burnout and stress from different perspectives. These are provided by a number of authors. Obviously the definitions would have a significant bearing on the therapeutic approaches in an attempt to overcome mental, physical and

emotional problems that affect people. Hence the need for an examination of the concepts burnout and stress.

Burnout

A number of authors have set out to define burnout. Miller quotes Freudenberger (1974) as the first to discuss burnout as a medical problem in the United States of America. He identified burnout as:

> A state of fatigue and frustration arising from excessive demands on personal resources[5].

The *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling alludes* to burnout as being a syndrome, often occurring among individuals in helping professions, involving emotional and physical exhaustion. Maslach (1982) cited by Hunter believes that burnout can be understood best by focusing on situational, environmental, and demographic factors, such as long working hours, little feedback regarding one's work, lack of family time, low salary, understaffing, life changes, unrealistic expectation, lack of time-off, and inability to control one's schedule.

Freudenberger (1980) represents a psychoanalytic position which believes that intrapsychic or personality tendencies are a more reliable explanation of burnout. Such as need for approval, workaholic qualities, authoritarianism, unassertive acts and overly sensitive reactions…, as these are the factors which contribute to burnout. Maslach emphasizes that burnout is a problem of the 'social environment in which people work.' [6]

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[5] Miller, *Dying to Care? Work, Stress and Burnout…*p29-30
[6] Maslach C. and Leiter M.P. *The Truth about Burnout. How Organisations Cause Personal Stress and What to do about it. P.18*

This quotation provides a guide concerning burnout, highlighting the situation, the environment and the demography to be considered, as these are the factors that contribute to burnout.

Burnout is physical, mental and emotional response to constant levels of high stress. When the body and mind is strained, emotional and physical fatigue develops.[7]

In my observation burnout has been a subject which has occupied the minds of many researchers of recent times. Its prevalence in modern times has made burnout an important issue. According to Iacovides, burnout can be viewed as a condition of 'professional exhaustion'[8]. Burnout is a common occurrence and is generally neglected yet it may affect every aspect of an individual's lifestyle.

The subject is getting the attention it deserves. It has even been called the disease of modern life. Burnout, according to Freudenberger (1980), Maslach (1982), Veninga (1981), and Spradley (1981),   may be defined as   'a debilitating psychological condition brought in by unrelieved work stress'[9]. They say that this condition results in depleted energy and emotional exhaustion, lowered resistance to illness, increased depersonalised interpersonal relationships, increased absenteeism and work inefficiency.

Smith, Jaffe-Gill, Segal, J and Segal, R. define burnout thus: 'Burnout is a state of emotional and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress'.[10]   This occurs when one is overwhelmed by and inability to meet constant demands. The writers say that a person's energy is sapped and productivity is reduced. This leads to an increasing feeling of hopelessness, powerlessness, cynicism and resentment. The

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[7] Canaff, A.L. in Recognising Job Burnout.
  http://www.888betsoff.com/links/05_presentations/franklin%20keynote%20burnout.pdf
[8] Iacovides A. *et al* Aristotle University of Thessaloniki accessed 27 10 08
[9] Freudenberger, Maslach, Veninga and Spradley. Burnout.
  http://www.winona.eud/stress/burrnout.htm.
[10] This article is available online at H:\burnout_signs_symptoms.htm

consequent unhappiness could be a threat to one's job, relationships, and health.

Hart (1984) concurs with the above definition, further describing it as 'compassion fatigue', making specific reference to the ministry. He adds that most conscientious people-helpers are prone to this condition. This view is reinforced by Maslach who describes burnout as a 'state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion marked by physical depletion and chronic fatigue, feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, and by the development of a negative self-concept and negative attitudes towards work, life, and other people'.[11]

Two important definitions of burnout are:

- 'A state of physical and mental exhaustion caused by long term involvement in emotionally demanding situations'[12] (Ayala Pines & Elliott Aronson).

- 'A state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward'. (Herbert J. Freudenberger).

These two definitions embrace the essence of burnout, with the first stressing the part that exhaustion plays in it, and the second stressing the sense of disillusionment that is at its core.

Hans Selye, one of the founding fathers of stress research, looked at burnout in the following way, after hundreds of experiments;

a. Selye looked at the way in which animals handled long-term stress. What he saw was that after an initial period of adaptation, they survived very well for quite a long period of time until, all of a

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[11] F:\STRESS%20IN%20PASTORATE.htm
[12] http://www.investinkids.ca//ContentPage.aspz?name=What_is_burnout

sudden, their resistance collapsed without any obvious direct cause (1974).

b. Selye also saw this with bomber pilots in the Second World War, who would fly effectively for many missions, but who would then fall apart as pilot fatigue set in (1974).

Many ministers started with high ideals, ambitions and passion, they then became exhausted to the point that their performance declined. These are times when rest helps us to approach the situation with a new enthusiasm.

Exhaustion and long-term stress contribute to burnout, but they are not the most destructive parts of it.

Stress

I would like to explain the various definitions of stress from different perspectives. These are provided by a number of authors (e.g. Hartley:1995, Selye: 1974, Paine:1982, Fowler:1982). Obviously the definitions would have a significant bearing on the therapeutic approaches in the attempt to overcome the psychological, physiological and emotional problems that affect people. Hence the need for an examination of the concept of stress.

According to the Dictionary of Care and Counselling, stress is: 'the debilitating and maladaptive physiological, emotional, and behavioural responses resulting from the appraisal of a situation and the ensuing belief that one does not possess adequate mechanisms and resources for coping. The eliciting stimulus, along with the mediating and cognitive activities and responses taken together make up what is described as the stress process' [13].

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[13] Hunter R.J. *Dictionary of Pastoral Counselling:* p.1227

In the study of physics, 'stress' is the term used to refer to pressure brought to bear upon an object, which results in fractures and cracks. In the study of psychology, 'stress' is a term used to refer to the pressures brought to bear upon an individual by the situations and circumstances of life, which results in mental, emotional and volitional reactions to such pressures creating psychological distress and physical disorders (Fowler: 1999).

Coleman in *Stress Management Technique 1988:5* states that,
today reputable medical scientists in the world accept that stress (that means anything that causes fear, anxiety, worry, apprehension, anger and even excitement) can cause genuine physical responses and diseases.

According to Lackey, 'Stress means stretching yourself beyond your limits, overextending yourselves without an adequate time for recovery'. He further states that, 'When you worry about or frantically anticipate future events that can't be avoided and then are preoccupied with it even after it is over, that's stress. If you have something in your life that's dominating your thinking that you can't let loose of, that's an indication this is stressful.'   (Lackey 2000)[14].

Morelli provides a short overview of stress in what he regards as a psycho-spiritual response to the condition.[15]

'In psychological terms', says Morelli,   'stress is any circumstance or event that threatens (or is perceived to threaten) one's usual adaptive functioning or lies beyond one's perceived coping capabilities. In spiritual terms, stress is considered a threat to one's spiritual well being and includes: interruption of prayer life, a sense of loss of God's love and care, and a lack of trust in God and His Church' (Morelli 2006).

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[14] Lackey : H:Burnout3.html (accessed date 201008).
[15] http:/www.antiochan.org/morelli/understanding

Leading exponents of the subject of stress have given different definitions of stress with different emphases. Among them are the following:

According to James A. Fowler (1999:2):
1. 'In the study of psychology, stress is a term used to refer to the pressures brought to bear upon an individual by the situations and circumstances of life';
2. It also 'refers to the mental, emotional and volitional reactions to such pressures creating psychological distress and physical disorders'. [16]

Richard S. Lazarus believes that 'stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilise. In short it's what we feel when we think we've lost control of events'.[17]

Rowland Croucher, in his article, *Stress and Burnout in Ministry*, cites one of the founding fathers of stress research, Hans Selye, who defines stress 'in terms of the response your body makes to any demand on it.' He further states that there is both 'good stress' (eustress) and 'bad stress' (distress). The former is linked with feelings of joy, fulfilment and achievement, while the latter is 'prolonged or frequent stress'.[18]

Hans Selye's view in 1956 was that stress is not necessarily something bad. It all depends on how you take it. The stress of exhilarating, creative successful work is beneficial, while that of failure, humiliation or infection is detrimental. Selye believed that the biochemical effects of stress would be experienced irrespective of whether the situation was positive or negative. Since then, a great deal of further research has been conducted, ideas have moved on. Stress is now viewed as a 'bad thing', with a range of harmful biochemical and medical long-term effects. The

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[16] outline.html#anchor243615
[17] https://www.mindtools.com/cgi-
[18] F:\stress_burnout.html

most commonly accepted definition of stress (mainly attributed to Richard S. Lazarus) is that 'stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize. In short, it's what we feel when we think we've lost control of events.[19]

1.8. Conclusion

These are the challenges that confront the pastor in his daily life and ministry. He needs to be equipped to counter the negative impact of burnout and stress. He also needs to fall back on spiritual resources to sustain and strengthen him/her. This self transcendence is often referred to biblically as being an 'over comer in Christ', or a 'victorious Christian life'.

In chapter one I introduce the concept of stress as a malady afflicting all kinds of people including those in positions of leadership. However, it is also true that stress has a positive side since it can stimulate performance to levels of excellence as in the case of Olympic athletes; but it can also depress to the extent that it can cause one to under perform. It is a matter of how one responds to this condition.

In the chapters that follow we will focus on the understanding of burnout and stress. I want to hold up a fresh beacon of hope, on how to cope with stress form various perspectives in this modern age.

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[19] https://www.mindtools,com/cgi.

CHAPTER TWO
UNDERSTANDING BURNOUT AND STRESS

2.1　Understanding burnout

2.1.1 Introduction

Chapter two attempts to offer an understanding of the conditions of burnout and stress. This is no easy task as defining and describing them varies due to the different forms experienced by different people. Despite these differences, however, there are certainly common characteristics found in most forms.

As Canaff states, burnout arises in response to expectations placed upon us, either by ourselves or others.[20]

'Burnout' has many definitions. The common aspect involves physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and interpersonal exhaustion. Organisations provided options and resources to aid burned-out workers. But the most common attitude was, 'If you don't like it here, leave' (Paine 1982:17).

Jennifer Senior [21], says, New York says, in a culture where work can be a religion, burnout is its crisis of faith. The following metaphor highlights the understanding of burnout, 'people suffering from burnout are like dry tea pots over a high flame, a drained battery that can no longer hold its charge'.

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[20]Canaff A.L. Recognising Job Burnout – The Counselling Corner by the American Counselling Association . (Accessed date 28 10 08)

[21] Jennifer Senior, New York – magazine http//nymag.com/nymag//author_78

2.1.2   Signs of burnout

Feelings of hopelessness, powerlessness, cynicism, resentment, failure, stagnation and reduced productivity is the result of burnout. These feelings can result in stress and which eventually can pose a threat to one's job, relationships and health. When one is burnt out one feels overworked underappreciated, confused about expectations and priorities, concerned about job security, overcommitted with responsibilities and resentful about duties that are not commensurate with pay.

Feeling of inability to meet constant demands results in burnout, which in turn leads to increasing depletion of energy. Sadness, anger or indifference can set in. One loses interest and motivation which caused one to take on a certain role in the first place.

2.1.3   Causes of burnout

One of the causes of burnout is that people are uncertain about the future. They are concerned about job security. Also the demands placed on individuals by relationships as well as job demands. One of the major causes of burnout is work dissatisfaction and also a feeling of lack of control over your work.

Burnout can be experienced in every occupation. No job is exempt from burnout. Burnout is more prevalent among service professionals. All employees are subject to experiencing burnout, but it is more common among teachers, clergy members, health practitioners and care givers.
People who place high expectations on themselves are also prone to burnout. Compulsiveness, perfectionism, and inflated self-confidence impacts negatively on personal and professional life. Also the setting of unrealistic goals. Thinking that anything is possible, and taking on more

than one can handle, will cause one to maintain a high intensity level which cannot be sustained over a long period of time.

2.1.4 Stages of burnout

According to Hutman S. *et al,* ' burnout has been found to proceed in stages that blend into one another so smoothly that you might not realise what is happening until you are in a state of despair and physical and emotional breakdown'.[22]

An individual might start a new job with immense energy levels. They may then find themselves in a state of disillusionment and disappointment – confusion sets in and the reasons for these feelings cannot be ascertained. Burnout symptoms begin to set in i.e..feelings of frustration, irritability, exhaustion and fatigue. (Hutman S., *et al.*)

Similarly, in the ministry, emerging ministers and newly ordained ministers commence with immense zeal and enthusiasm. As one progresses in the ministry one begins to experience disillusionment, discouragement and a sense of despair due to the demands placed on the clergy and spouses. Having no support structure for the clergy, they eventually burnout.

2.1.5 Conclusion

Burnout is not an end itself, but a process that can be avoided. In order to prevent and alleviate burnout it is necessary to be aware of the signs and symptoms and address these timeously so that it would not lead to eventual burnout. A person suffering from burnout can consider making changes to ones lifestyle in order to improve one's overall well-being and cope better with daily demands.

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[22] Helpguide- Burnout: Signs, Symptoms and Prevention

  http://www.helpguide.org/mental/burnout_signs_symptoms.htm.

2.2   Understanding stress

2.2.1 Introduction

In order to understand the phenomenon of stress, one needs to dwell on the numerous factors that contribute to it.

2.2.2 Factors contributing to work stress

The factors contributing to work stress is grounded in qualitative studies of the attitudes and beliefs of workers. Attempt is made to reveal ways in which workers make sense of their experiences at work, and how they interpret and give meaning to signs and symptoms, and make choices about how to respond.

There are historical, cultural and structural factors that condition work stress. One needs to consider the public and scientific discourses on work stress to ascertain the socio-cultural influences on their production and their influences on how individuals make sense of their experiences at work.

Attempt is also made to provide valuable insight.   Many disciplines have addressed work stress and our analysis has led us to engage critically the literature of psychology, physiology, history, and cultural studies.

Gibbons and Newton (1998), maintain that stress has far-reaching effects on relationships in the workplace. We look at these now.

What can we learn from the working environment as regards stress? Work stress, for many both lay people and researchers alike; indicate the 'natural' limit of human endurance and resilience. Work stress is 'real' for many people who face problems at work. It manifests itself in real physical and psychological symptoms.   It has real consequences

including behavioural change, even early retirement on medical grounds. Some may benefit from their 'condition' through compensation. For the majority, work stress is a burden which they endure without any prospect of personal gain.   Work stress may be 'real' for those who experience it, but at the same time it is also a product of times in which we live. Problems at work are a threat to health and well-being. What are the factors conditioning stress in this environment?

Physical well-being is a vital pre-requisite to a stress-free life. One needs to pursue a healthy lifestyle.

A healthy, strong body is better equipped to deal with stressful situations and is a means, like relaxation, of reducing stress. The 600 muscles in our body thrive on exercise and deteriorate without it (Powell & Enright 1990:135 ff.) In their opinion, regular exercise, a well balanced diet, and the correct amount of rest , are necessary to cope with stress.

A healthy well balanced diet and a good nights sleep is important. Sleep provides a restorative function within the body, provides a break from stress.

1. Exercise provides a way of releasing a great deal of the muscle tension.   An important benefit of exercise is muscle relaxation.
2. Exercise helps develop and maintain good circulation and lowers blood pressure.
3. Exercise improves immunization in the body's fight to ward off disease.
4. Exercise can be used to clear the mind of the worrying thoughts and anxieties.   Often more creative ideas and more effective problem solving occur after exercise.
5. Exercise improves self-image, appearance, and control of weight.

Nutrition

People respond to stress in different ways, some drink alcohol, some increase and decrease their food consumption. The effect of overeating is weight gain, which in itself is an added stress. A person 25 per cent over their normal weight range has a two and a half times greater chance of having a heart attack, hypertension, or a stroke. The overweight person's self-image may also fall causing a loss of confidence, which becomes another stress.

A healthy well-balanced diet containing proper nutrition can be used to help cope with stress. People who eat properly feel good about themselves.

Rest

For all of us getting a good night's sleep is important. Sleep provides a restorative function within the body, provides a break from stress.

2.2.3 The effects of stress on working relationships

There are 4 main areas in the work environment in which stress makes its impact.

Communications

When a group of people are under stress, it is not unusual for their communications to become less effective. Volume and tone of voice can be less cordial and may even become the source of conflict. Parish staff relationships begin to deteriorate and compound the stress problem.

Motivation

Stress leads to de-motivation to work. When going to work is an unpleasant experience associated with negative thoughts, a range of physiological symptoms and poor health may occur. It is then perfectly reasonable to dread the experience.

Staff absence and turnover

High rates of parish staff sickness and turnover are likely to reflect situation of stress at work. When staff feel undervalued and overstressed this will manifest in staff absence and turnover.   Stress has profound effects on an individual and those around him/her.

There are different areas of change brought about by stress. It is broadly categorised into psychological and physiological changes. These are further expressed in changes in thoughts, behaviour, and health.   But one of the devastating effects of stress is that on the human mind. It could lead to mental illness and insanity. The following section addresses this problem.

2.2.4 Factors contributing to stress in the clergy

In a study by Moy and Malony (1987), cited by Neumann N.R., it was revealed that job related stress among the clergy was the most common factor that led many to quit the ministry.   Stress therefore has to be addressed and it is necessary to be aware of the factors that contribute to stress so as to avoid them. Avoiding these factors will inevitably lead to the avoidance of stress.

The following are some of the factors leading to clergy stress:

Role Confusion

'Stress exists where there is confusion over one's roles and tasks even over their values'.[23]

The clergy are not only ministers but also spouses to their partners and parents to their children.

Work Overload

The minister is on call 24 hours a day. Their personal life is often interrupted to attend to professional matters. There are many facets within the ministry which is generally addressed by the minister, e.g. projects, youth ministry, children's church ministry, home visitation, hospital visitation, counselling, birthdays, thanksgiving services, the list is endless. Unless the minister delegates these tasks, he or she is a candidate for stress.

Job insecurity / job relocation & pay

A high concentration of ministers in a particular area can have two results;
Firstly, lack of jobs.
Secondly, the relocation of ministers thus resulting in stress.

Financial compensations

Clergy have a fairly high level of education, but do not earn a high salary. Their salary is not commensurate with their level of education.
'Education-wise clergy are among the best educated comparable with that of lawyers and doctors…pay-wise it is comparable to that of

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[23] Neumann R.N. May 1996. http://www.clergy_issues.html (accessed date 24 10 08)

someone far less educated.' This low salary that clergy receive is a major stressor for many clergy families.[24]

Loneliness and isolation

The role of the minister and the attitudes of people can create a situation of isolation for the minister. Many clergy have experienced awkward changes in group conversations when they arrive, and often sense that they are not welcome at certain social gatherings. Neumann states that; 'ministers need to be seen and accepted for themselves not just the roles they choose and play, to be able to kick back and relax, to say or hear the word (*%^#) once in a while'.

2.2.5 Stress and coping studies

What are the existing theories and approaches to stress and stress management ?

Wainwright & Calnan (2002:4), in their research in *Work Stress*, states that for many (both lay people and researchers alike), work stress indicates the 'natural' limit of human endurance and resilience to the pressures and demands placed on the worker, while for others the phenomenon represents nothing more than claims by disgruntled workers are constantly faced with excessive pressures and demands made upon them.

These viewpoints may be diametrically opposed, but there is a glimmer of truth in both of them. Work stress is 'real' for many people who face problems at work. It manifests itself in real physical and psychological symptoms.   It can have *real* consequences including behavioural change, or even early retirement on medical grounds.

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[24] Neumann R. N. 1996: 6. http://www.clergy_issues.html

Wainwright & Calnan 2002:124, examine possible responses to the work stress phenomenon. The job redesign agenda is examined and placed in its historical context before he turns to the dominant response to work stress which comprises various therapeutic interventions. The medicalisation thesis is examined along with criticisms of it and the reformulation of some of its key themes, particularly the way in which discourse gives rise to new forms of subjectivity. Qualitative data concerning lay attitudes to and experiences of formal therapeutic interventions for work stress are also examined, particularly focusing on the decision to consult, the mediating role of the doctor, and resistance to medicalisation. Wainwright & Calnan 2002:124 conclude that a consideration of the forms of subjectivity that the work stress phenomenon brings into being and the possibility of developing oppositional identities and practices.

2.2.6 Conclusion

The understanding of stress explores the perceptions of the phenomenon of stress which lead to the varied responses to this condition. These responses become manifested in real physical and psychological symptoms. This then has an impact on behavioural patterns. It is argued that responses reflect perceptions. In order to help the victims of stress, many studies have been conducted. Literature in this field abounds. They address the issue from different perspectives such as emotional, physical, psychological and mental. In addition there are many social, economic and political factors.

One needs to understand burnout and stress, especially from a physical and psychological point of view. These consequences now occupy our attention.

2.3   Exploring burnout

2.3.1 Introduction

This section dwells on the phenomenon of dealing with the exploration of burnout and stress. A condition that bedevils the clergy in a stress-ridden society. Burnout causes one to become run down due to the pressures and demands imposed upon him/her. The individual is spiritually, mentally and physically spent. Paine (1982:36) likens this situation to 'firewood in ashes or to a candle that has melted away – something that was present but is now gone'. This, he says, could be applied to emotional feelings, good health, creative thinking, idealism. It could be the result of both one's internal passion ('fire within'), or external pressures 'too hot to handle' (Paine 1982: 37). One is unable to function any further until this situation is dealt with and the person is restored.

2.3.2 Describing burnout

Burnout is described as old wine in a new bottle. Burnout is an age-old phenomenon that has been manifest in different periods, dispensations and cultures from the Stone Age to modern times. Each period presents its own challenges and circumstances that contribute to burnout. The demands of work pressures and the need for survival can be so overwhelming that one is fatigued, worn out and drained emotionally, mentally and physically.

Webster's dictionary defines burnout as 'to fail, to wear out, or become exhausted by making excessive demands on energy, strength, or resources'. [25].

Burnout has been defined as a metaphor: the smothering of a fire or the extinguishing of a candle. Where there used to be a vital spark and the

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[25] Webster's New World Dictionary (1972).

flame of life was burning bright, it is now dark and chilly (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998: 14).

There is general agreement that burnout is an internal psychological experience involving feelings, attitudes, motives, and expectations. There is a general consensus that burnout is a negative experience for the individual, in that it concerns problems, distress, discomfort and negative consequences (Paine 1982:32).

Burnout is often a symptom for some problems facing society such as the failure to achieve goals, the dissatisfaction of the worker, the search for personal fulfilment and meaning in life. These issues contribute toward a constant broadening of the concept of burnout (Paine 1982:34).

2.3.3 Overview: burnout in the workplace & in ministry

'Job stress' and 'burnout' have become two of the buzzwords which has always been used in the 1980s, says Paine (1982:11). Research suggests that dismissal of these topics is both short-sighted and potentially dangerous. The consequences of high levels of job stress, personal frustration, and inadequate coping skills, have major personal, organizational, and social costs - and these costs are probably increasing. Understanding and intervening in these syndromes is an important focus of this section.

2.3.4 Signs of burnout within the work of the minister

Signs of burnout may appear anywhere within any environment.

Personal signs of burnouts could not lead one to conclude that something is wrong only with the person. The dysfunction of the entire spiritual, moral and physical environment needs to be addressed also.

Paine (1982:43) says that some signs of burnout within the work environment include, first and foremost, a significant decrease in the quality of services provided to clients or parishioners. Friendly and formal parish staff encounters are increasingly replaced by stereotyped, formal, but 'quite proper,' staff interactions.

Other signs of staff burnout within the work environment include poor staff morale, as evidenced by workers and management expressing increased feelings of mutual disrespect and distrust that may lead to both sides insisting that they respect their rights, responsibilities, and relationships be legally codified. Parish staff members arriving late or failing to show up for important meetings and appointments. The minister spending more and more time away from the organisation and
otherwise reducing the amount of time spent in direct contact with line staff.
The modern church with its highly professional organisation akin to that of the corporate world is also likely to experience the challenges mentioned above. Both minister and administration staff may suffer
 stress and burnout under the weight of overwhelming demands to be proficient in running the church.

It is appropriate here to consider the personal factors that contribute to burnout.

2.3.5 Specific personal factors contributing to the experience of burnout

'A proper consideration of *personal factors* contributing to burnout will include such broad categories as genetic endowment and congenital factors; temperament; physical health status education and skills training, motivation and interests, behaviour patterns, especially those relating to interpersonal relationships' (Paine 1982:49).

Frequently encountered specific, personal cause of burnout is inadequate training and education needed to do the job. This may well be the situation of some pastors, especially of the Pentecostal denomination (I come from this tradition) who did not undergo adequate training that would equip them for the challenge of a most complex vocation. Hence they buckle under the pressure of ministry.

A related cause of burnout concerns individuals with highly developed, specific job skills, who also have serious deficits in more general ministerial skills, such as counselling, writing, speaking, and group problem-solving. This applies to the administration of a congregation which may be lacking in basic skills. The problems thus caused may eventually affect the minister to the point of stress and burnout.

Defining and describing burnout is difficult because it takes different forms for different people. One person may complain about being overworked and underpaid or grumble about his co-workers. Another may feel that God has shut the heavens and no longer has any interest in him. A faithful and loving husband may allow himself to have an affair with a hysterical counselee. Another may secretly turn to alcohol.

Burnout leads to a progressive loss of ambition, idealism, energy, calling and purpose. For the minister, untreated burnout can often mean the beginning of the end of a career. Burnout can be seen in the work of those in the helping services. Among the conditions which contribute to the incidence of burnout are: insufficient training for complete work with other humans, work overload with no clear work boundaries, too many hours spent doing work that is not appreciated, too much 'politics' and too little Christian charity, too much bureaucratic constraint with too little work flexibility, too great a gap between aspiration and accomplishment. Ministry has a high potential for all of these adverse conditions.

2.3.6 Conclusion

We conclude that defining and describing burnout is difficult because it takes different forms for different people, however, the prioritising of our work in a way that streamlines our time management is likely to lower and prevent the risk of burnout. Burnout does not happen to those who were never committed. From the above, one can learn to respond and regain ones enthusiasm and take on tasks more satisfyingly and efficiently. [26]

We have learned from Selye[27] some of the subtleties of burnout from pioneers of this discipline.

One is aware of the conditions which contribute to the incidents of burnout such as; insufficient training for complete work one is called to do, work overload and no clear work boundaries, low parish staff morale, too great a gap between aspiration and accomplishment. Burnout tends to lead to stress. How does burnout relate to stress? We discuss that below.

2.4 Exploring stress

2.4.1 Introduction

The following is an exploration of the different perceptions of stress and varied responses. Having looked at the many responses and symptoms of burnout and stress that bedevil people from across the whole spectrum of society, it becomes necessary to examine the physiological and psychological consequences of this condition.

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[26] Mentioned by: Owen in Excel Yourself Stress and Burnout
   http://www.excel-yourself.com/stress.htm
[27] Selym H. 1974. *Stress without Distress.* London: Hodder & Stoughton

2.4.2   How stress does the damage?

Stress has an effect on personal efficiency and ministry in a number of quite specific ways.

There is the detrimental effect that stress has on the individual's health. Many illnesses known to humanity is now recognised as being either directly caused or indirectly exacerbated by stress, although there are many other causative factors. Pressure and anxiety can always make angina, arthritis or asthma worse.

Much lost time in many companies is due to stress. Some illnesses are more closely linked to stress than others. Days lost through backache, indigestion and anxiety may be stress related. Stress plays a vital part in determining the amount of time needed off work by patients suffering from heart disease, pre-menstrual tension and high blood pressure. Migraine, insomnia, overeating, eczema are all problems known to be usually caused by stress (Coleman 1988:18).

We have succeeded in conquering most of the infectious diseases that caused such havoc in the nineteenth century, for example, smallpox, typhoid, and tuberculosis. Today in Africa, besides AIDS, stress is the big killer. The ultimate consequence of stress-induced illness is a stress-induced death.   There is evidence to show that the number of people dying from diseases caused by stress is also on the increase. Most people dying from diseases such as heart disease, strokes and cancer in their thirties, forties and fifties are stress induced and avoidable Coleman 1988:20)

According to figures taken directly from the British Registrar General's Occupational Mortality tables, company directors are seven times as likely as clerical workers to have a heart attack; five times as likely to

develop ulcers; seven times as likely to commit suicide and twenty times as likely to have a stroke (Coleman 1988:30).

Sickness and death are two of the most dramatic ways that stress can cost companies a lot of money. Factors such as unhappiness, frustration, boredom and too much responsibility are all common causes of stress that can lead to poor productivity and lost sales.

The important fact is that stressed parish workers are likely to be inefficient and incompetent. A stressed salesman will visit his next client with a gloomy look on his face and sag in his shoulders and won't get any orders.   The pressurised accountant will drink much and make appalling mistakes. Unhappy workers will leave and look for employment elsewhere.

The loss in terms of performance impaired by stress is immeasurable. Many errors in decision making and community caring and in the parish office can be blamed on stress.

2.4.3   The manifestations of stress: what it looks and feels like

Gibbons & Newton (1998: 14-16), share some of the ways in which stress at work can express itself in the way in which we think and behave. In this chapter we look at the manifestations of stress, that is, the way in which stress affects people including our physical status, our thoughts and our behaviour. Stress at work influences the way in which people work together, and it is therefore important to minimise stress in the workplace.

Let us look at the ways in which stress impacts people.

Stress affects four aspects of us as people.

1. Our physiology;
2. Our thoughts;
3. Our behaviour; and
4. Our health.

2.4.4 Physiological change

'The physiological effects of stress can be sub-divided into two types, *acute* and *chronic'* (Gibbons & Newton 1998:14). When we are afflicted with immediate stress which is short lived the body reacts with many physiological changes which help us cope. These *acute* responses are usually short-lived and can be very helpful.

The physiological changes give rise to the signs and symptoms we associate with feeling nervous or stressed, for example the 'butterflies in the stomach' we experience before an important examination, nausea, sweaty palms, a feeling that the heart is racing when stricken with fear (Gibbons & Newton 1998:14). Symptoms are:

- increased heart rate;
- increased rate of perspiration;
- blood is diverted from the stomach and stomach motility declines;
- blood is sent to the muscles and periphery; and
- pupils of the eyes widen.

Medical opinion estimates that between a half and three quarters of all illnesses and accidents are excess-stress related. There is little doubt that these consequences are often very harmful indeed. In view of the way that mind and body apparently influence each other, we can't separate physiological issues entirely from psychological ones.

Each of the body's reactions to stress demands is useful in and of itself. The so-called 'fight or flight' response happens at the autonomic nervous

level, that is, we don't will it consciously through the central nervous system. It happens automatically, in the same way in which the body handles such things as digestion, or raises the heart rate when we run for a bus, or adjusts our bodily thermostat when we move from a warm room to a cold room or vice versa. We don't have any say in the matter. The body recognises the need for a response, and produces it without our having to tell it to do so.

The problem is, however, that each of these things can damage the body if it's allowed to go on for too long. They are each intended by nature as an immediate, short-term reaction, designed to shut down again as soon as the emergency is past. If they don't shut down, they begin to have an adverse effect.

2.4.5 Physiological consequences of too much stress

Carmen Renee Berry (1999), a mental health professional argues that stress is not intrinsically bad. A certain amount of stress is advantageous to us because it challenges our physiological system and motivates us to live our lives effectively. [28]

Certain levels of stress seem psychologically beneficial to us. They add interest to life, put us on our toes, help us think quicker and work more intensively, and encourage us to feel useful and valued, with a definite purpose to our lives and definite objectives to attain.

Good stress is a challenge says Berry (1999). It enables us complete things that are normally difficult to do, that require effort, but can be done. As an example she cites getting up in the morning. Once one arises and has a challenge and is excited about it, the individual runs hard and plays hard. As a result the person can win or be close to winning. He or she is then able to relax at night and go and sleep.

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[28] Carmen Renee Berry in Youth Specialities (1999).

http://www.youthspecialities.com/freeresources/articles/getting_results/coping_with_stress.php

Good stress becomes bad stress, however, when it affects us negatively, whether physically or emotionally. For instance, stress becomes negative when a goal becomes unattainable, and one keeps making futile attempts to achieve it. Stress also becomes bad when challenged at an extremely high level for long periods of time.

When stress goes beyond optimum levels however, it drains our psychological energy, impairs our performance, and often leaves us feeling useless and undervalued, with diminishing purpose and helpless, unattainable objectives. Physiological and psychological energy are not distinct from each other. The more drained we feel physically by stress, the more drained we feel psychologically, and vice versa. But a few individuals give up psychologically as soon as they feel the first signs of physiological stress while at the other extreme a few keep going up to and even beyond the stage of physical collapse, driving themselves on by what we call will power alone. (Fontana 1989:5 -10).

2.4.6 Change in thought patterns

'Stress, particularly chronic stress, is associated with changes in thought processes' (Gibbons & Newton 1998:15). They argue that generally these changes can be viewed as a move towards thinking more negatively about ourselves and our situation. The result is:

- poor concentration;
- memory loss; and
- intrusive negative thoughts.

Poor concentration and memory loss are relatively mild symptoms of stress which may be acute as early warning signs that our stress levels are beginning to have an effect upon our life.

2.4.7 Change in behaviour

'Our behaviour changes when we are feeling stressed' (Gibbons & Newton 1998:18). These changes are widespread and can vary greatly in their extent for different people.   Some of the behaviour changes that are associated with stress are listed below:

- changes in diet;
- decreased repertoire of coping behaviours; and
- social withdrawal.

Both acute and chronic stress can have very profound effects on behaviour.   Many of these will be familiar to us and are widely acknowledged, for example changes in diet.   More subtle changes, which we often don't notice, include social withdrawal and a decreased repertoire of coping behaviours.

2.4.8 Changes in health

'A number of changes in health have been associated with acute and chronic stress levels' (Gibbons & Newton 1998:19).   Some of these are:

PHYSICAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL
Asthma	Low self-esteem
Coronary heart disease	Anxiety
Ulcers	Fatigue
Headaches	Insomnia

2.4.9 Conclusion

Stress has profound effects on the body's physiology, including producing changes in the body's immune system.

Low self-esteem and anxiety constitute evidence that stress is making a deep impact upon our daily functioning. If one is experiencing these kinds of symptoms, then it is likely that one is experiencing high levels of stress and should take action to move to a less stressed situation.

Gibbons and Newton maintain that stress has far-reaching effects on the human mind. This has been a phenomenon that has contributed to varying stress of mental anguish over the centuries.

After exploring burnout and stress the following chapter focuses on the effects of burnout and stress in the ministry.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EFFECTS OF BURNOUT AND STRESS IN THE MINISTRY

3.1   The effects of burnout in the Ministry

3.1.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on pastors and other Christian leaders as they are prone to burnout and stress. The ministry imposes great pressure and demand as pastors deal with the many spiritual, social and emotional issues that burden their congregants; sometimes these pressures can be overwhelming and beyond their capacity to cope and overcome.

It is the nature of the work that makes ministers prone to stress and burnout. Dealing with people with all their joys and sorrows, whims and fancies, peculiarities and idiosyncrasies, is bound to lead to states of burnout and stress. But this 'comes with the territory'.

3.1.2   Minister's and Burnout

'Burnout' is a phenomenon that is becoming a serious problem among doctors, social workers and other helping professions. Ministers, devout and dedicated though they may be, are not free of it. This appears to be a universal problem.[29]

According to research by Gallaher numerous pastors could no longer cope with the demands and pressures of ministry and eventually quit.[30] An article by Rowland Croucher reveals the same situation in Australia.

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[29] McNeill, J. (2006). www.assistnews.net (accessed date 25 06 2008)
[30] McNeill, J. (2006), cites Brian Gallaher in *Pastor's Stress and Burnout.* www.assistnews .net (accessed date 23 06 08).

He goes onto account for the prevalence of stress and burnout in ministry.[31]

The reasons may be as numerous and unique as there are pastors. However, recent research, says Croucher, (1982) has pinpointed the following problem areas: 'the disparity between (somewhat idealistic) expectations and hard reality; lack of clearly defined boundaries - tasks are never done; workaholism ('bed-at-the-church' syndrome); the Peter Principle - feeling of incompetence in leading an army of volunteers; conflict in being a leader and servant at the same time ('line-support contamination'); intangibility - how do I know I'm getting somewhere?; confusion of role identity with self image - pastors derive too much self-esteem from what they do; time management problems (yet pastors have more 'discretionary time' than any other professional group); paucity of 'perks'; multiplicity of roles; inability to produce 'win-win' conflict resolutions; difficulty in managing interruptions; the 'little adult' syndrome. Clergy are too serious, they have difficulty being spontaneous; preoccupation with 'playing it safe' to avoid enraging powerful parishioners; 'administration overload' - too much energy expended in areas of low reward; loneliness - the pastor is less likely to have a close friend than any other person in the community''.[32]

I don't want to give the impression that the ministry or Christian work is always bound to be devastating to those who are called into it. Burnout is experienced in varying degrees depending on the nature of involvement and the expectations of ministry. Some are slightly affected by it and other are completely demoralised by it.

[31] Croucher. *Stress and Burnout in Ministry.* 1982
   http://www.churchlink.com.au/churchlink/forum/r_croucher/stress_burnout.html.
[32] Croucher cites Dittes in: *Stress and Burnout in Ministry.* 1982.
   http://www.churchlink.com.au/churchlink/forum/r_croucher/stress_burnout.html.

3.1.3 The Nature of the Work Makes Ministers Loss-Prone

This section attempts to provide the reader with a better understanding of improving one's ability to anticipate and recognize loss-provoking situations.

Ministry is people orientated

Other people can be a major cause of burnout. Yet people is what ministry is all about. Whenever people work with people, there are bound to be intense interactions, misunderstandings, miscommunications, ulterior motives, and the like. But nowhere in the human services is this more likely to occur and be as damaging as in the ministry.   The reasons are twofold.

Firstly, when ministers begin their career they are often not as well trained in handling conflict situations, difficult personalities, and communication problems as are social workers, psychologists, counsellors and teachers. Training for these latter professions place a high priority on human relationships. Skills in these areas, are deliberately developed. Seminaries, tend to place more emphasis on theological study and preaching. By the time a young minister realizes he has problems relating to people, poor habits of communication and lack of people management skills may have become established and difficult to break. One way to alleviate this problem, of course, would be to place greater emphasis on relationship skills in the training of ministers. It is important for ministers to continue working on these skills after seminary.

Second, ministers relate mostly to people in a voluntary structure, Church congregations are made up of people who choose to be there, and who can just as easily choose not to be!

There are many dedicated and consistent church members who have their priorities straight and who can be counted on to be at their posts no matter what. There are still many others who can be sources of frustration, conflict, and bitter disagreement.

Another reason the voluntary structure of church work can lead to problems for ministers is that the people they must work with in the church are not necessarily the ones they would have chosen if they were actually hiring co-workers. As leaders of a mostly volunteer organization, they must relate to many with whom they would not normally have any affinity.   This can cause personality conflicts.

The voluntary nature of church life puts the minister under strain.   This is inevitable and must be accepted; a minister has to build immunity to it. Putting together committees, motivating workers, resolving conflicts, mobilizing resources, and carrying out the many other tasks which characterise ministry can cause a minister to wilt under the pressure.

God's church is a unique institution in which everyone has equal status and value. It is a body with many parts. Getting the parts of this body to work well together is challenging and immensely satisfying, but also difficult. The enormity and complexity of organizing a volunteer institution should make us depend more than ever on divine resource of the Holy Spirit.

As an office worker, I gathered my papers, pick up my briefcase, and head home.   I may have some notes I want to go over, but I am still able to feel I've successfully finished my day's work.

When is a minister ever done for the day?   No pastor can ever visit enough, pray enough, study enough, prepare sermons enough, or be involved enough in social issues. He may not be in an office eight hours a day, but he is always 'on call'- and he never has weekends off! It is easy, therefore, for the minister to continually feel that his work is never

finished. He can barely cope with the immediate demands on his time, let alone catch up with the backlog. It is hard for him to feel a sense of 'closure' or completeness when he finally heads home for an evening.

Oates (1976: 4) mentions that for centuries the pastor, priest or rabbi has been the primary person responsible for dealing with the needs of people. This is the traditional expectation. 'Whether or not the pastor has accepted these responsibilities, he has carried them out with skill and wisdom, or even appreciated the weight of the expectation, placed upon him or her, nevertheless the pastor is the one to whom people still look for the care of the bereaved, the alienated, and the separated'.

Sanford (1982) further supports the view of Oates.
People in the helping professions carry a very heavy burden. The clergy have limited time and energy. Their pains, grief's and troubles is inexhaustible. The clergy is expected to be kind, for everyone is carrying a heavy burden. Sanford mentions, when Mother Teresa was asked, how she could bear the truth that after many decades of ministering to those dying on the streets of Calcutta she had touched only one percent of them, she replied, 'I, was not called to be successful; I was only called to be faithful.'   The more significant our ministry, the greater the possibility that we may be faced with ministry burnout. To avoid this problem we need to know ourselves and our motives.   Sanford, (1982) gives us tools that enable us to be faithful and yet avoid the disaster of hopelessness and burnout. He points out perennial ways to wholeness and fulfillment.   How can we survive and continue to minister to the needy and broken people. We can meet frustration, anxiety, guilt and hopelessness in the urban and suburban congregations. Burnout is a word we use when a person is exhausted with his profession. Burnout has become enough of a problem to attract the attention of scientists who identify certain typical symptoms of the condition: difficulty in sleeping, complaints of weight loss, lack of interest in food, headaches, gastro-intestinal disturbances, tiredness that is not repaired by sleep or rest and temporarily alleviated by vacations.

It may also be characterized by outburst of anger or resentment. Burnout can occur in many works of life, doctors, lawyers', teachers or housewives.[33]

This is for ordained minister's and lay persons as well.

The word burnout is not new. It is mentioned it Webster's New International Dictionary. An e.g. of it is; 'the burning out of the interior or contents of something'.[34]

The word 'burnout' drawn from the imagery of fire, and fire is a symbol of energy. In its broad scope, the problem of burnout is a problem of energy. The energy can be used up but more psychic energy can be generated.

Many kinds of work can lead to burnout. But that of the clergy is different. It faces certain special circumstances.

Identified by Sanford are some special circumstances for e.g.;

1. The work of the minister is never finished.

People in many professions have a sense of completion of their task, eg. the carpenter finishes the table he is making, the surgeon is satisfied with the patient that recovers. Not so with the clergy. His work is never finished. He faces a continuous onslaught of services, weddings, funerals and administrative tasks. He likens the ministers job to that of Sisyphus in Greek mythology, whose fate it was to push a great stone up a mountain only to have it roll down again just before it reaches the top.

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[33] Sanford, J.A. 1982. cited in : Spirituality and Burnout: An Incremental Validity Study. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 2004, Vol. 32, No. 2, 115 – 125.
[34] Webster's New International Dictionary

This feeling that a job is endless, that you never quit reaching the top of the mountain no matter how hard you try, can lead to exhaustion.

2. The minister can not tell if his work is having any results.

It can be frustrating never to have the satisfaction of seeing a work completed. It can be even more frustrating not to be sure if ones efforts are having any results at all. This is because their work is primarily devoted to pastoral care and spiritual nourishment of people. One exception is the building program. This may be the reason why building projects are so popular among clergy. I identify with this, as it gives a sense of satisfaction, fulfillment, completion and accomplishment.

3. The work of the clergy is repetitive

The work of the clergy continually repeats itself. Easter, Christmas and New Year sermons must be prepared over and over, child consecrations or dedications come over and over. One sick person recovers or dies only to be followed immediately by another. It is an endless repetitive cycle.

4. Dealing constantly with peoples expectations

Perhaps in no other profession, except may be that of the politician , is a person facing so many expectations from so many people, and those expectations vary enormously. It is difficult for the pastor. Some expect the clergy to be a counsellor,   great teacher, a faithful pastor, an inspirational speaker, a marriage officer, a financial advisor, do hospital visits, attend community functions. The clergy pays a price in energy to meet these expectations. It takes energy to contend with criticism or hostility of people, just as it takes energy to please them by doing what they want the clergy to do.

5. The clergy and spouse must work with the same people year in and year out.

Taking on a parish is like getting married: once you get into it, you cannot get out of it easily. At times it seems like that difficult people don't leave the parish, but helpful people do.

6. Because the pastor works with people in need, there is a great drain of energy.

The draining of energy is subtle. One hardly uses physical energy. But mental and spiritual energy becomes depleted.

However, there is joy and satisfaction in such work when we see the person in need become better and stronger.

7. The clergy may become exhausted by failure.

For what ever reason the minister may seem like he failed, this will become a major source of burnout.

There is also the positive side, of the clergy, the support one gets, the satisfaction of helping people, the spiritual help one gets from others and many other benefits. It is also important to recognize the positive side of the minister's life.

Oates (1976: 3) says that, considering the crucial role that minister's play in the helping profession, innovative approaches is essential. 'Time is ripe for a flowering of creative methods and insights in pastoral care and counselling'.

The clergy is the innocent victim of negative factors beyond his control. They are also secret contributors to the problem because of their hidden egocentric attitudes.

Certain levels of stress are common today. But it is essential that the levels of stress be managed adequately and in time to avoid health problems that it can cause. While symptoms of stress may vary from person to person, continued stress can cause symptoms such as hypertension, anxiety, compulsive eating disorders, insomnia and a weakening of the immune system. Even higher levels can result in physical ailments like stomach ulcers, hair loss, high cholesterol, hormonal imbalances and even total burnout.

The first thing that one needs to appreciate is that there is some sort of stress management required. Denial of medium stress can lead to a situation where stress may hit all of a sudden. Once there is an acceptance of the fact that stress needs to be managed, there are various techniques to cope with stress. Mild to medium stress does not require you to visit a doctor since there are many ways to deal with it.

3.1.4 Conclusion

Since burnout is an emotional exhaustion and most people in the helping profession are vulnerable to this. The essence of the problem is the clash between expectations and reality. Clergies are elevated by others and personally. Many of these expectations can not be met therefore ministers must be realistic in setting achievable goals and targets that will bring about accomplishment and a sense of satisfaction instead of fatigue, feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

3.2. The effects of stress in the Ministry
3.2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the Biblical approach to stress in different areas of human relationships. Pastors find themselves relating to many people in different ways which lead to stress. Some of these are marriage, friendships, congregants' issues, denominational demands, etc.

A sense of being 'through for the day' is very important both psychologically and physiologically.   One of the major causes of stress is the feeling of incompleteness and the anxiety regarding tasks still needing attention.   This keeps the various systems in the body from switching off and returning to a relaxed and a restful state.

To overcome the stress that results from a continual state of alertness, a clear message must be sent to the body at the end of every day that it can relax and begin the process of rest and recovery.   But how do pastors do this? How do they ascertain that a reasonable day's work has been done?

Since the work of pastoring contain no clear inherent boundaries, it is usually necessary to create boundaries and to courageously apply them. This is most effectively accomplished by preparing lists of daily goals and 'checking off' the tasks as they are accomplished. It is important the list be realistic. The minister must write down what can actually be accomplished and allowing plenty of time for interruptions, emergencies, and unexpected choices.

Lazarus, [35] a psychologist who began rising to prominence in the 1960'addressed the issue of the effects of long-term stress. Its effects can also affect ones health, having either a direct physiological damage to ones body or harmful behavioural effects.

Others may have so much work to do that they do not exercise or eat properly. They may cut down on sleep, or may worry so much that they sleep badly. They may get so carried away with work and meeting daily pressures that they do not take time to see the doctor or dentist when they need to. All of these are likely to harm one's health.

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[35] Lazarus R.S. mentions this in : *Stress and Your Health.*
  http://www.mindtools.com/stress/Understand.Stresss/StressHealth.htm. (accessed date 230608)

The direct physiological effects of excessive stress are complex. The link between the effects of stress and heart disease is well-established. If stress is intense, and stress hormones are not "used up" by physical activity, then raised heart rate and high blood pressure can put tension on arteries and cause damage to them. As the body heals this damage, artery walls scar and thicken, which can reduce the supply of blood and oxygen to the heart. No one is exempt from this be it the clergy or the spouses.

Lazarus[36] goes further to say that this is when a fight-or flight response can become lethal: Stress hormones accelerate the heart to increase the blood supply to muscles; however, blood vessels in the heart may have become so narrow that not enough blood reaches the heart to meet these demands. This can cause a heart attack.

The other effects of stress has also been found to damage the immune system, which explains why one catches more colds when one is stressed. It may intensify symptoms such as rheumatoid arthritis. It also seems to affect headaches and irritable bowel syndrome.

Regular exercise can reduce the physiological reaction to stress. It also strengthens the heart and increases the blood supply to itm directly affecting one's vulnerability to heart disease.

The clergy is not exempt from these effects of burnout, stress or even depression.

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[36] Lazarus R.S. mentions this in : *Stress and Your Health*
http:/www.mindtoosl,com/stress/UnderstandStress/StressHealth.htm.

3.2.2 The Pastor challenged

Dobson J. in *Focus on the Family* states that the; 'ministry is a high calling but it is not for the faint hearted. Inherent in this line of work can be long hours, expectations of others, self- sacrifice and incredible times of joy'.[37]

Clergy men and women are tasked with the responsibility of taking Christ's message of love and forgiveness to all. This is very admirable, commendable and scriptural. The task of clergy men and woman is filled with burnout which will lead to stress if they do not take regular time for themselves apart from the ministry. The Biblical e.g. Is seen when Jesus himself took regular time apart with the Father (John 14:).

It is important for clergy men and women to seek God earnestly in prayer daily so as to be renewed, refreshed and re-energised by our Lord.[38]

Psychologists have made the point that the course of one's life has often been shaped by the manner in which one copes with stress (Harbaugh 1985:99). As mentioned in an earlier section, personal stress can cause an identity crisis in ministry. It challenges one to change if necessary.

The challenge is neither necessarily to eradicate all stress nor find a technique for perfect management of stress. Rather the pastor is challenged to learn something from the experience. As ministers we are compelled to see ourselves and stress in the context of Biblical anthropology. The Bible views the human being holistically, not as divided into separate, unconnected parts such as spirit, soul, body. It always speaks of the body in relationship to someone or something. The body is expressive of the whole person.

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[37] Dobson, J. *Focus on the Family.* http://www.focuson the family. com/
[38] info@ clergycare.co.za (accessed date 27 10 08)

Thus we learn that we cannot reduce stress to merely a physical symptom, but a condition that affects the whole person.

Pastors must guard against the tendency to get out of balance. This imbalance, according to Harbaugh, is to neglect 'one or more of the gifts of our body, mind, feeling or relationships' (1985:59). Stress challenges pastors to be whole.

3.2.3 A Biblical approach to dealing with stress

Divine help

The Biblical approach to suffering requires a pastoral theology which encourages us to realize that to deal with suffering is matter of legitimate pastoral concern. Biblical insights are crucial in the manner in which a minister deals with the problems of stress.

The Bible is replete with words of encouragement speaking into the lives of people who are going through phases of distress, disappointment and disillusionment. Isaiah 63:9 reads*: 'In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them'.* In this context God is speaking to a nation emerging out of the Babylonian exile and offering hope and a prosperous future. In much a similar way, Jesus offers hope to his disciples. *'My peace I give to you……'* (Jn 14:27); In this world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world' (Jn. 16:33).

In the above texts, divine help in stressful times is emphasised. Hope in God is a vital exhortation in this regard. The individual faith in God is also considered essential. One is reminded of the psalmist who has constant recourse to God in his hour of stress. Consider Psalm 42:5*: 'Why am I discouraged? Why so sad? I will put my hope in God'.*

The God of the Bible is thus seen as the answer to the many problems of pain, suffering and stress. The encounter between God and humans must be seen from the 'perspective of the comforting effect of God's grace, presence and identification with human need and suffering' (Louw 2003:98, 99). In this way God's comfort generates hope and faith.

Pastors themselves need pastoral care and counselling. The principles used to are for the congregants apply also to pastors who undergo stress and burnout. Their stories also need listening to. As Louw, in translating Veltkamp (1988:199) says, 'It is about the quest for a way to reach understanding and to change, to make progress in one's story in the light of the story of salvation. It is about paraclese: stimulating, encouraging and comforting; not merely comforting, but also challenging' (Louw 2003:99).

Wholeness and Spiritual Health

Spiritual Health

Spiritual health and healing pertains to the healing of the body the mind and spirit. This may be obtained by means of prayer, fasting and faith and trust in God for the miraculous, supernatural intervention of God. A person who is estranged from God in his or her prayer life would be in need of spiritual health restoration.[39] Thus the relationship between God and the person is all powerful and healing and so offers health in a spiritual form. This is apart from medical healing. Jesus said *"All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive".*(Matthew 21:22).
 This is particularly noticed in the ministry of Jesus. e. g. *…Jesus went about all the cities …healing every sickness and every disease among the people* (Matthew 9:35).

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[39] Hunter R.J. *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling* . Nashville: Abindgon Press. 1990:496

Faith Healing

The healing is perceived to be through the faith of the healer or of the person in need of the healing. Jesus often said, *"Your faith has made you whole"* (Mark 11:52). But this is ultimately attributed to work of God through a specially gifted minister or priest.

3.2.4 Relational perspectives

Marriage

The pressures of the ministry can exact a heavy toll on the pastor's family relationships. Married pastors invariably miss two evening meals a week owing to church obligations.[40] Even so, say the writers, pastors tend to rush off to meetings after a hurried meal. These situations can lead to often unbearable tensions between the spouses and can exacerbate the stress problem. This can continue between pastors and their children who suffer from the 'absent' father syndrome. Ironically, the greatest encouragement in life can come from one's mate. The tolerant and understanding mate listens, accepts, and can help to counteract the sense of failure and poor self-image. God saw the need for companionship (Gen. 2:18) and so created the woman. They would see each other as a source of comfort and encouragement during times of grief and sorrow. Hence the need for unconditional love in marriage. Apart from specific relationships such as husband and wife, there are general ones outside the home such as friends.

Friendships

A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. (Prov. 17:17)

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[40] Louw cites (LaRue, Jr. and John: Sept/Oct 1998: Vol 44, Issue 5).

Mental health is important to all people. In order to maintain one's mental health, it is necessary to have a sense of being valued by others. Hence the Biblical injunction to 'love one another.' Friends are able to affirm one another. To cite the old proverb: 'A friend in need is a friend indeed'.

3.2.5 The effect of burnout and stress on clergy and spouses

Oswald (1984) of the Alban Institute of Washington D.C. says that 'stress and burnout among clergy wives is as high as for pastors'.[41] This implies that clergy spouses are experiencing enormous burnout, which leads to stress and burnout. This implies that the expectations of clergy spouses is inevitably the cause of most of the burnout and stress that they have to endure. Unlike congregants clergy spouses have no one providing pastoral care for them. The lack of pastoral care means that these individuals seldom have someone to turn to for support and assistance in their time of need.

Bouma refers to these 'saints of God' as 'the walking wounded'.[42] Clergy spouses lose their individuality in that they have to conduct themselves in a manner that will have to be in keeping with the expectations that others have of them. Hence they cannot be themselves.

Unfair expectations are placed on clergy spouses by the congregants eg. Heading committees without requesting if the clergy spouse would accept. This places the clergy spouses in an awkward position – if she refuses, she is viewed as 'lazy'. It is instances like these that cause burnout and stress for clergy spouses. Clergy marriages, due to the

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[41] John Mark Ministries cites Oswald in: *What Pastor's Wives wish their Husbands and Churches Knew About them.* (1984).
[42] John Mark Ministries, http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/8202.htm.(GRID world visions leadership).

stress placed on it go through major strain so much so that 'divorce in the parsonage' is becoming the subject of many books and articles.

What causes this strain on clergy marriages. One has to look at the routine that the ministers have to go through that takes them away from their families. The minister is often expected to be on call 24 hours day which leaves very little time to spend with his family.

The telephone, a marvel of technology, that breaks the distance of communication is one of 'the greatest destroyers of pastors family life'. Very often congregants do not respect the privacy of the ministers family time. Phone calls are received at odd times eg, family times, prayer times late hours of the night and early hours of the morning.

Despite the negativism highlighted above studies in Australia reveal that 90% of clergy spouses supported their husbands calling and that most were considerably involved in the life of their churches.[43]

The role of clergy spouses is influential in the church. They touch members lives. Their relationship to the pastor makes them respected and trusted. This situation is demanding and often stressful for them.

Lee (2007) mentions that studies on clergy stress have addressed demands made by the ministry environment on the ministers personal and family life, whilst these studies have focused on family life the research was conducted using responses from male pastors. Little research has been conducted on pastor's wives. The study showed that the most salient variable was their satisfaction with available social support, which was true of pastors and their wives.

Oden[44] lists 3 major difficulties that clergy spouses face;

    Unrealistic expectations

    Loneliness

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[43] John Mark Ministries cites Bouma in: *Ministers Wives the Walking Wounded.* (1980).

[44] Mentioned by Oden in: *Stress and Purpose: Clergy Spouses Today* (1988).

Lack of a sense of urgent purpose

Unrealistic expectations

Unrealistic expectations of clergy spouses increase when the spouse is employed – it is further compounded by unrealistic self-expectations. Clergy spouses in employment experience great demands on their time and energy and are expected to do as much at church before they became employed. It is this high expectations placed on clergy spouses that cause them to end up being 'super-stressed'. Clergy spouses who try to limit their activities at church frequently feel that the congregation does not understand their reasons.

There is an interrelationship between the minister's family and the church family. (Guilford, 1985) cited by Edwin Friedman[45], observes that the clergy is involved in 'a triangle of families' i.e. own family, congregation and family units within the congregation. Stressors in one of these families can reproduce itself in other families of the triangle mentioned above. The awareness that stressors within the church affect the clergy family, clergy spouses expect to be able to balance themselves in the church family problems.   The realisation that situations in the clergy family can spill over into the church. When such a spillage occurs, it creates pressure and a sense of guilt. This places a severe strain on clergy spouses as they have no support from the congregants in their time of vulnerability.

Loneliness

Clergy spouses experience extreme loneliness as revealed by the spouse letters received by Oden (1988).   This is in contrast to the findings of Mace[46] cited by Oden, which revealed that clergy spouses

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[45] *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church Synagogue* – Stress and Purpose: Clergy Spouses Today (see Oden 1988).
[46] Oden cites Mace in 'Stress and Purpose: Clergy Spouses Today' (1988).

indicated that a lack of privacy was a major concern. Oden explains this contradiction as follows; career orientated families spend very little time at home, therefore their privacy cannot be invaded. Also congregants don't have time to invade privacy because they too are job orientated. The modern lifestyle is a rat race and though many would like close relationships they are often too tired to take the initiative.

Loneliness for clergy spouses arise as a result of images and assumptions of them. Not only in the church but also the secular world. It is often that clergy spouses do not have close friends from amongst the congregants which leads to their loneliness. In the midst of people and activity clergy spouses are still lonely because of a sense of isolation. This loneliness of clergy spouses reflects a growing problem in society as a whole.

Lack of a sense of urgent purpose

Niswander[47] states 'their husbands ministries are no longer the most important thing their lives'. This freed clergy spouses to be involved in church from a 'faith-centered' instead of 'spouse-centered' stance. Clergy spouses are generally committed to the church and have high expectation of it as the body of Christ. 'Clergy spouses often experience a disturbing gap between what they envision for the community of faith and the reality they actually encounter'. The level of commitment the clergy spouses see in the church troubles them partly because of their loyalty to and empathy for their spouses. The demands of the ministry also requires sacrifices at the expense of the family. Sacrifices for clergy spouses are meaningful when they are involved in a church with a sense of purpose but when he church seems a drift the sacrifices are pointless.

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[47] Oden cites Niswander in the article 'Stress and Purpose: Clergy Spouses Today' (1988)

Nouwen[48] has said that participating in the church is the most important discipline in developing one's spiritual life. Yet for clergy spouses, the very church they love and which nurtures them is also that which can cause pain and stress. Unsure feeling toward the church are distressing. By acknowledging them and understanding them better, clergy spouses can reduce their sense of isolation and guilt and prevent these feelings from festering into a basically destructive relationship.

3.2.6 Conclusion

The growth of one minister fosters the experience of the other. Ministers should develop a support group of other ministers and Christian workers as a means of sharing the encouragement and insight that will help them grow in self-understanding. Every pastor needs a pastor. Men and women of God have generally the same basic emotional needs as other men and women.

Galatians 6:2 can have a special meaning for those called into the Lord's work: 'Bear ye one anothers burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.' and from Proverbs,

Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend (Prov. 27:17)

Clergy spouses are not immune from the debilitating effects of burnout and stress. Clergy spouses experience the same levels of burnout and stress as ministers, if not higher. It is imperative not to ignore clergy spouses when considering the effects of burnout and stress in the ministry.

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[48] Nowen's point is mentioned by Oden in 'Stress and Purpose: Clergy Spouses Today' (1988).

CHAPTER FOUR

DEALING WITH AND MANAGING BURNOUT AND STRESS

4.1 Dealing with and managing burnout

4.1.1 Introduction

Burnout is a condition that causes one to become run down due to the pressures and demands imposed upon him/her. The individual is spiritually, mentally and physically spent. Paine (1982:36) likens this situation to 'firewood in ashes or to a candle that has melted away – something that was present but is now gone'. This, he says, could be applied to emotional feelings, good health, creative thinking, or idealism. It could be the result of both one's internal passion ('fire within'), or external pressures 'too hot to handle' (Paine 1982:37). One is unable to function any further until this situation is dealt with and the person is restored.

Wright in his article on burnout mentions, 'Burnout means to deplete oneself, to wear oneself out by striving to reach unrealistic expectations imposed by self, values of the society or your church' (Wright 2008:).

This section addresses dealing with and managing burnout and stress in the ministry. It is understood to involve physical, emotional, spiratal, intellectual and interpersonal exhaustion. Much time is given to the causes and effects of burnout in the lives of individuals. Signs of burnout are evident in many areas of one's life including family and work. It is often characterised by low morale.

We draw from the wisdom of secular writing like that of Richard on *Stress Management,* as we can look at how one can manage all of the stresses that one faces in one's ministry.

There are three major approaches that can be used to manage stress:

- **Action-oriented:** In this approach one needs to confront the problem causing the stress, changing the environment or the situation. One must have some power in the situation. Then this approach is the most satisfying and rewarding way of managing stress.
- **Emotionally-oriented:** In this approach one does not have the power to change the situation, but one can manage stress by changing one's interpretation of the situation and the way one feels about it; and
- **Acceptance-oriented:** Where something has happened over which one has no power and no emotional control, and where the focus in on surviving the stress.

These approaches are helpful in the managing of burnout of stress. They could be rewarding and satisfying.

4.1.2 Contributing factors

'Specific *personal factors* contributing to burnout will include such broad categories as genetic endowment and congenital factors; temperament; physical health status education and skills training, motivation and interests, behaviour patterns, especially those relating to interpersonal relationships' (Paine 1982:49).

Frequently encountered specific, personal cause of burnout is inadequate training and education needed to do the job. This may well be the situation of many pastors, especially of the Pentecostal

denomination from which the writer comes, who did not undergo adequate training that would equip them for the challenge of a most complex vocation. Hence they buckle under the pressure of ministry.

A related cause of burnout concerns individuals with highly developed, specific job skills, which also have serious deficits in more general job skills, such as writing, speaking, and group problem-solving. This applies to the administration of a congregation in which he or she may be lacking in basic skills. The problems thus caused may eventually affect the minister to the point of stress and burnout.

Burnout can lead to a number of debilitating consequences for the individual. This is an emotional low and easily undermines morale.

Managing time

Throop comments that an unplanned, overly responsive schedule often leads to unmanaged stress, health problems, and burnout'(2005:64). They say that the key to effective ministry is time management. For many people, learning to manage their time better would solve most, if not all, of their stress problems. This takes a bit of discipline and organisation. One way of 'saving' time is making the best use of it as it comes along. Time cannot be stored like money. Respecting time means using it responsibly.

Resting, relaxing and enjoying leisure activities are not wasting time, but making positive use of it. Feeling restless, bored or frustrated are not good uses of time. You respect your time by managing and planning, by being able to take advantage of opportunities when they arise.

Respect for other people's time is important. Keeping someone waiting, never being on time for appointments, handing in work to be done at the last minute all show that one has no consideration or respect for the other person.   One may see it as a sign of busyness, importance and power, but others are more likely to interpret it as being inefficient, badly organised or plain rude.

Job demands

If a job description does not exist, write a list of what you would expect someone with your job title to do.

Firstly divide your tasks and activities into three categories:

1. Things one must do
2. Things one should do
3. Things one want to do

There are tasks one cannot ignore, delegate or bungle.

Priorities

Setting priorities is a skill, and one well worth learning. From the list of tasks - what must be done, what should be done and what you would like to be done.   Sort out major tasks from the minor ones, urgent and non-urgent, and long-term goals from short-term goals.

Learn to say 'no'

Say you cannot stop for a chat now - and mean it. Suggest a time when you could meet to talk about the issue. If it is important they will come back; if trivial, they will not bother. Where possible set time limits.   'I can see you for ten minutes'. Going to someone else's is quicker than that person coming to you as you can terminate the meeting more easily.

Delegation of tasks

Delegation is basic to time management - sometimes one simply cannot do everything by oneself. Yet it is something many people find difficult to learn.

We say to ourselves:

a) It's easier to do it myself
b) It's faster to do it myself
c) If you want a good job, do it yourself.
d) I haven't got time to show someone else.
e) They never do it the way I expect it.
f) At the end of the day I'm responsible.

Delegation means giving someone a task to do, making sure it is something he or she can do, making that person responsible for it. Responsibility and accountability is still that of the one delegating the task. But the stress levels can be considerably reduced. However, stress can not, in my view, be altogether eliminated, but one must be able to detect the signs of burnout when they appear. Neils, the president of Assessment.com mentions thirteen signs of burnout which shall be dwelt on below.

4.1.3 The thirteen signs of burnout and how to avoid burnout

Neils, president & Founder of Assessment, com, the leading online career assessment company, focused on helping millions of employees and employers work together for their mutual benefit. [49]

Neil[50] uses the following analogy to illustrate the reason for burnout.

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[49] Fin\avoidingburnoutasphtm,htm (251008).

I picked up a fork at breakfast and explained that as long as I used it for eating, the fork would last indefinitely. However, if I began to use it to drive nails or dig trenches, it would soon break. The key was to use it for what it was designed to do.

He went on to say, that people were like the fork. When they do what they are not designed to do, they eventually break.

4.1.4 Early warning signs of burnout.

1.   Chronic fatigue – exhaustion, tiredness, a sense of being physically run down
2.   a. Anger at those making demands.
       b. Self-criticism for putting up with the demands.
3.   Cynicism, negativity, and irritability.
4.   Sense of being besieged
5.   Exploding easily at seemingly inconsequential things.
6.   Frequent headaches and gastrointestinal disturbance
7.   Weigh loss or gain
8.   Sleeplessness
9.   Shortness of breath
10.   Suspiciousness
11.   Feelings of helplessness
12.   Increased degree of risk taking

4.1.5 Conclusion

This section dealt at length with the problem of burnout. It is understood to involve physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and interpersonal exhaustion. Much time is given to the causes and effects of burnout in the lives of individuals. Signs of burnout are evident in many areas of

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[50] Neils, H. *13 Signs of Burnout and How to Help You Avoid it.* www.Assessment.com
    (accessed date 251008)

one's life including family and work. It is often characterised by low morale.

I now focus on dealing with and managing stress.

4.2   Dealing with and managing stress
4.2.1 Introduction

This section looks at what one can learn from scholarly publications on 'how to interactively manage people without causing negative stress'.

According to Powell & Enright in *Anxiety and Stress Management* most stress is a normal part of daily life, and can be coped with adequately by the individual. Prolonged or more serious stress however, may require professional help.

The problem of stress has become more widely recognized in our society.

Everybody, observe Powell & Enright (1993:1), experiences stress in their lives, from the rural farmer, to the suburban mother, to the business executive. Throughout history people have experienced stress.

There are a variety of ways our language is able to express it: one might say, 'I feel under strain/under pressure/tense or agitated'.

The stress of everyday life expresses itself in a variety of ways: an angry retort to an harmless question, a throbbing headache after a hectic day at work, the driver's impatient finger-drumming on the steering wheel in peak-hour traffic.   These daily stresses are normal.   However, with prolonged and more serious stress people often begin to develop

troublesome symptoms, which they worry about.   At this point they might look for outside help; from local doctors to clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and such professionals.

4.2.2   The magnitude of the problem

Although stress has characterised human society throughout the ages, it seems evident that the problems linked with stress have increased phenomenally during the 20th century (Powell & Enright 1993:2).   We might add that this position continues in the 21st century. Let us pause to consider a few statistics, which will put the problem of stress in context.

1. An estimated 80 per cent of all modern diseases have their beginnings in stress.
2. In Britain 250 000 people die annually due to coronary heart disease. The death rate doubled for men aged 34-44 between 1953-1973.
3. In the USA there has been a 500 per cent increase in coronary heart disease over the last fifty years.
4. In the USA 8 million people have stomach ulcers. 12 million people are estimated to have alcohol problems.
5. Americans take 5 billion doses of tranquillizers and 16 000 tons of aspirin each year (Powell & Enright 1993:3).

How may one explain the increase in these stress-related conditions? A commonly held view is that the 'pace of life' has accelerated. Sociologists might identify factors such as the decline of traditional structures such as community networks and extended families. Commonly held values, beliefs have declined. Others are changing work practices, poor diet, lack of exercise. However, they have to be faced.

Confronting and solving problems is a painful process which most of us attempt to avoid. The very avoidance results in great pain and an inability to grow both mentally and spiritually. The effective management of stress depends on the proper grasp of the environment in which individuals work.

4.2.3 The environment

The word 'environment' embraces many aspects of life. Humans are invariably products of their environment be it social, spiritual, psychological or work. This must be understood in order to manage people interactively.

Life experiences

A considerable body of work, originating from the research of Holmes and Rahe (1967),[51] in Powell & Enright (1990:4), suggests that certain life events that cause change and increase an individual's susceptibility to stress-related illness.   These life events involve change in health, family relationships, economic conditions, education, religion and social affairs.   They range from major life crises, such as death of a spouse, to relatively minor events, like going on holiday or receiving a parking ticket.

Social environment

Many researchers such as Cassel (1976), Gangster and Victor (1988) [52]cited by Powell and Enright (1990:7), have contended that people who are part of an extensive social network are less negatively affected by stressful life events and are less likely to experience stress related health problems (see Powell & Enright 1990:7). Naturally existing support

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[51] Powell and Enright cite Holmes and Rahe in *Anxiety and Stress Management* (1990).

[52] Cited by Powell and Enright (1990:7), in *Anxiety and Stress Management* (1990).

systems, such as extended families, work groups, and communities, facilitate better coping, and recovery.

Social support or personal contact available to an individual from other individuals or groups. This contact, according to Powell & Enright (1993:7), produces a number of obvious benefits:

1. The individual is provided with a means of expressing his or her feelings.
2. Helping a person establish a sense of meaning.
3. Social contacts can also provide useful information and practical help.

Studies have suggested that people who live alone and who are not involved with other people are more vulnerable to a variety of stress related illnesses. Lynch (1977),[53] avers that the socially isolated die prematurely. He compared mortality figures indicating that married people experience a lower mortality rate (from all diseases) than unmarried people. Research studies have shown that members of certain religious groups have lower incidence of stress-related health problems, attributed to their tightly-knit contacts. In one study, Brown and Harris (1978:19)[54] showed that women who had one important confiding relationship with a husband, lover, or friend, were 90 per cent less inclined to become depressed than women who have no such relationship to rely on.

These examples prove the importance of a sound social interactive environment as this provides a support system which benefits individuals who are prone to stress.

4.2.4 Natural environment

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[53] Cited by Powell and Enright in *Anxiety and Stress Management* (1993).
[54] in Powell & Enright in *Anxiety and Stress Management* (1993).

Numerous factors within the natural or physical environment have been shown to increase stress levels. Characteristics of certain environments have the effect of arousing the sympathetic nervous system and bringing the stress response into play.

Other factors, according to Powell & Enright (1993:11) we may classify under natural environment, might include the type of chemicals we take into our body. This can include the type of chemicals in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat. A diet high in cholesterol has been positively related to the increased risk of a number of physical illnesses. Lack of physical exercise has been linked with a number of physical disorders, and an increase in physical exercise with positive mental and physical health gains.

The question is what can be done to help stress victims cope and overcome their problem. Powell & Enright (1993:115) provide some helpful hints as follows:

4.2.5 Towards positive change

Learning to understand and manage symptoms of stress and anxiety helps the client to decrease the stress, they undergo.   In order to alleviate symptoms, it is important to identify and change some of the external stresses that have caused the problems in the first place. These stresses may be exaggerated by the way the client communicates with others; the way the client organizes life at home and at work.   This entails the setting of goals, recreation and priorities (Powell & Enright 1993:16).

4.2.6 The Importance of Goals

Life may be construed as a series of ever growing accomplishments of personal goals. Achieving these goals is a key to high self-esteem,

happiness and peak performance. People who are unhappy are often people who do not have goals. Without goals to strive for our lives can become empty, meaningless, and stressful. Some people are more aware of the goals they are working towards than others and subsequently have a greater sense of direction and purpose.

Goal planning is the act of deciding what you really want to do and then how you will go about doing it (Powell, & Enright 1993:15). The goal is made concrete by writing it down and making a commitment to it. Obstacles on the way to that goal must be anticipated, identified, and viewed as challenges. People who do not set goals, may harbour a fear of failure. Thomas Edison, the man who eventually invented the electric light bulb, said, 'failure is essential to success…..you cannot succeed without failing.….double your failure rate if you want to succeed.' (Powell, & Enright 1993:21). Following this, failure will not lead to a sense of inadequacy and low self-esteem and stress; rather one would remain composed and self-assured and face the challenge to succeed. This is reinforced in Powell & Enright, 'One student judges the event negatively, as threatening, while the other sees it in a positive way and it spurs him on to increased activity' (1993:17).

Increased activity can lead to increased productivity. In order to achieve this, one's planning must include breaks from time to time. This can result in quality as well as quantity of production.

4.2.7 Recreational breaks

After a week of hard stressful work, it is important to schedule relaxing and distracting activities for the weekend. Having a relaxing hobby for interest, which takes us physically and mentally away from work can be an invaluable protection against a build-up of stress. It is advisable to engage in leisure activity which is opposite in as many ways as possible from work situation. For example if one works indoors, at a desk, doing clerical work, a suitable hobby might involve being outside, doing some

physical activity. Holidays can also be valuable sources of relaxation and distraction. Holidays and other forms of leisure are an important item in a list of priorities necessary to bring out the best in one's life and performance. One needs to prioritise in order to be effective(Powell & Enright 1993:19).

4.2.8 What is prioritising?

The following is a suggestion as to how effective prioritising can be implemented.

Taking five minutes in the morning, at the beginning of the day, do draw up a 'things to do' list is a useful way of planning time. If large goals are broken down into small-specified short-term tasks, a sense of purpose is created. Meeting these attainable short-term goals and progressively crossing them off the list can provide an important sense of achievement and reinforcement. Set priorities. Accessing which tasks have to be achieved, which tasks can wait, and which tasks can be delegated. A helpful strategy is to rate tasks in terms of A, B or C priorities. A is 'At once'; B is 'Best done today'. And C is 'Can wait'. Spending large amounts of time on 'C' items at the expense of 'A' items is unproductive (Powell, & Enright 1993:20).

According to Powel & Enright (1993:22) an eighteenth century economist named Pareto suggested the 'Pareto Principle' or the 80/20 rule'. Simply stated, only 20 per cent of the tasks we do in a day produce 80 per cent of the rewards. Remembering this principle will help the individual to concentrate energies on the right 20 per cent of tasks, making these the 'A' priorities. It will also help the person to become more comfortable with not doing 'C' items.

Nonetheless, there is a great need to avoid being overwhelmed by all kinds of demands placed upon us by all and sundry, or else we will buckle under pressure. From my experience, one needs to be assertive and decisive.

4.2.9   On being assertive

Powell and Enright (1993:123) postulate that the way we behave and communicate with others at work, home or in public, can be an important factor in the development of stress. Poor communication can lead to unhealthy relationships, and unhealthy relationships are likely to increase stress. At the heart of healthy interpersonal communication is the skill of assertiveness.   Individuals with poor assertive skills create a variety of problems for themselves.   The person who cannot say 'no' to others' requests is likely to be overwhelmed by external demands; the person who fails to speak up for him/herself and express personal feelings and thoughts will not feel fulfilled and comfortable with his/her own identity. Communication skills affect every area of life, from expressing feelings in intimate relationships to dealing with over-zealous shop assistants.

4.2.10   Principles of coping and changing for the pastor

We should consider some general rules and guidelines for promoting change and coping with stress. An understanding of the basic principles means that a person can devise his/her solutions to problems as they arise.

How much control one has in a situation will directly influence how one tackles problems. A person in a position of authority can insist on change. Stress is more likely to be encountered where an individual does

not have much control. Most stress or frustration is likely to arise in situations requiring responsibility or accountability, without real authority to decide how something is done or to implement change.

The following are some of the principles that can enable pastors, among others, to cope with the demands and pressures that accompany the ministry.

Goal setting

The setting of goals gives one clear focus and direction in both one's personal and professional capacities. Lack of goals and a clearly defined purpose leads to vagueness, chaos and disorganisation. This in turn leads to frustration and exasperation and eventually to stress. A pastor must have a well organised agenda. Goals must be specific, measurable and attainable. In such a situation, one is confident, assured, and likely to have good mental and emotional health. A minister is often inundated with myriad responsibilities. He can be overwhelmed. Hence the need for a reorganisation of priorities (Powell & Enright 1993:124).

4.2.11   Stresses and lifestyle

Pressures from outside. In describing stress in their life.   Many see it as an excess of demands over resources. Pressures come from within, and from our beliefs, attitudes and expectations about the world and us, from habits and behaviours, and from our personality.

Some people have more stressors in their natural environment than others. It is because of our personality or other factors that some will be more at risk than others. Those people may also need to be careful not to overload themselves. Those who are prone to worry and have anxiety may be at more risk from stress and stress related illness than others (Powell & Enright 1993:124).

4.2.12 Life events as stressors

Life events are events that change our lives. Those events can be positive or negative. Events such as, death, divorce or children leaving home could have a negative impact as compared to birth or marriage.

Other events could include change of job, promotion, retirement, moving house or taking a holiday, new friends. Research suggests that experiencing a number of life events in a particular period of time could lead to increased ill health. This could lead to cancer. Some changes cannot be avoided. We cannot stop people dying or marrying or having children.

For most people, small daily events cause most stress. As an American psychiatrist Lazarus calls it 'daily hassles.[55] 'Most events depend on our attitude, e.g. the wet weather that prevents your longed for picnic may also be blessing if it means you do not have to mow the lawn. It is our attitude to an event that matters more than the event itself. As one person put it 'What happens within me is more important than what happens to me'   (Atkinson: 1988:9).

Psychologists have made the point that the course of one's life has often been shaped by the manner in which one copes with stress (Harbaugh 1985:99). As mentioned in an earlier section, personal stress can cause an identity crisis in ministry. It challenges one to change if necessary.

The challenge is neither necessarily to eradicate all stress nor find a technique for perfect management of stress. Rather the pastor is challenged to learn something from the experience. As ministers we are compelled to see ourselves and our stress in the context of Biblical anthropology. Thus we learn that we cannot reduce stress to merely a physical symptom, but a condition that affects the whole person.

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[55] Lazarus makes this point in Atkinson: Coping with Stress at Work (1988).

Pastors must guard against the tendency to get out of balance. This imbalance, according to Harbaugh, is to neglect 'one or more of the gifts of our body, mind, feeling or relationships' (1985:59). Stress challenges pastors to be whole

The growth of one minister fosters the experience of the other. Ministers should develop a support group of other ministers and Christian workers as a means of sharing the encouragement and insight that will help them grow in self-understanding. Every pastor needs a pastor. Men and women of God have generally the same basic emotional needs as other men and woman. Galatians 6:2 can have a special meaning for those called into the Lord's work: *'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ* (KJV).

4.2.13   Simple practical ways to relieve stress

There is 'good' stress and 'bad' stress. The body is unable to differentiate between the good and bad stress and therefore reacts in the same way to either. Reaction to stress takes the form of an increased heart rate, blood pressure, sugar level, skin temperature, breathing rate, alertness, muscle tension and sweat production. The heart is put under enormous strain because it has to work harder. Stress cannot be totally eradicated, therefore it is imperative that one learns how to manage stress. For example 'savouring the little moments in you life, will help you feel happier. Treasure the smile your child gives you in the morning; the satisfaction of helping a friend; and the pleasure of reading a good book'.[56]

Stress and burnout in ministry

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[56] File://E:\fin\sgtress%20 TALK.htm - Christian counseling Orlando for stress and burnout.

1. Taking regular time off. On off days do not follow your routine, but do things differently. If one does not rest one will breakdown.

2. Get proper exercise and sleep. Regular vigorous exercise such as walking and swimming, playing tennis will allow one to perspire and breath deeply.

3. Relaxation counteracts harmful effects of stress.

4. Join a small support or prayer group. Colleague in the ministry will understand one's needs.

5. Cognitive restructuring – changing the way one thinks.

6. Have fun – do activities out of your normal routine such as; bird watching, stamp collection sport etc.

Simple relaxation procedures can assist in relieving stress. Awakenings Web Sites Home of Simple Solutions for life's Problems; lists numerous activities for de-stressing.[57]

The above activities are merely practical examples of attempts to relieve stress. These are simple day to day activities which one who is experiencing stress may not have had the chance of doing due to one's busyness.

4.2.14   Conclusion

Chapter four discusses ways and means of managing people in such a way as to lessen or prevent stress, the idea being not to cause negative stress.

It is agreed that the problem can be of great magnitude. However, one needs to understand the environment in its different aspects which impact on the life of the individual positively and negatively. These aspects are life experiences, social, natural and work environment. A

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[57] Johyn Mark Ministries – STRESS%20IN%20PASTORATE.htm

healthier lifestyle is recommended. This includes physical exercise, holidays and other forms of recreation.

Allied to the problem of stress is the condition of burnout, a syndrome which seems characteristic of modern life with all its concomitant pressures and tension.

After considering dealing with and managing burnout and I now divert my attention to dealing with and managing stress.

We deal with this and its management here below. The following article gives us 10 practical techniques that may be helpful in the reduction and prevention of stress and burnout.

Here are 10 sure-fire ways to deal with stress:

1. Take frequent breaks from work - If one is working very hard, ensuring that one takes a few minutes off every other hour is a good idea. Making certain that during the break time one does not discuss work, but instead just sits back and closes one eye for ten minutes is very helpful.   Such short breaks are extremely recuperating. Initially one may feel uneasy since one has pending work lying on the table but if one learns to relax one will find that one is far more efficient after the break.

2. Reduce caffeine intake - Caffeine is a stimulant and even though it may seem that it helps fight stress situations by keeping one more alert and ready, it is harmful in the long run. Don't resort to a cup of coffee in each break, rather opt for green tea if in need to drink something.

3. Learn to say no - There are some people who just cannot say 'no' when they are asked for help. There are others still who seem to have a habit of steeping forward and taking on more work than they can possibly achieve at a specific time. Just because one feels that one can achieve something does not mean that one should take it on personally. After all there are only a certain number of hours in a day and one needs

to adjust sleeping time, relaxation time and time for yourself and family in the same number of hours.

4. Exercise - Releasing some of the pent up energy, aids in relaxing the body and mind. Not only is exercise good for stress reduction, it helps keep one in shape and makes one feel better. Exercise for about half an hour in the morning can leave one fresh and geared up to face the challenges of the day. The same time spent in the evening can help you get a good night's sleep.

5. Ensure adequate sleep - A sleep deprived person cannot perform in an optimized manner. There are obvious lapses that are likely to take place and these lapses at work or at home create situations that cause further stress. An eight hour sleep routine is a 'must', no matter the amount of work that is pending!

6. Have fun - Sometimes we get so bogged down with the schedules of daily life that we forget to have fun. Laughter is indeed the best medicine for any issue and that holds for stress too. Watching a movie or show that are funny is beneficial for the mental state and physical health.

7. Spend time with friends – One needs to ensure that one takes out some time for one's   friends. Confiding in someone is a great stress reliever. All of us have at some point or another felt easy after downloading a painful, irritating or frustrating event onto a friend.

8. Meditation – Meditation is of great help. Majority of the stress that the body encounters is not due to the situation as such but how we perceive it. Different people may react differently to a stressful situation. Regular meditation tends to develop lot of insight. As a result, things that used to cause lots of stress earlier, may eventually seem frivolous This results in calmness and relaxation.

9. Eat well - A healthy body is more capable of handling stress than a fatigued or ailing body. Ensure that you consume a balanced diet and

avoid indulging in fast foods and other foods that add to the toxicity of the body. Other than the quantity and quality of the food, the manner in which you consume food is also important. Ensure that you eat slowly and in a relaxed state of mind.

10. Adopt a hobby - Hobbies can be a great way to relieve stress. They are activities that you can do without the constant fear of someone evaluating you or being critical of you (as may be the case at work). While hobbies like listening to music and reading will take your mind of your worries, creative hobbies like painting, gardening and the like can help in increasing self esteem.

Stress is like a leaking tap. The earlier you attend to it, the better. Leaving it unattended will only make the matter worse. Sincerely following some, if not all of the above techniques is guaranteed to reduce your stress levels and prevent further complications.[58]

I have found that the following stress management resource may be a helpful practical stress management exercise in reducing stress. [59]

These stress management exercises are a wonderful way of dealing with stress as it arises. By dealing with stress head on helps reduce the chances of suffering from a build up of stress which could lead to health problems.

The following are 3 stress management exercises that could relieve stress.

1. Physical Exercise

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[58] http://ezinearticles.com/?10-Sure-Fire-Ways-to-Deal-With-   Stress&id=1368774 (accessed date 29 10 08).

[59] adapted from the Piers Cross- Director of Stress Relief Choices, prepared for Fortune 500 companies as well as Buddhists living in monasteries.http://ezinearticles.com/?10Sure-Fire-Ways-to-Deal-With-Stress&id=1368774 (accessed date 291008).

Relieving stress by exercise is immediate and fast working. The tension stored in the body is released through physical activity.

Even getting outside for a walk and getting into the countryside will shift one's mood and improve one's stress levels.

Other exercises which are good for dealing with stress are yoga, swimming and tai chi.

So if one is feeling stressed one need to get physical and connect to the body rather than the mind.

2. Smiling and Laughter

It has long been considered that 'laughter is the best medicine' and I agree wholeheartedly. If life is really stressful then try laughing. Song of Solomon affirms this in Ecc.3:4 there is time to ' …*laugh*…'. As daft as it may seem, laughing will shift your mood. During the Israelite's expectant release from captivity '*Then was our mouths filled with laughter…*' Psalm 126:2. '*A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance…*'(KJV) Prov. 15:13

Many have found that in a situation that is so unbelievable and hurtful but found themselves laughing instead of crying, found that to their amazement that incident didn't hurt half as much as it should!

- Finding a favourite move like, (Mr. Bean or Mr. Bones, Charlie Chaplin) and laughing in enjoyment is found to be a great stress reliever.
- Tickling a friend or partner or even better, getting tickled is a good stress reliever.
- Smiling on the other hand is one of the best stress management exercises that I use all the time. No matter how bad it is one can still smile. Sometimes we get stuck in childhood pain tapes which say, 'I am miserable so I will not smile'.

- Smiling is a really powerful stress management exercise as was proved by an American university. This university made a test on a group of stressed and depressed individuals. This group were all taking anti-depressants at the time.

  For 2 weeks the researchers made this group of depressed individuals do 1 thing for 20 minutes a day. At the end of the 2 weeks the group were all able to come off their anti-depressants and were considered 'happy'.

  What did they do for 20 minutes a day? What made them happy again and stress free?

  They were made to stand in front of a mirror and smile at themselves! .

  So smiling when one feels low and watching how it changes one's mood straight away, is amazing. Many have tried this, and had nothing to lose. Being happy helps in being stress free.

3. Breathing Exercises

Breathing exercises are immediate. You have access to these at all times of the day and they can be done anywhere, at anytime.

Step 1:

Breathe in through the nose (if one has trouble breathing through the nose then one could breathe through the mouth). Imagine having a red balloon in the stomach. With the in breath, imagine that this red balloon is being filled with air and is growing larger.

Step 2:

Having breathed in fully and the balloon is full imagine pinching the neck of the balloon with the fingers so the air doesn't come out. Then holding

the breath for a count of 4 or whatever number one feels comfortable with.

Step 3:

Imagine releasing the fingers from the imaginary balloon and allowing the air to leave at the same time that one breathes out.

Step 4

Continue this exercise until relaxed and stress free. One must feel free to change the colour of the imaginary balloon as one goes along in order to help keep concentration.

The following addresses way in dealing with managing stressful situations and sleeplessness.

All too often when people get stressed, their sleep gets disrupted. Some people complain that they can't fall asleep, and/or that they wake up one or more times during the night and have trouble falling back to sleep. Another common complaint is that people wake up earlier than they have to and have to drag through their days as a result. Whatever the sleep issue is, one can begin to deal with it effectively and maybe even avoid the need for medications. Of course the first step in any plan for sleep, &/or relaxation is to Stop & Breathe, slowly and deeply.

Sleep is imperative to our overall health and well-being. Some may have taken sleep for granted. But now with the negative and stressful news one is bombarded with on a daily basis, one may feel to wound up t sleep. The quantity and quality of sleep one gets each night is said to increase, as new habits replace old ones. The following list will work if

sleep continues to elude. It is said that it takes 28 day to make a habit, the following steps may be helpful, as new habits replace old ones.

The following steps have been adapted from the 100 natural sleep aid, that offers the top 10 steps to handling insomnia and managing sleep problems in times of stress, thy are :

1. the avoidance of discussion of subjects that cause stress or worry (personal or in the news) for 1 hour prior to going to bed. It might be a good idea to skip the late night news, too.

2. one should avoid the discussion of finances in the bedroom, ever, (especially at night) and in times of stress.

3. another, natural way to aid sleep is to Brain dump: Take 15 - 20 minutes prior to going to sleep to write down (almost like a stream of consciousness) whatever worries, stress, or fears or next days appointments one may have. Reminding ourselves that the paper will hold them for us until the morning when we can 'pick them up' if we still want or need to. Once the fears are written down, you are no longer carrying them in your head, so it is easier to fall asleep with a clear mind.

4. after 'dumping' your fears, tensions and stress on paper, choose one or 2 of the following list of possible activities to further move you to relaxation and sleep: listen to your favorite (soothing/relaxing)music, use a easy to read book, snuggle with ones partner, or under a cozy blanket, light a candle,(there are a number of scented, battery operated candles on the market now, so we don't need to add the stress of a fire to your list...); sip a cup of tea, meditate, list things that you are grateful for in your life, practice deep breathing (link).

5. this is to be done in a dimly lit room. Studies have shown that this is not only soothing but increases the production of melatonin which helps one to fall into a deep sleep.

6. listen to a relaxation CD while falling asleep to help keep the mind clear and quiet, and it also helps to keep outside thoughts from popping in and disrupting the relaxation/ sleep process.

7. should one awake in the middle of the night, one is advised to focus on a mantra: The following is recommend: 'Calm & relaxed'... just repeating these words in a slow, quiet, but audible voice will quiet the racing, stress-inducing thoughts, and helps one to fall back to sleep. Take slow deep breaths as the words are repeated.

8. We need to acknowledge the thoughts that disturb or disrupt sleep, and say thank you (to ourselves), and, if necessary, write them down, and then take slow deep breaths, focusing on the words, 'calm & relaxed' until sleep washes over us. We must not pretend that the thoughts didn't happen; we have to simply acknowledge them for what they are: our mind being active and in need of some reassurance, and then one can go back to sleep.

9. deep breathing is encouraged, while counting ... We are advised to inhale to the count of 4, hold for the count of 2 and exhale gently with a sigh through our mouth for the count of 4. By focusing on our breathing and counting, we are giving our mind something to focus on, rather than the runaway, stressful thoughts.

10. it is necessary to create an atmosphere in the bedroom that is conducive to relaxation and sleep. Making the space our 'sleep' space. Focusing on what we like for sleeping and relaxing: from colors to comfort, etc.

One can get a good night's sleep, even in stressful times, but now one has to be conscious and aware, and help the process along. One can no longer take this restorative and necessary activity for granted. However,

one will find that this will be appreciative and grateful for the sleep that one gets.[60]

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to develop relevant knowledge concerning burnout and stress that afflict the clergy in the ministry. It also deals with coping mechanisms and therapies. Secondary objectives were to overview theories and approaches to stress and stress management in the different spheres of life. The research is intended mainly for pastors and other ministers in the field of Christian work.

My chief motivation has been the struggles, strains and pains that pastors have to endure in the course of their ministry. This could help them to avoid tension in the family, burnout and stress in the ministry. It could enable ministers to overcome the psychological and physiological problems related to burnout and stress. Pastors will, I hope, find in it a resource for discussion at workshops, seminars and/or conferences and thus equip others in similar predicaments.

The chief question now is the way forward for pastors suffering under the weight of burnout and stress. We have explored the existence of stress

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[60] www.Sleep-Deprivation-cd.com

in its many diversified forms. The physiological and psychological aspects have been dealt with at length.

The central focus was that, concerns were raised at the impact such situations have on the minister and ministry both in their personal and professional capacities. The demands of ministry can place considerable strain on the minister and lead to burnout and stress.

What is required is a way forward. Probably a structured social support system designed specifically for clergy members. A pastor needs the ministry of fellow pastors who can identify with the crisis and can be a source of comfort and solace; at the same time fellow ministers are able to counsel a struggling, hurting pastor and bring healing, comfort and encouragement.

In South Africa, whilst there may be professional counselling centres for the general public, the clergy may feel awkward in attending these counselling centres for fear of reprisal by their congregants. Also these centres are designed to address secular issues as opposed to spiritual and ministerial matters. It is therefore suggested professional counselling centres for the clergy, which is almost non-existent, be established.

The main reason for the clergy experiencing burnout and stress is due to lack of sufficient training and the work overload. It is strongly suggested that ministers learn the art of delegation so that the many tasks that need to be undertaken are completed by the assistance of voluntary workers within the congregation. Many ministers fear delegation as they believe that the assistants would not have the acumen and knowledge to accomplish favourably the task at hand. Ministers, therefore, need to train, equip, groom and develop the laity so that they would be able to assist in the ministry. This will reduce and alleviate the problem of stress and burnout experienced by the clergy in the ministry.

In the ministry in South Africa, as compared to many first world nations, differs in that the pastorate is not assisted by full time workers. It would be advisable to create structures that will enable a situation where a church has a senior pastor having oversight of the activities of the ministry. The senior pastor is then assisted by assistant pastors who are responsible for specific departments within the church. This will help to reduce the workload of the minister thereby preventing severe burnout and stress in the ministry.

The minister must develop leaders from within the congregants to assist in the ministry. To accomplish this feat, the minister must serve as a mentor and be able to identify individuals who he or she believes will be able to catch the vision of the ministry. These individuals must be prepared to be trained, equipped and nurtured to serve in the ministry. Paul the veteran preacher in his injunction to his son in the faith, affirms this in 2 Tim.2:2

> '*And the things thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also'.*

This is imperative, in order for Minister's to bring balance to their time. They need to spend time with their families rather than concentrating only on church affairs. Time management is vital in order to reduce burnout and stress in the ministry. Clergy families, more especially clergy spouses feel the impact that the ministry has and this also leads to their burnout and stress. Even Jesus spent more time with the disciples than with the crowds. This implies that the family is an integral part of the ministry.

We have dealt with the concept of burnout and stress and examined various definitions and perceptions of the causes of each symptom.

There is no doubt that in a highly technologised and fast-paced world humans are subject to overwhelming pressure. Greater demands are imposed upon them psychologically, emotionally and physically.

Stress-related problems have escalated phenomenally in the 20th and 21st centuries.

One of the causes of stress is the environment in which we live and work, i.e. social, natural and work. Suggestions are provided in helping clergy to change their life styles. Among them are goal setting, recreation breaks, prioritising, health, nutrition and exercise.

It is a well-know fact that the ministry is a very demanding vocation and can take a very heavy toll on its practitioners. It is lamented that the average theological seminaries do not cater for this need in their curricula. It is vital that the prospective minister is well equipped and empowered in this area.

Burnout and stress is seen to have many facets. The Christian must have a comprehensive understanding of burnout and stress in all its guises. It differs from culture to culture. When burnout and stress is the dominating emotion it leads to failure in accomplishment of goals and the fulfilment of dreams. Biblical examples are given of key personalities such as Moses, Elijah and Saul, who underwent states of burnout and stress. They responded in different ways. But this emphasises the point that burnout and stress has always been a part of human experience.

The role of the pastor has to be reviewed in modern times to take up these challenges. While he or she has to serve the community selflessly, he or she must also guard his or her own life. It all depends on the society and culture in which he or she conducts their ministry. The conditions of a first world country differ from those of a third world country; or those of an urban church are different from those of a rural church. Thus they bring different challenges of burnout and stress to the ministry.

There seems to be a great possibility that many young people who have entered the ministry have been inadequately prepared for the awesome task that was ahead. This possibility is definitely a suitable starting ground for burnout and stress.[61]

'May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word'
11 Thess. 2:16-17.

Future research

Indications are that emerging ministers of this generation are not aware of the implications of entering into the full time ministry without adequate knowledge of the enormous demands and pressures that the ministry could have psychologically, physiologically and sociologically.

It would be beneficial to the ministry if seasoned veteran ministers could foster a way forward in implementing mechanisms and strategies to reduce the effects of burnout and stress. Young ministers should be made aware of the overwhelming responsibilities of the ministry.

Studies should include the role of Christian Counsellors, as well as the training of pastors in the handling of personal burnout and stress.

One needs to challenge the old ideas and ways in which we do ministry. That which was traditionally passed down is a major stumbling block for change as it does not take into account the changing world view of our society. Radical transformation is required in the minds and attitudes of both clergy and laity. Taking into account that our communities in the new South Africa with its economic, cultural, educational and environmental challenges are looking to the religious body for example,

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[61] Burnout among Australian Clergy – Review of religious research, 2004, volume 45:3, page 275).

the church, for answers. The curriculum of seminaries should most certainly include the aspects of stress, burnout, depression and challenges that the 21st century minister faces compared to that which our predecessors faced.

In conclusion, I voice my hope that this study will contribute to a better understanding of the plight and predicament of ministers in the ministry so that positive action can be taken to bridge the gap between the knowledge we received thirty years ago, and that at our disposal now. We do not have to be overcome by these contributing factors of stress and burnout but we can triumph.

This paper exposes one to the enormous demands and pressures which ministers are constantly subjected to. They can often bend under the considerable weight of expectation from both congregation and community. This can in turn lead to a negative impact upon their own families in terms of quality time spend with them and the emotional, psychological and physical effect on the minister. I have attempted to suggest ways of overcoming this situation, drawing on both biblical and secular insight, with the aim of bringing about healing and restoration to the embattled minister.

Finally, the words of John Wesley, 'There is no justice except for social justice'. And the amazing words of a great woman, Mother Teresa, 'I was not called to be successful; I was only called to be faithful.' May this be our reminder!

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