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GROWING UP AS A PASTOR'S CHILD:
THE PRESSURES AND POSITIVES
OF LIVING IN A CLERGY FAMILY SYSTEM

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MAJOR APPLIED PROJECT
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY DEGREE PROGRAM

Concordia Seminary
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The peace of the Lord Jesus be with you all!

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ABSTRACT

Through research and personal interviews, this project explores the lives of pastors' children and their responsibilities in light of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, the pressures they face in the clergy family system, and positive aspects of their lives that come with their unique lifestyle. Included is a retreat for pastors' teenage children which has been developed as a method of helping pastors' children cope with their lives in constructive ways, understand the pressures they experience, celebrate the positive aspects of being pastor's children, and grow personally and spiritually as they reaffirm their essential identity as baptized children of God.

To Heather, my wife,
and our eight pastor's children,
Melissa, Karl, Mindy, Stephanie,
Sarah, Krysta, Allison, Annalise

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Once a pastor's son, always a pastor's son. That was made clear to me at a circuit pastors' conference. Having accepted a call to a new state, my fellow pastors at one of my first circuit pastors' conferences in my new circuit discovered that I am a pastor's son. One of the pastors said something to the effect, "Can't you see the halo?" For some reason, being a pastor's son often seems to engender some kind of remark from others.

Having grown up in a parsonage myself, and having children of my own who are now living the life of a pastor's children, I am extremely interested in discovering more about the particular pressures that children of clergy experience as they grow up in a parsonage. Part of my motivation is to better understand my own years growing up as a pastor's son and, at the same time, to help my own children and those of other clergy understand more about the dynamics with which they must live. Hopefully, with understanding will come the added learning of how to cope with the pressures in positive ways, as well as learning to appreciate the benefits of being pastors' children.

The goals of this project are:

- 1) to explore the pressures children of clergy face as they grow up with dynamics that are common to living in a clergy family system, and how those pressures are negatively or positively managed;
- 2) to explore the positive spiritual and personal aspects of living in such a family;
- 3) to help children of clergy better cope with the pressures they face by designing and implementing a retreat for pastors' children;
- 4) to offer suggestions as to how pastors, the laity and the church-at-large can help create a positive parsonage experience.

The setting for this project, first of all, is my own ministry to the congregation I serve as well as my responsibility to my family. As I learn about the pressures that may be experienced by my own children, I hope to be able to provide for them a parsonage experience that is as positive as possible. As this is done, the effect on my ministry will be such that fewer pressures at home will translate into greater satisfaction with the pastoral ministry. Second of all, the setting encompasses the lives of other pastors' children as they are assisted in coping with the pressures they may face. If this is accomplished, the benefit of the project will impact more than my own particular setting but will impact many more pastors' children and their families.

In the chapters that follow, the lives of pastors' children will be explored in terms of their responsibilities, the pressures they face, the positive aspects of their lives and how they can be assisted in having lives that are as satisfying as possible in their particular context. Chapter Two explores from the perspective of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions the duties of children. Chapter Three takes a closer look at those particular texts in Scripture that refer to pastors' children, namely, 1 Timothy 3:4, 5 and Titus 1:6. In Chapter Four, the lives of the children of Martin Luther are examined to discover what life was like for the pastor's children in the Luther household. Chapter Five looks at the specific pressures that pastors' children may experience, primarily from the perspective of family systemics, while Chapter Six focuses on the positive aspects of living in a clergy family. Chapter Seven reports the results of interviews with teenage and adult pastors' children. The interviews were undertaken to try to provide some new research into the subject and to identify those areas where pastors' children indicate they could use some help. Chapter Eight recounts the implementation and results of a retreat that was held for teenage pastors' children as one possibility of providing assistance to them. Finally, Chapter Nine looks at ways that pastors' children, pastors, and congregations can assist the children of pastors in their lives.

The hopes of this project are that by exploring the lives of pastors' children and by offering a concrete method of helping them cope with their

lives, pastors' children will be able to understand some of the pressures they experience and then grow personally and spiritually as they learn to cope with those pressures in positive ways, especially as they learn to focus on the positive aspects of their lives and celebrate that fact that they are pastors' children.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DUTIES OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS IN LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE AND THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

As a family, the clergy family must deal with the ordinary pressures that come from living in the world and, in addition, must wrestle with those that come from living in the context of the parsonage. One may be tempted to seek guidance in dealing with those pressures primarily from sociological or psychological disciplines and the wisdom of the world. As a Christian family, however, the clergy family must look first to the Holy Scriptures for guidance. In addition, the clergy family will find helpful counsel from the Lutheran confessional writings as they shed light on the teachings of Scripture. An examination of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, therefore, provides needed direction and guidance for children and parents as they seek to live as a family under the will of God.

The Duties of Children

In the Scriptures, the duties of children are summarized in the Fourth Commandment, "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you."¹ In this context, *kabed*

¹Exodus 20:12. All Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, New International Version (International Bible Society, 1984).

(honor) means to “make honourable, honor, glorify,”² and has as its root the meaning to “be heavy, weighty.”³ In this case, the weight on children is to honor their parents just as though they were honoring God. Quoting Dr. Martin Luther, Keil-Delitzsch observes that this word “does not refer to fellow-men, but to ‘those who are the representatives (*vicarii*) of God. Therefore, as God is to be served with honour and fear, His representatives are to be so too.’”⁴

This commandment has been described by Luther as “the first and greatest” of the commandments of the second table of the Decalogue.⁵ In his “Large Catechism,” Luther has much to say regarding this commandment and the love and honor children are to have for their parents.

As people of God in Christ, children are to love their neighbors as themselves. This love is to be directed toward all people, including their parents. However, as Luther observes, the Fourth Commandment enjoins upon children the additional command to honor their parents. In doing so, God “distinguishes father and mother above all other persons on earth, and places them next to himself.”⁶ The Fourth Commandment reveals that God

²Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1979), 457.

³Ibid., 457.

⁴C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, The Second Book of Moses (Exodus), in Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 1, The Pentateuch, trans. James Martin (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1981), 122.

⁵Theodore G. Tappert, ed., The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 379.

⁶Ibid., 379.

considers parenthood to be an important vocation that is to be respected by all, especially by the children for whom parents are responsible.

As Luther states in his explanation to the Fourth Commandment in the "Small Catechism," the proper motivation for children honoring their parents is fear and love of God.⁷ In Ephesians 6:1, the Apostle Paul writes to children, "Obey your parents in the Lord . . .," indicating that their obedience is to flow from a relationship with God in Jesus Christ. As believers in Christ, children will seek to honor their parents, not out of threat of punishment or coercion, but out of love for their Savior and love for their parents.

How do children honor their parents? First of all, children honor their parents as they consider them to be God's representatives.⁸ Parents are to be held in such high esteem by their children that they regard their parents as people whom God Himself has placed over them. On the other hand, children dishonor their parents when they consider them to be people who are equal to them or who have no special authority over them. Someone may point out that in Christ, all Christians, including children and parents, are equal in the sight of God. However, in regard to functions and responsibilities, parents and children are not equal. God has given to parents the special vocation of being His representatives to their children, a task that deserves full respect. According to Luther, in order for families to function according to God's will and design, "there must be this sort of

⁷Ibid., 343.

⁸Ibid., 379.

inequality and proper distinctions"⁹ between parents and children. These are important words for families to heed. Often, parents are encouraged to be their children's friends first and that children should be regarded as equal members of the family. The Scriptures, on the other hand, paint an entirely different picture. As God's representatives, parents are the primary authority in the family, an authority that is to be respected by all and from which all other authority is derived.¹⁰

Secondly, parents are given proper honor when children "esteem and prize them as the most precious treasure on earth,"¹¹ an attitude that is expressed in word and deed. Children demonstrate that they prize their parents when they speak to them in ways that show respect. Conversely, children dishonor their parents when they are rude, demanding and belligerent toward them. Also, in the spirit of the Fourth Commandment, children will want others to realize that their parents are God-given treasures. This will happen as they speak well of their parents to others and represent them in the kindest way. In doing so, they will not only be fulfilling the Fourth Commandment but the Eighth Commandment as well as they seek to guard the good reputation of their parents. Children who mock their parents and speak badly about them to others only serve to demean their parents and dishonor them.

Children also demonstrate that they regard their parents as a treasure and prize when they honor their parents with their actions. In this regard,

⁹Ibid., 380.

¹⁰Ibid., 384.

¹¹Ibid., 380.

Luther sees children honoring their parents with their actions by "serving them, helping them, and caring for them when they are old, sick, feeble, or poor."¹² Luther speaks to children of all ages and reminds them that honoring their parents through their actions is a responsibility that exists throughout the life of their parents.

In a world inexorably tainted by sin, parents, in their own words and actions, may fail to give their children proper love and respect and may fail to fulfill completely their God-given responsibilities. In such cases, children may be tempted to feel justified in speaking badly of their parents or in ignoring them when they are old and in need. Sinful behavior on the part of parents, however, is not an excuse for minor and adult children to dishonor their parents through their words and deeds. As children who are "in the Lord," they will seek to demonstrate the love and forgiveness of Christ as they continue to honor their parents with their words and actions throughout life.

Thirdly, parents are honored as children are obedient to them. Luther regards obedience as a good work and states that "if they [children] wish to serve God with truly good works, they must do what is pleasing to their fathers and mothers, or to those who have parental authority over them."¹³ In comparison to other works in which people like to take pride, Luther challenges them to "produce a single work that is greater and nobler than obedience to father and mother, which God has appointed and commanded

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., 381.

next to obedience to his own majesty."¹⁴ Furthermore, he states that "it is highly pleasing to the divine Majesty and all the angels, that it vexes all devils, and . . . that it is the greatest work that we can do, next to the sublime worship of God described in the previous commandments. . . . For God has exalted this estate of parents above all others; indeed, he has appointed it to be his representative on earth. This will and pleasure of God ought to provide us sufficient reason and incentive to do cheerfully and gladly whatever we can."¹⁵

In the New Testament, Paul writes, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' - which is the first commandment with a promise - 'that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.' "¹⁶ He has no need to go into great detail about the meaning of obedience. He simply indicates that obedience is proper and, by referring to the Fourth Commandment, demonstrates that such obedience is expected by God. Likewise, he instructs children in Colossians 3:20 to "obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord." As God's design for family, children are to submit to the authority of their parents which God has placed over them. The motivation for obedience is that such action pleases the Lord. Christian children will seek to give their parents the respect, honor and obedience that they require by virtue of the position that their parents occupy in the home and out of love for God.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid., 382.

¹⁶Ephesians 6:1-3; also included in the "Table of Duties" in Luther's Small Catechism.

The Scriptures indicate that in a world inundated by sin, children will not always obey their parents but may become disobedient and disrespectful. In the Old Testament, the problem of disobedience is highlighted in Proverbs 30:11 which laments that "there are those who curse their fathers and do not bless their mothers." Furthermore, in the political law of the Israelites, children who cursed their parents were to be put to death.¹⁷ Agur, the author of Proverbs 30:17, went so far as to write that "the eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures." Clearly, from the perspective of the Scriptures, disobedience towards parents is considered to be abominable in the sight of God.

Likewise, the New Testament characterizes disobedience as being sinful in the sight of God and a malady that comes from lack of respect for God and His commands. Romans 1:30 states that one characteristic of godlessness is that people will "disobey their parents." In setting aside true respect for God and His commands, people will disregard the Fourth Commandment entirely, will not respect parental authority, will be disobedient and thereby bring dishonor to their parents. Likewise, in 2 Timothy 3:2, Paul makes the same point by indicating that in the last days people will be "disobedient to parents" as they become self-centered and self-serving.

Does a distinction exist between the obedience required of minor children who are under the parents' authority at home and obedience of adult children? The portions of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions discussed above would seem to apply primarily to minor children who are under the

¹⁷Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9; Deuteronomy 21:18-21.

authority of their parents. On their part, adult children as responsible persons may at times rightly make decisions that are at variance with the wishes of their parents and, in effect, disobey them. A good case in point is Martin Luther. The wishes of Luther's father was that Martin should become a lawyer. In 1505, at the age of 22, as Luther studied law at the University of Erfurt, he discovered however that he had little interest in being a lawyer, a discovery that he realized would be a disappointment to his father.¹⁸ Later on in that same year, Luther had an experience that convinced him that he should become a monk. He took his vow, an action which he realized made his father very angry.¹⁹ Evidence suggests that even though Luther felt justified in making his decision, despite the wishes of his parents, he nonetheless still desired to please his parents. Much later in 1525, when stating his reasons for getting married, he included the reason of wanting to please his father.²⁰

The only reference in the "Large Catechism" that might refer specifically to adult children is where Luther indicates that children honor their parents with their actions by "serving them, helping them, and caring for them when they are old, sick, feeble, or poor."²¹ In this context, the possibility exists that adult children may have to disobey their parents in

¹⁸E. G. Schwiebert, Luther and His Times (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), 128.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 138.

²⁰Roland Bainton, Here I Stand, A Life of Martin Luther (New York: Abingdon Press, 1950), 288.

²¹Tappert, 380.

order to honor them. For example, the time may come when adult children must make the decision to place a parent in a nursing home against the wishes of the parent. In doing so, the children would not be disobeying the parent as much as obeying God's command that they provide adequate care for their aging parent. Perhaps the overarching principle in this issue is the Scriptural command to obey God rather than man.²² This would apply not only to adult children, but also to minors if their parents demanded obedience that was contrary to the Word and will of God.

Fourthly, children honor their parents when they "show gratitude for the kindness and for all the good things we have received from our parents."²³ What have parents done for their children that children should be so grateful? Luther answers this question best when he states that, in light of the commandments, "everybody recognizes that he has received his body and life from them and that he has been nourished and nurtured by them when otherwise he would have perished a hundred times in his own filth. The wise men of old were right when they said, 'God, parents, and teachers can never be sufficiently thanked and repaid.' He who views the matter in this light will, without compulsion, give all honor to his parents and esteem them as those through whom God has given him all blessings."²⁴

The Fourth Commandment, as Paul states in Ephesians 6:2, 3, is the first commandment with a promise, "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." As children strive to be obedient to

²²Acts 5:29.

²³Tappert, 382.

²⁴Ibid., 383.

their parents and honor them in word and deed, life will be much better for them and the entire household. Many a parent and home has been immersed in anger and grief when children were disobedient and treated their parents with contempt. On the other hand, a home where children strive to be obedient is more likely to be a place of peace and contentment. In his commentary on this issue, Luther states that "whoever keeps this commandment will enjoy good days, happiness, and prosperity . . . For, in the Scriptures, to have long life means not merely to grow old but to have everything that pertains to long life --- health, wife and child, livelihood, peace, good government, etc., without which this life can neither be heartily enjoyed nor long endure."²⁵

The Duties of Parents

In the Scriptures, the duties of parents include teaching their children the ways of the Lord and instructing them in His commands. Speaking to Israel following the Exodus from Egypt, Moses instructed the Israelites, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."²⁶ While this reference for providing the ongoing instruction of children in the

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Deuteronomy 6:5-9; see also 11:18-21.

commandments of God is not specifically directed to fathers, other references indicate that fathers are to see to the religious instruction of their children. Psalm 78:5 indicates that the Lord "commanded our forefathers to teach their children" the statutes and laws that He has established, and, in like manner, Isaiah 38:19 says "fathers tell their children about your faithfulness." Paul echoes this concern for passing on the faith when he instructs fathers to bring up their children "in the training and instruction of the Lord."²⁷

Even though Scripture seems to suggest that fathers bear the primary responsibility for the religious instruction of their children, mothers may also carry on this function, particularly if fathers are not fulfilling their responsibility. In 2 Timothy, Paul comments on the sincere faith of Timothy and makes the observation that such faith "first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice . . ."²⁸ Timothy's father is not mentioned, which may indicate that he was no longer living or an unbeliever. At any rate, the mentioning of Timothy's mother and grandmother indicates that they had a strong influence on the faith of Timothy and, more than likely, were instrumental in making sure that he learned the ways and commands of the Lord.

Another aspect of parental responsibility concerns the meting out of discipline. Numerous examples are found in the book of Proverbs that indicate that discipline is to be done in order to train children in true wisdom and to build character. For example, Proverbs 22:6 gives the instruction to "train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn

²⁷Ephesians 6:4.

²⁸2 Timothy 1:5.

from it," and parents are told in 23:13, "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die." Furthermore, the importance of discipline is evident in 23:14 when parents are reminded that such discipline will "save his soul from death."

In the New Testament, the subject of parental discipline is discussed by the writer of Hebrews. In the context of discussing the discipline that God has for His people, the writer asks the rhetorical question, "For what son is not disciplined by his father?"²⁹ Furthermore, he states that "we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it" and "our fathers disciplined us for a little while as thought best."³⁰ Clearly, fatherly discipline is highly regarded by the writer of Hebrews who sees in such discipline a picture of how God the Father deals with His children.

While fathers are to discipline, they are not to do so in such a way that angers or embitters their children. In Ephesians 6:4, Paul reminds fathers, "Do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." In their dealings with their children, Christian fathers are to act in such a way that they do not provoke their children to anger. Any discipline or training that is done should be handled in the spirit of love if it is to have a lasting, positive benefit. Likewise, Paul writes in Colossians 3:21, "Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged." The unfortunate result of a father who treats his children abusively is that they may learn to loathe the home, and perhaps even wander from the faith and choose paths that lead them away from the Lord.

²⁹Hebrews 12:7.

³⁰Hebrews 12:9-10.

As fathers are the representatives of God, children may glean an impression of their heavenly Father that comes from the way in which they think of their earthly fathers. The responsibility of parents in setting an example of Christian love in all matters, especially in the matter of discipline, is clearly important and has implications for both familial and spiritual relationships.

While most references in Scripture that deal with the duties of parents are aimed at fathers, Scripture gives some insight into the activities of mothers. In the list of the qualifications of widows in 1 Timothy 5, "bringing up children" is considered to be a "good deed."³¹ The work of being a conscientious mother and of caring for the needs of children was considered to be noble work in the eyes of Paul and the church, a work that continues to be just as noble and important today. Furthermore, Scripture paints the picture of mothers as ones who offer special comfort for their children. Isaiah 66:13 states that "as a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you." In a way that elevates motherhood, the comfort that God offers His people is compared to the way in which a mother will comfort her child.

In the Lutheran Confessions, the subject of parents is treated in the "Large Catechism." In his commentary on the Fourth Commandment, Luther states:

Although the duty of superiors is not explicitly stated in the Ten Commandments, it is frequently dealt with in many other passages of Scripture, and God intends it to be included in this commandment in which he speaks of father and mother. God does not want to have knaves or tyrants in this office and responsibility; nor does he assign them this honor (that is, power and authority to govern) merely to receive homage. Parents should consider that they owe obedience to God, and

³¹1 Timothy 5:10.

that, above all, they should earnestly and faithfully discharge the duties of their office, not only to provide for the material support of their children . . . , but especially to bring them up to the praise and honor of God. Therefore do not imagine that the parental office is a matter of your pleasure and whim. It is a strict commandment and injunction of God, who holds you accountable for it.³²

Clearly, Luther understood that parents are to be good stewards of their children. Parents are not to regard their children as possessions who can be treated in any way they might choose. Rather, as God's representatives, parents are to regard their children as gifts and children of God, and are to provide for all of their physical and spiritual needs. Such care is a good work in the sight of God as fathers and mothers fulfill the obligations of their calling as parents.³³ The specific duties of fathers, as mentioned in the Lutheran Confessions, include laboring to support wife and children,³⁴ administration of the household³⁵ and the rearing of children.³⁶ The specific duty of mothers, according to the Augsburg Confession, is to bear children and care for them.³⁷

The Confessions reveal that Luther considered fathers to be the head of the household. On the one hand, he regarded both father and mother

³²Tappert, 388.

³³Ibid., 65, 219.

³⁴Ibid., 65.

³⁵Ibid., 219.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid., 65.

equally as God's representatives whose authority and positions are to be respected by all. On the other hand, Luther regarded the father as the one with the primary responsibility for seeing to it that his household receives religious training in the Word and the catechism. Luther's use of the masculine personal pronoun leaves no room for doubt that he regarded the father in this way. For example, in his preface to the "Large Catechism" he wrote that "it is the duty of every head of the household to examine his children and servants at least once a week and ascertain what they have learned of it."³⁸ Luther emphasized this in his Table of Duties in the "Small Catechism" where he included Ephesians 6:4, a text which emphasizes that fathers are to bring up their children "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."³⁹ Furthermore, his headings in the "Small Catechism" refer to the head of household teaching his family the various parts of the catechism, as well as the father taking the lead in teaching his children to pray. For Luther, the father bore the primary responsibility for providing for the ongoing physical and spiritual needs of his entire household, including wife, children and servants. However, this view of the father does not mean that the mother is to be less respected or that she has less authority. As was pointed out above, Luther regarded both parents as being God's representatives and equally worthy of full honor and respect.

³⁸Ibid., 362.

³⁹Ibid., 356.

Conclusion

In the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, a general pattern of family life is developed in which parents are considered to be God's representatives in the family. As such, they are to provide for all the physical needs of their children through their labor in and outside of the home. In addition, parents, especially fathers, are to see to it that their children are disciplined in love, that they are brought up in the training and instruction of the Lord, that they are reminded of God's commands in the Law and gracious promises in the Gospel, and that they are taught through word and example how to live as children of God. God-fearing parents will understand that children are a trust from their heavenly Father. As faithful stewards, parents will desire to love and care for their children as God's own and not misuse or abuse them for their purposes.

In return, God-fearing children are to honor their parents by regarding them as God's representatives with primary authority in the home, by cherishing them as the greatest treasure on earth, by being obedient to them, and by showing gratitude for all the kindness and love they have been given by their parents. The responsibility of children to love and honor their parents does not cease once they leave home. Rather, children are to honor their parents throughout life, and are especially to attend to the needs of their parents as their parents age and need care.

God has created a wonderful organization in the family. As parents and children bow to the will of God, the home will be a place of security, love and peace. Even though, in this life, all members of the family are sinful and fall short of God's will for them as parents and children, they can live together under the cross of Christ which binds them together in faith,

forgiveness and eternal life. As clergy families seek to live with the ordinary pressures of life and the particular dynamics of living in a parsonage, their identity as a Christian family is of greatest importance. As a Christian family, they will be enriched as they seek continually the guidance and strength that can only be found in the Holy Scriptures. In doing so, they will be able to rejoice in the gift of family that God has given them.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PASTOR AND HIS CHILDREN: A STUDY OF 1 TIMOTHY 3:4,5 AND TITUS 1:6

Included in the Pauline lists of qualifications for overseers and elders are instructions regarding the management of their children. 1 Timothy 3:4,5 states that the overseer “must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?)” Likewise, in Titus 1:6, Paul includes the injunction that an elder must be “a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.” From the outset, these texts reveal an importance that is attached to the pastor’s family and their conduct. Yet, this importance raises significant questions. Is Paul concerned about how the pastor’s children reflect on their father’s ministry, or is he more concerned about the abilities of the pastor to provide proper discipline and care, characteristics that are desirable for an overseer of God’s church? Should these texts be used to pressure pastors’ children into being obedient, or if a pastor’s child is disobedient, does this exclude a man from the Pastoral Office? These are some of the questions that can arise when faced with these qualifications for an overseer/elder. The purpose of this chapter is to examine 1 Timothy 3:4,5 and Titus 1:6 to discern their meaning so that we may have a proper understanding of how the pastoral ministry relates to and effects the

children of pastors.¹ First, the texts will be examined. Then will follow a discussion of what these texts mean for the pastor and his children.

The first reference in the New Testament that addresses specifically the matter of pastors' children is found in 1 Timothy. During his fourth missionary journey, Paul left Timothy in Ephesus as his representative to assist the mission congregation. Paul later wrote the words of 1 Timothy to provide instructions to Timothy about various matters, including the issue of qualifications for overseers.

In 1 Timothy 3, Paul outlines a list of qualifications for overseers which includes, among others, the following qualification in verse 4: "He [the overseer] must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)" Paul states that the overseer is to manage (προϊστάμενον) his household. Knight states that the word προϊστάμενον "emphasizes the leadership role of one who has been placed at the head of the family or church and who is therefore responsible to 'rule, direct and lead.'"² This management must be done well, and, in the context of the family, will be evident in the obedience and conduct of children. Ὑποταγή (obedience, subjection) on the part of the children of the overseer is one indication of his ability to manage his household well.

¹1 Timothy 3:12, the only other passage in the New Testament that lays down qualifications relative to church leaders and their children, will not be considered, as it pertains to the office of deacon and is a repeat of Paul's instructions in 1 Timothy 3:4.

²George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 161.

The phrase μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος presents somewhat of a problem. In the view of some,³ the phrase translated “with proper respect” might focus on the children and their attitude toward the authority and management of their father. In this view, the children will obey their father out of respect for him. Such respect by the children would reflect the type of leadership and discipline provided by their father. Children will be more prone to obeying their father with respect if discipline is fair and loving.

On the other hand, the phrase might be translated “with all dignity” and refer to the pastor and the manner in which he manages his family. In this view, the pastor will act in a manner which is not violent or abusive, but will rule in such a way that he demonstrates respect and love for his children. Lenski supports this view, stating that the sense of the phrase is “in subjection to the father, with dignity on his part.”⁴ Likewise, J. N. D. Kelly holds that this phrase seems more appropriate to the attitude of the father than to that of the children. “The point,” he states, “is that he must maintain strict discipline, but without fuss or resort to violence.”⁵ Knight points out that σεμνός is the first qualification mentioned by Paul in relation to deacons (1 Timothy 3:8). Since the word follows the designation “likewise” (ὡσαύτως), Paul may be saying that deacons are to be dignified in the same way as overseers. In this respect, the phrase “with all dignity” would seem to

³J. N. D. Kelly, A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1963), 78.

⁴R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1946), 586.

⁵Kelly, 78.

apply more to the father than to the children. Knight sums up the problem well, however, by saying that “it is difficult, therefore, to be sure of the reference of μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος. Perhaps Paul sought to describe that which characterized the relationship from both sides. Submission on the part of the children marked by a relationship of dignity and seriousness is that which reflects on the ability of a man to be a bishop. And this needs to be not just an appearance of σεμνότητος but πάσης σεμνότητος, a full demonstration of it.”⁶

Having discussed the character of an overseer who is also a father, Paul continues by explaining the significance of the manner in which an overseer manages his family. He argues from the lesser to the greater and says rhetorically that “if anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?” (v. 5) The implied answer is negative. If a man does not possess the ability to manage his family well with proper discipline and respect, then this inability will carry over into the larger family of the church. In the words of Lenski, “ill-trained, bad children reflect on any pastor, not merely because they are hurtful examples to the children of the members of the church, but still more because they show that the father is incompetent for his office.”⁷ Stated positively, Paul is saying that the qualities that contribute to managing and caring for a family with dignity are qualities that are needed in overseeing the people of God’s church.

⁶Knight, 162.

⁷Lenski, 586.

Paul states that overseers are called to “care for” (ἐπιμελήσεται) the church. Knight makes the interesting observation that the only other occurrence of ἐπιμελέομαι in the New Testament is in the parable of the Good Samaritan, a worthy example for any pastor who desires to care for his flock.⁸ Paul emphasizes that the church over which the overseer is to care is God’s, not the overseer’s. As such, overseers are needed who can demonstrate through their family life that they are able to competently care for and discipline God’s family as well.

The only other reference in the New Testament that addresses the qualifications of pastors and the conduct of their children is Titus 1:6. In this text, Paul wrote that an elder must be “a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.” This is similar to his other list of qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:4,5 in that he stresses obedience. However, here Paul embellishes the issue by including the thought that children of elders are to “believe” and not be “wild.”

In the book of Titus, Paul is writing to a pastor named Titus who is living and ministering on the island of Crete. Himself a Greek Christian, Titus would have been well qualified to serve the Greek population on the island. The Crete of Paul’s day was known for its immorality, which put pressure on the fledgling Christian Church in Crete as her members sought to live a moral Christian life. Into this context Paul addresses the issue of qualifications for elders and may explain why Paul goes into more detail when discussing the children of elders.

⁸Knight, 163.

The children being considered by Paul were those who were still at home and under the care of their parents. This is brought out by Paul's use of the words τέκνα ἔχων (children having). ἔχων is used "to denote the possession of persons to whom one has close relationships."⁹ In other words, Paul is referring to those children who are still under the father's authority at home.

Paul begins his treatment of the children of elders by saying that they should be πιστά (believing, faithful). They should be of the same faith as their pastor/father and not pagans. Paul may have mentioned this specifically because the church in Crete was still very new, and believing children would stand in contrast to the paganism that surrounded them. In the final analysis, however, men whose families were still pagan and not believers were not to be considered for the office of elder.

The importance of the children of elders being believers is emphasized when Paul goes on to say that the children should not be "open to the charge of being wild (ἄσωτία) and disobedient (ἀνυπότακτα)." Luther, in his commentary on Titus, relates this to the conditions in Crete when he wrote, "ἄσωτία means that one lives a wild life and carouses, as the youth usually do. The Greek people were especially addicted to ἄσωτία. They would drink until midnight and then they give themselves over to sexual immorality and to revelry . . . But on the contrary they ought to be subject to their parents, obedient, retiring, well-disciplined, so that they obey their father."¹⁰ In a

⁹Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 332.

¹⁰Martin Luther, Lecture on Titus, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 29 (American Edition), Luther's Works: Lectures on Titus, Philemon and Hebrews (St. Louis: CPH, 1968), 21-22.

moral climate such as existed on Crete, the children of elders were to stand out from all the immorality that existed around them.

Not only were the elder's children to be self-controlled and morally upright, they were not to be ἀνυπότακτα (disobedient, undisciplined, rebellious). This echoes the instructions of Paul in 1 Timothy 3:4 where he wrote that the children of overseers ought to be obedient. Obedience would reflect the ability of the elder to maintain proper discipline within his household and would demonstrate his fitness to shepherd the people of the church. However, as Knight observes, "Paul is not asking any more of the elder and his children than is expected of every other Christian father and his children. However, only if a man exercises such proper control over his children may he be an elder."¹¹

All in all, the Scriptures say very little specifically about the pastor and his children. What is said, however, is important in ascertaining how the pastor is to regard his children, and how the children relate to his ministry.

The Lutheran Confessions include references to both 1 Timothy 3:4,5 and Titus 1:6. The former is referenced without commentary in the Table of Duties in the Small Catechism and is applied to "bishops, pastors, and preachers." What is interesting to note, however, is the wording of verse five, "keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way."¹² This wording might suggest an understanding that the phrase μετὰ πάσης

¹¹Knight, 290.

¹²Theodore G. Tappert, ed, The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 354.

σεμνότητος (“with proper respect”) refers to the children instead of the overseer. Titus 1:5-7 is referenced in the “Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope.”¹³ However, these verses, as used in the treatise, are in the context of discussing ecclesiastical power and jurisdiction of bishops. No mention is made of the issue of pastors and their children.

What can pastors learn from these passages that refer to their children? First of all, they can remind the pastor of the importance of his family. The pastor’s family is not just an appendage in the pastor’s life. Family members are not invisible and do, to some degree, have an impact on his ministry and life in the congregation. God considered their presence and conduct in the church and community important enough to inspire Paul to address their situation and provide guidance and instruction about their care.

Secondly, these passages from 1 Timothy and Titus remind the pastor that he has the responsibility to care for his family out of love. He is to manage his family well, that is, he is to provide Christian guidance, discipline and supervision. Occasionally, a pastor may feel as though he is too busy with ministerial duties to give his family the attention they require. He may even entertain thoughts that he is a pastor first, and father second. Or, inversely, he may decide that he is a father first, to the detriment of his ministry. These passages that touch on the pastor and his relationship to his family indicate no such hierarchy. A pastor with children is at the same time a pastor and a father, two responsibilities that can exist side-by-side. Caring well for the family is not optional for the pastor. Rather, from Paul’s words, God fully expects that his pastors will lovingly care for the members of their

¹³Ibid., 330.

families, just as they are to care for the members of the church, of which their families are a significant part.

In his commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, Armin W. Schuetze discusses the role of the pastor/father in his treatment of 1 Timothy 3:4,5. He observes:

Often there does not seem to be time for both the family and congregation. Let no pastor feel that care for the congregation does not allow him time to manage his own family. He must take time for the latter. God expects it of him, even in view of his pastoral office. On the other hand, let no congregation make demands upon its pastor that allow him no time for his family. Let all remember: being a good husband and father, if God has given the pastor a family, is also part of being a good pastor.¹⁴

The texts from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 indicate that the burden is on the pastor to provide a household climate of love, forgiveness and Christian lifestyle in a dignified manner that will promote obedience in his children.

Thirdly, these passages can do much to alert the pastor to the potential presence of pressures that exist in the lives of his children. Someone once said, "It's not easy being me." Many children of pastors might echo those words. By virtue of their identity as the pastor's children, they may find themselves under an ecclesiastical microscope and may be expected by members of the church to be examples of morality. Furthermore, they may be expected to be better than the other children of the parish, a pressure that children can feel and at times rebel against. To be sure, Paul's words in 1 Timothy and Titus do indicate that the children of pastors carry with them certain expectations by God to be, as Luther stated above, "obedient, retiring,

¹⁴Armin W. Schuetze, The People's Bible: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1991), 53-54.

and well-disciplined.” As John H. C. Fritz observed in his Pastoral Theology, “the children of the parsonage should be a *good* example to all other children and young people of the congregation and the community.”¹⁵ Yet, at the same time, the argument could be made that these expectations are no more or less what would be expected of any Christian child. Part of caring for his family, then, is for the pastor to learn what life is like from the perspective of his children. In doing so, he will be more alert to the pressures that they can experience in their unique position as the children of a pastor.

Not only can pastors learn from 1 Timothy 3:4,5 and Titus 1:6, but the children themselves can gain understanding into their role as pastors’ children. Whether they like it or not, the children of pastors do play a significant role in the ministry of their father. Children need to realize that their behavior does reflect, to some degree, upon their pastor/father. What is important in this regard, however, is the manner in which children are reminded of the way in which their behavior reflects upon the ministry. Pastors need to be careful not to misuse the words of 1 Timothy and Titus or use them as leverage to get their children to behave. Comments such as, “You need to be good because you’re the pastor’s kid,” or “Be careful what you do because it will reflect on me” are words that can create an undo burden on the children. After all, the words of Paul in regard to pastors’ children speak more to the pastor and his ability to manage well than they do to his children. At the same time, Paul’s words are a reminder to the children that their faith and conduct is important. What is expected of them, however, is in reality no different than the behavior that God would expect from any of

¹⁵John H. C. Fritz, Pastoral Theology (St. Louis: CPH, 1945), 27.

his children, young or old. Faith and conduct are important regardless of what a father does for a living. They just seem to be more important if the father also happens to be a pastor.

The world of the Apostle Paul was, in many ways, no different than the world of today. When Paul wrote to Titus, he was addressing a social milieu in Crete in which immorality was rampant. When he addressed the qualifications of elders and indicated that their children should not be wild or disobedient, he was indicating that while all Christians should be examples of Christian living, it is especially important for the family members of a pastor to practice what he preaches. The words of Paul, therefore, are still relevant for today. Immorality remains as rampant as it was in the First Century. The world needs Christians who will live as shining lights in a dark place. The words of Paul speak to today's children of pastors, but not necessarily in terms of intentionally placing more pressure on them than other Christian children. Rather, they speak of the high calling and privilege as a Christian to be able to respond to God's grace and demonstrate obedience to both their Heavenly Father and earthly fathers. To be sure, pastors' children can fall and slip into disobedience. When they do, however, they too have at their disposal God's abundant forgiveness in Christ.

How should the pastor, family and congregation respond when the pastor's children do not live up to the ideals as presented by Paul? At times, pastors and their congregations may have questioned their ability to continue serving as a pastor as a result of a child who has grievously erred or who has, for example, been arrested for committing a crime. Some pastors may have felt the pangs of guilt upon reading Paul's words in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1,

and suggested to their church councils, or by their church councils, that they ought to resign from their congregations. What can be said about such situations?

Perhaps one answer is that sometimes children will rebel against the authorities God has placed over them, regardless of the amount of good managing offered by the father. One example of such an instance is the parable of the Prodigal Son, also known as the parable of the Lost Sons. While the parable does not indicate how the father raised his sons, the inference can be made from the character of the father that he would have managed his household in a godly manner. Even so, his sons decided to rebel. Sometimes this may happen in pastors' families as well.

However, the presence of a wayward child in the parsonage may be symptomatic of a deeper problem that exists with the pastor and his managing skills. One might speculate that the pastor/father, being insensitive to the needs of his children, provides little guidance or does not avail himself of the time to be involved with them in a meaningful way. In such cases, children may misbehave for the purpose of gaining more attention. If this were the case, then the pastor and his family would benefit from assistance in gaining the relational and managerial skills necessary to balance work at church and life at home.

For those who have felt guilt over children who have wandered from the faith or whose conduct has been offensive, perhaps the best construction is to consider the children in the parsonage as *simul iustus et peccator*. Both pastor/fathers and their children are sinful creatures who will sin and never be able to perfectly live up to the ideal as spelled out in Scripture. No pastor has always managed his family well with perfect dignity and temperament.

No pastor's child has always been obedient or acted in a perfectly disciplined manner. Both pastors and their children, therefore, stand under the cross in need of forgiveness. And, both pastors and their children are forgiven for Jesus' sake. Perhaps the greatest sign that a pastor is managing his household well is when the Gospel is primary in his family, when both pastors and children are able to forgive one another, just as Christ in love has forgiven them.

Considering that the pastor's family is such an important entity and under unique pressure relative to the pastoral office, what can be done to help pastors and their children cope with the expectations as delineated in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1? One vital aid is the family altar. When pastors' families regularly engage in family devotions, the Word will bring healing and strength and will help unite them in their faith in Christ. They will be able to confess their failures and find the forgiveness they desire and need when they do not live up to the standards outlined in the Scriptures. Above their roles as pastors and children is their most important relationship as brothers and sisters in Christ. Reaffirming and celebrating that relationship will help all to survive the parsonage.

Furthermore, the pastor must realize the importance of setting aside time for his wife and children. Personal family time is crucial if family members are to stay in touch with one another and if they are going to openly discuss the frustrations and pressures they feel as they cope with life in the parsonage. Taking the time to listen to one another and seeking to understand each other would go far in helping pastors and their children to deal with the demands placed on them.

Beyond the parsonage, much could be done in the local church and the church-at-large to better understand the unique circumstances of the pastor's family. Congregations need to be made aware of the sometimes unrealistic expectations they knowingly or unknowingly place of the pastor and his family. Instead of placing the parsonage family on a pedestal where the only place to go is down, they can understand that the people in the parsonage are people too and not different just because they are the pastor's children or wife. Indeed, on all levels of the church, from congregation to district to synod, much could be done to help educate pastors, their families and the laity regarding the dynamics of the parsonage, the proper role of the pastor's family in the church and how the pastor's family interacts with the congregation.

In the book The Shepherd Under Christ, the statement is made that "while Christian living is first of all a matter between the believer and his Lord, the Lord does tell him to be concerned about the impression which others receive of him, 'the Jews, . . . the Gentiles, . . . the church of God' (1 Cor. 10:32); 'in the sight of men' (2 Cor. 8:21); 'them that are without' (1 Thes. 4:12). This concern ought to be especially strong on the part of those who live in a parsonage" ¹⁶ Paul's instructions in 1 Timothy 3:4,5 and Titus 1:6 regarding the qualifications of overseers and elders, as they relate to their children, demonstrate the special concern that those who live in the parsonage should have toward the management of their family and how the conduct of the children reflects upon the ministry of their father, the pastor. In the final analysis, what can be learned from these texts is that a pastor

¹⁶Armin W. Schuetze and Irwin J. Habeck, The Shepherd Under Christ (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1974), 10-11.

who manages his family well will be better prepared to care for the people of God's church. And as the people of God's church receive proper pastoral care, they will be better prepared to support and care for the pastor and his family.

CHAPTER FOUR

GROWING UP IN THE LUTHER HOME

The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century brought about many changes to the Christian Church, not the least of which was the reinstatement of clergy marriage and the emergence of pastors' children. Since the Twelfth Century, when Pope Callixtus II issued a decree which banned clergy marriage, clergy in the Western Church had been forbidden to marry and raise children. At the time of the Reformation, celibacy by clergy was the norm, at least until Luther insisted that celibacy was not a higher order of life and that the Word of God allowed pastors to marry. As if to highlight his position on clergy marriage, Luther himself was married to Katharine von Bora on June 13th, 1525, an event which has been described as "the most unpremeditated and dramatic witness to his principles."¹

The marriage of Martin Luther and Katharine von Bora brought about what might be considered the prototype of the modern clergy family. Into this family was born six children, Hans, Elizabeth, Magdalena, Martin, Paul and Margaretha. In addition, the Luthers took into their home four orphaned children from amongst their relatives. This chapter will examine the attitudes of Martin Luther regarding his children, how growing up in a parsonage might have effected Luther's children and what clergy families of

¹Roland Bainton, Here I Stand, A Life of Martin Luther (New York: Abigdon Press, 1950), 286.

today, especially pastors' children, can learn about living in a clergy family from the example of the Luther home.

Life in the Luther home was far from what might be considered ordinary. By all accounts, life was busy for Luther and his family. Apart from the ordinary duties of running a household, the Luther home often played host to a number of guests and visitors which always numbered half a dozen.² The busyness of the Luther household in the Black Cloister did pose somewhat of a problem, at least for some. In a letter by an unnamed author to a potential guest of the Luther home, the following advice was given:

The home of Luther is occupied by a motley crowd of boys, students, girls, widows, old women, and youngsters. For this reason there is much disturbance in the place, and many regret it for the sake of the good man, the honorable father. If but the spirit of Doctor Luther lived in all of these, his house would offer you an agreeable, friendly quarter for a few days so that your Grace would be able to enjoy the hospitality of that man. But as the situation now stands and as circumstances exist in the household of Luther, I would not advise that your Grace stop there.³

The rather busy household of the Luther family obviously was apparent to those who observed the many guests going to and fro. While this no doubt created stress on Katharine to provide extra room and board, one might conjecture that the children of the parsonage found some delight and excitement at the seemingly constant parade of new visitors.

The attitude of Luther toward his children was determined by his understanding of family relationships as revealed in Scripture. In the "Large

²Theodore J. Kleinhaus, Martin Luther, Saint and Sinner (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), 112.

³E. G. Schwiebert, Luther and His Times (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), 597.

Catechism,” Luther stated his view that the Fourth Commandment “distinguishes father and mother above all other persons on earth, and places them next to himself.”⁴ He believed that parents were the primary relationship in the family, that the father was the head of the household and that children were to respect and obey their parents. Such a view is evident in one instance when one of Luther’s sons, Hans, was forbidden to see his father for three days as punishment for his disobedience.⁵ While this may seem stern to some, the incident demonstrates how important Luther regarded obedience on the part of his children. As Luther wrote, “a father can perform no act that is more unfatherly than sparing the rod and allowing the little child to have its own wanton way. For by such foolish love he finally raises a son for the executioner, who will later on be obliged to raise him in a different way -- with the rope on the gallows.”⁶

Still, Luther’s demand for obedience was not without temperance. He believed that “the apple should always lie alongside of the rod,”⁷ so that children will not “lose their friendly disposition toward parents and teachers.”⁸ The best model of all, according to Luther, is the manner in which God deals with us. He wrote:

⁴Theodore G. Tappert, ed., The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 379.

⁵Schwiebert, 596.

⁶Ewald M. Plass, What Luther Says, An Anthology Vol. I (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), 140.

⁷Bainton, 299.

⁸Plass, 142.

A father should handle his children in the manner in which we observe God handling us. God at times afflicts and chastises us, but He does not kill us; and in the midst of the affliction He consoles, strengthens, confirms, nourishes, and favors us. And when we have committed any sin against Him, He does not punish us according to the rigor of the Law but tempers the punishments. Moreover, when we have repented, He instantly remits the sins as well as the punishments. In the same manner parents ought to handle their children.⁹

The children who grew up in the Luther home would have expected their father to discipline and punish, yet, at the same time, they would have known him to be merciful and forgiving.

Luther dearly loved his children and considered them to be a great blessing in his life. On the occasion of the birth of his first child, Hans, Luther complimented himself that he had given up his monk's vow and could have the pleasure of being a father.¹⁰ On another occasion, "his colleague Jonas remarked that he saw the blessing of God in fruit and for that reason had hung a cherry bough above his table. Luther said, 'Why don't you think of your children? They are in front of you all the time, and you will learn from them more than from a cherry bough.'"¹¹

Luther's love for his children can be seen especially in the manner in which he handled the deaths of two of his daughters, Elizabeth and Magdalena. When Elizabeth died at the age of less than one year, Luther is recorded to have said that the impact of her death on him was that he had a

⁹Ibid., 142-143.

¹⁰Kleinhans, 113.

¹¹Bainton, 302.

“very sick, effeminate heart, so much do I grieve over her.”¹² Likewise, when Magdalena was lying on her deathbed at the age of fourteen,

Luther prayed, “O God, I love her so, but thy will be done.” And turning to her, “*Magdalenchen*, my little girl, you would like to stay with your father here and you would be glad to go to your Father in heaven?”

And she said, “Yes, dear father, as God wills”

When she was laid away, he said, “*Du liebes Lenichen*, you will rise and shine like the stars and the sun. How strange it is to know that she is at peace and all is well, and yet to be so sorrowful!”¹³

Clearly, Luther loved his children deeply and considered them to be God-given blessings in his life.

Luther’s love for his children was evident by the time and attention he devoted to his children. Even in the midst of his writing, teaching and other professional responsibilities, Luther took the time to include his children in his life and thoughts. At Christmas and Easter he would compose pageants for his children which included parts for all of them.¹⁴ In addition, Luther would compose hymns and carols.¹⁵ An example of one such hymn is “From Heaven Above To Earth I Come,” written by Luther for his children’s entertainment for the Christmas of 1534.

Even while he was away on one of his many travels, Luther would remember his children, write to them and bring home presents.¹⁶ An

¹²Schwiebert, 595.

¹³Bainton, 304.

¹⁴Kleinhans, 118.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 112.

example of one such letter was written by Luther to his four year old son Hans while Luther was in Augsburg in 1530:

My dearest son:

I am glad to know that you learn well and pray hard. Keep on, my lad, and when I come home, I'll bring you a whole fair.

I know a lovely garden where many children in golden frocks gather rosy apples under the trees, as well as pears, cherries, and plums. They sing, skip, and are gay. And they have fine ponies with golden bridles and silver saddles. I asked the gardener who were these children, and he said, "They are the children who like to pray and learn and be good." And I said, "Good man, I too have a son, and his name is Hans Luther. Couldn't he come into the garden, too, and eat the rosy apples and the pears and ride a fine pony and play with these children?" And the man said, "If he likes to pray and learn and be good, he too may come into the garden, and Lippus and Jost [the sons of Melanchthon and Jonas] as well; and when they all come together, they shall have golden whistles and drums and fine silver crossbows." But it was early, and the children had not yet had their breakfasts, so I couldn't wait for the dance. I said to the man, "I will go at once and write all this to my dear son Hans that he may work hard, pray well, and be good, so that he too may come into this garden. But he has an Aunt Lena he'll have to bring too." "That will be all right," said he. "Go and write this to him."

So, my darling son, study and pray hard and tell Lippus and Jost to do this too, so that you may all come together into the garden. May the dear God take care of you. Give my best to Auntie Lena and give her a kiss for me.¹⁷

This letter by Luther reveals what he considered to be especially important for his children. Along with studying and being good, Luther considered religious instruction to be of great importance. Along with everyone in the household, including guests, servants and extended family members, the children were expected to study the Catechism, pray, and

¹⁷Bainton, 303. For a complete account of this letter, see Schweibert, 595ff.

attend family devotions.¹⁸ His actions in this regard were consistent with his beliefs. In the “Large Catechism,” Luther wrote, “Let everyone know, therefore, that it is his duty, on peril of losing the divine favor, to bring up his children above all things in the fear and knowledge of God and, if they are talented, to let them learn and study so that they may be of service wherever they are needed.”¹⁹

From the evidence at hand, one can gain a sense of the general pattern of family life in the Luther home, especially as it related to the children. The Luther children would have been expected to be obedient to their parents and certainly would have been punished for their disobedience. At times, the discipline might have seemed harsh. Yet, at the same time, Luther would have tried to be fair in his discipline and would have used discipline as an opportunity to teach his children about the way in which God deals with His children.

The children in the Luther home undoubtedly would have known that they were loved by their parents. Even though their father was absent on many an occasion, the children would know that they were in their father’s thoughts as they received letters from him when he was away. Likewise, they might expect that their father would give them time and attention when he was home. Pageants and songs that were composed just for them would have reminded them that he cared for them and that they were not just an appendage in his life. Giving children time and attention was important in

¹⁸Schwiebert, 597ff.

¹⁹Plass, 140.

the Luther home, and Katharine played a large part in providing opportunity for Luther and his children to have adequate time together.²⁰

The children in the Luther home would know that they were expected by their father to grow in their Christian faith and devotional life. One can imagine a daily regimen in the Luther home in which all of the Luther children were expected to engage in daily recitations from the Catechism, study of the Scriptures and prayer. Likewise, the children, especially the boys, would be expected to study hard and learn their lessons so that they would be able to contribute to society as they matured.

The children of Martin and Katharine Luther must have had a life that was both interesting and, at times, frustrating for parents and children alike. The seemingly constant parade of visitors and students would have provided the Luther children with ample opportunity to learn much about the outside world. At the same time, one might speculate that there were instances when the children would be a bit too curious and Luther would be forced to order them away. However the details were played out on a day-to-day basis, life in the Luther household was full of excitement, and possible peril if the children overstepped their bounds.

One possible way of determining the effect that growing up in the Luther home had upon the children is by examining their lives after they grew into adulthood. Luther had his own ideas about what his children should do with their lives. At one point he believed that Hans should become a theologian, Martin a lawyer, and he observed that Paul had qualities of

²⁰Schwiebert, 596-597

being a warrior.²¹ However, time would reveal that the lives of Luther's sons would be different than what Luther thought they should be. Instead of following in his father's footsteps and becoming a theologian, Hans would study law and become an advisor in the Weimar chancellory.²² Likewise, Martin chose a path different from what his father might have chosen for him and studied theology without, apparently, ever having his own parish.²³ The youngest son, Paul, went on to eventually become a respected and capable physician.²⁴ He was in the employ of a number of high-ranking officials, and in the case of one, left his position because the religious views of the family were too liberal.²⁵ Apparently, the religious training Paul received at the hand of his father stayed with him into adulthood. Margaretha, the youngest and only remaining daughter of Luther, married a student from Wittenberg who was from a rich Prussian noble family and settled into the role of wife and mother. According to accounts, her marriage was happy until her death at the age of 36.²⁶

The future lives of the Luther children may reveal some possible effects, both positive and negative, that growing up in the Luther home had upon them. One possible positive result of the years of growing up with emphasis on learning was that all three of Luther's sons sought professions

²¹Ibid., 601.

²²Ibid., 602.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

that required discipline and serious study. Apparently, the concern for academics that was a significant part of their lives growing up stayed with them in their adult lives.

Another possible positive result was that the emphasis on religious instruction in the Luther home remained with them as they left home and continued on with their lives. In the case of Martin, theology was chosen by him as his preferred field of study. One can only speculate on the effect that having the same name as his father had upon Martin's choice to pursue the study of theology. As the namesake of his famous father, perhaps he believed that he needed to follow in his father's footsteps and become a theologian. In the case of Paul, his concern regarding theology is apparent from his decision to leave his employer because he believed the theology of his employer to be too liberal.²⁷ The religious grounding that Paul received from growing up in the Luther parsonage seems to have followed him into his adult life.

On the more negative side, one can speculate on the effect that living under the shadow of a famous father had on the children. The children would have experienced numerous times when Dr. Luther had to be away from home attending to other duties. During these times, the Luther children would probably have missed having their father at home, just as pastors' children today might miss their fathers when their fathers must be absent from the home. Any sadness on the part of the Luther children over the absence of their father, however, would have been ameliorated as they received letters from their father, such as the one quoted above.

Furthermore, one might imagine that the Luther children would have been in competition with others for their father's time and attention. The

²⁷Ibid.

Luther home seems to have been well above average in terms of the number of visitors, extended family and others who darkened the door of the Black Cloister. In such a familial milieu, the Luther children might have had to wait their turn to see their father, along with the many others who had appointments or who stopped by unannounced. The busyness of the Luther household may have produced stress at times in the children as they had to vie for the attention of their father.

Another potential stress that might have been experienced by the Luther children was the feeling of living in a glass house. Not only was their father a very famous man that drew the eyes of people toward him and his family, the Luther children would have had their home invaded by any number of people at any time that would have been eyewitnesses of the goings on in their home. The Luther children may have struggled with their identities as individuals as compared to their identities as sons and daughters of Dr. Martin Luther. Maintaining a sense of identity and privacy for family members in the home must have been difficult, and would have required good management skills in order to provide identity and privacy within the household. While the maintenance of identity and privacy would have fallen upon Luther himself, much credit is given to Katharine for providing a home atmosphere that tried to maintain as much as possible a semblance of family life. The observation has been made that “Katharine’s efficient home management must have played a large part in arranging for the children to enjoy intimate companionship with their father while at the same time providing the necessary hours of quiet and solitude for his prodigious labors.”²⁸

²⁸Schweibert, 596-597.

While much of any discussion is speculative regarding the effect that living in the Luther home might have had upon the children of Martin and Katharine, the observation could be made that living in a parsonage in the Sixteenth Century bears some resemblance to living in a parsonage in the Twentieth Century. While the Luther home may have been busy even by today's standards, many of today's clergy families also are very busy households that must balance personal, professional and familial demands. If the Luther children had to jockey for the attention of their father, clergy children of today likewise may feel that the work of the their father/pastor takes too much time away from their relationship with him.

The feeling of living in a glass house is another issue with which modern clergy children could relate to the Luther children. Even though most children of pastors today may not experience the tremendous amount of visitors and guests that were experienced by the Luther children, clergy children nonetheless must cope with a life that is very much in the public eye. Furthermore, pastors' children may struggle with identity as they are often known as and called the "pastor's kid." Maintaining personal and family identities apart from the work of the pastor/father requires careful maintenance in parsonage families today as much as it did in the Luther home.

The conclusion has been made that "in his love for the children Martin set the pattern of Protestant parsonage life -- a pattern that all Christian fathers would copy with advantage."²⁹ What can modern clergy families, and especially the children of pastors, learn from the Luther family and growing up in the Luther household? The Luther home brings to mind the

²⁹Kleinhans, 118.

importance of providing a solid identity as a Christian family and as Christian individuals within the family. Regardless of how busy Luther and his family were, evidence suggests that they consistently practiced a devotional life. Luther insisted that his children, as well as everyone in the Black Cloister, take time for Bible reading, Catechism recitations and prayer. The need for a solid devotional life is no different for modern clergy families who find themselves beset by many demands on their time. The practice of Bible reading and prayer is necessary in order to strengthen the faith of family members. At the same time, such a practice would remind them of their primary identity as a Christian family. This is especially important for the children of pastors as they wrestle with their identity as individuals compared to their notoriety as the pastor's children. They need to see themselves for who they are as forgiven sinners loved by their heavenly Father, an identity that supersedes any other identity which they may possess. Furthermore, the practice of regularly reading from the Catechism also is important for the children of Lutheran pastors, as the activity helps to maintain their identity as Lutheran Christians. In the Luther home, what was believed seems to have been just as important as who they were in Christ. The need for sound theological instruction for the children of clergy is equally as important today.

The characteristic of integrity is noticeable in an examination of the manner in which Luther dealt with his family life. In other words, Luther seems to have tried to practice what he preached. Luther believed that the father should be the spiritual head of the household and the way in which he saw to the spiritual needs of his family demonstrates that he took his responsibilities in this area seriously. He was a staunch advocate of

discipline on the part of parents as well as obedience on the part of children. Luther clearly insisted on obedience and discipline in his household and appears to have ruled with a firm hand. At the same time, Luther was willing to be merciful and allow the apple to lie alongside the rod³⁰ in order to provide for his children a picture of God's loving discipline for his children. Furthermore, Luther's integrity as a father is seen in his concern that his children know of his love and concern for them. Even though he would be absent, sometimes for days at a time, he remembered to write to them. When he was home, Luther would take the time to do special things for his children, such as write hymns and pageants. Also, he was known to have suggested games for children for the purpose of religious training, games he may have first tried out on his children.³¹ All in all, despite his busy schedule, Luther seems to have wanted his children to know that he cared for them by giving them his time and attention.

The issue of integrity by pastors in how they deal with family life is especially important for their children. If a child hears his father/pastor say one thing and then do another, the child may learn not to respect his father and consequently may not respect his father's vocation as a pastor. On the other hand, a child whose father seeks to provide consistency between his words and actions will go far in helping his children respect him as both a father and a pastor. For example, children need a consistent devotional life if they are to understand who they are as children of God in Christ apart from

³⁰Plass, 142.

³¹Martin Luther, Luther's Works, ed. Ulrich S. Leupold , vol. 53 (American Edition), Liturgy and Hymns, The German Mass and Order of Service (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 66.

the vocation of their father. The conscientious pastor will seek to provide that identity through regular devotions and prayer with their children.

Likewise, children may be more forgiving of the amount of time their father/pastor spends in his work at the church if they see him making the most out of the time they do have with him. Despite his busy life, Luther demonstrated that pastors can spend quality time with their children regardless of their schedules. Making the effort to give children time and attention communicates to children that they occupy an important place in the life of their father/pastor.

As Luther showed, the manner in which a father/pastor goes about maintaining discipline in his home is important partly in terms of what his actions say to his children. A pastor who preaches about the Law of God will seek to teach his children the importance of obedience and respect for parents and others in authority, and the necessary consequences brought about by disobedience. However, in doing so, the pastor would do well to model for his children the reality of mercy and forgiveness. To some degree, children receive an impression of their heavenly Father by the manner in which they are treated by their earthly fathers. As Luther demonstrated in both his writings and his life, "A father should handle his children in the manner in which we observe God handling us."³²

Clergy and their families of today could learn from the Luther household of the importance of trying to maintain a proper balance between one's professional, personal and familial life. In spite of the many activities and responsibilities that seemed to swirl around and inside the Luther home, Martin and Katharine appeared to try to maintain balance between work

³²Plass, 142.

and family. As parents try to maintain balance, the children will learn that they are important in the family. Furthermore, they will learn the importance of themselves learning how to balance and order their lives so that they can fulfill all their various duties and responsibilities.

Perhaps the most important learning that clergy families of today can receive from the Luther household is the importance of the predominance of grace. Whether the issue be discipline, religious training or recreation, Luther appears to have wanted his children to know of their gracious God and His love for them in Jesus Christ. Above all, the predominance of grace is something that clergy families today need as they face the difficulties and pressures that can come with the territory of being part of a pastor's family.

When Martin Luther married Katharine von Bora on June 13, 1525, he helped to set in motion the reinstitution of the clergy family. In doing so, Luther also unknowingly provided a prototypical example of parsonage life for subsequent generations of pastors and their families. As pastors and their children reflect on the life of Luther and his children, they may discover that while life in general in the Sixteenth Century was different in many respects from life today, life in the parsonage has for the most part stayed the same. The children of Martin Luther lived in a home where their father was very busy and may not have had as much time for his children as did other fathers. The Luther children may have felt at times as though the distinction between them and their well-known father was blurred. They would have witnessed people coming and going, invading the boundaries of their home. Yet, above all, they would have lived in a household where the Gospel and the Word of God were predominant. They would have understood that they were children of God by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

They would have enjoyed a father who made every effort to give his children time and attention. If the assertion is true that “in his love for the children Martin set the pattern of Protestant parsonage life,”³³ then pastors and their children would be wise to study and learn from the pattern of parsonage life that had been established in the home of Martin and Katharine Luther.

³³Kleinhans, 118.

CHAPTER FIVE
PRESSURES AND PROBLEMS
OF GROWING UP AS A PASTOR'S CHILD

In the Spring 1989 issue of the magazine, Leadership, there is a cartoon in which a pastor's wife is looking through a dictionary with her husband looking on. The caption reads, "Well, I'll be! They're right; here it is: PERFECT, adj., complete in all respects; without defect or omission; flawless; like a pastor, his wife, and their children." Another cartoon in a different magazine pictures two boys sitting on the ground outside a house in which one boy says to the other, "Ministers' sons are supposed to be troublemakers. Where did we go wrong?"¹ These illustrations are perhaps more revealing than they are humorous in the respect that they reveal commonplace attitudes that people often have regarding pastors, their families and especially their children, namely, attitudes and preconceptions that pastors' children are either perfectly well-behaved or, conversely, bad and troublemakers. In the article "Children of Clergymen: Do They Fit the Stereotype," the authors observe that

in the public mind, the children of clergymen are stereotyped to a greater extent than are the offspring of almost any other professional group. According to popular conception, so-called PKs (preachers' kids) are academically superior and highly motivated to achieve. Their upbringing is supposed to have given them firm moral values and a commitment to serve mankind. They are regarded as taking a liberal and humanitarian outlook, being concerned with social problems, and

¹Christian Ministry, Vol. 2, No. 4 (July 1971), 46.

having an optimistic attitude about their solution. In addition, it is assumed that many PKs are, to some degree, rebels against their parents and that this rebellion is manifested in a tendency to reject the religion they were raised in and to indulge in “wild” behavior. Another bit of folklore is that PKs are social outcasts, isolated from their peers.²

In the words of one pastor’s child,

I encountered both stereotypes. The kids at school expected me to be a saint, and the people at our own church expected me to be a troublemaker. The kids at school would say things like, “We can’t say or do that around her” or “I thought you were a Christian.” The people in the church would blame me for broken objects or misplaced things. For example, there was a problem with a stove in the church, and an elder came to me and said, “You really shouldn’t play with the stove.”³

As these examples demonstrate, growing up in a parsonage can be a complex experience, one in which many dynamics can produce pressures on clergy families.

This chapter will examine some of the dynamics that occur within the clergy family system, how those dynamics can produce pressures on the children, and how those pressures may lead to problems.

One question that needs to be asked from the outset is, “Are clergy families different from other families?” In response to this question, some may answer with a resounding “Yes!” They may point to the fact that clergy families do not exist in a vacuum. Rather, they exist within the framework of the congregation in which the pastor/father serves. To some extent, clergy families dwell within a “fishbowl” or “glass house.” They live under the

²Alan E. Bayer, Laura Kent, Jeffrey E. Dutton, “Children of Clergymen: Do They Fit the Stereotype?”, The Christian Century 89, No. 25 (June 28, 1962): 708.

³Cameron Lee, PK: Helping Pastors’ Kids Through Their Identity Crisis (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 78.

scrutiny of the congregation and, to some degree, the community, which places pressure on the pastor's spouse and children to behave and live in ways that do not bring dishonor on the pastor. Furthermore, congregations may place more demands on clergy families than they do on the families of lay people to set a godly example and be involved in the church. Add to this the fact that clergy families face the prospect of the disruption caused by frequent moves. Indeed, clergy families may be considered in some respects to be different from other families.

On the other hand, as Edwin Friedman points out, the notion that clergy families are different from other families is a myth. While they may have pressures that come from being so closely tied to congregational life, they nonetheless "neither exceed nor lack their quota of the human family's problems."⁴ Problems identified by Friedman that clergy families experience along with all other families are those relating to closeness and distance, the capacity for flexible separation, the ability to maintain self in the context of intimacy, the binding quality of others' expectations, the persistence of misunderstanding, dissatisfaction and resentment in human experience, or the displacement and projection of unresolved issues from one relationship to another, much less from one generation to another.⁵ Friedman goes on to point out the disadvantage of thinking that clergy families are different by saying that "the emphasis on how clergy families are different sociologically allows members of those families to avoid seeing their own role in their own

⁴Edwin H. Friedman, Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue (New York: The Guilford Press, 1985), 278.

⁵Ibid., 278.

victimization.”⁶ By claiming to be different from other families, members of clergy families can avoid personal responsibility for their own problems, while at the same time using their perceived differentness as a family as an excuse for the presence of tension. Indeed, some families may adopt a martyr complex in which they allow themselves to believe that the problems they suffer are simply the crosses they must bear that come with being in a pastor’s family. On the surface, such an attitude may seem noble, yet, underneath, it does nothing to bring about constructive change. While clergy families may be affected by particular stresses, such as the close tie and identity between the work of the father/pastor and the identity of the family, they are nonetheless regular families in the sense that they operate as families and exhibit the same interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics that are operative in all other families.

Family Systems Theory

In order to understand the pressures that are placed upon the children of pastors, the context of the clergy family needs to be understood. The field known as “family systems theory,” as developed by Murray Bowen, reveals some of the forces that are at work in all families, also clergy families. According to Bowen, the family is affected by the following concepts: differentiation of self, triangles, nuclear family emotional system, family projection process, emotional cutoff, multigenerational transmission process, sibling position, and societal regression.⁷ For the purposes of this study, the

⁶Ibid., 281.

⁷Irene Goldenberg, Herbert Goldenberg, Family Therapy: An Overview (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1991), 148.

concepts of differentiation of self and triangles will be explored, along with the effects these dynamics can have upon the children of pastors.

Differentiation of Self

“Differentiation of self” refers to “the forces within the family that make for togetherness and the opposing forces that lead to individuality.”⁸ In any family, a tension exists between the needs of the family and the needs of the individual family members. The ability of the family members to be able to see themselves as unique persons within the family is important if they are to develop in a healthy, constructive manner. Friedman describes differentiation as “the capacity of a family member to define his or her own life’s goals and values apart from surrounding togetherness pressures, to say ‘I’ when others are demanding ‘you’ and ‘we.’”⁹ In families, members can experience low differentiation if they are unable to separate their thoughts and feelings as individuals from the thoughts and feelings of the family, a condition known as “fusion.” Individuals with such a low degree of differentiation “are likely to be at the mercy of involuntary emotional reactions and tend to be dysfunctional even under low levels of stress.”¹⁰

In clergy families, differentiation of self can be difficult to achieve. The work of the pastor and his family life can become fused in such a way that everything the family does relates to the church and, in effect, becomes an extension of the church. Instead of engaging in family activities apart

⁸Ibid., 148.

⁹Friedman, 27.

¹⁰Goldenberg/Goldenberg, 148.

from the congregation, clergy families may find that the only time they have togetherness as a family is when they are jointly involved in an activity at church. If this is the case, clergy families may develop a low identity as a family apart from the congregation. Furthermore, identity can be a problem for the individual members of the family as they try to determine who they are as unique persons apart from the church and from being in a clergy family. The wife of a pastor is not just a wife, she is “the pastor’s wife,” a designation that carries with it added responsibility as one who is married to a public figure. She may be expected by members of the congregation to be more involved in the congregation than other wives or be a leader in groups. Likewise, the children of pastors are separated from other children by such labels as “PKs” or “TOs” (theological offspring). In the experience of one pastor’s child, he was told during a football game by other children that he could not get angry about being repeatedly and intentionally tripped because he was “the pastor’s kid.” In another case, a pastor’s son was greeted with a chorus of “Holy, holy, holy” upon entering a classroom in high school. The ability of wives and children of pastors to see themselves as unique individuals apart from the work of their husband and father, the pastor, is difficult, a difficulty that is made even more burdensome when people keep reminding them of their identity as people who live in a parsonage.

Pastors’ children may find differentiation difficult because of the realization that their behavior reflects on their father and his work. Sometimes the pressure to behave may be spoken. Instances may have occurred in which pastors have told their children that they need to behave because what they do will reflect on them and their ministry. The children may be reminded time after time of 1 Timothy 3:4,5 and Titus 1:6 in which

Paul wrote that the children of overseers and elders are to be obedient, believers and not participators in wild living. If, in fact, a pastor experiences difficulties in his parish, the children who receive such messages may blame themselves for their father's problems.

Having and preserving an identity apart from their father/pastor is further complicated because of the expectations of parishioners. Members of the congregation may expect that their pastor's children will set a good example for their own children, and may become vocal if the pastor's child acts in ways that do not measure up to their expectations. Still others may expect that the pastor's children will take a lead in activities at church, such as taking a leadership role in the youth group. If the pastor's child does not show a strong interest in such activities, church members may think that something is wrong with the child or that the pastor is somehow not fulfilling Scripture by managing his household well. Without realizing what is happening, the congregation may impose a double standard on the children of their pastor, all the while ignoring their own responsibilities as parents and the lack of participation by their own children. The real losers, however, are the pastor's children. They are the ones who must live with the messages, spoken or otherwise, that relay the expectations that the congregation places on them.

Along with the pastor and parishioners who at times place pressure on the pastor's child to be perfect, the peer group of the pastor's child may also exert some pressure by reminding the pastor's child of his particular role as the pastor's child. The pastor's child may be made to feel as though he is strange or left out because his parents will not allow him to see certain movies, especially if his peers are allowed to view them. He may be

reminded by his peers that he is the pastor's child, and that his father would have a fit if he knew his child had seen the movie. The same could be said for listening to music. In some parsonages, certain forms of music may be banned which can make the pastor's child feel odd by not knowing the lyrics to a current song that everybody is talking about. While this discussion is not intended to suggest that pastors' children should be able to do whatever they like or expose themselves to less-than-proper influences, it does point out the pressures pastors' children can face as they must live in the world with their peers.

The pressure to be perfect does not have to be spoken or intimated by members of the congregation, the pastor himself, or peers for the tension to exist within pastors' children. They can be very aware of who they are in relation to their father and his work at church simply by virtue of who they are as pastors' children. An example of how the realization of being a pastor's child can effect behavior concerns a pastor's son and Confirmation Class. As the pastor's son, he resisted answering questions in class because he was afraid that the other students would think of him as a know-it-all, and then resent him for it. The result was that the pastor's son rarely answered questions in the group, unless called upon or if no other student knew the answer. This tendency then continued on with the son into adulthood. While this situation did not lead to any serious behavioral difficulties, the example does serve to demonstrate how the awareness of being a pastor's child can effect the personality and development of pastors' children. Without even having to be told, pastors' children may indeed have a very good understanding of who they are and what that identity means in relation to their behavior.

The fact that the identity of pastors' children is intertwined with their pastor/father can be seen in the example of a nine-year-old daughter. During the evening meal after finishing the first day of school, the daughter announced that she had to answer a question in school by telling something about herself. Her response to the question, she said, was that her father was the pastor of a Lutheran church in town. Initially, the pastor felt gratified that his daughter thought so highly of his vocation as a pastor. Upon further reflection, however, he realized that his daughter's identity was so enmeshed with who he was as a pastor that she could not, at least at that moment in school, think of herself apart from her relationship with him as a pastor. After assuring his daughter that he thought it was nice that she thought about him, he then asked her to say something just about herself. She then responded, "I like to read."

The children of pastors can fall victim to an identity crisis or, at the very least, an identity confusion, in which they do not know who they are apart from being tied into their role as a pastor's child. In a parsonage where the members of the family are fused with one another and the congregation, they may develop very little of a sense of individuality. Yet, as children, especially as they move into the adolescent years, they will seek to discover their identity, sometimes by seeming to distance themselves from the parsonage and the congregation. As a way of fitting in and seeing themselves apart from the parsonage and church, they may seek out non-Christian friends, to the dismay of their parents.

The inability of pastors' children to differentiate themselves from being pastors' children can have adverse results in both attitudes and behavior. As a result of the almost constant pressure to live up to the

expectations of parents and parishioners, pastors' children may develop a resentment towards their situation. They may yearn for a kind of life in which they can enjoy a sense of anonymity and not have to live under an ecclesiastical microscope. Such a negative feeling toward the parsonage may result, for example, in a pastor's child looking forward to going to college, not only for the education, but for the opportunity to get away from the fishbowl.

Resentment towards living in a clergy family can lead to rebellion as a means of finding one's own identity. In the book, PK: Helping Pastor's Kids Through Their Identity Crisis, Cameron Lee provides the example of a pastor's son who rebelled against his situation. In the son's words, "I had such a love-hate relationship with my father and the church. As a child. I think you kind of equate the two. You equate God with your father. So during those early years, and especially during those times of trying to struggle for an identity, it was extremely difficult for me. I rebelled against being a PK."¹¹ Rebellion can be manifested in various ways. A pastor's child may rebel and assert his identity by acting out at church. After such an episode during Sunday School in which a pastor's son was particularly disagreeable, his teacher was heard to say, "And he's the pastor's kid!" The very rebellion that was perhaps intended to differentiate the boy from his father only served to entrench his identity as a pastor's child. Rebellion may also take more destructive avenues, such as involvement with children with bad reputations as a way of proving that they can be just like other kids and to disassociate them from the pressure to be perfect. Or, pastors' children may live a double life in which they play the part of the obedient, faithful

¹¹Lee, 25.

child at church and home, but live wildly when they are away from home with their friends. When pastors' children are banned from viewing movies or listening to music, but "everyone else is doing it," they may be tempted to sneak around behind their parents' back and engage in the forbidden activities in order to feel as though they fit into their peer group, an activity which is not limited to pastors' children.

Emotional Triangles

In addition to differentiation of self, another factor that effects families in general and clergy families in particular is the presence of "emotional triangles." According to Bowen, emotional triangles form the basic building block in a family's emotional system.¹² He defines the process of triangulation as follows:

A two-person emotional system is unstable in that it forms itself into a three-person system or triangle under stress . . . As tension mounts in a two-person system, it is usual for one to be more uncomfortable than the other, and for the uncomfortable one to "triangle in" a third person by telling the second person a story about the triangled one. This relieves the tension between the first two, and sifts the tension between the second and the third.¹³

As two people experience stress in their relationship, they will often bring a third person or issue into their relationship in order to help alleviate the stress and achieve a sense of balance. However, while the purpose of triangulation is to bring about balance, or homeostasis, into a family and

¹²Goldenberg/Goldenberg, 151.

¹³Cameron Lee, Jack Balswick, Life In A Glass House (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 40.

decrease the level of anxiety, the initial problem remains and will be brought into the triangulated relationship. The connection between triangles and differentiation of self can be seen in that, “generally speaking, the probability of triangulation within a family is heightened by poor differentiation of family members; conversely, the reliance on triangulation to solve problems helps maintain the poor differentiation of certain family members.”¹⁴ While the presence of triangles may give the appearance that families are experiencing less stress, the end result is that the primary twosome remains as stressed as ever. They have simply triangulated into their relationship a third person or issue as a scapegoat to help alleviate the tension without working on their problems. In other words, “triangles are a form of deceit. They are ways to steer around the truth about a relationship. And like lies, triangles are capable of producing tangled webs of relationships, a network of interlocking triangles, held together by a common desire to avoid facing the truth.”¹⁵

Given the possibility of clergy families and their members having a low differentiation of self apart from the church, many possibilities exist for the members of clergy families to find themselves triangulated into issues at home and church. A pastor’s wife, feeling the pressure to be the perfect wife and mother, may deal with her stress by placing even more pressure on her children to behave at church. In turn, the children, feeling the pressure, may rebel against the situation and act out their frustration by being “bad.” Suddenly, the children become the scapegoats for the main problem of the

¹⁴Goldenberg/Goldenberg, 152.

¹⁵Lee/Balswick, 48.

mother's inability to deal with the stress of being a pastor's wife. The very thing that needs to happen, namely, that she work out her frustration with her husband's work, does not happen since a new problem has emerged that draws the focus away from her own struggle.

Pastors' children also face the prospect of being brought into a triangle by members of the congregation. Lee observes that "some church members will try to ensnare the children because either they have failed to achieve their goals or they do not want to confront the pastor directly." He goes on to say: "But triangling is more than a failure to view the children as separate people; there is an ulterior motive, namely, to get to the parents through the children."¹⁶ An example of such a situation involved a pastor who was experiencing problems with certain members of his congregation. The anger and frustration between the pastor and the congregational members was of such an extent that verbal outbursts by some of the members would occur during and after meetings. Church members that supported the pastor would escort him home so that he would not have to endure even more verbal attacks as he walked across the parking lot to the parsonage. Caught in the middle of the fray was the pastor's son. The son did not attend meetings, nor did he engage in acts and words of anger toward the congregation. Yet, he was involved in the respect that members of the congregation would make remarks to him, such as, "We want you to know that we like you. We just have a problem with your father." In essence, church members were using the son as a way of trying to influence his father. He was unfairly triangled

¹⁶Lee, 51.

into a tense relationship, hence feeling the pressure that should not have been his to endure.

Apart from parishioners triangling the pastor's child when their real problem is with the pastor, sometimes pastors and their wives can triangle the congregation when their core issue is with their child.¹⁷ To illustrate, a pastor and his wife may have a problem with their child's behavior. Instead of dealing directly with their child and using their authority as parents, they may handle the situation indirectly by creating and enforcing strict rules, all the while blaming the rules on the congregation and the effect the behavior of the child will have upon the father's ministry. They may try to manipulate their child into more proper behavior by invoking 1 Timothy 3:4, 5 and Titus 1:6 in which the Apostle Paul talks about the behavior of the children of overseers and elders. The result of such triangulation is that the child may learn to resent the congregation and the ministry of the father because of the demands they seem to place on him. The parents may think that they are handling the problem constructively. However, by bringing in the congregation, they are attempting to avoid personal confrontations with their child and are avoiding having the child's anger directed at them. In the end, the entire situation is distorted and the very real possibility exists that the child will develop an antagonistic relationship with the church, if not rebel altogether. As these examples demonstrate, the presence of emotional triangles are unfair to those who are triangled in, as they involve individuals who have nothing to do with the problem at hand.

How do pastors' children react when triangled into a conflicted relationship, whether that relationship be between father and mother or

¹⁷Lee/Balswick, 176.

father and congregation? To be sure, those who find themselves in such a situation experience a whole range of emotions. In the case of the boy mentioned above, he experienced a high degree of anger and confusion, as he tried to figure why some of the members of the congregation could be so mean to his father, yet appear to be so nice to his children. Some may react by trying to cut themselves off emotionally from the situation, or by openly rebelling against the church and the clergy family. Others may quietly resign to the situation and play the role of the scapegoat by becoming the problem child. However the intrapersonal stress is manifested, the presence of emotional triangles has the potential to produce great emotional turbulence within those who are innocently brought into the process.

Structural Family Theory

In addition to the family systems approach to the dynamics of family life, another theoretical framework, known as structural family theory, also provides insights into the nature and dynamics of clergy families and the resultant pressures on their children. Structural family theory, which is associated primarily with the work of Salvador Minuchin, can be described as a theory that “focuses upon relationships among various family subsystems, the family boundaries, and the capacity of a family to readjust to changes brought about by developmental stages.”¹⁸ Some of the concepts of structural family theory that will be discussed in relation to clergy families are family rules and family boundaries.

¹⁸George A. Rekers, Counseling Families (Dallas: Word, 1988), 189-190.

Family Rules

Within a family, many rules, both verbal and nonverbal, exist to govern the behavior and relationships of its members. The pastor's family is no different. The Scriptures themselves indicate that rules are to be an integral part of the pastor's family, especially in relation to the children. In 1 Timothy 3:4,5, the Apostle Paul delivers the following instructions to Timothy in regard to qualifications of overseers: "He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity" (NASB). Likewise, in Titus 1:6, Paul concludes that "an elder must be . . . a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient." These texts indicate that the pastor is to maintain a well-disciplined household in which the parents govern in a dignified, loving, and not abusive, manner. Noteworthy is the fact that these passages are directed to the pastor, and not his children. Even though these passages reveal that the children of pastors are expected by God to be well-disciplined and behaved, the burden is on the pastor and not his children to provide and maintain a well-managed household.

In "keeping his children under control," no more is expected of the pastor than any other Christian parent. Yet, the presence of rules can, in and of themselves, produce tension in the pastor, his wife and their children, especially when applied in the larger context of the congregational family. Pastors may feel pressure that their children are to be models of obedience and behavior, especially when they are at church. Rules that are fair are appropriate. Sometimes, however, rules that are imposed upon the pastor's children place them in almost impossible situations. For example, a pastor may expect his child never to run in the sanctuary, and may be severely

chastised in the presence of other children when the rule is broken. At the same time, the children of parishioners are merrily carrying on, running up and down the aisle and hiding behind the altar. The inconsistency between rules that pastors enforce on their children and the rules of parishioners can produce tension in a pastor's child. Suddenly the child is faced with having to make a decision whether to listen to the father, or run with the other children and face certain punishment. Furthermore, in such a situation, pastor's children are singled out from the rest of the children as the "PK," maybe even enduring gentle, yet embarrassing, reminders from the other children that "you can't do that because you're the pastor's kid." Ideally, both pastors and parishioners would have the same family rules that govern behavior at church, yet, this is often not the case. When the rules diverge, tension within the pastor's child can mount.

Conversely, pastors, in an attempt to keep their children from being singled out, may enforce few rules at church. However, if the pastor's child is doing what the other children are doing and happens to misbehave, then suddenly the child becomes the pastor's kid once again. The pastor's child may be reminded by a concerned parishioner that he, of all people, should set a good example for the rest of the children. Or, the other children may appeal to the rightness of what they were doing because, after all, the preacher's kid was doing it too. One might come to the conclusion that the only time pastor's children can enjoy anonymity at church is when they are doing nothing wrong, or, if they are doing something wrong, by not getting caught.

Family Boundaries

Another concept of structural family theory is that of boundaries. In any family, appropriate boundaries exist that separate various subsystems within the family, such as mother/father, father/son, father/daughter, mother/daughter, and so on. The subsystems within the family are defined by their boundaries, and determine who will or will not participate in the subsystems. Boundaries can also serve to define the family as a whole and differentiate it from the outside. In the clergy family system, boundaries are extremely important if the family is to maintain a healthy sense of its own identity apart from that of the congregation.

An overlap of boundaries in the clergy family can be termed "boundary ambiguity."¹⁹ Boundary ambiguity comes as a result of clergy families having to assume various roles and identities that overlap one another. For example, a pastor who has teenage children may find himself in the position of being a teacher and at the same time having to teach own children. This may create some stress for the father/pastor as he must deal with his expectations of his child as compared to his expectations of the other students. This type of situation might also produce stress in the pastor's child if the child senses that his father, the teacher, is more demanding of him than the other confirmands. In a clergy family where boundaries are unclear and diffuse, the family and individuals within the family may have difficulty understanding who they are in relation to the congregation, who they are in relation to each other and who they are relation to themselves.

¹⁹Sue Schaar, "Health and Wholeness in Professional Church Worker Families: What Are The Issues?", Issues in Christian Education (Winter 1997, Vol. 31, No. 3): 9.

In addition to boundary ambiguities, others go further and speak of boundary violations. Lee identifies several boundary violations that can be thrust upon the clergy family by the members of the family as well as the congregation. The first of these violations is “congregations expecting too much of the clergy family’s time and energy.”²⁰ Most families need time to themselves if they are to develop and grow in closeness. While many nonclergy families may experience a tension between the demands of family life and work, the problem seems particularly prevalent among clergy families. The problem is only heightened when the family sets aside time for family time, only to have it disrupted by a crisis at church, an unexpected meeting, or a member who stops by the parsonage at suppertime to borrow the key to the church.

As Lee observes, “the need to compete with a demanding congregation for their parents’ time and attention is one of the most common complaints of PKs.”²¹ Many pastors’ children may have voiced the common complaint that their fathers never seemed to spend much time at home. Pastors may feel as though the demands placed upon them by the congregation allow them the freedom to take off a maximum of one day per week, a day which can easily be disrupted. In the words of one pastor’s child, “In the home, it bugged me that we could never do anything as a family without the 95 percent probability of someone calling or coming by, crying their eyes out over something!”²² Not only is the pastor’s regular time off in jeopardy of

²⁰Lee, 36.

²¹Ibid., 37.

²²Ibid.

disruption, so is his family vacation. Not uncommon is the scenario that a pastor receives a telephone call while on vacation that a church member has died. The pastor may respond by cutting his vacation short to attend to the crisis, with the hopes of making up the time at a later date. However, when vacations are prematurely brought to an end, it is doubtful if the time will indeed be recaptured at a later time. Once again, the family takes a back seat to the needs of the parish. If this happens often enough, the pastor's family may experience a sense of dread whenever they embark on a family vacation that the same thing could happen again.

The second boundary violation mentioned by Lee is "clergy neglecting to maintain clear boundaries with their congregation."²³ In one pastor's family, the church was quite often the main topic of conversation at mealtimes. The pastor and his wife would talk about members of the congregation, then say to the children something to the effect, "Remember, you can't repeat this to anyone." Such conversations are a clear violation of a boundary in which pastors' children are unduly burdened with having to maintain confidentiality. In the event that a pastor's child did divulge some information shared by his father at home, he might be chastised, when, in fact, it was the father who put him in a difficult situation in the first place.

Pastors who talk unkindly about church members in the presence of their children run the risk of causing their children to doubt whether or not their father truly practices what he preaches. To be sure, no pastor is perfect and has, in all probability, said or done things that do not quite mesh with what he says on Sunday morning. Yet, if pastor's children witness frequent

²³Ibid., 39.

incongruent behavior in their father, they may learn to turn off what he says altogether.

Sometimes, pastors may be unable to draw clear boundaries between the church and their home because of the feeling of having to sacrifice for the sake of the church or for the sake of their egos. If pastors are driven to sacrifice their time and energy so that people will like them, they may find that there are times when they are not only sacrificing themselves, but their families as well. This condition of having to sacrifice in order to meet one's own personal needs has been termed the "Messiah Trap."²⁴ The trap exists in that, "for some people, service to others grows not from strength, but from weakness; it is the result, not of grace overflowing in their lives, but of a need to be needed. It is the disappointment of living with the illusion that if I am 'good' and sacrifice enough, someone will finally treat me with the honor and respect I crave."²⁵

One problem with the Messiah Trap is that enough is never enough. If a pastor is insecure about himself, or imagines that his position in the congregation is in jeopardy, he may believe that he must work all the harder in order to make sure that the church will not want to revoke his call. Or, if a pastor has a need to be needed in order to feel as though he is worthwhile, then sacrifice can actually become an addiction as the pastor must work harder to reach the pinnacle of popularity with his parishioners. The end result, however, is that the pastor is attempting to meet his needs in such a way that he deprives his wife and children of their need to have an attentive

²⁴Ibid., 40.

²⁵Ibid.

husband and father. While he may seem to be a hard worker, and probably is, his family sees him as an absent father, willing to sacrifice precious moments with his family so that he can help supervise a subcommittee at church. The problem with sacrificing time with family is that such time, if not captured in memory and experience, is lost in a past that can never be recaptured. The church will always have subcommittees, but the pastor's children will never be able to repeat the time they could have had with their father as they were growing up.

The third boundary violation is "letting the demands of the pastor's professional role and image contaminate the parent-child relationship."²⁶ To some degree, pastors may have a difficult time separating who they are as individuals from their vocation. The same can be said for their children. The role of the pastor as a spiritual leader and example thrusts upon his children the similar role of having to be leaders and examples in the congregation. Pastors' children may be expected by their fathers to be present for every worship service and special event. They may be expected to constantly be on their best behavior lest they tarnish the image of their father by acting disrespectful or disobedient. What is often forgotten by the pastor, however, is that his children are human, in every respect of the word. They are not perfect, but are children who, like all others, will at times get tired and fussy and misbehave. Pastors, like any parent, may enjoy a sense of pride from the accolades received by their children when church members notice how good and well-behaved they are. Such praise, however, can easily serve the interests of the pastor to have children who make him look good. Such a desire can lead the pastor to be overly strict towards his children in order to

²⁶Ibid., 42.

make sure that people will know that he is able to manage his household well. When this happens, the pastor is allowing his personal needs to violate his boundaries as a father and places undue pressure on his children.

When pastors measure their children's behavior in terms of the overall impact on their role and image, the children may experience being punished not because they were bad, but because they embarrassed their father. A pastor's son relates the following experience:

I remember one time pulling a prank at school. For my father - I think this is part of the pastoral psyche that he went through - it was so important what other people thought. The teacher called him and told him what I had done. And he got so embarrassed. I can remember so vividly, he came home, and I can picture him almost like a mountain lion, just pouncing on me. He was fairly liberal with the belt. And the things that he said still stick out in my mind. It wasn't so much what I had done; it was what people thought.²⁷

This experience is especially interesting in that it demonstrates how in addition to a pastor being concerned about his image in relation to the congregation he serves, he may also be very concerned about how his children's behavior reflects on his image in the secular community. Pastors enjoy not only status in the church, but in the community. They may be looked upon by their community as leaders and examples of morality and decency. When pastors' children get into trouble, their misbehavior can have a detrimental effect upon the pastor's image in the community. This fear of potential embarrassment may cause pastors to enforce tight restrictions on their children, or, at the very least, elicit an occasional remark directed at the children that they need to be careful what they do because they wouldn't

²⁷Ibid., 43

want to hurt their father's reputation. Reminding children that they need to remember who they are as Christians is appropriate. Reminding them that they need to remember who they are because they are the pastor's children, however, can be damaging.

The extent to which the pastor's role and image is tied to his children can be seen in what sometimes happens when pastors' children do get into trouble. When faced with the reality, for example, that his child has been arrested for breaking the law, a pastor may agonize over his fitness to be a pastor, agony fueled by Paul's list of qualifications in 1 Timothy and Titus. The pastor may come to the conclusion that his ministry has been besmirched to the point that he should tender his resignation. That such a situation might occur is not an impossibility and, no doubt, has been played out many times in various ways. The underlying force at work, however, is guilt and embarrassment on the part of the pastor that his child's behavior is reflective of his competency and image as a pastor.

Another boundary violation takes place when congregations idolize the pastor's family.²⁸ Congregations may look up to the pastor's family and place it on pedestal. Such attention may not be considered all bad, and some members of pastors' families may actually enjoy the limelight. However, idolizing can take a nasty turn when the idols do not live up to the expectations of their fans. In the secular world, people seem to be fascinated when celebrities experience problems. The fascination is no different when clergy families are embroiled in difficulties. People seem to find some enjoyment and smugness from finding out that people who were supposed to

²⁸Ibid., 44.

be upright and pious turn out to be just like the rest of humanity. Cutting down those on the pedestal somehow serves to make others feel better about themselves.

Related to the issue of idolizing clergy families is the double standard that parishioners sometimes place on those in the parsonage.²⁹ What may be acceptable for children of church members may be considered taboo for the pastor's kids. For example, the child of a church member may decide to sleep in and not attend a worship service because he was out too late the night before. His absence, while noticed, might not raise too many eyebrows. However, if a pastor's child missed going to worship because he was out too late, his absence would be readily missed, which would more-than-likely elicit many questions by concerned members about his absence. The assumption might be made that the boy was absent because he was sick. One can only imagine the reaction if his mother, the pastor's wife, said, "No, he decided to sleep in because he was out too late last night. It's all right if he misses church once in a while." The double standard that exists for many pastors' children may serve the purpose of soothing the consciences of lay people when their own children misbehave. Somehow, the behavior of one's child does not seem so bad if those who are supposed to be good get into trouble from time to time.

The fifth boundary violation identified by Lee is "making clergy responsible for their children's actions, and PKs responsible for their parents' actions."³⁰ While children are always, to some degree, products of their

²⁹Ibid., 45.

³⁰Ibid., 49.

upbringing, the awareness of the responsibility of pastors and their wives to produce obedient children is particularly strong. As the Scriptures indicate in 1 Timothy 3:4, 5 and Titus 1:6, pastors do have the responsibility to raise their children in a loving and well-disciplined home, which is no more or less than what would be expected of any Christian home. However, the possibility exists that even when this is done, children may decide to rebel and act in ways that are considered to be unsatisfactory. Placing all the blame on the pastor and his wife for the behavior of their children only serves to increase their feelings of failure and guilt.

When pastors' children rebel, the cause is not always because they did not receive the care and love of a Christian home or that their father was a poor father. Rather, pastors' children may rebel as an attempt to assert their own individuality in a system where their identity is so tied in with the vocation of their father. Wandering away from the church or becoming involved with people who seem to be the antithesis of the clergy family may be avenues in which pastors' children try to disassociate themselves from the parsonage to discover their own identity. While this may help explain why pastors' children sometimes rebel, it in no way excuses the behavior. However, to automatically assume that when a pastor's child goes astray it must be the pastor's fault is unfair to the many clergy homes where children are brought up with Christian love and discipline.

The second part of Lee's fifth boundary violation, namely, that "PKs are not responsible for the actions of their parents," appears to be closely related to the sixth, and final, boundary violation, of "triangling PKs into conflicts that have nothing to do with them."³¹ Pastors' children may find

³¹Ibid., 51.

themselves caught in the middle of a dispute at church between the pastor and members of the congregation in which anger is vented at the pastor's children. Pastors' children may be made to feel ostracized by members who are at odds with their father as though they were part of the problem, when, in fact, they bear no responsibility at all for the dispute. The problem becomes even more serious if the pastor's child is placed in a position in which he must choose one side over the other. A pastor's child may be torn between love for his father and the loyalty to a friend if the friend is on the side that is in conflict with his father. The tragedy of being in the middle of a triangle is that the position can be terribly lonely.

In addition to Lee's six "boundary violations," another violation of appropriate boundaries might be postulated as congregations not respecting the personal living space of their pastor and his family. In the church of today, many pastors own their own homes and may be able to maintain a degree of privacy for their families. On the other hand, many pastors live in parsonages, which, of course, are owned and maintained by the congregation. The congregation may, whether they know it or not, make sure the pastor knows that he and his family are living in a borrowed house. In the words of one layman who was speaking to his new pastor who had just moved into the parsonage, "We are letting you live there."

When congregations own a parsonage, an attitude may exist on the part of some members that they can come and go as they please. In one mission congregation, for example, church meetings were regularly held in the basement of the parsonage since they could not meet during the week in the mortuary that they rented for the worship service on Sunday morning. Such a situation could easily produce tension for the pastor's family,

especially if no certainty existed that the congregation would be building their own facilities any time soon. Children might be reminded to be quiet and not play too loudly because their father was in a church meeting downstairs. Wives would have to deal with members coming and going almost at will, along with the work of cleaning up afterwards. Furthermore, with parishioners actually meeting in the pastor's living space, discipline of children would be under scrutiny. One can imagine the eyes of church members glancing upward, wondering what was going on, if during a meeting in the basement of the parsonage a pastor's wife spanked her child, only to be followed by the mournful cry of the pastor's child. Pastor's children might even learn to take advantage of the situation if they knew that their mother tended to lighten up on the discipline during meeting times. Disciplining children can be difficult enough of a task without having the congregation in the home noticing what is going on, and then worrying about what they might think.

While living in a parsonage does have the benefit of the pastor not necessarily having to worry about paying for and making repairs, the pastor and his family nonetheless are in the position of being at the mercy of the congregation or the Board of Trustees for maintenance. Pastors may be fearful of being too insistent that repairs be made or remodeling be done lest they be perceived as being too demanding. Furthermore, the children in the parsonage may be reminded from time to time that they need to be very careful how they treat the house, since it belongs to the church. Pastors' children who live in a parsonage must become accustomed to the idea that they must be careful what they do at home in relation to the parsonage,

because if they are too hard on the house, people might get angry at their father.

This boundary violation of not respecting the privacy of the pastor and his family may manifest itself in still more ways. If the parsonage is located next to the church, the congregation might be accustomed to using the parsonage lawn as a play area for children who are attending events at church, such as Vacation Bible School. Yard space is just as much an area of personal privacy as is a house. Generally speaking, people do not enjoy children other than their own playing on their lawns without permission and very few people appreciate people stepping on their flower beds or in their gardens. Yet, if this took place in the parsonage yard, the pastor may feel as though he should not say anything lest he offend a member of the congregation.

The sad result of congregations not respecting the personal living space of the pastor and his family is that the family cannot escape the tension of feeling as though they are on display. A common saying relates the sentiment that "there is no place like home." Home is to be a safe haven where people can relax and escape from the pressures of their work and world. Yet, the pastor's home is not always such a safe haven, especially if that home is a parsonage. Since many parsonages are located next to the church building, pastors and their families may feel restrained from doing things that other people take for granted. Even the ordinary practice of sunbathing may be restricted as people in the parsonage wonder what the church members will think.

Relocations

Another issue that relates to clergy families, along with many nonclergy families in our highly mobile society, is that of frequent moves. According to one source, the average pastorate in 1982 was three to four years.³² Growing up in the parsonage is to live in an atmosphere where the possibility of facing the disruption of moving is very real. Relocating to a different town is a stressful experience for the entire family. What is familiar is left behind, whether it be friends or knowing the best route to the grocery store. The family on the move faces a situation where everything is different, and when everything is different, people experience uncertainty and insecurity. While some may approach relocating with an attitude of excitement, others may experience intense anger and grief over leaving their friends and the life to which they had become accustomed.

The children of pastors can experience negative feelings as a result of relocation. Robert M. Stevenson, in conducting research on a group of pastors' children, observed that "many members of the group felt that while moving was a hardship, they had gained from the wider experience which moving brought." He went on to say, however, that "at the same time, those who expressed the greatest unhappiness in living in a parsonage related their pain to the experience of unwanted moves -- moving too often or moving at the wrong time."³³

³²Robert M. Stevenson, "Children of the Parsonage," Pastoral Psychology 30(3) (Spring 1982): 183.

³³Ibid., 184.

Pastors' children who move frequently can lament the fact that they never had the opportunity to develop close friendships that lasted for a long period of time. While moving is purported to build character and may teach children how to make friends, frequent moves do not provide them the time nor opportunity to develop strong relationships. Friendships apart from the family, even apart from the congregation, is important if the members of the pastor's family are to develop a healthy identity.

Another problem with frequent relocations is that they may have the effect of causing members of the pastor's family to become enmeshed with one another. Enmeshment occurs when the boundaries between family members are weak and they are not able to develop a sense of identity apart from the family as a whole. In other words, "enmeshment is like a bowl of pea soup where all the peas are squashed and you can't tell one pea from another pea."³⁴ When clergy families move frequently, they may depend on the other members of the family to the extent that they are hindered from developing strong friendships apart from the family, friendships that are important if they are to develop as individuals. They may become squashed together so that they see things in terms of "we" and not "me." Furthermore, frequent moves may have the effect of instilling a sense of hopelessness in the children. "Why," they may think, "should I try to make friends? We'll probably just move again." The children in the parsonage may decide not to get too close to their friends, since not having close friendships is worth the price if they do not have to experience the pain of separation. Pastors' children who experience frequent moves may look back on their lives and

³⁴Rekers, 40.

realize that they have very few roots and few close friends. For those with such a background, one of the most dreaded questions is, "Where are you from?"

Along with frequent moves, pastors' children can experience hardship if they perceive that the move is occurring at the wrong time. One example that contains elements of both frequent moves and moving at the wrong time is the case of a pastor's son who moved twice within the four years of High School. During the time of the first move, which took place during his Sophomore year, he was disappointed that he had to move since he had just been chosen to participate in a school musical. The second move occurred at the beginning of his Senior year, which added the tension of having to go through the routine of making friends all over again. As a result of the second move, the son never experienced a strong desire to return for class reunions, or even keep in touch with old acquaintances. The sense of identity that many feel in relation to their graduating class was never developed.

A move can also be considered unwanted by the pastor's children if they have lived for a long time in one place. One pastor's child, after discovering that they were moving from a town he had lived in for many years, made the remark that when he moved to his new town he would not make any friends. After one year of moving, his self-fulfilling prophecy was proven to be true, for he felt as though he had no friends. Pastors' children who have lived in one place for a long time have had the opportunity to develop close friendships and may identify strongly with their life in that place. Leaving everything behind can be devastating as they grieve being separated from their friends and the life to which they have become accustomed.

Deciding to move can be an extremely difficult decision for a pastor, especially as he tries to evaluate the impact on his family. Unfortunately, a pastor may adopt the attitude that his decision must be based purely on the contents of the call documents, thereby overlooking the effects that such a move may have on his family. The experience of a pastor terminating his pastorate has been described as “running barefoot through thistles -- ignoring the pain and running as fast as you can.”³⁵ The same could be said for pastors’ children who must move. Children may have the message communicated to them that moving is just part of being the child of a pastor. They may be told that they, too, must be willing to sacrifice because their father is first and foremost a pastor. Such words, however, may not be meaningful to children who are facing the prospect of leaving everything behind. They may end up swallowing their hurt, only to have it resurface at a later time. In the end, they may develop feelings of bitterness and resentment toward the move, and if left unchecked, may develop into bitterness and resentment toward their father and the ministry he represents.

To be sure, pastors need to evaluate the call based on the needs of the congregations in question. This does not mean, however, that he should not take into consideration the needs of his family. The members of the pastors’ family are not simply appendages that must follow the pastor wherever he goes. Rather, they are individuals who deserve serious consideration when contemplating a move. Part of “managing his household well” (1 Tim. 3:4) may include taking the needs of his family into consideration as seriously as his vocation as a pastor.

³⁵Stevenson, 185.

Whether moving is frequent, occurs at the wrong time or takes place after one has lived in one place for a long time, the experience will be, to some degree, painful for the children of pastors. While consideration may be given to their needs and feelings before and during the move, little attention may be given to their pain after the move has occurred. The family, upon moving to a new location, will find themselves very busy. The house needs to be put in order and boxes unpacked. The pastor's office must be set up and in working order so that he can begin working, in many cases, almost immediately. For a time, the pain can be ignored as members of the pastor's family are running to and fro as they try to get their lives in order. At some point, however, the pain of moving must be dealt with so that any bitterness and resentment that the children may harbor can be dealt with in constructive ways.

Children Without A Pastor

One more facet of growing up in a parsonage is that pastors' children are, in effect, people without pastors. By and large, pastors' children may regard their fathers as fathers first and pastors second, if at all. Parishioners, on the other hand, have a different relationship with their pastor. He is one called by the congregation to proclaim God's Word and administer the Sacraments. He exists outside of their families in a special relationship with them. For the pastor's children, however, that extra, special relationship may not seem to be so apparent. They do not have someone outside of their family that they can call their pastor. They do not have the opportunity to be involved in a process whereby they call someone to have a special spiritual relationship with them. Instead, they have a

father whose job is to be a pastor. From a relational perspective, their father may be a pastor, but he is first and foremost in their minds their father.

One would hope that parishioners have a relationship with their pastor in which they feel that they have someone outside of their family that they can turn to for objective counseling. In the event that they are experiencing difficulties and problems in their lives, they can go to their pastor for support. If a pastor's child, on the other hand, is experiencing problems in his life, especially if they relate to his parents and home life, to whom does he turn? In such cases, pastors' children do not, in reality, have a pastor they can go to for objective counsel and advice. Furthermore, if a pastor's child were hospitalized, does his pastor stop by to visit? More than likely, in such a situation, the child would consider that his father was visiting him, and not his pastor. Donald P. Troost, in the article, "The Minister's Family -- People Without A Pastor," wrote, "One thing is clear. Ministers are parents to their children first and ministers to them only when possible. In many instances the primary relationship precludes the possibility of the other relationship."³⁶

If, indeed, pastors' children tend to see their fathers as fathers and not their pastors, then this might effect aspects of the children's life within the context of the congregation. For example, when parishioners see a man in the pulpit they acknowledge one with whom they have a special relationship as a pastor. However, when a pastor's child sees a man in front of the church or in the pulpit, he sees his father. One pastor's child mused that he rarely

³⁶Donald P. Troost, "The Minister's Family - People Without A Pastor," The Reformed Review 31 (Winter 1978): 76.

listened to his father's sermons. Since he saw his father on a daily basis, and usually received some sort of synopsis of the sermon on Saturday anyway, he tuned out the sermon and would think of something else. To be sure, one does not have to be a pastor's child in order to tune out a sermon. Yet, for the pastor's child, listening to the pastor deliver a sermon on Sunday morning can take on a different character when the pastor is his father, and he sees and hears the pastor at home everyday anyway.

Coping Constructively

An examination of the dynamics of the clergy family system reveals that while pastors' families are no different than other families in the sense of the dynamics at work in the family, they nonetheless face difficulties as they attempt to cope with the unique relationship between their identity as a family and the work of their father and the relationship they have with the congregation he serves. As pastors' families exist in that relational framework, hope does exist that the members of such families can cope constructively with the pressures they face as they learn more about their situation and how to handle the forces at work in their families. The discussion that follows will examine various ways in which pastors' families and their children can cope with the problems and pressures they experience as they dwell in the parsonage.

The ability of the members of pastors' families to develop their own identities begins as the family itself seeks to maintain an identity apart from the congregation and their father's work. While attaining this identity may be difficult, as was discussed earlier, such differentiation is not impossible to achieve. The pastor's family needs to realize that its worth as a family does

not come from its association with the congregation. They are a unique family within all the families of the church. The pastor's family has its own roots, history, goals, traditions, rituals and life experiences apart from the church, an identity that deserves to be given the maintenance it requires. Instead of blending with the congregation and dulling its identity, the pastor's family can celebrate its individuality.

Important to the family's ability to maintain its distinctiveness is time spent together as a family. Pastors are reminded of the importance of taking time off away from the congregation in order to get away from the pressures. The same could be said for their families. Many pastors' families may discover that the time they spend together as a family is spent largely in the context of the congregation. The importance, therefore, of pastors' families spending time together apart from the congregation cannot be overemphasized. Being together allows the members of the family to become better acquainted and stay in touch with each other's dreams and goals. Pastors' families have a need, along with other families, to develop their own rituals and traditions that can act as glue to hold the family together. One such ritual is the family altar, gathering around the Word of God as the source of strength and guidance. As families maintain their time together, they can help one another cope with the tensions and pressures they feel as individual members of the family. As the family members are strengthened individually, then the family as a unit is better prepared to cope with the pressures it faces both from within itself and outside from the church and the world.

As the pastor's family experiences differentiation apart from the congregation, the members of the family may find the task of developing

their own identities much easier. This differentiating from the greater to the lesser assumes that if a pastor's family is aware of the need to differentiate in the greater context as a family, they will also be more aware of the need to differentiate in the lesser context of the individual members of the family. The family will encourage its members to develop their own goals and dreams apart from the family. They will try not to communicate the message that their identities are tied into the congregation, but rather, that each member is unique as special creations of God. They will attempt to develop the particular gifts and abilities of the family members, without automatically assuming that such abilities must always be used at church, even though the opportunity would exist for them to use their abilities in such a way. The cry of many a pastor's child is, "I just want to be me." The clergy family can help its members discover what "me" is as distinct from the "we" of the family and especially the "we" of the congregation.

If the children of pastors are to be able to develop their own identities, then their parents need to be aware of the pressures and problems their children face as pastors' children. All too often, pastors and their wives may not be aware of the influences and dynamics that are working on their children. They may wonder why their children are behaving in certain ways or why they are reacting to the congregation in a negative manner. Knowledge of the pressures on the family in general and children in particular is paramount if pastor's children are to be assisted in the task of coping with life in the parsonage.

In this day and age, many pastors begin their work as pastors as a second career. They may bring into their new situation children who are not accustomed to what life as a pastor's child can be like. To be sure, some of

those children may have fathers who were policemen, doctors or teachers, which represent some of the vocations that may have similar familial pressures as those of the pastor's family. Yet, they may be unequipped to understand life in the limelight or life that is so intertwined with a congregation that their very identity as a family and as individuals is threatened. Having lived for fifteen years with a sense of anonymity in relation to the congregation, hearing some remark that is made about being "the pastor's kid" can be a confusing experience for a child, especially for one who is already going through the tough adolescent years.

Along with knowledge, however, is the equally important need for openness and a willingness to want to talk with the children about what they are experiencing, both good and bad. Pastors' children exist in a family and congregational context that many would have a difficult time understanding for the simple reason that they have not experienced the same context. Therefore, as parents in a clergy family learn more about their life as a family they can communicate with their children that they do want to understand and are willing to listen to the frustrations and concerns of their children. Furthermore, pastors' children can be helped as they are brought into contact with other children who have the same background and experiences, so that they can help one another deal with their situations. Much benefit can be gained when people who share common backgrounds can help one another sort through their thoughts and feelings.

All in all, as Lee suggests, pastors' children have a tremendous need to want to feel "normal" in the sense that they do not want to have to live under unrealistic expectations.³⁷ To some degree, this sort of normalcy may be

³⁷Lee, 186.

difficult to achieve for the simple reason that they are in the position of being pastors' children, and, whether they like the situation or not, some pressure to be "good" will exist. On the other hand, pastors' children need to be respected as normal children by both their fathers and congregations alike without having unrealistic expectations placed on them. Pastors' children are *simul iustus et peccator*. They are sinful and will, at times, misbehave like other children. They, like all other children, are not perfect, and to insist that they measure up to a different standard is unfair and unrealistic. At the same time, pastors' children live under the same forgiveness that their fathers proclaim Sunday after Sunday. One pastor's child summed up the concern by stating that "they (pastors) should treat their kids as 'normal.' In a way, I think it is important that we set an example because if we don't, this is reflected on my dad, and people may not respect him. But I don't think unrealistic expectations should be placed on us."³⁸ Regarding pastors' children as children first, apart from the work of their fathers, would do much to help them develop their own sense of self.

The children of pastors need to be regarded as Christians who live with the same expectations as any other Christian. They must be taught to understand that if certain behaviors are expected of them, those expectations are no more or less than what would be expected of any other Christian child. Rules and expectations at home and church should be consistent and fair if they are not to be interpreted as relating to the father's role as pastor. Nor should the congregation impose a double standard on the pastor's children

³⁸Ibid.

and communicate to them that they should be different because of their station in life. The exclamation made by the Sunday School teacher after the pastor's son acted up in class, "And he's the pastor's son!" could be amended if the teacher would take the time to speak with the pastor as a father without intimating that a different set of expectations existed for the pastor's child than for the other children. In order to help pastors' children feel as though they are not living under unrealistic expectations, people must be aware of what they say and the impact that their words can have on others, especially those who are wrestling with their identity in the first place.

Important to the process of differentiating as families and as individuals within those families is the establishment and maintenance of proper boundaries. A cartoon in Leadership magazine includes the caption, "Pastor and Mrs. Wilson were finally able to establish clear boundaries between their church and family lives."³⁹ Above the caption is a picture of Pastor and Mrs. Wilson, standing poised with automatic weapons in the towers of the fortress they have erected around their home, complete with barbed wire. Signs stand outside the fortress that read "Beware of dog!" and "Trespassers will be shot!" While humorously overstating the measures that are necessary in order to preserve the identity of the pastor's family, the cartoon nevertheless points out that boundaries between the parsonage and the church are important if family identities are to be maintained.

As the cartoon mentioned above portrays, boundaries, if they are to be effective, should be clear both to the pastor's family and the congregation. With tact and patience, the pastor can communicate to his congregation the importance of respecting the personal living space of himself and his family.

³⁹Leadership 13(4) (Fall 1992): 57.

The average person would be somewhat taken aback if people just walked into their homes without knocking. The same is true for pastors and their families. Even if the family lives in a parsonage, the congregation has the responsibility to respect their privacy. Furthermore, respecting the special nature and importance of meal times is important as they are not only times for family members to relate and visit, but times when many families engage in family devotions. If pastors and laypeople alike would use common sense and remember to “do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” many privacy and boundary issues might be resolved as people remember to consider the needs of the other.

While maintaining proper boundaries between home and church is vital for the health of pastors’ families, it is also important that those boundaries not be too rigid. Pastors’ might overreact to the pressures placed on their children and not encourage their children to be too involved in the church. To do so, however, would deprive their children of the rich experience of congregational life. Furthermore, pastors may impose their own understanding on their children that they should not have close friendships with people in the congregation. Pastors’ children are not little pastors in the sense that what is true for pastors is always true for their children. Children, whether they be children of pastors or children of laypeople, need the special relationships that can exist in the congregation. In the end, boundaries that are too rigid may only enforce what the pastor is trying to overcome, namely, the feeling that the pastor’s family and children are somehow different than the other people in the congregation.

Another way in which pastors’ children can be aided in their life as pastors’ children is for their parents to have a positive attitude about the

ministry and about their life as the pastor's family. All too often, pastors will discuss their problems and conflicts in the congregation over the dinner table. This boundary violation can place the pastor's children in an uncomfortable position of knowing negative things about people in the congregation, people they may consider to be friends. Furthermore, discussing problems at home may lead pastors' children to the conclusion that the ministry is something that they would definitely not want to get involved with when they grow up. Pastors and their wives need to be very careful of the attitudes they express to their children, for the tension experienced by the parents, will, to some degree, be felt by the children. When discussing the congregation, pastors and their wives would do well to remember that there are other ears in the house. Keeping everything from the children is, of course, impossible. Even the most secretive of conversations have ways of being heard. Yet, parents can give an overall positive view of the ministry and the congregation to their children by focusing on the positive aspects of the church and their life as the pastor's family. After realizing that during supper nearly the entire conversation had dealt with negative aspects of the congregation, a pastor said to his children, "We want you children to know that being a pastor is not all bad," at which point the conversation turned into an opportunity to talk about good things in the church.

In order to provide the best possible atmosphere for the children of pastors, whether that be at home or in the congregation, pastors, their families, congregations and the church-at-large must be aware of the dynamics and pressures that are part of growing up in a parsonage. Through such avenues as pastor's conferences and journals, pastors can be educated

as to the pressures their children may indeed be experiencing as pastors' children. Pastors need to be open to the possibility that there may be times when their children are experiencing hardships that exist simply by virtue of being the pastor's child. The problems they face are real, and as they become more aware of their perceived differentness, they may become confused and even rebellious. In the final analysis, pastors bear the responsibility to be able to manage their households well. Part of managing the clergy family is for pastors to learn more about the parsonage as it relates to his work and congregation, as well as the pressures with which the members of his family might be confronted. One might even go so far as to argue that such knowledge is not optional, but rather necessary if pastors wish to provide the best possible climate for their children.

Furthermore, much could be done in the local church, as well as the church at large, to better understand the unique circumstances of the pastor's family. Congregations need to be made aware of the sometimes unreasonable expectations they knowingly or unknowingly place on the pastor and his family. Instead of placing the parsonage family on a pedestal where the only place to go is down, they can understand that the people in the parsonage are people too, and not different just because they are the pastor's children or wife. Indeed, on all levels of the church, from congregation to district to synod, more could be written and said to help educate pastors, their families and the laity regarding the dynamics of the parsonage, the proper role of the pastor's family in the church, and how the pastor's family interplays with the congregation.

At the beginning of this chapter, the question was examined of whether or not pastors' families are different from other families. On the one

hand, clergy families may be considered to be different experientially in that they do encounter life in relation to the church in ways uncommon to laypeople. As a result of the relationship of their father to the congregation, pastors' children face pressures that can be challenging. On the other hand, clergy families are no different than other families systemically in that they exhibit the same family dynamics as all other families. Perhaps the hope and help for pastors' families lies partly in the ability of the Church to provide assistance to such families by helping them see the experiential through the systemic, thereby helping pastors, their wives, and especially their children realize and experience the blessings that can result from growing up in a parsonage.

CHAPTER SIX

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF GROWING UP AS A PASTOR'S CHILD

The previous chapter focused on pressures and problems that may be experienced by children who grow up in a clergy family system. Growing up as a pastor's child, however, is not all negative. On the contrary, pastors' children can enjoy some advantages and blessings that come with growing up in a clergy family. This chapter will explore some of the positive aspects of being the child of a pastor.

Pastors' children have the advantage of growing up in an atmosphere where religion is not just a sidelight, but a way of life. All too often, children in Christian homes receive the impression from their parents that religion is something that is done on Sundays, or they learn by example that the teachings of the Christian faith are largely to be ignored in daily life. Pastor's children, on the other hand, tend to have parents who are committed to their Christian faith and who seek to bring their children up in the love and nurture of the Lord. While life in a parsonage is far from perfect, an attitude of forgiveness and love can more easily exist when those very virtues are studied and proclaimed by the father of the family on a regular basis. In this regard, as with any Christian parents, the importance of having a life which is consistent with what is taught is important for the parsonage. Pastors' children, as much as anyone, understand that their fathers are not perfect. However, when the children of pastors hear of the importance of patience, yet witness their fathers consistently lose their tempers at home,

the inconsistency will stand in stark contrast to the spoken word. Pastors' children, along with the pastors themselves, stand in need of daily forgiveness and acceptance. The parsonage is a wonderful place for children to learn that while people are not perfect, they can forgive and live together in peace.

Along with the emphasis on living the Christian life, many pastors' children have the benefit of regular devotions and prayer. While the children may not always realize the importance of such an activity, a consistent devotional life helps to form their spiritual life and identity. In addition, the children of pastors are raised in an environment in which they are exposed to theology on a scale that is not ordinarily experienced by the children of laymen. As such, they may learn much about their Christian faith and teachings that will stay with them throughout their lives. The knowledge that pastors' children have of Scripture and theology does give them the advantage in some contexts, such as Confirmation class. Pastors' children come into the class with a background from which they may know much of the information before it is presented. While some pastors' children may be uncomfortable with the thought that they might be considered a know-it-all by other students, they nonetheless have an advantage over other children who are not as knowledgeable. When one considers the pressures of the world that are laid upon children in general, to be grounded in Scripture and faith is a very important positive aspect of living in a clergy family.

Pastors' children also have the advantage of having fathers whose schedules can be quite flexible. Occasionally, a pastor might lament that he wished he had more time with his children. He may experience guilt as a result of having to miss important events in the life of his son or daughter

because of the demands and responsibilities of the parish. However, the very thing that pastors see as a negative, namely, their schedules, can be turned into a positive in which they can give their children the time and attention they need. Apart from times that have been definitely set for meetings and appointments, pastors have a schedule which is somewhat flexible and over which they can exercise control. Indeed, the flexibility of a pastor's schedule is the key that can enable him to better meet the need of his children for his time and attention. For example, if a pastor is in a position in which there is no way for him to avoid missing his child's play at school, he might still be able to share in this event by attending a dress rehearsal during the day. By doing this, he would show a definite interest in his child's life and would communicate that his child is important to him. The child would know that his father was concerned and was trying to make the best out of the situation. All that is needed is for the pastor to consider that his children are important enough to include in his schedule, even to the point of including them in his appointment book. While some pastors may react negatively to the thought of having to schedule time in their appointment books for their families, the fact remains that if one does not intentionally make the time, the time often is not made. With a little creativity, the flexibility of a pastor's schedule may make it possible for him to spend time with his children in ways that could not be managed by fathers who work from eight to five.

Another benefit of growing up in a parsonage family is the "built-in support system" that accompanies a pastor's family wherever they go.¹ The support system available to the pastor and his family includes, in part, the

¹Herbert L. Bomberger, "The Parsonage: A Way of Christian Family Living," Lutheran Quarterly 26 (February 1974): 62.

congregation and the circle of friends of other clergy and their families. This support system can be especially meaningful when pastors and their families move to a new town, a situation which is always a possibility for pastors' families. Relocating can be an extremely strenuous activity. The pastor's family, however, has the advantage of moving into a situation where they are eagerly welcomed by the members of the congregation. The pastor and his family are, ordinarily, readily respected and accepted by the people and are welcomed with open arms into the congregation. The support offered by the people of the church, therefore, can assist in making a stressful transition more bearable. This is especially important for the pastor's children who may have been heartbroken at having to leave friends. The stress of moving is not limited to pastors' families or their children. They do have the advantage, however, of entering a new location with an instant support system. This is not a benefit that is necessarily enjoyed by nonclergy families.

The support system that is available to a pastor and his family that comes from being part of a Christian community is important at other times than moves. In the event of an illness or death in the pastor's family, people in the congregation may offer their care, prayers and support as the pastor's family faces the difficult time. In a world where people are all too often isolated, the pastor and his family can enjoy the friendships of like-minded Christian people who will support them as they face the struggles of their lives.

From the perspective of family systems theory, the maintenance of proper boundaries is necessary if families and the individuals within the family are going to develop a healthy sense of their own identities. However,

a positive aspect of living in a clergy family is the link the family has between various relationships that come with being a clergy family. The observation has been made that “family life is less fragmented for most parsonage families because work, home, church and friendships all intersect and interrelate.”² This “ecology of family life”³ can be beneficial to the pastor’s family as they recognize “the relationships that already exist”⁴ and as they “understand our connectness to one another.”⁵ While proper boundaries in a pastor’s family need to be maintained, the family can find much needed support through the various relationships with which the pastor’s family is linked. Recognizing and appreciating those relationships is definitely a strength and positive benefit that comes with living in a pastors’ family.

While children of pastors may consider their station in life, at times, to be filled with pressure, the role of the pastor’s child also carries with it some degree of status in the congregation. Some pastors’ children may be tempted to take advantage of their situation and use their relationship with their father to gain some privilege in the congregation. Still, the pastor’s children are customarily looked upon as being special in the eyes of the congregation. They are loved by the people and can enjoy the kindnesses that are often shown to the pastor and his family. Growing up in a parsonage can be a very

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Cameron Lee and Jack Balswick, Life in a Glass House (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989), 283.

⁵Ibid.

positive experience as pastors' children witness the outpouring of love by members of the congregation which sometimes comes in the form of gifts and goodies at Christmas.

Given the nature of the work of a pastor, growing up in a parsonage has the added advantage of exposing the children to many different experiences of life. One girl was overheard to say to her friend who was the daughter of a pastor, "You're lucky! You get to go so many places just because your dad is the pastor."⁶ Along with the opportunity for travel, pastors' children also are in a position to meet people and dignitaries that are visiting the church or who the pastor is visiting. Furthermore, pastors' children are often exposed to the nitty gritty of life from which other children may be more shielded. While all people to some degree live with the reality of suffering, pastors' children are accustomed to having their fathers visit the sick, suffering and dying. Also, funerals may not be as mysterious for pastors' children as they might be for other children since funerals are so much a part of their fathers' lives. As they are exposed to more of the experiences of life, pastors' children may become more well-rounded in character and have a keener sense of the realities of life. This may be a positive aspect of growing up in a parsonage as the children are better prepared to cope with certain aspects of life. They may be more aware "of our humanity -- its strengths and weaknesses."⁷

⁶ Laurie Denski-Snyman, "Surviving and Thriving as a PK," *Ministry* (July 1994): 22.

⁷Herbert L. Bomberger, "The Parsonage: A Way of Christian Family Living," *Lutheran Quarterly* 26 (February 1974): 62.

The observation has been made that children of clergy tend to be unusually high achievers.⁸ In general, pastors' children are raised in an environment where education and study are considered to be a high priority. As a result, pastors' children may be encouraged to excel in education and adopt good study habits, skills that carry over into other avenues of their lives. One study determined that pastor's children were notably superior than non-pastors' children in several areas. The areas included a more than likely chance that pastors' children would participate in speech or debate contests, serve as a class president, participate in plays, be a member of a scholastic honor society and participate in music contests.⁹ Similarly, another article strongly recommends to pastors that they make education for their children a high priority. The article states,

Ministers may well be thankful, though they are poor in this world's goods, that they are giving to humanity's service sons and daughters who are rich in character and culture. Since the homes of ministers generally have such a record, how important it is that ministers of today shall make every effort to rear their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and shall make every sacrifice to give them the best possible educational equipment for the life that is before them. Die in poverty if necessary, but educate your sons and daughters.¹⁰

Academic excellence, then, is considered by some to be a particular benefit of growing up in a parsonage.

⁸Alan E. Bayer, Laura Kent, Jeffrey E. Dutton, "Children of Clergymen: Do They Fit the Stereotype?", The Christian Century 89 (June 28, 1972): 709.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Watchman-Examiner, "Ministers' Sons and Daughters"; reprinted in Concordia Theological Monthly 8 (February 1937): 132.

Another positive aspect of growing up as a pastor's child is the development of character, or positive qualities in personality and attitudes. The observation has been made that "ministers lead all other groups in our population in sending out from their homes sons and daughters who will become honored citizens despite the usual slurs on such children."¹¹ While those words were written in 1937, the observation may hold true for today as well. Growing up as the son or daughter of a pastor provides the opportunity to live in an environment where character matters. Their father as the pastor is expected to be an individual who will display good moral character at church, home and in the world, and he may pass that concern on to his children. The emphasis on the Word of God in a pastor's family provides a solid training ground where children learn what constitutes good character from the perspective of Scripture. Pastors' children may be very familiar with the Ten Commandments and what it means to live as a new person in Christ, important elements of producing good character. Luther himself regarded marriage as a "school for character,"¹² a school that undoubtedly would include as its students the children of the marriage. While some may believe that more characters come from pastors' families than people with character, the point remains that the parsonage can provide an excellent environment where children can learn good qualities that will enhance their lives and the lives of those around them throughout their lives. What was stated in 1937 may still be true today, namely, that "the proportion of

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Roland Bainton, Here I Stand, A Life of Martin Luther (New York: Abingdon, 1950), 300.

distinguished men and women contributed from among the families of the clergy can only be described as enormous. . . . We find that eminent children of the clergy considerably outnumber those of lawyers, doctors, and army officers put together.”¹³

Growing up in a parsonage is in many ways a very challenging experience for all in the family. Certain dynamics are at work in the parsonage that can make living in a pastor’s family a stressful experience. However, what needs to be emphasized is that living as a pastor’s child is not all bad. While people may find it easier sometimes to focus on the negative rather than the positive, the fact remains that there are positive aspects that come with growing up as a pastor’s child. Some of those positives are more obvious, such as the extra gifts given to pastors’ children at Christmas and other times by thoughtful members of the congregation. Other benefits, however, such as being grounded in the Christian faith and the development of good character, may not be fully appreciated until later in life when a pastor’s child reflects back on his or her life. Pastors’ children need to be reminded that the positive aspects of living in a clergy family are cause for celebration and provide a springboard from which a positive parsonage experience can be built. Perhaps the first step in helping pastors’ children cope positively with their life is by helping the entire family to recognize, embrace and build on the strengths that come from living in a clergy family.

¹³Havelock Ellis, *“Study of British Genius”*; quoted in the *Watchman-Examiner*, “Ministers’ Sons and Daughters;” reprinted in *Concordia Theological Monthly* 8 (February 1937): 132.

CHAPTER SEVEN

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: INTERVIEWS WITH PASTORS' CHILDREN

In order to find out first hand what some pastors' children are experiencing or have experienced in regard to growing up in a clergy family, face-to-face interviews were conducted during the months of January and February of 1998. One purpose of the interviews was to glean more information about growing up as a pastor's child from those who know best, pastors' children themselves. Another purpose was to provide support and encouragement for pastors' children, particularly those who are in the teenage years.

Those who were interviewed all lived in North Dakota at the time of the interview. All of the teenage participants, seventeen in number, whose ages ranged from thirteen to eighteen, were children whose fathers were active pastors in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. In addition, eight adult children of pastors were interviewed who, with the exception of one, grew up with fathers who were pastors in the aforementioned Synod. The scope and logistics of the interviews were such that the sample of teenage and adult children of pastors was small compared to the total number of

pastors' children that certainly must exist throughout the country. As such, the results of the interviews may not be scientific in the sense that one can draw definite conclusions that pertain to all pastors' children. However, the sample may provide information that could be useful when trying to design ways of assisting pastors' children in coping with their lives.

The methodology of the interviews was for the interviewer to drive to the locations of the pastors' children for face-to-face interviews, a task that covered most of the state of North Dakota. After first securing written permission from parents in the case of minor children to conduct the interviews and use information from the interviews in this project (see Appendix A), demographic data about the participants was collected. Such data included gender, age, marital status if applicable, occupation if applicable, degree of participation in the congregation, number of years growing up in a clergy family (to determine if the participant had experience as both a pastor's child and a nonpastor's child), whether or not parents lived in their own home, church-owned home, or both, and the number of moves experienced by the pastors' children while growing up in a clergy family. The demographics of the interviews were as follows:

- Gender: 15 male, 10 female
- Ages of teenagers (age/number): 13/4, 14/3, 15/4, 16/3, 17/2, 18/1
- Ages of adults: ranged from 34 – 44
- Marital status (adults only): married – 7, single – 1
- Occupation (adults only): pastor – 4, teacher, computer program analyst, parish education director, full-time mom
- Years growing up in a clergy family: entire life – 19, 7 years – 1, 9 years – 2, 11 years – 2, 16 years – 1

- Parents live in church-provided home: 16
- Parents live in both a church-provided home and own home: 9
- Number of moves remembered while growing up in a parsonage:
 - teenagers: 0 – 1, 1 move – 9, 2 moves – 5, 3 moves – 1, 4 moves – 1
 - adults: 1 move – 2, 2 moves – 2, 3 moves – 2, 4 moves – 1, 5 moves – 1

In addition to the above demographic data, at the time of the interviews half of the teenaged children were living in small towns and their fathers were pastors of small to medium sized congregations, while the other half lived in larger cities whose fathers were pastors of medium to large congregations.

While the bulk of the demographic data is fairly basic, some interesting, albeit, general observations can be made. Regarding occupation, six of the eight adults were involved in some vocation involving church work. This may suggest that those six adults by and large found growing up in a clergy family fulfilling enough to become involved in professional church work themselves. Seven of the adults were involved in occupations that required a significant degree of education, a fact which may indicate that education was an important foundation laid down in their years growing up.

The type of housing is interesting in that thirteen of the seventeen teenage children only recalled living in church-owned homes. Since most of these individuals only experienced being a pastor's child in North Dakota, this may suggest that to be a pastor's child in North Dakota means that one has a high probability of living in a church-owned home. In turn, this may suggest that the more rural the state the more likely it is that one will

experience parsonage living. This may or may not be significant unless, of course, a pastor's child is faced with the prospect of moving to North Dakota.

The number of years that the interviewees had spent as pastors' children reveal how many have or had fathers who chose the pastoral ministry as a second career. Among the teens, only two of the seventeen experienced the dual life of being a pastor's child and a nonpastor's child, making the change at the ages of nine and ten. Four of the eight adults had the same experience at basically the same ages (in the case of one, his father became a pastor when the child was two years old). This information is useful in determining the degree of difference the children experienced between the two lifestyles.

Regarding the number of moves, what is interesting to note is that the majority of the teenagers, ten to be exact, recounted moving zero or one time, whereas seven experienced moves of two or more. The experience of the adults was somewhat different, as six of the eight remembered moving two or more times. Such a difference might suggest that an earlier generation of pastors had a tendency to move more often than the younger generation, a dynamic that may contribute to one's sense of stability and satisfaction with the experience of growing up in a clergy family.

Secondly, regarding methodology, all of the participants were asked basically the same questions (see Appendix A). The questions were as follows:

1. What outside or inside pressures, if any, do you believe you experienced that came from being a pastor's child?
2. How did you react to and handle those pressures?
3. What were some positive aspects of being a pastor's child?
4. Because you were/are a pastor's child, do you believe you were treated differently than other children by parents? church? peers?
5. What impact has being a pastor's child had upon your spiritual life?
6. What impact has being a pastor's child had upon your involvement in the church?
7. What effect has relocations had upon you?
8. Did you see your father primarily as your father, pastor, or both?
9. How would you identify your family, as a clergy family, a Christian family, or other? Why?
10. Overall, do you see your experience as a pastor's child to be positive, negative, somewhere in between? Why?
11. (For those whose father is a second career pastor.) Did you sense any difference between being a non-pastor's child as compared to being a pastor's child?
12. (For those who lived in both a parsonage and their own home.) What differences, if any, did you experience between living in a church-owned home as compared to living in your own home?
13. What can be done to help make living as a pastor's child a positive experience? What can be done by the congregation or church-at-large?
14. What is the most important thing you would like pastor's children to know regarding growing up as a pastor's child?
15. Any experiences, positive or negative, that you would like to share regarding your life as a pastor's child?

The purpose of the questions was to discover as much information as possible from the interviewees about their lives as pastors' children. In order to make the exercise as comprehensive as possible, the questions dealt with various aspects of the life of a pastor's child.

The following pages will consider each question with a compilation of the responses (for complete transcripts, see Appendix A).

The Interviews Question By Question

1. What outside or inside pressures, if any, do you believe you experienced that came from being a pastor's child?

On this question, the teens were evenly divided with eight indicating that they did experience pressures relative to their being pastors' children and seven stating that they did not experience much pressure at all.

One common pressure relates to **peers**. A thirteen-year-old girl related her experience that the change from elementary school to middle school was a difficult one, especially since the crowd she was in while in elementary school no longer seemed to want to associate with her. The apparent reason for this shunning, in her opinion, was the fact that she was a pastor's daughter. On one occasion, when her father dropped her off at school, she was greeted with the words "church girl" spoken by her classmates. She felt as though she stuck out. Furthermore, this girl experienced some hesitance in regard to speaking out about things that she witnessed at school, such as "cussing in the hall." Her hesitance stemmed from people singling her out as a pastor's daughter.

Along these same lines, a thirteen-year-old boy indicated that he sometimes felt left out by his peers. His explanation for being left out is that his friends figure that he will not be interested in what they are doing so they just do not include him. While he indicated that this is not a huge pressure in his life, nonetheless he is very aware that he is not included in everything for the apparent reason that his father is a pastor.

Feeling pressure from peers can lead to behavior by a pastor's child that is designed to prove that he can be like everybody else. One individual, a sixteen-year-old male, indicated that his peers expect him to be "straight-laced." He shared the "hypothetical" example of the time a teacher exited the room and left a copy of a test on the teacher's desk. The interviewee stated that he said, "I'm going to go up and go look at the test." His reason for doing so was because people say that he would never do such a thing because "he's the pastor's son." While this may be a hypothetical situation, the fact that this teen would include the story may indicate that he has at the very least entertained notions of doing things simply to prove that he can be like everyone else.

Another common pressure voiced by the teens was that of feeling as though they had to be perfect. One indicated that people expect her to be "kind of perfect." This sixteen-year-old girl goes on to explain that "we're not suppose to really do things wrong with friends and stuff . . .; we're supposed to be kind of a goodie two shoes for everybody." While this pressure seemed to a present reality for this girl, she indicates that the pressure to be good was more prevalent for her when she was younger. She states that "when we were littler it was a little harder because they think you were supposed to be just great, you can't do such and such wrong . . .; they kind of think you're supposed to be perfect in every way."

The pressure of living up to the expectations of others because of having a father who is pastor is further voiced by an eighteen-year-old who was, at the time of the interview, away from home at college. While at home, she definitely felt the expectation of her friends that she be perfect. Furthermore, she was aware that people were more cautious around her in terms of what they said and did. According to her, this was “totally wrong.” Her experience at college, however, was different. She indicated that people seemed to accept her for who she was and that she could be more anonymous without everybody knowing that her father was a pastor.

Along with peers, the pressure to be perfect can come from people within the congregation. A seventeen-year-old male confessed that “you’re pressured in the church when you have to be some kind of good kid.” Such a good kid is, in his words, “trustworthy” and one who has a “good reputation.” Also, he indicated that his parents can have extra expectations of him because his dad is the pastor. He stated that he believes his parents can be “overprotective,” not simply because he is their son but because they are worried about his dad’s reputation.

Along with the pressure being perfect can be the pressure of NOT being perfect. A seventeen-year-old girl related that she received the message from her peers that a pastor’s child was “either really good or really bad.” She indicated that many people told her that pastors’ children “are either angels” or they are “totally rebellious.”

Seven of the respondents indicated that they felt little or no pressure as a result of being a pastor's child. The extent of feeling pressure for one thirteen-year-old boy was in what he termed "name calling." He stated that sometimes someone would say "there a pastor's kid . . . and make something up about my name." Such name calling, however, did not seem to bother him very much. Apart from that, in his experience his peers treated him for the most part like everybody else.

Another boy observed that "nobody has made fun of me or anything because there's a whole bunch of kids that are pastors' kids in this town." Apparently, in his case, the presence of a number of pastors' children took away the stigma that he was somehow different from others.

While most of the pressures that were discussed by the teens dealt with external pressures that came from peers, parents, and parishioners, one individual revealed that sometimes pressure can come from within the person. This fourteen-year-old girl indicated that she did not experience any real pressure from her peers or parents. At the same time, however, she herself felt "weird" having to tell people that her father was a pastor, especially when she was with people who did not go to church.

The adult children of pastors mirrored the responses of the teens. Half of the adults indicated feeling pressure as a pastor's child whereas half related not feeling much pressure at all.

The common thread among the responses of the adults had to do with behavior. In some cases their parents emphasized the relationship between acting correctly and being a pastor's child. In one case, an interviewee reported that "a number of times mom especially was in charge of our behavior but it would be either a warning or a reminder for some function, 'Now, whether you like it or not you represent your father, people are going to be watching you and are going to be judging your father by what you do so behave yourselves, be nice, be polite, don't be rowdy.'" In regard to behavior, another adult pastor's child remembered that her father would say things such as, "You know this is my job and people look at me." The message to the daughter was that her behavior would reflect on her father's job. In the case of another pastor's daughter, the pressure exerted by her father seemed more intense. She related that her dad "had a very bad hang-up that we had to look good, we had to look good for the congregation . . .; he took that thing that Martin Luther said about a pastor ruling over his family and they have to be good, very good, so there was a lot of pressure."

Along with parental pressure, the adults also indicated they felt pressure from members of their fathers' congregations. Along with the compliment of being well-behaved, one adult male reported that some of the adults in the congregation would bring up the issue of "how some pastors' kids they recall had been hellions or the wildest kids in the countryside and they seemed to have the idea you were either going to be the complete

opposite, determined to be the wildest kid around or you were the virtual saint.” The issue of the behavior of the pastor’s children must have been very important for some in this congregation, for, as the person observed, when his father retired one of the members told his parents, “We never had to be embarrassed by your children.” In like manner, another adult remembered that people in at least one congregation “felt like ministers kids should behave better than other children and my parents, especially my dad, felt the same way. So if you weren’t behaving exactly as someone thought you should, that was a big deal.”

This pressure is evident in the experience of one woman who was singled out in Sunday School by her teacher because she was the pastor’s daughter. One Sunday morning, as she recalls, the teacher

asked me to say the closing prayer in class. I felt very uncomfortable and I told her “No, I don’t feel comfortable doing that.” She made a big thing in front of the whole class and lectured me about being cooperative and “you are a minister’s child, you should behave better than this” and “I’m going to talk to your dad.” Then I did talk to my dad and that was one of the worst things that I could think of.

Her experience in talking to her dad about what happened was, in her memory, not good at all. Basically he indicated to her, as she recalled the conversation, that “you should be better at praying than the other kids and you should be an example,’ even when I was in a situation where I didn’t feel comfortable.”

Whether teen or adult, present reality or memory, the evidence clearly suggests that being a pastor’s child can, at times, include stress that comes

from his or her identity as a pastor's child. In this particular sample, the pressures came from family and church members who emphasized verbally that the pastor's children should behave well, often because of how their behavior would reflect on their father the pastor. In addition, pressure sometimes came from their peers who would not include them in certain conversations or activities. While it may be pointed that some realized that they actually were better off not being included in some activities, at the same time feeling left out can be hurtful for one who naturally desires to be included in the circle of friends.

What is particularly noteworthy is that fifty percent of teens and adults in this relatively small sample reported feeling pressures that directly related to their position as the pastor's child. One wonders if the results would be the same in a much larger sample. If so, then a very large number of pastors' children are experiencing or have experienced pressures that need to be addressed. Fifty percent is significant enough for the issue to be seriously dealt with by parents, the church and the pastors' children themselves.

2. How did you react to and handle those pressures?

In this sample, the good news is that the teens who reported experiencing significant pressures as pastors' children indicated that they attempted to handle those pressures in positive ways. By and large the most common response was that they tried to take everything in stride and not let

the pressures bother them too much. They used words and phrases like “I’ll just accept it,” “I don’t care,” “I just let it go in one ear and out the other,” and “It doesn’t bug me very much.”

In one case, an eighteen-year old girl indicated that she dealt with the pressures by trying to be herself. In her words,

I probably tried harder not to prove, not to be like everybody else but I tried even harder just to show them who I really was and that I wasn’t necessarily 100% the image that they had of me. I mean to a certain extent and probably for the most part I was, but then you just have to try to make the other parts of you shine and stand out a little bit more just to show that you know you are your own person.

Apparently, this individual tried very hard to maintain her own identity in the midst of the pressure to be what others thought she should be.

Another teen demonstrated how one can have a mix of ways in dealing with pressures, both positive and possibly negative. In response to the pressure of having to set a good example, this sixteen-year-old male indicated that for the most part he was able to let the pressure roll off. However, sometimes on purpose he would prove he wasn’t so perfect. He did not provide any specific examples except that he would want to show that he was “just as innocent or just as goofy as the rest of them can be.” In the case of this teen, he did not indicate that he ever got into serious trouble in trying to prove he was not so perfect. However, the potential may exist for one in his position to go to extremes as a reaction against the pressure of behavior.

As in most cases in these interviews, the adult children of pastors tended to go into much more detail about their experiences growing up as a

pastor's child. The manner in which they handled pressures ran the gamut from trying to be good to outright rebellion.

An example of trying to exemplify the image of the good pastor's child is one individual who stated that he "handled it by trying not to get into trouble" and by "doing everything and then some." This woman tried to fit the part of being a pastor's child by attempting to live up to the behavioral expectations that came to her from her parents and the congregation.

An adult male who had very negative experiences as a pastor's son remembered reacting to the pressures he felt in various ways. His way of coping, he observed, was "toughing it out and fighting back when you could and putting up with it when you couldn't." In addition, he tried to make his parents understand how he felt, what was going on and seek their advice. In his words,

I would try some of their advice but mom didn't have a clue of what was going on. I soon learned that any kind of advice she had for how to deal with this just was not going to work. It was based on ignore it or quote a Bible passage to them which would just make them laugh and hit you again.

This individual did not simply internalize his stress but made an attempt to go to others for advice. Such a reaction would probably be considered to be quite positive. The advice he received, however, did not seem to be very helpful in his situation.

Aside from trying to meet the behavioral expectations of others, putting up with pressure or fighting back, other responses indicated that

some reacted by subtly or overtly rebelling. The rebellion seemed to be somewhat innocuous. For example, an adult female said that she would handle the pressures of being a pastor's daughter "sometimes by acting out, being rebellious, learning to tell the first dirty joke to show that you were normal."

Other forms of rebellion were much more pointed. In the case of another adult pastor's daughter, her form of rebellion as a teenager against members of her congregation who watched what she did was to "irritate them by wearing a slit dress or something to drive them insane." This rebellion manifested itself in terms of outright defiance toward her father, when, in one instance, she tried out for and landed a part in a play at high school that her father had told her she would not be in due to its poor values. Looking back, she remarked that she

defied him, totally defied him, completely and utterly defied him. It was about the only time, however, I ever did it. My siblings, on the other hand – I have three younger brothers – all three of them were sneaky. They were doing rotten things like sneaking out of the house or going off and carousing . . . Except for this one incident where I openly defied, I pretty much towed the line.

This woman explains her brothers' behavior by stating, "I think they in their way rebelled against being pastor's children. I waited until afterwards. I waited until later before I rebelled from that and fell away for a time from the church and went through that phase." She further explains, "I finally sowed my wild oats when I was out of high school, after I was out of eyesight of the parishioners and out of earshot of them." She attributes this behavior

partly to being away from her “very strong disciplinarian father.” For this woman, her rebellion did not last too long. She went on to be married, have children and become very active in her church.

This last example raises the question: Is the rebellion demonstrated by some pastors’ children the result of the pressures they feel because they are pastors’ children, or because they had fathers who were strong disciplinarians? A father does not have to be a pastor to be a strong disciplinarian. If one interviewed teenagers who are not pastors’ children, instances might be discovered where children rebelled against their parents, citing overly strong discipline as the cause. The fact that teenagers sometimes rebel against their parents is not exactly a new revelation.

The experiences recounted by the pastors’ children who were interviewed for this project indicate that a number of those children rebelled against the pressures they felt which they attributed to being pastors’ children. Along with the apparent natural inclination to rebel against their parents is the added temptation to assert themselves over and against their particular role as children of pastors. This suggests that dealing with pastors’ children only because they are teenagers addresses only part of the overall concern. In addition to helping them cope as teenagers, they may need assistance coping with their particular pressures that come from their unique lifestyle as teenagers of pastors.

An interesting discrepancy is apparent between the responses of the teenagers and those of the adults regarding how they handled the pressures that came from being a pastor's child. On the one hand, except for two teens who admitted to minor rebellion, all of them indicated that they handled their stress in nonchalant ways. In their words, "I'll just accept it," "I don't care," "I just let it go in one ear and out the other," and "It doesn't bug me very much." On the other hand, the adults who admitted to having pressures that came from being a pastor's child tended to cope by acting out or by trying to prove they could be as rowdy as other children. What accounts for this discrepancy? One possibility is that children in general today are better able to handle their particular stress as compared to an earlier generation. Yet, the recent rash of violence in schools among the general population might suggest otherwise. Another possibility may be that pastor's children today do not experience much pressure or the degree of pressure that earlier generations of pastors' children experienced. Yet, both teenagers and adults recounted examples that indicate both age groups experienced similar stresses that relate to their lifestyles as pastors' children. Perhaps the best explanation for the difference is simply that of hindsight. Without denying that some pastors' children today are able to cope well with their lifestyles, others may not be able to discern, or not willing to say, how their acting out is directly related to their role as pastors' children. Without a doubt, the adults who were interviewed described in much greater detail the pressures they

felt as pastors' children and how they handled those pressures. It would be interesting to interview the teenagers again in ten years to see if their recollections have changed over the years.

3. What were some positive aspects of being a pastor's child?

The responses of the teenage interviewees regarding the positive aspects of being a pastor's child seemed to fall into four basic categories which can be described as **faith, fame, family, and friends**.

Of the seventeen teens, ten indicated that faith formation was one very important benefit that can come from growing up in a clergy family. First of all, responses focused on the relationship that these young people have with Jesus Christ. One individual remarked, "I sometimes feel I'm a lot stronger in my faith than some of them [peers] because they don't get it as much at home as we do, but I like it." Another opined, "I guess I know the Lord maybe on a deeper level than some other kids, but my Christian friends know a lot too."

A sixteen-year-old male left no doubt as to how important growing up in a clergy family was to his spiritual life. Acknowledging that he experienced many benefits, he said,

One obvious one would be that closeness to Christ, being around him all the time in the house or in the church or in wherever, it's always there. That's what you grow up with and that's what you're used to . . . It's the most positive thing you can get out of it, certainly what I got.

The benefit to one's spiritual life is noticed as well in relation to others who do not have the background of living in a clergy family. A fourteen-year-old girl noticed this difference. She observed:

There's lots of kids my age who don't really have a faith and they don't really know who God is. I guess because I've always been interested in the Word and everything that I know what I believe. Even the people who went to Confirmation aren't going to church anymore, just every now and then. I feel like I have a stronger faith because I grew up in a pastor's family. That's definitely good.

A second aspect of one's faith that was mentioned as a benefit that came from being in a pastor's family was general knowledge regarding God and spiritual matters. Observations included, "You learn all about God" and "I get to know more about the Church and everything else." One teen indicated that he was somewhat known by others for his religious knowledge. As he stated, "A lot of times kids in my class when they have more of a religious question, they come to me."

A third element of one's faith that was cited as a benefit was integrity and consistency in the practice of religion. Faith in Jesus Christ, as the above examples indicate, was not something that was an adjunct to their lives but was practiced by their families at home. One teen saw her overall home environment as being a benefit to her. She remarked that her home has "a different environment, I mean if you grow up at the church you have Christianity in your home." Another recognized as a benefit the consistency of attendance at worship services, especially in relation to others who are not from a pastor's family. He observed that "right away you're introduced to

God. Some other kids grow up, they never go to church, but when you're a pastor's kid you always go."

The second general category of benefits delineated by seven of the teens related to their fame, that is, their standing within the church, community or peers. Cited most often was the issue of respect. The general observation was made by a thirteen-year-old girl that "people are nice to you and of course they are to everyone else and they seem to respect you more." Another indicated that respect was something that was earned. This eighteen-year-old girl observed in regard to people inside and outside the congregation that "they are nicer to you. A lot of it you can see right through but I mean that all around the community everybody really gives you a lot more respect and some kids deserve it and some don't." She went on to explain, in her view, the relationship between respect and behavior. Referring to respect, she said, "After they got to know you either you kept it or you lost it. I think we've all kept it pretty well so that's positive." Another interviewee connected respect with the behavior of others. She observed that "people respect you kind of, if they know you're a pastor's kid. They act differently around you but they respect you." This respect, she observed, could be seen in that "some of them don't swear" or talk about parties they attended.

Another aspect of fame cited by the teens had to do with their own reputations. After pointing to his accomplishment of achieving an Eagle

Scout award, a fifteen-year-old stated that “everyone thinks you’re good or better” and that they have the impression that pastors’ children do not get into trouble “like other kids do.” For this individual, having a good reputation in the church and community was something he enjoyed.

A good reputation can also be enjoyed at school. A fourteen-year-old girl saw as a benefit of being a pastor’s daughter that “teachers trust you more if they know that you’re a pastor’s kid, if that makes any sense.” Evidently this girl sensed that her teachers considered her to be more trustworthy simply because of the fact that she is the daughter of a pastor.

A final element of fame can be identified as a couple of the teens pointed to special treatment at church as a positive part of being a pastor’s child. One cited as a benefit the fact that in his experience the pastor’s children usually were allowed to be first in line at church meals or when refreshments were served. Another pointed to the extra “goodies” that her family often received during Christmas time.

The third general category of benefits pointed out by five of the respondents can be summarized in terms of family life, especially the support they received from their parents. Observations by a couple of teens included, “My parents are easier to talk to than most of my friends because I know what to expect most of the time,” and “I ask my dad for advice.” Another stated that his parents “helped me through difficult places like some things

going on at school. That's an advantage of having [a father as] a pastor as a child."

Another aspect of family life identified by the teens as being positive was having parents who were available. As one stated, "It's good to know that you have a nice home to go to that will support you no matter what you do, that someone will come with you to the doctor's office and double check to make sure you're okay." One specifically mentioned that he appreciated how his father's job made it possible for his father to be readily available. In his words, "I guess unlike some jobs where the dads are sometimes always far away or not at home, usually he's at home or he is at work so he's nearby at least if you need to talk to him. I think our family is a little more closely knit than other families are."

Finally, the fourth area identified by the teens as a benefit that comes from being a pastor's child involved their circle of friends and acquaintances, especially those who are other pastors' children that they have met through church gatherings. One observed that, for her, it was important to "get to know a few who are the same, like we were all pastors' kids and so we had a lot of interests, same interests and stuff like that, and I believe that was positive." For two of the respondents, attending church retreats and getting to know people from around the state was seen as a particular benefit. As they said, "You go to church retreats and stuff and make lots of friends," and "You meet a lot of people from around the state; people like you."

The responses of the adults tended to mirror those of the teens, especially areas that relate to faith and fame. Half identified faith as a benefit that came from growing up in a clergy family, as demonstrated by the following excerpts from the transcripts of three separate interviews:

Growing in your faith, knowing your faith, talking about your faith. I thought everyone did that at supper time all over the world and it wasn't until I started working in the church that I realized that people just don't do that, or that there was a choice to go to church on Sundays. That wasn't ever an option, so that was good. We got to experience people's hurts a lot closer up.

Home devotions, prayer, meal prayer, I was well trained to have times of prayer and devotions; positive things about forgiveness, encouragement, patience, my parents really have taught me patience, patience with my own parishioners They taught me to take the time to worship.

I understood why it was important to go to church and wanted to go. I understood why my best friend _____ did not want to go to church or why his family didn't go to church I had a handle as a nine year old of how the world was put together I mean I had a very systematic worldview. In our home the Christian faith was real.

As the adult pastors' children discussed the benefit to their faith that came from growing up in a clergy family, they sometimes observed how their upbringing has been an asset in their adult lives. This connection between a solid Christian upbringing and adult life was shared by one individual who stated that

training in a religious upbringing has at times really been beneficial. Things have really been tough. I questioned things and railed against God and have been upset at the way my life has been turning out. But it [religious upbringing] always seems to be an anchor that eventually I come back around to and end up being really glad that it's there.

As with the teens, the adult pastors' children identified as positives issues relating to their status, or fame, as pastors' children and the security of their family life. In regard to fame, most often cited were respect by members of the congregation and community, being invited to events and getting to do various things and the manner in which people tried to be on their good behavior around the pastor's family. One individual especially remembered a fondness for casseroles that came from her many experiences attending potlucks and other church functions. In regard to family, the adults who identified this as a benefit focused mainly on the security they felt in a clergy family and the willingness of parents to help them and talk with them about their problems.

4. Because you were/are a pastor's child, do you believe you were treated differently than other children by parents? church? peers?

The purpose of this question was to try and ascertain if the interviewees believed that they were treated differently by significant people in their lives, namely, their parents, church members and peers, simply because they are pastors' children. By and large, the response of the teens was that they did not feel as though they were treated much differently than other children who are not the children of pastors. This is interesting in light of the responses to the first question that dealt with pressures that the teens believed they experienced that came, in part, because they are pastors' children. A number of them indicated that they did in fact experience some

pressure from peers and parents to act or not act in certain ways. Some indicated that peers did not always include them in certain conversations or activities. Whatever the reason for this apparent discrepancy between questions one and four, while the teens were consistent in identifying and talking about pressures they face, they tended not to believe they were treated much differently than other children.

The exception was voiced by a few teens who alluded to concerns that sound much like those iterated in the first question. In regard to parents, one teen remarked, "I think they have higher expectations of me because of my status. I guess I expect it of myself, too. This is what people expect of you, what this society expects and this congregation and this is what my parents expected. I guess they just expected you to be an all around good kid and just be the ideal pastor's kid." She went on to explain, "I suppose there were certain pressures but nothing really where I ever went off the handle at them or anything." Another described his parents as "overprotective" in comparison with what he saw his friends being allowed to do.

Regarding members of the congregation, a couple of teens indicated that they do believe they are treated differently. For example, in reference to going to a new church and receiving a welcome party, one teen said, "We kind of felt out of place because when other new kids come into our youth group you don't do anything. We welcome them in but we don't have a big get together. In some ways I guess we get treated differently and special."

Another noticed the difference in Confirmation class, when the teacher will “yell at all the other kids but she will not yell at me,” a situation that for this teen is “kind of embarrassing.”

The only references to peers treating the teens differently because they are pastors’ children was in regard to being left out of some things. One indicated that while he believed he was treated mostly like others, still he was aware that he was left out of some activities. Another indicated that to a certain extent he was treated differently because of “stuff I’m excluded from” and “other people know a lot more of what’s going on around here than I do and think that it is because I am a pastor’s son. It really doesn’t bother me though.”

As usual, the adult pastors’ children were, for the most part, a bit more thorough in their responses. Regarding whether or not their parents expected more of them because they were pastors’ children, without going into detail one remarked that “I think my parents expected a lot of us.” Another described in more detail that “we definitely had to watch what we were doing and not get caught . . . because of how it would look. What if your name was in the paper, you know, your reputation – big message there. You keep your reputation and oftentimes I envied my friends that didn’t have to worry about it. They were just children, they were just themselves.”

A third adult described a situation in which she and her siblings were treated differently than other children by her parents because her father was a pastor. She commented:

Yes, they expected us to pull to their standards. I think they expected us to be examples and my father's view of have your own house in order definitely was put into play. I recall even hearing dad, "I need to have my house in order here first before I can tell anyone else how to treat their families." He was very strict and then as the years went on and I left, they mellowed out I said you were always so much more strict with me. [My mother] said, "You were the guinea pig we practiced on and then found out things."

Even though her own upbringing was, in her opinion, more strict than that experienced by others, including her own siblings, she indicated that in retrospect it was a good thing and that she tends to be the same way with her own son.

In regard to church members treating them differently, a couple responses indicate that one can see this as being positive or negative. On the positive side, one adult recalls with fondness his treatment by the members of the congregation. In his recollection, "I would say that I have been blessed in this way that the congregation who loved my father loved his family. I was from a young child on always one that received all that and I don't know how to qualify it but the congregation was proud that I was there in person, their pastor's child, one of four." He went on to indicate that "even to this day" he is warmly received by the members of his father's former congregation. On perhaps a more negative side, one respondent replied, "Oh, they put you on a

pedestal and then during Sunday school they wanted you to be little theologians. They expected you to know the answers.”

As with the teens, being treated differently by peers was not something that posed much of a problem for the adults when they were teenagers. Apart from one remark, “I wouldn’t be included in some of the real dirty jokes,” the only other concern voiced by a respondent when asked if she was treated differently as a pastor’s child by her peers was:

Oh, definitely. I used to say to my dad, “I wish you would have become a plumber, why did you become a minister? With eight years of school, I just don’t get it. You know you could have been a doctor. Why didn’t you just become a plumber?” Because when you’re a child you want to just fit in snug and having a dad who is a minister you just don’t fit in. People expect different things from you. Just like they do to the ministers, they expect you to be not even kind of human. They want to put you on a pedestal.

5. What impact has being a pastor’s child had upon your spiritual life?

All of the teens that were interviewed, except for one, indicated that being a pastor’s child has had a very good impact on their spiritual lives. For the most part, comments centered on the fact that they have been brought up with a Christian lifestyle. For example, one young person stated that his spiritual life is “probably stronger because I’ve had to go to church every week, church and Sunday school and Confirmation and stuff.” Likewise, another responded that her spiritual life is “better because you know you’re going to be going to church . . . and you’re going to deal with church organizations, and that’s good because you learn more about your spiritual

life and become stronger.” Most of the comments of the other teens were similar, focusing on their being raised with a Christian lifestyle as being very good for their spiritual lives.

In one case a fifteen-year-old male indicated that being a pastor’s son did not seem to impact his spiritual life much at all. Without going into much detail, he responded, “Sometimes when my dad wants me to do a devotion or something, I just do it but I am not really into it.”

The teenagers who were interviewed did not indicate that they outright rebelled against their Christian lifestyle and the expectation of being involved at church; however in one case a young man came very close. His particular difficulties began when his father accepted a Call and the family moved to a new town. The son was approximately eleven years old at the time and had lived in his old town most of his life. He indicated that when he moved to his new town he felt he had something to prove. He desired very strongly to fit in with the rest of his peers and not be different. For nearly four years, as he confesses, “I lost sight of God and my faith and those kinds of things. In the past year or so it’s been coming back to me, and that has happened as a result of this and other things, getting more involved in the church.” What particularly helped this individual was taking part in church youth gatherings. As he said,

When this happened I started going to Spring rallies, LYF youth gatherings, and just meeting people at those gatherings and things that shared my faith, or what little I had. Seeing them and how happy they were with it made me realize that I could be the same. I

didn't have to be like everybody else. If I was a little bit different that was okay and that helped.

On the one hand, as a pastor's son, this young man started down the road of rebellion partly as a result of the pressures of moving. On the other hand, being a pastor's son may have helped to provide support and the opportunity to be a part of events that helped to strengthen his faith.

All in all, the responses of the adult children of pastors were very similar to those given by their teenaged counterparts. They indicated that they were raised with the rudiments of the faith in terms of consistency in attending worship, going to Sunday school and the like. In particular some pointed out the integrity they witnessed between what was preached and what was lived at home. As one explained,

We had a training of getting into the Word and then of course the spiritual formation is probably best shown to me in a spirit of forgiving one another, loving one another, hands on hugs and touch on the head and shoulder. It was a warm, kind, good place to be. . . . Kindness and love really was a sermon to us all. When my father would talk about forgiveness and love from the pulpit I really thought that was valid because this was not just theory to him. I appreciated that and that is the key in my own formation.

Another simply indicated that one benefit of living in a clergy family was that the faith "was something that was lived all the time."

One adult respondent indicated that her upbringing in a clergy family helped to plant the foundation for her spiritual life. However, this individual also shared that her upbringing was, in her opinion, extremely legalistic, so much so that she joined a different denomination as an adult. She connected

the legalism she experienced at home with the church where her father was a pastor.

Clearly, based on the responses of the interviewees, being raised as a pastor's child can have a very positive effect on one's spiritual life and faith formation. While one observed that he did not think "the effect is any different than any other family who raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," others indicated that they sensed they had more consistency in their spiritual lives than might be the case in some nonclergy families. They appreciated the foundation in the faith that was laid down by their parents. Also, they appreciated the integrity that they witnessed between what was preached at church and what was lived at home.

6. What impact has being a pastor's child had upon your involvement in the church?

In the case of the teenagers, most stated that they were involved in the life of the congregation mostly in terms of regular attendance at worship, Sunday school, Confirmation instruction, and youth group activities. All in all, this participation seemed to be, in their view, fairly consistent with what they observed was expected of other youth in the congregation. For the most part, the viewpoint was that they did not feel forced into being involved in the church. However, one indicated that "they probably expect me to do a little bit more than most of the other people my age." Another connected his present involvement in the congregation with his consistency at being at

church on Sundays. In regard to his being more involved than other youth, he replied, "Definitely more involved. I know there are lots of regulars but it seems like being a pastor's kid I come every Sunday and so I know what's going on and so I get more involved."

An eighteen-year-old college student indicated that her involvement in the congregation actually increased after she left home to go to college. She candidly stated:

It had gotten better since I left home, because living at home – dad preaching and my mom playing the organ and leading the church choir and everything – it felt like if I did stuff like that they'd think well, she's just like her mother I kind of stayed away from doing anything that was anything remotely similar to her which really made my parents angry, because if they needed my help I'd refuse I think I'm a lot more involved now that I can step back and kind of be own person and think about everything that I've learned from my dad and my mom in the past and now just give it a chance to let it grow on its own."

While most of the teens appeared comfortable with their involvement in the church, the experience of this girl indicates that not all are so happy. One cannot take for granted that all pastors' children are always eager and content with their level of involvement in the congregation.

All of the adults who were interviewed have maintained their involvement in the Church and in the congregations in which they are members. In fact, six of the eight are involved in professional church work as pastors or teachers.

One adult indicated that he was definitely more involved in his church as a teen. His involvement, as he remembers, was not forced but rather

something he wanted to do. Another remarked that her involvement and familiarity with the church as a teen helped her to understand how things work in her present involvement with the church.

In one case, an adult pastor's son described his involvement in the Call process at his congregation. In his opinion, his background helped him to provide important insight when discussing such issues as salary and housing. He observed that he had "insight into what the other side of the economic scale was."

7. What effect has relocations had upon you?

All of the teenagers who were interviewed had experienced relocating to a new town as a result of their fathers accepting a Call to a new congregation. The degree in which those moves effected the teens varied, especially in relation to their ages at the time of the move. Those who were very young at the time of the move did not seem to remember much at all about the move. Whereas, those who were older, especially in the teen years, indicated that the experience of moving was more stressful.

Fourteen of the seventeen youth either indicated that moving was a mildly stressful experience or they said very little at all. Those who indicated that moving was mildly stressful communicated common experiences and stresses, most often of which were the pain of leaving behind friends, the stress of meeting new people at school and church, adjusting to new teachers

and the environment of a new town. None of these teens reported any serious problems that stemmed from their relocations. After a period of time they seem to have adjusted well to their new surroundings. One individual singled out the church as being instrumental in his making a smooth transition. In regard to the congregation, he said, "I got introduced to everyone so I made a lot of friends real fast and when we moved here a lot of people from _____ came out and helped unload. It would have been hard without them." Another pointed to the Lutheran parochial school as being very important in helping her make friends in her new place.

Three of the teens indicated that their relocating experiences were very stressful. One who had moved for the first time when she was in the 4th Grade commented that "it had a really negative effect, I'd say at first I was upset." She said that she felt "betrayed" and that she did not understand when her dad said that "it wasn't he who decided but that it was God who decided it for him." As she became older, however, she became more comfortable with the move and could see the good things that came from their moving to the new town.

Another individual who related a very stressful move, actually a brother of the girl mentioned in the preceding paragraph, focused on the comments of peers and his difficulty at being able to fit in. At first, when he heard about the move he was excited. After being in his new town a few days or a week he realized that it was much different. He recalls being called the

“new kid” and especially remembers children saying things in a taunting way such as “Hey new kid, come here. You want to do this with me?” He connected his particular experience with his peers to his being the new kid more than to his being the pastor’s kid.

A third respondent reported that her previous move “was really hard.” This seventeen-year-old girl had been accustomed to moving for the reason that her father was in the military prior to becoming a pastor. Even the years her father was at the seminary were years adjusting to one transition after another. Her father had been at his first Call for six years, which was a long time in one place for this girl, and she was a Junior in High School at the time of the move to a much larger city. Looking back on the move, she remarked that

it was really hard. To tell the truth, I went into like a depression almost because I missed my friends I could talk to. Here it was like people wouldn’t talk to me. They would talk to the pastor’s kid and whoever they thought that I was or the new girl at school but nobody knew me or how to talk to me, and so it was really hard.

In like manner three of the adults who were interviewed related that they had experiences with moving that were not very positive, mostly due to leaving friends or feeling withdrawn in a new place. One individual described her second move as “a terribly wrenching horrible move because that was 7th Grade and I had dear friends and we cried and cried. . . . I was feeling traumatized after I got there” For her, the hard part was leaving her friends more so than the actual move itself. In retrospect, however, after

a period of time she came to realize that “it didn’t really scar me or terrorize me or anything like that.”

Thinking back to one move, one of the adults commented that the move from a town where he had lived for many years was a wrenching experience. As he said, “It was a real wrench, I really did not want to go.” As to how his many moves effected him, he observed that,

I probably tried to shut off my emotions a lot in school. I didn’t want to get too many friends. I didn’t want to get close to this. I’d had a couple of moves within four years, and I didn’t know how long this was going to last and it kind of upset me to leave friends behind. I kind of got a reputation at the time Star Trek was on that I was another Mr. Spock because I didn’t joke around much with people.

For this individual, his method of coping with his moves was by not getting too close to people for the fear that he would have to go through the grief of separation all over again.

This way of distancing oneself from others is evident in the tale of an adult pastor’s child who moved frequently as a result of her father being in the Air Force prior to becoming a pastor. She relates, “I got to where I did not make friends as well. I’d maybe pick one or two because I knew I would have to leave them. So I tended to withdraw, not make friendships as a kind of protection.” She acknowledges that this was her way of coping. She mentioned that her sister coped differently and was able to make many friends very easily.

The remainder of the responses by the adults indicated that they did not have a difficult time with moving nor did they remember moving as being

very negative at all. One individual saw benefit in his move from a large town and school to another that was smaller. Whereas before he had a difficult time getting into certain clubs at his much larger old school, he found himself able to be involved in his new school in ways he had previously been denied. Furthermore, his old school had too many guitarists, but in his new school his talent at playing guitar was in much higher demand. In his words, his relocation was “very, very positive.”

In another instance, a woman related that when she was in the 8th grade her father accepted a Call to Canada, a decision about which she was the only one of her siblings to be supportive. She remembers that her dad did not confer with any of his children when deliberating the Call and that she and her siblings found out his decision on Sunday morning with the rest of the congregation. As she looks back on this and other moves, she realized that her way of coping was to

learn how to fit in. You learn how to accept different personalities and you learn to stay at the outskirts of people and try to figure out which group you'd fit in better with. My thing was, and what I will tell my children, is don't cling to the first person or other personalities. I think it helps to figure out people and it was kind of interesting to see the different cultures that each town has.

What becomes clear through the above responses is that siblings can react to moving in different ways, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively. Such was the case with another adult pastor's child who indicated that while he saw one of his moves as being nontraumatic, his sister struggled a great deal with the move. He attributes his success at

handling his moves as a child in positive ways to being a “very secure child.” In addition, he made the interesting observation, “That was back in the day when people didn’t move so much in other careers. Now they do.”

Another way of looking at the issue of relocating is to inquire about how pastors’ children deal with the *possibility* of moving. Responses vary from those who say that they do not think or worry about it all to those who very strongly indicate they do not want to move.

Most do not seem to be too concerned about moving. As one stated, “I know if we go it will be okay because I’ve been through it once already, so I usually don’t think about it too much.” Another teen indicated that she is not very concerned because “my parents just told me they don’t really plan on moving in the near future.” For the most part, the teens do not appear to very concerned about the prospect of relocation.

However, three of the teens seemed to be quite concerned about moving and in a couple of cases were quite adamant about not moving. In one case, a pastor’s son shared that lately his dad had been receiving quite a few calls. He indicated that he handled the possibility of moving rather well until, as he stated, “last year when the Call was in _____, we went there to visit the church. I remember that night I threw up seven times. I don’t know if it was because I was just under a lot of stress or whatever.”

In two other interviews, a couple of pastors’ sons demonstrated their thoughts regarding the possibility of moving. Without being asked, one said,

“I wouldn’t want to move,” and another stated emphatically, “I don’t want to move. I want to stay right where I am!” One might speculate that the possibility of moving was something that was on their minds at the time of the interview since the information was volunteered by the teens without first being asked. Perhaps their fathers had Calls they were considering at the time or the sons heard their parents talking about moving. Whatever the reason, these two pastors’ sons were very much set against relocating.

8. *Did you see your father primarily as your father, pastor, or both?*

Given the close connection that can exist between the church and parsonage and the blurring of identities, this question was asked in order to try and determine how the pastors’ children regarded their fathers and their relationship with him.

The majority of teens (10 out of 17) responded that they saw their fathers primarily as fathers and not as their pastors. As one stated, “I never really think of him as my pastor but more as my dad.” A more detailed answer was given by another teen who observed:

I don’t think I ever really see him as my pastor because I don’t feel like I could separate the two. I don’t feel like I could talk to him one day as my father and then go in and talk to him the next day as a pastor I suppose now I ask him more for advice and stuff but mostly as a father and the pastor part just kind of works into it.

Likewise, the majority of adults responded that when they were growing up they viewed their fathers primarily as fathers. As one said, “He

certainly was my father. I knew he was the pastor of the congregation but I never saw him as my pastor.” Another remarked about his father that “his parental goals seemed to overshadow his professional role as it were.” This would seem to indicate that the manner in which a father presented himself might help determine how the children primarily saw their fathers.

Even though some pastors’ children seem to have a clear understanding of their fathers’ parental identity, the fact that he is a pastor certainly does not go unnoticed. A number of those interviewed, both teens and adults, replied that they saw their fathers as both fathers and pastors. The distinction was made depending on where the person was. For example, one teen observed that he saw his dad in different ways. “At home he’s just my dad. He tells me to do something and I do it, he tells me not to do something and I try my hardest not to do it. Sunday morning I come to church and he’s got the robes on and he’s preaching in the pulpit. I see then that he is my pastor and I’m just a member of his congregation.” Likewise, a pastor’s daughter related that “if we’re in church he’s my pastor but he’s my dad too. When he’s at home he’s my dad. He’s a normal dad. When we’re at home he’s my dad, but on Sunday mornings he’s a pastor.”

Two adults as well responded that they viewed their fathers as both fathers and pastors. However, the distinction is not always so clear, as one individual indicated. He said that his father “was probably two different people, but he was just any dad who would go to work. They are different

people when they are home.” In regard to listening to his father’s sermons, he went on to say, “You would tend to tune out because you’d heard that voice so much.” Apparently, listening to the shepherd’s voice during a sermon can be a bit more difficult if the shepherd happens to be one’s father.

If pastors’ children view their fathers primarily as fathers and not pastors, or even if they see them as fathers at home and pastors at church, do pastors’ children in reality have a pastor? In other words, ordinary parishioners have a relationship with a pastor that is separate and distinct from their families, whereas pastors’ children have a relationship with a father who they may or may not consider to be their pastor. Where do these children go for pastoral advice and care, especially if they do not feel like they can go to their father? The interviewees were asked who they turn to for advice. Many of those who were interviewed indicated that they would go to their fathers. They would go to him as their father but at the same time recognize he would give counsel also from a pastoral perspective. Other sources of advice included mothers, siblings, other trusted adults such as teachers, and trusted peers. By and large, however, those who were interviewed seemed comfortable going to their fathers.

Perhaps the most disturbing answer to the question of how pastors’ children see their fathers was voiced by two respondents, one teen and one adult. The answer was that they viewed their fathers primarily as pastors and not fathers. In both instances, the answer was accompanied by some

indication of a possible strained relationship between the child and his/her father. In the case of the seventeen-year-old, he asserted that his father's "job goes all day into the night and usually he's gone in the evening and he's not back until late at night. I don't really see a lot of him during the day. Sometimes the only time I ever see him is at church. In some ways, yeah, he seems more like a pastor." He went on to say that his father being gone so much did bother him.

The response of the adult was even more pointed. When asked how she saw her father, as a father, pastor, or both, she replied that he was "unapproachable." She explained her answer by saying that her father, who served three congregations for a time, "was gone all the time. I don't remember him as part of our lives as such. I remember one time he came home and I said, 'You look vaguely familiar to me' as he walked in. Especially when he was doing his job or being a minister he wasn't approachable because there were so many other people around him." Like the teen who identified his father primarily as a pastor, for this adult the main reason seems to have been that her father was rarely at home and mostly busy with work.

The question of how pastors' children see their fathers may actually be a good diagnostic question when trying to determine what kind of a relationship a pastor's child has with his father. An answer of "father" or "both father and pastor" seems to indicate that a good parent-child

relationship exists. However, when a pastor's child indicates that he sees his father primarily as a pastor and not as a father, such a response may be a red flag that the parent-child relationship is somewhat strained.

9. How would you identify your family, as a clergy family, a Christian family, or other? Why?

This question, while similar to the preceding one, was asked to try to ascertain how the pastors' children understood the identity of their family, as a pastor's family, a Christian family, or a regular family, or a mix. Family identity can be important especially when the distinction between church and a pastor's home and family life is sometimes blurred. Also, the question may help to discover whether or not the family was able to maintain good boundaries between home and church life.

The responses of the teens were evenly divided between those who saw their family as a pastor's family, Christian family or normal family. For those who regarded their families primarily as pastors' families, the two main reasons involved behavior and time spent at church.

Behavior was an important consideration for a couple of respondents who saw their families as pastors' families. As one stated, "It's like in church, you sit there, you're the pastor's family, you're supposed to be good and responsible, no laughing, no smiling, no pinching. I know the first week we got here, the people watched at church, I mean just stared and watched how we behaved and how we acted." Her thoughts were shared by another teen

who said, "I guess I would say 'pastor's family' because you have to behave a certain way. I don't know how many times I told my brother that we have to be good, you know, dad's job and people are watching, but it was never in a negative way. I mean it only made us better."

Others mentioned time spent at church as the main reason why they identified their families as pastors' families. For example, one stated, "Probably a pastor's family because whenever there is a pastors' meeting or something my parents both go and go to a lot of things like that." Another expressed similar sentiments when he indicated why he saw his family as a pastor's family. He said, "[It's] because you're always at church and all but as far as I'm concerned it's as normal as any other family."

A number of teens identified their family as a Christian family. In one case, a teen described what she witnessed as a transition from her family being considered by others as a pastor's family to that of being a Christian family. In her experience, sometimes her family was a pastor's family, but most of the time it was a "regular Christian family." The change took place as people realized they were a normal family. She observed, "When you're meeting new people and they ask what your parents do and you say your dad's a pastor, their first impression or thought is 'I'd better be careful what I say and do.' But after they realize you're just as normal as they are they get over it."

Another teen described her family as a Christian family mostly because of their attendance at church functions. An interesting observation was made by another who remarked, "I would say we're a Christian family. When I think of a pastor's family I think of a perfect, nice little family, but that isn't our family, because we have little arguments and my brother can be kind of rebellious right now since he's a bit older. So I would say a Christian family."

Those who responded that they had a normal family offered no particular reasons for their choice. Apparently, they did not see their families as being too much different from other families they had witnessed.

The adult children of pastors identified their families of origin more often as pastors' families than did the teens. One remarked that her family of origin was definitely a pastor's family because they were reminded of that fact by her parents. She went on to explain, "Because that's what we were told we were. If we were fighting, us kids, I still remember my mom saying that we're supposed to look like Christians." Also, she remarked that she believed her family had no identity apart from the church.

The theme of behavior was discussed by another adult who considered her family of origin to be a pastor's family above all else. In her opinion,

I don't think a pastor's family really tends to be a regular family, you're not allowed that luxury. You don't drink in public, you don't do things as a family, you try to build yourself up as someone who is an example for the rest of the parish. In my era that was a big thing to have your home in order before telling everyone else what to do.

Apparently these adults did not experience much of a family identity apart from the parish. They sensed the need or pressure to have to live up to certain behavioral expectations. Their families, at least in the opinion of these respondents, were defined more by what their father did as a pastor than simply by who they were as a family.

The identification of a family as a clergy family can be a source of pride for family members, so much so that the pride can turn into haughtiness. Such was the experience of one adult who described how pride in the family can become negative. He stated,

I'd say it was a clergy family because I was very conscious of it, that my dad was a pastor. It goes back to some pride in him, and to a certain extent, some of the pride was bad. . . . I can remember being conscious of pride to the point that you may be above someone else or something That's where the pride is bad that whatever Dad said is right even if it may be wrong.

The remainder of the adults identified their families of origin as Christian families above all other identifications. For one, this meant, "I viewed my family as a spiritual family, a together family. I did not see it as pastor's family." Another identified as most important the Christian lifestyle of his family of origin, but at the same time realized the benefits that came from being in a pastor's family. As he succinctly stated, "It is good to be from a pastor's family."

Generally speaking, the evidence suggests that those who identify their families as pastor's families tend to do so for negative reasons. This is not a hard and fast rule, however, since the designation of "pastor's family"

for some carried with it connotations of good things. Likewise, those who identify their families as Christian families tend to be thinking positively of family members living the Christian lifestyle and being involved at church. Those who identified their families as “normal families” tended to do so without offering any explanation for their choice.

10. Overall, do you see your experience as a pastor's child to be positive, negative, somewhere in between?

Overwhelmingly, all of the teens who were interviewed stated that their experience as a pastor's child was positive. Their reasons behind their positive outlook are listed below:

- I'm more well rounded and I've got a better head on my shoulder;
- I've been exposed to more real life situations;
- I'm probably growing up better than I would if my dad wasn't a pastor;
- I've gotten a lot of good things out of it, a few bad but in the end it's been good;
- You go to church all your life;
- I've never really had anything that's been demeaning about being a pastor's kid;
- You get to learn extra things about your faith;
- Sometimes pastors get more involved in church than their family, but for us it's pretty much half and half; we know that we're not neglected;
- Growing up with a stronger faith;
- Getting to know people in the congregation;
- You get the good morals and stuff.

Only two of the teens indicated some negative aspects about their lives as pastors' children. They observed, “Sometimes your dad's not home as much as you'd like but it's a good experience I think,” “I only want to be looked at as a normal kid and sometimes I'm not sure people look at me like

that,” and “My dad expects me to be perfect most of the time but you can’t really be perfect you know.” Even with these complaints and concerns, these teens also concurred that their lives as pastors’ children have been, for the most part, positive.

The results were the same with the adult children of pastors. In every case the adults indicated that their lives as pastors’ children were mostly positive experiences. Positive aspects of their lives include the following:

- I’m glad I had the instruction I had; I’m glad I had the discipline I had;
- The fact that we were instructed in Bible study was wonderful;
- The religious training has been an anchor that all my siblings and I have relied on.

An astute observation by one of the adults dealt with the issue of maturity in dealing with one’s life as a pastor’s child. This individual experienced a number of trials, particularly in her teen years. Yet, she observed that had she answered when she was a teenager the question about her life as a pastor’s daughter being positive or negative, the answer would have been quite different. In her words,

Would I have answered it that way? No. It took me until I was 20 to figure out that my parents were actually pretty smart.

If you would have asked me when I was 16, I would have said I hate this. Looking back on it now I can say it was valuable in a number of ways. I’m curious to find out how many of your teenagers respond to that sort of thing because I’d be willing to bet that they have similar feelings like it’s irritating to be watched and irritating to have to be held to higher standards.

You can tell them from me that later on it does get better and you’ll be very thankful for those times.

11. *(For those whose father is a second career pastor.) Did you sense any difference between being a non-pastor's child as compared to being a pastor's child?*

A number of pastors choose being a pastor as a second career, leaving behind their previous lives to take on a new life. When these pastors have children, the children as well find themselves with a new life and lifestyle. The purpose of this question is to try and determine if the children sensed any difference in their two lifestyles and in the manner in which they were treated as a pastor's child compared to not being the child the pastor.

In this particular sample, only two of the seventeen teens had fathers who were second career pastors. One became a pastor's child at the age of nine and the other at the age of ten. In both cases, neither individual remembered how people treated them prior to becoming a pastor's child. One did observe, however, that prior to becoming a pastor's daughter, "I remember always goes to church on Sunday, always going to Sunday school, getting to do devotions every night, but I don't remember how people treated me differently when I was little, if they treated me differently." In her case, the Christian lifestyle she experienced prior to becoming a pastor's child was a consistency that carried over into her new life as a pastor's child. This consistency may be significant in that this girl considered as a positive aspect of her life as a pastor's child that fact that she had "Christianity in the home."

In the experiences of the adults, four of the eight came from backgrounds where their fathers had not always been pastors, and of the four, two could recall significant memories about the differences between the two lives.

In the first case, a 36-year-old man who is a pastor became a pastor's son when he was eight years old. One difference he remembered was the connectedness of his family with the church. He commented, "Before he [his father] became a pastor, you went to church every Sunday and then you were completely disconnected throughout the week. But after being a pastor's child you were constantly connected in some way." The connection that he witnessed at home was "hearing conversation at home" that related to the church. Furthermore, another difference he experienced, that for him was actually quite positive, had to do with the amount of time his father spent at home. "As far as Dad being home more," he recalled, "when he was a pastor, I think he was home more as a pastor than before." Before his father became a pastor, this man remembered that "Dad was always gone when I got up in the morning and he usually came home after we were in bed and so I never saw him." As far as he was concerned, having his father at home more when he was a pastor was a big improvement and something he remembers with fondness. He said, "I can always remember being very happy because Dad was home and I could be with him."

In the second case, a 36-year-old woman became a pastor's daughter at the age of eight. Prior to that, her only experience had been being raised in the military since her father was in the Air Force prior to becoming a pastor. The difference she recalled between being a pastor's daughter and not being a pastor's daughter had to do with her social life and the social life of her family. "When he was in the service," she concluded, "I think we had more close friends, more social." One reason for the change, in her opinion, may be that "sometimes people are afraid to be very good friends with the minister because they think they might be judged or ruined to have been seen with him I think that people have a tendency to pull back a little bit in social ways." How did this effect her? As a pastor's daughter, "it made me pull back." Significantly, earlier this woman had pointed out that she had a hard time making friends after moving into a new location, something that occurred regularly as the daughter of a serviceman and later as the daughter of a pastor. Apparently, however, she noticed that her family had much more of a social life before her father became a pastor rather than after.

The experiences of these second career pastors' children suggest that pastors' children can expect changes in their lives, some positive and some much more challenging. Depending on the previous lifestyles and work habits of their fathers, they might experience having their fathers at home more often, especially during the day. However, the kind of social life to which they had been accustomed prior to becoming pastors' children might be

noticeably different after taking on the new identity as pastors' children. If people tend to be more reserved around pastors, then that reservedness might rub off on their children as well.

With an increasing number of people becoming second career pastors, any information that can be provided to their children about the possible differences might be very useful in helping them to prepare for their new life and identity as pastors' children. More research could be done to specifically target this issue so that the children of pastors or soon-to-be pastors could be adequately prepared to more successfully cope with the challenges they might face.

12. (For those who lived in both a parsonage and their own home.) What differences, if any, did you experience between living in a church-owned home as compared to living in your own home?

Having the dual experience of living in both a church-owned home and their own home was fairly common for both the youth and adults. Five of the seventeen youth experienced both as did five of the eight adults.

One teen did not notice any real difference between the two housing arrangements except that his parents would "gripe about the bills every once in a while" in their own home.

Another indicated that since the parsonage was next to the church more people stopped by as compared to when they were in their own home. In addition, she remarked, "You couldn't have too many holes in the walls for

pictures and stuff like that. You always had to keep the carpet nice.” Yet, for her, she did not see that much of a difference, as she said, “It’s still home to me.”

The big difference for another teen, referring to their own home, was that “none of the houses were as nice as we have now.” He described a parsonage he lived in as the “mouse house,” due to the very large number of mice that his family consistently trapped in the years they lived in that house. In addition, he remembered that people, church members in particular, were over at the parsonage all the time.

The experiences of the adults included some similarities with those of the teens. For example, adults reported that the close proximity of the church-owned home to the church was both a positive and a negative. On the one hand, in the view of one, “It was nice living in a parsonage because you were right next to the church, and Dad was gone a lot so that was nice.” On the other hand, living so close to the church meant for another adult that he felt as though their family was always being watched. Even though he felt comfortable going outside to play, nonetheless he observed that “you’re under more of a watchful eye.” As compared to his experience of living in his own home away from the church, he said,

When you are living in your own place away from the church you get lost in the city. You are just one of the crowd. At that point you can just go out in the back yard and kick a football and pick your nose at the same time if you want and you are not going to make it through the grapevine, where at the parsonage there is always someone coming by.

Apparently, this individual felt a certain amount of freedom to be himself while living in his own home as compared to living in a parsonage.

In regard to church members being around the house, a common experience for those in a parsonage was the “walkthrough.” As one described, “They would do walkthroughs. They would just call and say ‘we’re going to walk through and check it,’ but that put a lot of pressure on, like selling your house.” In another case, a pastor’s daughter recalled living in a parsonage that was kept in nice condition by the church. Without expressing any real pressure that came from the presence of the parishioners inspecting the home, she indicated that “it was their job,” and that she would check “to make sure there wasn’t any writing on the wall.”

A common sentiment expressed by the adults was that when they lived in a church-owned home, they seemed to have to be more careful about how they treated the home or made changes as compared to when they lived in their own homes. Speaking about this difference, one observed, “The big difference is when you own your own house you can do what you want to it. When you want to do something to it [the parsonage] you have to get permission first and then usually they will come in and do it or want to be involved in it somehow. . . . It is theirs and rightly so. I don’t look at that as being negative at all. It’s just the difference.”

Another adult spoke about this issue in a more concerned manner. In response to being asked if differences existed between the two housing arrangements, she replied,

Oh, definitely. You couldn't ever have new drapes or if they were going to paint it, there had to be a committee that came in to decide if they were going to paint it. You had to be careful how you lived because it was owned by the church and you felt that certain scrutiny as to how you were living in that house and how your yard looked because it was owned by the church. I think I was more free in _____ when we did have our own house and I remember that being the happiest for my mom; that was her house.

She went on to say, "You couldn't paint your room any color you wanted it. You had to wait like a committee. It's the most bizarre thing. It's one way it's controlled through the church."

In regard to the freedom of being able to decorate or make changes to one's own home as compared to a parsonage, another adult commented that "Mom and Dad I think felt so much more free and comfortable with changing things in the home and decorating and making improvements and things like that. I think that was a real liberating thing for them." She added, "I guess they felt liberated to be able to do with the walls what they wanted to. I remember Dad thinking that things were okay and they could make this improvement and not feel like something needs to be asked of church properties."

As the responses of the teens and adults would seem to indicate, the main differences between living in a parsonage as compared to their own home had to do with privacy and the freedom to make decisions about the

house. While these may be common experiences, how one regards the experience seems to determine whether or not it is seen as positive or negative.

13. What can be done to help make living as a pastor's child a positive experience? What can be done by the congregation or church-at-large?

This question was asked in order to find out what the pastors' children believed could be done by parents, the congregation and the church-at-large to help make the life of a pastor's child as positive a life as possible.

In regard to parents, one representative answer given by the teens was that they would like their parents to treat them as they would any other child. As one explained, "They can treat their kids like normal kids. They don't have to treat them like 'you have to be good because, you know, you're the pastor's kid so you have to be good a little more.' Just treat their kids normal Let them fit in with the other kids sometimes."

Another answer shared by the teens was that parents need to emphasize that their children are loved and help them grow in their Christian faith. This love and growth in faith was especially important to one teen who remarked that parents should "just love your kids and help them get strong in their faith so that you don't feel awkward having to tell these people that they are a pastor's child. Help them to be comfortable with living in such a Christian environment."

On this same subject, one of the adults echoed the sentiments of the teens regarding being treated like other children. Her advise to parents would be to “show them the love that Jesus would have, don’t be legalistic, kids are kids, they’re going to screw up.” However, another adult would caution clergy parents about having too little expectations of their children. She said, “I just don’t think that you really have to lower your standards either.” Especially in regard to behavior at church, her opinion was that proper discipline will encourage good behavior.

One way to make the life of a pastor’s child more positive is for the parents of the child to be there for the child. As one stated, “There is nothing a kid thirsts for more than to get attention from their parents. Pastors themselves need to see to it that they care for their families and make that a priority.” While this could be said of any child, this individual would remind pastors that they need to make sure they are taking into account the needs of their children in terms of taking necessary time to be with them.

Regarding how the congregation can help to make the life of a pastor’s child a more positive one, a popular word among the teens was the word “perfect.” Clearly, what was important to them was being able to maintain a sense of personal identity without the added expectations of the congregation. In the words of one teen, “They can expect that pastor’s kids aren’t going to be perfect. They can know that we make mistakes and that we don’t always want to have to do everything in the church, too.” Similar remarks included

that the congregation should “not think you’re ‘Mr. Perfect,’” and “Don’t stereotype the pastor’s kids like how you think they should be; just accept them for what they are.”

For one individual, however, the expectations of others did not seem to be a problem. She indicated that in her situation the congregation was “really supportive of our family and me and my dad and I really enjoy it here. As a result that wears off on all of us.”

One of the pastors’ adult children cautioned against people having too few expectations of pastors’ children. Especially in regard to the behavior of the children, she remarked, “I don’t feel like the congregation has any obligations to aid in parenting. I don’t think they have any obligation to lower their standards of the pastor’s children.” This woman seems to be saying that the congregation can help by simply treating the pastor’s children like they would other children; not lowering their expectations any more than they would for anybody else.

Other sentiments clearly indicated that congregation should respect the identity of the pastor’s children and not levee too strict of standards simply because they are pastors’ children. One adult stated rather strongly, “Back off, Jack. I remember when I was a teenager I came to church in my jeans but I sat up in the balcony. A lady came up to my mom and said, ‘I can’t believe she wore jeans,’ and my mom said, ‘At least she’s here.’” She also suggested that congregations could “give pastors and kids time off

together I think the congregation has to realize that they can't have a pastor there 100% of the time, that he has a family." Another believed that the congregation, as much as the parents, need to be careful not to have higher expectations than they would of other children. She observed, "They [the pastor's children] are not the ones that are employees." In like manner, another jokingly said that maybe he should have received an allowance from the offering plate as compensation for the expectations he felt that people from the congregation had of him. Finally, another stated, "Let the kids be kids. Not every kid is going to fill their father's shoes and, honestly, I don't think it's up to the congregation to make a pastor's child feel better or worse about themselves. The kid has the responsibility for his own actions."

As far as what the church-at-large can do to help make being a pastor's child a positive experience, none of the teens had anything to offer. Perhaps they did not understand the question or they were not familiar with the organization of the church-at-large to be able to give an answer. One adult, however, did offer the following suggestion, "The Synod could send a message to the congregation, 'Don't forget these are kids, too, they're just like yours Don't forget these are not little pastors, they're kids.'"

Thinking back to when he was a teenager, another adult speculated about what it may have been like to meet with other pastors' children in a retreat type setting. He mused, "I think it might have been interesting to compare notes with some other pastors' kids about things they'd gone

through or were going through or how their lives were, how their parents were, what mom and dad expected of them. It would have been a kind of group therapy session I suppose.”

By and large, the reactions of the teens and adults seemed to stress the importance of pastors’ children being able to develop as Christian people without having extra expectations placed on them by parents or the congregation. Opinions as to how that can be done varies from those who maintain that they should not have too many expectations to those who believe they should not have too few. What all might agree on, however, is that for pastors’ children to have a positive experience growing up they need to know that they are loved by Christ and their parents and that they have as much freedom as possible to develop as unique children of God.

14. What is the most important thing you would like pastor’s children to know regarding growing up as a pastor’s child?

The last question under consideration in this chapter sought to focus the thoughts of the interviewees on what they saw as being most important for pastors’ children to know. While much was said in the course of the interviews, the desire in this question was to distill out what was most important to them as pastors’ children.

The responses of the teens seemed to focus on five areas. By far the most common response focused on their individuality and maintaining their personal identity apart from being children of pastors. They responded:

- Just be a normal kid, don't act like your dad's a pastor most of the time because people are going to recognize you as a pastor's child not as a normal kid;
- Maybe tell them that they're just like other kids;
- Don't always worry about what other people are thinking; you have to live your own life and live how you believe; don't always follow others, you have to be an individual;
- Being a pastor's child doesn't matter, it doesn't make you different from anybody else;
- Don't let anyone treat you differently.

The second area most frequently mentioned was the importance of the Christian faith, their identity as children of God and the foundation of the faith and its teachings. The responses:

- I think I'd let the Lord [work out] things and trust him;
- If you are really strong as a PK you know that God loves you so then that's the best you can really have;
- Probably just it's what you learn that is good for you in the long run and it helps you make good choices knowing right from wrong, good from bad, and you know, just hang in there, it's all for the better in the end;
- The most important thing to me is that I have a strong faith.

The third grouping of responses focused on the importance of maintaining good balance as a pastor's child. While individuality is important, nonetheless it is important not to go overboard but still follow the rules. In their own words:

- Just to remember that they are [pastors' children] and that they should behave but that they don't have to be restricted and be this mental 'goodie two shoes' person; obey all the rules and stuff;
- When you're in the church you're going to be expected to be really good and just watch yourself and be careful what you do; you don't have to walk around all straight like you can't do anything, but just be nice in the church and don't try to be stupid;
- You don't have to be so quiet and everything but not to go way overboard; just kind of be in the middle, be yourself, don't try to cover up because this is his job.

Another comment focused on accentuating the positive and looking at the benefits that come with the lifestyle of being a pastor's child. Such benefits include those that come with the Christian faith. One teen explained,

I'd tell them it's just like growing up with any father or mother who has any other occupation; it's just the same but then there's the Christian side so you get the benefit of going to church and learning about the Bible and everything . . .; he's your parent so you get a parent but then you also know that you're going to get a full Christian life.

Finally, this last quote by one of the teens is an appeal to pastors' children to stay the course and not get bogged down in the problems they may experience. As one young person said who himself struggled for a time,

I guess I could tell people that even if you think that you're being made fun of or being pressured because you are the son or daughter of a pastor, try just to take it all in stride as best you can and live with it, because what happened to me was that pressure just got to me eventually and I started to break and I said, "Well, maybe being a pastor's kid isn't all it's cracked up to be after all;" but I really don't mind.

As people who have experienced living as pastors' children and then have the added benefit of the wisdom of hindsight, the eight adults who were surveyed offered some insightful comments for pastors' children. Their words seem to convey some heartfelt, genuine concern for their younger counterparts. They speak as people who truly can understand what it is like to be a pastor's child. Their comments are as follows:

- I would say that there are pros and cons of being a cop's child, there are pros and cons of being an Army brat, there are pros and cons of being a

pastor's child. The upside is you get all this great training, the downside is you may feel a little put upon sometimes with pressure because you're held up as an example; but nothing wrong with raising the bar, it will just make you a better person;

- Well, if your upbringing in your family was anything like mine was, and I suspect that most of them were as far as exposure to religious training and expectations, regardless of what you think now . . . you are going to find that what you have learned growing up and what has been instilled in you is going to be something that is going to be there as long as you don't fully reject it;
- Keep the faith, baby, because you could get really turned off, you could choose to get really turned off to organized religion, but keep the faith; it's a free gift that your parents gave you and you won't realize it until you're older;
- Take each day as it comes, learn what you can, trust your parents to bring you up right and in the end pitch for yourself;
- You cannot blame someone else, you have the responsibility for yourself, take responsibility for yourself, make your faith known, make your faith real, learn to love what God has given you all along, enjoy the fact that you are special, it was a pastor's kid that made me special and I enjoy it;
- I think back to a group called 'Dogwood' that came out in 1977 They said before they sang one of their songs that they wanted to know who the PKs were in the crowd. Then he said, "Whenever I'd go out my dad always said, 'remember whose child you are,' and yeah, yeah, I know I'm a preacher's kid." It wasn't until he was in the Navy and out in the middle of an aircraft carrier that he realized that's not what his dad was saying. So I think that you're a child of God, and I think that preacher's kids need to realize that their attitude and their behavior is not the kind of thing of a preacher's kid, but that they're a child of God. I think that unfortunately sometimes it's more that they're the preacher's kid and that's why they need to behave and not the fact that they're a child of God.

The comments expressed by the pastors' adult children convey, in their own way, a desire for the young people to stay firm in the foundation of the faith in which they have been taught. Their convictions came out in terms of closeness to Christ and the training and discipline they received from their parents. Furthermore, the adults provide a solid voice of hope for pastors' children. They indicate that even though one will face temptations to rebel,

the benefits of staying the course will be evident to them, even if at the present time those benefits may seem somewhat obscure.

The young people who participated in the survey seemed, by and large, to have a good outlook on their lives as pastors' children. None of them indicated that were presently undergoing extreme stress, albeit a couple had indicated that in the past they had gone through periods of time when they were tempted to go down paths of serious rebellion. The seventeen young people did share pressures that seem to be common to many others in their situation, such as the pressures of feeling expectations above and beyond those of other children, having fathers who did not seem to spend much time at home, experiencing the ridicule of peers and facing the stress not only of moving but living with the possibility of moving.

While there may be general similarities in the lives of these young people, it became apparent through the interviews that there was no one way of handling pressures. Rather, each one seemed to be able to deal with his or her situation in his or her own way. This suggests that care needs to be taken so that pastors' children are not all squeezed into the same mold or stereotyped in such a way that they are characterized as behaving in one way or another. Indeed, part of the concern voiced by some of these teens was that they felt they were stereotyped.

The general impression of the state of pastors' children, at least pastors' teenage children who live in North Dakota and whose fathers are

pastors in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, is that they are coping rather well with their lives as pastors' children. Based on the results of the interviews, one might offer a hopeful conjecture that the experiences of these teens indicate that pastors' children today collectively are doing rather well.

The method of using interviews is one way of staying in touch with pastors' children, hearing what they have to say and letting them know that they are being considered. In the interviewer's own years growing up as a pastor's son, there was no recollection of anyone outside of his family showing any interest in how he was doing living with the pressures that accompanied his lifestyle. Had someone interviewed him, he might have been somewhat surprised. However, the interviewer believes he would have appreciated the opportunity to share his frustrations and, at the same time, have someone remind him of the benefits that come from being a pastor's son. Sometimes, when a person is in the middle of his frustrations, the benefits can be very hard to see.

The pastors' children who were interviewed in the course of this project seemed, for the most part, to be appreciative of the opportunity to discuss their lives. Even more appreciative were some of the fathers of the teens. In order to raise awareness about these interviews, a general announcement was made at a District Pastoral Conference in which pastors were asked if they had teenage children and if they would be willing to allow their sons and daughters to be interviewed. The response to the announcement was

somewhat overwhelming as many indicated that they would welcome the opportunity. The pastors were not only supportive of the project, but also very enthusiastic about someone showing concern about their children's lives as pastors' children. Throughout the course of this project, pastors themselves consistently have been very interested whenever the topic is raised about the pressures and benefits of living as a pastor's child.

In retrospect, one more thing could be said about the interviewees, both teenaged and adult. They are the experts. At times their situations may seem confusing or rather clear, but they are the ones who are living or have lived the lives of pastors' children. The voices of these people are but a drop in the bucket of the many voices that need to be heard. One might encourage pastors and church officials to take the time to listen to the voices of pastors' children. Doing so will benefit both the speaker and the hearer and provide assistance for the one pastor's child who always wished that someone would listen to him. Giving them the opportunity to be heard is a proactive means of helping them cope with lives that are sometimes stressful, but hopefully, mostly very good.

CHAPTER EIGHT

PKS IN CHRIST: A RETREAT FOR PASTORS' TEENAGE CHILDREN

In order to synthesize and provide a practical outlet for the research in this project, as well as to provide an opportunity to be of concrete assistance to pastors' children, a retreat for pastors' teenage children was planned and implemented. The retreat was held June 5 –6, 1998 at the Doublewood Inn in Fargo, North Dakota. Nineteen young people between the ages of thirteen and eighteen participated in the retreat. Since the retreat was held under the auspices of the North Dakota District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, all of the teenagers were from the state of North Dakota.

The overall theme for the retreat was "Who Am I?" This theme was chosen due to the results of the interviews and other information delineated in the previous chapters. Time and time again, pastors' teenage and adult children who were interviewed raised the issue of identity. The goal of the retreat was to reaffirm the most important identity of the youth, namely, that they are baptized children of God, and then to branch off from that basic identity to discuss and reaffirm from the perspective of Scripture and the

Lutheran Confessions their roles as sons and daughters and pastors' children.

Before discussing the program of the retreat, a few words about the structure of the retreat are in order (see Appendix B for the agenda). The retreat was designed so that, for the most part, the youth would be consistently, but not constantly, engaged in study and discussion. The heart of the retreat was the devotions and four study/discussion times. Built around the study/discussion segments were blocks of free time so that the youth would have ample opportunity to become better acquainted. The assistance of a pastor and his wife from the North Dakota District was secured to help with the retreat. The couple was chosen particularly because the pastor's wife was herself the daughter of a pastor and might be able to provide some insight in the discussions.

As was stated, the overall theme for the retreat was "Who Am I?" What follows is the actual program of the retreat with commentary on what was done at the retreat inserted as necessary (please see Appendix B for an example of an uninterrupted study guide).

WHO AM I?

I. Who Am I? A Baptized Child of God!

This first part of the program focused on the most important identity of the youth as baptized children of God, an identity from which all other

identities find their fulfillment. As pastors' children and teenagers, regardless of who they may think they are or if they are sometimes confused about themselves, the truth of the Word of God tells them of God's gracious love for them in Jesus Christ. Through the water and Word of Holy Baptism, God has chosen them to be his own and has given them the vital identity as His children. Scripture passages were chosen to highlight the gift of Baptism and the accompanying gifts of forgiveness and new life in Christ. All Scripture passages are from the New International Version (NIV).

A. What the Bible says . . .

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 6:3-11

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin - because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

1. Why is my baptism so important?
2. What is my most important identity?
3. Why is it so vital to see myself first as a baptized child of God?

The youth who spoke up seemed to have a very good understanding of their identity as baptized children of God. All of the youth had experience with Confirmation instruction, some having finished the instruction and others still in the process. What was interesting to observe during this first discussion time was the reservedness of the participants. Possible reasons for their hesitancy to open up may have been that they did not know many of the youth who were present, the retreat had just begun and they were somewhat cautious, or the first topic was something they had heard before. As subsequent discussions would reveal, a correlation seemed to be evident that as they became more comfortable with each other, the more they tended to participate in the discussions.

Having reviewed the Scriptural understanding of one's identity in Christ, the study continued with an attempt to apply what Scripture says to the lives of the youth. In the spirit of the often-used statement in the Small Catechism, "What does this mean?" the desire in this section was to make the connection between faith and life.

- B. What does this mean for my life as a pastor's child?

Romans 6:11-14

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to

God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Galatians 3:26-27

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

1. What does it mean to be "dead to sin" and "alive to God in Christ Jesus?"
2. What does it mean to be "clothed" with Christ?
3. How does this truth help me when I am faced with concerns about identity?

The focus of this section was to emphasize that as baptized children of God, God Himself enables us, by His Holy Spirit, to respond to His grace by living the new life in Christ. For teenagers, as for all, this is an important issue. Pastors' children, like all Christians, are faced with daily temptations to throw off the new clothes of Christ and give in to the sinful nature. If we are to cope effectively in God-pleasing ways to the pressures we face, regardless of our station in life, the new self in Christ daily needs to be reaffirmed and strengthened by the Spirit through the Word.

Having discussed the essential identity of the teens as baptized children of God, the program moved to consider from the perspective of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions their important role as sons and daughters of earthly parents. Parent-child relationships can be an issue for teenagers, an issue that can be exacerbated when one factors in the pressures of living in a clergy family.

II. Who Am I? A Son or Daughter!

A. What the Bible says . . .

Exodus 20:12

Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Ephesians 6:1-3

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" – which is the first commandment with a promise – "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

1. How do we "honor" our parents?

Dr. Martin Luther, in his Large Catechism, suggests the following ways in which children can honor their parents: (discuss how we can show the honor suggested by Luther)

- a. when they consider their parents to be God's representatives.
- b. when they esteem and prize their parents as the most precious treasure on earth.
- c. when they are obedient to their parents.
- d. when they show gratitude for the kindness and for all the good things they have received from their parents.

2. What is the *motivation* for wanting to honor our parents? (see Ephesians 6:1)

Using specific examples from the Scriptures, the young people were reminded of their responsibilities towards their parents. Particularly useful, along with Scripture, was the information from the Large Catechism, as it helped to provide a practical application for how they can honor their parents, as is mentioned in the Fourth Commandment (Exodus 20:12). The inclusion of Ephesians 6:1 was intended to remind the teens of the motivation

for honoring and obeying their parents, namely, that one is “in the Lord.” This emphasizes the most important identity of the teens as children of God in Christ, and then helps them to understand what that relationship means in terms of their parent-child relationships.

Once the foundation had been laid from the Scriptures and the Large Catechism regarding their relationship to their parents, the discussion moved to considerations of how that relationship can be understood in various contexts. The issue of being a pastor’s child was raised specifically for the first time at this point in the retreat.

B. What does this mean for my life as a pastor’s child?

1. As a baptized child of God, motivated by God's love in Christ, how will I want to regard my parents?
2. Does the job of my father make a difference as to whether or not I need to honor them?
3. What does God say about the work of my father?
1 Timothy 3:1: "If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task."

The intent of this section was to move from the greater to the lesser as the youth were encouraged to focus more squarely on their particular lives as pastors’ children. In this way, after laying the foundation of who they are in Christ and what that relationship means in terms of their parent-child relationships, the youth were guided into examining their specific situations as pastors’ children.

The desire of this part of the program was to help the youth better appreciate the special role of their parents. As a bridge to encourage them to

think about the pastoral vocation of their fathers, the second question was asked that specifically referred to the job of their fathers. By asking this question, the youth would hopefully better understand that they are to love and honor their parents, regardless of the vocation of their fathers. The special nature of the Office of the Pastoral Ministry was accentuated in the third question. The goal of this question was to remind the youth of the special nature of the work of their fathers. All too often, as the research indicates, pastors' children may have feelings of resentment toward their fathers and the work that they are doing in the church. They may see the work of being a pastor as something that creates extra stress for them as the children and a vocation that all too easily conflicts with their family life. Regardless of what a pastor's child may feel regarding the work of his father, Scripture indicates that the work of being a pastor is a noble task and one to be respected, even by pastors' children.

At this point in the program, the youth began to open up much more and participate in the discussion. Most had become better acquainted with their fellow participants and were more at ease with the retreat.

Once their identity as children of God and children of earthly parents was established and discussed, the program moved pointedly to the identity of the youth as pastors' children. The information in this section focused, first of all, on those portions of Scripture that speak specifically about

pastors' children. Secondly, the information that was discussed consisted of data that was gleaned from the research and interviews of the project.

III. Who Am I? A Pastor's Child!

A. What the Bible says

The Bible does have something to say that refers specifically to pastors' children. In his lists of qualifications of "elders" (pastors), the Apostle Paul wrote the following:

1 Timothy 3:4-5

He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)

Titus 1:6

An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.

1. While these words speak primarily to pastors, what do they say about the importance of pastors' children?
2. Why is it important that pastors' children be believers?
3. Why is it important that pastors' children be "obedient" and "not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient?"

The Scriptures that were the main focus in this section are important if pastors' children are to understand themselves and their unique role as pastors' children. Some were surprised to find out that Scripture specifically mentions the children of pastors. Others were aware of what Scripture says. What Scripture says regarding pastors' children can be very instructional for their lives and can help them understand how their behavior does have an impact in terms of their fathers' ministry. While the verses stated above

speaking primarily to pastors, nonetheless they provide much food for thought for the children themselves.

The next section sought to focus the discussion on the realities that come with being a pastor's child and the desire by many pastors' children to have an identity apart from the work of their fathers. The youth were challenged to consider the degree to which they can actually compartmentalize their lives between being a pastor's child and being a normal kid. A common reflection by pastors' children uncovered in the research and the interviews was that many wanted to be treated like other youth whose fathers are not pastors. This section encouraged them to think about and discuss just how realistically that can be done.

B. What does this mean for my life as a pastor's child?

1. A pastor's child might say, "I want to be treated like every other kid."
 - a. to what extent is this possible?
 - b. to what extent is this not so possible?
2. What are some "realities" that come with being a pastor's child that cannot necessarily be changed?

By the time the program reached this point, the youth were discussing much more freely and seemed to be very comfortable sharing their opinions. The observation might be made that as the program moved from theology to practice, the participants seemed more acutely attentive and participatory, as though they realized that their own lives were being considered.

A number of opinions were shared regarding the realities that come with being a pastor's child. For example, the comment was made by one of the youth that "sometimes people say things that are mean." In the experience of this individual, peers and others have at times singled him out as being a pastor's child and have made disparaging remarks regarding him. Children of all ages seem to have an ability to focus on that one thing that makes others different from themselves and then use it to put others down. For a pastor's teenage child who may be struggling with the parent-child relationship anyway, to be singled out as a pastor's child may tempt him to create even more distance from his father and himself.

Another reality of being a pastor's child that surfaced in the discussion had to do with expectations by people in the congregation. The remark was made, "You will be asked questions and people think you know the answers." The context of that remark was people asking religious questions. On the one hand, one might enjoy being considered as someone who is knowledgeable about religious matters. On the other hand, pastors' children have expressed that they do not always enjoy being singled out. For those who would like to blend in more so and be a normal teen, being a pastor's child can lead to the stereotype that they are the ones who know it all.

Having breached the subject of being a pastor's child and the realities that come with such a lifestyle, the program became even more focused on

the pressures that can be felt by pastors' children. By this time, the participants appeared quite ready to join in the discussion.

C. A closer look at pressures

- 1. Discuss the following pressures that are sometimes experienced by pastors' children. Have you experienced these pressures? If so, how?**
 - a. identity - knowing "who I am" apart from my father being a pastor**
 - b. involvement in the congregation**
 - c. the expectation to be "perfect" by parents, members of the congregation, others**
 - d. the expectations of peers**
 - e. not enough time or attention from father**
 - f. the "fishbowl" – the feeling of being on display**
 - g. interruptions in family time**
 - h. moving or the threat of moving**
 - i. other pressures?**

- 2. What would be negative or harmful ways to cope with the pressures that might go with being a pastor's child?**

In this section of the program, the youth offered many observations on the pressures that they have experienced as pastors' children. In regard to identity, the interesting observation was made that being a pastor's child seems to have an effect on friends and their willingness to come over to the pastor's house. Apparently, friends can feel somewhat strange going to the parsonage. While no specific reason was given for this attitude, one might conjecture that friends feel as though they might be more restricted at the pastor's house or that the pastor may want to talk about religion. Whatever

the reason, this hesitancy is another example of how pastors' children may feel as though they just cannot really be themselves.

Involvement in the congregation was another concern that sparked considerable discussion. Comments were made relative to feeling like they had to be at everything that went on at the church and then feeling guilty if they weren't. Also, concern was expressed about parishioners who would complain if the pastor's child was not at church.

The observation was made in regard to expectations that most of the expectations seemed to come from members of the congregation. In the experience of these teens, members communicated those expectations directly to them. However, sometimes they were communicated indirectly through their parents. Apparently, church members who were dissatisfied with the pastor's child would speak to his parents and the parents, in turn, would communicate the complaint to the child. The teens further observed that sometimes they felt from their parents and peers expectations to be perfect. By and large, however, they came mostly from parishioners.

Peers are not off the hook, however. The concern was raised that sometimes pastors' children are used as "sport" by other children. The example that was shared was when children try to get the pastor's son or daughter to swear or do other things of a more carnal nature. Apparently, some consider it a challenge to try to make the pastor's child do something that would be considered bad.

Another pressure that created significant discussion had to do with moving or the threat of moving. This concern was described as being “a big deal.” Some reacted to moving by not allowing themselves to commit to friendships for fear that they would move again. Furthermore, just the threat of moving was affirmed as being a concern. As one shared, “I am very aware of it.” Not all moves are bad, however. The point was made that sometimes moves can be good, especially if the relocation is to a place that has more to offer. The general consensus, however, was that moving and the threat of moving was something that was definitely on their minds.

Another pressure suggested that was not included in the study guide was the issue of having a “double personality.” In other words, as one stated, “I have to be someone I am not at church.” For this individual, the feeling was very strong that he could not be himself when he was at church. Rather, he had to behave a certain way and play the part of the pastor’s child. This quandary was described by another teen as “the church face vs. the real face.”

After discussing the pressures that are felt by pastors’ children, the issue of handling those pressures was pursued. The teens agreed that a negative way of handling the stress of being a pastor’s child would be to take the stress out on others. They recognized that the manner in which they handle their stress is important. Using Scripture as the guide, the remainder of the section of the program that dealt with pressures focused on handling those pressures in constructive ways.

3. Handling pressures in positive ways.
 - a According to Ephesians 4:22-27 below, how does my identity as a baptized child of God influence how I can cope with the pressures of being a pastor's child, as well as other pressures?

Ephesians 4:22-27

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

- b. How does being a son or daughter who is "in the Lord" (see Eph. 6:1 above) help in honoring and respecting parents?
- c. How can applying the forgiveness and grace of God in your life and relationships help you cope positively with pressures?

The final segment of the program focused on the positive aspects of growing up as a pastor's child which were gleaned from the research of the project. What is important for pastors' children to realize is that many benefits can come from their lifestyle, benefits that can be celebrated and for which they can be thankful. All too often, pastors' children may focus so much on the pressures they feel that they do not notice the benefits that can be enjoyed. The goal of this section, and the reason why it was placed at the end, was to encourage the teens to go back to their lives with a refreshing perspective on their lives as pastors' children.

D. A look at the positive side.

Discuss the following benefits of being a pastor's child. How have you experienced these benefits?

- a. stronger faith in Jesus Christ**
- b. knowledge of the Bible and theology**
- c. evidence suggests that pastors' children often tend to be very good academically and musically**
- d. going places, meeting people**
- e. "status" in the congregation**
- f. lots of "goodies"**
- g. other benefits?**

By and large, the participants agreed with the above list of benefits. In addition, someone mentioned that a benefit was being able to live in a "free house." Also, one voiced not taking the family for granted as a positive aspect of living in a pastor's family.

The conclusion to the study guide was an example taken from the presenter's own experience as a pastor's son. Since the retreat focused primarily on issues relating to identity, the experience seemed a fitting end.

A closing thought . . .

I remember, on a number of occasions as a pastor's teenage son, that just as I was about to go out with my friends my mom would say, "Steve, remember who you are." When my mom said this, I do not recall thinking that she said this because I was a pastor's son or that she did not trust me. No, I believe that she was in her gentle way reminding me of my most important identity, that I was a baptized child of God.

As we part ways and go back to our lives as pastors' children, I would like to leave you with a final word . . .

Remember who you are, in Christ . . . and REJOICE!

EVALUATION OF THE RETREAT

A crucial element of this retreat was an evaluation tool that was completed by each participant (see Appendix B). The participants were asked to rate the retreat using a scale from 1, strongly disagree to 5, strongly agree. In addition, the evaluation included a number of questions to which the participants were asked to respond. The results of the evaluations, which were completed by every participant, are as follows:

1. I have a better understanding of who I am as a child of God.
undecided – 1 agree – 8 strongly agree – 10
2. I can better accept my role as a son or daughter.
undecided – 2 agree – 11 strongly agree – 6
3. I can appreciate even more the role of my father as a pastor.
undecided – 2 agree – 5 strongly agree – 14
4. I feel better about my life as a pastor's child.
undecided – 2 agree – 8 strongly agree – 11
5. I better understand some of the pressures that come from being a pastor's child.
undecided – 2 agree – 6 strongly agree – 13
6. I am equipped to handle those pressures in positive ways.
undecided – 5 agree – 6 strongly agree – 8
7. I see how the forgiveness and grace of God can be applied in my life as a way of coping positively with pressures.
undecided – 2 agree – 8 strongly agree – 11
8. I can see the benefits of being a pastor's child.
undecided – 2 agree – 5 strongly agree – 12
"for the first time, thank you"

- “That I am in Christ and that others like and dislike moving.”
- “There are others like me who know how this feels.”
- “How many others share the same experiences as I do.”
- “I know there are other people that are going through the same thing I am.”
- “How to deal with the pressures of being a PK.”
- “How many others feel the same.”
- “There are kids that share the same experiences as me.”

18. What would you have liked to learn more about?

- “How to cope with moving around so much.”
- “Helpful ways to get out of a values and beliefs conflict.”
- “What we can do to help our fathers.”
- “The pressures of PKs and how to deal with them.”
- “About how to fit in around school.”
- “How other families work that don’t have pastors’ children in them and how they cope with life.”
- “Everything was fine.”
- “I learned more than I imagined; I think you focused mainly on the most important part – that we are not only children of pastors, but also of an awesome, loving, and caring Father.”
- “Nothing else.”
- “Experience after moving and settling in a church that is unaccepting.”
- “More Bible readings.”
- “Positive sides.”
- “Specific ways to cope with stress.”
- “The book of Titus.”

19. Suggestions as to how the retreat could have been improved:

- “I liked it!”
- “Bigger rooms to sleep in.”
- “More organized schedule.”
- “Longer party!”
- “Pick own roommates.”
- “Make it longer so we get to know everyone better.”
- “Actually, I think it was great. For being the first of its kind, the retreat went extremely well.”
- “I think that the retreat was well planned and does not need improvement.”
- “More comfortable chairs.”

20. Suggestions for future topics at a retreat for teenage pastors' children:

- "How PKs are similar to other church-goers."
- "Bible in depth, not the stories everyone knows but some things that most people don't know."
- "How we, as pastors' children, can make a difference in the lives of others around us."
- "Moving."
- "Pressures of sin."
- "Peer pressure."

21. General comments:

- "I'm glad that I got to know everyone as well as I did. I had a good time and I think we should do it again sometime. I don't like feeling out of place, or in a special position just because my father is a pastor. I like being treated as everyone else is."
- "I liked this – it was fun."
- "I really enjoyed my time spent with everyone. I learned a lot about how to deal with the pressures."
- "Loved the long breaks! The Chi Rho symbol – it was fun learning that it has "PK" in it and that we are "in Christ!"
- "I had a lot of fun at this thing. I think that we should have another soon."
- "I thought the retreat was fun and educational."
- "I had a really fun time. Thanks!"
- "Great retreat, have to do it again."
- "Thank you so much, Pastor J., for putting this on. At first, I wasn't sure what to expect, but now, I'm really glad I came and had a blast."
- "This was a very good idea and should be done again."
- "My best friend's dad was killed in a car crash and being a PK has helped me and him."
- "Retreats are the way to deal with stress like we talked about."
- "Very good overall, I enjoyed time here spending it with people like me."
- "I think that this was well planned. I enjoyed it a lot."
- "I thought it was fun to meet new people."

As the evaluations would seem to indicate, the participants by and large found the experience to be beneficial to them. What is noteworthy is that thirteen of the nineteen teenagers indicated that one thing they had learned that they did not know before was that there are other pastors'

children who are going through the same thing they are. This may suggest that many pastors' children are suffering in silence, unaware that people do exist who have similar experiences and who understand what it is like to be a pastor's child. Retreats such as the one presented here are excellent opportunities to bring these teenagers together for mutual learning and encouragement.

In terms of improvements, the evaluations suggest that more emphasis could have been given to the issue of coping skills. Five of the nineteen chose "undecided" as a response to the statement, "As a result of this retreat, I am equipped to handle those pressures in positive ways." Even though the program did touch on the issue of handling pressures in positive, Scriptural ways, apparently the teens would have benefited from a more thorough treatment of the subject or more concrete suggestions as to how they can constructively cope with the stress in their lives.

All in all, the retreat seems to have benefited the pastors' teenage children and helped them to understand more fully some of the dynamics that are at work in their lives, especially the most important dynamic of the love of God in Christ Jesus. A very encouraging sign is that fourteen of the teens indicated that they strongly agreed that as a result of the retreat they could appreciate even more the role of their fathers as pastors. If a pastor's child can learn to better appreciate the calling of her father, perhaps the

entire family will be benefited which, in turn, might make the father's vocations of father and pastor a little less stressful.

An indication of the impact of the retreat was evident a day after the retreat ended. The mother of one of the participants called the presenter and inquired if a lost item had perchance been located. During the conversation, the mother made the comment that prior to the retreat her son was having a difficult time with the possibility of moving. After bringing him home from the retreat, however, she noticed that he was much more comfortable with the idea. If this is any indication of the helpfulness of the retreat, than hopefully other parents noticed positive results in their own teens.

Looking back over the retreat, some general observations can be made. One aspect of the retreat, which did not necessarily show up on paper, is how quickly the teens seemed to develop camaraderie among themselves. Some, but very few, of the youth knew each other on a first name basis prior to the retreat. Within a few hours, however, most of the young people seemed comfortable with one another. This was evident Friday evening when, after supper and free time, a spontaneous gathering took place in one of the rooms of the chaperones. Within minutes, nearly every participant at the retreat, including adults, were in the room snacking and watching videos. During this time, the manner in which the pastors' children interacted was amazing. They acted as though they had known each other for much longer than the time they had spent at the retreat up to that point. Perhaps they discovered

that they had enough in common as pastors' children that any other barriers were easily overcome. Perhaps this was something that was noticed by the youth themselves, which might account for the large number who wrote in their evaluations about finding others who were just like them. What was particularly interesting was the way in which some of the older teens seemed to care for the younger ones. In some respects, the gathering resembled a family.

In the experience of this retreat, having an adult on hand as a chaperone who herself is a pastor's daughter proved to be very helpful. Throughout the discussions, she was able to provide understanding and insight. Furthermore, she was able to communicate to the teens a message of hope. She voiced what others stated in the interviews in the previous chapter, namely, that it does get better.

An interesting discovery that happened almost by accident involves the Chi-Rho symbol. As the group was discussing what it means to be "in Christ," the presenter drew the Chi-Rho symbol on the white board. In doing so, he noticed that the letters "P" and "K" can be found in the top and bottom of the symbol. After a little more redrawing, a new symbol was born (see Figure 1 on the next page). The symbol became known at the retreat as "PK in Christ," and served as a reminder that the most important identity a pastor's child can have is to be "in Christ." One of the teens referred to this in her evaluation when she wrote, "the Chi-Rho symbol – it was fun learning

that it has 'PK' in it and that we are 'in Christ!'" This symbol became a focusing symbol for the retreat and is the reason for the title of this chapter.

In closing, providing opportunities, such as this retreat, to offer assistance to pastors' children can be of great benefit to the children and their families. Perhaps more could be done to bring these young people together for mutual support so that they do not need to feel as though no one understands them. Many people do exist who understand and can provide much needed encouragement. Those people are the pastors' children themselves.

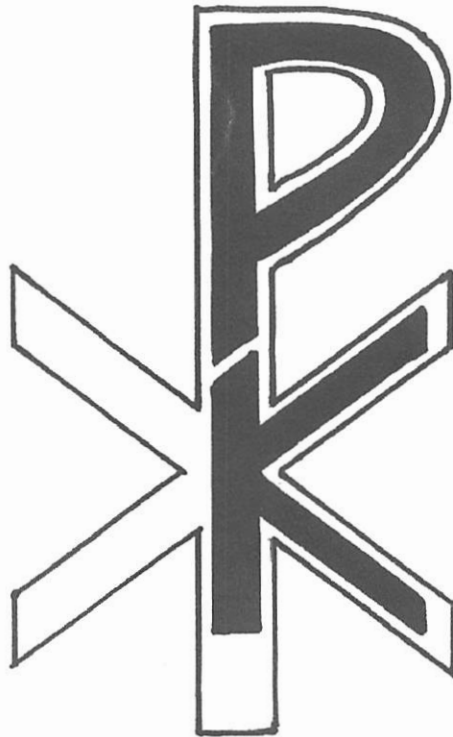


Figure 1 – "PK in Christ"

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSIONS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter has two main purposes. The first is to distill from the research some general conclusions as to how pastors' children can be helped to deal constructively with their lifestyles.

Within this first purpose, first of all, important principles will be stated that provide guidance as to how pastors' children can cope constructively with their lives. The principles will be shared in a heart-to-heart manner as if they were being spoken directly to pastors' children.

Second of all, pastors and congregations will be encouraged to understand the life that pastors' children often have and offer suggestions as to how they can help. Those who are involved with pastors' children as family and parishioners can seek to understand pastors' children and the pressures that they may experience.

Thirdly, recommendations will be made that pertain to the church-at-large. The church-at-large can be instrumental in continuing to offer assistance to pastors' children.

The second purpose of this chapter is to offer some observations regarding this project in terms of the personal and professional growth of the author within his context as both a pastor and a father. Furthermore, recommendations will be given regarding possibilities for further study.

To The Children Of Pastors

You have a very special life. Like any life, you may have your ups and downs. At times, you may experience the benefits that come from living in a pastor's family. And at other times, you may feel like being a pastor's child is not so great. Regardless of how you feel, however, here are some important principles to remember that will help make your life a positive experience.

1. *Remember who you are!*

No, I am not talking about being a pastor's child. The most important identity that you could ever have is that you are a baptized child of God, redeemed by Jesus Christ. Sometimes you may be tempted to think that you are not very important. Sometimes you may think that you are a bit too important because people seem to have so many expectations of you. This is why you, me, all of us need to remember that we are children of God by His grace through faith in Jesus Christ! When you were baptized, God made you his own in Christ. He freely forgave you all of your sins and gave you a new life of peace and power with Himself. This is who you are! All the

expectations that others have of you – friends, family, church – cannot take from you your most important identity. So, in the ups and downs of your life, remember that God in Christ loves you. Remember who you are, and rejoice!

2. *Think about what you have!*

At times you may be tempted to think about everything that you don't have, or wish that you had a different life. Maybe sometimes you feel like you are not included in a certain circle of friends because your dad is a pastor. Maybe you think that you have to prove yourself in order to fit in with the crowd. Or maybe you think once in a while that it would be nice if you could be treated like other children and not have to act one way at church and another way someplace else.

As a child of God you have the best gifts from God that you could ever have – forgiveness and a new life of hope, peace, and power in Jesus. As a pastor's child, you also have some nice benefits, too. You know how some people do not seem to care much about God at all? Maybe you have friends who are like that. You can be thankful that you have a family where God is real and you are taught important things like God's love, Jesus dying and rising for you and the importance of forgiveness. Think about how nice it is that you have been brought up knowing your Savior. That is something too many people do not have.

Another benefit you can enjoy is being able to know some pretty nice people. Your church contains people who love you and care for you. Sometimes they may say or do things that are hurtful. But then, so do you. Try to be patient with them and remember to forgive. Forgiveness is a great gift you can give to others!

Oh, and don't forget all those nice "goodies" that your family is blessed with at holidays and other times. Sometimes you may get so many cookies and candy that you don't know what to do with it all. What I am trying to say is that your life as a pastor's child can be a really great experience. Think about what you do have, and what you do not have won't seem as important.

3. Be a Christian child.

Do you sometimes think that you are supposed act better than other children just because you are a pastor's child? Try not to think too much about the extra expectations that other people may have of you. What is most important is that, with God's help, you live as a child of God. It does matter how you live. But then, doesn't it matter how any of us live?

What this means is that you, like every other child, need to honor your parents. Remember the 4th Commandment? We all know that nobody has kept that commandment perfectly. Sometimes we have not obeyed our parents, spoken disrespectfully to them, or treated them badly in other ways.

By God's undeserved love, however, we are forgiven for Jesus' sake for all those times. Because of God's great love and the mercy He has shown you, with the strength He provides you can honor your parents and love them with your words and your actions.

Also, as long as we're talking about parents, remember that your father's job is very important. God has called him to be a pastor, to share with people the Word of God, to tell them that their sins are forgiven in Jesus, to comfort them with God's promise of eternal life when a loved one dies, and to help them when they are sick and in the hospital. Sometimes it may seem like he is really busy and you miss him. Respect him for the job that he does, and think about all the times when he could do things with you at times when maybe other dads could not.

4. Ask for help!

Who can you talk to when you start to feel the pressure of being a pastor's child? I hope that you remember to talk to God. He has promised to hear you and help you in time of need.

Also, remember to talk to your parents about what you are thinking and the pressures you are feeling. Sometimes parents do not understand unless you tell them what is going on. Not every pastor has been a pastor's child, right? Maybe your father did not grow up with a dad as a pastor. Help

him and your mom to understand by sharing your life with them. They may not be so out of touch as sometimes you may think!

Another suggestion is to try talking to another pastor's child. Who better to understand what you are going through than another pastor's child. Maybe you could help each other!

What you do not want to do is say nothing and hold it all in. When that happens, you may have a hard time seeing the good that you have. No, the best thing to do is to find someone you can talk to, beginning with God.

5. *Keep the faith!*

Just one more suggestion, keep the faith! The most important and positive thing you can do is to keep believing in your Savior Jesus Christ! I once talked to a pastor's daughter who was 38 years old. I know that may seem old to you, but she remembered what it was like to grow up as a pastor's daughter. She told me that the most important thing she would tell other pastors' children is to "keep the faith!" In other words, she was saying that it will get better. Sometimes we can't see how it can. But she knows, and wants you to know, that God will never leave you. Another pastor's daughter told me that when she got older she realized that she had received many benefits as a pastor's daughter. Even though she had her problems as a young person too, she is thankful for the Christian upbringing that she had.

So, keep the faith! Keep trusting your Savior Jesus and remember that God will never leave you!

I hope that these few suggestions will help you as you live your life as a pastor's child. Each day is a new beginning for you as a child of God in Jesus Christ. With God's help, live each day confident that He will see you through and will help you cope with anything that might come your way!

To Pastors And Congregations

The following are suggestions as to how pastors and congregations can provide a climate in which pastors' children can have a more positive experience growing up in a clergy family. The hope is that as pastors and congregations become more aware of what pastors' children may be experiencing, then they will be more attentive to the needs of the children and proactive in developing an atmosphere that is friendly to pastors' children.

1. *Let pastors' children be children.*

Pastors' children grow up with a lifestyle in which they may experience pressures that come from being pastors' children. Along with the pressures and stress any child or teen might experience, they may have in addition certain expectations from parents and parishioners that only add to the

burden. This first suggestion merely makes the point that pastors' children are first and foremost children, and need to be treated as such.

The children of pastors have needs like other children. They require time and attention from their parents. All too often, demands are placed on a pastor's time where he is away from home most of the day. The children notice this. When speaking to pastors' children, they sometimes indicate that they do not have enough time with their fathers. Pastors and congregations need to be aware of this concern. Pastors, after all, are not only called to be pastors, but they have the responsibility to care for their children and see to it that their needs are being met. Pastors can learn to balance their time between work and family, and congregations can be attentive to the situation and see to it that their pastor takes ample time off for his family.

Furthermore, pastors' children, like any children, do not need to shoulder adult-sized burdens. When pastors' bring their church problems home and spend time talking about the problems instead of focusing on the family, valuable time may be wasted. Not only that, but talking about people or negative situations at church in the hearing of the children may actually place the burden on the children. Imagine hearing talk about people at church and then knowing that you cannot say anything. This puts the child in a difficult situation of having to maintain confidence about something that really is not his concern at all.

Sometimes, a pastor and the congregation he serves experience difficulties with each other. Perhaps the congregation is not happy with the pastor for some reason, and maybe the pastor is not happy where he currently is serving. Both pastors and congregations need to be aware of the impact that such problems can have on the pastors' children. Unfortunately, the children of pastors can find themselves experiencing the brunt of parishioners who are angry with their father. They may take out their aggression against the pastor's children by unfairly singling them out or making remarks to the children that are disparaging toward their father. Likewise, pastors may say things to their children that place the congregation or members in bad light. If this happens, the children may have to experience the stress of divided loyalties. Pastors and congregations need to be aware of how their actions can effect the children of pastors. Inappropriately dealing with difficulties at church on the part of pastors and congregations may adversely effect pastors' children for many years.

2. *Encourage their individuality.*

In order for family members to grow and develop, families need a balance between community and individuality. Family members need the foundation of a stable home life, and, at the same time, the members of the family need the freedom to be able to develop their own interests. Pastors' families sometimes have a hard time maintaining balance between church

and home. There may be times when it seems as though the only time the family is together is when they are at a church function. When this happens, the concern is that pastors' families may have very little identity as a family apart from the church.

As families go, so go the children. Pastors' children may have very little sense of who they are apart from what their fathers do. Statements such as, "Look, there's the pastor's kid," only serve to drive home the point that the child is not defined by who he is, but by what his father does. Pastors' children, like all children, need the freedom to develop their own individualities. Pastors and congregations can help them do that by respecting proper boundaries between church and the pastors' home life.

One common complaint of pastors' children is that they feel as though they are stereotyped. What they hear is that pastors' children are either wild and rebellious or straight-laced. Pastors and congregations both need to remember that pastors' children are unique individuals that need to be respected as individuals and not stereotyped one way or another. In a round about way, when pastors' children feel pressure to be extra well behaved, they may react and cope by either playing the part or rebelling against the expectation. In either case, they would only be entrenching the stereotype deeper in the minds of people. Like other children, pastors' children need room to grow and develop as much as possible without their identities being too wrapped up in the work of their fathers.

3. *Treat pastors' children like other Christian children.*

Another common lament of pastors' children is that they want to be treated like other kids who are not pastors' children. The extent to which pastors' children can realistically be just like other kids is debatable. Some might say that as much as pastors' children want to be treated like regular children, they need to understand that they do live in a "fishbowl" and must cope with stresses that will come their way. Others may maintain that pastors' children can be treated like nonpastors' children if only people around them would treat them that way. Regardless, pastors' children can be assisted by pastors and congregations alike if they try to be fair with pastors' children and not expect too much more from them than they would of any Christian child.

The key is "Christian" child. Certainly all Christian children have expectations placed on them in terms of the Commandments and so forth. For example, Christian children, pastors' children included, are expected to honor their fathers and mothers. The issue in regard to pastors' children and expectations, however, is that sometimes pastors and congregations expect more from the pastors' children because they are pastors' children. This is where the pressure comes in, when the children feel that it is unfair that they should have to behave differently and better than others do simply because they are pastors' children.

One way to combat the feeling that a double standard is being imposed is by emphasizing to pastors' children that their behavior is desirable not because they are pastors' children, but because they are children of God. If pastors and congregations keep this in mind, then the children will not feel singled out for extra expectations. This might go a long way toward helping pastors' children not feel, as one described, that they have to wear a "church-face" as compared to their "real face."

Along with too many expectations, pastors and congregations need to remember not to expect too little of the pastors' children. Not encouraging pastors' children to be involved lest they feel pressured might encourage them to be lackadaisical about congregation life. The same advice can be given in this case, namely, treat pastors' children the same as one might treat any Christian children, no more or less.

To The Church-At-Large

In an interview with an adult pastor's son, the man remarked, "I would like to see every District have a clergy family seminar to talk and share and encourage." Included in this seminar, in his view, would be an opportunity for the children of pastors to meet, discuss their lives, and encourage one another. This adult son of a pastor raised the issue that the church-at-large, from district to synod, could help to proactively strengthen clergy families and especially their children.

The church-at-large is in an important position, first of all, to listen to the cries for help that may come from pastors' children. Cries for help might include a pastor's child who is in trouble with the law or who is engaging in some other reckless, extreme, self-destructive behavior. Such behavior might not always indicate that the child is buckling under the pressure of being a pastor's child, but the possibility exists all the same. Sometimes, but not always, District Presidents or other officials may find out about such crises and be able to step and offer help. All too often, however, church officials may be the last ones to find out.

Second of all, the church-at-large needs to listen to the silence. By "silence" what is meant is the lack of discussion regarding pastors' children and the pressures they experience, especially the silence of the pastors' children themselves. The evaluations that were filled out by pastors' teenage children at a retreat held for them revealed that fourteen out of nineteen participants learned at the retreat that there were other teens who were experiencing what they were going through. This indicates that while these teenagers did experience stress in their lives that related to their being pastors' children, they apparently felt as if they were alone in what they experienced and felt. Just because the children do not openly talk about the pressures they feel does not mean such pressures do not exist. The church-at-large, as well as the parents themselves, can help by not only listening to pastors' children, but by taking the initiative to ask questions.

Some things that the church-at-large could do to offer much needed support would be to include articles encouraging pastors' children and their families in publications that reach the home and congregation. Special events could be held, such as District retreats for pastors' children that would provide the opportunity for children to meet for the purposes of education, inspiration, and mutual support. Likewise, a mentoring system might be worked out where pastors' children would develop relationships with other pastors' children for mutual support. Such endeavors, as well as those yet to be considered, might go a long way toward proactively helping pastors' children positively cope with their lives.

Observations

The issue of growing up as a pastor's child is an ongoing one. As this project has endeavored to show, the children of pastors may experience a range of pressures that can be very challenging and at times devastating. At the same time, the lives of pastors' children can be very satisfying. The difference between devastation and satisfaction would seem to depend, in part, upon various dynamics in the family that work for or against pastors' children. The study of family life known as family systems does offer some insight into the dynamics of family life and the relationship between the church and the pastor's family that might work for or against the children. Such systemic concepts as boundaries, differentiation of self and

triangulation provide insight into some of the dynamics that go on in clergy families and their relationship to the church. Paying attention to those dynamics may help to alleviate some of the pressure that pastors' children and their families experience.

At the same time, the most important dynamic for any pastor's family and the children of that family is the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Mere understanding of family dynamics is no guarantee that all the pressures faced by pastors' children will disappear. Pastors' children live in a world that is warped by sin. Any children of pastors, therefore, who entertain notions that they can live as pastors' children completely free of the pressures of the parsonage are being unrealistic. However, the power of the Gospel is such that the love of God in Christ can lift pastors' children above their situations into the most important identities that they could ever have, namely, children of God in Christ. They can be reaffirmed in their relationship with Jesus Christ, see the positive aspects of their lives as pastors' children and learn to live each day as a new beginning in the love and care of their awesome God.

This final chapter has attempted to distill from the research some basic principles to help guide pastors' children, pastors, congregations and the church-at-large as they endeavor to provide support for children of pastors. However, one can hardly say that all pastors' children experience the same thing. This project has revealed similarities of stress and benefits

that are part of the lives of pastors' children. Yet, what one considers stressful another may find beneficial. For example, one pastor's child may complain about receiving too much attention in the congregation, whereas another might find the extra attention rather nice. One may resent being singled out and labeled a "PK" among peers, while another may simply not care. The experiences of each pastor's child are his own. The warning is that people try to impose pressures where they do not exist, or ignore pressures that do.

The subject of pastors' children and their lives with all the complexities that are involved is an issue that is churchwide in scope. However, the issue is one that can greatly impact the local parish. Pastors who are frustrated with family life and children who seem to be rebellious or unhappy may find their vocation less and less satisfying, which, in turn, may effect their outlook and performance. If pastors' families in general, and pastors' children in particular, can be helped to see the forces at work in their lives and cope with them in constructive ways, then perhaps pastors, their wives and their children will all have a much more positive outlook regarding their families and the Office of the Pastoral Ministry. Perhaps learning more about their families and paying close attention to what their children are experiencing as pastors' children can be included in the injunction to manage their families well.

This project has been an enlightening one for me both as a pastor's son and as the father of eight pastor's children. While attending a Lutheran college, I observed that the pastors' children I knew tended to be either the ones who were quick to party, or they seemed very reserved, studious and, for want of a better word, straight-laced. My impression was simply, "Why?" The question was always in the back of the mind. This project has provided me, and hopefully for others, answers to the question. I can see how my own life as a pastor's son was at times stressful, mostly due to the way I was treated by my peers. On the other hand, I see much more clearly the benefits of living in a clergy family, not the least of which was my solid upbringing in the Christian faith. My parents gave me the gift of a very good foundation in the faith. For that I am most thankful.

This project has made me much more aware of the dynamics that can swirl around the children of pastors. Understanding them does not make them go away. Rather, understanding helps us realize that there are solutions. As a result of this project, I find myself very protective of my wife and children, almost to the point of apology. I am more vocal about the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries around my family. I am more concerned about taking the time to be a significant part of the life of my children. I want my children to develop their God-given gifts, their own identities under their most important identity as baptized children of God. The two congregations I have served during the course of this project have

been very respectful of my family, a fact for which I am most thankful. While there is much more to learn in the school of experience, pressures to overcome and mistakes to be made, one thing is sure, we walk together as a Christian family.

The effect of the project on my own ministry also consists in the satisfaction that I am better able to balance church and home life. As I have grown in my own understanding and shared information with the members of the congregation I serve, my life has been less stressful at home and at church.

An example of how the information regarding boundaries which was gleaned from this project has enabled me to better care for my family involves a situation precipitated by our most recent move. The parsonage sits next to the church, an arrangement of which we were aware prior to our move. However, what we were not aware of was a gate that opened from the parking lot of the church directly into the driveway of the parsonage. For some time, church members had used the driveway of the parsonage as an escape route after church events, a route that took them in effect through the parsonage yard, down the parsonage driveway and within three feet or so of the living room and dining room windows of the house.

Right away this arrangement was a concern to me for three reasons. The first was safety. Now that eight children inhabited the parsonage, most of whom were small, I was concerned that one of the children might be

playing and accidentally get hit by a car. The second reason was security. Since the gate had been left open during the nearly two-year vacancy, the driveway of the parsonage also functioned as a walkthrough for most of the neighborhood children as they went to school. Since we had personal property in the driveway, I was concerned that some of our belongings might be damaged, not to mention the possible damage that could be caused by people walking down our driveway at night. The third reason was privacy. If the gate was to be left open and used by the congregation as an exit after church functions, our family might have people driving down our driveway peering into our dining and living room windows. All three concerns of safety, security and privacy relate directly to the issue of boundaries and maintaining a healthy family identity.

After pointing all of this out to some of the members of the congregation, graciously they agreed that the gate should be closed. The decision, however, was not without some very minor controversy. Once people become accustomed to a certain way of doing things, it can be difficult to think about doing something new. Also, as was pointed out to me, the previous pastor moved his cars on Sunday morning so that people could drive down the driveway. The final result was that it was considered acceptable to close the gate and not move our vehicles. Instead, the congregation decided to restripe the parking lot to allow for better flow of traffic.

This incident is mentioned only because it serves as an example of the importance of guarding the boundaries of the pastor's family. The easy thing to do would be to simply continue with what had always been done. The cost, however, would have been the safety, security and privacy of my family. Understanding the dynamics of boundaries and their importance for family identity enabled me to try to deal with the situation in a constructive way. I believe that this is one way in which this project has benefited me, my family and ultimately, the congregation.

Recommendations

Within the setting of my own ministry and family, this project has been beneficial both professionally and personally. However, the information and practical nature of this project can be useful in the greater context of the church-at-large.

As was touched on in an earlier chapter, whenever I have talked with other pastors about the subject of this project they generally have been very interested. When the retreat was being planned, a significant number of pastors were excited about their children taking part in the event. My experience has been that pastors are concerned about their children and are interested in discovering more about the pressures their children may be facing. Pastors who do not have the background of being pastors' children, as well as those who do, may not always be aware of the challenges their

children might face that come from their identity as pastors' children.

Including the topic of this project at pastoral conferences and similar events might prove useful in raising the awareness and knowledge of pastors about the lives of their own children.

With this in mind, more study could be done that focuses upon pastors' children. One such study might focus on the effect on children who have fathers who choose the pastoral ministry as a second career. Are they prepared for the differences that might exist between their two lifestyles? Do they have an understanding of the dynamics of being a pastor's child? Some of the evidence in this project suggests that pastors' children do sense a difference between being a layman's child and then becoming a pastor's child. With the apparent increasing number of people with families who are attending seminaries, the concern about preparing the children along with their fathers would seem to be very important. Perhaps holding a retreat type event for the older children of seminary students would be beneficial.

Another area of study might focus on adult children of pastors. In the experience of this project, adults who grew up in a clergy family are sometimes carrying around deep hurts from their past experiences. In one case, one of the women who was interviewed for this project left the denomination of her youth to join another, an action she attributed mostly to her strict upbringing as a pastor's daughter. In another case, a man who was interviewed who was raised as a pastor's son has remained in the church but

rarely is involved in the life of the church, including attendance at worship services. Cases such as these, as well as others that may be known, suggest that a significant number of pastors' adult children may exist who are still nursing wounds from their years as pastors' children. Understanding more about the dynamics of parsonage living and where people have come from may help pastors deal more effectively with adult pastors' children who are members of their congregations. As odd as it may sound, perhaps enough of a need exists to have a retreat for adult children of pastors!

In conclusion, this project has provided me with the opportunity to explore an issue that has been on my mind for many years. Understanding more about the pressures that pastors' children experience as well as the benefits that come from their lifestyle has helped me to understand more about my own upbringing and has increased my appreciation for being a pastor's son. More importantly, however, I believe that as a pastor and father I am better prepared to meet the needs of my family and congregation and deal with the interrelationship between the two. My hope is that this project, and its practical applications, will be able to help others deal positively with growing up as pastors' children.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW FORMS AND TRANSCRIPTS

CONSENT TO USE INTERVIEW

I understand that the information shared in this interview will be used for research purposes only, and that names and places will be omitted or changed in any transcripts of this interview. I consent to allow Stephen P. Juergensen permission to use information from this interview according to the above restrictions.

Name _____ Date _____

PARENTAL CONSENT

I give permission for my minor child to participate in an interview with Stephen P. Juergensen, according to the conditions outlined in the "Consent to Use Interview."

Name _____ Date _____

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS/QUESTIONS

Interview # _____

Date _____

Person interviewed _____

Sex M F Age _____

Birth order 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Marital status M S D W

Occupation _____

Present involvement in the church _____

Years growing up in a clergy family _____

When became a pastor's child? _____

Parents live in own home? church provided home? both?

Number of moves while growing up in a parsonage _____

1. What outside or inside pressures, if any, do you believe you experienced that came from being a pastor's child?
2. How did/do you react to and handle those pressures?
3. What were some positive aspects of being a pastor's child?
4. Because you were a pastor's child, do you believe you were treated differently than other children by parents? church? peers?
5. What impact has being a pastor's child had upon your spiritual life?
6. What impact has being a pastor's child had upon your involvement in the Church?
7. What effect has relocations had upon you? (if applicable)

8. Did you see your father primarily as your: father, pastor, both?
9. How would you identify your family, as a clergy family, Christian family, other? Why?
10. Overall, do you see your experience as a pastor's child to be positive, negative, somewhere in between? Why?
11. (For those whose father is a 2nd career pastor) Did you sense any difference between being a non-pastor's child as compared to being a pastor's child?
12. (For those who lived in both a parsonage and their own home) What differences, if any, did you experience between living in a church-owned home as compared to living in your own home?
13. What can be done to help make living as a pastor's child a positive experience? What can be done by the congregation, church-at-large?
14. What is the most important thing you would like pastor's children to know regarding growing up as a pastor's child?
15. Any experiences, positive or negative, that you would like to share regarding your life as a pastor's child?

TRANSCRIPTS OF THE INTERVIEWS

Notes regarding the transcripts:

- The transcripts have been kept as literal as possible. The individuals who were interviewed displayed a wide range of verbal styles, therefore, some of the interviews are easier to read and follow than others.
- I = Interviewer; PC = Pastor's Child
- Proper names of individuals, places and congregations have been omitted and replaced with _____.
- The symbol ----- refers to portions of the audiotapes that were inaudible or incomprehensible.

INTERVIEW #1

Male, 35, married, LCMS pastor, eleven years growing up as a pastor's son, lived in both a church-owned and parent-owned home, one move

I: What pressures, if any, do you believe you experienced that came from being a pastor's child?

PC: Looking back, I don't feel I really had any pressures so to speak. I really didn't feel any pressures. When I was growing up, you know, I don't know if you could call it naiveté or what, but being a pastor's kid was just like, you know, being the child of a carpenter or a machinist or anybody else. You know, I didn't know there was any standard or any difference and my folks never really sat us down and said "This is how you're going to act" or "This is what you're going to do, this is what your dad is and how you will act a certain way." So, there were no pressures as far as how we acted in public and things like that. I certainly had, you know, like all parents do with their kids when they go to visit someone, "All of you will have your best manners," you know, but what I experienced was very normal for any other household I saw. Some of the pressures I might have experienced probably came more from my peers as far as school mates, classmates and back when my dad became a pastor, that's when the walk out was going on, he became a pastor in ____, and there was some tremendous turmoil in the parish that he went to. The senior pastor, it turned out, was a member of ELIM and it split the congregation and that's a whole other story but the principle of the school was in ELIM also and I used to be best friends with his son and I could never figure out why all of a sudden he didn't like me after we came back from vicarage because my dad vicared at the same church he got a call from to be an assistant. My parents never talked to any of us about what was going on. We knew something was going on that wasn't good and it was upsetting but they never talked about it in the home so we just didn't know. But when you got to school with your friends, that's where it really hit and so I got kicked on quite a bit and so that's where it came from. I could never figure out why that happened but if you want to talk about pressures that was probably it. Looking back, and it wasn't pressure to act a certain way, it was more this is what you are and I don't like yours, that kind of thing.

I: Can you recall, what do you think about that?

PC: Well, I didn't understand, to be honest with you, I didn't think much about it. I mostly cried, because it hurt your feelings and they didn't want you to be around and yet you had to go to school to be around them. It was more confusing than anything else cause one day they'd be real nice and the next day, you know, they'd just hammer you, you know, and I can remember wanting to be friends so bad and it made me try harder to be their friend and that probably got me into trouble sometimes. But, that's where PKs maybe

get in stuff, they're rebellious but I don't see that coming out of being a "PK." I see it more out of wanting to - peer pressure - wanting to be friends and be accepted.

I: Do you think that had you not been a PK that you would have had that same peer pressure?

PC: I think you would have it in a different way, yeah! I don't blame at all. I never felt that it was my dad's fault because of what he was or what he did. I never had that, it never crossed my mind. In fact, I always, I always wanted to be a pastor since Confirmation really. That's what really kind of steered me anyway that I can remember and I put it off for awhile so I could do more valiant things.

I: Well, let me just ask another question then. This is perhaps somewhat related. As you look back growing up in a parsonage, can you think of anything that you would like to have seen done differently?

PC: Growing up, oh, I didn't grow up in a parsonage

I: Oh really, as a pastor's child?

PC: I'm getting technical on you. Boy, that's a tough question because I was very happy growing up. I guess if anything I would like different I can remember times when I had asked my dad to do something and he couldn't because he was busy. I would have liked more time with my dad. I always had a good relationship with him but at the same time that's not a problem. I understood that he was busy and had to go do things. I don't even know if I would want to change that, you know, it's just something that I can remember and that I applied to my life today is to try and take that time when I can with my kids.

I: So your experience growing up has influenced how you yourself act?

PC: Yeah, I more take it as I don't want to change it, just learn from it and try to improve. Not that it was bad but, you know, I can hear myself in my kids when [they say] "You got to go to the office again today daddy," "Yeah, I do," "Oh I wish you'd stay home." It tears the heart out. I promised to play with you tonight and then tonight comes and . . .

I: Well, what were some of the positive aspects of being a pastor's child that you remember when you were little?

PC: Lots of fruit baskets and food at Christmas time. Oh, you know, you get as a pastor gifts of money and that was always a positive thing, you know, and it made mom and dad happy, you know, but I don't want to put a bad light on all that. I remember I liked, looking back, you know, I didn't really think about it then but the one year we did spend in the parsonage I liked living away from the church in our own house in a neighborhood.

I: What about that did you like?

PC: It was like you weren't under such an eye so to speak I guess. There is a difference between parsonage living and having your own place somewhere else, especially in a city because you kind of get lost in the crowd then and not that you were doing anything wrong it's just nice to be able to get into a

back yard and kick a football if you want without everyone seeing what you are doing. And the house we lived in, I have lots of good memories of that. I guess from a human standpoint too it made me very proud to see that my dad was respected by a lot of people and I had a lot of pride and I don't think in a sinful way but like a parent is proud of a child. I thought that was real nice. People treated you well there and I know there are other positive things and not that you were able to skateboard around the church sidewalk and not get into trouble like the other kids, that's a bratty thing though. Oh, I don't know, right now I can't think of anything else right now. I know there are some others.

I: What effect has being a pastor's child had upon your spiritual life?

PC: I don't think the effect is any different than any other family who raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, the effect is the same. You grow up as a Child of God and you kind of come to know and love your Savior and forgive the misgivings and that's no different than the next person who isn't a pastor's child. Certainly though you are around it more as you're hearing some things at home more than possible someone else would. So as a pastor, too, if you're trying to teach people to be in a devotional life then you certainly want that at home, you need to model what you are teaching but like any other home at the same time not perfectly all the time. So I think pastors and their families get put up on this pedestal that they are to be better than others or that somehow being in a pastor's family it's somehow more sanctified or something, but it's not, it's just like any other family. They are not different than any other family. The spiritual aspect of things from that perspective is a little different because if a parent is doing what their responsibility is then each one is bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I: Let me just ask you, I think, a very related question, the one about the spiritual life may have been a bit more general. Do you see that your being raised, at least that you were raised as a pastor's child, as having any impact upon your involvement in the church?

PC: I think it had a great impact in a very passive way

I: How so?

PC: Not an impact in a way that I could consciously say this is why I've become a pastor and this is why I'm involved in the church but faith and life is an ongoing, I don't want to call it a process, faith and life is ongoing as you grow and having grown up as a PK so to speak or for having grown up with parents that raised me under the nurture and admonition of the Lord gave me the solid ground to stand on later in life so that when I did reach the point to where I went into church work I was well prepared based on how I'd been brought up as a child and that practical way that I'm finding out being a new pastor and getting into peoples' homes and seeing how they relate is the mixed marriages going on right now especially around here, Roman Catholic and Lutheran, and the response I get is "We'll let our kids grow up and let

them make the decision what faith they want to believe in at that time or church they want to join.” I have a real problem with that because parents, whether Roman Catholic or Lutheran, you need to make a decision and go with it, raise that child up in whatever faith because that’s your responsibility as a parent, even if it’s the wrong faith, it’s still your God-given responsibility and it’s not up to us to let our children make that decision because they won’t make the decision, they’ll choose not to go, period. In fact, their whole mentality in that choosing not to go, well look at all the problems they caused for mom and dad, they constantly fought, what good is that, I don’t want to be a part of it and so there is no "religion" in their life at all because they choose to not be a part of but having raised in that, if you want to call is a one dimensional, you know, in one faith that certainly builds a very good foundation from childhood on to go on for the rest of your life. I know that when I’m old and gray, as I do now, all the focus is on how I was raised because that’s your foundation, that’s where you started and that’s what God desires families to be, it’s Christ centered, God centered.

I: Basically, you indicated earlier, I believe, that you had essentially the one move, it was when your dad became a pastor and then you moved to that one place. Did that have any kind of an impact on you or effect on you?

PC: Well, it had a . . . let me back up, because vicarage is an important element in all this too. I thought it went great in that church. I thought it was great and that way, you know, _____, my wife, in our moving, you know, it happened for us at a really good time because our kids are young and they’ve responded the same way I was. They like it and certainly you compare one place to the next, “I like this place better” or “that’s better,” but it’s always an adventure and that’s how it was for me. So back in vicarage I remember not liking _____, _____ and I knew we were going to _____, _____ and that was an exciting thing, it was a whole new place and you didn’t know what to expect and by that time we were use to going to different schools. So going to a new school really wasn’t any big deal either, you just make friends, you know, and that was a very positive experience and that leaving, we didn’t want to leave because you were leaving friends behind. So when it came time for Call Day we found out we were going back to _____, great, because our friends were back there and we knew that after being there a year we knew the town somewhat and it was great.

I: You weren’t going to a totally new strange experience?

PC: Right, you were going home but I don’t know if that would have made a difference if it had been some [other] place. Again it would have been another adventure but this has made it even greater from certainly the situation that existed would not exist. But, from our standpoint, it was great. Our parents just didn’t talk about that stuff and all the problems going on in the church; it just wasn’t talked about in the home, not at all and so for us

kids, I'll speak for myself, we were disconnected from that and, I guess you could say, allowed to go [on] living as kids so to speak and just have fun.

I: You sensed that you had an identity as a family apart from church?

PC: Right, very much.

I: How did your father maintain that? You mentioned that he would not talk about things that happened at church, how did your parents or father, how did they try to maintain that sense of identity that you remember as a child?

PC: I would say making the effort as much as possible to have devotions together, praying together, eating together, just the general, really. I don't know of anything more special they could have done than any other family, you know, to maintain your identity as a family, from discipline that goes on in the home and family time when you sit down and watch a television program or read a book. Certainly that kind of stuff was very much encouraged.

I: When you think back on your growing up as a pastor's child, would you say that you saw yourself as a clergy family or as a Christian family?

PC: I'd say it was a clergy family because, thinking about it now that you asked that question, I was very conscious of it, that my dad was a pastor and it goes back to some of the pride in him, you know, and to a certain extent, some of the pride was bad.

I: Bad in what way?

PC: Well, you could almost get . . . I can remember being conscious of pride to the point that you may be above someone else or something, you know, and you know you're not but so I can, being honest about it, I can remember feeling that way. That's where the pride is bad that whatever dad said is right even if it may be wrong and possibly, I don't know how, such a perfect child, that attitude may have shown in some ways but I don't know.

I: It is interesting to look at the identity of a family and how they perceive themselves and their identity, whether it was a clergy family or a Christian family or another type of family. It's interesting talking to them and try to identify what was right then?

PC: Yeah, cause growing up, you know, it's not just that I'm seeing myself as a clergy family but that's what everyone else sees you as too and so you know it's kind of a two way street. And then again that pedestal thing comes up, you are put on a pedestal by other people and there is no doubt about it and there are the pressures that come that I see, you know in my opinion, came more from outside than inside. If any pressures come from inside it was from an overprotective mother which any family experiences. Does that answer your question.

I: I believe it does and I appreciate it very much. These questions are basically applicable to you because your father is a second career pastor so, do you remember there being any differences that you were aware of

regarding being a nonpastor's child and then being a pastor's child or even your family identity before and then after?

PC: I think that's a really good question because what someone answers, what kind of a family do you see yourself as, I can remember before he became a pastor, you went to church every Sunday and then you were completely disconnected throughout the week; but after being a pastor you were constantly connected in some way mostly hearing conversation at home and being aware of that from my dad and being treated by other people as the pastor's family and so there was a big difference before and after. A big difference noticeably also in church things at home, that's probably the biggest difference right now. As far as dad being home more, when he was a pastor, I think he was home more as a pastor than before. I remember, I was very young, but I have a very vague recollection, all I remember is my mom when I was very very young, dad was always gone when I got up in the morning and he usually came home after we were in bed and so I never saw him.

I: So that was an improvement?

PC: Yeah, it was from the family living perspective, you know. I didn't think anything different, you know, it's just looking back in reflection and observation.

I: Any other differences that you saw being a nonpastor's child and being a pastor's child?

PC: Not that I can right now, just because I was too young to really and I'm just going by the perceptions that I had that I can recall. I can remember the times when dad was around, this is not necessarily a difference but a similarity. I can always remember being very happy because dad was home and I could be with him.

I: And related to that, I guess is, since you have had experience with both your parents owning their own home and also living in a parsonage which was owned by the church, what differences did that make?

PC: Well, there is some big differences! The parsonage was very nice, it was a very nice home and the congregation really went all out to take care of the pastor, they really had a good way of doing that for lack of words here. So, there was no problem, physical or otherwise. The parsonage was a very nice house but the big difference is when you own your own house you can do what you want to it. The other is, when you want to do something to it you have to get permission first and then usually they will come in and do it or want to be involved in it somehow. It is theirs and rightly so. I don't look at that as being negative at all. It's just the difference and the other difference is you are, as I said earlier, you're under more of a watchful eye.

I: Glass house?

PC: Yeah, very much and when you are living in your own place away from the church you get lost in the city, you know, in the cities I mean, and so you know you are just one of the crowd and that point you can just go out in the

back yard and kick a football and pick your nose at the same time if you want and you are not going to make it through the grapevine; where at the parsonage there is always someone coming by. I don't remember that so much bothering me because I don't know if it was an attitude or what, I didn't care. By then I was a teenager, you know, but in reflection that's what's there now. You are under a watchful eye. Those were probably the biggest differences. I remember also at the same time I was very comfortable not that I was doing anything anybody, you know, I had to be ashamed of. I was comfortable to go outside and play around. That's all I can think of right now.

I: Basically, one more question, any experiences positive or negative that you would like to share regarding your life as a pastor's child, any experiences that just come to you?

PC: I have to think about that one. Nothing really pops out at me. The one thing that probably does, but I don't know, you know, the experiences I don't really attribute to being a PK, I think the experiences I had any child would experience whether you're a PK or not. So, I guess there really isn't any experiences as a PK that really pop out in my mind and I think any experiences I could tell you about any kid could really be regardless of who they are. I want to give you something to go on though and it's not really an answer but if something comes up we can go back to it.

I: What can be done to help make living as a pastor's child a positive thing?

PC: I was hoping you would ask that question. That's a good question. It's to make it a positive experience. Having known other pastors' kids and what I've heard by experience, a lot of PKs have come under households where the parents are very strict and you act this way because your father is a pastor. You will not do this, you will not do that, all no, no, no or the dad is just completely gone. He's tied up with his other life which is the church and I would say any words I have to say are geared towards pastors more than the PKs to take care of your family and your one wife. It is your human wife and make that the priority in your life, obviously God first, family second and then you deal with the work you have to do. There are great responsibilities involved with this but I know more pastors who don't take a day off to spend with their family or evenings, book a whole day full of activities and then book a whole night full of meetings night after night, and that's one thing I can remember, if that's possibly back to the previous question, constant meetings and just to back off from some of that and give the time to your family. There is nothing a kid thirsts for more than to get attention from their parents because that's what, I address to the pastor's themselves, to see that they care for their families and make that a priority to do it.

I: Do you see District or Synod or the church-at-large, how can they be of any assistance?

PC: Stay out of it.

I: In what way?

PC: They can be of assistance because I think, if they can, I don't know how though, possibly putting out materials about or encouraging family life among pastors I think that's the only thing they can do because you obviously can't go in and tell someone what to do, you recommend it for their reading, perusal and commend it to the Lord. They are not responsible to do that, their responsibility lies with the person ultimately but the Synod and District certainly can be an instrument in providing some help and guidance along those lines and I think they do in many ways. Being new, too, I've been around District and Synod, yeah, but still I'm green behind the ears as far as that goes.

I: Let me ask you then a very general question. As you look back on your life growing up as a pastor's child, if you were to characterize your experience as generally as possible, if you were to say it was a positive experience, it was a negative experience and it was somewhere in between how would you try to characterize that?

PC: I'd say it was a positive experience.

I: Why would you say that?

PC: Because it isn't just a job, it's an adventure? No, what I just said is true to a certain extent. I never saw, don't ask me how, I attribute this to God. I never saw the pastor, I only saw the pastor as an office, wording is weird there, I only saw the office of the pastoral ministry and it was beyond like most places, you know, most homes you have a job to do and the dad or mom nowadays goes and does that job while the pastor has a totally different job than anyone else in the whole world, taking care of people's souls. Obviously, I'm speaking from what I know now but it applies to then because back then I knew that I didn't know how to put into words, you know, how when you know something is right but you don't know how to say it why, and so I don't attribute that, I attribute it to my mother and father to the extent that I was brought up in the faith but that faith is alive and active and the Holy Spirit has an effect on who he wanted to and how he wants to and somehow I always saw that office of the pastoral ministry and this was a great thing, a very great thing, and the greatest in the world and so it was a very positive experience and so any negative things that happened really didn't matter because the office was still there and there were some very negative things that happened, probably another answer to that question, experiences positive or negative, probably that whole thing going through ELIM with that senior pastor because I came to really like that guy since he was the senior pastor. While they didn't talk about him at home, all of a sudden he was gone and I didn't know. In fact, I didn't really know a lot of the story until maybe about five years ago as it was never talked about. It was talked about, you knew and heard the things that he did but that was pretty much just all it consisted of and it was more, "Well that is wrong, you know, he shouldn't be a pastor anymore," and so what was done was the right

thing even though you still liked the guy and so I don't remember feeling a lot of hurt ever. It raised more questions than anything else but then at the same time it really didn't matter. That may sound contradictory but how I function as a person, its like water off a duck's back to me. I can hear something and the next second I'm on to the next thing and I've forgotten about that and on to the next thing. That was a significant time because it caused a tremendous amount of turmoil in the congregation and it literally split the congregations probably 60/40, one of the big things is the office of the pastoral ministry remained and so I never, you know . . . But when things like that happened many people look bad on pastors, on all pastors the application is made, but I never saw it that way. The office was always still there.

I: Another question, as we look at this whole topic and many different aspects and facets, did you see your father primarily as your pastor, your father or both?

PC: Father, I'd never refer to him as a pastor. He was my dad. You know, I'm going to be a true Lutheran and say both because he was my father probably primarily, but being a father who was my pastor. I don't know if I can separate it as to where that separation happens because when things came up and we talked about things he was being a father and a pastor at the same time, and what I did was - that whether I obeyed him or disobeyed him, you know - was beside the point. I think presently he is my father and is to this day, but at the same time he will always be my pastor/father.

I: Do you sense that people treated you differently because you were the pastor's son?

PC: I never sensed it then, I'm going by then

I: Looking back, how did they treat you differently?

PC: You know that's why I say then. I didn't sense it because I could not sit here and point to one instance where I could say that is how it happened or where, just judging from how things work today, you know, stuff went on like someone, you know, like hypocritical, thinking they'll be nice to you and then, as soon as you walk away, they turn their backs on you and talk about you and obviously you don't hear a lot about that so I could never really point to an instance where it made an impression on me.

I: You think it probably happened but you can't think of a specific incident?

PC: That's probably not fair to answer. I'd prefer back then I had no sense of that and that's probably the best answer to go with.

I: I appreciate it very much and just to wrap up, what is the most important thing that comes to mind that you would want pastors' children to know?

PC: I'd want them to know about the office of the pastoral ministry and that it's something that Christ instituted for people and through which they can hear the forgiveness of sins being given to all people and that same

forgiveness is for them and that negative comments they may hear their parents make or talk about other people and things like that, don't let that create in your mind a judgmental attitude toward others. The reason I say that is because in a lot of PKs' homes, like I said earlier, you get a negative feeling about, well if this is how dad acts, then how would you treat me or mom or whatever, I don't want any part of that, I don't want to be a pastor and I know a lot of sons growing up as PKs, I've been told by them directly, that's why they don't want to be a pastor. They have very negative remembrances of not only things said but how they were treated, whether it's too strong of discipline or whatever. Realize that your father is a sinner too and don't let those things that go on that are sinful effect how the office is being because it's a state that God has created and it's good - all things that God does are good and I don't know if that's comprehensible, that's probably the most important.

I: Well, what it says to me and what I've heard you say is that you want pastors' children to remember what forgiveness is all about, remember you're forgiven and remember Jesus.

INTERVIEW #2

Female, 13, entire life as a pastor's daughter, always lived in a church-owned home, one move as a pastor's daughter

I: Basically, what I'm interested in, is if you have experienced what I'll call any pressures from being a pastor's child?

PC: You mean at school?

I: Yeah, at school.

PC: I don't know. Last year and this year I've been the youngest where, you know, I don't know, if people find out they label you right away as a pastor's kid, "No you better not do anything weird around her" and I just kind of like didn't consider it and wanted to prove it, you know. I'm not saying that - I'm not ashamed of what my dad does.

I: Right.

PC: And last year, I don't know, I kind of went through the trauma of finding; I was still in elementary school and my friend, I thought was my friend, just kind of dumped me.

I: Really.

PC: I don't know why. So first of all I was with this really in group and, you know, and then they just kind of dumped me and picked up her and I was like "Okay I have no idea, who cares." There is this girl that goes to my church here and we're in a couple of the same classes and I asked why the kids don't invite me. Later on she went and told everyone that I was the pastor's daughter. She turned around and asked me, "Do you pray before every meal? Do you do this, do you do that?" Okay, why do I have to answer these questions? I can just sit here, I don't know, you know, trying to enjoy this and, I don't know, once in awhile, it's just like one time my dad dropped me off after lunch, I went home and the kids said "church girl" and, you know, I kind of just gaze off, you know, because that's the way that things are going to happen and, I don't know, it sometimes, I feel, you know, like why this? I mean no one else sticks out, "Oh wait, that kid's parent's a lawyer" or whatever, you know, and I don't know if they understand that it's a normal job, I mean, you don't live like differently from the other people. I don't know.

I: Kind of confusing?

PC: Yeah.

I: You mentioned that you just kind of try to let it roll off.

PC: But, I'm the kind of person that can't do that and so I come home, you know all, you know, like it was right before lunch and so I came home [with it] just bothering me, it was just bothering me because this girl, you know. I had a chance to bring that up so I just kind of, my dad had to talk to me and I was thinking, you know, and sometimes at school I'm afraid to bring up any

concerns that I see, you know, like cussing in the hall or whatever because I'm afraid that people are going to think, "Oh man, you know, she's a pastor's daughter and a . . ."

I: Kind of a goody two shoes?

PC: Yeah and I mean, you know, these are concerns that I see. I mean I'm not probably because of what I was raised by but it's kind of confusing sometimes so I have to be kind of, I don't know, want to express my opinions but yet I don't want to say it's okay and go up there and tattle over every little thing you know.

I: Right.

PC: But these concerns, I'm afraid that when I bring these up, people, you know, end of discussion. Oh, okay you know.

I: Right, I can tell pressures are there with your peers. Any others that you can think about?

PC: No, not really.

I: Any positive aspects of being a pastor's kid?

PC: I guess you don't, like other people you can tell, don't always have all the discipline in everything, you know, and you can tell that they're really weird and I mean I'm like where I'm at, you know, and I find things, I just say things like they are, you know, happy or whenever I ask my dad for advice and everything.

I: Is it more discipline you think? The next question you already touched on. Do you think that because you are a pastor's child you're treated differently by your friends?

PC: Well, by my friends. I don't know but I guess they, you know, it just depends who because some of these people like just come from church. I mean things just kind of . . . I can never really trust her, so I can't really consider her a friend but like an acquaintance. A lot of my friends, they don't care.

I: They're your friends, they just don't make a big deal out of it?

PC: No.

I: Sounds kind of nice.

PC: Yeah, it's not a big deal but I was kind of scared about . . . but you know things are just like they are and people aren't going to accept me, they, why actually they are my friends, they aren't going to accept the way that I am and what my life is like.

I: How about in the church? Do you think people treat you differently in church?

PC: I think and I have two of my best friends that do. I think that's probably because we have this big understanding and everything.

I: Sounds like the church is pretty important.

PC: It is.

I: Do you think parents treat you any different because you're a pastor's child?

PC: No, I don't know, sometimes I think my parents spend more time over at the church than at home at times, you know, but they don't treat me any different.

I: What impact do you think being a pastor's child has had on your spiritual life?

PC: I think I understand a lot more things than, you know, than other people; that other people don't understand and I can understand, can understand how Jesus would have felt when he was here because of what he goes through and what I go through a lot of times; how I get ridiculed sometimes when he did too and I honestly think that just, you know, being able to talk about these things and not my parents to know what I am talking about and not like whatever.

I: So it's been a benefit?

PC: Yeah.

I: Then that discipline you talked about earlier in regards to church stuff, like you're expected to be in church?

PC: Yeah, expect to not get caught for anything but I guess that's some of the house rules.

I: Yeah, I certainly hope so but, at any rate, are you pretty involved in the church?

PC: Yeah, I'm in a church group, in Confirmation and a lot of things like that.

I: You said you only moved once?

PC: Yeah.

I: How's that effected you, moving?

PC: Well, I was only in the first grade and the town wasn't very big so I mean my friends, I still have my friends, you know I was just so young that it didn't really affect me and if I would move now it would affect me a little more because I am older, you know.

I: So, you see if that happened it might affect you. Well, next question I'm going to ask you is, I'm just going to ask you if you see your father primarily as a father,

PC: . . . look at me differently but kind of cover it up and I don't want to be looked at differently. I only just want to be looked at as a normal kid and sometimes I guess I'm not sure people look at me like that.

I: In your opinion, what could be done to help make living as a pastor's child a positive experience?

PC: I think just to know that I'm, that I'm loved just the same and all that stuff and I know that, I mean, if people tease me about what my dad does that I can be able to say, "Well, I don't really care if that's what you think because I don't look at it that way," and so I kind of look at it like that.

I: If you could, if there was one thing that you would like other pastors' children to know, what would that be?

PC: That you don't have to be so quiet and everything but not to go way overboard just kind of be in the middle, you know, kind of be yourself, don't try to cover up because this is their job, it not like your dad . . .

I: Try to be balanced?

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you have any interesting experiences, I mean, anything that comes to mind, interesting experiences of being a pastor's child?

PC: Not that I can think of . . .

<end of tape>

INTERVIEW #3

Female, 36, married, preschool teacher, became a pastor's daughter at age eight, lived in both a parsonage and a parent-owned home, five moves

I: Basically from the outset I would like to understand what pressures inside the home or outside the home have you experienced as you were growing up in a clergy family.

PC: I don't think I had outside pressure. I guess people at church felt like ministers' kids should behave better than other children and my parents, especially my dad, kind of felt the same way. So if you weren't behaving exactly as someone thought you should that was a big deal.

I: A big deal. How did you know it was a big deal?

PC: How did I know it was a big deal? Well, especially because I was older, you know, I, especially when I was in junior high, [heard that] because of what they are, preachers' kids should behave -----

I: People actually said that?

PC: Oh, yeah, and at home my dad would say things like, "You know this is my job and people look at me."

I: How did you handle that?

PC: I handled it by trying not to get into trouble. I had some siblings who held us by their belly but I handled it by trying, you know . . .

I: To tow the line and all?

PC: Doing everything and then some.

I: A rather different side of the coin now. What were some positive aspects that you experienced?

PC: Some positive aspects. I got to meet a lot of people, people I think are very nice and very hospitable towards ministers' families, you know that kind of thing, and people always are on their best behavior around you for the most part, you know, they don't want to look bad and you usually see the best side of people for the most part.

I: Do you think that because you were a pastor's child that you were treated differently than other kids by your parents?

PC: Yeah, I do. I think that my parents expected a lot of us. I'm the second oldest daughter of six and my mom worked outside the home and so there were a lot of pressures on some, you know, to do things and a lot of responsibility and things.

I: How about those expectations on the part of the church?

PC: I think that varied where we were. I can remember a couple of families in particular, you know, that were very demanding of the kids and there were other people, you know. I think that's not a blanket statement, you know, for anybody.

I: Some were, some weren't.

PC: Right.

I: Now, how were they demanding?

PC: Okay, this one story. I'm not Lutheran so it may sound strange, in my church we do not have lady pastors and I don't personally feel that that's appropriate and my dad is very conservative and I was taught for a long time that we don't infant baptize, that we baptize later. I always thought for a long time that . . . there should not be a women, in particular myself, in a religious setting in charge. One time I had a teacher of mine who was an elder's wife who was teaching sixth, seventh and eighth graders, my own was sixth grade, and so there were several boys in the class who were older and were baptized and she asked me to say the closing prayer in class and I felt very uncomfortable and I told her no and I said I don't feel comfortable doing that and she made a big thing in front of the whole class and lectured me about being cooperative and you are a minister's child, you should behave better than this and I'm going to talk to your dad. And then when I did talk to my dad that was one of the worst things that I could think of, the pressure of, you know, you should be better at praying than the other kids and you should be an example even when I was in a situation where I didn't feel comfortable.

I: What did you think about that when she started talking to you?

PC: Well, you know it's confusing because I was still a kid, I was trying to be true to what I had been taught and I believed and yet here was someone, you know, so I didn't quite know what to do; stressful.

I: Stressful. Were you treated differently by your peers in school?

PC: Especially in high school. Lots of times there were comments about "We know what a preacher's kid is," you know, their straighter than straight or wilder than a March hare, and those kind of things and so you know my friends didn't treat me differently but people who didn't know me well but knew what my dad did I think so.

I: Kind of tough on one's identity.

PC: Yeah, trying to find your own way.

I: What impact do you believe being a pastor's child has had upon your spiritual life?

PC: Well, . . . it brought me to where I am now, but I think a lot of times we see from a lot of ones, sometimes kids aren't allowed to make their own religious choices and at some point in life there has to be a commitment of your own. You can't stay where your friends stay forever so when I went away to college, and it's very common in a lot of religions, but there was a time about a whole year where I didn't go to church at all . . . And then I, you know, started to think about something that you see in church and got back to where, you know, where I went but then it was my own convictions and my own belief and so I think that that, you know, I had the knowledge that eventually brought me back to where I needed to be but I didn't, I wasn't allowed, and that's the hard thing now especially when I have kids now, it's a

"Yes you have to go to church." I want them to be raised that way but they also have to have the freedom to make their own decisions, they have to make their own commitment I think and I think a lot of times especially if you're not the minister you're not allowed that, we will be there and that's it.

I: Do you think that was part of why you were away for a year?

PC: I think so, I think it got to where, you know, it's like, by the way, I don't have to go to church.

I: Sort of like "I'm free."

PC: And it's just kind of, you know, like at some point you have to find your own way. So I think that.

I: But yet at the same time you indicated there is that foundation.

PC: You know, when you start, yeah, I have the knowledge and the foundation you started with and so it's not just something that I just knew out of luck, you know, . . . if you have that little bit of sacrament with religious strength you didn't have that, you know, that to help them find their way back but, you know, like I said that is why I am now back turned the long way around.

I: And the next question related to that; basically, what effect do you think being a pastor's child had upon your involvement in the church?

PC: I actually, that was a unique situation, my parents, my dad was the minister here until about two years ago and I think you know there were a lot of things I wouldn't tell him . . . I think I'm more aware maybe about things that need to be done in the church, you know, because a lot of times the minister's family, you're expected to do a lot, you know, and so I think I became more aware of what needs to be done than some other people might be.

I: You mentioned before you moved another time. What effect did that have upon you growing up?

PC: Before my dad became a minister he was in the Air Force so we had moved every year or two all my life

I: So you were use to it by the time he became a minister?

PC: I was used to it but my sister and I, this is my younger sister, had two different ways of handling it. _____ made some really quick friends and that was okay. I got to where I did not make friends as well. I'd maybe pick one or two because I knew I would have to leave them so I tended a little bit to withdraw, you know, not make friendships, you know, kind of as a protection, you know, it hurt to leave them and I knew I was going to have to so that was my kind of coping with things. So I'd make one or two friends, you know, but I didn't get real involved outside the church and I think it's because I knew I was going to leave anyway so that was it.

I: So it did have an effect on you?

PC: Yeah, it did.

I: When you think back did you regard your father primarily as your father or as a pastor or both?

PC: I think both. He was probably two different people but he was just any dad who would go to work. They are a different person than they are at home. I mean this for any occupation where they are not to let someone see you at their office and I think it was a little bit difficult and maybe it was because I was older it wasn't so bad but because you are at the church, at least I was at the church so much, and you know that it's hard to separate that; especially it's hard for me to separate worship times, you know, to listen to him but it's the same way if I heard thing ----- and so you would tend to probably to tune out because you'd heard that voice so much and when it's a different voice, when it's someone else's voice, you know, it's not one you hear all the time it's a little different I think.

I: Thinking about your family then, your family identity, did you see your family as a clergy family or a Christian family or some other way?

PC: I don't know, I guess I thought of my mom as a preacher's wife, if that's right. I guess maybe in a dual role. We'd always been a Christian family, that was always there but because the minister part came later, you know, it wasn't always that way. I don't think it was as hard, you know, to separate his job from, you know what I mean, because we hadn't always been a clergy family or a minister's family, it had always been a Christian family. But I don't think, you know, my mom was a preacher's wife though, you know that, I, you know, that's the role she fits in too.

I: Kind of fit the ideal role people thought a pastor's wife should be?

PC: Yeah, I think so. Especially themselves, they wouldn't have seen in . . . That's very interesting when you see it, you know, in different parts of the country they have different expectations.

I: Now your father during his ministry was mostly up here or was it in _____?

PC: _____, and then _____ and _____ and here and now in _____.

I: And what's the difference about the way people regarded you, what you sensed?

PC: Well, it's hard because like when they were up here I wasn't living with them and that was recently. My mom is from _____ so I think that has a lot to do with it. Churches in the South are fairly conservative, I think, across the board about religion, I think churches in the North, like in _____, I think are very, I don't want to say casual, but maybe more accepting and a little bit more laid back I think. And especially churches in the big city, too. I think a lot of when you go to really large congregations and my dad has not been a pastor of large congregations, you know, when you're in a small congregation of 40-50 people, people know each other fairly well and so it's a little more like a family kind of, you know. So go to dad but if it's a larger congregation people tend to take other people more on the surface like, you know, what is affecting outside and that's when I guess I felt more you need to put on a different appearance, you know, because people

don't know you as well then and people aren't more judgmental in meeting appearances.

I: Overall, do you see your experience as being a pastor's child as positive or negative or somewhere in between?

PC: Somewhere in between. I guess, you know, I don't know any other things so it's hard to compare and it's made me who I am now, you know, so there's good and bad and I think that's the way it is with anything, you know.

I: If there is any one thing you would like to have seen done differently, what would that have been?

PC: I would have liked my parents to be a little more accepting of us as kids and who we were and not who they thought we should be, to do my one thing. And not just my parents but, you know, people in general to realize that pastors' kids are just kids like everyone else's and we all make mistakes, they're going to be loud in church, you know, and I think that they have to have their room to grow too.

I: So your father is a second career pastor. Did you notice any difference between the life you had before and when you became a pastor's kid; as compared to what it was before in terms of the way people regarded you?

PC: Yeah.

I: How was it before?

PC: Well, when he was in the service I think we had more close friends, more social. I think sometimes people are, I don't want to say afraid, but if you don't live perfect lives, I think sometimes people are afraid to be very good friends with the minister because they think they might be judged or ruined to have been seen with him, and those kind of things. I think that people have a tendency to pull back a little bit from that, you know, social ways ----- and they did at least I ----- and not always because we did have some good friends a lot of times. There were people in the church that really pulled back, it made me pull back, you know, so if we'd just been a member there it would have been a different relationship I think.

I: If there weren't as many close friendships after becoming a pastor's child where did you find your friendships?

PC: Well, I think in every church there is, at least in the ones I've been in, there is usually what I call a core group because usually in a group of people that are more active and a little more into church than in other places and you know how those are. And so I didn't make as many friends because you know I didn't make a lot of friends, I would rather have one or two close friends and that was about it. So that was my way of coping with it, and I don't think it was maybe so much friends for the kid as it was for my parents. I guess that's what I saw more, but my parents didn't count as many close friends and I think when we were in the service they had ----- and have an extended surplus and that's what I thought changed more when they became a minister. And not that they didn't socialize but people were a little more reserved around them I think.

I: Guarded?

PC: Yeah, guarded and maybe that's more what I saw than kids my own age. That wasn't as much a difference for us as for our parents.

I: And since you lived in a home that your parents owned as compared with a parsonage, do you remember any difference between the two; being in your own home as compared to a parsonage?

PC: Not really because I guess you know when you work for the Air Force we lived in governmental housing, you know, there wasn't ownership and that's only . . . Owning a home was not real important to my parents, you know, and moving to them wasn't, they enjoyed moving I think and being different places. Here the church owned the house and they kept it real nice and up real well and I didn't notice there was one place we lived in that part of that thing ----- I always felt like it was their job when they came to visit so I checked to make sure there wasn't any writing on the wall. That was scrutiny, personally I think it was.

I: Scrutiny?

PC: Yeah, a little bit but

I: No one saw it usually?

PC: I don't think so. I think there could be a problem but I think it's really more people than whatever.

I: What could have been done to help make being a pastor's child a positive thing and making it a positive experience?

PC: I think that when you realize that they are just kids, you know . . . I think it is for the parents and for the congregation to [know] that they're not any more perfect than your kids are and -----

I: Not to have a double standard?

PC: Right. They are not the ones that are employees, you know. They hired the minister, I mean, only to a certain extent you do hire the family - come as a package deal - but you know you're not paying them so they don't have to deal . . . I do think they have a right to be their own person. You don't want them going out and drinking and doing drugs or those things, but to a certain extent you have to love their parents. And I know that's not in your place or the people in the congregation tend to set the standards for their kids.

I: It's not for them to parent the pastor's kids?

PC: That's what I think. Well just because they are clergy doesn't make it any easier than any other parent.

I: If there is one thing you could say to pastors' children who are now in a clergy family in their home what's one thing you'd want them to know?

PC: Take each day as it comes, learn what you can, trust your parents to bring you up right and in the end pitch for yourself.

I: And a chance here to share any experiences, humorous, otherwise, that you may have had, positive, negative, as a pastor's child.

PC: I have lots of stories. Well I always forget part of that you know. I think you have a chance to live in different places which was good but that wasn't always a bad thing. I went to a lot of places and saw a lot of people so you know I guess I've also seen . . . We've had people stay at our house to play with the kids. My parents always were always really good about taking in people that needed help and we made some friends in realty that didn't have children and you know there is always, we've always trusted them I guess. A couple of times we've had things stolen. I remember when I was in high school, I was in Vacation Bible School, we had one little girl draw a picture of - they asked them to draw a picture of God - and she drew a picture of black, it was all black, there was little yellow light and there was a train track and my dad asked what that was about and she said well, living with God means that I don't have to be afraid when I walk home. And I was wondering where she lived, she lived in a really bad part of town and she had to cross a train track and go through two little ----- and it was just you know, this slum. You see a lot of things that make you really grateful for what you have and realize that there are a lot of people who don't have much.

INTERVIEW #4

Male, 13, entire life as a pastor's son, always lived in a church-owned home, one move as a pastor's son

I: A little bit about me first, I grew up in a parsonage my whole life so I'm just doing this to try to figure out what it's like for other people growing up as a pastor's child. The first question, what pressures if any do you feel?

PC: The only pressure, I mean you get left out of some stuff but it is not really pressures.

I: Like what stuff?

PC: Like some things that kids at school or whatever would know that you are never going to and you are never going to be interested in so they just leave you out of everything. I mean I don't get left out of a lot but there is stuff here and there.

I: You still know it happens?

PC: Yeah, I mean . . .

I: And you think it is because they know you are a pastor's child?

PC: Yeah, I mean that's pretty much my assumption because just about everyone else knows and well there is other people but they were kind of weird people that nobody else talked to so they get left out too.

I: Anything else?

PC: No, not really pressures that I can think of.

I: How do you handle those things?

PC: I don't care, most of the times the things I get left out of are like things, I, kids in my class you know even in this rural community talk about stealing and bragging, about drinking and stuff and I know they have parties but I never get invited to them so they don't. I mean I know they have them and stuff but I am never there and they never tell me when or where or how or why.

I: And that's okay?

PC: Yeah, I don't care.

I: Well, I'm going to turn it a little bit here and ask you for some positive things about being a pastor's kid.

PC: I don't know, a lot of times kids in my class when they have more of a religious question, they come to me.

I: They do?

PC: Yeah.

I: You're like expected to be the expert. Do you know the answers?

PC: Sometimes, yeah, sometimes there is stuff, yeah, that out of the Catholic Bible or whatever that I've never heard of or some other document that I've never heard of that I wouldn't know of so.

I: We've already talked about your peers and they kind of treated you differently.

PC: Yeah, kind of, you don't get, I mean you get the same treatment as everyone else but just some things you are just left out.

I: How about church, do you think people treat you differently than other kids?

PC: I don't know, what do you mean? Explain that.

I: Do they maybe expect you to be different, expect you to be---?

PC: I don't think so. Every personality is in the background I guess. I mean some people it goes from background but other ones, you know, you have from ground up that have been from Kindergarten to the eighth grade and you are just one of the bunch but if you like come in your home you can see at that phase they don't get accepted as well as other ones because they just haven't been there forever so you don't know anything about them really.

I: So you feel pretty well accepted then?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well you have kind of an interesting situation here because you got the church and your community is kind of like a rural area. Where do you go to school?

PC: _____, seven miles from here.

I: How about with your folks? Do you kind of sense they expect you to be different?

PC: No.

I: They don't say things like, "You can't do that in church because you're the pastor's son?"

PC: No, commandments tell us you can't do that.

I: So it has more with like your identity as a Christian. Well, how about with you, what do you think you're being a pastor's child has, what kind of impact does it have on your spiritual life?

PC: Well, probably my best friend _____, down the road, his father just died last year before school started because he got in a car accident but you can tell the difference between him and me the way we are religiously and I think it had some effect but not a lot, you know. I mean you go to church, you know, and then you know what it is but some people that aren't there a lot you can tell they don't really care as much as like I would. I mean you know you wake up some mornings, you go "I don't want to go to church" but then there's other mornings that I don't really care because I have nothing better to do.

I: Yeah, you're expected to be there.

PC: So you, so everybody in church knows if you're not there, "Where's _____," "Well he's either sick or he's somewhere else."

I: Well, that sounds like a plus.

PC: Yeah, I mean you, I mean just being a PK you get to know a lot more people and stuff because my dad goes to open houses or to like _____ and

stuff on like calls and stuff and he just, you know, you would meet more people of the older generation than some other people that, you know, are just farming kids and stuff.

I: Yeah, I'm sure you get invited to a lot of things with your dad or something.

PC: Yeah, the family goes a lot plus when he goes to like hospital calls and stuff sometimes I go with. I just go there for what I want but you can sit in the lobby and read or something.

I: So you think you're safe with the atmosphere and everything. That's kind of a plus for you?

PC: Yeah, I mean it helps, I mean the parents encourage your faith and stuff, yeah, it helps.

I: Well, this next question is dependent on how much you remember when your were five. You said you moved that one time, you moved here at when you were five.

PC: Yeah, well, you see, I was born in _____ and then when I was one we moved to _____, and then my dad started in the seminary, then he went to what is that called, that vicarage or something like that and he did that in _____ and then we moved back to _____ to polish off his stuff and then after he got that I was five years old and we moved to _____ and we've been here ever since.

I: So this has been pretty much your life?

PC: Yeah, I don't want to move either.

I: You don't want to move?

PC: No, I want to stay right where I am.

I: And so what do you think about this whole thing, you know, the possibility [of moving]?

PC: Yeah, I have. I don't want to move but if we ended up having to move I wouldn't want to go to like some downtown school and stuff, you know, I mean I'd like to keep it rural, 20 kids in a class.

I: Is this like something you worry about?

PC: I don't worry about it but you know it pops up every once in awhile.

I: Crosses you mind.

PC: Yeah.

I: Tell me about how you see your dad, do you see your dad primarily as your father or as a pastor or something else?

PC: As a father because he takes me places and stuff like fishing or like to _____ or like that and we do other things, you know, and then as a pastor because we have church and I see him every Sunday at church, we have confirmation classes with him and stuff and then we'll have something of a question like out of the Bible, like out of Deuteronomy, a couple of days ago, I didn't know who was talking or something and I'd have daily devotions and so then when I have a question then it's a pastor but more of the times a father.

I: You see him as more of a dad, that's interesting to think about that.

PC: I never really thought of that before.

I: Yeah, it's kind of interesting, I hadn't either and then one day I realized, you know, I thought of my dad as a pastor, I'd see him in the pulpit as my dad. Hey that's my dad up there. Another question kind of like that but it has to do with your whole family. When you look at your family in relationship to other families, do you see it as a clergy family or a Christian family or what kind of family?

PC: I don't know. Well, it's kind of a Christian family but then a lot of other families around here, like the _____ that live really close _____, they're a spiritual family too but there is like a pocket over here and there that you know are spiritual families but I don't know whether I'd call it a, I don't know whether ours is more of a spiritual or just kind of a regular, I mean.

I: What do you think?

PC: I don't know, kind of weird, in between but I'd have to say spiritual then because it is just the way we do things.

I: Overall, do you see your experience at being a PK as a positive experience or a negative experience?

PC: Positive, definitely positive.

I: Why positive?

PC: Because I've never really had anything that's ever been demeaning about being a pastor's kid, like being left out of a beer bash, oh wow!

I: What do you think could be done to help being a PK, what could be done to help it be the best there is?

PC: I don't know.

I: You see it as a pretty positive experience?

PC: Yeah, it is, I know it's pretty well as it is. I don't think I'd really want to do anything to change it.

I: I wouldn't either, sounds good to me. This is an important question because if you think about other pastors' children, and maybe they don't have as good an experience as you do, maybe they have the same kind of experiences that you do, what's a real important thing is what you would like other PKs to know about themselves, about being a PK.

PC: I don't know. I mean if you are really strong as a PK you know that God loves you so then that's the best you can really have but if you are like, you know, just kind of there as a PK you then you would want like more faith in God and stuff. But me I don't think I'd really change anything at all, any advice, I mean I don't really know what to say.

I: Well, I think you have said a lot . . . What I heard you say is essentially that it is important for a PK to know that God loves them.

PC: Yeah, because I know that I could probably imagine somewhere around, you know, a PK that is really in a lot of trouble just because he is a PK. I mean they feel that their life is no good or whatever because they have

nothing to do except go to school, go home, sleep, go to school, go home seven days a week. That could be pretty dull.

I: Do you know any other PKs?

PC: Yeah, I know the _____ up in _____ and there's some others. I don't know their name but, you know, I know about them.

I: Do you have any interesting experiences at all from being a PK that you would like to share, positive or negative; just some interesting funny story?

PC: I can't think of anything right now. I really must be pretty dull today.

I: No, I don't think you're dull at all.

PC: Seems to be the beginning of every question, "I don't know."

I: That's a way of saying "I'm going to think about it." So basically you are happy with the way things are?

PC: Yeah, there is nothing that really about being a PK that I can think of that has, I mean, I have some weird stories but have nothing to relate to being a PK, I mean.

I: One thing I'm thinking about doing is putting together an overnight retreat just for pastors' kids, for teenage children of pastors.

PC: Go for it.

I: Do you think that would be something that would be useful?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, that's basically all I have. You've been very helpful. I appreciate your remarks.

INTERVIEW #5

Male, 15, nine years as a pastor's son, always lived in a church-owned home, one move as a pastor's son

I: Well, just some questions simply because I grew up in a parsonage my whole life and I know what it was like living there, but I am just trying to figure out what it was like for other people too. These questions I ask are simply to try to find out what it's like for you living as a pastor's son. Try to be as honest as you can - you are helping out my research. What you have to say is real important. The first question simply is to ask you if you sense that you have any pressures that are put on you because you are a pastor's child; outside pressures from other people or like in the home or anything like that?

PC: Not really, not really pressures, I don't think of it that way.

I: Has anyone ever said anything to you like, "You can't do that because you are a PK?"

PC: Yeah, but it is mostly been jokingly. I know they were just joking around because of their respect for me.

I: What are some positive things about living as a PK?

PC: Positive things; I guess unlike some jobs where the dads sometimes are always far away or not at home, well usually he's at home or he is at work so he's nearby at least if you need to talk to him or something. I think our family is a little more closely knit than other families are. We get along better than other families do. Friends at school and stuff talk about how their families always argue with their parents and we don't have a lot of that.

I: Any other positive things that come to mind?

PC: Not really. I'm not really much for thinking positive and negative, I just think it's my age.

I: Do you think that being a pastor's son, do you think people at church expect you to act differently than other kids?

PC: Probably to a certain extent.

I: How about your parents?

PC: Not really, no. Oh, they're pretty good, they are okay parents. I don't have any complaints.

I: So you don't know how they feel about you being their son and have that's -----

PC: No not really. We're a pretty good family actually. We can have fun. We get into arguments like everyone once in awhile but can't really help that.

I: Sounds like a family. How about your peers, do they expect you to act differently?

PC: Yeah, probably to a certain extent because I know of stuff I'm excluded from. Like other people know a lot more of what's going on around here than

I do and I think that is because I am a pastor's son. That has something to do with it. It doesn't really bother me though.

I: What kind of things to they exclude you from?

PC: Well, they have parties and stuff and I don't really know about it or really care about it. I don't want to go to them anyway. Just like who's dating who and all that stuff.

I: And in other things they include you?

PC: Yeah, pretty much, yeah.

I: Wonder why that is, why do you think they didn't tell you about all those other things?

PC: Well probably because I'm a pastor's kid, they probable think that my parent's wouldn't let me go to this or I'm not suppose to go to this, they don't want me there.

I: But, it doesn't seem to be a big issue for you. Well, what do you think that being a pastor's son, what kind of impact do you think that has on your spiritual life?

PC: Quite a bit probably because you grew up with it and it's there every day. Dad's took me to work with him, you hear about it pretty much every day and stuff and you go to church pretty much every Sunday unless you're sick, I really don't miss much, it's pretty big part of my life actually.

I: You see others being different, like other families?

PC: Yeah, there are families around here that are there pretty much there every week but you can see that certain families only come when it fits their schedule or something. It's not you go to church every Sunday because that's what you're supposed to do, you go to church when you can and that's when it could make a difference.

I: Basically, being a pastor's son are you like being more involved in church than you would be if you weren't?

PC: Probably to a certain extent.

I: Would they expect you to be like president of the youth group?

PC: Oh, a little bit I guess. A lot of that stuff just growing up with it, I'm use to it so I just do it anyway because I'm just use to it and being a pastor's son I've grown up with it and stuff so you are probably pretty much close to the spiritual leader of my class.

I: Oh, you are?

PC: Because I'm the only one that really, I don't know, I haven't' really talked to many of them, but some of them don't really take it all that seriously, but as long as it's at least what they show and not what they think, but their actions it's hard to tell if they take it all seriously and stuff.

I: Do you see other positive things?

PC: Yeah, sort of. Well sometimes you are kind of forced into things, you're not really forced into it but you have the choice of having it, you don't go into it or something your going to disappoint a lot of people and I guess people just think it's basically expected that you're going to do this.

I: You moved, not counting like vicarage and other stuff, basically just the one time here?

PC: Yeah.

I: And you don't remember much about that?

PC: No, not really

I: But yet knowing that that's a potential part of the pastor's life?

PC: Yeah.

I: What kind of affect does that at have?

PC: That kind of was negative because knowing that sometimes at any time you get to get up and leave and go to another city or state or something, have to make all new friends, adjust to new teachers and a new environment and all that.

I: Is it like you worry about it?

PC: I, every one in awhile I think about it but

I: It's a real part of your life?

PC: Yeah.

I: You don't worry about it?

PC: It's there.

I: When you think of your dad now, your dad as a pastor, and when you think of your dad do you think of your dad as primarily your father or as your pastor or what?

PC: Well, that's a tough question. I guess I always think of him as dad, but in church and in some of that stuff he is also like the pastor, it's wonderful. There is no real times when I just think of him as pastor and not as dad.

I: Then there are times when being a pastor seems to come through a little bit more maybe?

PC: Yeah.

I: And when you think of your family, what do you think about your family. Do you see this as being you're a pastor's family or do you see it like a Christian family or how do you kind of characterize your family?

PC: Well, for certain I know we're a Christian family and that's pretty certain and to a certain extent we're a pastor's family. Most of all, I usually think of us as a happy family.

I: That's pretty cool. Well, basically, an overall look at the big picture, do you see your experiences as being a pastor's family to be a positive experience or a negative experience?

PC: Oh, positive, I guess that is the way I've grown up, I don't really know what it's like not to be a pastor's son, it's kind of how I was raised.

I: As far as you are concerned, it's been a good life; satisfied with it?

PC: Yeah.

I: If there was anything you could change about being a PK, what would you change if anything?

PC: I don't think I'd change anything.

I: What do you think could be done to make living as a pastor's child the most positive experience?

PC: I guess probably eliminating a lot of people's sense about how you are a pastor's son so you can't do these certain things and so are excluded from this activity or that.

I: In other words, they would think about it and think about you?

PC: Yeah, and not what does or whatever

I: In other words, treat you for what you are and not the other stuff. The next question I think is real important because this is your opportunity to talk to other pastors' kids that are out there. What, perhaps, is the real important thing that you would like other pastors' kids to know about being a PK?

PC: Well, I guess a lot, for myself, I don't really think of myself as a pastor's son and I don't know if any pastors' sons think of themselves that way but they usually think of themselves as just a normal kid. But just to remember that they are and that they should behave but that they don't have to be restricted and do this mental goodie two shoe person. That and obey all the rules and stuff.

I: You know the feeling, have fun and not have to worry about being good even though you're suppose to be good anyhow. Do you have any experiences about being a pastor's kid that you would like to share, it could be humorous, it could be positive one or not such a positive one, it could be anything you want to share.

PC: I guess being a pastor's son, you kind of get to go on all these, you get to go on to all these different places and you get, I guess like, our youth group, I get a little more priority and stuff but being a pastor's son, I guess, I'm one of the first ones usually to like to go District gatherings or zone gatherings.

I: I have another question. I'm thinking about putting together an overnight retreat for pastors children only, what do you think of something like that? Do you think it might be useful?

PC: That would be an interesting thing to do to meet other kids and to know how they feel about being a pastor's son and stuff.

I: I might be doing that then in a few months or so because I'm one too and it would be interesting just to bring people together. Okay, that's all I have to ask, I wanted to know how you feel and what you think about being a pastor's son. It sounds like you don't have any real serious stresses or anything, no annoyances. I just like to remind people too that each individual is special and unique and the important thing is to know how God feels about you in Christ.

INTERVIEW #6

Male, 44, married, LCMS pastor, entire life as a pastor's son, always lived in a church-owned home, three moves as a pastor's son

I: I have some questions I would like to ask, the first is, what pressures do you feel you experienced being a pastor's child?

PC: Pressures?

I: It could be outside pressures, it could be inside pressures?

PC: I don't have any memories of pressures. I can recall being encouraged, if you want to call that pressure and encouraged to attend church group and so on but I mean it was never presented as an option by my parents, I was to go, and I went. Pressures, I really don't feel I had any pressures as a child growing up in the parsonage.

I: That's good. A related question, for example, in church, do you think people treated you differently because you were a pastor's child rather than just one of the group?

PC: Yep, I would say that I have been blessed in this way, that the congregation who loved my father, and that's maybe part of the reason, loved his family, and I was from a young child on always one that received all that. And I don't know how to qualify it but the congregation was proud that I was there in person, their pastor's child, one of four. And even to this day, and I go to _____, when my wife and I were married and my dad was pastor, they are all just so thrilled to see me. Although, as the years go by, of course, there are not as many who know me anymore, must the older ones know.

I: So you have like some special status in the congregation?

PC: Yeah, I would say that that is true. I enjoyed a real recognition and people thought well of me and as well of my whole family I'm sure and I never experienced a sense of, you know, we want you to do this because you're the pastor's son or high pressures, it just kind of, just was one of them but also especially encouraged or, I'll just call it loved. Not that it was obvious but I was there the most you know, I was never missed, I think I've missed church six times in my life. I'm __-years-old you know so how do you answer that, you're looking for my position in the congregation. I didn't feel like I was on a pedestal but I felt that I was always recognized and appreciated just as part of the package with my dad you know.

I: How about, do you feel that you were treated differently by your peers than they would treat other kids?

PC: When you say peers, that would place us into high school and junior high school. Yes that I did feel and if that is pressures or perspective then I would address that a little bit. I was known in a community of about 7000 people and high school class about 250. They knew who my father was if they wanted to know and word travels and that's one of the preacher's kids

and, therefore, I wouldn't be included in some of the real dirty jokes you know or part of the students especially the athletes who would engage in all kinds of behavior which is unbecoming of anyone, especially a Christian. I wouldn't be a part of that group, I mean not that I not necessarily wasn't interested in wanting to be but then that wasn't accepted nor was I willing to become one of them to be accepted. I think I'll give the Holy Spirit credit for that. I didn't need, I didn't want to lower my standards. I suppose now looking back to be a part of that group but I did feel that I was not one of the group. I more or less got a lot of my community sense from the church, not so much from the high school and not so much from things that I did with friends at school. More or less I had friends in the neighborhood, we'd play basketball together, a bunch of boys, we would play football together but that wasn't then taken against the high school so much. Not that I didn't have friends, but there were some subtle ways that I wasn't necessarily part of the group that got together and did nasty things, if there were such, I don't even know, maybe there aren't such things but I think there is.

I: Did they ever say something that you recall openly? Did they say things?

PC: No, nothing that I can recall.

I: It was just more of a matter of not being included in a group.

PC: Yeah, but just a little different culture than some. I mean there are some things that I look back on now and think how naive I was too that I didn't know the trouble I was pretty close to getting into if I'd have just been there and done some of that stuff.

I: How did you handle that? You mentioned that you did not have to prove yourself and go that route. How did you handle those pressures that you felt from those peers?

PC: I guess my experience would be that I had like one and two good friends, male friends, from the congregation who happened to also be in the same high school and I would just kind of spend time with them and sit in the library or sit in the cafeteria and mostly seek them out, you know. I wouldn't know of the fellow basketball players or you know the fellow track players, but we didn't do things together after class, after school. How did I handle it? I just kind of didn't care. I didn't separate myself from them, you know, to be in class you didn't really have a small group where it was noticeable what clique you were in or that. I just went to class and studied and met with a friend or two and went home, you know, did my paper route or whatever else I had to do. I'm pretty boringly unperturbed by it, I guess.

I: Do you sense that your parents treated you any differently than they would other kids because you were a pastor's son?

PC: No, I don't feel that my parents treated me any different than any other Christian parents would treat their child. I felt that when I did something wrong I was being disciplined and deserved it but then forgiven and encouraged. I presume that's the normal Christian household. My

father was no novice at life. He was wounded twice in World War II and then went to the seminary. I mean, he knew both sides of the town and stuff like that. As far as treating me in expectations and so on, I just had good high expectations and in terms of my life, my career, but also were supportive in my own personal interests and decisions, kind of nice household.

PC: Okay, that's great. Did you sense that they pretty much wanted to help you develop your identity as you yourself?

I: They didn't apply pressure in saying what I should or should not do with my life as a career, vocation. They did take tremendous loving interest in what kind of a person I would be, in other words, honest, kind, and they were patient with me as I grew. I don't know how to say it. I'm so sheltered and shielded in knowing what other households are like in some ways to a fault so that you didn't have a proper perspective perhaps on how others of these young people are raised in their homes. But we didn't have any shouting at us, or shouting between mom and dad, or, you know, only pretty much good stuff happened in our house. I know that's not the norm in a lot of peoples homes but it was in mine, I mean I'm pretty thankful for it.

I: Well, I'm going to change the tone here a little bit and just look at some positive things. If you think back on [growing up] in a clergy family, what are some of the positive aspects of that?

PC: Home devotions, prayer, meal prayer. I was well trained to be times of prayer and devotions. Positive thing about forgiveness, encouragement, patience, my parents really have taught me patience; patience with my own parishioners, mistakes that I would make and think I should have done and that I'd be patient and loving and kind and disciplined, which I appreciate now. Positive things; they taught me to take the time to worship and that isn't something we're born with, it's something we have learned and are shaped in, those are some that I think about in that fashion.

I: I'm wondering how that relates to other families.

PC: You would hope, I suppose, that the people of our congregation would do those things and I suppose in some cases.

I: I'm wondering if there isn't more of an emphasis in a clergy family on this.

PC: Yeah, I think so although, of course, I also think there is some negatives in a clergy family regarding the amount of time that can be spent with a parent as well. I don't know if you want to talk about that in the same question as positive but it will work. I mean, yeah, I played catch, let's say 100 times in my life, just to use it as a percentage. I would have played catch with my father out of that 100 probably 10 times and with my mother 90 times, I bet, because she was a little more available like 90% more available after school and so on. And she did stay home with us and I feel that I as an adult pastor/parent that that's something I really wanted to make as an adjustment is my involvement with my children, actually my sons. I have sons and to show my face to them just a little more often than my father did

as he built a large, let's say, a large congregation was built in _____ when he was there physically and numerically and went from very small group in a very small granite building to a very large group in a very large new building and that didn't just happen and we give thanks to God for his work and so on. As I look back on it I really don't have any unresolved issues about that but it was a reality that my mother did a good job compensating. But he wasn't around as much as I think he wished he might have been able to and it had, I don't know, no lingering painful consequences but nonetheless, you know, I think a boy needs to see his father more than I saw my father in some ways and they made up for it. We did take family vacations and this and that, you know, and so there are positives. I'd be the one saying that would be not so positive but not exactly earth shaking either.

I: What impact has being a pastor's child had on your spiritual life?

PC: That has been just really fine. Growing up we would read, dad would have an old paperback Bible and we would read one page every day. If it was in the middle of a sentence, he would say, "Well, just remember that sentence." I can almost just picture it and we'll pick it up tomorrow and we'd pick it up tomorrow, you know, and we would just go through the gospels and we'd just read the gospel and then we'd read Portals of Prayer and I'd eventually get a turn to some of the reading and really didn't do a lot of discussing as I recall. Well, maybe we did and I just don't remember it but that we had a training of getting into the Word. And then of course the spiritual formation is probably best shown to me in a spirit of forgiving one another, loving one another, hands on hugs and touch on the head and shoulder. It was a warm kind good place to be. I remember seeing Ephesians 5 in the kitchen a lot, "Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church." I saw my father really tenderly hold and hug my mother almost daily whatever he'd think of and that genuine affection, kindness and love really kind of was a sermon to us all. And when my father would talk about forgiveness and love from the pulpit I really thought that was valid because he knew, and this was not just theory to him. And I appreciated that and that is a key in my own formation and how my boys are learning what true marriage and love is. And I call that a spiritual formation in practical terms in that they understand how love works in real life too in the parsonage and not just head knowledge but also heart and hands, and I really thank God for that. And church life were not two separate things which is kind of unique.

I: There is a consistency between what your father would teach, what you'd hear and talk about and what he practiced.

PC: Oh yes, and my mother, an outstanding Christian mom who encouraged people and especially as children, but also spoke well of people who might have been critical of something that dad was trying to do or you know develop an Evangelism program. "Well, we can't do that now," she'd always say, "Well they mean well", you know. Maybe she'd try to encourage all of us and that was really cool, it meant a lot when I think back on it. And

when I went through CPE, I mean the professor said, "What are you in here for?" Well, my mother was a workaholic and maybe that's one of the things--- in our family history, you know, and now on to another subject, that looks pretty good to me.

I: How about with your involvement in the church? You're a pastor, so apparently the experience then, I guess I'm assuming here and I shouldn't do that, but apparently your experience growing up did not sour you on the possibility of being a pastor.

PC: No.

I: And then just with being a pastor's kid and your involvement in the church, even growing up, how did that have an effect on you?

PC: I give credit, of course, in many places. Never did my parents tell me, "_____, we think you would be a good pastor," never.

I: So you feel that pressure---

PC: They didn't put pressure on that. I remember as an eighth grader, I think it was, I went into my school counselor in _____ and I said, "I think I'm going to be a minister." They were doing one of these "what do you think you want to do" interviews one-on-one with the school counselor and the counselor said, "Well, yeah, you know they don't get a lot of money." I said, "Well, I don't think I'd do it for that reason actually." I think that's pretty good for an eighth grader. And then I told it to my dad later and he said something like, "Well, we'd be proud of you no matter what you wanted to do." It was the right answer, you know, and growing up in the church I really did enjoy theology. I liked studying Luther's Small Catechism. I think I'm one of the only ones but there are others I hope. Then I was afflicted with diabetes when I was 13 and there is some formations there that helped me to sort out some issues in my life regarding mortality and eternity and so on. And I think as I approached going to college I sort of changed my mind, kind of fighting against this gentle nudging. I went in as a speech major. I could always use that in the ministry, but I sort of would like to be a speech teacher too. I kind of liked that in high school. I didn't always [like] Speech but I got [a] straight A. But it was almost boring, it was not just challenging to me. So I changed my whole major in college and didn't get straight A's. But I enjoyed it more. And it was psychology actually. And then I pre-enrolled at the seminary and really had a good experience with the guys at _____ that were there. The professors were encouraging, our parents were very supportive and I'm sure pleased that I was pre-enrolled although they didn't ever brag about me in my presence or that I know of away from me and said, "Yeah, our son, you know he's the best, he 's going to the seminary." They just loved me as just who I was, you know. Now I don't --- if that's the, I've kind of forgotten what your question was, but I think I'm in the area, I'm in the neighborhood.

I: Regarding your church involvement and impact of being a pastor's child. What you went through, did you stay attached to the church?

PC: Yes, I commuted. I went 45 miles one way in a car pool for years. I only drove once a week. It worked well. So I went home. I was home every night and I was actually hired by the church that I was a member of for \$100 a month. And talk about cheap. To do as a college student some youth work. I would meet with the youth and I would try to work on topics with them. Dad would come and have a topic once a month and I would meet the other nights and some youth counselors and I would more or less try to think of games. Now I look back on it as really kind of dumb but that was okay for that time in my life. The congregation thought well of me. I'm sure that I was interested and then I enjoyed it. I was probably 20, maybe 21, when I had it and did it for about a year. They had a vacancy, they had a DCE, they just dropped that program for whatever reason, probably financial. And I said, "\$100 a month, we can afford that." And then after I was about ready to get married and said, "I don't want to do this anymore, I want to go to the seminary next quarter." And so they let me go. I played organ and did that as well. I really didn't, I mean, I'm sort of glad that I didn't get a chance to do much other things like preaching . . . Now that I look back I'm glad I didn't get to. I wasn't trained but I know some churches that would definitely do that. "Well, here's a guy going to the seminary, he hasn't learned anything about ----- yet but let's let him preach." I didn't get to do that and that was okay.

I: Now you mentioned earlier that you moved three times. I'm just wondering the effect that had on you.

PC: I'd be happy to talk about that. The first move I was 5, maybe 4, I think I was 4, from outside of _____ to inside of _____. Dad had a three point parish and then moved to a one point parish on a second call and then, of course, a 4-year-old doesn't know anything so I don't hardly remember. I remember the town and this and that, but then I started Kindergarten so it might have been close to 5, and went Kindergarten through eighth grade in that town, _____.

I: You were there some time then?

PC: Yeah, dad was there seven years and had a good feeling there. Although I submit that elementary aged, all you really care about is eating, that your parents love you and they have some games to play with your friends and I did, I had all that, I played baseball like every son, that's all I ever lived for.

I: So your identity as a pastor's son didn't really mean that much to the people that go to grade school?

PC: Well, that's all I knew but didn't know any better that the neighborhood kids just treated me like I was just one of the kids. Although one was Catholic, one was probably Baptist, as I look back, one was Missouri Synod Lutheran. It was a nice neighborhood of a lot of kids that would play, you know, and it was pretty good. Then the third move of course would be the most likely to bring trauma. The summer before my ninth grade so I

would be having to make some friends. But for me, being as I had just come down with diabetes a year earlier, and so I was already in enough trauma medically where this just didn't seem like it was that big a thing to me.

I: Like it was already enough with this?

PC: Yeah. I had to say my sister, my younger sister, really didn't like to move anymore; seen some trauma as she tells it to me. She's in _____, by the way, you can even call her and have her come over.

I: That would be interesting. I'll get her name later.

PC: And she struggled, as she told me now recently, which I didn't realize at the time. I had new friends right away and kind of girl crazy by then. You know a ninth grade boy kind of notices girls were kind of cool and had lots of dates those four years in high school, which was okay and then the congregation warmly received us.

I: So you adapted to the move rather well, able to make friends easily.

PC: Yeah. It was frightening, we would easily, I don't know what that means. I think it's just my parents. I was a very secure child and perhaps that helped. I submit to you that's the reason. That's back in the day when people didn't move so much in other careers. Now they do.

I: It's interesting, in that respect, just looking back over the history. It seemed like there was a time when people generally lived one place for awhile for a certain time and then as pastors moved around frequently.

PC: Yes.

I: Now it seems to be stretched out.

PC: Yeah, I would agree. And pastors are wanting not to move so frequently unless they are in trouble or something like that.

I: When you think back on growing up as a pastor's child, did you consider your father to be your father, your pastor, both? Primarily, what was he to you?

PC: He was certainly my father and he has passed away. Yeah, he was a teacher, I want to say, when you say pastor, that's a New Testament word. I knew he was the pastor of the congregation but I never saw him as my pastor. I never felt like somehow he was my pastor too, but more in the sense of a teacher, he was a good teacher and taught well in Confirmation and I had three years of Confirmation from him. We had in _____ seventh through eighth grade and I moved after eighth grade. I should have maybe been confirmed as an eighth grader but no we moved and then he switched it to seventh through ninth grade confirmation in _____ and now I got an extra year at no extra charge. So I was with a bunch of eighth graders when I was a ninth grader. So I got an extra year. But, I guess it was good for me. As far as being my pastor, I mean I heard him preach and teach and I listened and enjoyed it. I was able to see him as my father but also as one who'd give me the sacraments and I knew that this was pastoral stuff happening.

I: You know, I think regular parishioners like it. I think it's very much that they have a relationship with their pastor and that they need to talk to someone they can talk to the pastor.

PC: Yeah, I see what you're saying.

I: What would you say, as far as who did you have to go talk to, maybe you talked to your father but if he wasn't helping you, who would you go to?

PC: I would talk to my mother and father because . . . One time I had a friend who in _____ back as a seventh grader was arrested for shoplifting and I was in his presence and knew he was doing it, didn't try to stop him, wasn't participating. As a matter of fact, I was in another aisle worrying, my heart was just pounding. I knew he was going to shoplift cigarettes or a lighter or whatever and I wanted to be in a different aisle but I wanted to be in the same store. He was my friend you know, pressure, pressure, pressure, but he got arrested. They had us both upstairs in the office and they realized that I wasn't actually a thief, though I wasn't as far as God was concerned you know. So they let me go and I went home just bawling and talked to my mom and dad about it. "Dad, we got arrested for this," and I, you know, and they were very kind and considerate and took it as a teaching point. That would be something that I don't know that any teenager would go to his pastor about anyway but that would be something that the pastor would be happy to help with. But I felt comfortable with going to my parents and I don't know how that can be answered in separating the two. I hardly ever try to separate the two. I think dad was a pastor who was also first my father.

I: As far as your family identity as a clergy family, did you see your family as, I'll just give some suggestions and let you pick out how you saw your family.

PC: I understand.

I: Basically, as a clergy family, like "we're the clergy family you know, and our life is very much attached to the church," or did you see it yourself, for example, as a Christian family primarily or any other type? How did you see your family relationship?

PC: I would say both of those would be a good way to get a handle on it. My whole perspective on when you say "what kind of a family we were," when you start the morning at breakfast and devotions and that's vivid in your mind, I'm seeing a Christmas tree with the crèche under it and that all tied into worship and church life, so that's Christian isn't it? But then also Mom had myself and my little sister sitting in the front pew while she had the two youngest children back with her in the back pew because they were needing diapers and I was in that front pew at age 5 and my sister age 3 and 4. Come to think about that so we were the pastors kids and in some sense I kind of liked it, I loved it.

I: What did you love about it?

PC: This was my dad up there and he was doing a good job and he's telling them some good news, they need some good news, he cares about us too, he'd

look at us when he was preaching once in awhile. One time he looked at me and my friend who had been caught for shoplifting in a few months, he said, "Boys, be quiet," right during the sermon and I came home from that and he said "____, whose fault was that" and I said "It was ____ fault." And then he gave me a slap on the seat and said, "____, whose fault was that?" I said it was his fault, I wasn't doing anything, he was just telling me some funny things and I couldn't help it, I was laughing, there went another one. "Now I'll ask you again, whose fault was that?" I said it was my fault. So that's what happens when you don't sit with your little sister and sit with your friends, that gets you into trouble. All that's no extra charge kind of stuff.

I: Right, an extra story.

PC: I'm sure you've got a few. Now when you say "Am I a Christian family," yes, did I see myself as a pastor's family, definitely. Yeah and I'd say mostly that is good stuff and it is good to be from a pastor's family.

I: Okay, so that kind of leads me to the next thing I was going to ask. Overall, do you see your experiences as positive?

PC: Very positive.

I: If there was one thing you wanted to say to pastors' children based on your experience and so forth, one thing you wanted to say to them, what would you want to tell them?

PC: Just one, ha!

I: Well, as many as you want.

PC: Oh gosh, enjoy good times, make friends with people, enjoy this time, I mean enjoy the love of a congregation that they have for you, they want to have for you. Be yourself, not who you think they want you to be or who they tell you they want you to be. In other words, if you want to sing in the jubilee choir and your parents say you should do it and it would be fine and you want to, do it; but if they think just because your the pastor's son or daughter that you should sing in the sixth grade or whatever grade choir and your parents don't make you, there is nothing that says you have to in my opinion. That was the perspective that I was given. I never was forced to do things by my parents.

I: And you appreciated that.

PC: Yeah, I think I did. Although [they] kind of encouraged me in a way now that I think was so much the gospel in parenting. "Well, _____, you're such a talented person, you should go ahead and do that, you know you can do a good job," whether I really wanted to or not that felt pretty good. I just did it anyway. I don't know if that's kind of anecdotal or not, I think there's something to this encouraging people rather than you must do it.

I: Anything else you would like to add?

PC: Yeah, and of course I have children and we want to encourage them to not also fall back into a "poor old me, I had to everything" mode either and not to encourage them to think, "All right maybe you do less because after all your already picked on enough." I won't say no you can't do that either, -----

I: Balance these things out as being important.

PC: That card can be used on a parent. "Well look, I have to go to everything, I have to go to Lenten services, no other kids in my class go to Lenten services," you know. My advice to you son is get use to it, you're going, because this is a Christian household and we're going, not because you're the pastor's son.

I: You see it as an important thing to distinguish between them?

PC: Yeah, I do.

I: We're doing this because we're Christian.

PC: Yes, exactly. Now and another thing that I have now in campus ministry is a whole different kind of thing for them, because they are really not involved enough in parish issues. This is not a parish, but on Sunday morning, now tomorrow morning, I will go with my boys to _____ worship at 8:30. I will physically remove myself at 9:15 to get here for my 9:30 Bible class and 10:30 worship. But I want to sit with them, I would have to do that of course but . . .

I: Do you see any benefit in doing that?

PC: Yeah, I do. I feel like they see me as their father more often. Then once a month we all do everything here so they hear their father preach. I mean they grew up hearing their father and only their father preach. Now they have only 12 times a year, you know. Except in the summer they are here more but then I get a benefit because I get to sit in the pew with them and kind of watch the things that happen with them as well and how are they worshipping, why and why not and do some more teaching in that.

I: Sounds like a pretty neat arrangement.

PC: Yeah, it is in that we really decided early on that that's the answer to a lot of family problems. With the older boys they are not young enough to be a little Sunday School, like we have at the college student teaching, we only have three here and they are older, they want to be in a youth group which we don't have that age, we have college age where we are at. We were stuck but we got involved by doing it this way and I consider that a nice answer and solution.

I: Well, what can be done to help pastors' children so that they spend their years growing up in a clergy family as a mostly positive experience?

PC: I have a theory about this. I'm aware of parsonages that are really pretty nice and I would see a seminar about every two years to encourage parsonage - when I say parsonage, I shouldn't use that word as people are buying homes now - clergy homes that are doing well to celebrate that. Part A. Part B. I'm also aware as I'm sure you have run across in our church there are some real troubling situations that for various reasons are coming up and they need some encouraging, uplifting and support. So I'd like to see every District, I know _____ is doing it, have a clergy family kind of a seminar to talk and share, encourage, sort out. I think that we're so unique that that is worth pursuing, I really do. Not be so unstructured, have a little

bit of structure and like your questionnaires would be a nice way of having maybe an hour on these two questions and somebody, include the students or the children to do some of it, maybe have them have their own little group, some of it, that kind of stuff I would go to.

I: Learn from each other and help each other out.

PC: Unfortunately, there's a lot of, I shouldn't say a lot, there may be some who don't even know they need to be doing this, they're so stuck, they don't see the need for it. We can't force medicine on anyone, it would be an investment, but I think it would be worthwhile. I would go to it.

I: And just any experiences you have you, humorous or otherwise growing up as a pastor's son, would you like to share.

PC: Well, a story is coming so let's everybody share. When I was probably 14, my youth group was putting on a drama in the church basement and my mother asked me if I had a part memorized by such and such a date and would I have that part memorized and I said, "I don't know." And of course that date came and that was the day we were going on a roller skating party and I wanted to go on that roller skating party because I was going to meet some friends there from the youth group. And my mother said, "Well, you can go, because you have your work done," and she said, "I'd kind of just like to hear that part," and of course I hadn't studied it and therefore couldn't say the part. And that play was in another week or two and I still had time, but she wouldn't let me go roller skating and my father backed her up. And I really was devastated by that discipline and I'm thinking of course Hebrews 12 and discipline is hard at the time and it was hard. That was one of the hardest discipline sessions I ever at that time had known my parents to do to me. I would much rather have been hurt physically than that way but, and it brought tears, I could see she was weeping about this difficult decision she had to stand by. But I appreciate that as an adult and you know what I'm talking about and that's the kind of love that is real, not fluff, it's a character building kind of love. And I have practiced that with my children and called their bluff and this is going to be interesting to see what they say about it. Hopefully they know that I love them in spite of some of their turmoil that they're in which I'm describing. They would be in the same age now that I was in. That would be an example of, and then, of course, I've told my mother since that I do appreciate that tough love.

I: Of all your years growing up, is there anything about being a pastor's child that you would like to see different?

PC: I'm not thinking there is an answer to that I can give.

I: So that just indicates that by in large you're just very satisfied?

PC: Oh yeah, I'm thankful.

I: You would have kept in the same?

PC: I'm not bright enough to think how I could engineer it any differently. I'm pretty satisfied.

I: Anything else you would like to add - anything at all?

PC: No, I wish I could give you more specifics but I'm not here to complain too much, you can tell that.

I: Do you think we've covered the issue or is there anything else about being a pastor's child that comes to mind?

PC: You know, in a sweeping summary statement, life in the parsonage was for the most part very good. People were very kind to me and to my parents. I had a capable father and a tremendously talented loving mother, and not without their own personalities-----. This is just what you're hoping for when you live a Christian life. I don't say that we didn't have economic concerns now and then, we made the most of it, never had new cars until I was 18, the first new car. My parents learned to, they finally did go to the house after I had moved to the seminary in '75. I don't know what that means. Still three were living at home and then my father died in 1988 in a car accident. And so, and that has an influence on me because as a pastor of a church that then had 350 people for the funeral, 30 pastors you know, the District president and that was one nice way of showing what I [side one of the tape ended here]

I: . . . in regard to the support that you witnessed?

PC: Yeah, I'll say that sentence again. When the 350 people at the funeral and I'd say 30 clergymen from all over - I hadn't been home since '75, I'd been gone 13 years away from home, and when I say away from my childhood home, that this congregation loved us and showed it, in fact, in the church basement after. Oh, they didn't have internment then because it was January and so we went right down to the basement and had a large dinner. And the pastors in this basement, and I'm one of them, and the ladies aid person who'd known me since I was a ninth grader turns to me - and this is my father's funeral - she turns to me and she said, "_____, would you have the prayer for the meal?" And I had just come from the funeral and I suddenly realized they really think a lot of me. I don't know what that meant. You know you could psychoanalyze that whole situation, but here I am grieving at my own father's funeral and they saw me as their son, I'm guessing, who now became a pastor and it's only natural that this son, whose also a pastor, should lead this vast assembly. All these other including the District President they could have asked, they asked me and I got through it. I don't know how. I'm not sure how I did that, in fact, now I'm almost choked up by it. So that's another way of illustrating the unusual thing.

I: Thank you for your time - I appreciate it very much and hopefully through this process maybe some good ideas can come out to help pastors' children, especially those who are struggling, maybe some constructive elements for pastors' children.

INTERVIEW #7

Male, 13, thirteen years as a pastor's son, always lived in a church-owned home, two moves as a pastor's son

I: Well, basically, I just want to ask you what kind of pressures you might feel being a pastor's child. They might be pressures from other people or just anything. What did you think that you felt?

PC: Nothing, not really, not a whole lot.

I: Another way to look at it is do you think that people at school or whatever, do they treat you differently?

PC: No they just treat me like a normal kid, it seems like most of the time.

I: Have there been times when they haven't?

PC: Yeah.

I: When they do treat you differently, how do they act?

PC: They just say like, "There's a pastor's kid" or something like that and make something up about my name or something and I just ignore them most of the time.

I: That's how you handle that, you just kind of like . . .

PC: Ignore them.

I: Ignore, okay, how about with your situation here, you know this is where you go to church or are you a member of a church elsewhere?

PC: I go to this church, _____, every fourth Sunday and then the other Sundays I go to _____ Lutheran Church.

I: And that's where you go to Sunday School and stuff?

PC: Yeah, that's where I go.

I: Now, when you're over there do people treat you differently because you're a pastor's child?

PC: No.

I: When I ask these questions I'm not saying they have to or anything, I'm just curious because I have seen cases where people might have been [treated differently]. How about your parents, do you think they treat you any differently than other kids?

PC: No.

I: You sound like you kind of feel you're pretty much a regular guy.

PC: Yeah.

I: Okay, that's good. How about when you think about your life as a pastor's child, do you have any positive things that come from that life?

PC: They helped me through different difficult places like something's going on at school and they'll say, "Well, it's okay" and you know like help me through that. That's an advantage of having a pastor as a child.

I: Okay, so you get some good advice.

PC: Yeah.

I: Plus a lot of extra goodies at Christmas time and stuff like that.

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, when you think about your spiritual life, how do you think being a pastor's child has really helped your spiritual life?

PC: It helps me because my parents always remind me that because I'm a pastor's child and that I believe in Christ and everything it helped.

I: Have you had devotions and stuff, expected to be at church?

PC: Yeah, I go to church, I only missed one Sunday and I was really sick then.

I: So, you're regular in worship.

PC: Yeah.

I: Now you said you've moved once, twice?

PC: Twice.

I: What kind of effect did that have on you?

PC: The first move I was one year old so it didn't have an effect on me and the second move I had, I was twelve, and that had an effect because I had to find new friends in a much bigger town than what I use to live in and that was pretty much about it. It's a lot different because it's flat and there are no hills to sled down here.

I: There is a big difference. In fact, when we were driving around I believe I ask your dad if there were any hills in this town and he said no.

PC: No hills.

I: Pretty flat. So did you adjust pretty well when you moved here, like make friends and stuff like that. Did you find being plugged into church because your dad's a pastor, is that helpful like in making friends?

PC: Yeah, most of the time.

I: I have some other questions. When you think of your dad, okay, and he'll never hear this just don't worry about any of that, but when you think of your dad do you think of him primarily as, that's my dad or do you think of him as like your pastor or both?

PC: That's my dad.

I: You think, "That's my dad."

PC: Yeah, he's just a normal dad pretty much, at home he's a normal dad but at church he's the pastor.

I: So you see him up there preaching and you think, that's my dad.

PC: Yeah, that's my dad, then my pastor when he's in church and I'm like watching him and at home I'm just kind of . . .

I: So, I guess one thing that's interesting to me is that people have a pastor they can go to for advice or something and who do you go to for advice if you have something on your mind?

PC: I go to my parents for the most part.

I: Okay, you'd go to them. When you think about your family and you see your family as it relates to everything else, do you think of your family

like we're a pastor's family or more that we're a Christian family or what do you think of your family as a whole?

PC: As a Christian family and a pastor's family because dad is a pastor.

I: Primarily, though, a Christian family and that's a real important part of who you are?

PC: Yeah.

I: And just another thing, it sounds like you seem pretty positive about your experience. It's been a pretty good experience, so much more positive than negative.

PC: Yeah.

I: If you were wanting to give some advice because you know you're a pastor's child, that makes you like an expert, about being a pastor's child, okay, now if there is something that you wanted other pastors' children to know that was really important for them to know about being a pastor's child, what would you tell them?

PC: Just be a normal kid, don't act like your dad's a pastor most of the time because people are going to recognize you as a pastor's child not as a normal kid.

I: They will recognize you that way?

PC: Yeah.

I: How would a normal kid act? I mean, just being a regular kid, be yourself?

PC: Yeah, most of the time, be yourself and it will just come to you.

I: Are there other times when you think, you know, "I'd better be careful what I do because my dad's a pastor?"

PC: Sometimes. Okay, not a whole lot.

I: What kinds of times would that be?

PC: I can't really think of any right now.

I: I suppose every so often you get----- I think I asked you this before, but your friends treat you pretty much the same as any other kid?

PC: Yeah.

I: So, in all it's a good experience; that's good. Do you have any interesting experiences you'd like to share when it comes to living in a parsonage?

PC: Well you don't have to pay for the house, you just kind of live in it. So you get some extra stuff out of it too and that's about it.

I: Is there anything you would like to have different about being a pastor's child, is there anything you want different?

PC: Probably not.

I: It sounds like you're real content with the situation.

PC: Yup.

I: Good deal, I wouldn't ask you to change it at all.

PC: Good.

I: Well it's good to hear what you have to say and I appreciate that.
Anything that you could add that maybe I left out?
PC: No you covered everything. Well, I think that will end this then.

INTERVIEW #8

Male, 15, entire life a pastor's son, always lived in a church-owned home, two moves

I: I'm basically looking at the question of what it's like growing up as a pastor's child. I am one and I know what my experiences were like but it's real interesting to talk to other people and to find out what their experiences were with growing up in a clergy family. So I'll just ask you some questions and get your reaction to them, okay? No one will hear this but me, so basically as you think about your years of experience in a clergy family, do you recall is there has ever been any pressures that you felt?

PC: By who?

I: Like from, let's just say, by your peers?

PC: Not really. Nobody has like made fun of me or anything because there's a whole bunch of kids that are pastors' kids in this town.

I: That understand each other maybe.

PC: Yeah.

I: And they treat you, you think, like pretty much a regular type guy?

PC: Yeah, pretty much.

I: Are there times when they don't?

PC: No, not really, probably normal.

I: Do you think your parents treat you differently than other kids?

PC: Well, I guess they trust us more, simply because, I don't know, they just do.

I: So, what comes to mind is that they just are more trusting of you because they know you?

PC: Yeah, mostly.

I: More trusting of you than other kids?

PC: Yeah, and I forgot what I was going to say.

I: And, how about by the church? Do you think people have different expectations of you or treat you differently or things like that?

PC: I don't know, I think that not really. I mean people know that I'm a pastor's kid but they didn't treat me differently.

I: Now when you think about your life growing up what are some positive benefits, some positive things about being in a clergy family?

PC: Everyone knows you which can sometimes be bad but it is kind of nice and I can't really think. Oh yeah, you meet a lot of people from around the state and people like ----- and stuff.

I: So people know who you are?

PC: Yeah.

I: In what way is that not always such a good thing?

PC: Because they'll just come up to you and talk to you even if you don't really care that much.

I: They just assume you want to talk. And so it has its positive things. You don't sound that serious about it.

PC: No, nothing bad.

I: Now what impact would you say being a pastor's son has had on your spiritual life?

PC: Probably stronger because I've had to go to church every week, church and Sunday School and Confirmation and stuff.

I: So that's a real priority.

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you see it in other kids?

PC: There's usually about the same 10 people that go to church or Sunday School while others sometimes come and go. There's usually about 10 in attendance.

I: Would you say that you're stronger in your involvement with the church? Would you say you're pretty involved?

PC: I don't know because I don't know what they're doing. Like if it's the youth group then I like to be involved in that, but if it's like decorating the church for Christmas or something it's not my favorite activity.

I: Do you have some choices or do they expect you to be involved or not?

PC: Oh yeah, you're not forced to do it.

I: So your parents don't say, "Look, you're my kid, you got to get all this done"?

PC: Yeah, they usually don't go to most of the stuff that we do.

I: So there's not a lot of pressure from them?

PC: No, they have to do most of the stuff.

I: Well, you moved a couple of times. What effect did that have on you?

PC: Well, you see the first time we moved I was 4 so I wasn't going to school yet and we were the only one on that block because it was at the bottom of a hill. So the only people around this area were older people and because you lived on the side of the town nobody was there. So I didn't really have too many friends there. But then we moved again. Now I was 14 and I have a lot friends so that was hard to leave.

I: I see. How long ago was that, a couple of years?

PC: I think it was almost two years, end of seventh grade.

I: How did you handle that?

PC: Fine, I guess. We've been down there again a couple of times this year, that's better.

I: Were you able to make friends here?

PC: Oh, yeah. I was just overnight with a friend last night.

I: How did the church help, you know, when you moved and everything? How did that help to be the pastor's son, coming new into a place?

PC: I got introduced to everyone so I made a lot of friends real fast, and like when we moved here a lot of people from _____ came out and helped unload. It would have been hard without them.

I: So that was kind of a helpful thing too?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, when you see your dad - his being at home, you see him at church, you see him a lot in that respect - do you think of your dad as primarily "that's my dad" or "that's my pastor" or how?

PC: Probably "that's my dad," I never really think of him as my pastor but more of my dad. He's great.

I: So when you see him preaching, "that's my dad"?

PC: Yeah, I mean it's not like I don't listen to him or anything, but because I usually think of Pastor _____ at _____ as my pastor because that's where we go three times a month.

I: So if there was like a time that you really needed to talk to a pastor, there'd be someone you could go to talk things over?

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you think if you didn't have this other pastor, do you think it would be that way?

PC: Probably. Yeah, I think so.

I: I think it's interesting that many children of pastors really don't have another pastor and we kind of wonder who they talk to if they really wanted to talk to someone.

PC: It just kind of depends on what you want to talk about. Like if you don't want your dad to know of anything.

I: Who would you go to?

PC: Another pastor.

I: Now, when you think of your family as a family and how it relates to everything else, do you see your family as if it were a pastor's family, or do you see your family as a Christian family, or how would you characterize your family?

PC: Probably a pastor's family because whenever there is like a pastor's meeting or something my parents both go and they go to a lot of things like that.

I: Pretty involved in stuff. If there was something about being a pastor's child that you could have different what would it be?

PC: I don't know, nothing really.

I: You're pretty content then?

PC: Yeah.

I: And now back to my next question, overall, do you see it being a positive experience?

PC: Yeah, I'm probably growing up better than I would if my dad wasn't a pastor.

I: Really?

PC: Yeah, because, I don't know.

I: So you see it as a benefit then. So there must be guidance there for your or something?

PC: Yeah, I mean, he had rules that we had to do whereas some people might not and get into trouble and stuff.

I: Well it sounds like it's a pretty good way to look at things. If you don't have rules it's a way to get into a lot of trouble. We need more rules like in a pastor's family than you see in other families?

PC: Not more rules, more, just, I don't know, it's kind of hard to speak out, it's just the way . . .

I: Disciplined. Well, let's say that you are going to have something to say to other pastors' children. What's an important thing you would like other pastors' children to know about being a pastor's child? What is the most important thing you'd like them to know?

PC: I don't know, I can't think of anything. The pastors' kids that I meet are my friends right now so it's not like, you know.

I: If someone was struggling with being a pastor's child, what would you say?

PC: I don't know, it depends on what they were having trouble with.

I: Do you have any interesting experiences you'd like to share about being a pastor's child?

PC: Right off hand I can't think of anything that could be interesting ones.

I: If the District were to come along and decide it would do an overnight retreat just for teenage children of pastors, does it sound like that would be interesting?

PC: Yes, it would if it was, like if it had a lot of stuff around the area that you could do, okay, like if it was in Minneapolis or something.

I: Well that's basically it. I appreciate your time. Hope it recorded okay because -----

<end of tape>

INTERVIEW #9

Male, 14, entire life as a pastor's son, entire life in a church-owned home, one move

I: The first question I want to ask you is simply what pressures you may feel being a pastor's son, if any?

PC: Not really any. No one really bothers you about it or anything.

I: Your friends, you don't feel any great pressure from them about being a pastor's child?

PC: No.

I: How about any positive aspects [that come from] being a pastor's son.

PC: You know, you go to church retreats and stuff. You make lots of friends and stuff.

I: Anything else?

PC: I get to know more about the church and everything else.

I: Plus there's all those extra goodies at Christmas time. I don't know about you but we get a lot of stuff like that. Do you think that because you're a pastor's child - I mentioned this already, but I'll just ask you again - do you think you were treated any differently by your peers?

PC: No.

I: Do they pretty much include you in things?

PC: Yeah.

I: How about your church, do the church people treat you any differently than other kids?

PC: Well, not really, they don't treat you any differently or anything but, I don't know, I guess not really.

I: So you don't sense that they like expect you to be better?

PC: No, not really.

I: How about by your parents, do you think they treat you any differently than other kids?

PC: No, not really.

I: Well, how about looking at your spiritual life and maybe comparing this to other kids that you know and so forth. What kind of an impact has being a pastor's son had on your spiritual life?

PC: It's a lot better because you know your going to be going to church and stuff and you're going to deal with church organizations and that's good because you learn more about your spiritual life and become stronger, so that's better.

I: So you are pretty much expected to be at church all the time?

PC: Yeah.

I: Would you say more different than being in a Christian family?

PC: It's no different.

I: Well how about your involvement in church then, being a pastor's son compared to other people. What is your involvement like?

PC: Well, I wouldn't say I do much more than any of the kids around here going to Sunday School and stuff. There are some kids who just stop going and stuff because it takes time or whatever but I didn't really care, I like it.

I: You said you moved once and you remember that a little bit. What effect has having to move had upon you or even your living with the possibility that you may move. Do you think about that much?

PC: No, I don't really think of moving much. When we did move I was kind of little so I didn't have a lot of friends that I had to move away from. But I don't think of moving an awful lot.

I: What effect do you think it would have on you now if that happened?

PC: I'd still see my friends and stuff because when we moved here from _____ we still see those people now so I wouldn't really worry about it. I'd still see these people.

I: When you think of your family, let me back up a little, when you think of your dad/pastor, do you think of him primarily as your father or do you see him as your pastor? Just how do you view him?

PC: Mainly as my father because most of the time that's what he is.

I: If there was ever a situation where you didn't feel like you could go to your parents to just talk about something - and you always hope a person can do that, but you see him primarily as your father - who would you go to talk to, do you think, if you needed spiritual advice or if there was something that you really needed to talk about?

PC: Guess I'd probably go and talk to one of my friends, Christian friends, or something because I don't know if I'd talk to mom or dad about that stuff all that much.

I: When you think of your family, would you identify your family as we're a pastor's family or a Christian family or just how would you see your family?

PC: Just as a Christian family, just, you know, go to church and everything and Dad's up there doing his job.

I: Overall, do you see your experiences as being a pastor's son a positive experience or a negative experience?

PC: Positive.

I: So if you were a pastor someday you wouldn't mind your kids being pastor's children?

PC: No.

I: What can be done to help make living as a pastor's child like a really positive experience, from your perspective?

PC: Just think of him as like your father or your son and not, you know, just like treat him like any normal father or any normal son would, just as a family.

I: And how about parents, your dad, what can they do to make it a good experience?

PC: Just take you to church and everything and teach you all that spiritual stuff through Church and Sunday School and all that stuff and then they should teach you about life.

I: Same question, basically in regard to the congregation. Sounds like they treat you pretty much like they would any other kid. What can they do to make being a pastor's kid a good experience?

PC: You know like just being friendly, just getting along and all that.

I: Is there anything that the District or Synod could do to help pastors' children if they need it?

PC: I guess they should just do what they've been doing. What they're doing is pretty good.

I: This is your chance to help out other pastors' children you know that maybe aren't having such a positive experience that you've had, which is good and not bad. But if there was something that you would like to say to other pastors' children you know about, what you would like them to know about growing up as a pastor's child? What would you want to tell them?

PC: I'd tell them it's just like growing up with any other father or mother who has any other occupation. It's just the same but then there's a Christian way on the side so you get the benefit of going to Church and learning about the Bible and everything and you get, just, it's not just he's your father but he's a pastor. He's your parent so you get a parent but then you also know that you're going to get a full Christian life.

I: It sounds like a pretty good deal. Any experiences you have had, positive or negative, about growing up as a pastor's son, humorous stories or anything that comes to your mind?

PC: Just a story?

I: Just anything, yeah.

PC: I don't know of anything.

I: I'll let you think about that for a couple of minutes and I'll say some more things here but I'm just going to run a few things by you. I'm just curious if you've ever heard anything like this before? Have you ever heard someone say to you, "You can't do that because you're the pastor's son"?

PC: Yeah.

I: You've heard that. When did you hear that?

PC: An example would be like watching TV or listening to a certain type of music that wouldn't be completely Christian or anything they'd say you couldn't watch that or you couldn't listen to that type of music.

I: Do you have friends that say that?

PC: Oh yeah, they just pretty much kid around and stuff.

I: What did you think when they said that?

PC: I don't know, I guess if I can't watch it why would you be watching, why would it be any different for you to watch it.

I: If people say things like that, you know, people handle it in various ways, I guess, and sometimes people want to handle it by “Well, I’ll do it anyway to show them that I can” or “I’ll just ignore them” or whatever, how do you handle things like that?

PC: I don’t know, just kid around with them. I’ll watch it to show that, you know, it’s no different just cause he’s the pastor but because, you know, why would it be right if God doesn’t want me to watch a movie because it’s satanic, why should anyone else be able to watch that movie.

I: Does it make you mad when they say that?

PC: No, you can take it in stride, let it roll off.

I: Do your parents ever say something like that, you know, be careful what you do, you’re the pastor’s son?

PC: Not really.

I: Do you kind of get that feeling?

PC: No, they’ll set a good example or something.

I: Do you think they’re doing that because you’re the pastor’s son or because you set a Christian example because you’re a Christian?

PC: Kind of both.

I: All in all it sounds like you’re pretty satisfied.

PC: Yeah.

I: If there is anything that you could change, is there anything you would want to see done differently?

PC: No, not really.

I: How about time. Do you have enough time with your dad and that sort of thing? Pastors have kind of a weird schedule.

PC: I don’t know, I’d like to have more time just to talk about stuff like say if I want to go somewhere with a friend or something I’d like to have time to discuss it with him if I could find that time just to talk about something.

I: Anything else you can think of?

PC: No.

I: I appreciate your taking the time and helping me out trying to get some sort of idea what’s it like to grow up in a family that has a pastor in it. And I’m thinking about eventually at some point maybe having a retreat just for pastors’ children, for teenage pastors’ children. What do you think of an idea like that?

PC: Oh, I guess it’s all right. You get to meet kids that grew up and lived just like you so that’s kind of good.

I: There might be some value in that. Well, maybe in the future you’ll hear about it.

INTERVIEW #10

Male, 16, entire life as a pastor's son, entire life in a church-owned home, one move

I: Well, basically as you think on your life growing up in a clergy family, are there any pressures you have ever felt because you are a pastor's son?

PC: Yeah, I guess in school and in lots of places like that people kind of look at you to be straight-laced, you'll never do anything wrong kind of a person, which I don't know if that's necessarily the right thing to label those kinds of people.

I: What do you think about that when they do that?

PC: Well, sometimes it kind of bugs me a little bit and sometimes it kind of helps me to do more of what is right, to be more of that person.

I: Well, what sorts of things do they really kind of bug you about sometimes? What sorts of things do they say?

PC: A hypothetical situation would be like, you know, say the teacher steps out of the classroom and he's got a copy of the test laying there on the desk. I'm going to go up and go look at the test, they say, "He'd never do that, he's the pastor's son, he can't do that," those are the kinds of things that they tend to say, just a hypothetical situation however.

I: Oh, of course. So you felt that pressure from your peers to single you out. How about at church, have you ever felt in church that people treat you differently because you're the pastor's son?

PC: I don't think so, as far as I'm concerned they see us all as a member of the body of Christ and whether I'm the son of the pastor or not it makes no difference.

I: Then how about at home with your parents? Do you think they treat you differently than other kids and not just like a parent/child relationship but in a sense that they just treat you differently or have different expectations of you because you are their son, the son of a pastor?

PC: Maybe, not necessarily because that's who I am but it's probably of who they are too. That's their Christian morals showing through.

I: When friends at school or wherever, when they would lay that kind of pressure on you, how would you handle something like that? Sometimes people handle it by wanting to prove that they can do it and sometimes people handle it by just kind of letting it roll off or maybe they ignore them or don't want to be their friends or whatever, how do you tend to handle things like that?

PC: Depends on the situation. Most of the time I just let it go in one ear and out the other, you know, because they say those things but it's not the truth. If I really was an evil person at heart, I'm really not, but I could do those things if I wanted too but I just don't.

I: So you keep yourself from doing that, you don't feel like you have something to prove?

PC: Right.

I: How about looking at some positive aspects of being in a pastor's family. What would you think are some positive things?

PC: There are a lot of them I'm sure, but it's hard to think of at this time. But one obvious one would be just that closeness to Christ, you know, being around him all the time in the house or in the church or in wherever, it's always there. You know that's what you grow up with and that's what you're use to like if you're the son of a doctor, a lawyer or a welder, whatever, that's what you're around and that's what you tend to know. It's the most positive thing you can get out of it, certainly what I got.

I: Then you got the whole benefits that come from being a pastor's son?

PC: I guess respect. That people do tend to respect the pastor's children more I think, not just myself or my brothers and sisters but you know other pastors' kids in town I know are pretty straight-laced too.

I: So you sense the community seems to respect you. Anything else or any other benefit?

PC: Not really. Like I said, I'm sure there are a lot of benefits that do come as a result of it, but they're just hard to think of. When you do happen to come across one of them you recognize that this comes as a result of being the son of a pastor and that's a good thing. But sitting here right now it's hard to think of some.

I: Well, thank you. I'm going to turn to your spiritual life and the impact that being a pastor's son has had on your spiritual life and maybe even as compared to other children, what impact do you see it having on your spiritual life?

PC: To be perfectly honest, five years ago it did get on me. I felt like I did have something to prove, you know. I don't know, it came as a result of moving here and just growing up and getting away from _____, what I was use to. And then as I got a little bit older I said, "Well, you know, I want to try and fit in," you know, on all this and that, so I just kind of lost it along the way. But now I've been starting to get back a lot.

I: You say, "lost it," what do you mean?

PC: Well, I lost sight of God and my faith and those kinds of things and in the past year or so it's been coming back to me and that has happened as a result of this and other things, getting more involved in the church.

I: So there was a period of time when you kind of found yourself maybe rebelling against church and against what you were just trying to fit in and all. You thought that maybe it had something to do with your move?

PC: I don't know, maybe that's just an excuse, it could have been, you know, but this is new to me. You know, back there I was who I was and everyone was okay with that. Now I'm here and it's a lot different, I don't want to be different.

I: You want to fit in and be a part of things. I appreciate that; I appreciate your sharing that with me. After that little time of kind of rebelling did you say you're kind of coming back around?

PC: Yeah, when this happened I started going to Spring rallies, LYF youth gatherings. And just meeting people at those gatherings and things that [made me] shared my faith or what little I had, you know, seeing them and how happy they were with it made me realize that I could be the same. I didn't have to be like everyone else, you know, if I was a little bit different that was okay and that helped.

I: What involvement would you say or what impact has being a pastor's son had on your involvement at church? That's very similar to what I just asked but in terms of your involvement at church?

PC: Well, I'd say they probably expect me to do a little bit more than most of the other people my age. They expect me to do, you know, like myself and two other guys my age help out with the communion, collecting the cups and things like that, music in church, playing the trumpet and doing all sorts of things, singing in the choir every now and then when I have to. Usually I'm happy to do all of these things.

I: Do you sometimes feel like, "Well, I have to do that" or because of who you are?

PC: Not necessarily because of who I am but just because. I sing in the choir, for instance, if somebody, one of the stronger guys won't be able to be there on a certain day, my mom asks me to fill in the part and I say "Okay, I suppose if have to." And that's a little bit if I have to but it's not that I don't enjoy getting up in front of the church.

I: You're more apt to be asked because you're the pastor's son than someone else to sit in on those positions?

PC: Maybe it's because my mom is the choir director; that might be it too.

I: That helps too. Another question I had was you had to move once and it sounds like it was a pretty significance event for you. Let's talk about that a little bit more and the effect that moving had on you. Is there any more you want to say about that?

PC: Well, my dad, when we were living in _____ and there was just the three kids at the time, I think all three of us kids had been down in the basement and dad came down and said just out of nowhere, "How would you guys like to move?" And sure, you know, I was sitting down there and said, "Yeah, okay," you know not actually thinking about what was going on. So I was all gung ho about the idea. And so here it turns out when dad accepted the call and we move up to _____ and I get here and I said, "Okay, well this isn't so bad, I can probably get use to this." And I got to realize that, you know, after a few days or a week or so it was a lot different.

PC: How was it different from what you were used too?

I: Well, for one thing _____'s a lot bigger than _____, well not necessarily a lot bigger, but somewhat bigger, and down there at _____ it

was out in the country and now here we're in the middle of town. And I'm still that way, I'm still use to being down out in the country like that and it's the way I prefer it. At least for the first few years of my life that's had the most impression on me and living in that situation compared to being in town and in the center of everything, you know.

I: Do you find people different in how they treated you?

PC: Yeah, part of that probably was because I was new in town.

I: The new kid.

PC: That's right exactly, "Hey new kid, come here, you want to do this with me?" I did get a lot of that.

I: I see, and did they make an issue out of the fact were you a pastor's kid, too?

PC: I don't think so, just the new kid. That was about it.

I: Understanding that in the pastor's family there always is that possibility [of moving], what kind of effect does that have on you?

PC: Well, it's nothing I thought a lot about and especially in recent years because, you know, I'm nearing the end of my high school years. After this I'll have one year left and that will be it, you know. The kind of thoughts that run through my head are, what if dad gets a call right before my senior year and decides to take it, well am I really going to want to go and spend one year in another town or you know could I find some place to live here in _____ and finish my high school and things like that. You know, when you really look at it, it probably would make much better.

I: So you've played that through your mind?

PC: I have at times because you see what I really worry about is when I look back at the second grade when we moved here I know those kids at the time you know, "Hey new kid" and all that kind of thing. But then, you know, you look at it and say, well, if it happens now as compared to almost ten years ago, you know how people definitely mature in that much time especially from being a second grader to a senior in high school and then it's not so much of a problem.

I: Significant enough to think about.

PC: Right.

I: When you think about your dad do you see him as your father, primarily as your father, or as your pastor? How do you view him?

PC: Different ways. At home, you see, he's just my dad, and he tells me to do something and I do it, he tells me not to do something and I try my hardest not to do it. But, you know, when Sunday morning I come to church and he's got the robes on and he's preaching in the pulpit, I see that then he is my pastor and I'm just a member of his congregation.

I: When you're sitting in the pew listening to a sermon is that your pastor preaching or is that your dad?

PC: My pastor preaching and my dad, a little bit of both.

I: This is another question, too. If there was something that, you know, given the fact that your dad is also your pastor, if there was something that you really needed to talk to someone about but you didn't think you could talk to your parents, who would you go to and talk to about it if you had some spiritual or some other concern?

PC: That would be tricky. I guess my dad is a pastor and I don't feel comfortable talking to my parents about it, even though a pastor would be someone good to talk to and my dad is a pastor it would be, it might be tough for me to even talk to him just as a pastor. But as to who would I go to, I don't know, like I said, you know, I've been going to gatherings and getting involved in my youth groups and things like that. I've made a good deal of friends who may not necessarily have all the right answers so to speak from a theological standpoint but they could sure understand where I'm coming from.

I: Okay.

PC: I find that a lot.

I: So there might be those people around that you could talk to. Not to say who or anything, but would there be any other pastors around that maybe you feel you could talk to about something?

PC: Oh yeah, in _____, just for example, there is only the one Missouri Synod church but you know the ELCA is just down the street and you know a friend of mine who graduated last year his dad is also a pastor, a Baptist pastor, and you know they're fairly good friends of ours. I'd feel comfortable talking to him, too.

I: So there are those support people around you?

PC: Oh yeah.

I: Another question, too. It's similar but has more to do with your family. When you look at your family, do you see your family as we're the pastor's family or we're a Christian family, primarily how would you view the identity of your family?

PC: I do see some of that when, you know, take a picture and all standing there like at Confirmation or something, you know my confirmation pictures and my sisters and my brothers, I say, well, that's me and my dad, the pastor, and here's our family, the pastor's family, and we're all together, like at graduation, things like that. It does show through.

I: Do you see your family apart from involvement in the church just as a family?

PC: Like the question of saying that our modern society has no family ties, kind of getting away from the earlier things like saying that kids are always on the run and, if that's what your talking about.

I: Do you see your family as having it's own identity as a family apart from church?

PC: Yeah, I would say we do. My dad was an active member of the Kiwanis Club and he was the President a year or so ago and my mom was

active before she went back to school. She was very helpful at the school here in town with the music program like playing piano and things like that. So in the community we do kind of have our things that we do and people who recognize me for what they do.

I: Do you see that you have a life apart from church?

PC: Yeah.

I: Your family does things together apart from church. I'm just curious to know just how you see your family and the whole mix of family; that is nice. Well, we'll move on to another question. Overall would you see your experiences at being a pastor's son to be a positive or a negative experience?

PC: Overall, the past 16 years of my life, you know, except those rocky few in the middle, the whole thing's been very positive. I've gotten a lot of good things out of it. A few bad but in the end it's been a way that's good.

I: Do you, I'm not saying you should be a pastor, but would you want to see your children be pastors' children?

PC: It's something I've been thinking a lot about, you know, ever since I kind of found myself again, so to speak, and who I really am. It 's like it seems like just about everywhere I turn God is kind of leading me down that road even more and more. You know how everyone from when they're real little has those little kid dreams, "I'm going to be a policeman," "I'm going to be a fireman", etc.? Mine was when I was little, "I'm going to be just like my dad, I'm going to be a pastor." And then I got older and thought that's really not for me and, you know, I probably even tell you, I probably thought of it as stupid at times. And now I look back on that and the way I was then and I see who I really am.

I: Why do you think that changed after some time?

PC: Well, God's a big part of it.

I: What can be done, in your opinion, what can be done by your father or by your parents to help being a pastor's son the best experience it could be?

PC: One thing that I would think of that just came to mind right off the top of my head would be like maybe not making it a good experience, but you know trying to help you grow in my faith. You know like if I had a question about something, while the Bible says this and I've heard someone else says this, well you know, how do they relate to each other and what does it really mean. I can get that from my dad or my mom or both and that tends to be a good experience.

I: What can the congregation do that makes being a pastor's child a good experience?

PC: Just to be supportive, I would say. They're really supportive of our family and me and my dad and I really enjoy it here, as a result that wears off on all of us.

I: Is there anything way the District, the Synod, you know, the church-at-large could help address the needs of pastors' children to help it be a good experience?

PC: I could say it's probably about the same as the church on a more local level but being supportive and things like that. When you go to a larger scale like that it's hard to pick out just certain people, you know. If you have to do it in a more general sense, I guess I really don't know.

I: Okay, that's fair, it's honest, it's what we want. This is your opportunity to share something with other pastors' children. If there was one thing you wanted them to know or a couple of things you wanted them to know about growing up as a pastor's child. Is there something important that you want them to know, how to handle it, how to deal with it?

PC: From my personal experiences, I guess, I could tell people that even if you think that you're being made fun of or being pressured, like you said, because you are the son or the poor daughter of a pastor, try just to take it all in stride as best you can and live with it. Because what happened to me was that pressure just got to me eventually and I just kind of started to break and I said, "Well, yeah, maybe being a pastor's kid isn't all it's cracked up to be after all." But I really don't mind.

I: Why didn't you break totally, how did you survive that?

PC: Growing up in general you know, it's like hang in there, you can get through it, more or less. It's like when I was younger I was just about as mature as I am now because then I just sunk down about 5 and 6 years ago and just kind of hung around and did things I probably shouldn't have, and maybe just didn't try hard enough not to do those things. You know, like I said, you just kind of ride it out. Everything will be all right eventually.

I: Well I very much appreciate your honesty. I sensed that there was a period of time when there very much was a struggle, and yet at the same time you seem to have come through that and didn't go off the deep end, even though it sounds like you got pretty close. I just want to affirm and am very happy to have visited with you. We were able to see you [came through] what was a very painful time ----- I appreciate your help very much. I think that's it unless you have anything more you'd like to add, anything about being a pastor's kid, any experiences that might be humorous or different or anything, funny stories about being a pastor's kid.

PC: I'm sure I could think of a couple of things. It happens even when it may not seem like it happens because you know my dad's a pastor and you know he knows other pastors and most church related people from all over everywhere and you know you get to know those people and you also get to know who they are and what they're like and you can meet some really interesting people. I really have without a doubt, _____, remember him, and when he moved to Colorado, you know, we had had that friendship with their family from being together in church. As a result a couple of summers ago we took a trip to Colorado to visit them for a few days and it was just a blast. Those things that happen and the friendships that you make are really a positive footnote.

I: I'm thinking about putting together a retreat for pastors' children, for like teenage pastors' children, and I just wanted to get your opinion about what you'd think of that idea or what you'd like to see in a retreat like that?

PC: I think it would be great. It would be an opportunity for people like myself and who have gone through kind of the same things I have to talk about it and, you know, if they are still going through it to help them get out of it or at least get a start.

I: Maybe help be a support person for what someone else is going through; you kind of understand what is going on.

PC: Because in that kind of a setting, if you'd have a retreat like that for pastors' children, we all have something in common. We can all relate to one another in some way and that would be good tool for building lasting relationships.

I: Well I thank you for taking the time. I appreciate it very much.

INTERVIEW #11

Female, 16, entire life as a pastor's daughter, entire life in a church-owned home, one move

I: Why I'm doing this is research into what it was like growing up in a clergy family, a pastor's family, and I just have some questions I'd like to ask you about your life in a parsonage. One of those questions is are there any pressures that you have felt being in a clergy family, for example, any pressures from peers?

PC: Yeah, we're suppose to be kind of perfect.

I: How do you get the feeling? Do people say things or do things?

PC: We're not suppose to really do things wrong like with friends and stuff, different, we're suppose to be kind of a goodie two shoes for everybody.

I: Do they say things like "you're not suppose to do that because you're a pastor's kid"?

PC: They used to, they don't anymore. When we were littler it was a little harder because they think you were suppose to be just great, you can't do such and such wrong. So it's not as hard as it was like at _____'s age. It's hard, they kind of think you're suppose to be perfect in every way.

I: I see. Any other pressures you may have felt from anywhere, like being in church?

PC: Not really. Just behavior stuff but no more than the rest of the students or children, set a good example.

I: How do you handle that? How did you handle that when people would make you feel like you had to behave?

PC: Usually pretty good. Sometimes I'd prove I wasn't on purpose.

I: Kind of do that little thing to show that you weren't perfect?

PC: In fact I'm just as innocent or just as goofy as the rest of them can be.

I: So more often than not you just kind of let it roll off or . . .

PC: Most of the time. It doesn't really bother me that much anymore. At first it did but not really anymore.

I: Did you feel like your parents had different expectations of you because you were a pastor's child?

PC: No, not really.

I: So most of that came from outside?

PC: Yeah. Mom and Dad don't expect us to be perfect.

I: They're realistic about it. Okay, I'm going to switch gears a little bit here and just ask you about some positive things that come from living in a pastor's family.

PC: My parents are easier to talk to than most of my friends because I know what to expect most of the time. I sometimes feel I'm a lot stronger in

my faith than some of them are because they don't get it as much at home as we do, but I like it.

I: So you think overall it's a pretty good thing?

PC: Yeah, a pretty good deal.

I: Plus all those nice little goodies you get at Christmas time.

PC: Yeah, little extra goodies, I mean I like it.

I: Well, thinking about your spiritual life, what impact do you think being a pastor's child has had on your spiritual life?

PC: You understand a little better. I think going through Confirmation and stuff is easier just because you've gotten it ever since you were little. You're use to hearing it. A lot of other kids are too but we get it a little more so I think it's really good.

I: Are you stronger in your faith, do you think, than others?

PC: In some ways, yeah.

I: How about your involvement in the church? Do you think as involved as you are in the church, do you think you'd be less involved if you weren't in the pastor's family?

PC: I don't think so. I think it would be the same if I wasn't in a pastor's family. I pretty much like that kind of stuff. I like to be involved and Mom wants me too so to me I guess if I wasn't in a pastor's family I'd still be interested in quite a bit of it.

I: You moved that one time. So you were how old when you moved?

PC: Seven.

I: Seven years old. Do you remember that? Do you remember the move at all, what effect did that have on you?

PC: I kind of liked it. It wasn't hard as I think it was for the rest of them because they were a lot older, because I was only in school for a year or two. I kind of missed being out in the country and it was a little different because there weren't as many younger kids there as there are here, but one girl I kind of liked the most.

I: Part of being a pastor's child is that possibility of moving. Do you ever think about that very much?

PC: Sometimes, but I know if we go it will be okay because I've been through it once already. So I usually don't think about it too much.

I: It doesn't really worry you too much?

PC: No, because eventually I'll be leaving home anyway.

I: Yeah, that's true.

PC: So I look at it that way.

I: Now when you moved here, and I'm just repeating your impression, when you move to a new church, do you think being a pastor's family made it easier to move? You know, as far as you're coming in and people know who you are. Did you find them accepting and so forth?

PC: I think so. For those people it was pretty easy. Some people weren't too sure but I think it was easy for the most part because they knew what to expect. So yeah, I think so.

I: Now when you think of your dad, do you see your dad primarily as he's your father or he's your pastor or just how do you see him?

PC: As dad, just kind of both together, because I really don't call him pastor, I call him dad all the time. In Confirmation too I just call him dad . . .

I: So you see him up there preaching and that's Dad? If there was something that you wanted to talk to someone about and if you wanted to talk to a pastor about it, who would you go to?

PC: Probably dad.

I: You'd still go to dad. Why?

PC: Because he understands quite a bit and I feel I could easily talk to him.

I: It sounds like you have a good relationship with your dad.

PC: I think so.

I: Now lets think about your family now, your family identity. When you think of your family do you see it as you're a pastor's family or you're a Christian family or what?

PC: Sometimes it's a pastor's family, we fend for ourselves but most of the time it's as a regular Christian family.

I: What are some of those times when it seems like a pastor's family?

PC: When you're meeting new people and when they ask what your parents do and you say your dad's a pastor and their first expression or thought is, "Better be careful what I say and do." But after they realize you're just as normal as they are they get over it.

I: So initially they treat you a little differently?

PC: At first it's different and then after they realize what you're like they act normal and realize you're just like them.

I: So with your family, then, how does your family maintain its identity as a family apart from church, since so much goes on with the church. How does your family maintain its identity? How do you have a life apart from church as a family?

I: So everything you do is just with the church?

PC: Not always.

I: You're off doing things together as a family?

PC: Yeah.

I: Okay, just kind of curious about how you saw your family. But overall, when think about your experience as a pastor's daughter, would you say it's been a positive experience or a negative experience?

PC: Positive, I believe positive.

I: Why would you say positive?

PC: Being a pastor's family you get to learn extra things about your faith that sometimes you don't normally get. Ask the extra questions when you can think of them just out of the blue and you get a little more explanation

about things because sometimes if you're not and you ask questions you get the explanation. But if you think about it more later on sometimes you never remember to ask it again. Being a pastor's daughter you can just continuously ask and add to what you already know.

I: Any other reason why it's a positive experience? Maybe another way of looking at it is - you indicate that it is a positive experience - what have your parents done or your father done to try to make sure it's a positive experience? Or what can he do to make it a positive experience?

PC: Treat us fairly most of the time. I mean we get, I don't know, sometimes pastors get more involved in church than their family. It's pretty much half and half, you get just as much or sometimes the church gets a little more, but we know that we're not neglected.

I: At times, are you satisfied with the time that you have with him, he tries to balance that?

PC: Yeah, most of the time, he does pretty good.

I: What does that say to you when you know he's trying to balance his time and take you and your brothers with him?

PC: That we're important to him, that it's not just all work and that we're just on the side.

I: It shows you're important also. What can the congregation do, for example, to make sure that being a pastor's child is a good experience, or what are they doing?

PC: Just be kind, don't be so funny towards them. Sometimes they are short to say, "But we're just-----and that we're pastors' children and we think differently." Usually they treat us pretty fairly.

I: You just want them to treat you like a regular person?

PC: Yeah, I mean we still have our faith and it's strong but we're pretty normal.

I: Anything, for example, the church-at-large, like the District or the Synod, is there anything they can do to help to meet the needs of pastors' families or pastors' children?

PC: Make you feel a little more welcome at first than they usually do sometimes.

I: Welcome at first, like what?

PC: Moving from place to place sometimes they aren't sure what to expect, they don't treat you fairly until they realize you do things different than the pastor before sometimes, a little different.

I: So you don't know what to expect?

PC: Yeah, give a little more understanding at first because it's different for that pastor too than just the congregation.

I: Your relationship with your dad aside from the church has been, you think, pretty good?

PC: I think so.

I: If it wasn't, what do you think that would do to your relationship with the church, if the church and he wasn't getting along so well, how might that effect your relationship?

PC: It might be all stressful towards everyone. They might think because you're his family you might feel different towards them, too. That you would probably think the same way towards them too that you would probably think the same way he does, they aren't too sure what to expect.

I: And that's something you have never really faced?

PC: Yeah.

I: I'll give you a chance here. If you could say one, two or three things, however many, things that are important for other pastors' children to know about their life and to help them out, what would those things be?

PC: There might be pressure from others about your faith. Sometimes kids don't understand because you talk a little different than----- Sometimes with science and things you think that teachers overreact with how we evolved and all these things, and I think we overreact sometimes. Like I have one, but two believe what I think and how it taught some things, and not to let what the teacher says bother you because you know what's right and just to believe in what you've been taught; just remember that you're taken care of.

I: It does get easier?

PC: Yeah, because we're littler it's a little harder to understand. As I get older I find out that it's easier to understand and accept whatever they are.

I: Now you're sixteen, when would you say you probably were more stressed out by this?

PC: Probably when I was about nine or ten.

I: Why then?

PC: Because it getting to be when you're growing up but yet you gain an understanding of things but not quite getting it. You feel the pressures more from people the way you should think and how you should act. I think that was part of it.

I: Now that you're a bit older you feel you better understand what's going on?

PC:: Yeah. There's still lots of things I don't, but yeah, I have a few things I've understood better now that I'm older and have more time to learn about that.

I: Do you think you're able to maintain a sense of who you are even when people say those other things about being a pastor's child?

PC: Yeah, because I know the difference, because I know that we're just the same as they are.

I: Do you see yourself as a pastor's child or a Christian child or what?

PC: Both. I'm a pastor's kid but yet I've been raised as a strong Christian.

I: Do you have any experiences at all, maybe funny ones or whatever, that you'd like to share about being a pastor's child?

PC: When people ask you if you have a good relationship with your pastor, they don't realize it's your father, until the last minute.

I: What do you tell them.

PC: My sister, when she was in college, she'd just say, "Yeah, very good," and then you say you live with him and they're, "Well, that's cool," and then they finally figure out it's your father and they think that's kind of strange at first.

I: So you can have a little fun with it, too?

PC: We do. My sister does quite a few things like that. I do, too, because they don't realize that at first and then when you kind of get into it explaining it then they think it's kind of funny because then they catch on to it.

I: Anything else, any experiences that stand out?

PC: No.

I: Well, one thing I'm thinking about doing with this is maybe eventually putting together kind of an overnight retreat for teenage pastors' children in our District, and to be perfectly honest here what do you think of that sort of thing?

PC: I think it would be good to realize that you're not the only one, there's more.

I: What sorts of things would you like maybe to talk about in that type of retreat?

PC: Your experiences with your friends on being a pastor's child so you know that they get the same things in bigger cities too. Sometimes it's different, that you get the same pressures, that we do.

I: Maybe help each other kind of deal with those?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, anything else you'd like to add at all about being a pastor's child?

PC: I like it.

I: Do you see your children some day being pastors' children?

PC: I think so. I think it's a very good place to bring a child up in and kids when they're littler don't always get the same meanings. I think it's good.

I: Well thank you for your honesty and your time.

INTERVIEW #12

Female, 18, college student, entire life as a pastor's daughter, entire life in a church-owned home, two moves

I: As we talk about your life in a clergy family, what would you say, if any, were there any pressures that you felt maybe from peers?

PC: I think that there were certain pressure like as far as what people expected, like my friends expected me to be like, like they expected me to be perfect which is totally wrong because it is. But I think that people were always a little more cautious around me until they got to know me more which is always kind of, I mean there is nothing wrong with it, but it takes awhile to get to know people. Like here in college it's different because no one knows who I am. They only know I'm _____'s daughter but they don't know my dad's a pastor.

I: Do you sense a difference?

PC: A big difference. I do because people are just natural, you know, [about] things and you know it's a lot easier.

I: Did you ever hear things like "you can't do that because you're the pastor's child"?

PC: Yeah, I mean just not even really big things cause I was a really bad kid, but just basic everyday things were like it was always, "Wow, I didn't expect a pastor's kid to say that" or, you know, or just I don't know, basic stuff like that.

I: How about do you sense that people at church treated you differently than other kids?

PC: I guess I wouldn't exactly know because you, like in _____, there aren't a whole lot of kids that go and there aren't any kids my age there. But when I was younger they basically treat all the kids in the church the same, you know, because when you're younger there are no differences. But as you get older some kids keep maturing, some kids don't. So I think I think they probably respected me more and my opinions more than they respected the other kids. They thought maybe I knew what I was talking about more which might not necessarily be true. So I suppose it gave me a little bit more respect and took my feelings more to heart.

I: And how about your parents, do you feel like they treated you any differently than other kids? Any other expectations of you?

PC: I think they have higher expectations of me because of the status my dad has. I mean I guess I expect it of myself too. That it's just, okay, well this is what people expect of you, this is [what] this society expects and this congregation and this is what my parents expected. I guess they just expected you to, you know, be an all around good kid and, you know, just be the ideal pastor's kid. But I mean I suppose there was certain pressures but

nothing really like where I ever went off the handle at them or anything. I mean it wasn't anything, it was just something that I've always dealt with so it was never anything different. I guess I wouldn't know a difference.

I: How did you handle those pressures like with your peers and everything else? Like for example some people almost overcompensate and want to prove that they're just like everyone else or some people just ignore people and go out themselves. How did you compensate?

PC: Well, I don't know, I guess I just, I think I probably tried harder not to prove, not to like be just like everyone else but I just tried even harder just to show them who I really was and that I wasn't necessarily 100% the image that they had of me. I mean to a certain extent and probably for the most part I was but then you know you just have to try to make the other parts of you shine and stand out a little bit more just to show that, you know, you are your own person.

I: So you wanted to make sure they knew who you were?

PC: Right.

I: Okay, all right, well, to change the subject a little bit, try to look at any positive aspects of what you remember of being a pastor's kid.

PC: Well, I don't know, you always got lots of food at Christmas time. I don't know, like I said basically people just gave you more of a chance than a lot of kids got because I think that people always think while, I don't want to kiss up, some of the people looking around the congregation do. They are nicer to you and that part, you know, a lot of it you can see right through that. But I mean that all around the community and everybody really gives you a lot more respect and some kids deserve it and some don't, but I think that was good because . . .

I: Like a built in status.

PC: Kind of, and I mean either, I mean after they got to know you either you kept it or you lost it. I think we've all kept it pretty well so you know that's positive and just getting to be involved in things that a lot of kids do get to be involved in. Like, I mean I get to know a lot of people like, I mean especially when I was younger, like the _____s and I mean we've always been together. Just to get to know a few who are the same like we were all pastors' kids and so you know, we had a lot of interests, same interests and stuff like that. And I believe that was positive that we had a chance to do stuff like that.

I: Thinking about your spiritual life, what impact would you say that being a pastor's child had on your spiritual life?

PC: Well definitely my father's opinions are mine. I mean I don't think that I'd be anywhere near as focused as I am but it's hard to imagine ever having lived differently. I don't know, I think that especially after having moved away I really realize how much I value having that around every day. I mean even though it wasn't like we didn't have devotions every night or, you know, any things like that but just as simple as praying before we eat

and stuff. I mean here I don't do that all the time, I mean I do, I mean I pray every night and stuff but you know I think that it was a lot stronger at home than it is here and I think that I really notice that now and I definitely remain a stronger person spiritually than without.

I: So you lived it at home and had it around a lot.

PC: Yeah, and it has carried over a lot more here. I mean I see a lot of college kids where they don't go to church on Sundays. We have chapel here so it's not quite so bad, but you know they don't go to church on Sunday like they use to because their parents aren't making them get up or whatever. And I mean I would feel weird if I didn't for myself, not just for my parents but for myself.

I: So you stayed with the family practice.

PC: Right.

I: And how about your involvement in church?

PC: It's gotten better since I left home because I think it was because well living at home like dad preaching and my mom playing the organ and leading the church choir and everything it felt like if I did stuff like that they'd think, "Well, she's just like her mother." And especially with me going to school here and going to be a teacher just like Mom, I kind of stayed away from doing anything that was anything remotely similar to her, which really made my parents angry because if they needed my help I'd refuse. But here I mean I'm involved in lots more. I'm involved in the choir here and playing piano and I've gone to Bible class a couple of times here. I think I'm a lot more involved now that I can step back and kind of be my own person and think about everything that I've learned from my dad and my mom in the past, and now just kind of like give it a chance to let it grow on its own.

I: Okay, would you say that it's probably been good for you to go to college and get away from home?

PC: Definitely. I was considering like this summer, I was considering well going home on a weekend and working and then I'd go to church there but I'm glad I'm doing it here. I'm glad I'm getting a different perspective on things because I mean I've always, my dad's always been a pastor and even if he hadn't been it's been for just a week on vacation and dad's always been there so you see this is the first time I've ever gone to church without my family being here which is kind of weird in itself. It's kind of weird going alone but it's nice to get a different perspective on things. I'm not saying I always enjoy it. I mean my brother he sent an e-mail saying well my dad gave a sermon on this or that and I'm like tell me more about the sermon because I didn't like the one I heard in church. And I mean cause I guess, I don't know, I think it's been a really good experience for me to get out and hear different things.

I: When you mentioned that you moved twice, do you remember both of those moves?

PC: Well, I remember, no, because I remember the one move to _____ and then when we moved to _____ I was like one.

I: What effect did that have on you?

PC: Well I was in fourth grade at school and, I don't know, it had a really negative effect. I'd say at first I was upset. I was really upset and I guess having never moved before or remembering having moved before I didn't think we ever would and I felt really kind of betrayed. But Dad explained it and I just definitely didn't understand it then that it wasn't him that decided it that it was God who decided it for him and everything that it was time for him to move on. And I was upset for awhile but I think as I got older and as I got situated where I was I realized that it was and that he's done a lot of good things here and we all have benefited from being in _____ even in small ways and then I realize that was true.

I: Did you feel like when you moved that the congregation supported you or was there good support there or how did that all work with you being accepted?

PC: Well, getting accepted here I think it was good because we would just, I think they were kind of glad to have a family there. I mean they never said one way or the other but the guy that lived there earlier, Pastor _____, was a bachelor and then he had gotten married but didn't have kids. I think they were kind of glad to have a family there and they all like Dad. Dad always says, "Well they haven't asked me to leave yet." So I think it was good and people from _____ when we left they were really supportive of it. They didn't want him to go. I remember them not wanting him to leave but they understood so it was really a relatively easy transition that way. You didn't have a hard time coming in. It was a hard time leaving but I mean they didn't make it extra hard for him.

I: And, maybe it doesn't affect you now as much as when you were living at home, but just the possibility of moving, did you ever think about that?

PC: Oh yeah. Especially I was really sensitive after awhile. Actually, I guess I wasn't because we had just moved, we hadn't moved for awhile. I guess now it almost bothers me more because I'm here and I know I'm staying here but if my family leaves that would be weird for me because they wouldn't be as close. Then I kind of feel like I wouldn't have a home because, and I always think about stuff like that, cause you know I go home for the weekend and the other kids go home for the weekend and if my parents move where would I go because I would know five people in that town. So I think that it almost affects you more because I would be apart, I would have to grow up.

I: Is that something you really worry about?

PC: No, not really. I think about it in passing every once in awhile but it's not the thing I'd worry about. I would deal with it when it came.

I: I'm sure.

PC: I'd have too.

I: When you think of your dad, you know, and when you grew up, did you see him as primarily as your father or as a pastor or just how did you view your father?

PC: I think my father. I don't think I ever really saw him as my pastor because I don't know, I mean he is but I just don't feel like I could separate the two. Like I don't feel like I could talk to him one day as my father and then go in and talk to him, I know I couldn't talk to him the next day as a pastor. I mean I never really talked much about spiritual or religious controversies or topics at all with him. If it comes up we do, but I guess, I don't know, at least I never use to. I suppose now I ask him more for advice and stuff but I guess mostly as my father and the pastor part just kind of works into it but normally as my father.

I: Mostly as dad. When you see him preaching you see Dad up there.

PC: Right.

I: Now something interesting too is if there would have been say something you really had to talk to someone about when you didn't feel like talking to your parents about it or whatever, you know a lot of people have a pastor they go to, who would you have gone to or who would you go to?

PC: Well, I don't know. I have a lot of really good friends and I have with my job. I've always been more mature and I'm a waitress at home and I have friends who are older than me who could give me a kind of an older persons view of things. I don't know, I guess I always wondered about that if it were really a teacher you meet. Here I don't know if I would talk to Pastor _____ or not. I don't think I would because, I just, I guess I don't really know him all that well. I mean I know him, but I say probably a teacher or an older friend.

I: It's an interesting life when you think about it, here's all these people and do they have a pastor or not? It's kind of interesting.

PC: Right, yeah.

I: Another question regarding just the way you saw your family growing up. Did you see your family as we're a pastor's family, was that a big deal, or we're a Christian family or something else?

PC: I guess my family, I guess a pastor's family, Christian as well, but I guess before I would say pastor's family because you have to behave a certain way. I don't know how many times I told my brother that we have to be good, you know, Dad's job and people are watching. But it was never in a negative way. I mean it only made us better. I mean we might have occasionally done things for the wrong reason being for Dad but I mean I think that eventually I think we've grown to get closer. I mean like I said we are a pastor's family but never really much thought of any [other] way. But now I think, as I step back and have a chance to look, I see that it's not just like my dad and I'm here or there, it's kind of more like all of us.

I: When you were younger did you kind of just see like, did you see yourself as a family that stood apart by itself or did you just kind of like Dad's here and we're here and we're part of what he does or what?

PC: I think when I was younger it was just we're a family just like everyone else, you know, everyone does their own thing. But then as I got older I kind of thought, well, Dad has a house full and he brings in the money and we do this, you know, this is how we pay him back, you know, we show him the respect and you know that comes along with his job. I think I learned that as I got older.

I: If you would say to your brothers, "You know I think we need to kind of be good" or whatever, how did you know that?

PC: Being the oldest, I would say instinct. Seriously, I don't know, I think I just always had an eye for the situation always having been around it my whole life and being older than them and just having known that well, we shouldn't be doing this or maybe we should go to this or thinking of making an appearance here or, you know, I just kind thinking, "Well, would our parents do this," you know, "would our parents expect us to do this." I've got a pretty good insight to those kind of things.

I: Kind of came from within you knowing that's how you [should be]?

PC: My brothers got kind of upset ----- Yeah, my parents, they would drop hints or say certain things, but a lot of it pretty much we [knew we]should do this or I know that I should do this.

I: Did you sense that, or let me ask this, what did you observe your family doing to try to maintain its identity as a family apart from church or was it's identity very much associated with church?

PC: I would say pretty much associated with church because we never really did anything as a family outside of church activities except for our vacations. And even then it was, I mean, vacations were always weird because my dad took vacations and was still a workaholic. And so I mean the things that he did with family and he'd go to family night at church or we went we'd go to Winkle together when we were really young, all the kids could still go. And most of the things we did as a family were for church so we never really did much between other than watch TV together or anything like that. I mean we're all so busy and with being a pastor you know you don't have hours. I mean a lot of kids their dad had a 9-5 job, they went home and did stuff at night, and I was kind of jealous of that in a certain way because, I mean, I remember my dad especially when the office was in the house when I was little in _____ he was usually in the office doing something and you know he would always . . . I was in there a lot doing this and that, but I was just kind of like, well your dad takes you for ----- and your dad is with you or did that with you and dad never really did and I never held it against him but I was always kind of jealous I think.

I: So time was kind of an issue?

PC: Kind of and then as I got older we were all so busy it didn't really matter anymore. But I think I missed out on a lot because other girls in my class were doing things with their dad and I never really did. We were never really close like that.

I: Well, thinking back on that, how do you feel about that now?

PC: I don't know. I guess there are some things I would have liked to have done but I think I would rather have, I mean we still spent time together and I think I like the way it was, I don't think that we're really a family that can be too close and lovey dovey like that anyway. I think it's more our personalities that are like that. Their families were never like that, my mom's and dad's, so that I think we might have been that way anyway.

I: If there was anything that you would like to have seen done differently, what would that have been?

PC: Maybe being able to take an occasional weekend to Valley Fair, you know, being able to do stuff like that rather than work, work, work, take two weeks for vacation. It would have been nice, you know, or just to be able to rent a cabin for a weekend, you know, for the summer and being able to go away and being able to put all distractions behind. And even those two weeks when you're on vacation you're thinking, "Okay, what if this happens in the congregation?" He leaves five different numbers where we're going to be every day you know, the secretary knows where to get a hold of me, all this and all that, he brings the stuff with so he can write his sermon for the next week, he likes to go church hopping, you know, we do all this so it's still really involved which, I mean I wouldn't want to like totally be dead to the world when we're on vacation but that would have been kind of nice not to have so much stress on our vacation. He was thinking about what he should be doing then.

I: Really get away from the church?

PC: Right, so to speak. Yeah, or the people maybe, just so we could have our time and not be having to worry about other families and stuff.

I: Overall, do you see your experience as a pastor's child to be positive or negative?

PC: I would say positive. I'd say I'm more well-rounded and I've got probably a better head on my shoulders than a lot of kids I know because I've been exposed to all sorts of different ideas towards life itself and theology and religion and all that. So I mean I've been exposed to a lot more dealing with the important stuff in life than a lot of people. So I would say it's a positive experience.

I: A more well-rounded person.

PC: Yeah.

I: Yeah, you've probably seen a lot more than maybe some people have.

PC: I've had to deal with a lot more. Like my mom, one day, I don't know it was just in passing this Fall, when someone in our congregation died and we were talking and I said, "Oh, you know, funeral would be Thursday," and she

knows the drill. You know I think I've just been exposed to more real life situations with older people, with death and life, with children with everything so I think I've been exposed a lot more and I think I'm more prepared than lots of people.

I: What can be done, in your opinion, what can be done to help make a pastor's child's life a more positive experience? First of all, what can be done by the parents or by the family?

PC: I think maybe ----- with my family it might have been a little easier not to always have to feel like they had to be someone else for the congregation. I mean to a certain extent you have to behave yourself but not to have to like be someone totally different, you know. And I mean kids learn that on their own sometimes and then they get away by going to the other end of the spectrum like you said. I think sometimes it would be better just to or at least sit down with them and say, "Well, you know there's certain things you have to do," but that doesn't mean that it is this or that.

I: What I hear you saying is try to help the child understand who he or she is.

PC: Right

I: Apart from . . .

PC: Apart from who their dad is.

I: But there was a time in your life when you kind of struggled with who you were. What age of your life would that have been when you most struggled?

PC: Probably thirteen to fifteen, somewhere in that time.

I: Why do you think that was?

PC: Probably because that's when everyone else was like doing all those boring things like drinking or smoking or -----or whatever' it might have been and I didn't want to do that. But yet it's like people thought, "Well she's not doing it because of her father," while that might not necessarily have been true, that was me making those decisions. But you know people thought this or that so you know you have to just stand up for yourself and sort of [know what] you shouldn't have to do. You should still say, "Well, okay, that's who I am," but people always just thought well it's because of my dad.

I: What can be done by the congregation to help being a pastor's child a real positive experience?

PC: Well, a lot of people I think just expect a lot out of you as far as like they expect you to sing in choir and they expect you to go to all these things and do all these things and be really involved. And, you know, if that's who you are that's fine, but I mean if you can't sing or if don't want to be part of those kinds of things, I mean you can still be your spiritual person without singing in the church choir. I mean you know there's a lot of things you can do and I think they just expect so much out of you and they're not who they really are around you. And pastors' kids aren't stupid, they know that you're

putting on an act, so I think that if they would just be themselves. I mean, as I'm getting older, I'm realizing that these people I grew up with aren't who I think they are and it's almost hurt me because it's like you build these people as the perfect people and then you realize that they're normal, which shouldn't be a surprise but it is because all your life they've been acting differently towards you except for your really close friends in the congregation. And I mean pastors never really have many of those because they're scared, you know, you don't want to get too close to a pastor's family. So, I don't know, I think that they kind of put on a front and I think I mean it's really evil to think that most of the time by the kids.

I: I'm going to broaden out a little bit more here. What can be done by the District and Synod, you know, to help pastors' children?

PC: I don't know. If anything maybe, I mean, like the District -----
----- we don't much as a family. Then I guess maybe it's just because we go there and we don't have the time to. But like when I was younger we always did stuff together, we always had Christmas parties and we always did that. I think that was easier for us because we got to be with pastors' kids like I mentioned and that made it easier because they were like us and they knew what we were going through and not like it was a tragedy. But I mean they knew and they shared our lives and I think that if they just did more stuff like that. It would be more things like this is golf tournament thing. It's so much fun for me. I mean there aren't many kids my age anymore that would come to these things but it's just fun to be around people like us because . . .

I: Letting their hair down.

PC: Right, you get a chance to be yourselves around people that you like because you understand each other and I think stuff like that would really help a lot.

I: If you were talking to pastors' children, what is the number one and number two thing that you think is most important that you'd like them to know?

PC: Probably that they can be their own person without having to live in their parent's shadow. So that they have to remember that along with being a pastor's child comes certain expectations and they can't blow them off either because it's really important. And I always feel like you should respect what your parents do. And I greatly respect what my father does and I would never do anything to harm his position or put him in a position to have to do something about, you know, my actions or anything like that, because it's got to be hard on him to deal with balancing his personal life and his work because they're so closely intertwined. And I think that that would be what I would tell them, that they can be their own person but yet at the same time they have to remember that they come along with the package kind of thing.

I: Do you see your own children being pastors' children?

PC: I don't know. I always say that I could never marry a guy who wants to be a pastor because, I don't know. But it's almost I think I could because I was raised that way and I feel that I could effectively raise my kids that way. And I think that I would almost want to be in that setting because that's where I feel comfortable and safe and I would want my kids to. I mean I always feel pretty safe. I always felt pretty secure and, well, I know my dad was never going to get laid off and there's always someone needing a pastor. And that I always felt safe because I always kind of felt my dad knew all the answers. Even if I didn't go to him directly I always felt that he would know what to do. And I guess I would want my kids to feel that way that they could to us and I guess I'd think they'd feel safe like I did. I could do it.

I: Do you have any interesting experiences from being a pastor's child that you'd like to share, funny or otherwise?

PC: Oh man, I don't know, it's just all one big smear. I guess there were so many when I was young. Just in general, things embarrassing from what your parents, things that you would say, you know that would get you into trouble when parents realize they can't say things at home, you know. Or I mean, you know, nothing really specific but there's just so many general stories where, and I guess, that comes along with the learning experience of what you can and can't do. Because when you do certain things you realize, "Oh I don't think I should have done that, that's going to make it tough for mom and dad," or, you know, because I don't have nothing specific that comes to mind, I don't know what my brothers thought of but more than likely.

I: Anything else you'd like to say about being a pastor's child? Wide open question, anything?

PC: I don't think I ever would have it any other way. I really don't, I mean, I wouldn't be the person that I am now and I could never see myself being another person. So I mean I don't have any regrets. Not that I could have changed it but I don't have any regrets and I think my parents did a really good job and are still doing a good job actually. I mean, in changing times with everything that's going on they've maintained pretty constant in their beliefs and everything and I wouldn't have it any other way.

I: Well, maybe some day you will have an opportunity to share that with your children.

PC: Maybe far down the road.

I: Well thank you for your time. I'm thinking about putting together a retreat for pastors' children, like an overnight retreat, and in regards to that I would like to know, and be totally honest, do you think that would be a useful thing; and the second thing is what sorts of things would be helpful to talk about?

PC: I think it would be definitely worth a try. It's always harder to see how things are going to work until you try it. As far as things to talk about, I think if anything it would be helpful to just to be able to get together. Not so much have seminars or a speaker or anything but just, I mean, have

devotions. Work into the devotions families and dealing with things like that and maybe dealing with specific pressures and peer pressures and all that and just those kind of devotions. But I think not to really put pressure to discuss, discuss, discuss but more or less just giving a time to get together and discussing amongst themselves, because I think that's how kids work things out the best is being able to discuss with other kids. You know, I mean, I would enjoy even if . . . There's a Baptist minister's son I'm real good friends with and we talk all the time about really different things that we have to deal with, different ways we deal with them and we share ideas. I think getting conversations started amongst the kids and being able to take questions or read questions of something would be a good approach to it.

I: Well, I appreciate your help.

INTERVIEW #13

Male, 37, LCMS pastor, eleven years growing up in a clergy family, lived in a church-owned home, two moves

I: The first question I have is simply as you think back on your experiences living in a clergy family, any pressures that you experienced, inside pressures, outside pressures?

PC: Nothing more than normal. I mean there were no pressures because I was a pastor's kid or not a pastor's kid. There was only one time in my entire growing up existence that somebody made fun of the fact that I was a pastor's son.

I: Was that a peer?

PC: Yeah, it was a classmate in ninth grade who, a young lady, who said, "Oh a little Christian boy would never do that."

I: So that's the one time?

PC: The only time I remember.

I: And you handled that by basically?

PC: By just turning it back to her. It was not, it maybe wasn't intended to be a personal stab and I simply chose not to take it as a personal stab.

I: How about some positive aspects of that type of lifestyle?

PC: Positive aspects. I had a very secure home, very secure family. I think that probably sums it up, just a very secure home, very secure family. The ability and understanding of why things were the way they were and some of that perhaps being from a pastor's home, other things simply that's the personality that I had, that type of person that I was.

I: When you say you understood things the way they were what were some of those things?

PC: I keep thinking of kids' things, the things you think of as kids. I understood why it was important to go to church and wanted to go, I understood why my best friend _____ did not want to go to church or why his family didn't go to church so I always invited Jeff to come with me and he did. I had a handle as a nine-year-old of how the world was put together. And I remember sitting at my best friend's home and his mom talking about that she had no need for God, no need to believe in God and I was sitting at the table and asked her, "Well, aren't you afraid of going to hell?" I mean I had a very systematic world view already as a nine-year-old that simply made it easy for me to put things into place and into perspective already.

I: It just made you I suppose being around the whole Christian atmosphere?

PC: In our home the Christian faith was real, it was not put on and I learned to love music because my mom sang with us every night before we went to bed. And I learned to love the Savior and it was real because when I

had the boogieman underneath my bed my mom came in and we said a prayer that the boogieman would be protected. Or when in one particular instance, and this was at the Seminary in _____, there were storm warnings out and we could look out our bedroom windows and see the horizon and the clouds were bad and they were coming, and so for bedtime Mom selected the bedtime story Jesus calms the storm and we read the book, Jesus Calms the Storm. And I mean so it was all very real, it's part of real life, it was not, the Sunday/Monday connection was very real. It was not well you're the pastor's son on Sunday but any other time you could be whomever you want. This is who we were and first and foremost my mother and father's Christian faith was demonstrated in the house, not in public, the public was just an extension of what was happening at home and so in my mind growing up it was pretty natural that my dad should be the pastor, it was very natural. His outward ministry was a, it was an extension of what was already happening in our house. And you know as you interview my children you may or may not hear that, you probably won't, but then again I probably didn't realize it as a sixteen or seventeen-year-old either.

I: Well, we all look at things differently.

PC: We sure do.

I: Any other positive aspects or benefits that came from being a pastor's family?

PC: People were kind because my dad was so nurturing and caring. The kindness the people showed to my father eventually overflowed to our family, overflowed to me. My first job was for a member of the congregation, things like that. It made it very easy because he was well respected in the community but definitely as a high school student it made it very easy for me to gain respect because it was a part of how things were. But a lot of that was simply attributed to my own personality. I simply grew up in a positive environment, period, and it was not because well Dad's now the pastor, he's the problem fixer and we got to be good kids because we're the pastor's kids. It's just the way my parents were and you get to [be a] part of that. As was the case for the others, the LCA pastor's daughter was a year ahead of me and that was not the case for her. She was in more trouble than anyone I know and ----- at age nineteen was pregnant and busted for drugs and very much in rebellion.

I: That's another story and problem.

PC: Yeah, that's another story.

I: I'm interested in if you sensed at all that you were treated differently than other children, first of all by your parents because you were a pastor's child?

PC: -----

I: And I just asked the question about if you sensed that your parents treated you differently than other children because you were a pastor's child?

PC: My parents treated me differently than I saw other parents treat their kids. In all cases I saw I think the thing that was very beneficial was that my parents were very balanced, my parents, I always felt, were exceptional. My father was a man of exceptional integrity and he not only modeled that but he held each of us children accountable to that. I did not feel I was treated any different than any of my other siblings nor did I feel that I was treated differently than my father treated any other kids.

I: How about in something like Confirmation class, did you have your father in Confirmation?

PC: I had my father in Confirmation classes and I did not feel I was treated any differently there at all. As a matter of fact, when I needed to be put into place he put me into place but there was no favoritism, there was no sense of being harder on me because "you're my son," everyone else gets away with it but you won't. And again in my view as a kid growing up and seeing that it was just a natural extension of what was already happening at home and so it was no different. I remember too that when it finally came to Confirmation classes I was a year, we were confirmed in ninth grade, a year later than when we lived here and as an eighth grader I was not emotionally ready to be confirmed at that time. I was not asking the right questions of life, I had a different, you know, my whole eighth grade year as I was growing and life is really kind of a blur but as a ninth grader I was very mature, asking good questions. And I just spoke with my dad on the phone when we were commenting again that it's a good thing I was not a doctor because I would never have been able to make it through school. Almost all of my theology was done in Confirmation class and was good and I still go back and look at that Confirmation book for stuff for kids today. Does that make sense?

I: Sure. How about do you sense that you were treated differently by your church because of the fact you were a pastor's child?

PC: I think that [being] treated differently is maybe not as much as a number of other factors. Because I was the pastor's kid everyone knew who I was and because of my personality I used that to my advantage. Okay, being a very extroverted type of person, my goodness, if you know who I am I'm going to squeeze you for everything I can get out of you, you know, in a good sense, you know. I'm in the network with you to find out everything that you know and everything that they know and I'm going to spin it around in my mind and the next little thing that pops up I will know just who to talk to and get help with this or help with that.

I: You use it to your advantage.

PC: I used it to my advantage and again that was more so a personality thing maybe but that's who I was. I thrived in the atmosphere of everyone wanting to know who I was. My first parish in _____ I thrived in that environment more so than I do here because the town had 800 people and it took me six months to learn 800 names and everyone knew me and I knew

them and I could use that to my advantage because that's just the way that I was.

I: Again, we already touched on it in terms of your peers, you mentioned that once in a sense they treated you differently than their other friends and other peers?

PC: Yeah. I don't sense that they treated me differently because that's who I was and in my circle of friends people accepted me for who I was because I accepted myself first. I was not looking for acceptance. I did not need to be accepted. I did not need to be a part of the crowd because in my world I was the crowd. I mean it sounds really dumb but really I was a self contained emotional social human, okay, and so if they tried to treat me different I didn't notice it because it didn't matter how and I think as a result the people who tried to pull, if they even tried to pull. That's kind of like this incident with this girl, in the ninth grade, they tried it once and it didn't fly and I was having such a good time enjoying life that in most cases people wanted what I had as opposed to the typical high school senior putting others down so that you could make yourself look better.

I: What do you think contributed to your ability to handle your lifestyle as positively as you were able to?

PC: I would think parental corrective influence, strong family bonds and ties, a good healthy sense of who I was, a good healthy sense of who my God is and how things were put together. Looking back again as a six-year-old child I had heart surgery and was one of fifteen kids in the entire nation. The only place in the world that would do it at that time was _____. Of which the Lord just arranged for my dad's first call out of the seminary to be in _____ and as a little kid I was growing up and knowing that my life was in God's and God held everything, he held everything and arranged everything for my benefit and my good and loved me dearly and all the way through. And as a six-year-old child undergoing heart surgery, very scary, very risky, God took care of that. My goodness, if He could take care of that and make me a new person because I could not walk from my house to the end of the driveway, if he could take care of that, then that's the foundation for the rest of my life. That was significant so it did not matter what anyone said or did. I'd enjoyed life that they didn't know, that kind of life John talks about, give your life to see God in Christ Jesus.

I: What impact did growing up as a pastor's child have upon your spiritual life?

PC: Well it's interesting in that what you would think you know everyone would think that the pastor and his kids are always, you know, especially those high school ages are always talking about spiritual things and the like. That's not the case. We had family devotions most every morning and now as a parent I realize how hard that was for my parents to make happen. In difficult times, you know, we always had the comfort of family. I really only know of two times that my father actually sat down to pray with me, that two

times more than most people would get and one was after I left home and was married and expecting our second child and so that carried on after he felt I was more comfortable doing that then. My spiritual life, the early formative years, before my father ever became a pastor, I learned more theology at my mother's practical workings of forgiveness and life from my mother's knee than I did at the seminary. I learned more theology about the Scripture and the spiritual things at Confirmation classes than I ever did at the seminary. My spiritual growth, that was all subject to things at home.

I: What impact did being a pastor's child have upon your involvement in the church, I guess I'm looking at more than just one's spirituality, with one's actual involvement in the church.

PC: Living at home, involvement in church for me at least it increased my paths within the congregation, it was stuff I wanted to do. Okay, you know no one made me do it, no one forced me to do it, my parents never exerted any pressure on me to do anything more than what I wanted to do. I loved being in church, I loved being in God's house. I loved doing the things that were there and therefore when it came time where there was opportunity my paths were greased, meaning that people already accepted me, it was just very easy for me to pick up the guitar and play, very easy for me to do this or to do that, that was the better thing I went to. There were no negatives at all.

I: Now you've moved twice essentially, once was when your dad became a pastor and you moved once in your high school years, seventh grade. What effect did those new locations have upon you?

PC: The first response is to say none. Looking back I can see the whole reason for the moving, moving to that new location in the seventh grade. God wanted to put me in a place where I could be formulated for my future and to get out of a big city, out of the big town, and placed in a place where my skills and abilities could be developed. I did not make it into the camera club in seventh grade in _____, in eighth grade not only did I not make it, not only did I make it, but by the time I was a senior in high school I was the chief photographer for the entire high school and for the newspaper. I would have been one guitarist among a thousand but by this move going to _____ I was the one guitarist where when I graduated from high school my picture was in the paper because I was going on a world tour which would not have happened.

I: You see that as a positive, that you relocated?

PC: The relocation was very very positive. Now ask me about a relocation now having moved in my own ministry, now I know what my parents were going through as they moved because the move from _____ here was ----- . It was two years before I finished scraping the house even though very specifically and clearly God wanted me here.

I: When you were a child you didn't sense any grief [over moving]?

PC: Not at all, not at all, the world was at the time, I perhaps grieved for months, I mean I just very easily fell into place. I remember the first day at

my new school, the first day was hard but by the time the week was done I was comfortable whether it's pastor's kid or whatever, or both personalities, no problem.

I: When you think back on seeing your father maybe there was a difference when you father was not a pastor as compared to when he was?

PC: But I don't remember those times.

I: So when you think back on your father and how you saw your father, how did you see him, did you see your father as a father, or my pastor, how did you view him?

PC: As my father, that was my father, always approachable. As a matter of fact, I could walk into his office at any time and talk to him about anything.

I: If there was some question, issue or problem you needed to discuss, many nonclergy children have a pastor they can talk to but you are comfortable still talking to your father?

PC: Probably more so talking to him because he is my father than because he was my pastor, probably more so.

I: So when he was up there preaching, "that is my dad up there"?

PC: That's right, that was my dad. I also was the only kid in about the eleventh grade, I guess I perfected the art of sleeping through church with your eyes open because I knew on Sunday morning or at dinner at noon he was going to say you look pretty tired in church. I'd been up until 3:30 in the morning in the band, come on dad, got up at six to deliver papers, of course I'm tired.

I: And how would you characterize your family growing up, a pastor's family or more Christian family or how might you characterize how you viewed your family?

PC: How I viewed my family. I viewed my family as a spiritual family, a together family. I did not see it as a pastor's family. I did not see it as a Christian family. My parents said what they meant and meant what they said, always.

I: Overall, would you consider your experience growing up as a pastor's child to be positive experience or a negative experience and why?

PC: Very much a positive experience all the way through and I don't think that that is because of the fact that my parents, my father was a pastor. It's just that that's who my parents were and whether my dad would have sold insurance or whether he would have been a farmer or whether he was a pastor, my life would have been the same.

I: Especially since you mentioned earlier you don't remember much about your years before your dad was a pastor, I was going to ask you if you sense any difference between being a nonpastor's child versus a pastor's child.

PC: My earliest memories are the first two years of my father's seminary, I can remember bits and pieces, tiny bits and pieces before that, but nothing before that.

I: Sometimes when visiting with people what comes up is the issue of time, spending time with your parents. When you look back on your being a pastor's child was that an issue for you?

PC: My father was very good at making us feel important that, you know, the fact that he did not make my high school choir concerts, the fact that he did not make this, that or the other thing all the time did not matter. It did not upset your bond with us----- My mother tells me that he didn't make a single concert when I was a senior in high school. I don't remember that, it was not an issue. What my father was good at was being developed enough that he cared enough about the lives of us kids that if he had to be gone or if he was gone, all he had to do was put in an appearance ----- I don't know ----- and my perspective again was to prove that at a very early age I simply learned not to be offended by what people did or didn't do. I had no control over what my father did. I wasn't going to get into a moody and pouty mood because he wasn't there, that wouldn't have been his fault, it was my fault. I'm responsible for my own actions, though I could not articulate that and that's how it was. My parents were very good at certain things. If they couldn't be with us for certain things we had a regular habit of every Monday we went swimming together, until seventh grade when we moved, when that changed. We had a regular habit of my mother and father would simply say we're going to get out of Dodge for awhile and leave on Friday and we'd go somewhere and spend the night and then you know as a family and do something and come back on Saturday.

I: They made an effort to be a family.

PC: Right, and so it did not matter. My dad was gone a lot but my mom was always there as a security for us. I didn't need to have dad around, mom was the crest for me because mom was very secure herself.

I: What could be done in your opinion to help make living as a pastor's child a positive experience, first of all, by parents?

PC: Honestly, my answer, which looking after 20 years of being a pastor's child, however many it was, I think we have the pastors themselves who were miserable with life and therefore miserable with anything-----

Number two, to make things easier a lot of pastors have to clearly not take themselves so seriously. You can't fix the world, you weren't called to fix the world, you have to be willing to say "that's their problem," deal with it, you have to say -----, don't come over, if your congregation isn't doing what you think they should do, it's their congregation.

I: How about the congregation itself, what can the congregation do to help make being a pastor's child a positive experience?

PC: I think it's very simple, let the kids be kids. Not every kid is going to fill their father's shoes and honestly I don't think it's up to the congregation

to make a pastor's child feel better or worse about themselves, it is only the kid who has the responsibility for his own actions.

I: And a little broader, how about the church-at-large, I mean the District or Synod?

PC: My gut response is this, it's not up to the church-at-large, pastors have ----- for both themselves -----

I: Do you see that the responsibility falls with the parents, the pastor himself?

PC: Yeah. The pastor's personal responsibilities are honesty because you could pass that on to your kids. There is nothing that even the most dysfunctional congregations can make happen to your kids. Okay, a personal example. In _____ the Mennonite church was exceptionally dysfunctional, exceptionally dysfunctional. They chewed up pastors and spit them out like you wouldn't believe and this particular family, in their case, their system, the congregation recommends you for ordination. This pastor is a phenomenal caring pastor. The congregation . . . treated this guy like dirt. _____ loved life, he loved life and he understood that you don't have to take it because this congregation was treating me like dirt that doesn't mean I'm dirt. Their daughter is the same age as my daughter, she is the most competent, the most life loving, the most enjoyable young lady to be around and the whole congregation no matter what they tried to do to that family-----

I: What is, this is your opportunity to speak to pastors' children, what would be the most important thing that you would want them to know about being a pastor's child?

PC: ----- you cannot blame someone else, you have the responsibility for yourself, take responsibility for yourself, make your faith known, make your faith real, learn to love what God has given you all along, enjoy the fact that you are special, it was a pastor's kid that made me special and I enjoy it.

I: Any interesting anecdotes you'd like to share about being a pastor's child, humorous or otherwise?

PC: Well, I'll tell you what, humorous or otherwise. I'll give you one here to put on the tape. 1972 when we moved to _____, the church council had just had a meeting before we got there, there was a resolution that they would not let any guitars be played in church. My father comes right after that meeting, had no idea about it and the second Sunday we were there he says, "_____, how would you like to play along with so and so and so and so, to sing during the offering. You can play your guitars, and I said, "Great." And so I stood up there in the balcony along with a couple of friends I had just met and I strummed the first cord of the guitar and 326 gray haired people got whiplash, turned their necks to look into the balcony because that dreaded guitar was there. I lived through it. Let's see, what else, any other anecdotes. I've heard that the worst thing to be in the Christmas pageant

was Joseph because you had to sit next to a girl and they figured that I should be Joseph, that's the pastor's son, and I was really mad, I was really mad, because I didn't want to be next to that girl. And so I was an ornery cuss for the whole children's program. Someone tried to say, "Well, you're the pastor's kid, you should not act like that." Here's another one, like I said, those things didn't phase me. I said, "Well, if Joseph would have been a pastor's kid he would have not wanted to be next to Mary either." I mean go ahead, you're six-years-old or nine-years-old or whatever. The last thing you want to be is next to a girl whether you're a pastor's kid or not. I hope this is helpful.

INTERVIEW #14

Male, 17, entire life as a pastor's son, lived in both a church-owned and parent-owned home, three moves

I: One question I'd like to ask you, based on your experience, just any pressures that you feel that come from being a pastor's child?

PC: Oh, well, you're kind of like you're pressured in the church when you have to be some kind of what you call good kid kind of, you have to have a good trustworthy, a good reputation.

I: How do you sense that? People say things to you?

PC: People usually just you know say ----, come up to you and say, "Yeah that was a good job," you know, playing guitar, you know, sometimes you have to be kind of pressured to do it.

I: Pressured into it?

PC: You know, like performing like certain things like, for instance, playing the guitar on Sundays like for church. Be pressured into that or like meetings and stuff.

I: Do you feel like you are expected to?

PC: Yeah, like you are expected to be there and, you know, to make an appearance.

I: How about with your friends at school?

PC: How do they see me or . . .

I: Yeah, do they like lay pressures on you or say things or . . .

PC: Not really, no, they just, whatever comes, whatever goes.

I: You don't feel like they treat you differently because your dad's a pastor?

PC: No.

I: So more so here at church?

PC: Yeah, more so.

I: How about with your parents, remember, you know, this is confidential, but do you sense your parents treat you differently than they would other kids?

PC: Sometimes, like if I want to like go out like on weekends and go out with some friends that call, you know, and go to like a party or something. Personally I'm not one that goes out and just gets smashed or plastered so, before I could, but if you go and hang out and stuff sometimes they have a problem with that sometimes. Usually it's not except whenever I want to go - ----- they kind of get overprotective.

I: Do you think maybe that's because you're their son or because part of it's because you're a pastor's kid.

PC: Sometimes it seems like they want to keep that reputation, kind of still have a good reputation and it all depends on where I'm going and like who's going to be there.

I: You were saying something like "be careful of what you do because you're a pastor's child" or something like that?

PC: Not really.

I: A little different question here, basically when you talked about sensing some pressure like here at church, how do you handle that?

PC: Oh, usually I'll just, you know, accept it because it's usually not anything really big and requires a lot of work and a lot of planning in that part. But usually I'll speak my mind. When I'm thinking, I guess I want to be with it I'll do it, but if not I can see that I've let the people down. Then I let them down, you know, then you might say that I don't want to do it or I declined.

I: Now to switch gears. I want to look at what you see as positive benefits from being a pastor's child.

PC: Oh, well growing up it's good to know that you have a nice home to go to that will support you no matter what you do or if you hurt or something that someone will come with you to the doctor's office and you know double check to make sure you're okay and it's good to know that they care. You know, learn good morals and stuff too.

I: Do you see your life being different in some ways than other kids whose parents are not pastors?

PC: It depends on like who I see. I mean like some kids in high school they are going out and getting drunk every night and their parents don't care, I mean I think that's rather silly. I mean it's just good to know that you have people who care for you.

I: How about your spiritual life, what impact did being a pastor's child have on your spiritual life?

PC: Good, in fact, it's just good to know what you believe and it seems solid to believe about your God, because I've grown up with it all my life and it's been a part of me and it's probably something if you have a problem you just like work it out, you just look up stuff in the Bible, it helps then, it's been a help.

I: You mentioned you moved three times, I suppose you remember those?

PC: Yeah.

I: What effect did that have?

PC: Well, obviously it's not a very easy task to move. There are like big moves like in _____ and right before I started first grade, we moved right before then and you know you just get to know your classmates and stuff and then you have, and then you move and you have to start all over again. And then right then in the secondary years when you prepare for what that high school offers you get moved again and you're on two different wavelengths

and it's kind of hard to adapt and like leaving friends and having to make new friends and it's an experience.

I: Sure, how did you handle the moving personally?

PC: I always thought about it and questioned it and asked my parents, you know, why are we moving again and they said you know it's what your father wants, you know, and it will be better for the family, that kind of thing. But I never really protested it or was against it. It is rather hard leaving all your friends and, you know, leaving for somewhere where you are amongst your friends and having to go to a new place and start all over and say, "Hi, I'm the new kid."

I: You know, part of being a pastor's child is just that possibility of moving. Do you think about that very much?

PC: Not really, because, you know, like right now my parents just told me they don't really plan on moving in the near future, but they said that your brothers and sisters will all probably be graduated out of high school before we even plan on moving again.

I: So, they're pretty open?

PC: You know, whenever my dad receives a Call or something they'll always tell us before they tell the congregation so they talk with us about it.

I: When you view your father, do you see him primarily as that's my dad or do you see him as your pastor?

PC: That's a toughy, that's a real tough question. Sometimes maybe a little bit more seeing him as a pastor. Well, his job goes all day into the night and usually he's gone at night in evenings and he's not back until late at night, like later that night and I don't really see a lot of him like during the day. Sometimes the only time I ever get to see him is at church. In some ways, yeah, he seems more like a pastor.

I: Is that, you know, being a lot of times he spends at church and stuff like that, does that bother you?

PC: Sometimes yes, it can get, I mean it can get messy, you know, sometimes and you just feel kind of overwhelmed at certain points like when you want to have like friends and stuff come over and my mom she's always really busy too and ----- house and that kind of gets kind of put off to the side or something to do later and you can't really have a whole lot of friends over with a really messy house -----

I: You know, sometimes when people have things they have to talk to someone about or whatever, lots of other children have their pastor. Who would you go to. I mean, if there was something that you had to talk to and you didn't want to go to your parents, who would you go to?

PC: I'd probably either go to friends or else another adult who I trusted who was, you know, keeps secrets, that would help me like if I'm going through some rough times. I really don't, I mean, I'm not really putting my parents down or anything. I really don't like to talk to them about things. Then sometimes, you know, my dad will be like, yeah, it kind of reminds me

of this person like this but they don't, you know, say exact names or anything, you know, who did this and did this for his wife and told them that stuff and he always referred to examples and stuff and makes a five minute conversation, you know, that could be over in just,, I know it seems like an eternity sometimes, -----

I: I appreciate that. And now when you look at your family and the identity of your family, do you see your family as we're a pastor's family or a Christian family? How would you characterize your family?

PC: For the most part, I'd say we were a normal family, like anybody else, you know, the average family, mom, dad, kids and the dog, you know, that kind of thing.

I: And overall, do you see your experience of being a pastor's child as a positive experience, a negative experience, somewhere in between or how would you characterize it?

PC: Probably somewhere in between, maybe leaning a little bit more on the positive side and you get the good morals and values and stuff that keep you a good kid and keep you in line and stuff, you know. You're not going to go out and wreck your life, you know, and so I think it's a little bit on the positive side.

I: You mentioned, I think earlier, that you've lived in both church-owned homes and in your own home. Do you recall or do you sense there's any difference between the two and the life between living in a church-owned home and your own home?

PC: Not really, except, you know, your parents will gripe about the bills, you know, every once in awhile, you know.

I: So before that you could call a trustee?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, what can be done to help make, in your opinion, what could be done to help make being a pastor's child a positive experience by the parents?

PC: These are deep questions.

I: What could be done to make being a pastor's child a positive experience, what can be done by parents?

PC: Okay, sometimes like my parents, you know, they'll sound like a broken record, "Don't do this, don't do this, don't do this, don't do this, these are bad," you know, "You should do this, you should do this," you know. In a way kind of just lay off, you know, and let your kids do their own thing. You think like within you know certain degrees and abilities because you know kids, you know, especially my age, you know, we're at that stage where, you know, we're at the edge of the pool and, you know, we're kind of, you know, waiting to dive in but, you know, we don't need to hold Mom's hand anymore, Mom or Dad's hand anymore, we need to jump in and test the water for ourselves.

I: How about anything that could be done by the congregation to make it a positive experience?

PC: Nothing really. I mean the congregation, you know, they basically, I mean they do have that reputation for, ideal thing, that you have to kind of keep up but the congregation doesn't really expect like a whole lot, you know, they expect you to be a good kid, you know, and that's a reasonable, you know, sensible kid, you know. I don't really have a whole lot of problems with that.

I: If you were like talking to pastors' children and you wanted to tell them one thing that was most important that you wanted them to know about being a pastor's child, what would that be?

PC: Probably just it's what you learn that is good for you in the long run and it helps you make good choices knowing right from wrong, good from bad, and you know, just hang in there, it's all for the better in the end.

I: Do you have any interesting stories that come from your experience being a pastor's child, humorous or otherwise?

PC: I have some of them here. A couple of years ago, maybe it was last year, I got a bunch of friends over and we were watching a movie, a rated "R" movie, and my dad has a hard time with a bunch of guys and girls watching a rated "R" movie at the same time in the same room. And I guess he overheard some of the language and stuff and it wasn't too good and he came in there, he said, "I think you should watch something else right now" and it was like in front of everyone and I was just like OH, way to kill, way to kill, way to kill a night and stuff like that.

I: How did you deal with that?

PC: Oh. to tell you the truth just grin and bear it and you kind of just take the situation and sometimes you have to bend it a little bit. There's not really a whole lot you can do with a situation like that.

I: Do you ever feel like you have to prove something to friends or anything, you know?

PC: In what way?

I: You know, like prove like I can be like other people?

PC: Sometimes, sometimes like you act younger. Some of my friends, like in the seventh and eighth grade when I first moved here, they thought it would be cool to start smoking or something, you know, and they are like, "Yeah, try to be cool like us," you know, "you're just a pastor's kid," kind of that and not taking put downs or anything like that, you know, "Give me one of those" and it was not for me, haven't touched one since.

I: Well that's basically what I wanted to cover. I appreciate your honesty. I'm thinking about eventually maybe putting together an overnight retreat for pastors' children in the District and kind of bring people together. What would you think of something like that?

PC: I think it would be interesting. Me, personally, I'm pretty busy usually with sports and stuff and school activities, but I think it would be a rather interesting experience.

I: What kinds of things do you see would go into that kind of experience to make it real beneficial?

PC: Like what do you mean, like what?

I: What kind of topics and that sort of thing?

PC: Probably like a detailed topic on different cults and different religions, and see how they differ from this religion.

I: Anything that relates specifically to being a pastor's child that would be helpful to know?

PC: Get like some older people, like adults, that have been pastors' children to come in and tell about some experiences that they have had and what they've done to kind of, you know. I think that would be kind of interesting just to hear other people's thoughts on it and such.

I: Well I appreciate your time.

INTERVIEW #15

Male, 15, entire life as a pastor's son, lived in both church-owned and parent-owned home, four moves

I: One question I'm looking at is I'm trying to figure out what some of the pressures are that pastors' children feel because they are pastors' children, so I'm just going to ask you, do any come to mind, any pressures you've felt because you're a pastor's child, now or earlier?

PC: Not really, I actually do good.

I: Do you sense that your friends treat you differently ever?

PC: No, not at all.

I: Do people here at church treat you differently?

PC: No, not really.

I: What do you think parents do, do they treat you differently because you're a pastor's child?

PC: No, they just want us to be good.

I: So the way they treat you and the expectations they have of you, do you think they're different than for other children?

PC: Not really, I don't really think about that and what they expect of me and all that stuff.

I: How about some positive benefits that come from being a pastor's child, can you think of any positive things?

PC: I was an Eagle last year, everyone thinks you're good or better---- like other kids actually do.

I: Why is that good?

PC: I don't know, it's because some kids are really like mean and stuff.

I: Do you have kind of a good reputation?

PC: Yeah.

I: When you think about your spiritual life, what impact do you think being a pastor's son has had on your spiritual life?

PC: I've really grown up with it through my whole life and ----- talking you have all these believers and stuff, but I don't know.

I: When you think about the times that you have moved, what effect did that have on you?

PC: Well, I don't know ---- you have to get to know your kids and your teachers all over again. I don't really have any memory of that too much.

I: How old were you when you moved here?

PC: About 10 or 11, I think, when dad finally got a Call and then you have to make new friends.

I: So you were able to handle it real well?

PC: Yeah.

I: You know that's part of reality of living in a pastor's family is that possibility of moving. Is that something you think about?

PC: No, I never think about it.

I: When you think of your father and how your father is, do you see him as well that's my dad or that's my pastor?

PC: I view him as that's my dad. I never really see him as my pastor, just as my dad.

I: So when he's up there preaching that's your dad?

PC: Yeah.

I: What about your family, when you think of your family do you see your family as we're a pastor's family or we're a Christian family or----?

PC: I think of it as my family, never thought about it much.

I: Well, overall do you see your experience of being a pastor's son as being a positive one, a negative one or somewhere in between?

PC: I don't know, I suppose somewhere in between.

I: Why do you say that?

PC: It's good sometimes but kind of bad in some. My dad expects me to be perfect most of the time but you can't really be perfect you know.

I: Does he like tell you that or come across with it?

PC: I just feel it sometimes.

I: Do you ever feel like you have to prove something to other people?

PC: No, not really.

I: Do you feel you would like to be like other kids?

PC: Yes, I'd like to do things like other kids.

I: Based on your experiences in your life, what do you think can be done by your parents to make being a pastor's child a positive experience for you?

PC: -----

I: How-----?

PC: I don't know, I think it's pretty good around here. They don't really work me hard or treat me bad or treat me too good. They aren't really too overbearing like some people. They do treat me really good.

I: Anything you'd like to have done differently?

PC: Maybe a little bit more freedom.

I: Kind of feel a little restricted?

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you think that's because you are a pastor's son or because you are the son or would it be that way if he was not a pastor?

PC: I think it's maybe because I am a pastor's son.

I: Well, let's say that you are in a position to talk to like other pastors' children, what are some things you'd especially like them to know about being a pastor's son, important things you'd like them to know and how to handle it?

PC: I really don't know. That's a hard one. Maybe tell them that they're just like other kids, not----- and things like that. I don't know. That's about it I guess.

I: Just appreciate who you are.

PC: Yeah.

I: Are there any interesting stories or experiences that you would like to share?

PC: Not that I can remember,

I: Well, I appreciate your honesty. Do you ever feel like when you are in Confirmation class, do you ever feel like your dad had different expectations of you than the other ones?

PC: I don't know. I kept getting into trouble a little bit more, it's just always like that, getting into trouble a little bit more than the other kids.

I: Is that just because that's the way you are or -----?

PC: I don't know, a little bit is me and a little bit of him being my dad, I don't know.

I: Well that's interesting.

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, I appreciate your time, you've been very helpful. Oh yes, I have one more thing. I'm thinking about eventually putting together a retreat and inviting teenage pastors' children to come. What might you think of something like that? What kind of topics or what kind of stuff would be good to talk about?

PC: I'm not sure, like other Bible camps, they just keep pushing the Bible on us, that you constantly, and like it's a little bit tiring after awhile, have some fun stuff but yet some Bible studies but not too much that you're pressuring the kids.

I: A good balance?

PC: Yeah.

I: That will do it. Thanks again.

INTERVIEW #16

Female, 14, entire life as a pastor's daughter, lived in both a church-owned home and parent-owned home, two moves

I: One thing I'm exploring in this project is looking at some of the pressures that pastors' children may feel by virtue of being a pastor's child. Those could be pressures that come from friends or peers or from the congregation or anything. So I'd like you to share with me if you felt any pressures at all.

PC: Pressures, well, I guess now I don't feel as much pressure. But when I was younger I always thought it was kind of weird to have to tell people my dad was a pastor. I always felt that it was weird because everyone else was, especially like if you didn't go to church or something, "Oh, well, your dad's a pastor." But I guess pressures now would be having been put in charge of a lot of the youth programs here because I'm always so involved with the church anyway and so that can kind of be a pressure.

I: Sure, so whether or not you sometimes feel like it there is still this expectation of you?

PC: Yeah.

I: Anything else, are there ever instances when people have said, "Well you can't do that because you're a pastor's child" or anything like that?

PC: No, I don't remember anyone saying because of being a pastor's child. I think it all depends on the friends that you have and all my friends are really, kind of like -----. I don't know just to be nice and don't ---

I: Okay, sounds pretty neat. Along the same lines, do you think you're treated differently by, first of all, your friends?

PC: Possibly yes, it's probably because I'm more of a goody good, you know.

I: That's an interesting question, do you have any experience at all that maybe the congregation kind of treats you a little different than they might others?

PC: Yeah, I guess that I know a lot of people in the congregation and I know especially a lot of the older people and I really like talking to them and stuff but hopefully I'm giving them the impression that all of the kids our age aren't like rude and disrespectful and everything. So that might be some of their thoughts of the other kids.

I: Another question in that regards, do you think your parents treat you differently because you're a pastor's child as compared to just another nonpastor's child?

PC: I think they treat me about the same because they're my parents so anyway I think I'd be treated the same if I was in a pastor's family or not. I think that they've expected me to be like more showing my faith, more, I don't know, more kind to everybody.

I: Just simply your impressions, there aren't any right or wrong answers.

PC: Okay.

I: It's just simply your experiences and so forth. Now I'm going to turn the tables a little bit here and ask you what you see to be the positive, the benefits of being a pastor's child?

PC: I think the benefits truly are that there's lots of kids my age who don't really have a faith and they don't like really know who God is. I guess because I've always been interested in the Word and everything that I know what I believe and even the people who went like to Confirmation and stuff, aren't going to church anymore, just every now and then. I feel like I have a stronger faith because I grew up in a pastor's family, that's definitely good.

I: That's definitely a good positive benefit to have. Any others that come to mind?

PC: I think teachers trust you more if they know that you're a pastor's kid, if that makes any sense at all.

I: Well sure, it's something that apparently you have sensed, a little more trustworthiness in you. This is very related to what I just asked because you answered in terms of the benefit being a stronger faith. The one thing I've been asking people is what effect they believe being a pastor's child has had on their spiritual life, faith and life?

PC: Yeah, well another thing that has really helped my spiritual life, I think, is seeing the churches and stuff with my friends, that really, I don't know, I've really liked doing that.

I: So your life, when you look at your life, this one you may have touched on already, but what impact has being a pastor's child had on your involvement in church?

PC: Yeah, it's had a lot not so much, well, right now. More with like the high school youth and stuff and I'm in charge of like carnivals and like "Are you going to be there at this meeting, it's going to be fun." And I know like when I was younger I would have a lot of stuff to do with like the Christmas programs and like helping out with the kids.

I: Would you say you tend to be more involved than some others?

PC: Oh, definitely more involved. I know there are lots of regulars but it seems like being a pastor's kid I like come every Sunday and so I know what's going on and so I get more involved.

I: By in large, are you pretty comfortable with that involvement or sometimes it feels like . . . ?

PC: Most of the times it's okay and . . .

I: Most of the times it all right?

PC: Yeah.

I: How do you handle the times if maybe it's a little more pressure than you appreciate, how do you handle that pressure?

PC: I'll find my mom and say, "Mom, I really don't want to have to be in charge of this right now," or "Maybe you should try to find someone else."

I: So you're pretty open with . . . ?

PC: Yeah.

I: You said you moved a couple of times and you do remember those moves. What effect did those moves have on you?

PC: Well, moving, it was always kind of scary. First off because you didn't know anybody who was in the church and then having to make new friends. I'm lucky I've been here for so long because I have some really super great friends right now. And moving, I always thought it was kind of weird because, "Oh, you're getting a Call, but I don't think you're being called over there." And I guess I was lucky because when I came here I went to _____ Lutheran School during my first years here instead of like public and that was good because it was small classes. I was able to meet more people and it was in a Christian environment so that way I was able to slowly get into the bigger community.

I: So the parochial school, Lutheran school, has been a very positive thing for you?

PC: Yeah, that helped a great deal.

I: And also, just being a pastor's child one lives with the possibility that one's father might get a Call and move somewhere. Do you think about that very much?

PC: Well, sometimes I do actually. But my mom always says, "What if we go to Africa and become missionaries?" I think right now I think about it a lot more since I'm in high school and I really, right now, I have to be signing up my classes for next year and all that stuff. So thinking if I would have to move it would ruin a lot of stuff right now, if we leave.

I: Is it really something you worry about?

PC: Right now I'm not really too worried about it.

I: More or less just like a realization that it could happen, but you don't sit around and hope that doesn't happen.

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, when you think of your father, do you see him as this is my dad or this is my pastor, how do you view him?

PC: Well, this is kind of funny because sometimes we'll be eating supper or lunch and then all of a sudden he'll think of story and he'll like talk as if he's like preaching. And all of a sudden I'll just think, "Oh my, he's a pastor right now." And then sometimes like in church he'll tell this story or he'll be saying something and I'm like, "Oh, that's my dad." So I think kind of both, I see him as both.

I: Anything more you'd like to say about how you view your dad?

PC: I guess I really love my dad. He's a good guy and I guess it's really nice. I have lots of friends whose parents are divorced and everything. It's nice to have a strong dad who like knows what he believes and like he's always there.

I: Do you see then that he puts his faith into practice while at home and you see that and you appreciate that?

PC: Yeah.

I: Okay. If you were ever in a situation when, I'm not suggesting you would be, but if you were ever in a situation where there was something you really needed to talk about but you just didn't feel like talking to your parents, and given the fact that your dad is also your pastor, who would you go to talk to, you know lots of children have a pastor they can go to, who would you go to?

PC: Well, I'm pretty open with my parents. If it was something terribly tremendous like I couldn't tell my parents, I think I would talk to a teacher, a counselor at school, somebody.

I: So basically you feel you could talk to your parents?

PC: Yeah, I guess I think of my dad more as my dad than my pastor.

I: Why's that?

PC: Because I know him like outside of the church. If I would only see him every day and on Sunday preaching then I would think, "Oh, he's a pastor," but since I like know him, he's my dad.

I: Okay, all right, great. Now when you think of your family, collectively now as your family, do you see your family as a pastor's family or we're a Christian family or how would you kind of characterize your family?

PC: I would say we're a Christian family. When I think of a pastor's family I think of a perfect nice little family but that isn't our family, because we have little arguments and my brother can be kind of rebellious right now since he's a bit older and stuff so I would say a Christian family.

I: So that's like your predominant characteristic then, that you're a Christian family?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, overall, do you see your experience of being a pastor's child to be a positive experience or a negative experience or?

PC: I think it's just an experience, I don't think it's negative or positive. I mean it's positive in lots of aspects growing up with like a stronger faith and getting to know more people in the congregation. But, well, maybe it is more of a positive experience, because I can't really think of too many negative things. I guess I've never really thought of having a negative life here because of the fact I'm in a pastor's family but . . .

I: That's good though, as I see it, because when you think about your life, what I'm hearing from you is that it's primarily a good experience. That's the way it is. Is there anything you'd change or want to see different?

PC: No, I don't think so, I'm pretty happy right now.

I: Well, that's neat. I'm not out to change that.

PC: Okay.

I: I'm really happy to hear that. Now you've lived in a situation where your parents have owned their own home and you've also lived in a church-

owned home. Now based on how well you remember those years, especially your earlier ones, living in a parsonage, was there any difference between the two, living in a parsonage, church-owned home, as compared to your parents' own home?

PC: Well, the parsonage, it was like close to the church and so we'd always have more people from the church stopping by and saying "Hi" all the time. And like you couldn't have too many holes in the walls for pictures and stuff like that. You always had to keep the carpet nice. I never really see that much of a difference, it's still home to me.

I: There weren't too many interruptions in a church-owned home and the congregation seemed to respect [your privacy]?

PC: Yeah.

I: In your experience, in your opinion, what can be done by parents in a clergy family to make living in a clergy family a real good experience?

PC: Just love your kids and get them strong in their faith so that you don't feel awkward having to tell these people that they are like a pastor's child. But then I don't know, help them grow up to be comfortable with living in such a Christian environment.

I: Any suggestions for parents how they could do that?

PC: I like devotions, I guess it's a thing about me. I think it really has to do with your friends that you have.

I: How about the congregation, what can the congregation do, if anything, to help?

PC: Well, they can expect [that] pastors' kids aren't going to be perfect and they can know that we make mistakes and that we don't always want to have to do everything in the church, too.

I: Sounds like what you're saying is, let them be who they are?

PC: Yeah.

I: This is your opportunity to pretend like you're standing up in front of other pastors' children and you're going to tell them what you believe to be the most important thing they need to know about being a pastor's child.

PC: Well, if it's with a bunch of people who already are pastors' children it's probably different depending on each person, what they think. But the most important thing to me is that I have a strong faith, I think, that's really neat.

I: How does that help you?

PC: It helps me, I feel like I'm a better person and I feel more comfortable with my life. I don't have many problems.

I: Any interesting stories about being a pastor's [daughter that] you would like to share? It could be a humorous one or any others.

PC: Oh, this is kind of a funny one. When we were in _____, we had like that parsonage right by the church. And one morning my brother _____ was just being potty trained and this is, there was like people walking by, like right in front of our church. And _____ was outside and he was peeing like right in the front yard and there was like people walking by going to church.

And like this one guy, he was like an older guy, he said, "What are you doing," and ____ said, "Well, my dad does this all the time." So, I thought that was funny.

I: Famous things kids say, great. One thing that I'm thinking of maybe doing in the future is to put together a retreat for pastors' children to kind of bring together people of similar backgrounds, experiences and maybe give them an opportunity to share with one another and maybe for some that don't have a real positive experience to help them out. And I'm just trying to get people's impressions, first of all, as to the usefulness of such a thing and second, is what sorts of things they could see a retreat like that covering, topics, whatever?

PC: I think that would be a very interesting thing to do. I think topics could be like peer pressure and like growing as a pastor's kid, I mean, I've seen some people get teased for it and I think that would be an issue to go over.

I: Well I appreciate you taking your time to talk to me. You've been very helpful and I'm very happy to hear you're having a real good experience in your life.

INTERVIEW #17

Female, 17, seven years as a pastor's daughter, lived in a church-owned home, two moves

I: The first question I'd like to ask you is if you have sensed any pressures from being a pastor's child, it could be outside pressure like friends, peers, whatever, it could just be inside pressures, placed on yourself or anything, just any pressures you may have experienced?

PC: Oh, I get pressures from the church people because, well, you're a church leader and stuff, they always expect way more out of me and my brothers than they do out of any of the other kids there.

I: So you think that's -----?

PC: Yeah, and the other people don't just feel like any pressures at all. I don't know, from the kids at school I usually don't but most of them don't know I'm a pastor's kid, but my close friends do so they don't usually because they have known me for awhile. At first it was kind of, you know, a pastor's kid, you know, you're either really good or really bad, and so once you get to them they're like regular people.

I: You made the comment, did someone tell you or did you hear like "really good" or "really bad"?

PC: Yeah, lots of people told me that, well, usually pastors' kids are either angels or they're like totally rebellious.

I: Is that right, you say people told you that, what kind of people, like kids your age or what?

PC: Yeah, kids in high school.

I: Have you felt pressured like you fit that mold one way or the other?

PC: No, not really, I just kind of acted like, you know, I'm a person like everyone else, so why should I.

I: Coming from basically a very small town where you were at to a much larger area, much larger congregation, were there differences between the two, in terms of how people related to you?

PC: At school?

I: Yeah.

PC: Yeah, it was because, I don't know, our town was like 1200 people. When we moved that's how many people go to our school, and there are so many people, you know, it was really hard to go because, I don't know, nobody would talk to you and you were on your own.

I: They weren't as open or friendly?

PC: Yeah, they just kind of already had their own friends and, you know, their own groups and it was really hard the first three months because we moved at the end of the year when summer was over. It was really hard to adjust to bigger classes in a bigger school, in a bigger town.

I: Regarding these pressures that you have indicated were there, like with the church and stuff like that, how do you handle that?

PC: Oh I usually, I don't know, I usually do at the exact moment, it's like for every -----, people will ask me to head up a committee. I was Vice President of our youth group and, I don't know, it's always me and brother always have to do everything, the work. It was just expected of me because you know my dad's right down the hall from his office or something, I don't know.

I: And he just gives in to that?

PC: Yeah, well I do a lot of work at the church. I'm a Sunday School teacher and youth group and so, every time you ask me to do something I usually do it, just because, I don't know, I feel like it kind of is what I should do.

I: Makes sense, it's not always work.

PC: I mean I do a lot at the church and I love doing work at the church, it's just sometimes, you know, between my sports and school and, you know, friends and everything else, the time is a little limited.

I: Has it ever got to the point where you really started to get overworked, where you felt like you were overloaded?

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you feel you would talk to someone about that?

PC: Yeah, I suppose you would.

I: Well, at any rate, you just kind of feel like it's expected of you?

PC: Yeah.

I: To do those things?

PC: Not by my parents, though, but just by certain people at the church.

I: Another wavelength here, what are some benefits or some positive things that come from being a pastor's child?

PC: It's a different environment. I mean if you grow up at the church you have Christianity in your home and stuff like that. I mean people respect you kind of, if they know you're a pastor's kid, they act differently around you but they respect you if you're like, you know, they can't be themselves, they argue with each other.

I: You sense that too when people around you act differently?

PC: Yeah, well some of them don't swear, they can't talk, business people are cool, you know, they can't talk about, you know, the party that they went to last night or, you know what I mean, just playing around, it's kind of quiet and [they] shut up about it.

I: Does that really kind of bother you?

PC: Yeah, but people get over it. But you know, I can almost see why, once they get use to it they start to open up, you know.

I: Once they get to know you then?

PC: [There's] me as a friend and then there's me as a pastor's kid.

I: It sounds like that happens.

PC: Yeah.

I: Kind of a pain until it gets to that point, but any other benefits being a pastor's child?

PC: You get punch on Sunday, nothing else right now. There are all kinds of things though, I can't explain any right now.

I: Fine, if they come to you as we go along just feel free to share them. Do you think you're treated, I think we might have covered this a little bit already, but I'm just going to ask you again, do you believe that you are treated differently by your parents because you're a pastor's child?

PC: Definitely not, we're a normal family actually, just, you know, when we get to the church and dad's in the pulpit.

I: How about, and we touched on this already, with your peers. Sounds like they initially will treat you differently but as they get to know you then they treat you pretty normal. Is that a good way of summarizing that?

PC: Yeah.

I: Regarding the congregation, what I'm hearing you say, is that at least the youth director treats you differently. Anything else at church? Do people treat you differently because you're the pastor's child?

PC: I don't know, some of the youth still, I guess, they use to----- for a year but when we first got there they had this big party and, you know, welcomed us into the church and stuff.

I: And how many other kids got a big party when they came?

PC: I know, that's why we kind of felt, I don't know, out of place because when other new kids [come into] our youth group you don't do anything. You know, we welcome them in but we don't have a big get together and in some ways I guess we get treated differently and special.

I: So at the very least there's going to be some special recognition of who you are, everyone knows who you are. Well, what impact does being a pastor's child, would you say, had upon your spiritual life?

PC: I think it's impacted a lot because, you know, I go to worship every Sunday and I teach Sunday School, I taught for 2 years, I'm involved a lot at the church and also even at home and stuff my dad's always very supportive about, you know, and if I have a problem or whatever I can always talk to him and, you know, we'll pray together or something like that so it's been really good.

I: And also your involvement in church, it sounds like being a pastor's child has had a big impact upon your involvement in church?

PC: Yeah.

I: I think you covered that topic up to this point. Now I'm going to ask you about your moving. It sounds like you're kind of use to that. I don't know if you're use to it or not but you've done a lot of it in your life. Just the effect that moving has had on you?

PC: Well, it was really hard because we lived in _____ for six years and, I don't know, that's kind of how I felt. I grew up with these people kind of

and, you know, moving in the middle of your junior year can really affect your life. It was really hard, you know. I, to tell you the truth, I went into like a depression almost because I missed my friends I could talk to. Here it was like, you know, people wouldn't talk to me. They would talk to the pastor's kid or whoever they thought that I was or the new girl at school, but nobody knew me or how to talk to me and so, I don't know, it was really hard.

I: Difficult transfer.

PC: Yeah, definitely.

I: Well, being a pastor's child means a person lives with the possibility that your father will get a Call and go through that whole process and then have to move. That's something you think about very much, does it really kind of bother you, or what?

PC: Not right now because I graduated.

I: That does make a difference, doesn't it?

PC: Yeah.

I: It might make it a little more difference if you were a couple of years younger.

PC: If my father moved then I would have stayed here until my brother and I graduated. But my little brother, he's only 13, and, I don't know, the move was hard on him, too. I'm being silly on moving. I didn't think it would be as hard on him. I didn't make friends very easily so it was just, you know, you don't open up very well.

I: A tough time anyway, when people are trying to come to terms with their identity of who they are. When you think of your dad and who he is, do you think of him as that's my dad or that's my pastor, just how do you view him?

PC: If we're in church he's my pastor but he's my dad too. I'll give him a hug on the way out of church and then if I shake his hand I'll give him a hug, you know, things like that. You know when he's at home he's my dad, he's a normal dad. He's not, you know, he doesn't come down on us at home like, you know, really really strict. When we're at home he's my dad, but on Sunday mornings he's a pastor.

I: So when you see him preaching that's your pastor preaching to you or that's your dad preaching to you?

PC: My pastor because I don't like take it like he's speaking directly at me, like, you know, a father would. But I see him as my pastor at church, a pastor that I'm very close to.

I: There you go, a pastor you can hug on your way out of church.

PC: Yeah.

I: If there was ever something that you needed to talk to a pastor about, and you didn't feel like you could talk to your parents, who would you go to?

PC: I don't know. I've thought about that before and it's kind of a confusing question because you know how can you go to your father and tell

him confidential things about your personal life that you wouldn't tell your father but that you would tell your pastor.

I: Do you have a relationship with any other pastor who you could go to?

PC: Well, yeah, I could talk to pastors but probably wouldn't though if I had to talk to them.

I: It's something important to think about, you know, what support you do have and who would you go to if you needed to. Now when you think of your family, and we're going to kind of broaden out a little bit, the family collectively here, when you think of your family do you see your family as we're the pastor's family or we're a Christian family, how would you characterize your family?

PC: Probably more like the pastor's family because, I don't know, it's because the other people think that too, you know. They'll bring us food or bring us potatoes or something and they assume pastor's family.

I: Yeah, they have this kind of special identity as a pastor's family. See yourselves as the pastor's family, is that how you see your family? What does that mean in terms of how much you can be yourselves, how you feel you can be yourselves?

PC: Just be ourselves at church and things, you know, I don't know, it's kind of like, you know, in church, you know, you sit there, you're the pastor's family, you're suppose to be good and responsible, you know, no laughing, no smiling, no pinching. I know the first week we got here, the people watched at church, I mean just stared and they stare and watch how we behaved and how we acted, you know, like we were so scared we were like, people watching us.

I: Wondering what's going on. So how do you handle that when people do that?

PC: Try and act like a good child.

I: Do you ever feel like you have to prove that you're not?

PC: That I'm not a good child?

I: Do what other people do?

PC: I use to, I don't as much anymore. And when I was younger, when I was like a freshman or sophomore in school, I used to try all the things that everyone else was doing.

I: Not to feel left out?

PC: Yeah, to make people think that, you know, I was normal too, I wasn't some goody two shoes from the church, you know, because that's harder when you have school and nobody will talk to you because they think you're too good for them and stuff like that.

I: We all react to it in various ways.

PC: I don't know, it was kind of one of those things that I felt I had to fit in.

I: Overall, do you see your experiences at being a pastor's child as being a positive one or a negative one?

PC: Positive.

I: Probably it has its ups and downs but by in large a good experience?

PC: Yup.

I: That's good to hear. Do you sense any difference, when you were like 9-10 years old and you became a pastor's child, you had quite a life before becoming a pastor's child, do you see any differences between not being a pastor's child and being a pastor's child? Do you remember any differences like the way people treated you or just the patience they had, or?

PC: I don't remember things like how people treated me but I remember always going to church on Sunday, always going to Sunday School, you know, getting to do devotions every night, you know, that kind of thing. But I don't remember how people treated me when I was little, if they treated me differently.

I: That is going back a ways. Or just a difference between living in a parsonage and not living in a parsonage, do you remember that? In your opinion what can be done by parents, by clergy parents, what can be done by clergy parents to make being a pastor's child a real positive experience? What can they do to make a difference?

PC: Well, they can treat their kids like normal kids, you know, they don't have to treat them like you have to be good because you know, I'm the pastor here, you're the pastor's child so you have to be good a little more. Just treat their kids normal like, you know, other kids do, let them fit in with the other kids sometimes.

I: And, from what I hear you saying, that is what your folks have done.

PC: Yeah.

I: I'm just kind of curious, what was it like for you being in Confirmation class having your dad as a teacher?

PC: Kind of weird because I knew all of the answers, I did.

I: Did you tend to share them or did you tend like to not share them?

PC: Well, it depended. Sometimes I'd keep my mouth shut because I felt like I ----- and then every once in awhile he'd tell me, "Please let other people answer them." But it wasn't bad because he's always been, you know, my teacher.

I: How about in terms of the congregation? What can it do to help make being a pastor's child a good experience?

PC: Don't stereotype the pastor's kids like how you think they should be. Just kind of accept them as for what they are and there's nothing you can do to change them. It's like saying, you know, please don't be like some of the guys, you know, watch out for him. It's the same thing, just the opposite.

I: Anything else?

PC: I'd say don't treat them any more special than any other kid, you know, because I think we get special treatment at the church, but people invite us over to dinner all the time. Just treat them like you'd treat your own kids, don't single them out or treat them differently.

I: And if you were talking to pastors' children, what would be the most important thing you'd want them to know?

PC: Don't always worry about what other people are thinking. You have to, you know, live your own life and live how you believe, don't always follow the other. You have to be an individual but do what you need to do. I guess that would be my advice because if you don't you're going to get –

I: Any interesting experiences that you had from being a pastor's child, humorous or otherwise?

PC: Not that I can think of right now.

I: One thing I'm considering doing is at some point offering a retreat for pastors' children and bring together teenage children of pastors. And [I'm] asking people a couple of things. The first one is honestly whether or not they see that as being a useful thing and the second thing is what sorts of topics should a retreat like that cover?

PC: I think it would be useful, yeah, because there would be more people that are like you. It wouldn't be just like a church gathering would be. People would have the same outlook and, what could we do there?

I: Yeah, what sorts of topics or whatever would be useful to discuss?

PC: I don't know, conformity, non-conformity.

I: Well, unless you have something you'd like to add that's basically all I have.

PC: Not that I can think of. It's been good being a pastor's kid though. I'm not concerned.

I: It's interesting to look at the lifestyle. Thank you for your help.

INTERVIEW #18

Male, 39, single, eighteen years living in a clergy family, always lived in a church-owned home, three moves

I: Well, the first question I want to ask you is simply what pressures do you remember experiencing being a pastor's child? It could be pressures from the outside, like from peers or what have you, it could be pressures that you just yourself felt, what pressures do you recall?

PC: Well, I remember, you know, a number of times Mom especially was in charge of our behavior but it would be either a warning or a reminder for some function, "Now, you like it or not you represent your father, people are going to be watching you and are going to be judging your father by what you do, so behave yourselves, be nice, be polite, don't be rowdy," you know, all that. You know it wasn't the harping thing every day but every now and then there might be a special occasion or there might be, might have something to do with a church function. Or just a reminder that kids in high school, they'd be talking about some of these wild goings on that some of our classmates or other people were doing or had been caught doing. She might feel the need to reinforce the values, realize people are watching them. And then from time to time in a couple of different places people had mentioned, we would get complements on our behavior, not just me but my brothers and sisters. Little old ladies of the church would come up and say, Oh, you're such nice children," you know. And some of the adults would bring up, you know, about how some pastors' kids they recall had been hellions or the wildest kids in the countryside. And they seemed to have the idea you were either going to be the complete opposite, determined to be the wildest kid around or you were the virtual saint who was going to follow your father's footsteps and go into the ministry or something like that.

I: Like they expected one or the other.

PC: Yes, nothing in between. You weren't going to be a nice kid that wasn't going to be a preacher or you weren't going to be a wild kid that was, you were an average kid. You were one or the other. And from time to time you'd get back and those were the things, you know, growing up. Like I said it wasn't a constant daily harping scene from that aspect. Those things kind of stick up in your memory. I remember when my father retired from _____ and left and one of the congregational members told him and my mother, I wasn't there at the time, they told me later on what they said, you know, "We never had to be embarrassed by your children." As if this was something that they were, you know, somewhere in their minds, this was something that they were waiting or holding out or glad it didn't happen, you know, but were worried that it could happen and I say you've had experience with that before.

I: And you sense that that concern of theirs definitely did come out while you were there?

PC: Possibly, I don't recall, you know, no member of a congregation ever came up to me and warned me about my behavior or, so we were basically pretty good kids. We didn't go to beer busts like a lot of our friends did go to. Other pressures. I remember the first time I went to parochial school. I went to a grade school, a public school, kindergarten to second grade, and I was one of the kids. I had my best friends. Two or three of us played together and got along with everyone and just had little spats here and there, but everyone did. Nothing was said or mentioned about what my dad did. I mean it came out. We had times when we talked about what our daddy did for a living, where we lived, whatever, no one made anything of it. When we moved from _____, the town we were living in, we were told we were going to another town where we'd be able to go to a parochial school. I'd never heard of a parochial school and Mom explained, "Well, it's a school that is run by the church and you'll have religious classes and it will be so much nicer because there will be Christian children and upbringing there." And I didn't really know how much was going to change in my life in that respect, but she seemed to be selling us on the fact that it was going to make everything better. And we moved to _____. They had a small parochial school there and small classes. I went to a class where I was one of about twenty some kids in my class to a class where I was one of like eight or nine kids, possibly ten, and everything changed for the worse. We had kids there that because we were the pastor's kids would grab my brother and me and line us up against a wall and throw their balls at us at recess or take turns trying to beat us up because we were the pastor's kids.

I: They made it very clear.

PC: Oh, yes. And if we tried to fight back it would be, you're sinning, and you're the pastor's kids and they'd laugh at us and they kicked sand in our face and the teacher stood and watched and did nothing. And I'd tell my mother and father and Mom couldn't believe this was happening and her idea of how to deal with it was just to ignore them. I said, "If I ignore them they get me from behind," and she couldn't believe that. And Dad's idea was, Dad just seemed to be a little above it all, he was like, "Well, they beat up Jesus too, they spat on Jesus," and my dad was the kind you did not to his face come out and tell him the flaw. His logic was, "Well, they killed Jesus too, would that be okay to you?" He kind of couldn't believe this either. We'd never run across this anywhere else, they'd never heard of this before. Well, we kind of, you know, we were there for like twenty-one years roughly and we moved from there to another congregation that also had a parochial school, things were much better there. While we were there it was sort of an on again, off again thing. Kids would lose interest in you and be the buddy if there was something they could get from you free. Then there was always a ringleader, somebody decided that for some reason there was someone to pick

on that they had to pull some stunt and you're the pastor's kid, your the one who is marked. So we went through that rough initiation period and then it was kind of okay. Things died down a bit but then every now and then they flared up and it was just an ugly situation for kids. But at the time they tried to put the pressure us, "You have to be a saint because you're the pastor's kids and you've got to take everything we dish out." And what I got in feedback from my parents was, "They're pretty much right, we don't want you fighting, we don't want you retaliating, we don't want any of that stuff." And I really did not appreciate that at all. That was kind of a pressure that I just really couldn't stand. I guess that went away. There are all kinds of pressures in just growing, some of them it's kind of tough to sort out, what's a growing pain, like what's a pain that's specific to being a PK. Some of this doubtlessly got mixed together in all this. It's not always easy being a third or fourth grader or a kid of any age. There are all kinds of pressures of some kind or other and sometimes people put a label on them or try to put a twist on it like, "Well, you're from a religious family because of that," and that really didn't have anything to do with it but . . .

I: Sounds like there were those things that were clearly identified that you felt because you were a pastor's kid.

PC: Oh, yeah.

I: But if you weren't a pastor's child you wouldn't have experienced that?

PC: Oh, yeah. I feel at the time there was an excuse for them to pick out somebody. There just seemed to be some of those kids who have to be bullies and maybe they'd have done the same thing if my dad was a pharmacist. But just because we were the new kids, but they did put the label, "the pastor's kids." It was a parochial school and, as far as I was concerned, that was it because my dad was the pastor we were in trouble and that was that. And then, of course, later on, during my high school years went back to public school again, never heard a word about my dad being a pastor. And my general idea was that when you were in public school it didn't matter. Everyone's dad did something different and because you were in that school the family's background didn't have anything specific to do with it. A pastor's kid in a parochial school meant that your dad was associated here. I don't know, those are the main things I can think about. Like I said when I was in high school, the kind of subtle warnings from Mom about behaving yourself and the occasional comments from the little old ladies or the members of the congregation on how they were so pleased that we weren't an embarrassment to them. Well, we really didn't plan to be or plan to really avoid that but it just turned out that way, "we're glad you agree and it meets with your approval."

I: Now how did you react to or handle those pressures?

PC: Well, these are the subtle ones. On the one hand, it was sort of like after the fact, well, you know, "Good job, I'm glad you're here, you were a credit to the congregation," and, you know, "Good luck and thank you." I was

like, "Well, glad you enjoyed it, my pleasure." The ones from Mom, she would warn us, it was like, well, you know, it's kind of a general enough warning, "Don't get into trouble." She'd tack on that thing, "People are looking at you and judging your father by that," but Dad was like, "Well, I don't have any intention of getting into trouble, I don't run with that crowd, you know, I'm not really tempted to do that sort of stuff."

I: You didn't feel like you had to prove yourself?

PC: No, I didn't feel I had to go an extra mile because, you know, I pretty much kept pretty close to home. I had my fun but my fun was kind of mild. Early on in the parochial school, boy, I didn't know what to do then. Tried to fight back and the thing is, at the time, I was pretty good, I was fast enough and strong enough that I could handle every one of them. But they'd come at you three and four at a time and so fighting back, you couldn't run away. And the teacher was no help. The teacher was the trainee that was out for a year. And my folks [talked] to her. She was like she had never heard of this, didn't even talk about it in her training and she was kind of afraid of what to do and we were just a bunch of fourth graders. I liked her generally but I felt that she was kind of copping out on the things and she wasn't taking charge.

I: She didn't have you, she probably didn't get much support.

PC: I didn't feel I did. My brother and I, we kind of, we were separated at, we had two grades in a classroom and so for awhile, one year we'd be together and I would be graduated to the next class and, you know, so we couldn't always support each other. And like later on it got better. And especially I think in his grade, I don't recall, but at the time it was just a matter of, you know, toughing it out and, you know, fighting back when you could and putting up with it. And when you couldn't you'd at the same time be trying to make your folks understand just how you felt and what was going on. And I would try some of their advice, but it's that Mom didn't have a clue of what was going on and I soon learned that any kind of advice she had for how to deal with this just was not going to work. It was based on ignore it or, you know, quote a Bible passage to them which would just make them laugh and hit you again. That was not the way to go there because they thought you were preaching at them and were trying to be better than them. Then they'd prove, make you know in a hurry what they felt about that. As a fourth grader, I didn't have the kind of courage to just constantly put up. I just got out of there when I could and . . .

I: Tried to remove yourself from being in situations where you . . .

PC: Well, you know, yeah, for awhile. But they, it's kind of tough, you know, I can't even recall everything that happened, but at first it was pretty intense. Later on, for some reason, it kind of slacked off. I got a little respect because I was pretty good in sports. In the classroom I got a little respect because I was a good student and I could help people occasionally. It slacked off but I always knew it was there. I knew what they had done. I knew how I felt. And even when we're kind of getting along after awhile, if I said

something that I didn't go along where they wanted to, it kind of flared back up and "That's because you're the pastor's kid, you know you're not one of us." I didn't mind being excluded but it extended to retribution just for not being on our side and going along, you know. And so I just learned to kind of distance myself as much as possible and to make sure there were enough witnesses if there was something else I had-----

I: And that lasted?

PC: Roughly twenty-one years. Then we were on to the next congregation, again a parochial school, again small classrooms but there they were. I don't know if it was because they were a little older and growing out of that or if they just weren't a group to do that, didn't have the right people in there to try.

I: Most of them, just at least the two that you were familiar with, most of them in that school.

PC: It might have been that school or just a couple of individuals because there seemed to always be a couple of leaders and the rest just followed along. And the leaders were the stronger, more powerful, more obnoxious characters. They kind of bowled their way and made the others kind of, you know, kind of dance to their tune, you know. They would make up the rules, choose the sides and all that sort of stuff and then everyone else kind of fell into step or something like that. Then at the other school it just wasn't like that and I just didn't know, I was kind of . . . There we had another problem. There we had a teacher that was starting to go senile, an elderly lady who had been a teacher for many many years but they finally had to remove her while I was there. She would have trouble. She'd give you an assignment one day and the next day she would demand you turn in results of a different assignment. And everyone in the classroom said, "[You] didn't tell us to do that," and she would just scream at us, "Yes I did, you're just being mean and you're doing this deliberately and you're trying to make me think I'm crazy." And she would slap kids if they told her and it finally got to the point where enough of us were telling all our folks the same thing. And they finally, I guess, they had to have a special meeting or Board meeting or something to discuss it. And they finally told her that, they thanked her for her years of service but she was not longer required there, but it was kind of tense. We were all in the same boat so you didn't have to be careful then.

I: You had quite the experiences with parochial school.

PC: Oh, well, yeah. That was just the one year in _____ because we moved around Thanksgiving time that one year and there toward the end of the year we had to put up with her.

I: It sounds like the second school was more positive than the first.

PC: Yeah, the second school was pretty good. It was a nice experience there. Dad probably had more trouble in the second one because of an associate pastor there, and he had to be serving along side a pastor that had been there 30-35 years, a large congregation. And he, Dad, after a year was

suppose to be elevated to an associate pastor or an equal partner and that sort of thing. And well, the congregation, it was one of these things, there was a lot of inner political wrangling there and this pastor had been there as I said for so long that he kind of had gotten molded into the scene. And so when the right people said the right things he did what they wanted and he knew what they wanted. And Dad started standing up to them saying, "Now you can't do that, that is not what we're suppose to be doing," and "That's not what a pastor does," and they pretty much railroaded him out of there after a little over a year. He wasn't going to fit into the congregation where they wanted him to. He wasn't going to be there and at the time I didn't know what was going on. It wasn't until years later that, I was still a sixth grader, so my folks didn't really discuss this with us. Later on they kind of let us know what was going on. I always wondered why [when this was] supposed to be such a good opportunity for dad and we there just a little over a year and then moved.

I: What did that do to you to find out why?

PC: Well, at the time I remember we moved back or moved to _____, where I grew up, we started at. The first place I remember was _____, it was 25 miles from my maternal grandparents' farm and we were there, you know, just about every Sunday. And it's the first place I had memories of and so that was home. And when we moved it was like a three hour drive from there to the eastern part of _____. We were in the south central area, and you know, I was kind of well, you know, "We're not going to be near grandma's." When we were there we use to make the annual drive all day to _____ to visit my father's relatives, his brothers and my paternal grandparents and we'd stay for a week. That was our once a year vacation and gradually my visits to _____ ----- Then it was like an hour, 1½ hour drive across the border to western _____ and then north to _____ which was 15 miles from my paternal grandparents and my uncles, so we went from one family's area to the others. And at the time, I just figured well Dad accepted that call because that was going back to his home place and he just preferred to live there, which was partially the truth but partially because it was an opportune time for him to get out of what was a bad situation. And later on when I heard that or found out that Dad was, how they treated him, partially it was why he was so eager to get out of there. If it had been a better situation, he might, well, not have gone there because he was taking a pay cut and he was, you know, going down from a large congregation to a dual parish, two very small ones. At the same time, you know, I just figured it was an unfair situation probably but that's something that you take a chance with when you take a job somewhere. Nobody knows how this is going to turn out and I'm sorry it happened but I'm glad he had an out that was fairly acceptable for him at the time. But it was far enough in the past when I found out what really had happened that it was for like well kind of a dirty trick, but what are you going to do.

I: At the time it didn't bother you because you didn't know?

PC: Well, it was just like, "We just moved a year ago and we're going to move again." "Oh, yeah, but we're going up here and you're near your aunts and uncles." "Well," you know, "okay." But I got to start over in school and that and make some new friends, got to learn how to, you know, what it's like and I never enjoyed moving.

I: As long as we're talking about that, let me just ask you what effect did relocating have on you as you think back on that?

PC: Well, the first one I remember from _____ to _____ was a wrench because though I knew I'd grown up, I'd been there my whole life as far as I remember. And as I said my grandparents, I've got an uncle who is my age, he was just like that, he was just a playmate, of course some of my schoolmates, all my friends, it was a real wrench. I really did not want to go and then from _____ to _____, that one was, I didn't feel strongly against that one at all. It was more the inconvenience of moving. I didn't like packing up and going because it was starting over but I didn't mind leaving that situation behind. And from _____ to _____ it was again. My grandfather had just died just a few years prior to that, my maternal grandfather. In fact, he had died, we had gone up to the funeral and my father was going to the Synodical Convention in New Orleans that was happening that summer. And I think they just kind of fell into this plan, well as long as we're here, and they had me, my brothers and sisters stay with my uncles and aunts. And Mom and Dad would go back down, pack, they'd go to the Synodical Convention for a week or two or whatever and then they'd come up and get us and we'd go back. And so when they came up to get us they had this news. I'd been going to VBS, they had a rural parish out there my relatives went to, and I, you know, went to VBS for a week there. And then we came back and they said, "We're moving, we're going to _____." "Well, where's _____?" "Oh, it's that last town before this town." We knew _____ was the town that was just before my grandparents farm and it was the town just before that. That was quite the coincidence that we'd get a call to there but things had happened pretty fast through there. And so at the time it was well, again, the friends I had were pretty good in the situation and I didn't know what was going on with Dad so I was kind of like I didn't know what to make of, or why. But, you know, by then I was going to be in seventh grade. I thought, "Well, if we got to we got to." I think I, for the first couple of years, I think it did last a couple of years, I was, I probably tried to shut off my emotions a lot in school. I didn't want to get too many friends. I didn't want to get close to this. I'd had a couple of moves within four years, and I didn't know how long this was going to last and it kind of upset me to leave friends behind. And I kind of got a reputation, you know, at the time Star Trek was on, I was another Mr. Spock because I just didn't joke around much with people.

I: Just distance yourself a little bit.

PC: I did the work, you know, and I would do my schoolwork. I wasn't unfriendly to people but I just didn't join in a lot of things.

I: Maybe it was safer to do that instead of getting to close?

PC: Yeah, I didn't make a big deal out of it but I just didn't involve myself or try to. I did make some friends, we had some common interests but it was sort of like for awhile there I just, you know, we're friends but I'm not going to hang around too much with you because I just didn't. Somewhere inside, I didn't [think] Dad was going to work out and I'd have to leave again. But as time went on, you know, we share our history with these people and events happen and I opened up more so.

I: Would you say that you were treated differently than other kids whose parents did not have a parent who was a pastor? Do you think you were treated differently by your peers and your friends at school?

PC: Again, not in the public schools. The first parochial school definitely, the second one not nearly as much. But there was also this, of course, everyone knew who my dad was, everyone knew how my dad was associated with the school. And every now and then something would come up at school, "What do you know about that Mark," or "Can you ask your dad," just because I happened to be his son, you know. "Oh yeah, I'll talk to him," and so on. We had religion classes and I think every now and then it's ----- "Why are you asking me, why don't you ask Mark, he ought to know this stuff," you know. And again the same thing kind of happened when I was in public school, but I was going to Confirmation. It was at the time I had been through rigorous or extensive religious training but I was in church every Sunday, I had to learn Bible passages in every Sunday School I had, I was, you know, in the ACT, we had family devotions and I was surrounded by this, from the time I can't even remember. And we had other kids in the class who, you know, they were there for Sunday and Sunday School and pretty much the same way. They did their schoolwork, they did the minimum daily they had to for getting by. So when my dad was running the Confirmation class he would, you know, push ahead our homework and so on. I, of course, had to do this thing very publicly on the kitchen table, half the stuff, and looking up Bible passages and memorize them, we'd have to know the articles, confession and all this stuff and I had to memorize and I would work on it. And Dad would go around the table asking people his questions. Every now and then, if you stumped someone it would be, "Why don't you ask Mark?" Or he'd ask, "Does anyone know," and I'd have my hand up and he would ignore me for awhile. Later on, after awhile he said, "Look, I know you know the stuff but just for the class, I'm not saying never volunteer, I'm not saying never do this but why don't you just hold back and let's see if we can get some of the others to answer." So I wouldn't, after awhile, you know I wouldn't volunteer. He might call on me from time to time when no one would volunteer or he'd try two or three and no one knew the answer. But again, with the others it would be, "Why pick on me, you know Mark knows

this stuff, let's just keep it going, let's get out of here, we got another hour, don't embarrass me anymore than you have to," but that was the extent of it. They didn't give me any grief over it but it was in the classroom, it would be like, "Don't bother me," you know. I'd lay low in school and I'm trying to lay low here but there are only about six or seven people and it's kind of tough. If you want the question answered, Mark knows it, let him answer it, let's keep going here.

I: Were you happy with that?

PC: Like I said they didn't give me any personal grief over it either in class or out of class. By that time, I think, for the most part, either there was a different kind of people or they kind of outgrow it, the real kind of small childish bullying. And I was getting a lot of the same thing in regular classes at school, public school. I was a pretty good student and I did my homework and, not only that, I enjoyed reading encyclopedias and research material. I'd get interested in a subject and I'd read about it and I would volunteer stuff in class. So I was one of the eggheads. So it got around after awhile, "Well, why don't you ask Mark, he always has the answer," or I'd be one of the two or three people you'd expect to know. Or it's probably done on the Board and it would be the same sort of people, you know, never volunteer, never do anything, not even their homework, you know, "Why don't you ask Mark, I'm sure he knows the answer." They did ask me to help them once in a while. I was just an extension of that really by the time I got to Confirmation class so it was no real big deal. I just kept on doing my work, getting my grades and whatever.

I: Do you sense that you were treated differently by your parents than just kids in general because you were a pastor's child? Were you treated differently by them?

PC: In some ways, yeah. I think, well, in especially training. They were just training like I said. Confirmation, make sure I had done my homework, and of course I definitely had to be there on Sundays when I wasn't sick or in Sunday School I had to be there. And religious training obviously they made sure I did get that and got through all those things. Otherwise, for the most part, I don't believe so. Except when I was very young and I remember the first time the first year or two when I got interested in Halloween. And I said, "What's Halloween? All these people are dressing up and going out and getting candy," and "Boy, that looks like fun." And my dad, we didn't do that, we had All Hallows Eve services and I wasn't told. It seemed to me we had church all the time, I was always in church. I remember one time, I think it was the second grade, maybe first grade, we had a very good teacher, Mrs. _____, She was one of the best teachers I ever had and she really took an interest in kids. And she had us sitting around, "What did you do for Halloween last night?" And everyone, "Well, I dressed up as a witch and we went out," "I dressed up as a ghost," "Mark what did you do?" "I went to church." "Oh." And no one else had done that and they were all feeling sorry

for me because I didn't get to go out and get any candy. I remember I started to cry. I didn't know why but I was different, you know. And I remember talking to dad and asking him about that and "I'm not raising any little beggars" and he was very hard against it. Later on he relented, but it was until about seven or eight years later he let us start going out and doing stuff like that.

I: Do you think it would have been different if you would not have been a pastor's son?

PC: I think it would have. I think Dad, where my dad grew up, his family they were religious. They were, you know, pious people and I can see in my uncles and their families, yes, religion is an important part of their lives. But they are much more relaxed about some things than my dad, I think. My dad was in some ways a more intense individual than some of his brothers are. But at the same time, he tells us, [he had] an interest in going into the ministry [because of] his tour of duty in Japan. And I don't know, he's never been real specific on what instances or what happened, but he said over there he suffered godlessness and the pagan rituals and he said it just really went against his grain and he decided there really is a need for pastors, not necessarily missionaries, which are good. But that's where he got the first idea that he should serve the Lord in this way. And it took, he was still in his early 20's, it took him another couple of years at least before he ended up going to the seminary. And I don't know if he was just working out some things on his own. He was from a large family, all of them farmers. I guess he was the best farmer, but he finally made a decision he didn't want to farm and this was the path he should follow. So I think when he bought into it he bought into it whole hog. Let's say he just really was going to follow what he believed was right. Not that other pastors don't but I mean he got a little more intense about how to interpret everything. And like I said, I hadn't been to an All Hallows Eve service in I don't know how many years. But for a lot of the years we never had them and probably just different congregations that didn't have that tradition or something. But because we had a church service we had to be there. But even after the church service we decided that all this dressing up as demons, ghouls and devils, etc, that's a kind of Satanism or reference back to that. So even if the kids don't know what it is, they think it's fun, we are not going to tolerate that and we are going to make sure they know that we're not going to tolerate that and why. So, yeah, he's mellowed out in his old age. Now his grandchildren go out and do that, he thinks its cute for them. But at the time he was a much younger man, much more stringent in making known his beliefs.

I: Did you feel different?

PC: Did I feel different?

I: In things like -----?

PC: Yeah, very much felt different. At the time I didn't know I was different, but I and my family went to church, we saw the same people in

church almost all the time, and I knew other people went to other churches but I didn't know that other people didn't always go to other churches. They didn't go as often as we did, they didn't believe the same things we did. There was just our church, those churches. We can't all fit in this building. I mean, this is a pretty bad choice you know, that's fine, there are lots of churches, lots of pastors, that's fine, not everyone can be a pastor's kid, that's fine, I understood all of that, you know without having to be told that's the way it is. But you know the idea that I was immersed more than others was kind of a gradual awakening for me. And when I did come to realize that and realize how other people, especially people my own age, saw some of this and reacted to me. And soon I started to know that my lifestyle isn't as calm as its geared up to be.

I: So, your awareness got a little broader?

PC: Yeah.

I: You realized that more.

PC: Then it was a gradual thing and it came in stages, too. There was a stage when some people go to church three or four times a year, and then later on some people don't go to any church and then, you know, it then gets out to college and so on. I went to the University of _____ where they had over 50,000 people enrolled and, of course, I'm in one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country. And getting, you know, not only seeing things but getting a whole new different type of news cast about things going on in the community. And not just what was in the community but really bizarre things to me that were everyday occurrences are not so bizarre there. And I'm not in Kansas anymore. There really are a lot of different people around you, you know. When I went to college for the very first time, having come from small towns and small congregations, the very first time in college, not only did I meet Jews, Hindus and others, but atheists as well. And then people who came out and full frontally attacked me for religion. "You've got to be an absolute moron to believe in a god" and "You know how could any thinking being believe in some mythical magical being up there. I can see it 500 or 1000 years ago when they didn't have any explanations for anything and you're trying to latch on to some reason for the liking, some reason for these phenomenon, but in this day and age how could anyone with a brain even think that there's got to be a supernatural being like this, I mean when you die you die and that's it." And they'd not only attack you for that and try to get you, sometimes they'd do a ----- people just want to get you into an argument just for the intellectual stimulation of it. And others were very forthright that, you know, "You call yourself a thinking person, defend it, until you can you're a moron as far as I'm concerned and not worth my time." You learn to roll with it, defend what you can and of course they kept, you know, attacking everything that you can't prove. "You can't give me the evidence right here that I can hold and feel and then you haven't got anything." "I can't give you a miracle right here that you're [going to believe]

without scoffing," etc, "That's your privilege." But I had to keep coming back to, well, I keep saying that's what faith is all about. I can't prove it but I believe in it and if I could prove it to everyone, everyone would be a Christian. Or everyone who could think would be a Christian and then you'd turn the argument around, "How could anyone with a brain not believe this," "I'm sorry but if you want to discuss what I believe, fine, I'll discuss it, but I'm not going to have you spitting in my face and yelling at me every two minutes."

I: Do you think that, based on your experience, people at church and the churches you were a part of, do you think they treated you differently because you were a pastor's son?

PC: To an extent, yeah, I think that because to this day I've never been really good with names. I may recognize faces and I know a name when I hear it but people that, you know, from the first day you'd move to a congregation or something there would be people I'd be introduced to and forever after when they saw me, of course, they knew everyone in the congregation. And they would, quite often, especially like after church, and that's when they'd walk up and talk to me. They didn't go up and talk to any of the other people my age. There were other classmates, of course, if they had something to say to them. Here they were all inter-related [in a] lot of these congregations. In talking about something they would come up and talk to me both about church business, things about my life in general and so on. And so, yeah, I think they kind of. It was always we were a family for that part of the congregation but we were real set apart from the rest of it and they saw us that way I think. I don't think they were mean about it, though, but there was always a little more reverence, I think, if I could use that word.

I: Status.

PC: Yeah, probably, we were sort of like the first family of the church. Not necessarily that we called all the shots or anything but it was always, I mean, they treated my dad, I could always say very respectably, even when you're chilling or having a good time and laughing and so on. We'd be invited out to suppers or we had the church suppers or something and they were always very respectful of him, had the respect for each other. I mean there was more of a partially interesting----- You know, buddies and pals and chums kidding around and so on. But with dad they didn't do that so much and by extension with us as kids and my mother, his wife, they, we were attached to him. At the time you don't think about it so much but when you look back on it, it's like, yeah, they were just a little more withdrawn and polite and respectful of dad.

I: When you think about positive aspects of being a pastor's child, what are some positive things that you remember in your life?

PC: First is the obvious religious and spiritual education.

<side one of tape ended>

PC: So back to positives. I was talking about the spiritual and religious education which, for the most part, as I hinted was probably more intense than a lot of my peers in the congregations. I think for my family [that] has carried through. I mean my brothers are very active in their congregations. My one brother sings in the choir and the other has been president of his congregation, my one sister was a parochial school teacher and ----- to her school this last year or so, the other sister is also involved in the church music of her congregation. We all feel [that we have] definitely gotten a great deal out of this and are grateful for it and I can't say that no one else gets that or something like that out of this upbringing. But when you are a pastor's kid it is quite [part and] partial and you can pretty much count on it occurring. ----- As I hinted or said that a lot of people just by knowing that my father was a minister of the congregation or a minister seemed to approach me with just a tiny bit more reservedness perhaps, but just like, you know, a little more polite. At least, to begin with, than if they knew that right out front or found that out. I'm not sure if I've ever found a way to explain that or what but generally speaking, outside of the religious training and experience, I don't know that it has been an enormous advantage in what we call real life. For the more normal aspects no one's offered a huge discount on my car insurance or . . .

I: Those would be real benefits.

PC: That would be nice. But it's like I said, training itself, training in a religious upbringing has at times really been beneficial. Things have really been tough and then I questioned things before and I, you know, railed against God and really have been upset at the way my life has been turning out. But it always seems to be an anchor there that eventually I come back around to and end up being really glad that it's there.

I: Do you attribute much of that to your upbringing?

PC: Yeah, for the solidity and ----- Well, like I said, I can't really say that no one else gets this from their parents. I hope other people do, but with my parents it was always they weren't just reading the words, they weren't just going through the motions, they believed what they were saying. And I mean not that other people don't believe it. But after awhile after you hear the Christmas story ten, twelve, fifteen, twenty times, you know, a lot of people know it in their sleep, they can rattle off verses or the general thing. But each season, each time especially when you're very small, they try to make it special, they try to really. Not just that story, the Easter story. And just the general upbringing. When I had questions they were there. Both my parents would answer and I didn't get put off with, you know, "I don't know" or "Well, you don't have to know that" or "It doesn't matter." They had a real sincerity and they really imparted that and I think that makes a difference. Other families are religious and some of them, even though they aren't pastors and so on, I have no doubt some of them are as devoted and genuine about trying

to impart their faith to their children. But I think being in a pastor's family I had much higher chance of having a family that would do that for me.

I: You basically answered I think the next question I was going to ask and that was, what impact did being a pastor's child had upon your spiritual life? I think you more or less answered that, it was something that was lived all the time.

PC: Yeah.

I: Not sporadic, something that was very much a part of your life.

PC: Most definitely.

I: And also, what impact did being a pastor's child have upon your involvement in church?

PC: Well, it's, I don't really think about it, but it's kind of tough to say on a whole. I remember back when this congregation was going through it's trials and Pastor _____ had been released and they were kind of going through a small split in the turmoil, and they were putting together the documents thinking about self-evaluations and what we were going to say in the Call letter that eventually [resulted] in you coming here. I attended a number of meetings and I remember sitting there and we really went over, I mean they would [go over a] sentence and they would dissect it one word a time. "Is this just the right word we want to say?" And I spoke up a few times I remember and-----I'm going to hate myself, I don't recall the name of the pastor who was serving this vacancy from over in _____. He went to the seminary for a brief time with my dad, they knew me. I was kind of shocked, you know, it had been over thirty years since they'd seen me, but anyhow, I recall we were putting together, well two aspects of it. One aspect of it was, you know, well we've had this split and this problem and we, people had been approaching us and saying, "I hear you kicked out your pastor," "What's going on with you people," "I hear you guys really had a terrible problem." People from hundreds of miles away that I see a couple of times a year would come up to me and tell me about this. I hadn't realized it had gotten that far out. And so, the idea was that we wanted to put together a letter or a document kind of trying to reassure the candidate or whoever that, you know, we're not really bad people because this is a nice place, we just got into a bad situation somehow. And I didn't have a whole lot to contribute to it until they came up and they were asking, "Okay, well what kind of things do you want in a pastor, let them know what we want," and they came up with a sentence something like they wanted a pastor who was flexible and willing to, what was it, compromise, flow with things and compromise and everyone seemed to think that was fine. And then I, the one pastor was sitting there and I just said, "Well, personally, I think it would be better if, you know, more reassuring to a man coming here if we were to tell him that we would like someone who was flexible enough to compromise on nondoctrinal issues." We may think its understood but I think we should spell it out, we're worried about this, that we don't expect you or expect whomever to compromise on

those areas which are not, should never be compromised. And the one pastor said you never compromise on doctrine and I think that's a good idea. So I, they said they were going to keep that in there. And later on when it came time for some people to talk about salaries or something other, you know, a new idea would come in that [there should be a] fund for equity. Not only to provide the house but there would be this annual contribution for stuff. My folks had just gotten for the last four to five years or so that they had been at their last congregation they set up this fund and with that they bought the lot that they eventually built their house on and it was really a blessing to them. Without that they wouldn't have had the down payment and so on. It was the first time in their adult lives that they owned their own house. They'd always lived in a parsonage supplied by the congregation and they had no equity in anything. And of course we had arguments back and forth, "We're supplying this rent free already, you know, and it's our own expense," and several times I kicked in a few things and said, "Well, yes, it's understood and it's appreciated," or "What do the scriptures say, we are to care of these people, not to make them lavishly rich but we are to take care of them. And part of taking care of them isn't necessarily just for today, but it's also to make sure that at such times as they leave us that they're not destitute or without something. I'm sure it's up to them to do their own budgets and be frugal. And as you see pastors come in all shapes and sizes too and we know we can't do everything for them but we're not even going to try. But at the same time we should be able to someday face our Lord and say, look, "God we did what we could now and it wasn't a great deal but it was something." I said I would feel better if we did something as it doesn't have to be a lot but we've got to do something. And I related that bit about my folks and they used to always joke about when they retired they were just going to have enough money, they were going to get a mobile home and go and visit each of the kids for a month at a time. And I said, "Folks, you've got to do something to stop this from spreading out," and I got a laugh at the meeting. I guess I was the one person there who could see it from the other side because I told them about my folks. It was probably a new idea now that you should put this extra money aside and I said it, really.

I: Well, being a pastor's child, it actually gave you some insight.

PC: Insight into what the other side of the economic scale was because I remember growing up first, most of us don't get rich being in a pastor's family. Money was always short and we economized and we never went without essentials. We always had food, we always had clothing and we had what we needed and that was fine, but then we had a few frills. I'm not saying we dressed in potato sacks but at the same time I knew pretty much what my parents' financial situation was. They were in debt almost constantly, paying things off, which may be the American way but I knew my dad, with a college education, was earning less than a lot of kids my age were who were working on their dad's farm. And I just knew, I said, you know,

"You got to do it." I thought I pushed to do it a little more than some of them were planning to do and I gave my reasons.

I: So what this says is that if you're having a Call committee maybe its a good idea to have a pastor's kid on there?

PC: Yeah, well, I think so.

I: See things from another perspective.

PC: Yeah. I know you have your congregational budget and then somebody's always asking you to give a little more for something or other. But at the same time these are people with families that we've got to take care of to an extent. And it's, you know, having looked at it from that side I just decided to give my perspective there and I think it probably made a difference to some people at the time in talking about it.

I: As you think back, how did you view your father, as that's my father or that's my pastor, just how did you regard him?

PC: A, primarily that's my father. I suppose there were times or so where it was more that's my pastor. I remember, I can never really separate my father from my pastor. As long as I was growing up he was probably more than 90%, even when he was in an official capacity, more than 90% of this was my father, he's my pastor, he's my father, his parental goals seem to overshadow his professional role as it were.

I: If there would have been a time, for example, if there would have been something that you had to talk to someone about, and you didn't feel comfortable going to your parents, and unlike other people you didn't have a pastor whose separate from the family, who would you have gone too?

PC: That depends. I mean, my next youngest brother and I confided in each other a lot. We were partners in crime, we're confidants or whatever and so for some things I could see talking to him. I could see myself talking to him. If you're talking as far as an adult influence, I really don't know. I wasn't that close to most adults. I might say a teacher or something but mostly I tended to shy away from discussing really private things with them. It was probably easier to talk to my mom most of the time than my dad on a lot of things. Later on I got to know that a lot of the stuff that went to my mom got to my dad, so I really had to, some things didn't, every now and then some things didn't but Mom was just very relaxed. She's got to talk to people and especially when something's troubling her and so I really don't other than my parents or the other kids. I didn't confide in as much with them because they weren't quite as close in age like ____ was.

I: When you think of your family, would you say, regarding your family as it were a clergy family, a pastor's family, or a Christian family, how would you characterize your family, like in family identity?

PC: If I understand your question, I considered us a family. I knew I'm in just a family and grew up just with that focus. But later on, as I said, things gradually opened up and I started realizing that we didn't live exactly the way most of the people around us did. I mean in smaller ways, more subtle

things. Not that everyone has exactly the same habits or exactly the same anything. But I got to have an idea that, yeah, we were a family but a pastor's family as kind of a subset of that. Which would, by that tag, explain some of the differences we've had to others. And I saw this and as I got older and talked with other PKs, some of the Methodist kids, Presbyterian kids or whatever, we had some things in common that some of the others didn't. Not that I really [got] to be real close buddies of others but some of these [had] the [same] background. And, you know, going to church, during Lent or Advent, around Christmas season, some years we really go during that Christmas week. Five to six times a week we'd be in church because Dad had both congregations and at that time of the year my folks thought we should all be seen at both congregations. We'd have Christmas Eve services, Christmas Day services and maybe Sunday service in addition. And we'd say, "Ah gee, again." When I was little it was one thing as we'd just get dressed up and drive wherever they went, but later on it's "Oh no." Sometimes they'd just spring it on us, you know, we're going, "Since when?" "Didn't we tell you, get dressed we're going." And some of them had gone through that too. So it was anyhow, but yet primarily, it was just like, you know, every day life was we're a family. But we were always conscious of when dad was gone. It was like, okay, he's visiting someone in the hospital, the nursing home, he's paying a house call, he's seeing a shut-in, he's at the church, he's at some meeting somewhere else, he's at a Call meeting for another church and we had to take messages on the phone. People would call up wanting to talk to the pastor. We were kind of coached on how we should answer the phone to help deal with these people if Dad wasn't there or both our parents were gone. We'd take messages and "What was the problem" and so on so. I guess it's sort of like, you know, what some doctor's family was like. You've got a professional in the house and people will call you up at home and we run our business out of our house. And yet it's . . . So yeah, primarily a family but there was that undercurrent. Father is in this particular vocation and you should be aware not only of that but you're going to have a few adjustments in your lifestyle because of it, you know.

I: Sometimes you mentioned about having some awareness. When you were younger you didn't necessarily have as much of an awareness of the impact upon your family and yourself that came from what he did and then you talked about later on this awareness being stronger. At what age were you when that awareness started, become more prevalent?

PC: Well, I mean, when I was starting grade school I knew as people would come to the house and talk to Dad, I mean people visited Mom too and so on. But they would come and we lived next door to the church and, you know, they'd have meetings and sometimes Mom and Dad would come home with someone and dad would go through some stuff. So, you know, I knew all this had to do with being a pastor then. So it was sort of like your background started. Folks are in and out, you know, parents working. Mom, when we

were young, at the time she was trying to make a special effort to go to all the meetings, she was a young pastor's wife, "I'm going to be at all the meetings, I'm just going to be on all the committees," that was pretty much expected of a pastor's wife, you know. And all this stuff, she said, nearly drove her nuts in time because, she said, first she had all these little kids, and there were so many other things to do as well. Then she had to have, of course it was expected, that you have a spotless house. People would come over and you couldn't have a mess in the living room floor, you couldn't have dirty dishes stacked up on the table, you had to have something presentable at all times. But that was always, like I said, I was young enough. I didn't have a basis of comparison. Mom was always cleaning, we're always washing, you know that's just the way it is, that's life, you know, go on. I suppose when we started parochial school and my dad was part of the school hierarchy and of course I was getting older at the time, fourth or fifth grade, and yeah, we had young people. At that time I would start answering the door more, answering the phone more and it just gradually started sinking in, more and more people coming to talk to my dad, and it wasn't talking to my dad, "Well, hi, how are you buddy, go fishing last weekend?" It was to talk to my dad about church matters or about the school matters and I didn't know for sure how other families went on. But you know, it started to sink in that this a little different, you know, things are. Dad had his office and we were told while the door was closed to the office he is with someone and you were to stay away, you weren't to make a whole lot of noise, you weren't to go barging in. But when the door was open, you know, we'd sometimes run through the house. It's when it kind of started to sink in a little more, I suppose about fourth, fifth grade and then, when I simply started being coached we were allowed to then answer the phones on occasion and then how to respond to people and it just started from there. It built a little more. By the time I was in junior high school it was definitely almost full blown. This is because of, you know, Dad's position in a Christian community and in these congregations and so on. Things were a little different for us than for most people.

I: Do you consider it to have been a particular stress to have lived in a parsonage, in a church-owned home, since you were cleaning and stuff?

PC: Oh, I didn't really think of it that way, I suppose. It's not as if people were walking through on their own whenever they wanted to, I think.

I: People respected your space?

PC: Oh yeah. It was our home. I remember we had, when we moved to _____ it was a brand new house, they had just built it, we were the first ones in it, it was a brick parsonage. The foundation started to settle and it started to crack along the one wall and of course we had to have people over for repairs and the garage floor cracked and one side looked bigger. So, yeah, it seemed convenient at the time because I knew by that time that, you know, Mom or Dad didn't have to pay for this stuff. I started to have an opinion of

money, you know, sometimes you don't spend a lot on frills and so on. And I knew that at least we got the whole side of the house, the bricks, you can see where the mortar [was] separating and it's going all the way up. I knew the congregation's paying for this, you know, they were not ----- benefit there, but no, I didn't see it. It wasn't until, like I said, the last so many years of my Dad's last parish where it had set up, Mom and Dad told us they had this meeting. I mean as we got older they would let us more in on what some of the decisions regarding the family were. ----- the congregation as voted to set up the standing fund to contribute for these types of things, I started thinking, "You know, they're right, we've never owned a home. Where are you going to go when you retire, I know you don't have a huge savings account someplace, I know you haven't got equity in a plan." I was a little concerned, what are my folks going to do and when they got this thing I thought, "Well that's kind of nice" but I didn't know if it was going to be enough. And I did find out that they did buy it, that it did cover the lot they bought, and they were able to quite make a down payment on this modular home they had moved out there. So now they're making house payments. It was really just in time and a blessing because I don't know what they would have done if they'd have been stuck renting an apartment or condominium someplace. They would have almost had to rent if they wouldn't have had a down payment for anything.

I: Overall, do you see your experiences at being a pastor's son as being a positive or a negative one?

PC: Overall, it's been a positive experience. They had a number of trying times and ----- part of that's just life. I don't know if anyone goes through teenage years and preteen years without a number of crises of some kind or another. But we avoided a number [that] I saw other people had . . . Yeah, the religious training as such has been an anchor that all my siblings and I have relied on. I know people who committed suicide who in the great moments of depression might do something that I'd consider, or when I was really little to know, and it always came around, you know, you can't do that.

I: Came back to a foundation.

PC: Yeah, it crosses your mind. But you think, you know, that it can all be done but you know when it comes to it I can't do that, I don't know what I'm going to do but I can't do that, you know. And I know other people obviously did not turn around at that but if they had a religious upbringing - I can't speak personally on what exactly their religious upbringing or whatever their beliefs evolved into - but when they needed it most it deserted them somehow. They did not have that same anchor or rock that I know I and my family rely on. So I guess that, well, it hasn't made us financially rich, we all know that we are spiritually blessed.

I: What in your opinion can be done by parents, by pastors, parents, to make being a pastor's child a positive experience?

PC: Positive experience for the children of pastors. Well, there is, of course, like I said, we had our long-standing training and schooling in the Bible which must not be neglected, but at the same time it must not be hammered home with a whip and a ruler and "You will memorize these passages or else." If you're going to sour children on it they're going to get away with as little as they can. They're going to turn from it as soon as they can as a rebellion. If nothing else, I think that it's religious training [that] has got to be, "Yes, this is important, I'm going to tell you why it's important." And it's got to be carried out, you know, like, you know, like I want you to have this, that I'm going to force you to take this, I want to go through this with you, I want to explain to you, I want you to know you can come to me with questions, I don't have every answer, no one has every answer in this life, short of God, but I will help you when I can and it doesn't have to be sheer drudgery, you will memorize and you will be there and you will say your part, there are some fun things we can do and life is not all just you know church and home, you know. There's a lot of life out there to experience and enjoy and I know there are dangers. I know there are things you can't protect your children [from]. Or the parents are going to have problems because there are not only dangers but, you know, the unsavory things and your children are going to be exposed to them. But you've got to give them their common sense or impart [to] them what part of your common sense you can. And let them know that, you know, this is part of how you can deal with a lot of these things, when in doubt I mean, you know, you could well run into people who are going to say "Why not do this, how do you know until you try this, you know sure it may be against the law or something but a lot of things are, people speed, that's -----, people do it all the time, nothing happened." You got to impart in them, when in doubt, you know, you can fall back on this, you know, don't do it, come talk to me, we'll talk about it, if I'm not available I want you to remember that this is your training, we have reasons for it, you may not know it right now, it may be your parents, but please, you can rely on us you know, obey the laws, obey your rulers or whatever where they do not violate God's law. I mean this is expected and there are reasons for it, you know, if you don't feel comfortable doing something rely on this, if you have any questions rely on that, it will see you through, we can talk about it later, we can discuss it later but for now I'm there to talk with you, this can help. I mean I sound like an unmarried marriage counselor telling a father how to [raise] his kids.

I: You're doing a good job.

PC: But basically, . . . as far as religion, religious training and how it affects your daily life, the mistake I have seen on a couple of occasions, experienced this way, is the unreasoning, you know, you'll do it because I say you'll do it and you're going to do it right now and you're going to make sure it's right and I don't have to listen to you right now. You've got to kind of invite them to come in and guide them rather than force them along that

path. I'm not talking just my family. Other examples of this were, you know. it's just this is the right way and we're not going to talk about why it's right but you're going to do it whether you like it or not, you know, and that just doesn't seem to work. You can force them for so long because they haven't got a choice or haven't ----- that some day they won't rebel like that, you know, kind of tired of them because I don't like being pushed and told to do stuff without giving a reason or told I don't deserve a reason, you know, myself, it's just human nature kind of talk and balance, I can think, talk to me, let me know some things, explain.

I: Can there be anything done by the congregation itself to help make being a pastor's child a positive experience?

PC: Well, I would love to have a weekly allowance out of the collection plate. Realistic, well, if you're going to start putting these kind of conditions on me, then, oh gee, well that's a little more abstract. I can't really think of anything except my upbringing. The congregation was very respectful of us so I never had any, you know, idea of "I've got to get away from these people" or "I want to run away from all this stuff."

I: And you appreciated that?

PC: Yeah, on a level I did. Part of it was they were just nice people and part of it was they were nice to people, but you're the pastor's family and that just means you were just a little special. We got invited out to suppers at places and, you know, we went to families because they invited the pastor out, you know, and they'd invite people out but it was a special night when they invited the pastor out. We dressed up and we'd go out there. I knew the reason we were coming because my dad was the pastor and if my dad was the barber, you know, well we might occasionally have a barbecue with the neighbor or something but we wouldn't get invited out as often to people's places. Because, well, I guess we were kind of the local -----

I: I'm going to draw it out just a little bit more and move beyond the congregation to the church-at-large. Is there anything the church-at-large in your opinion could do to help make being a pastor's child a positive experience? When I say church-at-large I mean District.

PC: You know people like say something about offering a special perk in some ways. If you want like a son of the pastor who wanted to go to the seminary, partial tuition or something, I don't like singling people out and saying because you are this man's son you will get this perk and because your father was a farmer or a banker or something else you don't think you have this same inclination to do this. I know there are scholarships that are set up that way at all kinds of universities, you know, people spending money anywhere they like. So don't like, let's recommend that, because I think in some ways that it's unfair. You may have some people who would really need or appreciate that who won't receive it while others . . . But that isn't necessarily the only kind of perk that there has to be or perk but this is just a concept I haven't really had on my mind before.

I: Let me put it this way, if you were say were in junior high or high school, if somebody were to come along and thought it might be an interesting idea to have a retreat for pastors' children, do you think something like that might have been interesting to you?

PC: It might of at the time. We lived in _____ at that time and there was a Lutheran camp. I don't know if you've ever heard of it, it's not too far away from where one of my uncles lives, by _____ and I've been to it a number of times. And it was just like a summer camp. They would operate throughout the summer and you know Lutheran children from congregations all over the District would go there to spend a week or so in camp and it was used. I remember my mother went there a couple of time for pastors' wives retreats. The pastors themselves would meet there, it was a nice place, cabins, they had a lake to fish, woods, slap mosquitoes all the time. I don't know if at the time I would have felt that. I think I would of but it might have been interesting to kind of compare notes with some other pastors' kids about things that they'd gone through or were going through or how their lives were, how their parents were, what Mom and Dad expected of them. It would have been, you know, kind of a group therapy session I suppose.

I: It could turn into that I suppose.

PC: Oh yeah, everyone would say, "Well _____ it's your turn to talk to tell us your life story," you know, and ask them to go around the circle. And I remember going to a couple [of] camps but they were religious camps, Lutheran camps. It was smaller but it was more exclusively for pastors' kids. But that's an idea. I might have been interested in something like that if I'd have been around at the time.

I: This is your opportunity now, let's say you're standing before some pastors' children, some teenage pastors' children, what is the one thing you'd want them to know about themselves, about being a pastor's child?

PC: Well, if your upbringing in your family was anything like mine was, and I suspect that most of them were as far as exposure to religious training and expectations along these lines, regardless of what you think now that you want to do or what it was worth or how boring it all was or how unreasonable it all might have been at the time, regardless of what you'll end up doing as your own profession, whether you yourself become a pastor, a lay minister, something in the church or you go like I have into the secular aspect which most of you probably----- you are going to find that what you have learned growing up and what has been instilled in you is going to be something that is going to be there as long as you don't fully reject it and run away . . . I know some people have done that, you know, renounced it all and gone the whole other way and then eventually ended regretting it. But it is going to be something you may take for granted now, but in hard times, like we all do, you end [up] turning to it, clinging to it. And in the good times it is not just a touch base, not something that's always there but in a quiet moment it's when you see what is going on, what's happened to people you know or

happened to even to famous people, words like if it was up to the grace of God, this is something you are going to learn to appreciate and it's not going to be jump out someday and go, this was the moment it was all done for, but quietly it's just going to be there and it's going to be one of those things like good health that you're going to be thankful for especially when you see what can happen without it. So don't, I'm not saying make a big deal of it to everyone and everything, but be quietly grateful for it and you don't have to beat your breasts or anything and say what a poor sinner you are and how grateful you are to God that he had saved you here. But just regardless of some of the stuff you've been through and how you didn't appreciate it at the time and maybe it was unnecessary, some of it, we all go through some unnecessary stuff but it laid the groundwork for something that's really important and you may not really appreciate it for awhile but if you're fortunate it will be

<end of tape>

INTERVIEW #19

Male, 14, entire life as a pastor's son, entire life in a church-owned home, one move

I: Well, the first question I want to ask is if you have experienced any pressures from being a pastor's child? Have you experienced any pressure from your friends or peers or classmates or anything like that?

PC: They don't really think about that.

I: Have you ever heard something like, "Well, you can't do that because you are a pastor's child?"

PC: Yeah.

I: You have heard that. Do you want to go on more about that, when did that happen?

PC: They say, you know, that you are perfect, that you can't do anything wrong because you are the pastor's kids and I just tell them I'm human.

I: So I'm wondering how you react to that when people say things like that. How do you handle that?

PC: Just blow them off.

I: Do you ever feel like you have to prove something?

PC: No.

I: So, you basically handle it by trying to be yourself?

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you think that people treat you differently because you are a pastor's child, a pastor's son? I'm going to start off with your parents, do you think they treat you differently because you are a pastor's child?

PC: Not at all.

I: So, from what you see, they're pretty consistent with how they treat you and how they treat other kids?

PC: Yeah.

I: How about the congregation, do you think they treat you any differently?

PC: Some of them do.

I: How so?

PC: Like one of our Confirmation teachers, she'll yell like at all the other kids but she will not yell at me.

I: What do you think of that?

PC: Kind of embarrassing.

I: Do the kids ever give you a hassle about that?

PC: No, they take it out on her.

I: Any other examples? Anything else about the congregation?

PC: Not really, just kind of peaceful folks.

I: How about you peers? You mentioned already that sometimes they say things like “You can’t do that because you are a pastor’s child” and you just kind of blow it off. Do they treat you differently than they would their other friends?

PC: I think some of them but not most of them. They treat me like everyone else.

I: So you’re pretty satisfied with that?

PC: Yeah.

I: Good deal. Now I’m going to ask you what are some of the positive things that come from being a pastor’s child? Are there any positives you want to mention?

PC: The only one I can think of is that they come and mow the lawn.

I: Pardon me?

PC: The only one I can think of is they come and mow the lawn.

I: Do they come and water too?

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you think that as being a pastor’s son that that’s really helped you?

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you see that with other families too? Would you think that that’s kind of an edge that you have?

PC: Well, I guess I know the Lord maybe more on a deeper level than some other kids but my Christian friends know a lot too.

I: It’s interesting that your dad’s work and home life kind of come together sometimes.

PC: Yeah.

I: So you’re around it a lot and see it as a benefit?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, you actually swerved into the next question I’m going to ask you, and that was what impact does being a pastor’s son have upon your spiritual life? That’s pretty much the same question. Do you see it as having a big impact, do you have like devotions and stuff?

PC: We don’t usually have devotions at meals but I have devotions by myself before I go to bed and, of course, I started as a requirement for Confirmation but just got into the habit.

I: I think you might be a little unique in the respect that you travel around and do concerts.

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you enjoy that?

PC: Yeah, it’s fun.

I: So that’s a good deal, too. Do you get to meet a lot of people?

PC: Yeah.

I: When you think of your father, do you see him as that’s my dad or that’s my pastor or just how do you see him?

PC: I look at him as my dad basically.

I: So, when you are sitting there and hear him preach?

PC: I think that's my dad. I don't really think it's my pastor. Even though I needed something.

I: And he still is but you still think of him primarily as your dad?

PC: Yeah.

I: If there was ever something you needed to talk to someone about and you didn't feel comfortable going to your parents - we would always hope that would be an influence - but if there was something you didn't feel comfortable about and since really you don't have a pastor who is not your dad, who would you go to for advice if you had something you need to talk about?

PC: I don't really know. Probably go to one of my friends or my teacher or something like that.

I: So, if you think of another adult type person do you think about a teacher that you feel close to? Do you know of any other pastors that you would go to?

PC: -----

I: When you think of your family now, we'll broaden it out a little bit, when you think about your family, do you see your family as we're a pastor's family, or how would you characterize your family?

PC: Like compared to other families?

I: Yeah, how do you see your family?

PC: I think it seems very good. My father, you know, pastors' kids-----
 ---- wears baggy pants and things.

I: But I noticed that you don't do that.

PC: I don't like that.

I: You don't care for that?

PC: No, I want to give good appearances.

I: Involved with family. You see this kind of stuff going on in other families. Would say that as far as you are concerned that you're pretty comfortable with the way you are?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, overall, would you see your experience as being a pastor's son as being a positive one or a negative one? How would you characterize it?

PC: Positive.

I: You'd do it over again?

PC: Yeah.

I: Is there anything that you would like to see done differently in your life as a pastor's son?

PC: Not really.

I: Since you live in a church-owned home, does that cause any like stress?

PC: Like what do you mean?

I: Do you imagine that it would be different or have your experiences always been living in a church-owned home, do you imagine that it would be different if you lived in your own home? Do people seem to respect your space over there, church members or do they come in?

PC: I guess it depends on whether or not you own your own house, or know the church pays the water and the electricity-----

I: Do the church members like stop by a lot or do they respect your space over there?

PC: They'll stop by if they need something from my dad. Usually they call first.

I: Just treat it like it's your home and they respect that?

PC: Yeah.

I: What do you think could be done or what is being done based on your experience to help make being a pastor's child a real positive experience by your parents? What are they doing or what could they do to make it a positive experience?

PC: Ever since I can remember my dad has always prayed-----, read the Bible, made me go to church even if I didn't want to.

I: You say that's a good thing?

PC: Yeah.

I: Okay, anything the congregation could do that you could think of that makes it a real good experience to be a pastor's child?

PC: They have always been real nice to us ever since we first got here. We've made good friends.

I: Well, it sounds like you just had a real good experience being here.

PC: I wouldn't want to move.

I: Having mentioned that, even though you don't remember the one time you have moved too much, that's one reality that a pastor's family deals with and there was even the possibility, how do you think that you'd handle that? Do you think about it much?

PC: No.

I: You don't let it really nag at you. If you were talking to other pastors' children and there was one or two things that you would really want them to know about being a pastor's child, what would you want them to know?

PC: Do you mean to another pastor's children?

I: Yeah.

PC: I really don't know.

I: Let's say you were talking to someone who was really kind of struggling at being a pastor's child and maybe had a lot of pressures on them, what advice would you give them?

PC: I think I'd say let the Lord put things and trust him.

I: It can be all right. I sense that you have a pretty strong Christian background, it's nice to hear. Do you have any experiences being a pastor's child that might be interesting that you would like to share?

PC: I don't know.

I: Just like any experience, maybe a funny story or a story that sticks out in your mind, something interesting that happened to you because you are a pastor's child?

PC: No.

I: Well, I appreciate your taking the time to talk to me. One last thing. One thing that actually I'm going to have to do as part of this project is that I'm putting together a retreat for teenage pastors' children and I'm wondering, number one, don't be nice to me and tell me it's a good idea if you don't think so but, what would you think of such a plan like that and number two, if there was a retreat for teenage pastors' children, what sorts of things might be good to talk about?

PC: Retreat, like what do you mean by retreat?

I: An overnight retreat like at a hotel or something, just to bring together pastors' children from around the state.

PC: I think it would be a good idea.

I: Get to know people. What sort of things might be good to talk about with pastors' children?

PC: Probably about other people, like at school, your peers, talk friendly, like what you talk about and what you can't do, after all, because you are a pastor's kid. Could talk about that probably.

I: Deal with some of those stresses that you feel sometimes and help each other out. I appreciate your time.

INTERVIEW #20

Male, 15, entire life as a pastor's son, entire life in a church-owned home, one move

I: Well, the first thing I want to ask you about, have you talk about, is any pressures that you have experienced because you are a pastor's son. Now that could be stresses you experienced by friends, peers, it could be pressures from the congregation, anything.

PC: Basically at first, but then like after awhile my friends just got use to it.

I: And what did they do at first?

PC: Well, they didn't really do anything but it was just the thought.

I: How did that come out, that thought, like things they said?

PC: Oh, not really, it just, I don't know how to explain.

I: Did they ever say things like "You can't do that because you are a pastor's kid"?

PC: No, well they thought that I didn't do certain stuff, you know, like go for fun, but then I told them different.

I: And when you say go for fun, what do you mean?

PC: Oh, usually like once we swam across the whole lake.

I: Did you sense that at first they didn't think you'd do things like that?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well, once they got to know you?

PC: Oh, I don't know.

I: Did you act pretty much like an ordinary guy?

PC: Yeah.

I: How do you handle, you know, if you do feel pressures like that, you know, when they think, "Well, you can't do these things" or "You won't do these things because you are a pastor's son," how do you handle those sorts of things?

PC: I just like say that if they do this thing I can't.

I: Do you ever feel like you have something to prove, that you can do things like other kids can?

PC: Not really, not anymore.

I: But there was a time when you did?

PC: Yeah.

I: When would you say that time was, like how old do you think you were?

PC: Probably when we first got here, first grade or so.

I: Well that's when you start remembering that you kind of felt some of these things?

PC: -----

I: Do you think that, we've talked about your peers just a little bit already, do you think they treat you different because you are a pastor's son?

PC: Not really.

I: How about your family, do they treat you different than they would other kids?

PC: Well.

I: Not because you are their son but because you are a pastor's kid.

PC: I think they did at least a little at first. Like I'm always hearing about these kids getting grounded for no reason and I don't really get grounded.

I: Do you think they're easier on you because you are a pastor's son?

PC: A little bit.

I: Okay, that's an interesting question, how about the congregation, do they treat you differently because you are a pastor's son?

PC: Definitely, because everyone knows me and just know the other kids my age.

I: Can you think of any example or any instances like during Confirmation class?

PC: Oh, yeah, for one, when they were announcing our names and they were like giving out the school certificate this one guy he like called my name, he knew it and then he called one of my friends names and instead his name was-----and he looked at the name and he said ____ like.

I: That's different. Does that really bother you at all when people in the congregation treat you differently?

PC: Well, as long as it doesn't carry outside the church.

I: Just kind of like in the house. Now, so people at school are pretty cool with you being a pastor's son?

PC: Yeah.

I: Now talking about positive things or benefits that come from being a pastor's son, can you think of any benefits?

PC: Well, there was that thing about your kids being first -----

I: So then you look at your life as compared to other kids lives whose parents aren't pastors or whatever, do you see them pretty much the same?

PC: Yeah, pretty much, compared to teachers like, money and stuff.

I: Like they have more?

PC: Well, most of the people around here work at the plant and that's money.

I: Any other differences that you detect in your life as compared to other kids?

PC: Not really, because I don't have my license yet.

I: You don't, and everyone else does?

PC: Yeah, everyone like knows that.

I: The fact that you don't have your license, do you think that's because you are a pastor's son or is that just what your folks think?

PC: That's just because my dad's like my grandpa was. My grandpa didn't let my dad get it, well he would not have. He didn't like get, my dad just like when he was fourteen he just went and got it.

I: So that's like a hassle for you right now. It sounds like it is not because you are a pastor's son necessarily but it's just what your parents think.

PC: Yeah.

I: Kind of like normal parent/kid things, huh?

PC: Yeah.

I: What impact do you think being a pastor's son has had on your spiritual life?

PC: It is not very much. Sometimes when my dad wants me to do a devotion or something, I just do it but I am not really into it. Sometimes I'm like too tired and just can't focus right.

I: Do you get asked to do more things around here because you are a pastor's son?

PC: Not really.

I: So the church doesn't like expect you to be a leader in the church?

PC: Not really.

I: One thing you said, that you remember the one move you experienced. What was that like for you moving to a new place, new church?

PC: Well, since I was so young it wasn't that big but I do remember it because that church, it was like the town of 400 people or something like that and the church was really small so you knew everyone, when here you don't know everyone.

I: And you know part of the reality of being a pastor's family is that possibility of moving. Did that first Call give you something to think about very much?

PC: Yeah, because my aunt she ----- pastor and she got my dad on the Call list and she lives down in _____.

I: I see. So when you deal with the reality of that possibility, what does that do to you?

PC: Well, I just think about it, "Okay, I'll move."

I: So it doesn't like make you real anxious or anything?

PC: Not really, just be closer to them. It's a real town.

I: A real town. You don't see this as a real town?

PC: No.

I: Well, it's something you think about but when you think about it, it doesn't like give you a problem. When you think of your father as the pastor, when you see your dad and when you think about your dad, do you see him as primarily as your dad or your pastor or just who is this guy that you see?

PC: Oh, it depends on where because like if it's in the church I see him as the pastor but if it's like on a ski trip then it's pastor/dad.

I: So when you are sitting in church and he is up there preaching, do you think of him as . . .

PC: Pastor.

I: So it depends for you, it depends on where he's at and what he is doing?

PC: Yeah.

I: That's an interesting thought. I've never asked anybody this before but when you are at like a ski trip or something, do you call him Dad or do you call him Pastor?

PC: Oh, I don't know, sometimes either or; depends on the mood I am in.

I: If there was something you wanted to talk to someone about and you didn't feel comfortable talking to your parents, and since your dad is also your pastor, let's say there was something you wanted to talk to a pastor about and you didn't feel comfortable going to your Dad, who would you talk to? What other adult or who would you go to for a talk?

PC: I don't know.

I: You know, like a relationship with another pastor or someone you would feel comfortable going to?

PC: Not really. I don't know any other pastors except for Pastor _____.

I: When you think about your family now, as the identity of your family, do you see your family as a pastor's family or what type of a family do you see your family as?

PC: I guess we're a normal family. Whenever we go somewhere, a few times whenever we go somewhere, it's always now it's my dad, like when we went to _____ no one knew he was a pastor.

I: What was that like?

PC: Better than having a visit about five minutes or sitting for half an hour.

I: Well, when you go places and people recognize him as a pastor, even if you are doing a family thing, it can kind of . . .

PC: Takes away from what you are doing.

I: So when you went to _____ and no one knew who he was and there was no interruption?

PC: Yeah.

I: You enjoyed that?

PC: Yeah, it was great.

I: Overall, do you see your experience at being a pastor's son to be a positive one, or a negative one, how do you perceive that?

PC: It's positive so far.

I: Is there anything that you'd like to see done differently, looking from your perspective as a pastor's son, anything you'd like to see done differently by your parents, the church or anyone?

PC: Let me think about it.

I: Okay, that's really a parent/child issue not so much a pastor's son issue. Now, you know, you live in a church-owned home, has that ever created a stress for you, how you are suppose to treat it or have you ever had a problem with it?

PC: No, because if we just break something we fixed it or I did, my brother, I don't know about him.

I: You both seem to respect that as your place to live, it doesn't bother you much?

PC: There have been a few times where someone would like look in the directories like in the phone book for a pastor's name so they came to the church or to the house. And I think there have been a couple of times where some drunk guy stopped outside the house and honked the horn 50,000 times, knocked on the door.

I: So your family is not as anonymous as other families might be? It actually happened, some drunk guy sat outside the front of the house and honked?

PC: Yeah, it was really strange.

I: How did you handle it?

PC: I don't know, I just yelled outside my window and I said, "Shut up," but his windows were rolled up so it didn't make any difference.

I: What can be done by pastors and their wives and so forth, what can be done by parents to help make being a pastor's son a real positive experience? What do you think is being done?

PC: I don't know, I suppose just treating them like other kids, like being a kid.

I: Kind of like having no more expectations of you than they would any other kid?

PC: Yeah, and as you get older you should give them more responsibility. You should also give more good stuff, too.

I: More privileges?

PC: Yeah, freedom.

I: Well, how about as a congregation, what can congregations do to help being a pastor's son a real positive experience or what are they doing? It seems like a pretty positive experience for you.

PC: Oh, I suppose sometimes it's good when they know you and they talk to you and sometimes it's not so good. Sometimes they should just leave you alone.

I: What are some of those times?

PC: Sometimes just when you are angry or frustrated or something.

I: They shouldn't always like single you out or something, be more aware of where you are at?

PC: Yeah.

I: So let's say that you were in a position where you had, where you were talking to other pastors, sons and daughters and maybe all of them are not

having as positive an experience as you are, what would be an important thing that you would want them to know about being a pastor's child?

PC: Don't let anyone treat you differently.

I: You want to be yourself, want people to treat you like other kids and at the same time recognize, what I'm hearing you say, is that there are limits to what we can do?

PC: Yeah.

I: Well part of this project that I am doing is that I'm putting together a retreat, like an overnight retreat in a hotel or something for teenage children of pastors, and I am going to ask you a couple of questions about that. And like I tell people, don't be nice to me and tell me it's a real good idea. The first question is, do you think that would be something that would be useful to bring together teenage children of pastors?

PC: I don't know. I suppose it depends how, if they have had a good experience or a bad one. In that ways it's kind of good because the ones with a good experience can talk to the ones with a bad.

I: Help each other out because they are the ones that are going through it all.

PC: Yeah.

I: They are like the experts, that's what I think, you guys are the experts. Well, what sorts of things do you do at an overnight retreat, what sorts of things might you want to talk about?

PC: I don't know. I can't think of anything that we usually talk about, like have different groups of people.

I: Something that I am thinking of maybe doing is just giving people a chance to share their experiences of some of the stuff they deal with and letting people tell just how they handle things. Well, anything else that you would like to say about being a pastor's son? Well, let's put it this way, if you had a choice would you do it over again?

PC: Yeah.

I: It sounds like, on the one hand, yeah, there's some things about it that are all right and it sounds like, on the other hand, there might be some things about it that aren't.

PC: I suppose there is one good thing, well kind of, because this summer we're doing this big concert tour and we like go around up to _____ and down to _____ and _____ and when we get to like, we go through _____ where we use to live and like everyone there knows us. Like when we came back there they tell him all their problems, he's kind of like not with us at all.

I: It would probably be something to change.

PC: Yeah.

I: Like when you are away as a family that seems important because one thing that comes to your mind about going to _____ was that you were just

like a family that didn't have to worry about anything else. Anything else on your mind as a pastor's son?

PC: Not really.

I: I thank you for taking the time and talking to me.

INTERVIEW #21

Female, 38, married, eighteen years growing up in a clergy family, lived in both church-owned and parent-owned homes, four moves

I: The first question I'd like to ask you is just based on your experience, what pressures did you face as a pastor's child? It could be pressures from peers, it could be pressures that you felt, if any.

PC: There was a lot of pressure I feel being a pastor's child. Number one was be a good example. The kids at school viewed you as a goodie two shoes, that they couldn't tell you certain things because you were the pastor's kid so then you learned to tell the dirtier jokes first so that you could kind of fit in. My dad had a very big hang up that we had to look good, we had to look good for the congregation. He took that thing that Martin Luther said about a pastor had to rule over his family and they have to be good, very good so there was a lot of pressure.

I: How did you, well, let me ask this, what did people do or say that made you feel that?

PC: Oh, on the playground kids would say, "Don't tell that to ____ or, you know, when you were in the church if you were running around at all, the members would make you feel like, well that's the preachers kids, they should know better.

I: By what they said?

PC: Yeah. Not so much, just their actions around you, I think.

I: You sensed it.

PC: Oh yeah, and that we were always the first in line for things. They would do that for the pastor's kids and that, you know, at times can be very nice, but at times it makes you feel like a showcase. You're like a showcase to go through. It was a normal [thing], you want to be part of the kids and just be in the background but you were

I: Brought out.

PC: Brought out and put on display.

I: How did you handle those pressures personally?

PC: Sometimes by acting out, being rebellious, learning to tell the first dirty joke to show that you were normal.

I: Had something to prove?

PC: Yeah. You know it's weird to think back. I think really what helped me is God placed people in my life just at the right time, teachers and friends that kind of kept me from getting real rebellious.

I: They were good influences in your life, kind of hold back a little bit.

PC: Right.

I: What do you see as being some of the positive aspects of being a pastor's child? Tell of your experiences.

PC: Growing in your faith, knowing your faith, talking about your faith, you know. I thought everyone did that at supper time all over the world and it wasn't until I started working in the church that I realized that people just don't do that, you know, or that there was a choice to go church on Sundays, that wasn't ever an option, so that was good. We got to experience people's hurts a lot closer up.

I: More in touch with them?

PC: More in touch with real life situations definitely. There was a lot of positives, and especially with moving-----.

I: When you think back, somewhat related to an earlier question, do you sense that you were treated differently by your peers simply because you were a pastor's child?

PC: Oh, definitely.

I: You mentioned that already a little bit. Is there anymore you can add to that, how they treated you differently?

PC: I used to always say to my dad, "I wished you would have become a plumber, why did you become a minister with eight years of school, I just don't get it. You know, you could have been a doctor, why didn't you just become a plumber?" Because when you're a child you don't want, you want to just fit snug and having a dad who is a minister you don't just fit in. People just expect different things from you. Just like they do to the ministers, they expect you to be not even kind of human, you know, they want to put you on a pedestal.

I: But when you're trying to figure out who you are anyway.

PC: Right.

I: To have that added pressure. Is there a time in your life particularly when it seemed to be a struggle for you?

PC: Probably from fifteen to eighteen.

I: Time of life when you're trying to figure out who you are.

PC: Yeah.

I: Were you treated differently, you think, by your parents because you were a pastor's child?

PC: We definitely had to watch what were doing and not get caught.

I: Not get caught?

PC: You know, because how would it look. What if your name was in the paper, you know, your reputation, big message there, you keep your reputation and oftentimes I envied my friends that didn't have to worry about it, you know.

I: They could do what they wanted to do?

PC: They just were children, they were just themselves, you know.

I: And, in regards to the congregation, you mentioned a little earlier, too. How did they treat you differently than the other kids in the church?

PC: Oh, they put you up on a pedestal and then during Sunday School they wanted [you] to be little theologians, in my viewpoint. They expected you to know the answers.

I: Did you find that to be true in Confirmation?

PC: Oh, well my dad taught me in confirmation, if I didn't know the information I was in trouble.

I: He expected you to know it like everyone else but was there a difference in what he expected everyone else to know?

PC: There were a lot of differences.

I: In Confirmation class did you have a tendency to volunteer the answers or were you a little more hesitant?

PC: It depends on what we were. I would be hesitant, I wasn't a good memorizer so I would have to say I would be hesitant.

I: I think sometimes, wondering if pastors' children have their father or mother for a Confirmation teacher, sometimes kind of want to hold back, they don't want to come across as knowing everything.

PC: Exactly.

I: Well that does have an effect on you, an effect on a person all your life, you learn to respond to things and handle things.

PC: Right.

I: Well, regarding your spiritual life, before you mentioned that that was a benefit?

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you have anything more you'd like to say about the impact of being a pastor's child had upon your spiritual life?

PC: It planted the foundation for my spiritual life to grow. Although I really had a hard time committing to the stuff. Not a slam towards the Missouri Synod, but after being in a Missouri Synod home where it was so legalistic, and that it reminded me of the Pharisees talking to Jesus that they get so legalistic that [they] don't look at the love of Christ and I know that probably isn't true. I'm just starting to realize that that's not true in all Missouri Synod but what I experienced as a child was it was ----- And there was no room for the love that I think Jesus wanted. And then when I moved to _____ in 1981 there was a pastor at the _____ Lutheran Church that absolutely drove me nuts because he was just as legalistic. And I would leave on Sunday swearing. So then I started searching for a different church and I ended up at _____. But there was no bending of, it was you do this and that and I was always, but what if, and then how come, and so to me I just backed away. And then when out and started doing Bible studies and I explored. And it's not that I agree with everything that that church does. I really should take a firmer stand on homosexuality, you should take a firmer stand on abortion but I have grown very much so. But I'm at that age where I'm starting to grow spiritually and recognizing it.

I: Do you see it as there is a connection between your growing up as a pastor's child and your present church involvement?

PC: Well, I'm comfortable in church and yes, to make church home. And so I, even in the job I do, I don't have to be told what to do at any time because I know what to do, you got to be happy in that.

I: Your experiences growing up have helped you in your present involvement?

PC: Yeah.

I: You mentioned that you moved four times. Based on how well you remember those moves, what impact did the relocation have on you?

PC: The first time I remember moving I was in first grade. The only thing I remember from that is being carried into the school by my dad. I was scared going to the school. And then when I was in the eighth grade we moved to _____ and that was kind of exciting because you know it was time to change, so that to me was exciting. Everyone was against my dad taking the Call, which he didn't confer with any of us. We found out Sunday morning when we were sitting in the congregation that he decided to take the Call, we had no idea, so I was the only one really supportive.

I: You were excited about it but it was tough on others?

PC: Right. It split up my older sister that was a junior in high school at the time. [She] stayed in _____ to finish her last year in school there. She didn't move. And then I lasted nine months. Moving to _____, I actually chose to repeat the eighth grade because I didn't get anything out of the _____ school system at that time. It really sucked. And moved to the last town of the _____ and it was not someplace for a little _____ girl with blond hair and blue eyes, you know. So you know I moved to _____ and that move was exciting. But yet I knew I wouldn't see my parents for a year so I was very homesick at first. Then I moved from a small town to _____ where they have an enormous school and heavy Catholic population that didn't even know what Lutheran was and . . .

I: How old were you then?

PC: I was fourteen.

I: So you were in _____ for a year and then moved to _____?

PC: Right. That was scary because it was a bigger school.

I: Overall, what effect did this have on you?

PC: I think it was, even though it was a struggle, you know, as a child to move and then try to fit in, you learn how to fit in, you learn how to accept different personalities and you learn to stay at the outskirts of people and try to figure out which group you'd fit in better with. And my thing was, and what I will tell my children, is don't cling to the first person or other personalities. I think it helps to figure out people and it was kind of interesting to see the different cultures that each town has.

I: It sounds like overall it wasn't a really negative experience?

PC: No, I'm sure at the time it was tough but I don't remember it as being negative.

I: If you would see your father as a very important figure in your life, would you regard him as your dad or as your pastor? How did you regard your father, when you see him in the pulpit?

PC: Unapproachable.

I: As a father and as a pastor?

PC: Yes, because my dad, and this is true of the three older kids, because in _____ he served three congregations so he was gone all the time. But I don't remember him being a part of our lives as much. And I remember one time he came home and I said, "You look vaguely familiar to me," as he walked in. But so especially when he was doing his job or being a minister he wasn't approachable because there were so many other people around him.

I: Sometimes people need someone to talk to, like another adult, and they don't always feel comfortable going to their parents. Now with children who are not pastors' children, a member of the congregation, they may have a pastor they can talk to. Who would you go to if it had to be someone you wanted to talk to and couldn't approach your parents?

PC: That goes back to there was always, now I can see where God planted people in my life. I had a high school counselor that was excellent ----- great smile, he sat me down and made me talk about how I really felt.

I: He was supportive of you?

PC: Yeah. Even in my mom and dad's friends, I would cater to one lady in particular, _____, and talk to her.

I: Well let's us go back a little bit regarding a question about how you viewed your dad as unapproachable. Did you regard him as a dad or as a pastor?

PC: It was really confusing because it's your dad and you should see the human side, and then you're in church and all these people have a great respect and you're thinking, "That's just my dad." I mean, so it was really, I think, confusing as a kid.

I: You weren't sure?

PC: No. And my cousin, _____, we were the same [age], when we were real little, three and four and five, [he called us] both his daughters. She called my dad, Jesus, you know, which they actually do when they're that age and so I'm like, you know, that's just my dad.

I: When you think about your family, your family growing up, did you see your family as a pastor's family, or were you just a regular family?

PC: Definitely a pastor's family.

I: Because you felt more as a pastor's family than a normal family?

PC: Because that's what we were told we were. You know my mom and dad really, you know, if we were fighting, us kids, I still remember my mom saying, "We're suppose to look like Christians, we're suppose to be the [example]." And, so what's the natural thing a kids going to do, act out more.

I: There was a very strong message?

PC: Oh yeah.

I: And then that colored a lot of what your family did?

PC: Yeah. We learned that at the church, and if there was a fun thing going on you were at the church first, you weren't anywhere else.

I: You sense that your family had much of an identity apart from church?

PC: No.

I: Overall, do you see your experiences at being a pastor's child as being a positive experience, a negative experience or how would you try to characterize that?

PC: Well, you have to put it as it was a positive experience. But you could go back and tie certain things that you've done in your life and put blame on, you know, being a pastor's kid. But it's who made me who I am. And that's the faith walk that God wants me to have and so maybe, out of my experience, He wants me to do something. I just have to keep praying for Him to guide me to do that.

I: So as an adult you look back and you say, "Well, I can't blame who I am on my upbringing and yet my experiences in my upbringing can actually help me now"?

PC: Right. And I definitely do things different with my children.

I: Have you always considered it that way?

PC: Probably. Between my sixteenth and eighteenth year, that was the tough time for me. That's when I didn't want to be a pastor's daughter.

I: So if I did ask you that question, whether you thought it was a positive or negative experience when you were fifteen or sixteen?

PC: Then I would have said, "This was the worse thing that ever happened to me," you know.

I: But once you can get past that you start seeing things more clearly?

PC: Yes.

I: You have experience when you were growing up living in both a church-owned home, a parsonage, and your parents owning a home. Do you remember there being any difference between them?

PC: Oh, definitely. You couldn't ever have new drapes or if they were going to paint it, there had to be a committee that came in to decide if they were going to paint it. You had to be careful in how you lived because it was owned by the church and you felt that certain scrutiny as to how you were living in that house and how your yard looked because it was owned by the church. I think I was more free in _____ when we did have our own house and I remember that being the happiest for my mom, that was her house.

I: Less pressure?

PC: Right. And they would do walk-throughs, you know. They would just call and say, "We're going, you know, walk through to check it," but that put a lot of pressure on, like selling your house, you know, you have an open house when you have . . .

I: You had to make sure . . .

PC: You had to maintain . . .

I: Looks good.

PC: Yeah.

I: How did that come down anyhow?

PC: You have to take care of it and make sure it looked good.

I: How did you parents handle that?

PC: Oh, definitely. You couldn't paint your room any color you wanted it, you know, you had to wait, like a committee, it's the most bizarre thing. It's one way it's controlled through the church and it controls certain members to be real particular. I mean every congregation has them. You just knew which ones to avoid for the most part, you know.

I: In your opinion, what could be done by the parents, by clergy parents, to make being a pastor's child a positive experience?

PC: I think the first thing that comes to my head is show them the love that Jesus would have. Don't be legalistic. Kids are kids, they're going to screw up.

I: So when you use the word "legalistic" how do you define that?

PC: Well, you know, my dad would always start a lecture quoting a Bible verse. Pretty soon you would be like, you know, you know it says in the Bible that we should blah, blah, blah. Let them discover that, being more of because I love you I want to see you living like this, or what can we do together to make this a good situation.

I: Well, in your experience, religion was kind of a drag?

PC: Yeah. Well, when you're a teenager and you're getting quoted from the Bible, what's the first thing you're going to do, you know? And some of the --- ----, you know, the Bible verses, which was okay, but I think that it has to come out of your love first and then Jesus love.

I: Anything that the congregation can do?

PC: Back off, Jack! Really. I remember when I was a teenager I came to church in my jeans but I sat up in the balcony. And a lady came up to my mom and said, "I can't believe she wore jeans," and my mom said, "At least she's here."

I: So she stuck up for you.

PC: Yeah. But the congregation has a tendency to take their stuff [that] they want to deal with the pastor, sometimes, and place it on the kid's shoulder.

I: Interesting.

PC: And . . .

I: Do you recall that happening?

PC: Yeah. My dad in _____ replaced the pastor that was drug addicted and caught on tape dealing drugs and the cops caught him. Then instead of impeached or whatever they call it, he was given a bigger congregation, which they tend to do. And so it was like he ran the church like a giant

playground area----- And my dad came in and said, "No, we're going to get back to a little bit of doctrine here." So then during youth events, like the other pastor would allow boys and girls to sleep together in a youth house, you know, over sleepovers, junior high age, but my dad said, "No, boys upstairs, girls downstairs." That was that. So then I dealt with a lot of "Why is he doing that this way when we had it the other way."

I: So it came down on you?

PC: Yeah. You know, when you're at that age you're thinking, "Well, why can't we all sleep together?" I wasn't at that phase but they were. To me it was like, "Big deal." Now I know what he was doing, you know, but that kind of thing or even with like ladies aide, you know, I'd go down there for free cake whenever they met on Wednesdays. And just hearing them complain about certain things that went on in the church, you take that as your responsibility, because you're there all the time.

I: So even as a child you felt some responsibility for things going on, or if they said something about your dad?

PC: Yup. And they would, they just felt free enough to say stuff, you know, other kids or adults and you could just catch the innuendoes.

I: What would that do to you?

PC: It divides you. It makes you, [on the one hand], that's my dad, you know, pride kind of thing, and then on the other hand, that's my pastor, too. Real confusing.

I: Do you see that the church-at-large could do anything to help to make being a pastor's child a good experience?

PC: I think they need to get pastors and kids time off together. I think that they should not make a pastor's role so demanding. I think the congregation has to realize that they can't have a pastor there 100% of the time, that he has a family.

I: So pastors have a life and [should] realize it too?

PC: Yeah. And I think the church could send a message too. The Synod could send a message to the congregation, "Don't forget these are kids too, they're just like yours."

I: Be more open with them?

PC: Be more open. They're going to screw up. I mean, I still remember just [getting] back from the District conference, you know, so and so's son is an alcoholic and this one, well, guess what, he was just dumb enough to get caught, you know.

I: How much was going on anyway?

PC: That's sneaky. So I think [the] church could send a message, "Don't forget these are not little pastors, they're kids."

I: I appreciate that. If you were standing in front of pastors' children, say teenagers, and you had an opportunity to talk to them, and there was one thing you would like them to know, something about your past life on being a pastor's child that's really important, what would you want them to know?

PC: Keep the faith, baby! Because you could you get really turned off, you could choose to get really turned off to organized religion. But keep the faith. It's a free gift that your parents gave you and you won't realize it until you're older. So just try to hang in there. I think I had my high school counselor that did help me.

I: Something that I'm doing with this project is putting together a retreat for teenage children of pastors and I would just like to get your impression.

PC: Have a lot of chaperones.

I: What do you think, [what are] things that might be good to talk about?

PC: Try to [talk about] different things. When you just act out. I mean I started smoking when I was fourteen. You know, mostly to, like I said act [out]. I mean that's dumb. I'd never do it now but, you know, just to fit in. Let them know they're people. They're not a congregation, they don't have to carry that all on their back, kind of build their self esteem.

I: It's not their responsibility.

PC: But I guarantee they could take it as their responsibility because [of] the non-verbal. [It] is your responsibility, you're here all the time. "_____, where's the light, turn off the light," you know.

I: Anything else you'd like to add about being a pastor's child?

PC: Be who you are. I mean, you didn't have a choice in it, you know, it's where you were born, it could have been a lot worse.

INTERVIEW #22

Male, 40, LCMS pastor, seventeen years growing up as a pastor's son, lived in both a church-owned and parent-owned home, one move

I: As you think back on your life growing up as a pastor's child, were there any pressures that you felt, pressures from outside, for example, from your peers or others?

PC: Well, it was hard for me to determine sometimes whether the pressures, which were the pressures, whether the pressures were because I was a PK or because our family and one other family. Out of the large church there were members of one school from grade school, everyone else went to public school and so there was a difference in how we were perceived at the church for different things. And Bible knowledge was different because of the school, so I don't know that I necessarily always particularly perceived it because I was the preacher's kid. From peers, the pressure, I went to a different school than everyone else did and so I never perceived it as just simply with my peers.

I: Do you ever recall someone saying something like making a reference to your being a PK, you couldn't do things?

PC: Not in that regards but the reference with being a PK was, well, we were living next to the house, that there would be, you know, lights would be left on in the gym, or shoes would be left out or something. The perception was that the preacher's kid and that was, but I don't remember ever being ----- so I couldn't do something because I was a PK. Again, my circle is different from church and school because the school was eight miles away from the church. There was another Lutheran church than at the school so it was a whole different circle so we perceived differently in different spots. Everyone knew I was a preacher's kid but it was perceived differently.

I: Any pressures from the congregation?

PC: In what regard.

I: In regard to did you sense different expectations of you because you were a pastor's child?

PC: The only expectations, I think, some perceive that life was easier for me for some reason. I remember that, and that's kind of a nebulous kind of answer, but I don't now that I necessarily remember feeling all this extreme pressure in that regard.

I: How about from your parents?

PC: Not in that regard. Pressure from my parents would be related to school and I don't that that necessarily had anything to do with being a preacher's kid.

I: You didn't get a message that you had to be careful what you did because your life reflected upon your dad?

PC: No. I never had that pressure. But I was never a kid to get into trouble either and so, I mean it wasn't like I was fighting or my own personality. So I did not, I just didn't get into a lot of trouble. So the only trouble I would get into would be just related to schoolwork and stuff. It was not doing things, so there was never, that wasn't an issue but I just didn't do it anyway. So, you know, had I done it maybe that would have been something but I never, you know, it wasn't an issue for me so it didn't become an issue for them either.

I: How about, did people treat you differently, say, let's start with peers, did they treat you differently because you were a pastor's kid?

PC: On occasion. But again I don't know that I necessarily perceived it as I was a preacher's kid because I just didn't participate in . . . Like when I was a junior in high school and we were doing some stuff. We had a basketball team in church and the peers that were my age they were playing basketball, were really into the drinking scene and stuff and so we would play at church and then they would go and be, they'd come drunk and that and there was a difference there. But I don't know totally whether it was just because I was a preacher's kid or just that I didn't participate in that kind of stuff either. So, you know, I can remember reflecting back I didn't feel that I was being treated differently other than the fact that I just had a different set of values than they did. So that for me, personally, it wasn't a problem.

I: How about the church and congregation, did they treat you differently?

PC: Well, they did but part of that is because we had a congregation about the size of _____ and so there's lots of kids and you know of the guys my age I would be one of the few that all the adults would know. They might know who, it wasn't like everyone's related to everyone else, it was a mobile congregation and a lot of in and out. So the congregation was constantly changing and so everyone would know who I was, everyone would know my name, they'd know my brother and sisters' names and yet other kids my age, the adults wouldn't really know who they were. You know they might know what their names may be and so in that regards I'd be treated differently.

I: Much more well known.

PC: Right.

I: And your parents, did they treat you differently or did they treat you like other kids?

PC: About the same.

I: Now some positive aspects of your growing up as a pastor's child. What positive things do you remember?

PC: You know, you have a built in community of people that know who you are. I mean, you know, you know we talked about it earlier, you know all these adults know who you are as a kid, you know. I think most kids don't want a lot of adults to know who they are, and that was a positive thing. Church life was a positive around us. I don't know exactly, I mean, I didn't

see a lot of negative in it but I don't know exactly how to determine looking back as to a lot of . . .

I: Benefits maybe?

PC: You know we didn't move a lot, so, I mean, it's not like we had that as a concern that, you know, you had this built in community with ----- We just didn't do that.

I: Maybe benefits is a better word.

PC: We had a stable home and, you know, my dad knew a lot of people in the community so we got to do things, I think, a lot of times that I don't know the normal person did, and that came out from just my dad's position. I mean, you know, everyone likes to go to baseball games, and we had a member who was a part owner of the _____, and so we'd get tickets that are right down on the dugout. And, you know, I would be able to get tickets and want to take people but nobody would have access to those tickets. So I mean, you know ----- the people just knowing who you are.

I: As you look back what impact did growing up as a pastor's son have upon your spiritual life?

PC: I think for me personally there was an emphasis, I mean because we were the preacher's kids my parents had made it a priority that we went to Lutheran Grade School even though our church didn't have one. And you know it was eight [miles] and then after we moved into our own home it was twelve miles away and then we did that. And then it was seventeen miles to the high school and there weren't a lot of people from our area that went to those. And, you know, I attribute a lot of that emphasis just because of what he did, you know. That's where we went. That in itself was ----- and impact, you know, that when we get back from like when we were in Confirmation or when we were doing stuff, you know, a lot of kids assumed I knew something because I was a preacher's kid. And while some of that was true, but it wasn't totally, I mean they always liked the fact that my parents had seen it as a priority. So I went to grade school and high school and so I would say that my Bible knowledge comes from the fact that I went to a Lutheran grade school and high school, not because I was a preacher's kid. _____'s Bible knowledge is not as strong as it would be had he gone to a Lutheran grade school or high school but he hasn't had that opportunity.

I: What was it like for you having your dad as your confirmation teacher?

PC: Well that's, you know, you're going to get something different out of _____ that you are out of me. See I went to Lutheran grade school so I didn't technically have my dad as a Confirmation instructor until the last two months or so because I was having Confirmation three mornings a week at the grade school I was going to. And there wasn't really much reason for me to go to his Confirmation class because they were on basic 101 compared to what we doing at school. So, you know, I came in on the end as did this other gal who was in my class who was also in Lutheran grade school. So we came in for the last months so I didn't have my dad long. I always felt that my dad

was a very good teacher. When I was a little kid I sat in on his class on Saturday's until I was banished by the class for that. I was in third grade and that's when they had class on Saturday mornings and I'd go and sit on the class when we were still living next to a church. And on Saturday the eighth grade took a 75 question multiple choice true and false test and there were 25 kids in the class, I think I had the third best score. They didn't like that so I was banished from the class. They didn't like that but it had nothing to do with the fact that necessarily I was a preacher's kid. But I was getting it four or five days a week and they weren't. So I didn't have him long but he always impressed me as a good teacher. I think I would have enjoyed it. But when I said they were on basics 101 and I would have been bored to tears so I didn't have him much as a Bible class leader either which is different because _____ goes to my Bible [class] instead of the high school Bible class. He comes to my class instead, that's by his choice.

I: How about your involvement in church as you look, you know, kind of looking differently than just one's spiritual development. Do you think that being a pastor's son had any impact upon your involvement in the church?

PC: It has had, I think it had a great impact on how involved I was. I know it's been different for _____ than it was for me, but I was always very involved from the beginning, I mean, as in junior high school I taught Sunday School and I helped with Vacation Bible School, you know I just did a lot throughout. And I don't know how much of that is from Lutheran grade school and high school over and against the preacher's kid or not. I don't know that you can separate the two, but you know my involvement was always much more active than I know that even _____'s is.

I: Do you think it was something you just wanted to do or was there something?

PC: I wasn't made to, I didn't have to do. I was never, you know, I didn't have to teach Sunday School and when I was in junior high school I didn't have to teach Sunday School. I didn't have to. I think there was a year or two of Vacation Bible School when I was constrained to help but it was not a big deal for me. I mean it was not this is what you're going to do, but other than that for the most part what I did get into was by my own choice and we tried pretty much to do that with _____.

I: You mentioned you moved that one time and you were pretty young when you moved.

PC: I don't remember a whole lot about it.

I: But yet, at the same time, part of being a pastor's child you live with the reality that a person might. And I'm just curious, you spent a long time at one place, did you think about that much or was it much of a concern?

PC: It wasn't much of a concern. I only remember two times in particular in that whole twenty years because my dad was five years at his first parish, twenty years at his second parish and fifteen in his third and it's hard to believe he was at his third almost as long as at his second. But during that

twenty years I only remember two times when I thought that we might move. And really once that I really felt we might move and it was about fourth grade and I wasn't worried about it. I thought that it was a strong possibility that we'd move but I don't remember being worried about it. It wasn't a part of my life. It will be interesting to see what _____ says but, you know, because I think I've had twice as many Calls at least maybe three times as many Calls as my dad had.

I: You don't see it being a real . . .

PC: For me personally it wasn't, no.

I: No big concern.

PC: No.

I:: When you think of your father as the pastor, how did you consider him or regard him? Was he your father, was he your pastor, just how did you view him?

PC: I viewed him as both.

I: When would you view him as your dad as compared to your pastor?

PC: Well, I don't remember sitting in a pew thinking "That's my dad," you know. I don't remember thinking in that regard. You know, when we were at home he was dad, when we were at church he was pastor and I don't know that I was able to make that distinction and I never was overly concerned. I did feel that if I needed to talk to him about something I could and I never felt that, you know, my dad and I have very different personalities and our ministry is very different, but I remember as a kid feeling that if I had to talk to him about something I could. But I didn't have any of those major issues in life necessarily as a kid than a lot of the other kids were struggling with for whatever reason, and I don't know why, they need more personal things.

I: If there would have been something that you needed to talk to an adult about or a pastor and you didn't necessarily feel comfortable going to your parents or your dad as a pastor, whatever, who would you have gone to?

PC: Pastor type situation. I don't know, that's a hard call. I would not have gone to the pastor at the grade school where I was at. I saw him as coming from the old school and being real legalistic in his manner. I wouldn't have gone to him, so I don't know how to answer that. But I never felt, there was never an issue where I struggled with that, so I don't know.

I: When you think about your family then, did you see your family as a clergy family or a Christian family or just how would you have?

PC: When I was a kid?

I: Yeah, growing up.

PC: I guess it was more of a Christian family. I mean clergy wasn't a part of our, you know, dad was a pastor but it was a Christian family, that was more the issue.

I: Your big identity was not as a pastor's family, more a Christian family?

PC: No, you would reference it but I mean it was not the thing to find an issue.

I: So, overall, do you see your experience growing up as a pastor's child to be a positive one?

PC: I would have to say it was, it wasn't a negative.

I: And since you have experienced living in both a church-owned home and your parents owning their own home, can you say anything about the differences between those two?

PC: As a preacher's kid or from my own personal experience.

I: Both ways.

PC: It was nice living in a parsonage because you were right next to the church, you know, and dad was gone a lot so that was nice. It wasn't a very nice house. It was forever not in good repair. You know we had a squirrel in the laundry room and snakes in the wall and mice, I mean, it was an old house, it was an old farmhouse. I mean I didn't hate it as a house but it was just a rundown house. I mean they did what they could do to it. But I liked it when we lived three miles away. I liked it that our house was our house and people couldn't just stop over but we had people over. But, I mean, it wasn't the same as when you're right next door

I: People stopping by and needing to get in?

PC: Well, you know, I remember as a little kid there was a wedding and no one had rice and they came over to our house, I mean as a little kid, and they came over and said they wanted rice. And we had a baby-sitter or someone like that, so I went digging through trying to find rice, you know. I'm thinking, "This is silly," but it wasn't a big issue. The biggest issue was that we were able to have, we had a bigger home, a better home and a little privacy even though we were in the middle of a neighborhood. Whereas we weren't before, we were off in the middle of no where, well at the edge of a suburb and there was nobody around, there were no houses around. The nice [thing] when we lived next to the church was the church had a lot of property and not all developed and so we had our own adventures in the woods, which I had forgotten about for awhile, but that was a lot of fun, so that was neat but it was nice to have our own home.

I: Just generally speaking, growing up as a pastor's son is there anything you would have like to have seen done differently?

PC: I don't know, I don't think so. You know we had the stability that we weren't moving all the time which some preacher's kid have to deal with that all the time. We never had to deal with that and we were a close knit family, you know. My dad's family was in the _____ area so, you know, we didn't have that issue [of] being far away from family. Didn't move a lot, we had a nice home, so I mean ours wasn't necessarily the typical. We didn't move, we were close to family, had a nice living situation, so we didn't deal with some of the issues that, you know, others were. Like my family, my kids are 1400 miles away. Yet on the other hand, you know that we've had many a chance

to go home and they've been to weigh in on their thinking of that. And you know, since living in _____, while _____ will remember that so he's the only one in our family that's really moved a lot.

I: What could be done, in your opinion, what could be done to help make being a pastor's child a real positive experience?

PC: Well, I think part of making it a really positive experience is for non-PKs themselves who are preachers to understand the possible pressures, you know. Like for _____ as an example, or the other kids, you know, I'll take heat on occasions because I won't make _____ go to _____. He hates it, you know, and it's not that he hates doing things in church, he just doesn't like _____ and so I don't make him go. I take hits from some people because, you know, if you don't make yours go, it's like I'm not going to make him go, he doesn't do a whole lot of other things and nobody else's kid has to. Because he's the preachers kid, I'm not going to make him go to that.

I: You're not going to take the pressure you feel from people and transfer it, the expectations they have of your children and then pass it on to them?

PC: Which is easy, I think, for the pastor to do when he needs a volunteer because you know this and that and I'm not going to do that to him. The expectations I put on are not necessarily the ones of the other people. I mean there's no doubt he's going to feel pressure about issues or the other kids are too young yet to feel some of that. _____ might feel some of that but I don't know whether that's from being a preacher's kid or just being a loving little girl. But you know _____ will feel some pressure. But I'm not going to make him do things just because someone else thinks he needs to do it. And a lot of preachers do.

I: So what I hear you saying is that pastors themselves need to stick up for their kids.

PC: Well, the family, the pastors family, the husband and wife both have to. They need to deal with what the issue is, they shouldn't make their kid have to deal with the issue. Now I'm not saying there's not times I make, you know, _____ has had to do things on occasions and I had to do the same kind of things. But I didn't, you know, if he is totally innocent, but I would make him do this even if he wasn't a preacher's kid. But there was someone in church that totally misrepresented and was totally hurt by something he didn't do, you know. And I made him write an apology letter and, you know, and realizing that maybe some of that was because he was the preacher's kid. But you know that I would think that I just know how I am and I would make him do that anyway, you know. So they tell me I was really but I don't make him go do things he doesn't want to just because he happens to be the preacher's kid.

I: What could be done by the congregation to help make it a real positive experience?

PC: That's a tougher one because different congregations might handle things differently. I don't know that there's a one kind of answer to that.

I: Just on general principles.

PC: I think the congregations realize they're kids just like anyone else. Kids will be kids. I mean I think that the general problem with preacher's kids today is the same general attitude that society has with kids. They have unrealistic expectations about their kids and the preacher's kids might be just more of a focus because they happen to be the ones they know. So I don't see that this is a real problem with my kids at _____. I don't see that, I see it as a real possibility.

I: Anything the church-at-large could do to help make it a positive experience?

PC: I think that goes back to what I said earlier. I think just non-PKs, and there's more of them all the time, need to be aware of the possibilities. You know, my family over -----. _____ is a third generation, and so, and both of us are PKs, so both of us have experienced the good, bad and the ugly and, you know, that I'm doing what is right all the time but at least we're aware that it's there.

I: You have an awareness of the dynamics?

PC: Yeah. Aware of the possibilities and dynamics. I don't think that all new preachers are aware of the dynamics and some of these poor preacher's kids, you know they weren't preachers kids all the time, and so I think that's even more difficult for them, you know. My son _____ was three when I was in vicarage so in a sense he's been a PK a long time, met a lot of people.

I: What is the most important thing that you would like pastors' children to know about being a pastor's child?

PC: I think back to a group called "Dogwood" that came out back in 1977 and I was a ----. And they would be the opening group for BJ Thomas. That's when BJ Thomas found religion, and two of three members of the group -----. And I remember they were singing a song and they said before they sang one of the songs, they said they want to know who were PKs in the crowd. So I knew there was suppose to be quiet and then he said, "Whenever I'd go out my dad always said, 'Remember whose child you are,' and 'Yeah, yeah, I know I'm a preacher's kid.'" And he though it wasn't until he was in the Navy and out in the middle of an aircraft carrier that's not what his dad was saying. So I think that you're a child of God, and I think preachers' kids need to realize that their attitude and their behavior is not the kind of thing of a preacher's kid but that they're a child of God. And I think that unfortunately sometimes that's more that they're the preacher's kid and that's why they need to behave. And the fact that they're a child of God and that's the indicative mark but it's easier said than done.

I: Anything else you'd like to add?

PC: No, so is that twenty-five interviews now?

I: Almost.

<end of tape>

INTERVIEW #23

Male, 16, entire life as a pastor's son, lived in both a church-owned and parent-owned home, one move

I: The first question is simply based on your experience. What pressures, if any, do you feel you faced yourself because you're a pastor's child? Like pressures in school or anywhere?

PC: At school it's kind of like you're expected to be a better kid. You can't do anything wrong and stuff like that. At church it's kind of expected to be good [all the] time. Not that people like, you know, just seems like you're expected to always be there and doing stuff in the church. And it doesn't bug [me] very much though. It's kind of a higher standard, I guess, being a pastor's kid.

I: Have you ever heard people say things like, "You can't do this or that because you're a pastor's son"?

PC: Not really that. They say like someone asks you do something and you say "No," and every once in awhile you hear people say "Oh, it's because he's a pastor's kid."

I: How do you handle that?

PC: It doesn't bug me very much. Everyone gets made fun of a little bit.

I: Kind of let it roll off?

PC: Yeah.

I: Do you think that your peers at school, do they treat you differently?

PC: No. I have my friends and we usually are together.

PC: Your friends, basically are around. How people in church, do you think they treat you different because you're a pastor's son?

PC: Maybe when I first got here but after awhile I guess not anymore, just accepted me.

I: Just accepted as one of the bunch. Do you think your parents treat you any differently, because you're a pastor's son, as they would other kids?

PC: No.

I: What are some positives or some benefits, positive things, that come from being a pastor's son?

PC: Right away you're introduced to God, you know, and like, you know, I mean some other kids they grow up, they never go to church. But when you're a pastor's kid you always go.

I: What impact do you think being a pastor's child has had upon your spiritual life? It's kind of related to what you talked about.

PC: A lot, I guess, because you pretty much grow up in a life of faith and you get a stronger faith because you're always around it. I think when you go to church, the kids that go to church, I'm always around it you know since I go to church with my dad or at least talk about it.

I: How about your involvement in church, do you see your involvement in church as any different because you're a pastor's child?

PC: Not really. I suppose you're expected to be a little bit better but I don't think I'm that much more than the other kids at church, you know. There's a lot of other people there that are really involved, too.

I: You remember moving once.

PC: Once from. . . I was born in _____ and then I remember we lived in _____ and then I'm not even sure if we went back to _____ or if we went from _____ to _____.

I: Was that like a year of vicarage?

PC: Yeah.

I: You moved to _____ and back to here. Did that move to here, be when you were four or five?

PC: Yeah, that would have been the same. Right now there's always the chance to move, my dad's been getting a lot of Calls lately. You never know I guess.

I: So it's a reality you have to live with?

PC: Yeah.

I: How do you deal with that? Is it something you think about a lot?

PC: Yeah, I do, especially lately since he's been getting so many Calls. I guess you just have to be ready for anything.

I: Do you worry about it?

PC: I really use to. But since last year when the Call was, like in _____, when we went there to visit the church. And I remember that night I threw up seven times. I don't know if it was because I was just under a lot of stress or whatever. And I guess I kind of think what it would be like to live there.

I: So you've had to think about it almost every month for the last two years it seems like. Do you think of your father just as a person? Do you think of him like that's my dad or that's my pastor, who is he?

PC: My dad.

I: Like when you're in church, too, and preaching, that's your dad?

PC: Yeah.

I: If there was something that you felt you needed to talk to a pastor about and you didn't feel comfortable going to your parents, who do you think you'd go to?

PC: I don't know. I never had to think about not being able to talk to my dad.

I: Now, when you think of your family and the identity of your family, do you think of your family as a pastor's family, or a Christian family, a normal family, how would you regard your family?

PC: I guess as a pastor's family, you know, because you're always at the church and all. But as far as I'm concerned it's as normal as any other family. ----- she does the same as like their parents do and we're pretty normal.

I: The church is, you know, such a big part of the life that you feel like you have enough family time?

PC: Yeah.

I: Overall, do you see your experience at being a pastor's son as being a positive experience or a negative experience, how would you characterize it?

PC: A positive experience. Like I said before, you to church all your life. Sometimes your dad's not home as much as you'd like, but it's a good experience I think.

I: I'm not saying you should be a pastor, but is this the kind of life you envision for your own children?

PC: Yeah.

I: You've had experience living in a parsonage or church-owned home and now your parents live in their own home. Just depends purely on how much you remember about the parsonage, but do you remember there being any differences between living in a church home and living in your own home?

PC: I sort of remember that none of the houses were as nice as we have now. And the parsonage I lived in wasn't any better, especially the one that we first moved to. I called it the "mouse house." We actually had two houses in _____. We just moved to a trailer, which wasn't too bad.

I: Did you find you remember when you lived there that the people respected your space or were they over there all the time?

PC: Yeah, they were over there all the time.

I: So mostly your experience has been -----, not living next door to church and those types of things?

PC: That would be the one next to the church.

I: The one in _____.

PC: Because it wasn't very far away and you can't get very far away in _____.

I: Well, what can be done, in your opinion, by parents to help make being a pastor's child a positive experience?

PC: Explain to children what's going on, you know, about all these Calls he's getting. And then what could happen with these Calls and all that kind of stuff. We could possibly be moving. To give you time or whatever to get use to it. I just want to know what's going on. It's not really that bad.

I: How about the congregation, what can the congregation do to help make being a pastor's child a good thing?

PC: Not to think you're "Mr. Perfect" or, you know, it's no different then. Sometimes you just get expected [to do] more, like, a lot of things, like that, to a lot of people.

I: Just treat you like an ordinary guy?

PC: Yeah.

I: If you were like talking to other pastors' children and you were going to share with them, what do you think is one of the most important things they

need to know about being a pastor's child? What would you want to tell them?

PC: When you're in the church, you're going to be expected to be really good, and just watch yourself and be careful what you do. You don't have to walk around all straight like you can't do anything, but just be nice and stuff in the church and don't try to be stupid.

I: Well, I appreciate that. Part of this whole project that I have to do is that I have to put on a retreat, like an overnight retreat, just for teenage children of pastors. And so what I'm asking people, and I'm saying is don't be nice to me just because I'm bringing this up as an idea, but do you see the value of such an experience? And number two, what sorts of things might be good for pastors' children to know?

PC: Try to find what you think would be good about being a pastor's child and how you handle yourself, just being accepted.

I: I'm going to have to do that, put on an overnight retreat and so you might be hearing from me in the not to distance future about that. I find that there are a lot of really neat teenage pastors' children in the area. Thank you for your time.

INTERVIEW #24

Female, 13, entire life as a pastor's daughter, always lived in a church-owned home, one move

I: The first question is, what pressures, if any, do you believe you experience that come from being a pastor's child?

PC: What do you mean?

I: Like, for example, any pressures from friends?

PC: Well, I don't really get pressured because everyone thinks I'm like a pastor's child, so I'm suppose to be like perfect at everything.

I: So do you think they think that?

PC: I don't know.

I: Do you think that your friends treat you differently because you're a pastor's daughter?

PC: Just a little.

I: Why do you think that?

PC: They all think they want to go to a feature PG13 movie, they'll ask me first, of course, they will anyway, I mean, they'll like say "Will your parents think it's okay" or something like that and ---

I: Do they ask that of the other kids, too?

PC: No, they just seem like they can go.

I: How about the church, do you think people in the church treat you differently because you're a pastor's daughter?

PC: No, I don't think so.

I: So they haven't said anything like, "You can't do that because you're a pastor's daughter"?

PC: No.

I: How about your parents, do you think they treat you differently because you're a pastor's daughter?

PC: No.

I: When people do things like that, when they say like, "Will be okay if your parents let you go to a PG13 movie," how do you react to that?

PC: Well, most of the time I say, "They'll probably say okay."

I: Does it make you feel bad or anything when they do that?

PC: No, not really.

I: Well, what are some of the positive benefits that come from being a pastor's child?

PC: You learn all about God and people are nice to you and, of course, they are to everyone else and they seem to respect you more.

I: What impact does being a pastor's child have on your spiritual life?

PC: Probably not really being tempted too much to be like they sometimes just to like go to a party ----- and stuff. I probably would be less [apt] to do

that because I come from a family where I don't have brothers or sisters that go to that stuff.

I: Anything else, any other ways that being a pastor's child has effected you spiritually?

PC: I don't think so.

I: How about your involvement in the church, do you think that makes a difference because you're a pastor's child you're involved in the church more or less?

PC: Well, yeah, because I tend to be like at church every Sunday, but most of my friends will be like there only half the time. They'll come every other Sunday or every three Sundays.

I: You're more apt to be at church all the time. Well, you've moved once and you say you don't remember that too much?

PC: No.

I: So that move didn't really effect you very much. But yet part of the reality of being a pastor's child is just living with that reality that there's a possibility of a move. Do you think about that very much?

PC: Well, not really.

I: It didn't like really cause a big problem for you. Well, when you think of your father, do you see him primarily as your father or as a pastor or how do you see him?

PC: As my father.

I: Okay, so if he's up there preaching then, "that's my dad."

PC: Yeah.

I: If there was something that you needed to talk to a pastor about, and you didn't feel comfortable going to your parents, who might you go to?

PC: My father.

I: When you think about your family and the identity of your family, do you see your family as you're a normal family or a Christian family, you're a pastor's family, how would you identify yourself?

PC: I don't really think of the fact that we're, well, we live in a parsonage and that.

I: So you don't really think about that, a normal family . Well, overall, do you see your experience of being a pastor's child as being a positive experience or a not so positive experience, how would you describe it?

PC: I think it's pretty positive.

I: What do you think could be done to help make living as a pastor's child a positive experience by your parents? What can your parents do to make being a pastor's child a good experience?

PC: -----

I: How about the church, what can the congregation do to help it be a good experience?

PC: Not to be perfect.

I: And, if you were like talking to other pastors' children and there was something really important that you wanted them to know, what would that be?

PC: Probably that being a pastor's child doesn't matter, it doesn't make you different from anyone else.

I: It's all in who you are?

PC: Yes.

I: And part of this whole project that I'm doing is that there's suppose to be a retreat for pastors' teenage children, and you don't have to say it's a good idea if you don't think so just to be nice to me, but what do you think of something like that? Do you think that would be a useful thing?

PC: Yeah, because then you know what other people are thinking and what you can do about it.

I: I thank you for your time and for the interview.

INTERVIEW #25

Female, 34, sixteen years growing up as a pastor's daughter, lived in both a church-owned and parent-owned home, two moves

I: The first question I simply want to ask you to think about is what pressures, if any, do you recall experiencing as a pastor's child? They could be pressures from the outside, pressures from the inside?

PC: It was more pressure filled as a teen than as a young adolescent. I personally think that my mother's job was way worse than mine, a pastor's wife as opposed to a pastor's daughter. But I don't know that I felt particularly pressured to perform as a youngster but as a teenager. I felt like I was being watched.

I: Watched by?

PC: Other parishioners, not necessarily, you know, my high school contemporaries. But the people who were members of my dad's congregation watched what I wore to church and I generally would irritate them by wearing a slit dress or something to drive them insane because I kind of rebelled from that a little bit.

I: I was going to ask you how you reacted to those pressures?

PC: I generally just, it really irritated me. I tried to aggravate them. The most rotten thing I ever did as a pastor's daughter was defy my father and try out for a play in high school that he did not approve of and landed a part. And made my brother try out and he landed a part and my father was absolutely livid. After he had expressly told me, "You will not be in this play, it does not have good values, it does not reflect what we believe, you will not be in this play."

I: You saw it as being a rebellion?

PC: Totally, defied him, totally defied him, completely and utterly defied him. It was about the only time, however, I ever did it. My siblings, on the other hand, were, I have three younger brothers, and all three of them were very sneaky. They were doing rotten things like sneaking out of the house or going off and carousing and stuff. And I was generally, except for this one incident where I was openly defiant, I generally pretty much towed the line never ever having drinks of alcohol or went to a party or anything during high school, ever. I was really a ----- and didn't do any carousing or defacing property or anything like some of the things my brothers all did, all three of them totally did.

I: How much of that do you think was related specifically to being a pastor's child?

PC: I think they in their way rebelled against being the pastor's children. I waited until afterwards. I waited until later before I rebelled from that and fell away for a time from the church and went through that phase. And then

met a wonderful very good man who hauled me back in again and he will take credit for that. But I won't give him credit for that because I think that as a pastor's child I really didn't have the need to rebel all that much. So I didn't find it that pressure filled. And then after I went to college, then I didn't necessarily constantly rebel against being a pastor's daughter but perhaps being further away proximity wise from my very strong disciplinarian father. Finally sowed my wild oats then when I was out of high school, after I was out of eyesight of the parishioners and out of earshot of them, that's when I did my thing.

I: Kind of caught up with you later.

PC: It did, it kind of caught up with me later. It was a short period of time but it was enough to, enough for me to be, you know, not a very good Christian person for several years. I didn't attend church in college the first year I was away from home until like I just really started seeing my future husband at the time.

I: Do you think that growing up, that especially in your teenage years, did your peers treat you differently or say things or do things that . . .

PC: Every now and then someone would say, it wasn't very often, my friends would generally be pretty good about treating me fairly well. I don't recall feeling like an outsider all that much. I had a lot like different cliques and stuff that I ran with and never, you know -----.

I: So by in large your friends accepted you pretty well?

PC: Yes, pretty much. Many of my good friends did come from my grade school, eighth grade here I went to a Lutheran school. I actually went through all of my parochial school years in a Lutheran school and -----.

The only years that I did not go to a Lutheran school was in Kindergarten and then I didn't go to a Lutheran high school for four years. I went to public school for a grand total of five but grades one through eight were all at three different Lutheran schools. And those friends I retained even in high school came from that eighth grade year, I think, and those friendships with those other Lutheran kids through the high school years. I had a pretty good basis for good friends. I never ran with the real nasty crowd or anything like that.

I: How about, you mentioned the congregation already but your congregation that you were part of, how did they treat you differently, if at all, because you're a pastor's daughter?

PC: The first congregation I was [at was] very small and I don't have much a recollection of things from there. The second congregation I was I had very good friends who went to public school while I went to a completely different school and none of my friends from my congregation went to the same school I did. My parents drove us eighteen miles one way so that we could go to a parochial school. The congregation people I don't feel ever treated me differently.

I: Did you sense that you were watched?

PC: That was later, that was when I was in the third congregation, seventh grade through high school. That congregation always watched what we did. I recall my dad preaching and my mother would like to sit up in the balcony, she would have all four of us and were six years apart, so it's two, four, six years apart. And we sit up there in the balcony and I recall him being able to discipline us from the pulpit. He would be able to look up into the balcony as we were screwing around making any noise he would give us the mean daddy look from the pulpit. And we were instantly decent. But I think Mom was really pretty smart taking us up there rather than being in the front pew having the whole congregation know exactly what we were doing. We were up in the balcony and if we were making noise, daddy could discipline us and it was all done and we were being quiet. But, yes, they would definitely watch how we behaved, I would behave.

I: Did they say things, do you recall them saying things?

PC: No, I don't recall them ever saying things. My dad was then, and still is, a very very strict disciplinarian, so there was not a lot of room for, like today everyone that I know their kids go out to the bathroom at least four times during the worship service, there was none of that type of thing at all. We were expected to be very quiet and not be coloring or not be eating or various things like that. We were together with my younger siblings sometime.

I: How about your parents, do you think they treated you differently, more differently than other kids because you were the pastor's child?

PC: Yes. They expected us to pull to their standards. I think they expected us to be examples and my father's view of have your own house in order definitely was put into play. I recall even hearing dad, you know, "I need to have my own house in order here first before, you know, I can tell anyone else how to treat their families." Yeah, I do recall that. He was very very strict and then as the years went on and I left and the other younger kids, then they mellowed out, mellowed out and mellowed out and now they're still fairly strict with their ----- . But nothing compared to how they were with the guinea pig, I mean that's what my mother has said. I said, "You were always so much more strict with me." She said, "You were the guinea pig we practiced on and then found out things." I think that as time went on they did less and less of that but with me they were very very strict. It's a good thing they were because then later on I came back to that. I kind of like came the full circle and [I'm] particularly hard on my son. I ask a lot of him and way more than my friends are with their children. They look at me and go, "Why are you making him do that." Well, because I expect him to act a certain way because my parents did that with me and I'm really glad they did, you know discipline with love.

I: Well, what were some positive aspects of being a pastor's daughter, some benefits?

PC: Oh, I got to eat at every capital in the world. I love to this day, goulash. I love goulash, my husband hates casseroles but I love casseroles because I went to every meeting, every lady's aid, every youth group. I think I grew up around older people a lot, since I was the oldest I was around the older people a lot, and I got to go to all the youth group things and skating parties and things like that from the small town. I really liked being around the older things and never really particularly minded going to new things with my mom or dad or both.

I: So if you were expected to go to these things it really didn't bother you?

PC: I didn't have a problem going at all. Perhaps my younger sister minded more but I didn't have any problems with it.

I: Okay, you see it as a benefit?

PC: Yeah, as I recall.

I: Being able to meet people?

PC: Yeah. I thought it was great and I got to eat casserole, that was really good. To this day I like potlucks and my husband cannot stand them.

I: Well, what impact did being a pastor's daughter have on your spiritual life?

PC: I would say a great impact particularly when I compare my upbringing to my husband's and that's the best test for ----- . And I can remember one time my husband, I can quote the Bible, when he was going to public school I think that was probably the greatest impact on when he was going through school years. It really had a great impact on me spiritually being able to go to parochial school through the formative years. In looking back I can now say, you know, I knew the Catechism, I knew the Bible stories that kids in Sunday School now days don't really know anymore and I think that probably was the greatest and then I----- are you sick but, you know, I recall being taught early on to be very very polite on the phone and take messages very specifically if they were for dad.

I: That might be something that not every child learned either.

PC: That was very important to my parents to answer, you know, very specifically, take very detailed messages.

I: So you see it as having a very good impact , especially when you went through that rebellious time.

PC: Yes, I really do. And I think the fact that I did attend parochial school was anchored to me for later on when I weathered the storm of rebellion in my college years. Yeah, I think that's what really really helped.

I: What impact has being a pastor's child had on your involvement in the church?

PC: I think particularly early on when we first moved to_____, we'd been married for six months, I was in my early 20's, it was a matter of wanting a break from church involvement for awhile. I went through a stage where it's like, "Honey, let's go to church and come home," and there was a period of time when that's all I wanted and that's all he really wanted, too.

He was very busy with his business at the time and I was just not interested in being super involved in the church. And then I will attribute the giant clucking sound to my friend's brother _____. Thank you. I think they reminded me how important it is to be involved and then it made me remember that I probably had some gifts that I was wasting by not being involved in various activities in the church. So I would attribute that to them. Thank you for reminding me that this is important. I did need to do this, it's not going to be someone else who is going to do it, you need to do it. As far as being a pastor's daughter, it is reminding me, I think if I had seen people go to meetings and I had been to meetings myself and I had seen what it takes to organize various events, I would have had probably a better appreciation for the fact that what I could do would help.

I: Then you kind of knew how it all worked?

PC: Right. I didn't know how the whole thing worked, Robert's Rules and how the meetings could go and such things like that. And you know the dad and mom like things, I acquired those, well those were kind of a natural there, too. I would say the fact that I was brought up knowing all those things and knowing the liturgy they made me more comfortable later on.

I: You mentioned you moved twice. You remember those moves?

PC: The first move I remember wasn't that big of a deal. The second move from _____ to _____ was a terribly wrenching horrible move because that was seventh grade and I had dear friends and we cried and cried. We had a huge going away party for us in the church basement and since the church in _____ before we went to _____, and it was ugly, there was just a lot of crying, it didn't last long. I was feeling really traumatized. After I got there, you know, I kind of floated back and my personality is such that I went from one thing to the next without too much problem. But the going away party was really tough and my girlfriends and I played a song we had written for the occasion. It was one big mess, it was a really big mess. And the move before that when I was really small, I remember as being billed by my parents being very excited. That way they were really smart in manipulating our minds to think this is really cool, you know. So that was very basic. That move was not a real problem because I was at an age where I had close dear friends and I did not want to leave and that was the hard part rather than the move so much, because I was leaving all my friends and that was the tough part.

I: Realizing that moving is always a possibility, is that something you thought about during . . .

PC: I did but it never really bothered me that much because after I had had that newest move and realized, "Hey, things aren't so bad, it's kind of a cool place to be," I realized that I would survive it again. It didn't really scar me or terrorize me or anything like that because I realized, well, okay, I just moved. I retain to this day a friend that I had that {I had to} move from. She was in my wedding and I was in her wedding and she has remained my dear

friend. I call her to this day. So she was my friend from second grade to seventh grade and . . .

I: You were able to make friendships from them?

PC: Even so, even with moving.

I: That's great.

PC: That's so very few. Like one, she was the dearest and one main friend that I really did not want to move away from and so I did, I moved from that friendship and that really helped too. I think that maybe eased the whole ----. My parents were very good about maintaining a couple of friendships with people from those previous congregations. They invited them to their new home, and we would go down to their Confirmations, and they would like come up to ours. And they did that with all of their congregations, with both of those first two. They would have friends from both of them come to our current home and visit. So all within the same state, just totally different parts of the state, southern, east, central, south and then very central.

I: When you think back to your years in a parsonage, how did you regard your father? Did you regard him as your dad or as your pastor, how did you view him? For example, when you sat in church and saw him, who would this person be to you?

PC: My father. I always was scared of Dad. [He would] separate [being a] father from [being a] pastor. Here's a case where I think it was especially good at it. When I got married my husband, who was a -----, went to premarital counseling with my father and, I thought, this guy has it together, if he feels like he can go through premarital counseling with my dad. Wow, cool, this is the man for me. And he was brilliant about keeping those separate. He always separated his fatherhood from pastorhood and so that was very easy, it was very easy to see him as my dad and as my pastor separately. He was my favorite preacher for so many years. How did I see my dad? As a ----- totalitarian dictator. He's got a very strong personality. I viewed him with the utmost admiration, respect and fear. I think he was just such a strong imposing figure and still is, exceedingly intimidating to everyone. He really is. And I rather enjoyed that as a child. I think he really enjoyed his ----- as scary.

I: You say he was able to separate his pastorhood from fatherhood? Did he ever do that at home?

PC: Yeah.

I: So at home he was Dad and he didn't bring too much of the pastor part home?

PC: No, that's not true either. He obviously had to intermingle. Particularly my parents were very very good at the house mentorship, and we had meals together, always had meals together, but meals there was a time to give instruction time. And though he was the disciplinarian who always would make sure that we would learn things and Biblical principle facts. So, yes and no. Yes, he would separate the two and I could always tell when he

was being Dad and not really pastor, but he was very good about making sure that we were educated on Biblical principles at all times.

I: So, when you see your family then growing up would you consider it as being your regular family or were you a pastor's family? What would you say to the identity of your family?

PC: A pastor's family. We were always not concerned to have been a regular family. I don't think a pastor's family really tends to be a regular family. You're not really allowed that luxury.

I: How is it different?

PC: You know, where you don't drink in public, you don't do things as a family, you try to build yourself up as someone whose an example for the rest of the parish.

I: So it went beyond just being a Christian family?

PC: Oh yeah, I think so. I mean in my era particularly that was a big thing. It was to have your home in order before you're gone and telling everyone else what to do and that was an example you were expected to set. The pressure was on my mom, because she, as you know, was the one who there with them all the time and, you know, had the kids. And [she] was on her own, parenting, an awful lot, when Dad was gone, with meetings every night and was absent an awful lot.

I: How did you react to that, his being gone a lot?

PC: I resented it. I think I resented it probably more than my mom did. I resented the fact that Dad was not around when I thought that he should be. But after awhile came to somewhat of an understanding that was part of his job. It took about three to four years into my marriage to get over that same resentment with my husband and his job. But you know, "I do not want you to be gone like my father was, you need to be at home." But then figured out that that was his job, again, for the second time in my life. Duh. And so now I understand it way better than I did before. I got myself in ----- on that one. Fortunately it was before I had children that I figured that concept out.

I: It wasn't a personal thing, it was just the way it was?

PC: Right. And he was very very active in going to meetings and doing counseling and things like that because he was active. But able to maintain his dictatorship when he came home, he was obviously the head of the household even though Mom did probably the lions share of the discipline and he handled the tough part.

I: Overall, do you see your experience growing up in the parsonage as a positive experience?

PC: I'm glad that I had the instructions I had. I'm glad I had the discipline I had. I think had he not been a pastor that part of that would be lacking, that he wouldn't have had the education and background regarding discipline to understand it as well. I don't know that his counseling training aided him all that much with children, but I think that the fact that we were instructed in Bible study was wonderful. I'm so glad that I have that background,

particularly now in Bible study. I have confidence in meetings and Bible study and things like that because I feel that I have that instruction.

I: Do you think you would have answered that the same way in your teenage years?

PC: Would I have answered it that way? No. It took me until I was twenty to figure out that my parents were actually pretty smart.

I: So, after maturing, in looking back there was a big difference?

PC: Oh yeah. If you would have asked me when I was sixteen, I would have said, "I hate this, I hate this, I want to be a -----." Yeah, looking back on it now I can say it was valuable in numerable ways. I'm curious to find out how many of your teenagers respond to that sort of thing because I'd be willing to bet that they have similar feelings like it's irritating to be watched and irritating to have to be held to higher standards and things like [that], especially when you're a teenager and want to do fun stuff.

I: Kind of -----

PC: I'd be willing to bet that. However, you can tell them from me that later on it does get better and you'll be very thankful for those times when your; yeah, I find myself thankful that I had that schooling and instructions. That's what made me such a big proponent of parochial school. I was one of the incorporators in _____ because I believe in Christian education.

I: You indicated before, you had experience living in a church-owned home until your parents got their own home. Was there a difference that you remember?

PC: Yes, I would say so. My parents were horrified when they found out that they needed to buy their own parsonage because they were terrified and they'd never owned their own home before, and thought, "Oh, my goodness, I can't possibly do this." So that affected all of us kids. We're looking at them going, "Okay," you know, Mom and Dad are kind of worried about something for the first time ever. And even though Dad had accepted the Call knowing that it was still a trauma for them to buy their own home when they were in their, I suppose their thirties by then. They loved their parsonages in the first two parishes, they loved those homes and so for them to try to find a place I think for them it was kind of traumatic. The difference between those homes is my mom and dad, I think, felt so much more free and comfortable with changing things in the home and decorating and making improvements and things like that. I think that was a real liberating thing for them.

I: They weren't as uptight about things when they were in a parsonage?

PC: Right I guess they felt liberated to be able to do with the walls what they wanted to, I think. And I remember Dad thinking that things were okay and they could make this improvement and not feel like something needed to be asked of church properties people or something like that.

I: Do you recall a difference in how often the church members stopped by and that sort of thing between the two? Were they more or less invasive in the parsonage or your own home?

PC: No. I think in their own home they were more apt to visit in the home that they owned. I paid more attention as I got older, but I don't think there was any difference. They had plenty of people. The home that they owned was smaller and probably less appropriate for the amount of children they had, you know, but [it was] what they could afford. ----- The country parish had this huge home, this big square box home, those big country things and it was wonderful with huge amounts of room and big bedrooms and lots and lots of room. And a big yard with a tire swing. And then when I was in first through seventh grade the parish was in town with a nice big yard and a bunch of trees and lots of room again for kids and huge basement that we roller skated in, our own roller rink. And so they felt that they had had a lot of room. And then when I was in my high school years, in their third parish, our home that we owned was small compared to those. And then, after all, the kids were gone and still they had this huge home, a garage and they had vast amounts of bedrooms with all the grand babies and stuff. But they had a smaller home, the one that they owned was small. My bedroom ----

I: Based on your experience, what can be done by parents to make being a pastor's child a positive experience?

PC: I have a unique perspective, too, because my two best friends, _____ and _____, are parenting three children. And so I can look at them and say, you know, you should be doing that and that and so that is an interesting question because it's something I thought a lot about recently. I think they can make their children real confident and sincere in their role as pastors' kids by being good disciplinarians, I really do. I believe that one of the greatest things to come out of being a pastor's daughter was having a very discipline oriented father and he taught that to me. And I think that that's probably the best you can give your children is that love plus discipline.

I: So pastors need to provide that for their children?

PC: By all means.

I: Discipline with love.

PC: Discipline and be consistent about it and be sure that it's motivated [by love] because you want the best thing, not because people are watching.

I: How can that be communicated?

PC: Probably by reading every job in the book and effectively show them that stuff because I now am experiencing that with my two-year-old. I think preparing to communicate that to their children means starting right off the bat. It needs to be through their teen years. I think that that love and caring is inherently communicated through their love, they know that you care enough to tell them "No." I always did, I always knew that the only reason that they were so strict was because they loved me.

I: Anything else that parents can do besides discipline to help make being a pastor's child a positive thing?

PC: On a negative side, I would say that my dad was such a dictator sometimes. I just had this discussion with my mom when she came out to see us not very long ago, you know my father, I can count one time in my whole life that he ever apologized to me, and I know what it was and why it was. I think that you could probably, I told my mother this, probably could have communicated compassion and forgiveness better to me had he taken the time to apologize instead of taking six months at working on that. Maybe he didn't make very many mistakes but I know there was more than one in those eighteen years.

I: Dad is a real person.

PC: Right. Make him human.

I: Show integrity between what is preached and what is learned?

PC: Right. And I think that that is perhaps where he may have failed in not allowing himself to ever say, "No, I'm sorry, I shouldn't have said that." I think I told my mom just two weeks ago that I probably would have respected him even more had he been able to ----- because I know there were probably times when he felt that he had screwed up in a parenting role and could have said he was sorry but didn't want to appear weak. I think that would be dominant. I'm not saying ----- every single day but I'm saying that that probably would have aided in my opinion.

I: How about by the congregation? What could be done to make being a pastor's child a positive experience?

PC: I don't really feel like the congregation has any obligations to aid in parenting. I don't think they have any obligation to lower their standards of the pastor's children. I just last night, _____, _____ and _____ and I were talking, and I will not take my child out to the nursery if he's being bad. I don't want him to learn that ----- and _____ and I differ on that. The pastor's wife doesn't want her kids to be disruptive, their being obnoxious in church, so send them to the nursery to be baby-sat. My view on that is they need to be in church, they need to be listening. I know, he knows, less than two years old and knows that that's the Lords' prayer because he'll hear it and he'll fold his hands by himself unaided by Mom and Dad and when it's done he'll say, "Amen." So I know that he knows what's going on. I can tell him what happens at church and he can tell me, he knows what that means, you know, the people. He understands that concept even at age two of what church is, we go there to pray, we go there to pray to Jesus and we sing and he knows there is going to be people there. So I think the congregation could expect that those kids will be in church, at least they should be. I don't think they should be in Sunday School during church, I don't think they should be in the Nursery during church, I think they should be in church.

I: So there are just expectations?

PC: I think so and I don't think those are bad, that's my opinion, I just don't believe that those are bad. Over the years we've probably lowered our standards and expected less and less of them you know. Now if I had eight

children that might be a different story. I had just one, give your wife a little more latitude I think in that situation because she is one. But its the best time to be near your children. Your children are such that they're like you and _____ and they're quiet and well mannered, that's who like they're going to be. If they have a firecracker daddy and a firecracker mommy, like _____ and _____, they're going to be spastic, that's just the way it is.

I: So what I hear you saying is that even though there are these expectations, the church and the congregation shouldn't parent the children but respect [you] as one of the parents?

PC: Right. I would agree with that. I just don't think that you really have to lower your standards either. I think that proper discipline can take the church over and good behavior will be there in church.

I: And that's across the board, no matter who you are?

PC: It doesn't matter who you are. It's if you're parenting a child in that way if you believe that it is important to have your own house in order, that's what's going to happen. There are going to be instances no doubt when your children are going to rebel and obviously ----- I can't say across the board because that's not so, every child -----.

I: Anything the church-at-large could do to help pastors' children have a more positive life?

PC: I don't know that there is particularly any real education. I do know that my mom has a attended for years [pastors'] wives retreats and I think that's great. I think she always really derived a sense of power from knowing that she's not the only-----being a pastor's wife with children. I think that's very valuable, my mom does really good, that's how she met _____. I think that's a good way to do it. I think a support group for pastors' wives is good because they have the tough job.

I: If someone came to you and you were in high school and said, you know, I'm thinking about having a retreat for pastors' children.

PC: Oh, I think that would have been cool.

I: Do you see any value in that?

PC: I think that would have been really cool because that would make me feel special. It would make me feel like, you know, there are other people who are just like me, that would be really cool. Yeah. I wouldn't want to make it out to be that big of a deal so that, you know, thinking, "Ha, ha, I'm going to a special retreat," but I think that it would be fun and I think it's a good idea. Is that common now?

I: No.

PC: Not very common at all, from what I know.

I: If you were talking to pastors' children, teenagers, and there was one or two things that you thought was very important you'd like them to know about being a pastor's child, what would you tell them?

PC: Well, I've had that conversation with _____ because she and I have a lot in common. She is eleven or twelve and she had talked about that a

little bit. I would say that there are pros and cons of being a cop's child, there are pros and cons of being an Army brat, and there are pros and cons of being a pastor's child. The upside is you get all this great training. The downside is you may feel a little put upon sometimes with pressure because you're held up as an example. But nothing wrong with raising the bar, it will just make you a better person. So that would be the benefit I would say.

I: By raise the bar you mean raise the standards?

PC: Yes, raise the standards, and I think there is nothing wrong with raising the standards. I mean, I guess, I would rather that my parents had higher standards for me than lower standards for me. This will just make me a better person. ----- So that's what I would tell teenagers. And I would also tell, particularly teenagers, hang in there. In a couple of years your whole view of the world will change, your whole view will change and you will be so glad that you know all these other pastors who are friends of your dads. You'll be glad that you know how meetings go and you know what it's like to be . . .

<end of tape>

APPENDIX B

RETREAT FORMS AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

WHO AM I?

I. Who Am I? *A Baptized Child of God!*

A. What the Bible says

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 6:3-11

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin---because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

1. Why is my baptism so important?
2. What is my MOST IMPORTANT identity?
3. Why is it so vital to see myself first as a baptized child of God?

B. What does this mean for my life as a pastor's child?

Romans 6:11-14

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Galatians 3:26-27

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

1. What does it mean to be "dead to sin" and "alive to God in Christ Jesus?"
2. What does it mean to be "clothed" with Christ?
3. How does this truth help me when I am faced with concerns about identity?

II. Who Am I? *A Son or Daughter!*

A. What the Bible says

Exodus 20:12

Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Ephesians 6:1-3

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise--"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

1. How do we "honor" our parents?

Dr. Martin Luther, in his *Large Catechism*, suggests the following ways in which children can honor their parents: (discuss how we can show the honor suggested by Luther)

- a. when they consider their parents to be God's representatives.
 - b. when they esteem and prize their parents as the most precious treasure on earth.
 - c. when they are obedient to their parents.
 - d. when they show gratitude for the kindness and for all the good things they have received from their parents.
2. What is the *motivation* for wanting to honor our parents? (see Ephesians 6:1)

B. What does this mean for my life as a pastor's child?

1. As a baptized child of God, motivated by God's love in Christ, how will I want to regard my parents?
2. Does the job of my father make a difference as to whether or not I need to honor them?
3. What does God say about the work of my father?
1 Timothy 3:1: "If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task."

III. Who Am I? *A Pastor's Child!*

A. What the Bible says

The Bible does have something to say that refers specifically to pastors' children. In his lists of qualifications of "elders" (pastors), the Apostle Paul wrote the following:

1 Timothy 3:4-5

He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)

Titus 1:6

An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.

1. **While these words speak primarily to pastors, what do they say about the importance of pastors' children?**
 2. **Why is it important that pastors' children be believers?**
 3. **Why is it important that pastors' children be "obedient" and "not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient?"**
- B. What does this mean for my life as a pastor's child?**
1. **A pastor's child might say, "I want to be treated like every other kid."**
 - a. **to what extent is this possible?**
 - b. **to what extent is this not so possible?**
 2. **What are some "realities" that come with being a pastor's child that cannot necessarily be changed?**
- C. A closer look at pressures**
1. **Discuss the following pressures that are sometimes experienced by pastors' children. Have you experienced these pressures? If so, how?**
 - a. **identity - knowing "who I am" apart from my father being a pastor**
 - b. **involvement in the congregation**
 - c. **the expectation to be "perfect" by parents, members of the congregation, others**
 - d. **the expectations of peers**
 - e. **not enough time or attention from father**
 - f. **the "fishbowl"**
 - g. **interruptions in family time**
 - h. **moving or the threat of moving**
 - i. **other pressures?**
 2. **What would be negative or harmful ways to cope with the pressures that might go with being a pastor's child?**

3. How can the pressures be handled in positive ways? (Discuss this especially in light of parts I and II above)

ND District Retreat for Pastors' Children
Doublewood Inn, Fargo, ND
June 5 - 6, 1998

EVALUATION . . . EXTREMELY IMPORTANT!

Please take the time to complete this anonymous evaluation of the retreat. Your honest responses will help improve future retreats. Thank you for coming! May God bless your life!

PART 1: Please respond by circling the number that best reflects what you think.

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = undecided 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

As a result of this retreat,

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I have a better understanding of who I am as a child of God. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | I can better accept my role as a son or daughter. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | I can appreciate even more the role of my father as a pastor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | I feel better about my life as a pastor's child. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | I better understand some of the pressures that come from being a pastor's child. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | I am equipped to handle those pressures in positive ways. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | I see how the forgiveness and grace of God can be applied in my life as a way of coping positively with pressures. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | I can see the benefits of being a pastor's child. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | I realize that there are other pastors' children who have similar lifestyles and experiences. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | I am comforted knowing that there are others who are able to understand my life as a pastor's child. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Overall impressions of the retreat . . .

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. | The retreat was well organized. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. The information shared at the retreat was helpful. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. The presenter seemed to be well prepared. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. The facilities for the retreat were adequate. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Should there be another retreat in the future? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. I would be interested in attending another retreat for pastors' children. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

PART 2: Please respond to the following questions.

17. What did you learn at the retreat that you did not know before?

18. What would you have liked to have learned more about?

19. Suggestions as to how the retreat could have been improved:

20. Suggstions for future topics at a retreat for teenage pastors' children:

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