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### The Development of Vocational Awareness Among a First-Year Class at Concordia Seminary

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL AWARENESS  
AMONG A FIRST-YEAR CLASS AT  
CONCORDIA SEMINARY

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Practical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

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by  
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose

Through an integrated system of eleven preparatory schools and two theological seminaries the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod attempts to educate its own ministry. Recent years have seen a steady increase in the number of students making application for admission to its seminaries.

Forecasts made by the group's Board for Higher Education indicate the problem will increase in seriousness. In a forecast prepared for the Twenty-Sixth Delegate Synod which met at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, during June 1950, the Board estimated the number of ministerial graduates that would be needed for the next thirty years as follows:<sup>1</sup>

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Forecast</u> |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1950        | 125             |
| 1955        | 148             |
| 1960        | 175             |
| 1965        | 208             |
| 1970        | 246             |
| 1975        | 292             |
| 1980        | 350             |

As a result, in common with other theological schools Concordia Seminary faces the problem of having an increasing

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<sup>1</sup>Reports and Memorials. Twenty-Sixth Delegate Synod. Assembled at Milwaukee, Wisconsin. June 21-30, 1950. P. 139.



number of students in residence who are not sure of their vocation for the ministry.<sup>2</sup>

This study directs itself to an examination of the vocational awareness of an entering class of students at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. Specifically this thesis will attempt to determine the origin and extent of this vocational awareness. The study is confined to the vocation for the pastoral ministry, for which Concordia Seminary at present prepares the large majority of its students at graduation.

#### Definitions

It is seen at the outset that vocational awareness is an intangible. It cannot be measured in specific units of "attraction." Measurement technique has been perfected to the point where satisfactory results can be gained in the evaluation of intelligence, aptitude, and even personality. There is, however, no one test or even battery of tests which can be administered to determine precisely the

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<sup>2</sup>John Oliver Nelson, the director of the commission on the ministry of the Federal Council of Churches, writes: "First, theological education since World War II has begun to face an unprecedented problem of personal vocational adjustment among students. Time was when it assumed that men came to seminary quite sure of their calling, taking for granted the minister's status among his fellow Christians and heading casually for a particular field of ministerial service. Now all that is changed. Most students enter seminary today still harried by the deepest questions about the ministry." John Oliver Nelson, "Trends Toward a Relevant Ministry," The Christian Century, LXVII (1950), 525-7.



"aptitude" a man has for the pastoral ministry, much less his drive and determination to pursue this calling.

Vocational awareness is ultimately the sum total of both complex innate tendencies and qualities plus all of the factors of environment and training. Since heredity and environment can no longer be measured in a child, it is apparent that an inquiry could not follow a procedure of attempting to isolate the multitude of factors which comprise a vocational drive.

At the same time other disciplines have found through observation, experimentation and testing that certain areas of the background and development of the individual are normative for the understanding of his problems. The field of guidance and counseling, for example, outlines ten areas of information needed for guidance purposes: (1) Home background--information concerning the parents, their occupation, education, religion, health, birthplace, citizenship, and the language spoken in the home. The same information is requested for siblings. Community environment. Home conditions. Availability of books and magazines. And other factors, e.g., "broken homes." (2) School history and record of class work, based primarily on grades. (3) Mental ability or academic aptitude--this is a compound factor, representing not only innate characteristics but it is a combination of both native capacity and training. (4) The achievement and growth in different fields of study--because of this subjective factor in grading, broad testing programs are suggested



to be administered at the end of the year to measure achievements which are based on standardized tests. (5) Health. (6) Out-of-school experiences--for example, the summer and work experiences. (7) Educational and vocational interests--interest has been found to play the most dynamic roles in all aspects of mental and emotional development. (8) Special aptitudes--in art, literature, music, mechanical skills, etc. (9) Personality--judging both self and social adjustment. (10) Plans for the future.<sup>3</sup>

There are three techniques by which one can determine these personal factors. One is by the means of formalized testing. Tests can be administered which will measure mental ability, achievement in specific fields, and special aptitudes. A second means is through questionnaires which contain specific questions regarding home background, health, and interests. The third approach is more informal: the use of anecdotal records, interviewing, and the writing of subjective essays by the group concerning its goals, motivation, and misgivings. In this study all three techniques have been utilized. The particular strengths and weaknesses of each technique will be described as the results are enlarged.

We shall analyze specifically the following items as the most important factors contributing to a vocational awareness:

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<sup>3</sup>Arthur E. Traxler, Techniques of Guidance: Tests, Records and Counseling in a Guidance Program (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945), pp. 20-5.



(1) Ability--a. as measured by the American Council on Education Psychological Examination. This test measures with high reliability native ability. b. as measured by the Ohio State Psychological Test. This examination tests the ability to think; it seeks to discover how well a person utilizes the ability he has. (2) Home background--location of home, father's occupation, religion of parents, and number of siblings. (3) Mental health--a. as measured by the Bell Adjustment Inventory which takes into consideration the adjustment of the individual, both past and present; and b. as measured by the California Test of Personality which tends to emphasize the present adjustment. (4) Reading ability--selecting some of the most pertinent data from the Iowa Silent Reading Test plus magazines and books read by the group. (5) Interest--as measured by the Kuder Preference Record, plus questionnaires on other occupational interests. (6) Goals in the ministry--as measured through subjective essays. (7) Misgivings about preaching--as measured through subjective essays. (8) Change in vocational awareness after five months of seminary training--as measured by subjective essays and a comparison of quality points.

Besides "vocational awareness," another concept calls for definition: the position of the ministry in the Lutheran church. To appreciate a vocation toward the Lutheran ministry one must sense the unique position he occupies.

The Lutheran ministerial student is deeply conscious of the tremendous responsibility which rests upon him. The



Confessions to which he will subscribe speak of the ministry as "the highest office in the Church."<sup>4</sup> The life of every Christian, he learns, is to be lived as a heavenly calling. "But the chief service of God is to teach the Gospel."<sup>5</sup> This theoretical position is further supported by the attitude of respect and reverence in which the average parishioner holds his pastor.

Secondly the office of the ministry is not limited to a special social or economic group.<sup>6</sup> The average student seems to feel that he is rather unusual if he has decided on the ministry voluntarily and does not come from a family of several ministers. Statistically, however, this student is the rule rather than the exception.<sup>7</sup>

In the third place, the minister is said not to represent himself, but Christ. Typical of several statements in the Confessions is the following:

Neither does the fact that the Sacraments are administered by the unworthy detract from their efficacy, because on account of the call of the Church, they represent the person of Christ, and do not represent their own persons, as Christ testifies, Luke 10:16: He that heareth you heareth me. (Thus even Judas was

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<sup>4</sup>Philip Melanchthon, "The Apology of the Augsburg Confession: Article XV," Triglot Concordia, edited by F. Bente and W. H. T. Dau (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 327.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>"Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope," The Smaldecald Articles, Triglot Concordia, p. 511.

<sup>7</sup>Thirty-six per cent of the 1950-51 entering class came from parsonages.



sent to preach.) When they offer the Word of God, when they offer the Sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ.<sup>8</sup>

This quotation indicates the fourth distinctive factor as well: it is the Church which calls or appoints men. Quoting Romans 1:16 and Isaiah 55:1, the Confessions demonstrate that God commands the ministry of the Word. He works through His Church. "For the Church has the command to appoint ministers, which should be most pleasing to us, because we know that God approves this ministry, and is present in the ministry (that God will preach and work through men and those who have been chosen by men)."<sup>9</sup>

In its statement of the "Objectives of Ministerial Training" the Board for Higher Education lists the following as the principal functions of the minister today:

- A. Preaching and teaching revealed truth, so that men may know the truth and believe the truth.
- B. Teaching men to live according to revealed truth, so that they may demonstrate and prove their Christian faith.
- C. Delegating to qualified persons, as circumstances require, the performance of the functions of his office so that the Kingdom may grow. In modern times this clearly imposes upon the minister also the necessity for extending some of his functions through the instrumentality of organizations, so that the limitations of his own span of activity can be effectively compensated by the work of others.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Melanchthon, op. cit., Article VIII, p. 237.

<sup>9</sup>Melanchthon, op. cit., Article XIII, p. 311.

<sup>10</sup>The Senior College Problem. Part I: Objectives of Ministerial Training. Board for Higher Education (1946). P. 4.



We observe then in the Lutheran doctrine of the ministry the delicate tension between the concept of the Christian calling which every Christian has and the special call given by a congregation to one whom it chooses to administer Word and Sacrament. Consistently it is emphasized that the power of the Word and Sacraments neither comes from the ministry, nor do they become ineffectual when administered by "evil men."

In the course of this study we shall also be aware of the dual nature of the ministry itself. On the one hand it is a calling. God calls an individual into His service both to bear witness to Christ and to institute this witness in others through the administration of Word and Sacrament. The individual senses the working of God in his life, is aware of a love for God and a sense of concern for others who are not as yet in this relationship with God. Eventually the realization comes that the Holy Spirit has called him to proclaim the Gospel to people. This awareness of a calling may have taken place gradually. A great number of the students spoke of an ambition or desire to enter the ministry which was with them since childhood. Only a few can point to the specific factor which made them aware of their vocation.

But, on the other hand, the ministry is a profession. God extends His formal call to serve a particular parish through the agency of men and organizations. Theoretically a congregation can call any one of its members whom it feels is most qualified for the position of its religious leader.



In actual practice, however, when a church body grows to a certain size, the procedure for the recruitment and training of its clergy becomes rather formalized. Certain criteria are set up. A man must study a set number of years at prescribed institutions or pass examinations to demonstrate his orthodoxy, his grasp of certain techniques, and his moral life.

The ministry at the present time must be sensitive to both sides of this paradox: the ministry as a calling and as a profession. Exclusive preoccupation with either side destroys the other. Excessive concern with only the call will result in a clergy of lesser ability and inferior training. Congregations would be at the mercy of anyone who decided that he had a "call." But over-emphasis on the professional side of the ministry tends to set up a special class of "clergymen," a group separated from the people whom they are serving.<sup>11</sup> The tendency is to become preoccupied with theological niceties as ends in themselves. The central task of the Church, that of proclamation, wanes. Each side of the tension must preserve its unique contribution to the total picture of the ministry.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>For a fine statement of this problem in the Baptist ministry cf. Hugh Hartshorne and Milton C. Froyd, Theological Education in the Northern Baptist Convention: A Survey (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1945), pp. 21-33.

<sup>12</sup>The Senior College Problem, p. 6.



## Relation to Other Studies

By its very nature this study is related to two general areas of research. In the first place it must acknowledge its dependence upon the whole field of educational testing. Secondly, it is related to the many studies and articles written specifically about ministerial training.

The field of educational testing has made great strides in the area of aptitude measurement. There are now standard tests which measure either general aptitude or aptitude in specific fields. There are at the present time aptitude tests designed to measure ability in art, music, science, mechanics, foreign languages and many other fields. But there is no specific tool for the measurement of "ministerial aptitude." Numerous experiments are in progress attempting to construct such tests for the legal, medical, and teaching professions.<sup>13</sup>

As was indicated above, we have made use of two general aptitude tests, the American Council on Education Psychological Examination<sup>14</sup> by L. L. Thurstone and Thelma G. Thurstone and the Ohio State University Psychological Test.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Traxler, op. cit., pp. 42-64.

<sup>14</sup>L. L. Thurstone and Thelma G. Thurstone, "American Council on Education Psychological Examination," published by Educational Testing Service, Cooperative Test Division, 15 Amsterdam Avenue, New York 23, New York.

<sup>15</sup>"Ohio State University Psychological Test," adapted by the Committee on Technical Research of the Ohio College Association. Form 23, 1947-48.



Both of these tests are highly reliable. The A.C.E. has a reliability on the total score of .95 to .97. The coefficient for the Ohio is .68. By using these two tests in combination with one another the validity of one can always be checked against the other.

This study is also dependent upon the rapidly developing area of personality testing. In spite of general weaknesses, these tests furnish almost the only systematic way of collecting and analyzing information in this area. A lack of agreement on a basic definition of personality has remained a fundamental obstacle. Since psychologists have observed conflicting personality traits in the same individual under different circumstances, the question has arisen whether there is indeed any core of traits which could be defined as the "personality" of an individual.

If we agree that personality only arises in the meeting of each individual situation, then measurement becomes impossible. But if we grant that personality is "a more or less definite entity made up largely of a number of generalized traits,"<sup>16</sup> then description and measurement become possible.

In the area of personality we have utilized three tests: Hugh M. Bell's "Adjustment Inventory,"<sup>17</sup> published by

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<sup>16</sup>Traxler, op. cit., p. 100.

<sup>17</sup>Hugh M. Bell, "The Adjustment Inventory (Adult Form)," published by Stanford University Press, Stanford, California.



Stanford University; the "California Test of Personality,"<sup>18</sup> developed by E. W. Tiegs and his associates at the University of Southern California; and the "Kuder Preference Record,"<sup>19</sup> published by Science Research Associates.

In the second place, there have been studies made of ministerial training both within and outside the Lutheran Church. At the time of this writing the Board for Higher Education of the Missouri Synod is engaged in an extensive program to increase the "production of professional workers" and to provide "facilities for full college training in our Synod's preministerial education program."<sup>20</sup>

The twofold objective of re-organization is, briefly stated, to lead the ministerial student progressively to spiritual maturity and to enable him to acquire the necessary competence for the present-day ministry. The first objective is intangible, and its implementation will require not only much planning, but also consecrated teachers and students, and especially a rich measure of the Holy Spirit. The second objective is of a curricular nature. The construction of an effective and thoroughly integrated curriculum is as great an undertaking as, probably greater than, the erection of the most up-to-date plant.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Ernest W. Tiegs, Louis P. Thorpe, and Willis W. Clark, "California Test of Personality--Adult Series," published by California Test Bureau, 5916 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, California.

<sup>19</sup>G. Frederic Kuder, "Kuder Preference Record," published by Science Research Associates, 228 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago 4, Illinois, 1946.

<sup>20</sup>Reports and Memorials, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>21</sup>"Objectives of Ministerial Training," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXII (April 1951), 275-7.



Particular attention is called to the "Objectives of Ministerial Training"<sup>22</sup> drawn up by the Board; the "Report of the Educational Survey"<sup>23</sup> conducted by the Board in 1943; the article entitled "What Can Be Done to Strengthen the Students' Determination to Enter the Ministry?" by Professor Erwin H. Schnedler, as well as "A Positive Program for the Students' Social Development in our Preparatory Schools" by Professor E. A. Wolfram, both published in the Report of the Professors' Conference, held at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in August 1946.

Two recently-written dissertations also deal with the subject under discussion. The first is the doctoral dissertation, "The Training of Ministers in the Missouri Synod: A Historical and Critical Evaluation,"<sup>24</sup> by Thomas Coates. Professor Coates outlines the course of Lutheran education during the past decades, seeing a trend toward an integration of teaching with the motivation of Christian love and service. Of special interest to this study would be his evaluation of religion courses and the worship program at the preparatory schools and seminary. Since his study

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<sup>22</sup>The Senior College Problem, Part I, pp. 1-19.

<sup>23</sup>"Report of the Educational Survey." Proceedings of the Professors' Conference, Concordia College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 10-13, 1943.

<sup>24</sup>Thomas Coates, "The Training of Ministers in the Missouri Synod: A Historical and Critical Evaluation." Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1950.



included the polling of sixty-one clergymen and students by means of a questionnaire, his proposals should reflect the thinking of those who have gone through this educational system themselves.

The second dissertation is the master's thesis of Edward Wessling, "A Study of the Religious Attitudes of a First-Year Class at Concordia Seminary."<sup>25</sup> In this study Pastor Wessling attempts to discover what concept of faith was most commonly held by these men. He concludes that for the most part they conceived of Christian faith as intellectual knowledge of and assent to a certain body of religious facts.

Perhaps the best known study of theological education in general was that undertaken by the Conference of Theological Seminaries in the United States and Canada and the Institute of Social and Religious Research in the early 1930s. Particularly Part 4 of The Education of American Ministers,<sup>26</sup> Volume I, has direct bearing upon this study.

In passing we might recall Liston Pope's comment: "No adequate survey of theological education has been made in the United States in nearly twenty years. Six generations

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<sup>25</sup>Edward Wessling, "A Study of the Religious Attitudes of a First-Year Class at Concordia Seminary." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1950.

<sup>26</sup>William Adams Brown, "Ministerial Education in America," The Education of American Ministers. I, (New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research).



of students and virtually a generation of instructors have passed through the theological seminaries in the intervening two decades."<sup>27</sup>

A more recent survey, although far more limited in scope, was completed in 1945 by the Northern Baptist Convention. Those interested in the methodology used in conducting such an extensive survey, as well as those interested in comparing Baptist theological training with that of the Missouri Synod, will be interested in this study. Its results were published under the title Theological Education in the Northern Baptist Convention, prepared by Hugh Hartshorne and Milton C. Froyd.<sup>28</sup>

For the sake of completeness we also call attention to Oscar A. Winfield's doctoral dissertation, The Control of Lutheran Theological Education in America.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Liston Pope, "Dilemmas of the Seminaries," The Christian Century, LXVII (1950), 520-2.

<sup>28</sup>Hartshorne and Froyd, op. cit.

<sup>29</sup>Oscar Ahlenius Winfield, The Control of Lutheran Theological Education in America (Rock Island, Ill.: Augustana Book Concern, 1933).



## CHAPTER II

### ABILITY AND HOME BACKGROUND

In order for a student to adequately fulfill the requirements of the "professional" ministry, his ability must be of a high enough calibre to permit him to assimilate the necessary attitudes and skills of the parish ministry. The first question we ask then concerning this class of potential ministers is: "What is their scholastic aptitude or general intelligence?"

We note that this question is not tantamount to asking, "How good were their grades in high school and junior college?" or "How well do they apply themselves?" This question rather concerns itself with the native capabilities of the class. To answer this question the American Council on Education Psychological Examination for College Freshmen was administered to the group.

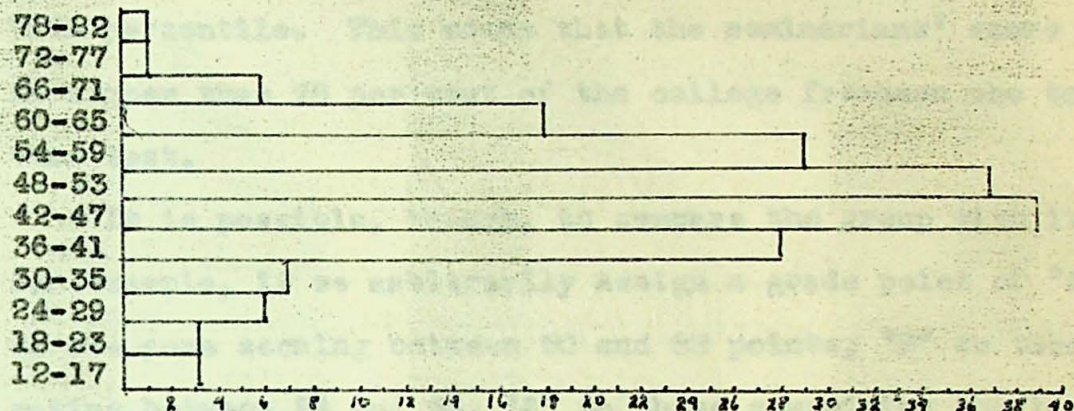
This examination consists of six individual tests which fall into two general areas. The first three tests are "Quantitative Tests"--that is, they deal with (1) arithmetical reasoning, (2) number series, and (3) figure analogies. The student's ability to use basic arithmetic skills is measured. In addition his ability to recognize relationships between sets of figures and various geometric figures is evaluated.



In the following table we have indicated the results of the "Q" test:

TABLE 1

Distribution of "Q" Test (A.C.E.) Scores<sup>30</sup>  
of First-Year Students at  
Concordia Seminary, 1950-51



Mean - 47.77

Median - 44.7

Mode - 46

Unfortunately, by the very nature of the case our interpretation of the A.C.E. scores must remain partial. The A.C.E. test is designed primarily for college freshmen. That means that the published norms are geared only for that group. Thus we have no fair standard to judge the ability of the Concordia group to think in quantitative

<sup>30</sup>Since it is our hope that this study will be of use to those who may not be too conversant with statistical terms, we shall define the terms which will occur throughout the study:

Mean is the most commonly used average; it is computed by adding the numbers and dividing the total so obtained by the total number of items.

Median is the middle value in a series; half of the total number of figures will lie above the median, half below.

Mode is the value which appears most frequently in the distribution; it is the most "probable" value of the variable.



terms in contrast with others who have received an equivalent training.

This much, however, can be stated. A comparison of the first-year class mean with that of the national norm shows that the average incoming seminarian rates at the 78th percentile. This means that the seminarians' score is higher than 78 per cent of the college freshmen who took this test.

It is possible, though, to compare the group with itself. For example, if we arbitrarily assign a grade point of "A" to everyone scoring between 60 and 82 points, "B" to those rating between 54 and 59, "C" to those comprising the large group between 42 and 53, "D" to those who fell between 36 and 41, and "F" to those who achieved only 12 to 35 points, then the class would rate as follows:

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| A | - | 26 |
| B | - | 24 |
| C | - | 75 |
| D | - | 28 |
| F | - | 19 |

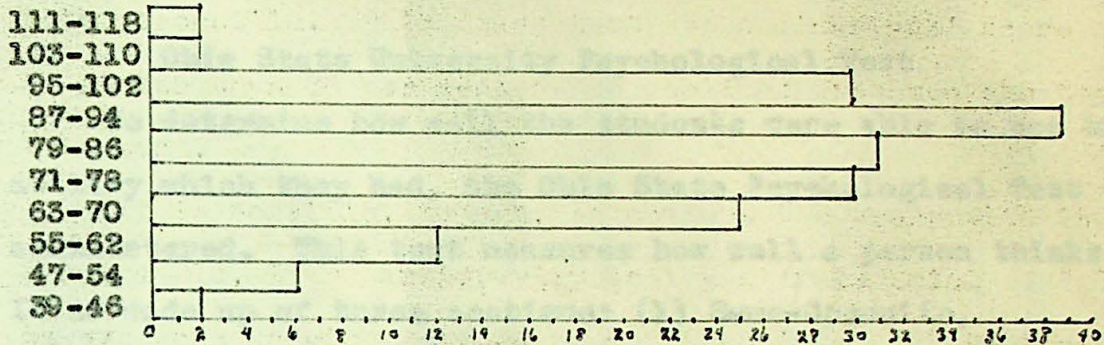
The second set of three tests measures linguistic ability. They are termed (1) Same-Opposite, (2) Completion, and (3) Verbal Analogies. In these tests the student must recognize synonyms and antonyms from a series of words, identify certain words when merely the first letter is given, and distinguish analogies. This second set of tests is the more important in the evaluation of an incoming ministerial student since linguistic ability plays a greater role in a theological curriculum than it would, for example, in a scientific curriculum.



In the next table we see the scores charted for the "L" test:

TABLE 2

Distribution of "L" Test (A.C.E.) Scores  
of First-Year Students at  
Concordia Seminary, 1950-51



Mean - 80.16

Median - 86.25

Mode - 88.5

A comparison of the "L" scores with the "Q" scores indicates that the average seminarian is comparatively stronger in linguistic ability than he is in quantitative ability. While he ranked at the 78th percentile on the "Q" test, he ranked at the 85th percentile on the "L" test.

Once again we shall assign a tentative grade according to percentile rank. Those rating in the highest of the seven percentiles, that is, those receiving raw scores between 99 and 118, we have evaluated as "A." Those who received grades between 91 and 98 fell into the "B" category. Raw scores falling between 67 and 90 were classified as "C." Those who received scores between 59 and 66 were judged as "D" and those who fell in the lowest percentile with scores of 39 to 58 were evaluated as "F."



The result of such evaluation shows the following in each category:

A - 20  
B - 27  
C - 98  
D - 20  
F - 12

#### Ohio State University Psychological Test

To determine how well the students were able to use the ability which they had, the Ohio State Psychological Test was administered. This test measures how well a person thinks. It is made up of three sections: (1) Same-Opposite, (2) Verbal Analogies, and (3) Paragraph Comprehension.

This test, which was developed by Herbert A. Toops, has a reported validity coefficient of .68. It will be seen that in general this test measures material similar to that of the second part of the A.C.E.

When one surveys the scores made by the seminary group, one is impressed with their high rating. However, it must again be kept in mind that this test was written primarily for college freshmen. An actual comparison of means shows that the "average" incoming seminarian ranks at the 79th percentile of the national norm.

Perhaps the fairest tabulation which can be given would be to show the raw scores made by the men of the seminary in comparison to those made by men of three typical Ohio colleges. It must again be stated that the seminary group has had two years of additional college training.



TABLE 3

Comparison of Total Scores on the Ohio Test<sup>31</sup>

| <u>Raw Score</u> | <u>Heidelberg College</u> | <u>Oberlin College</u> | <u>Ohio University</u> | <u>Concordia Seminary</u> |
|------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 144-149          |                           | 6                      | 1                      | 2                         |
| 138-143          | 1                         | 21                     |                        | 20                        |
| 132-137          | 2                         | 27                     | 2                      | 12                        |
| 126-131          | 2                         | 25                     | 1                      | 12                        |
| 120-125          | 5                         | 26                     | 2                      | 30                        |
| 114-119          | 6                         | 16                     | 4                      | 15                        |
| 108-113          | 7                         | 23                     | 4                      | 14                        |
| 102-107          | 11                        | 16                     | 6                      | 12                        |
| 96-101           | 4                         | 19                     | 8                      | 15                        |
| 90-95            | 6                         | 9                      | 5                      | 6                         |
| 84-89            | 16                        | 8                      | 14                     | 7                         |
| 78-83            | 6                         | 7                      | 11                     | 10                        |
| 72-77            | 9                         | 4                      | 10                     | 8                         |
| 66-71            | 11                        | 2                      | 10                     | 5                         |
| 60-65            | 10                        | 2                      | 20                     | 4                         |
| 54-59            | 11                        |                        | 17                     | 2                         |
| 48-53            | 8                         | 1                      | 18                     | 2                         |
| 42-47            | 7                         |                        | 11                     | 1                         |
| 36-41            | 5                         |                        | 11                     |                           |
| 30-35            | 2                         |                        | 8                      |                           |
| 24-29            |                           |                        | 6                      |                           |
| 18-23            |                           |                        | 1                      |                           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>128</b>                | <b>212</b>             | <b>170</b>             | <b>177</b>                |

Although one is initially impressed with the superior rating of the Concordia group, a comparison of the seminary mean of 109 with the centile and grade-expected class based on 4,577 freshmen indicates that the "average" seminarian surpasses approximately 80 per cent of this freshmen group and with normal effort would make "B" grades.

<sup>31</sup>"Ohio College Association (College) Norms for the Ohio State University Psychological Test Form 23," Ohio College Association Bulletin No. 135, p. 7.



## Reading Ability

As a specialized area of ability, the silent reading skill of the class was tested. The Iowa Silent Reading Test<sup>32</sup> was used. Of particular interest to us was the rate and comprehension section of the test which is listed below. In this test the student was asked to read two diverse types of prose, the first dealing with scientific content and the second with social studies material. It will be noted that the reading rate of the 1950-51 class was lower than that of the preceding year. One would expect the figures to be consistently high since the percentile rank listed is compared with the mean for the freshman college level:

TABLE 4

## Results of Iowa Silent Reading Test

|                          | Percentile rank of<br>Concordia mean for<br><u>13th grade</u> |
|--------------------------|---|
| Rate (only 1/2 of class) | 73rd  |
| Comprehension            | 48th  |
| Directed Reading         | 48th  |
| Poetry Comprehension     | 55th  |
| Word Meaning             | 68th  |
| Sentence Meaning         | 33rd  |
| Paragraph Comprehension  | 58th  |
| Use of the Index         | 48th  |
| Selection of Key Words   | 74th  |

In the second part of the test, that of directed reading, the ability of the individual is measured to comprehend and answer questions of rather detailed nature concerning material

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<sup>32</sup>H. A. Greene, A. N. Jorgensen, and V. H. Kelley, "Iowa Silent Reading Test (New Edition)" (Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y.: World Book Company).



read. The test makes a special effort to avoid a mere identification of words. The 1950-51 seminary class rated below the average college freshman.

The following unit concerning poetry comprehension is not considered of importance for the specialized training of the seminary.

The next test, however, which measured word meaning, is of utmost importance. It is pointed out that much of the difficulty encountered by students is due to a lack of familiarity with the terminology used in text and reference books. The mean of the class was at the 68th percentile rank of the test group. This means that the average incoming seminarian would rate 68th in a group of 100 average college freshmen--67 would be inferior to him while 32 would rank above him.

The greatest weakness of the group was shown by the next test which dealt with "sentence meaning." In this unit of the test sentences are read in which the meaning of the whole sentence must be comprehended. The seminary group ranked at the 33rd percentile. This means that the average incoming seminary student rated significantly lower than the average college freshman.

It will be noted in conclusion that the seminary group ranked higher in paragraph comprehension, as well as in their ability to locate key words, which measured skill in selecting the central topic of any paragraph.



Undoubtedly part of the poor reading ability manifested is due to the extensive training in foreign languages given at the preparatory schools. The student apparently becomes so "word-conscious" that his comprehension and grasp of the whole sentence is lost. It was noted above that the seminary students made their poorest showing in the test which measured sentence meaning. In interview most of the students indicated intense interest in a remedial program which would better their reading skill.

#### Home Background

Of primary importance in the developing of a vocational awareness for the ministry is the position of the social and religious background of the individual student.<sup>33</sup> The first inquiry concerned the sections of the country from which the students came. It will be seen in Table 5 that 69 per cent of the group came from the central and midwestern states:

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<sup>33</sup>Personal data concerning the students is on file in the Office of the Dean, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Through the kind cooperation of this office, this information was made available.



TABLE 5

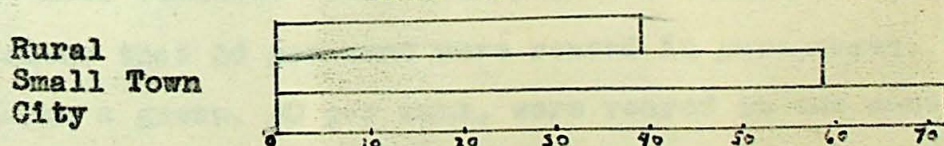
Geographical Distribution of the First-Year  
Class at Concordia Seminary, 1950-51

| <u>Geographical Area</u>                                     | <u>No. of Students</u> | <u>Per Cent</u> |
|--|------------------------|-----------------|
| New England:<br>Conn.  | 3                      | 2               |
| Middle Atlantic:<br>N.Y., N.J., Pa., D.C., Md.               | 21                     | 12              |
| Central:<br>Ill., Ohio, Ind., Mich.                          | 52                     | 30              |
| Midwestern:<br>Wis., Minn., Mo., Nebr.,<br>Kans., Iowa, N.D. | 72                     | 40              |
| Mountain:<br>Colo., Idaho, Wyo.                              | 5                      | 3               |
| Pacific:<br>Wash., Ore., Calif.                              | 7                      | 4               |
| Southern:<br>Ga., Texas, Ark.                                | 10                     | 6               |
| Canada:  | 9                      | 5               |

Perhaps even more important for an understanding of the background of the class is the question concerning the size of the community from which they come. One discovers a greater similarity between students coming from cities of approximately the same size--even though there may be a distance of three thousand miles between them--than between those who may be from the same state but represent a rural and an urban background.

TABLE 6

Geographical Distribution of the First-Year  
Class According to Size of Community,  
1950-51





Later in the study we shall discover the important factor which Christian parents were in stimulating their sons to study for the ministry. An analysis of the religious backgrounds of the students' parents indicated that both were Lutheran in the large majority of the cases. A total of 154 men reported that both parents were Lutheran. In another nine cases the mother was Lutheran while the father was a member of another denomination. Five students were reared in homes in which the father was Lutheran while the mother was a member of another church. Only four students reporting did not fall into one of these categories. In one case the student's mother was Lutheran while the father belonged to no church. In the second case neither parent was a church member. In the remaining two cases the mother was a member of a non-Lutheran denomination while the father belonged to no church.

The only criterion we have available for determining the types of families from which these students were drawn is the occupations of their parents. Since many studies have shown a high correlation between the occupational status of the father and the achievements of the student, this index is important. Although the group itself believes that "most students" come from pastors' homes, the survey indicates that 36 per cent were reared in parsonages. Almost as large a group, 30 per cent, were reared in the homes of business men or skilled laborers.



TABLE 7

Tabulation of Occupations of Fathers  
of First-Year Students at  
Concordia Seminary, 1950-51

| <u>Occupational Class</u>   | <u>No. of Students</u> | <u>Per Cent</u> |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Minister                    | 59                     | 36              |
| Skilled Labor or Business   | 51                     | 30              |
| Agriculture or Manual Labor | 40                     | 24              |
| White Collar                | 11                     | 7               |
| Professional                | 3                      | 2               |

The last factor of general description we are able to give concerning the "average student home" is the number of children in the family. As will be seen in the following table, a great range of backgrounds was represented--from ten students who had no brothers or sisters to one who came from a family of fifteen children:

TABLE 8

Number of Children in Family,  
Including Student

| <u>No. of Children</u> | <u>Students</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1                      | 10              |
| 2                      | 28              |
| 3                      | 33              |
| 4                      | 32              |
| 5                      | 23              |
| 6                      | 16              |
| 7                      | 10              |
| 8                      | 5               |
| 9                      | 4               |
| 10                     | 4               |
| 11                     | 1               |
| 12                     | 3               |
| 15                     | 1               |

Because of the presence of several men who served in World War II, the age spread in the entering class was extensive. The 170 students ranged in age from barely 19 to 34 years. The "average" age fell at 21 years 2 months.



## CHAPTER III

### MENTAL HEALTH

We turn our attention to another vital factor which influences both a man's decision for the ministry and his future effectiveness, namely, that of mental health or personal adjustment. The first tool utilized was "The Adjustment Inventory (Adult Form)" by Hugh M. Bell. This test provides measurement in five areas: (1) Home adjustment, (2) Health adjustment, (3) Social adjustment, (4) Emotional adjustment, and (5) Occupation adjustment.

The Bell adjustment test has the advantage of evaluating an individual's adjustment not only at the present moment but takes into consideration the past adjustment as well.

We shall consider in turn each of the areas included in the test<sup>34</sup>:

| <u>Home Adjustment</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>No. of Students</u> |
|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Excellent              | 0-1          | 2                      |
| Good                   | 2-3          | 39                     |
| Average                | 4-11         | 112                    |
| Unsatisfactory         | 12-16        | 16                     |
| Very unsatisfactory    | Above 16     | 4                      |

Only forty-one students out of the entire class were found to have made either good or excellent home adjustments.

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<sup>34</sup> All of the norms used are those suggested by Hugh M. Bell, "Manual for The Adjustment Inventory." Published by Stanford University Press.



By far the largest number were found to have an "average" home relationship. The religious educator, however, is to be concerned about the twenty students who were found to have made an unsatisfactory home adjustment. The scores become particularly significant when one considers that most of these students left home at the age of thirteen to fourteen years to attend a synodical preparatory school.

The seminary mode was 4; the mean 4.18; and the median 6. These three figures fell into the upper limit of the "average" category.

| <u>Health Adjustment</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>No. of Students</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Excellent                | 0-1          | 25                     |
| Good                     | 2-3          | 44                     |
| Average                  | 4-8          | 67                     |
| Unsatisfactory           | 9-13         | 15                     |
| Very unsatisfactory      | Above 13     | 2                      |

It must be emphasized that this test evaluates the student's own impression of his health as well as the actual factors of health which can be determined through a questionnaire. The questions dealt with his past medical history, his susceptibility to colds, his appetite, feelings of fatigue, and so forth.

As a group the class is in good physical condition. Sixty-nine have good or excellent health adjustment. This is 40 per cent of the class. Eighty-seven men, 49 per cent, were in the "average" category. This means that seventeen individuals, 9 per cent of the group, have unsatisfactory health adjustment. The seminary mean was 3.26, which rated



just slightly under what we classified as "good" health, while the national norm for men is rated as 5.28, which would be in the "average" category. The seminary median was 4, the mode 5.

| <u>Social Adjustment</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>No. of Students</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Very aggressive          | 0-2          | 19                     |
| Aggressive               | 3-6          | 40                     |
| Average                  | 7-15         | 64                     |
| Retiring                 | 16-20        | 26                     |
| Very retiring            | Above 20     | 17                     |

To test the group's social adjustment questions such as the following were asked: "Do you sometimes get badly flustered and 'jittery' in your present job?" "Do you like to participate in festival gatherings and lively parties?" "Do you make friends readily?" "Does it upset you considerably to have someone ask you to speak when you have had no time to prepare your talk?"

In evaluating the results, fifty-nine of the men were found to be "aggressive" or "very aggressive." Another sixty-four were rated as "average." The remaining forty-three, 24 per cent of the class, were found to be "retiring" or "very retiring." In this instance the seminary mean of 13.38 was below the national mean of 11.38 for men. This indicates that the average entering seminarian is not as aggressive as the men in the test group were discovered to be, but instead were slightly more retiring. The seminary mode was 8, the median 10.



| <u>Emotional Adjustment</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>No. of Students</u> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Excellent                   | 0-1          | 11                     |
| Good                        | 2-3          | 19                     |
| Average                     | 4-11         | 101                    |
| Unsatisfactory              | 12-15        | 29                     |
| Very unsatisfactory         | Above 15     | 15                     |

To evaluate the emotional adjustment of the group the Bell test asks: "Have you ever been extremely afraid of something which you knew could do you no harm?" "Do you worry too long over humiliating experiences?" "Do you get upset easily?" "Does criticism disturb you greatly?" "Do you day-dream frequently?" "Do you often feel self-conscious because of your personal appearance?"

The tabulation shows that thirty members of the class rated in the two most satisfactory categories. The next one hundred and one had average emotional adjustment. A total of forty-four men, 25 per cent, had made unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory emotional adjustment. The seminary mean was 11.25, significantly below the tentative norm of 7.70. The mode and median were 7 and 8 respectively. It is to be remembered that the arithmetic mean is influenced by extreme values; thus the fifteen at the lower end of the scale tended to lower the mean. The fact still remains, however, that fifteen individuals who aspire to become leaders of churches are burdened at present with a "very unsatisfactory" emotional adjustment.



| <u>Total Adjustment</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>No. of Students</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Excellent               | 0-8          | 8                      |
| Good                    | 9-21         | 43                     |
| Average                 | 22-47        | 102                    |
| Unsatisfactory          | 48-60        | 15                     |
| Very unsatisfactory     | Above 60     | 5                      |

The totals<sup>35</sup> for the Bell adjustment test revealed eight men, 4 per cent, to have an excellent over-all adjustment. Another forty-three students were evaluated as having made "good" adjustment. The largest number, of course, 58 per cent of the class, ranked "average." Twenty men, however, 11 per cent, thus far have made an unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory adjustment. As a whole the seminary group scored a better adjustment than that set as the tentative norm. The Concordia mean was 32.44; the tentative norm for men was 34.60. The seminary mode was fairly low, 26.5, with the median just slightly lower, 26.33.

To summarize we shall present a final tabulation. To check the validity of the Bell test a group of ten experienced adult counselors were instructed to watch for adults who evidenced either a very good adjustment in any of these areas, or a very poor adjustment. From these findings the following norms were established. The norms of the "well adjusted" group are found in the first column of the table; the norms for the "poorly adjusted" are in the second column.

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<sup>35</sup>The totals include the averages from the unit on "Occupational Adjustment," even though it was not felt that a complete description of the results was necessary for this study.



Since this test has been administered to the entering class at Concordia Seminary for two academic years, the figures for the 1949-50 class are given in the third column and the figures for the class of this study, 1950-51, will be found in the fourth column.

TABLE 9

A Comparison of First-Year Class Adjustment Scores with Two Validating Groups on Bell Test

| <u>Area</u> | <u>Well Adjusted</u> | <u>Poorly Adjusted</u> | <u>1949-50</u> | <u>1950-51</u> |
|-------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Home        | 4.65                 | 10.27                  | 6.34           | 4.18           |
| Health      | 5.40                 | 11.53                  | 4.48           | 3.26           |
| Social      | 8.40                 | 16.80                  | 9.91           | 13.38          |
| Emotional   | 8.28                 | 15.78                  | 8.38           | 11.25          |

The home adjustment of the class under study is significantly better than that of the class which preceded them. In fact their home adjustment is slightly superior to that of the "well adjusted" test group. A similar fact is true of their health adjustment. In this instance the 1950-51 class scored significantly higher than the test group and somewhat higher than the seminary entering class of 1949-50. However, there is a complete reversal in their social and emotional adjustment. Actually the social adjustment of the class ranked much closer to the maladjusted test group than to the well adjusted group. The difference between the two seminary classes is striking. The spread is not quite as great in the emotional adjustment figures, but still is considerable. Again the adjustment of the 1950-51 class was significantly poorer than that of the 1949-50 class.



### California Test of Personality

We shall approach the problem of mental health from still another channel, that of a so-called "personality" test. As indicated in the introduction, it is really impossible to measure "personality" per se. In the final analysis one cannot even separate ability and achievement from personality. There are, however, certain fundamental factors of human nature which can be measured with some degree of reliability. Together these form some of the dominant elements of what is commonly called personality.

The "California Test of Personality--Adult Series" attempts "to reveal the extent to which the individual is adjusting to the problems and conditions which confront him and is developing a normal, happy, and socially effective personality." The test posits a satisfactory life adjustment as a balance between self and social adjustment. The first six parts of the test measure self-adjustment: (1) Self-reliance, (2) Sense of personal worth, (3) Sense of personal freedom, (4) Feeling of belonging, (5) Freedom from withdrawing tendencies, and (6) Freedom from nervous symptoms.

In this part of the study we shall attempt to define more precisely the area and specific tendencies noted as particular strengths and weaknesses in Bell's Adjustment Inventory. For a man to be happy and effective in the ministry he must do more than merely acquire certain skills



and a fundamental body of knowledge. For his own sake, as well as for the sake of those whom he serves, he must have a well-balanced personality. He must possess the emotional stability to work over a long period of time without evidencing nervous symptoms or anti-social tendencies.

### Self-Reliance

The first item measured was that of self-reliance. For a student it would measure his ability to do his work with assurance. After receiving directions, a man with self-reliance would be able to depend upon himself in carrying out the assignment without constant supervision from the outside. The need for self-reliance in a man looking forward to the professional ministry need not be emphasized.

In order to determine the self-reliance of the class the students were asked in part the following questions: "Is it easy for you to turn down unreasonable requests?" "Is it hard for you to continue with your work when it becomes difficult?" "Do you usually get upset when things go wrong?" "Does it discourage you when people do not appreciate you?"

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 10.5                       |
| 10 - 15                 | 23                         |
| 25 - 40                 | 33.5                       |
| 55 - 75                 | 17                         |
| 85 - 90                 | 14.5                       |
| 99                      | 1                          |

The figures in the above table show the rating of the Concordia group as they are projected against the national



percentile. It will be noted that as a class the Concordia group rates rather low on self-reliance. Approximately 68 per cent of the class rated below the 50th percentile. The largest group, 33.5 per cent, fell between the 25th and the 40th percentile. Only 15 per cent of the entire class rated above the 85th percentile. The mode and the median for the class fell at the 40th percentile, the mean at approximately the 50th percentile.

#### Sense of Personal Worth

The second item which was examined by the California Test was the sense of personal worth possessed by the individual. To test this factor of personality the potential ministers were asked: "Do you find it hard to get people to accept your ideas?" "Do most of your friends have confidence in your ability?" "Are you often invited to social affairs?" "Do people usually depend upon you for advice?" "Do your friends seem to think you have an outstanding personality?"

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 0                          |
| 10 - 15                 | 9                          |
| 20 - 35                 | 25                         |
| 45 - 60                 | 35                         |
| 75 - 80                 | 18.5                       |
| 85 - 90                 | 9.5                        |
| 95 - 99                 | 4                          |

In the sense of personal worth section the first-year class scored higher. Once again the largest group, 35 per cent, fell between the 45th and the 60th percentile. This



time 31 per cent of the class rated above the 75th percentile. The mode of the group fell at approximately the 53rd percentile while the mean was slightly higher at approximately the 65th percentile, and the median fell at about the 65th percentile.

#### Sense of Personal Freedom

To determine their sense of personal freedom the students were asked in part the following questions: "Do you have to do what other people decide most of the time?" "Do your responsibilities keep you 'tied down' too much?" "Are you prevented from managing your own work or career as you wish?" "Do you feel that you can say what you believe about things?" "Does your family object to some of your close friends?" "Are you troubled by the fact that economic conditions restrict your freedom?"

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 1.5                        |
| 10 - 15                 | 1.5                        |
| 20 - 25                 | 4                          |
| 35 - 50                 | 15.5                       |
| 65 - 75                 | 49                         |
| 90                      | 29                         |

The Concordia group rated unusually high in their sense of personal freedom. As the above tabulation indicates, only slightly more than 5 per cent of the class rated between the first and the 25th percentile, whereas 49 per cent of the class rated between the 65th and the 75th percentile. The mode was 82, the mean was at approximately the 69th percentile, whereas the median fell slightly above the 90th percentile--



the highest ratings on the adult norms. This indicates that the group feels a sense of freedom in choosing its friends, spending its time, and seems to indicate a sense of freedom from economic restrictions.

### Feeling of Belonging

To determine their feeling of belonging the group was asked fifteen questions, of which the following are typical: "Do you feel that you are an important member of some organization?" "Do you feel that your relatives are as attractive and successful as those of your friends?" "Do you feel at ease in all the groups you attend?" "Do you have enough friends to make you happy?" "Do you usually feel at ease when both men and women are present?"

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 4                          |
| 10 - 15                 | 9                          |
| 25 - 35                 | 23                         |
| 50 - 65                 | 35                         |
| 75                      | 20                         |
| 90                      | 9                          |

The average member of the first-year class rates just slightly above the average adult in the country in his feeling of belonging. The mode and median of the class fell at the 55th percentile, whereas the mean fell at slightly above the 45th percentile. It must again be noted that even where the majority of the class is found to have made a satisfactory adjustment, there still is a certain number of individuals who fall at the lower end of the scale. Thirteen per cent



of the class, for example, rated between the first and the 15th percentile.

### Withdrawing Tendencies

To estimate the withdrawing tendencies of the individual seminarian, the class was asked fifteen questions from the California Test, including: "Are certain people so unreasonable that you hate them?" "Do you find it more pleasant to think about desired successes than to work for them?" "Do you find it hard to meet people at social affairs?" "Are your responsibilities and problems often such that you cannot help but get discouraged?" "Do you prefer to be alone rather than have close friendships . . . ?"

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 1.5                        |
| 10 - 15                 | 10.5                       |
| 20 - 25                 | 23                         |
| 35 - 45                 | 16                         |
| 55                      | 20                         |
| 75 - 85                 | 21                         |
| 99                      | 8                          |

With the mode falling at the 55th percentile and both the mean and the median falling at approximately the 80th percentile, it will be seen that the test group rated well above the "average" adult.

### Nervous Symptoms

The California Test determines the frequency of nervous symptoms by asking the individual whether he is likely to stutter when he becomes excited, whether his muscles twitch,



whether he finds difficulty in sitting still, whether he is tired a great deal of the time, and whether he has considerable difficulty in going to sleep.

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 5                          |
| 10 - 15                 | 14.5                       |
| 20 - 30                 | 18.5                       |
| 40 - 55                 | 30.5                       |
| 70 - 85                 | 23                         |
| 90                      | 8                          |

Since there is a great discrepancy between the three averages, we will note first of all that the median, which is the middle value in this series, falls at the 50th percentile. This would seem to indicate that the first-year group experiences approximately the same number of nervous symptoms as the average adult. The mode of the group, however, which indicates the value which has appeared most often, rated at the 70th percentile. The mean fell at the 40th percentile.

#### Social Adjustment

As previously indicated, the second large area of the California Test dealt with the social adjustment of the men. The following units were included in the second half of the test: (1) Social standards, (2) Social skills, (3) Freedom from anti-social tendencies, (4) Family relations, (5) School relations, and (6) Community relations.

#### Social Standards

The social standards of the group were measured by the following questions: "Are the beliefs of some people so



absurd that one is justified in denouncing these people?"

"Is it all right to avoid responsibility or work if you are not required to do it?" "Should one be courteous to people who are very disagreeable?" "Is it dishonest to fail to pay a railroad or bus fare if the opportunity presents itself?" "Do people who persist in getting into trouble after proper warning deserve sympathy?"

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 0                          |
| 10 - 20                 | 2.5                        |
| 35 - 50                 | 20                         |
| 65 - 75                 | 46                         |
| 85 - 90                 | 32                         |
| 99                      | 0                          |

The group had a high set of social standards. The mode fell at the 80th percentile with the mean just slightly above the 80th percentile, and the median just slightly above the 90th percentile.

#### Social Skills

To determine the social skills of the men they were asked whether they found it easy to introduce people and to enliven dull social affairs. The test further questioned their ability to talk with people as soon as they met them, to break away from social gatherings easily and to assist in the planning of social functions. They were further questioned concerning their habits of offending people or breaking into conversations.



| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 4                          |
| 10 - 15                 | 22                         |
| 20 - 30                 | 17                         |
| 45 - 55                 | 22                         |
| 70                      | 21                         |
| 80                      | 5                          |
| 90 - 95                 | 6.5                        |
| 99                      | 1.5                        |

The social skills of the group were higher than might be expected in view of the preparatory school arrangement. Although the median rated at approximately the 50th percentile and the mean at the 45th, the mode fell at the 70th percentile. It is suggested that the above tabulation be consulted for in spite of this high mode, 43 per cent of the class rated below the 30th percentile.

#### Anti-Social Tendencies

The next area measured by the California Test was that of anti-social tendencies. The following questions were asked: "Do you often have to stand up for your rights?" "Are you often forced to show some temper in order to get what is coming to you?" "Do you find it easy to get out of trouble by telling 'white fibs'?" "Do you have to assert yourself more than others to get recognition?" "Have you found that getting even is better than 'taking it' too much of the time?"

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 2.5                        |
| 10 - 15                 | 5.5                        |
| 20 - 30                 | 15.5                       |
| 40 - 50                 | 38                         |
| 65 - 80                 | 30.5                       |
| 90                      | 8                          |



This particular item is an essential factor in the personality of a man who must deal with people. It will be seen in the preceding tabulation that the test group would rate slightly above the average adult in the country. The mode for the group fell at exactly the 50th percentile, with the mean just slightly above. The median fell slightly above the 60th percentile. It is to be noted in the percentages that only 38 per cent of the class rated above the 50th percentile. This means that although a few rated high scores, there were a considerable number who showed strong anti-social tendencies.

#### Family Relations

In distinction to the section on the family in the Bell Adjustment Test, the California Test measures the adjustment of the individual at the present moment. The fifteen questions in this unit dealt with the following situations: "Do the members of your family get along as well as you would like?" "Does your family seem to believe that you are not thoughtful of them?" "Are you troubled because members of your family differ from you regarding beliefs and standards?" "Do you like the members of your family about equally?" "Are some members of your family too extravagant?"

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 4                          |
| 10 - 15                 | 8                          |
| 20 - 25                 | 15.5                       |
| 35 - 45                 | 14.5                       |
| 55 - 65                 | 25                         |
| 85 - 95                 | 33.5                       |



Once again the group manifested happy and well-adjusted family relations. Only 12 per cent of the entire class rated below the 20th percentile. The largest number of the group, the mode, fell at the 85th percentile. The median, the lowest of the three averages, fell at the 65th percentile, whereas the mean was at approximately the 88th percentile. These statistical figures will take on additional meaning when we look at the description many of the students gave of a happy home life. It will be seen later that the home was one of the most decisive factors in initiating a vocation for the Lutheran ministry.

#### School Relations

This unit of the test termed "School Relations" for the institutional testing is in reality a test of occupational relations. The questions in general seek to determine whether the examinee worries about his daily work, whether he feels he has freedom in his work, whether he is doing the type of work he likes best, and whether he feels people appreciate the work he does. It must be remembered then in looking at the following figures that the questions proper dealt with regular employment. In administering the test, however, the monitors instructed the students to answer the questions as they would apply to school relations.



| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 1                          |
| 10 - 15                 | 12                         |
| 25 - 35                 | 12                         |
| 45 - 55                 | 33.5                       |
| 65 - 75                 | 25                         |
| 85 - 90                 | 15.5                       |
| 99                      | 1                          |

In interpreting this unit of the test one must proceed with great caution. As was indicated above, certain biases may have been produced because the students answered the question regarding part-time jobs they may have held. Merely to complete the picture we will note that the mode of the group fell at exactly the 45th percentile, whereas the median fell at slightly above the 65th percentile and the mean at slightly above the 70th percentile. This indicates that there was no clear central tendency in this particular unit whereas there was in all of the other areas of the test.

#### Community Relations

The last unit of the California Test questioned the student concerning his community relations, seeking to test both his attitude toward community as well as to evaluate the community in which he actually lived. Again a note of warning is to be sounded. In personal interview it was discovered that many rated in the lower percentiles of the community relations because they actually were reared in sub-standard urban communities. As an illustration of the type of question used, we cite the following: "Have you found that most community social welfare activities are



necessary?" "Do you feel that many fine families live in your neighborhood?" "Would you welcome most of your neighbors into your home as friends and associates?" "Do you feel that most of your local public officials are honest and efficient?" "Is there too much neighborhood cooperation in your community?"

| <u>Percentile Norms</u> | <u>Percentage of Class</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 5                   | 2.5                        |
| 10 - 15                 | 14.5                       |
| 20 - 30                 | 27.5                       |
| 40 - 55                 | 35                         |
| 75 - 85                 | 18                         |
| 90 - 95                 | 2.5                        |

In comparison to the family relations there is not a large clustering in the upper percentiles. The largest number of the group fell at the 55th percentile, just slightly above the average. The mean was low in this area, approximately at the 40th percentile, whereas the median fell at about the 57th percentile. Perhaps certain biases again occurred because the student would question the political efficiency and social expediencies of certain welfare measures. Again conclusions must be drawn in this area with great caution.



## CHAPTER IV

### AREAS OF INTEREST

The fourth large area to which we direct our attention to grasp the extent of the vocational awareness of the incoming students at Concordia Seminary concerns their interests. It is presupposed that for an individual to be happy in a certain occupation or calling his interest must be consistent with those which make for success in that particular field. This factor is especially important for the test group because so many of the students made their decisions for the ministry while still youngsters or adolescents. Often when a vocational decision is made during this period of youth, elements of romance and prestige tend to color one's thinking. Because of the lack of familiarity with whole aspects of the ministry, frequently an unfortunate decision is made.

In this area of the study we shall attempt to determine whether the students manifest interests which are consistent with the work of the ministry.

#### Kuder Preference Test

As a tool to this end we shall use the findings of the "Kuder Preference Record" which was administered to the first-year class immediately upon their arrival at the seminary. The Kuder Test measures interests in the following nine areas: (1) Mechanical, (2) Computational, (3) Scientific,



(4) Persuasive, (5) Artistic, (6) Literary, (7) Musical, (8) Social Service, and (9) Clerical.

This test presupposes that each individual will have certain dominant interests. It is to be noted, therefore, that in order for a man to score high in one area he must receive a correspondingly low score in another. Since it would mean little to merely quote the means attained by the group in each of the areas, we shall attempt to interpret their meaning by comparing the rating of the seminary students with several occupational groups<sup>36</sup>: a base group, that is, undefined as to occupation; a group of clergymen; social workers; secondary school teachers; the entering seminary class of 1949-50; and the entering class for 1950-51.

#### Mechanical Interest

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Base Group                | 78.61 |
| Clergymen                 | 58.29 |
| Social Workers            | 68.38 |
| Secondary School Teachers | 65.30 |
| 1949-50 Class             | 63.53 |
| 1950-51 Class             | 60.90 |

The above tabulation indicates that the mechanical interest of the incoming seminarian is significantly below that of the average working man. The group which rated lowest on mechanical interest was that of the practicing clergymen. It is interesting to see that the 1950-51 class rated only slightly above this group.

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<sup>36</sup>G. Frederic Kuder, "Revised Manual for the Kuder Preference Record." Published by Science Research Associates, 228 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago 4, Illinois.



## Computational Interest

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Base Group                | 35.26 |
| Clergymen                 | 31.29 |
| Social Workers            | 32.97 |
| Secondary School Teachers | 35.69 |
| 1949-50 Class             | 26.83 |
| 1950-51 Class             | 26.42 |

It must again be explained that these charts only represent interest in the specific fields and in no way measure innate or actual ability. Thus the incoming seminarian seems to have consistently less interest in the computational area than any of the other groups examined.

## Scientific Interest

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Base Group                | 64.03 |
| Clergymen                 | 60.03 |
| Social Workers            | 64.15 |
| Secondary School Teachers | 62.67 |
| 1949-50 Class             | 56.38 |
| 1950-51 Class             | 59.02 |

Once again the class under examination manifested less interest in the scientific realm than did any of the other groups, including the clergymen. The difference, however, between the 1950-51 class and the group of clergymen was not significant.

## Persuasive Interest

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Base Group                | 74.37 |
| Clergymen                 | 66.42 |
| Social Workers            | 78.59 |
| Secondary School Teachers | 68.58 |
| 1949-50 Class             | 70.52 |
| 1950-51 Class             | 70.02 |

This is one of the three areas in the Kuder Test considered vital interest areas for the potential minister. The seminary groups did rate slightly above the group of



clergymen. It was discovered in interview, however, that many individual students who manifested considerable persuasive interest and ability were rated rather low by the Kuder Test. This occurred because the test uses questions concerning selling and salesmanship as its criteria for persuasion.

#### Artistic Interest

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Base Group                | 46.12 |
| Clergymen                 | 39.00 |
| Social Workers            | 39.15 |
| Secondary School Teachers | 41.42 |
| 1949-50 Class             | 44.04 |
| 1950-51 Class             | 46.62 |

The artistic-aesthetic interest of the incoming seminarian is quite high. As the above table indicates, the group of practicing clergymen rated slightly below the other groups while the seminary group rated approximately the same as the base group of men.

#### Literary Interest

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Base Group                | 47.77 |
| Clergymen                 | 61.65 |
| Social Workers            | 54.38 |
| Secondary School Teachers | 52.58 |
| 1949-50 Class             | 57.13 |
| 1950-51 Class             | 52.14 |

This is the second area which is considered an important field of interest for the potential clergyman. The group of practicing clergymen, it is noted, rated the highest in this area. Because of its importance we shall look at this area in more detail when we analyze the group's reading habits. Although the class rated slightly above the base group, it



manifested far less literary interest than did the group of practicing clergymen.

#### Musical Interest

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Base Group                | 16.60 |
| Clergymen                 | 21.13 |
| Social Workers            | 13.06 |
| Secondary School Teachers | 16.75 |
| 1949-50 Class             | 25.46 |
| 1950-51 Class             | 23.49 |

In general it is seen that all of the groups rated lower in musical interest than in any of the other areas surveyed. Although the seminary classes were slightly above the other groups, the difference was not significant.

#### Social Service Interest

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Base Group                | 73.71 |
| Clergymen                 | 97.39 |
| Social Workers            | 99.15 |
| Secondary School Teachers | 84.60 |
| 1949-50 Class             | 88.35 |
| 1950-51 Class             | 91.77 |

This is the third area, along with the persuasive and literary, which is important for the clergyman. When one compares this table with the preceding ones, it will be noted that the dominant interest of the group was in social service. They rated at almost the 92nd percentile. Their next greatest area of interest was that of persuasive interest in which they rated at approximately the 70th percentile. But in spite of this fact, the seminary groups did rate lower than the group of clergymen and the group of social workers in social service interest.



## Clerical Interest

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Base Group                | 52.14 |
| Clergymen                 | 46.94 |
| Social Workers            | 45.97 |
| Secondary School Teachers | 50.83 |
| 1949-50 Class             | 49.99 |
| 1950-51 Class             | 43.42 |

This area of interest is not considered too important for the minister. Although the seminary class under examination manifested less interest in the clerical field than did the remainder of the groups, once again the difference was not particularly significant.

## Other Occupational Interests

As a second check on the interests of the class they were requested to fill in a questionnaire on which one question read: "In what other occupations are you interested? (List in order of preference.)"

It was found upon examining the questionnaires that the number of occupations listed varied greatly. Eight individuals, for example, stated that they had "no other preferences," whereas others listed four or five. In order to cull out the most crucial occupational interests, only the first and second choices of the students were considered.

These were weighted, valuing the first choice at two points and the second at one point. The complete list is tabulated in Table 10.



TABLE 10

Other Occupational Interests of First-Year  
Students Listed in Order of Preference

| <u>Occupation</u>                      | <u>Weighted Value*</u> |
|--|------------------------|
| Teaching                               | 114                    |
| Law                                    | 35                     |
| Social Work                            | 27                     |
| Medicine                               | 25                     |
| Agriculture                            | 24                     |
| Journalism                             | 23                     |
| Music                                  | 22                     |
| Athletics                              | 18                     |
| Mechanics                              | 18                     |
| Business (Office Work)                 | 17                     |
| Scientific Research                    | 17                     |
| Engineering                            | 13                     |
| Architecture or Mechanical Designing   | 11                     |
| Psychology or Psychiatry               | 10                     |
| General Construction (Carpentry, etc.) | 10                     |
| Mathematics or Economics               | 10                     |
| Salesmanship                           | 8                      |
| Dramatics                              | 8                      |
| Administration                         | 8                      |
| Outdoor Manual Labor                   | 7                      |
| Youth Work                             | 7                      |
| Skilled Factory Work                   | 6                      |
| Radio Work                             | 6                      |
| Forestry or Horticulture               | 5                      |
| Chemistry or Pharmacy                  | 5                      |
| Politics or Diplomacy                  | 5                      |
| Art                                    | 5                      |
| Aeronautics                            | 3                      |
| Army                                   | 2                      |
| Criminal Investigation                 | 2                      |
| Mortician                              | 2                      |
| None                                   | 8                      |

\*First Choice - 2 Points  
Second Choice - 1 Point



The occupation which ranked immediately after the ministry, which was not included on this questionnaire, was that of teaching. This area received well over three times as many votes as that which rated second, namely, law.

The general field of interest remained consistent. The third choice of the group was social work. Medicine ranked just slightly behind social work; it will be noted later that several members of this class aspire to become medical missionaries. The other areas can be examined quite easily from the table itself.

In examining the questionnaires one gained the impression that often the individual was listing an occupation which seemed to him to be colorful and romantic rather than indicating an actual bent toward that vocation, still less any ability. For example, many spoke rather casually of wanting to become business executives, scientists or pilots. But for the most part the group did express its second occupational desire. This is supported by the large number which listed "agriculture" as either a first or second choice.

#### Literary Interests

To enlarge our insights into the interests of the class the men were questioned concerning their favorite authors and the magazines they most frequently read. In administering the questionnaires no limit was set on the number of authors the individual could list.



It seemed significant that 69 members of the class, that is, 40 per cent, were able to list no favorite author. In all, 122 different authors were listed. With the exception of eight authors no definite pattern of class preference was indicated.

To keep the list from becoming too unwieldy, any book which was not listed by at least two men was not included in the following table. It is significant to note that only one of the favorite authors could be considered a writer of theology. This was C. S. Lewis, who was listed by fifteen of the incoming students. Although he is a layman, and has written some novels, the major part of his works are "light theology."

A. J. Cronin should also be mentioned as a semi-religious novelist. Otherwise the list seems to indicate personal preference and also reflects the preparatory school training in English literature and Greek.



TABLE 11

Favorite Authors Listed by First-Year Students  
in Order of Their Preference

| <u>Author</u>   | <u>No. of Times Listed</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Dickens         | 20                         |
| A. J. Cronin    | 19                         |
| Shakespeare     | 17                         |
| C. S. Lewis     | 15                         |
| Douglas         | 14                         |
| Poe             | 12                         |
| Sinclair Lewis  | 11                         |
| Mark Twain      | 7                          |
| Plato           | 6                          |
| Hugo            | 6                          |
| Tolstoy         | 5                          |
| Milton          | 5                          |
| Aristotle       | 5                          |
| Dumas           | 5                          |
| O. Henry        | 4                          |
| Ibsen           | 4                          |
| Scott           | 4                          |
| Luther          | 4                          |
| R. L. Stevenson | 4                          |
| Longfellow      | 3                          |
| Tennyson        | 3                          |
| Byron           | 3                          |
| Thomas Hardy    | 3                          |
| G. L. Wind      | 3                          |
| Homer           | 3                          |
| W. Churchill    | 3                          |
| Goethe          | 3                          |
| Thackeray       | 2                          |
| Pearl S. Buck   | 2                          |
| de Maupassant   | 2                          |
| Shaw            | 2                          |
| Checkov         | 2                          |
| E. S. Gardner   | 2                          |
| Emerson         | 2                          |
| Zane Grey       | 2                          |
| Shelley         | 2                          |
| O. Wilde        | 2                          |
| Cooper          | 2                          |
| Wallace         | 2                          |
| Thomas Mann     | 2                          |
| Browning        | 2                          |
| T. S. Eliot     | 2                          |
| Kipling         | 2                          |
| Maier           | 2                          |
| Whitman         | 2                          |
| Hemingway       | 2                          |
| Keats           | 2                          |
| Voltaire        | 2                          |
| None            | 69                         |



Secondly, the students were requested to list the magazines they most frequently read. The list is given almost in its entirety in the following table. In this instance any magazine not listed by at least three students was not included.

One is impressed with the lack of "religious" journals included in their preferences. Ranking eighth in the list, with eighteen students reporting it, was the Lutheran Witness, the official organ of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. An equal number of students read This Day, a picture-story magazine published by the Missouri Synod and directed primarily toward the family. With the exception of three men who read The Cresset, a literary publication published by the official youth organization of the Missouri Synod, no other theological or religious periodical was mentioned frequently enough to be included.

TABLE 12

Magazines Most Frequently Read  
by First-Year Students

|                          |     |                     |    |
|--------------------------|-----|---------------------|----|
| Life                     | 132 | Atlantic            | 11 |
| Time                     | 86  | Sport Magazines     | 11 |
| Reader's Digest          | 76  | National Geographic | 9  |
| Saturday Evening Post    | 68  | Popular Mechanics   | 5  |
| Collier's                | 30  | True                | 4  |
| Look                     | 21  | Fortune             | 4  |
| Coronet                  | 21  | American            | 4  |
| Lutheran Witness         | 18  | Argosy              | 3  |
| This Day                 | 18  | Cresset             | 3  |
| Walther League Messenger | 16  | Harper's            | 3  |
| Newsweek                 | 13  | Popular Science     | 3  |
| Quick                    | 12  | Outdoor Life        | 3  |



To gain an overview of the types of magazines read the publications listed in Table 12 were grouped according to ten major divisions. It will be seen that the magazines grouped under "Light literary," which included, for example, the Saturday Evening Post and Collier's, ranked first--having been listed 223 times. This was followed by magazines classified as "Pictorial news," for example, Life and Look magazines. Time, Newsweek and other magazines which feature news articles and editorials rather than pictures ranked third. Ranking fourth were the many Lutheran journals such the Lutheran Witness and the Walther League Messenger. Literary magazines such as the Atlantic Monthly, the American and The Cresset ranked fifth.

Just slightly behind the literary type of publication rated sports and outdoor magazines. This category was followed by magazines of a technical nature (scientific, mechanical, or musical). The publications of other denominations rated next.

Finally we have magazines which were classified as the "pulp" variety. These were listed by five men. Only one student stated that he occasionally read a theological journal. This was, incidentally, the Concordia Theological Monthly.



TABLE 13

Classification of Magazines Read  
by First-Year Students

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Light literary               | 223 |
| Pictorial news               | 176 |
| News (Literary)              | 106 |
| Lutheran journals            | 46  |
| Literary                     | 22  |
| Sport and Outdoor            | 21  |
| Technical                    | 19  |
| Other and Non-denominational | 11  |
| Pulp                         | 5   |
| Theological                  | 1   |

Specialized Academic Pursuits

If a man has a specialized interest he will pursue it in various ways. By means of the Kuder questionnaire we have been able to evaluate the comparative interests of the class. The questionnaire on "Other Occupational Interests" demonstrated certain consistent patterns of interest. The preceding section concerning the reading habits of the group under examination gave some insight into both the types of material read by the men and their fields of interest.

Another way by which a man will develop his special interest is to seek further training in that field. It has been noted that by far the majority of the men were trained in synodical preparatory schools. Twenty-two men pursued specialized studies at schools other than the junior colleges. To show the diversity we shall list: (1) Schools attended, (2) Number of men attending such schools, and (3) Total number of years spent there.



TABLE 14

Other Schools of Higher Education  
Attended by First-Year Students

| <u>School</u>   | <u>Number Attending</u> | <u>Total Years</u> |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Concordia Teachers College                                  | 4                       | 2.0                |
| Washington University                                       | 4                       | 6.5                |
| Valparaiso University                                       | 2                       | 7.0                |
| Michigan State Normal                                       | 1                       | 1.0                |
| Northern State Teachers College<br>(Aberdeen, South Dakota) | 1                       | .5                 |
| Cisco Junior College<br>(Cisco, Texas)                      | 1                       | .5                 |
| St. Louis University  | 1                       | 1.0                |
| International Correspondence School                         | 1                       | 3.0                |
| Harvard University  | 1                       | 2.0                |
| University of California                                    | 1                       | 3.0                |
| Cornell University  | 1                       | 1.0                |
| Chicago Musical College                                     | 1                       | 4.0                |
| Indiana Extension University                                | 1                       | .5                 |
| Southwestern University                                     | 1                       | 2.0                |
| Texas Christian University                                  | 1                       | 1.0                |
| University of Oregon  | 1                       | 2.0                |
| Fordham University  | 1                       | .5                 |

Of more particular interest to us are the fields in which the men worked. It is significant to note the correlation between the number who indicated interest in teaching and the number who pursued work in the education departments of these universities. With the exception of six students who worked in the social sciences or psychology, no definite class pattern developed.

The entire list of departments in which the students worked is shown in Table 15.



TABLE 15

Specialized Training Engaged In  
at Other Schools by First-Year Students

| <u>Field of Study</u> | <u>Number of Students</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Education             | 4                         |
| Social Sciences       | 3                         |
| Psychology            | 3                         |
| History               | 2                         |
| Social Work           | 1                         |
| Chemistry             | 1                         |
| Philosophy            | 1                         |
| Literature            | 1                         |
| Civil Engineering     | 1                         |
| Mathematics           | 1                         |
| Music                 | 1                         |
| Physics               | 1                         |
| Biology               | 1                         |
| Classical Languages   | 1                         |



## CHAPTER V

### STRENGTH OF VOCATIONAL AWARENESS

Thus far we have attempted to survey four of the factors influential in determining a man's sense of vocation. After exploring the mental ability of the class and describing home backgrounds, we analyzed the important factor of mental health. In the last chapter we endeavored to add depth to the analysis by observing the special interests of the class. With this information before us we come to the core of the thesis, that of evaluating the strength of the vocational awareness of the incoming seminary class.

Our evaluation will be made on the basis of an essay written by each member of the class entitled "My Goals as a Pastor." A subjective rating was made of each essay as it was read, and recorded as strong, average or weak. Since the analysis was made by the writer after seven months of personal contact with the class, his judgment was often influenced by the knowledge he had of the author of the individual essay.

It is to be noted that the essays were written after approximately ten days of residence at the seminary. During this period the student was still making his initial adjustment to a new setting, undergoing a series of new experiences. Many were so conscious of the "liberation" from the preparatory schools and were so awed by their environment that they



tended to see everything, as they themselves later realized, with "rose-colored glasses." The following analysis, however, was made:

Degree of Vocational Awareness

|         |    |
|---------|----|
| Strong  | 50 |
| Average | 88 |
| Weak    | 24 |

These essays on the students' pastoral goals were written for the most part after six years of preparatory school training. It therefore came as a surprise to note how many of the students expressed difficulty in formulating a clear set of goals. Many stated that they frankly had never given much thought to the question. To give the reader some insight into the actual approach of the student, we note the reaction of one man in writing his essay:

It seems just a little strange to have to ask yourself just why you are studying for the ministry, especially after a few years of special preparatory school training. Still more strange is the fact that I had to give it some deep thought. Nevertheless, this is the case and the following paragraphs are an attempt to express this situation.

Since many of these essays were three to four pages in length, it is difficult to cull out individual paragraphs which concisely express the viewpoint of the writer. However, we submit the following as a typical section of an essay which was judged to express a strong sense of vocational awareness. This student expresses his chief goal in the ministry as a desire to win souls. He develops the thought that his chief goal in life will be to reach people with well-prepared sermons, topic lessons, mission calls, private



conferences and calls to the sick. Near the beginning of his essay he writes:

After thinking over some of the more serious of the problems confronting the world today, and after trying to put my finger on one force which would act as a common solution to these grave problems, I have arrived at the firm conviction that Christianity is the power and the only power which is able to accomplish this insurmountable task. By Christianity I mean the firm belief in Christ Jesus as the Savior of the world . . .

To carry on the beacon light of the true Gospel, to spread the doctrine of the atonement of Christ into the far corners of the world, many men are needed by our church, the Lutheran Church. I consider this church my own, not merely because I was, so to speak 'born' into it, but because in the Lutheran Church I am confident that I have found the church which teaches the Gospel in all its truth and purity. These men needed by our church to serve as ministers and missionaries must have a number of fine qualities and characteristics. I do not claim to have all these qualities and characteristics; indeed, sometimes I feel as if I have none of them. However, I pray that God may help me to grow in sanctification also here at the seminary and that He may develop in me these necessary traits and abilities. I in turn must pray for direction in order that I may avail myself of all the opportunities offered to me here at the seminary.

Since this topic is of the essence to our study, we shall quote one more paper in which the writer expresses a strong sense of vocational awareness. In his essay the student describes the tragedies which he had faced in his early life. He specifically mentions his own pastor and the sainted Dr. Walter A. Maier as the channels through which God worked to convince him "that the business of the kingdom of God was what I really wanted out of life and nothing else could satisfy me."

Ever since I entered preparatory high school at the age of fourteen, I wanted to become a pastor of the



Lutheran Church. I felt that by entering the office of the holy ministry I could devote my entire life to the service of God for His glory and for the salvation of lost souls.

Through my entire life I have always had a deep reverence for the Scriptures and for anything that represented or symbolized Christianity. I have always loved to read the Scriptures and other theological works. In fact I am often eager to save some money and buy new theological and dogmatic books. I have often been strengthened in my faith by outstanding theological works and by sermons and church services.

These areas cannot but be somewhat overlapping. One could hardly define the precise point at which the student who has a rather strong sense of vocational awareness is distinguished from the one who has an average sense of ministerial drive. The following excerpt is from an essay written by a better-than-average student who comes from the home of a minister. He expresses a reverent approach to the ministry, analyzing preaching and mission work to the individual as necessary for the successful growth of the church. His initial two paragraphs read as follows:

The chief force behind my decision to become a pastor was in my early home education. My parents, especially my mother, continually impressed upon me the importance of the work of my father. When the time came for me to go to a preparatory school, there was no doubt in my mind that I was to become a pastor, not only because my parents wanted me to, but because that was the best way I could use my talents in furthering the Kingdom of God.

By watching the daily work of my father and listening to the reports he would bring home after his sick calls, adult classes or voters meetings, coupled with the added information my mother and my brothers, also pastors, would throw in concerning the work of the ministry, I set up in my mind a standard which I think I must attain in order to be most successful in the work of the Lord. These might also be called my goals as a pastor.



One of the most important areas to be considered in this thesis is the analysis of those with a weak sense of vocational awareness. In the writer's judgment twenty-four students, 14 per cent of the class, were classified as having a weak set for the ministry. Whereas it was difficult to define the precise point at which the strong and average set for the ministry varied, the line was quite definite between those who had an average drive for the ministry and those who were classified as having a weak sense of awareness. In all twenty-four cases the student specified that he was at this time quite "hazy" or "not sure whether I want to become a pastor or not." This is to say that all of those classified in this area expressed either serious doubts about their future in the ministry or else decided uncertainty as to why or how they began their present course of study. Because of the importance of the problem we shall analyze in detail four of these papers.

The first student went through the entire six years of study at one of the preparatory schools. At the time of this writing he states that he is "beginning to realize why I want to become a minister." He goes on to indicate that he would never think of giving up the life at a Lutheran school. He does, however, express confusion as to why he is studying to be a pastor. He asks whether there are rewards and goals for which to actually work. In the following two paragraphs he presents a summary of his present view:



My goals as a pastor at this moment are very hazy. I know that right now I am in the final lap of attaining something that I am not too sure of. It is very nice to know that a person has only five more years to go before he goes out into the world to preach the Gospel to every creature.

From the very first day that I entered the study for the ministry I did not know the real reason and push behind me. To this day I wonder why I entered into such a field. There is no one in my family that ever was a minister. Maybe I was tempted to enter the ministry because the president of the Walther League painted a very rosy picture to me. Perhaps, I think now, the idea of entering the ministry was caused by knowing that my parents never would have been able to send me to college at home and, therefore, I decided to go someplace where this might be attained. My attitude toward this has changed since then, because I know now that I might have been able to send myself through school, but a thirteen-year-old does not realize things like that.

The second student under consideration is very emphatic about clearing himself of any possible selfish motives in preparing for the ministry. After listing the reasons which he did not have in mind in entering the seminary, he asks why he did then choose such a course in the first place. In answer he describes his taking a "pre-med" course of study in high school, but then he adds, "In the meantime I read the Bible with very great interest." He specifies the parochial school has having stimulated his interest in Bible stories. Upon graduation from high school his pastor persuaded him to enter preparatory school. Here he encountered difficulty. To gain further insight into his problem we present his opening paragraph:

To begin with, and in order to be perfectly frank about it, I have not made up my mind as yet whether I wish to become a pastor or not. This does not mean that I



decided on the ministry in order to keep up the tradition of the family, in fact my father is not a minister, or that I chose this calling because it's one way of being able to get cheaper rates on the trains, nor does it mean that I'm now at the 'Sem' in order to stay out of the army. In fact, I have thought very seriously of joining the army after graduating from the 'Sem.' Nevertheless, it does mean that I am undecided, and still have some doubt. I realize, however, that it is high time that I decide in one way or the other and so give it a lot of thought at every opportunity.

The third student summarizes his thinking concerning the ministry as "inconsistent." After making clear the fact that he wants to serve his Savior in some way and to find happiness in his work, he points out the channels which led him to the seminary. After stating "I am not sure I want to be a pastor," he continues:

My father is a pastor, and he is a successful one in the true sense of the word. I attended parochial school straight through from kindergarten to eighth grade. Then the time came for me to decide where I was going to continue my education. I was all ready to go to the local high school. I had a job in a small business which would have, and still can, provide me a good living wage and life-long security. The only comment I got on those plans was 'das ist doch kein Beruf.' It was finally decided that I should attend Concordia College in \_\_\_\_\_. I was thirteen at the time, and all I knew was that I did not know very much. I took the sage advice of my parents and soon found myself in \_\_\_\_\_. Six years later I graduated. Although my stay in \_\_\_\_\_ was not a particularly happy one, I cannot say that it was especially trying either. Socially and scholastically I had no difficulty. Yet I never enjoyed my studies and work there. I always had to force myself to sit down and 'hit the books.' It was never a happy preparation for a holy calling, as it should have been. Throughout my stay at \_\_\_\_\_ I found myself in such a position that quitting school was out of the question. My parents were undoubtedly making sacrifices for my sake, and I know that they prayed that I would be successful in my work and eventually become a pastor. Since I had no other definite plans in mind, I continued. I continued until one day, September 10, 1950, to be exact, I found myself here at the Seminary.



The fourth student also comes from a pastor's home. In his case we once again see a decision made by a youngster who was not mature enough to realize the implications of the professional ministry. After six years of training, he states, "My ambition is not to be some big wheel in Synod . . . but just a good down-to-earth yet spiritual ambassador for Christ."

He points to his father and older brother as the primary source of encouragement for his entering a preparatory school. Although he was uncertain as to whether he wanted to become a minister, he decided that he could "lose nothing by going through high school in \_\_\_\_\_." This student's weak sense of vocational awareness becomes clear in the following excerpt:

When I got as far as Tertia, I figured that I had to make up my mind once and for all if I intended to continue my studies. After graduation, I was still undecided. But because I didn't know what other profession to take up, and because I was sure I didn't want to work for the rest of my life in a factory or in other manual labor, I continued on to Secunda hoping that by graduation from Prima I would know what I intended to do. Graduation came, and still I was lost for what to do about my future. As the summer went by, it became more and more apparent that I would return to the Seminary. I thought that in case I should decide to go through with the ministry, at least this way I wouldn't fall behind my class, and if I should decide to take some other course of study, I could profit from my experience here at the Seminary the rest of my life. In other words, this question has been with me the better part of my life and is still unanswered. To paraphrase the words of one of the evening chapel speakers, I'm the type who is just tagging along with some buddie because I don't know what else to make my life's profession.

Included in the category of those with a weak sense of vocational awareness were four students who stated that they



felt no desire for the particular area of the pastoral ministry. They made it very clear that they were interested in a specialized phase of work such as teaching. One student, for example, entitled his essay "My Goals as a Professor."

He wrote:

I realize that my topic is not the topic listed in our assignments, but I think that I should be entirely honest and say that my interests lie much more in education on the secondary and college levels than in the parish ministry. However, I believe the field of education to be of great importance in the work of God's Kingdom. Therefore, what are my goals as a professor?



## CHAPTER VI

### GOALS IN THE MINISTRY

A student naturally expresses his own dreams, desires and ambitions. In the assigned essay entitled "My Goals as a Pastor," most students mentioned the source of their motivation, the type of parish they would like to serve, and the general goals which they have at the present time. In this chapter we shall look specifically at the goals developed by the students. In the following chapter we shall analyze the factors which motivated their study for the ministry.

To state verbatim the goals of every student would require a list of perhaps seventy to eighty individual items. To make this section more useful, therefore, the writer attempted to summarize the goals under eleven categories. These could not be exclusive since many students mentioned two or more of these goals. Often a student would state, for example, "There are three things I would like to accomplish in the ministry." His description might therefore include several of our categories.

A summary of these expressions is shown in Table 16 as they appeared in a final tabulation:



TABLE 16

Goals in the Ministry as  
Developed by First-Year Students

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Preach Christ                     | 102 |
| Social Service                    | 38  |
| Work with Young People            | 30  |
| Personal Assurance of Faith       | 15  |
| Personal Satisfaction             | 12  |
| Desire to be Christ-like          | 12  |
| Desire for Pleasant Personality   | 12  |
| Personal Prestige                 | 10  |
| Desire to Indoctrinate Thoroughly | 6   |
| Desire to be a Speaker            | 4   |
| Build a Church                    | 4   |

Because most of the students expressed difficulty in articulating their precise goals in the ministry 102 of them, 58 per cent of the class, either stated that their only goal was to preach Christ or at least mentioned it as one of their dominant goals. In the first excerpt the student expresses this thought in terms of "saving souls for Christ." He writes:

My first goal is of course to do the most that I can to save souls for Christ. The most ideal way, I feel, is in the parish ministry. However, I have always felt that 300 workers for Christ are better than one. For this reason it is my goal, not only to preach the Word, but to so vitalize my parish that all will become workers for the kingdom. I feel that a pastor, no matter how successful he might be personally, has not fully served Christ until he has enlisted the help of his entire congregation. For a Christian who has felt the peace of God come into his life can't help but be filled with a zeal to help bring that peace into the lives of others. We must have an active, not a passive Christianity.

The second student emphasizes his great desire to preach Christ by stating that he is willing to serve anywhere that he may be needed. He describes his goal as follows:



To preach Christ crucified is my main goal as a minister. How and where are goals which I have not yet decided upon. I am prepared to go wherever I am best suited. If foreign mission work is what I am best suited for, send me to Nigeria, Africa, Russia, or even Siam. If my place is here at home, I am willing. Just as long as I can find people to whom I can present God's free gift of eternal life, I shall feel that I am accomplishing my goal. To tell the world that Christ has died for them is my goal.

The second large complex of goals centered about social service. The concern of these students tended to be anthropocentric rather than theocentric. Many of the actual goals stated were similar to those grouped under the preceding category. However, their emphasis was not primarily on serving God or preaching the Gospel, but rather stated that their interest lay in helping people or serving others. A total of thirty-eight statements of goals were included under this caption. Some individuals stressed the work of the ministry in institutions among those ill or mentally deranged. Others were filled with sympathy for neglected peoples in various parts of the world. It should be added that most of the students who listed this goal usually concluded their discussion by stating that service to the body eventually had to include concern for the man's spiritual welfare. A rather general quotation written by a thoughtful student is the following:

I had finished all but one semester in public high school. At that time the element of social service entered in together with the personally applied criterion, 'apt to teach.' I can truthfully say that at that time I wished to have as my future occupation something that would be of benefit to others. I even realized that as a preacher I would not be wondering



how to get rid of money.) But I had something worth more than all worldly wealth; this I could give to others.

One item which in the estimation of thirty students needed to be stressed as a goal for the average pastor was work among the teen-agers of the church. These students discussed this goal always in connection with one of the preceding. However, all of them developed in great detail their interest in youth work and for the most part their dismay at the present youth programs of the church. The first student who comes from a layman's home reacts as follows:

I am amazed at how few churches in our synod have an active youth program, or if it is active, how little they do to bring the word of God into their Walther League meetings or whatever the organization is. In this sense my goal is two-fold. First, to attract the youths of our church back into our youth organizations by making the meetings as entertaining as possible. And then, when I have them there, to bring them back to Jesus. To get them to come to church and become active church members. It is my opinion that the reason so many drift away from the church after confirmation is not because the Walther League of their particular church has degenerated to nothing, but because they are not given a chance to become active members in the church. If they could be made interested in joining the choir, teaching Sunday School or maybe some of the boys becoming ushers on Sunday morning, I think that many of them would soon become active members in the church.

A second student who was reared in a parsonage emphasizes the instruction and guidance needed by young people:

There is one phase of pastoral work which I would like to stress - work among youth (adolescents). Instruction in God's Word is absolutely essential. However, there should be more! The adolescent should have someone to whom he (or she, as the case might be) can go when guidance is needed. Then, too, there should be



a place where young people can get together for healthful and Christian recreation. These things are provided in places, but many places are seriously lacking in these facilities. No matter how small the parish, there should be some sort of Christian center for the youth. I have seen many young people become warped and bitter at the world due to such a lack. This is the one thing I have to help overcome.

An important goal and source of motivation for the ministry was that of finding a personal assurance of faith. Fifteen students developed the thought that they had a strong desire to remain in close and constant contact with the means of grace. In order to preserve and strengthen this intimate communion with God they decided upon the ministry. All of these students mentioned this motivation in connection with dominant desires to preach Christ and to help people. Many of them apologized for mentioning this personal factor which is "essentially selfish in nature." The first student mentioned both his hope of a heavenly reward and his desire for a better knowledge of God:

In addition I hope to get a heavenly reward out of being a pastor. What I mean is that I hope to have God say to me on judgment day, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant.'

. . .In addition I hope to gain as a pastor a better knowledge of God. I realize that you can obtain this as a layman but I believe that a pastor is more likely to receive this through his constant study of the Word for his sermons, lectures and discussions. Furthermore, a strengthening of my faith which is very vital to our spiritual life.

In the second quotation the writer associates his "selfish goal" with his desire of being an example to his parishioners:



Still there is a 'selfish' while entirely Christian reason for my desire to become a minister. Through my work with His Word in the harvest for Him I hope to become more firm in my own faith and more spiritually mature. No minister can hope to be effective if he does not 'practice what he preaches.' Therefore I hope to grow more spiritually mature in order to become an example to my parishioners.

In all, twelve students emphasized the personal happiness and self-satisfaction which they expected to find in the ministry. In general these goals were distinguished from the category of personal prestige or personal assurance by the emphasis on the security, temporal in most cases, which they expected to gain in the ministry. One minister's son mentioned that he was aware of the thorns in a minister's life but added: "I have chosen the work of the ministry and of the high calling in Jesus Christ because I personally see in it much satisfaction."

Almost all of the students in this group mentioned the desire for the life and atmosphere of a parsonage. The following quotation was written by a student with a strong sense of vocational awareness:

I want to rear a family in a parsonage! That is, I want, like every healthy man, to get married and to establish a home. What profession guarantees a more blessed home and family life than that of the ministry? No minister becomes a financial tycoon, but what need is there for masses of money? Every minister is well-provided for in this world. No congregation neglects the physical well-being of its pastor and his family. It gives me joy to look forward to establishing a home where Christ will dwell as the Head of the house -- a home which can be pointed to as an example. A pastor is better equipped than an average layman to disseminate the spirit and knowledge of Christ right in the home. His is a house of prayer.



A sixth group of goals concerned the desire of the writers to be "Christ-like." Twelve students emphasized that a man is not fully equipped for the ministry until he becomes a "small Christ" to his people. In the following quotation a student speaks of this desire in terms of being "a reflector of Christianity":

I would like to be a reflector of Christianity. One who would let his light so shine that he actually would be different from this world. In this, also, is a taking, for to be able to reflect the light I must first have the light shining on me, and to have a bright reflection, I must have the light focused directly toward me and I must have my new man up in the front to reflect that light.

Another goal stressed by the first-year class was that of developing a cordial and friendly personality. This group felt that in order to be effective in doing the personal work of reassuring people in doubt and guiding them to God, the man must be humble and friendly. One student wrote: "To summarize what I wish to accomplish in a few words, I will say that I hope to be what Lindemann calls a 'cordial' pastor. I want to serve God as a pastor with my whole heart."

The students seemed to be aware of the personal qualities which are considered essential for the public ministry. In a survey conducted among a group of seventy-eight laymen concerning personal qualities preferred in their ministers<sup>37</sup> the following three items ranked highest: (1) Good mixer with young and old, (2) Sociable and agreeable, and

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<sup>37</sup>Hartshorne and Froyd, op. cit., pp. 52-3.



(3) Pleasing personality. The student quoted below integrates his desire for a pleasing personality with a need for living in close harmony with one's parishioners:

I want to live in close harmony with my parishioners, so that if anyone has a problem of any kind and he feels that I can help, I want him to come see me without any hesitation. I want them to feel that my doors are open to them at all times, and I would like to feel the same about them. This close fellowship is conducive to stronger Christianity. Last and most important of all, I want to be a humble faithful servant of the Lord.

Many students tended to reflect their own high impression of the ministry by stating more or less indirectly that one of their goals will be to share in the honor and prestige which surround the office of the ministry. Ten students emphasized the feelings of happiness which would be theirs when they would occupy this position of sole leadership in a congregation:

Within myself I regard the ministry as a career, yes, the career. First of all it is the highest calling on earth; opportunities are innumerable, social contacts are almost limitless and (being an adventurous person) the travel end appealed to me also. In addition I have noticed and learned that pastors (especially Protestant) are highly respected and therefore must serve their place in society.

The majority of the students alluded to the fact that their job would center about teaching and preaching God's Word. A specific goal of six students, however, was a thorough indoctrination of their congregation. Several said they hoped "to teach them, to instruct them so thoroughly in the great truths of the Scriptures so that those truths become a part of every member and an active force in their



lives." One student complained about the way in which many adult classes are being confirmed by some of the pastors of today--"a month of instructions and the person is a Lutheran."

Another student summarized this goal as follows:

It hurts me deeply to run across Christian men and women who have been members of the church for years and yet know pitifully little about the Word of God. The scope of their doctrine seems to contain only a few of their favorite passages of Scripture and the rest of the Bible is almost a 'closed book.' Its doctrines for them are too unfamiliar to be useful tools for their daily lives. A well indoctrinated congregation, then, is one of my goals.

A goal set up by four students concerned the desire to preach. Although most of these students expressed an enjoyment in public speaking and a desire to concentrate on this aspect of the ministry, they all connected this desire--which would be selfish as an end in itself--with the total task of winning people. One student who originally had views of entering the law profession expressed his desire to speak in the following paragraph:

My goal in the ministry is to win souls for Christ. I believe I shall be able to do this most effectively through sermon work. As a result I hope to someday become a great preacher of the Word. I feel that it is in actual sermon work that one can reach the most people most effectively. I hope to be able to present challenging, soul-searching talks which leave the hearer with something to think about. I hope I shall never be afraid to preach Biblical truths because some people don't like to hear the Law. That is one of the great troubles with many pastors today. It is in the pulpit that I hope to do my greatest work.

The last specific goal mentioned by a group of four students was that of building their local church. This group distinguished itself by emphasizing the physical facilities



of the church almost to the exclusion of the human element. One student wrote: "If the Lord permits me to enter the ministry, I should like to build a bigger and better congregation out of the one I have."

Another student indicated this by writing:

I want to be a successful preacher and to have a large and prosperous church, with a huge Sunday School, a thriving parish school, and an active Walther League. I want to be, in other words, a successful minister in every sense of the term. But I also pray God that He will keep me ever mindful that these are not goals but merely the goal posts and that my goal is to bring other souls to the Lord Jesus Christ for the pardon and comfort which I am receiving from Him.

There were other goals developed by the members of the class. Most of them, however, were individual in nature and did not represent a major concern of the class. One of these, for example, was the furtherance of music and liturgy. The student quoted below described this as his fourth goal in the ministry:

My fourth goal in the ministry is to further the cause of good music and ceremony in the church service. My second love is perhaps music, especially the great music of our church. All too often Christians forget that the word that is sung is as potent as the spoken word. However, this is only true when that music is good music. . . I also feel that it is not right to overlook our heritage of religious ceremony. I feel that vestments lend dignity and reverence to the service as contrasted to the revivalistic air found in some churches.

#### Area of Service Preferred

In considering their goals for the ministry approximately one-third of the class made some reference to the area in which they would like to conduct their ministry. For



completeness we shall survey briefly the areas in which the class indicated its preference:

Field of Interest

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Foreign Mission                              | 22 |
| Medical Mission                              | 4  |
| Willing to Serve Anywhere                    | 16 |
| Non-Parish                                   | 12 |
| (Administrative, Social<br>Work, Chaplaincy) |    |
| Teaching                                     | 7  |
| City   | 4  |
| Small Church                                 | 4  |
| Country                                      | 4  |

Rating first in the list of areas as shown in the preceding tabulation was that of foreign missions. Twenty-six students mentioned their desire to spread the Gospel to the heathen. Of these twenty-six, four specified that they wanted to become medical missionaries. In the first excerpt quoted the student develops his reasons for desiring to open new mission fields in Africa:

The time for spreading the Gospel is now and always. We have the command to go and preach the Gospel to everyone; not only if the field looks promising, but also if it doesn't look so good. Therefore I would like to preach the word of God in some place where it has not been preached in its truth and purity. It seems to me that the large continent of Africa has many places where souls could be won if missionaries were sent. Our church has done great work for the Kingdom in Nigeria, but Nigeria is a very small part of the continent of Africa. This, therefore, is my first goal, if God wills it, to try to open a new mission field in Africa.

Another student who had been forced quite early to turn his attention away from becoming a doctor because of financial reasons, hopes to become a medical missionary. His paragraph is representative of those written by the four



students who aspire to this field of endeavor:

Assuming that I might prosper under the guidance of God as a minister, I would like to achieve this goal: I would like to become a medical missionary. Administering healing to both body and soul of man is the greatest service a human being can render to his neighbor. I could hope for nothing better and I would be no happier if this goal were realized. The Baptists have a school to train medical missionaries. In that they are ahead of us. Our own missionaries have told us time and again that their chances of starting and encouraging missions are enhanced if they are able to minister first to the physical and then the spiritual needs of the natives.

Undoubtedly those students who did not express a preference for a specialized area felt that they would serve their church wherever God sent them. Sixteen students, however, specifically stated that their desire to spread the Gospel was so great that they would be willing to serve anywhere. One student who developed at length his realization that the sufferings and sorrows of people can be cured only through the Gospel wrote as follows:

Be a witness of Christ unto the world. Bring Christ and His word to the slums, to the upper four hundred, to the peoples of the Ozarks, and to the peoples of the dark lands of the pagan. And what may be considered very much today, let me bring this Gospel of love behind the iron curtain. Of course as we read this we realize that I as one man could not even in the smallest degree accomplish such an enormous goal. But the only goal that meets one's mind because of what has been said is, preach the Gospel of Christ and tell others of the grace of God. I as yet have not set my goal toward that of a missionary, parish pastor, or worker with the youth, but I trust that God will guide me so that I will be able to preach His word.

Twelve students were quite definite in stating that their chosen area did not lie in the parish ministry. Although they all agreed that they were determined to serve God to the best of their capacity, they felt that their abilities would be



utilized to the fullest either in an administrative position, in the chaplaincy or in social work. Several students felt that their backgrounds qualified them for an administrative position. All of these men stated that had they not entered the ministry, they would have chosen careers as business executives. The following quotation is typical:

The gifts with which the good Lord endowed me do not lie along lingual, scientific or scholarly lines, but to the best of my knowledge lie along administrative lines. If I did not value the calling of the ministry as highly as I do and if I would place the ministry on a level with other professions or occupations, I would certainly have chosen a career as a business executive since that, next to religion, is my major field of interest. In view of these facts then, I believe, at the present time, that I could best serve the Cause if I were to be placed in a ministerial administrative position.

A student who became extremely interested in social work while attending preparatory school stated that he is "positive that I want to go into some phase of church work," but he is not at present sure whether this should be in the parish ministry or in social work. He indicated that this problem is the primary reason for his being at the seminary on a "trial basis":

I have decided that my line is social work of which our church is badly in need, but I am not at all convinced that I can accomplish more for Christ in the parish ministry than I can through some other phase of social work in the church. That is why I am here at this seminary on a personal trial basis.

The period of armed conflict during which all of these men had their preparatory training was reflected in a desire on the part of several to enter the chaplaincy. In most cases these men merely mentioned the chaplaincy as one step



in their projected careers. For example, the man who is quoted below stated that he would like to serve in the Chaplains' Corps for several years, after which he hoped to become a member of one of the preparatory school faculties where he would prefer to teach literature. Concerning his interest in the chaplaincy he wrote:

Having found my reason for entering into this profession, I now had the courage to say what I would truly like to accomplish. My first desire is to enter the Chaplains' Corps. I believe it is my one great ambition, to bring the words of comfort to our fighting men who battle to preserve our right of freedom of worship.

As was indicated in Table 10, "Other Occupational Interests of First-Year Students Listed in Order of Preference," teaching was the other profession preferred by most. Seven men voiced their preference for the teaching ministry rather than for the pastoral ministry. One of these who has not yet decided on the pastoral ministry is debating between service in the Chaplains' Corps or in teaching. His paragraph is of interest:

Counselors have advised me to enter the teaching branch of the ministry, in view of the fact that my educational background is of such a nature as to give me a considerable advantage in working toward that goal. A short term of service in the armed service of my country has given me a certain insight into the work of the Chaplains' Corps and a desire to perform similar service. .

Four men indicated a strong preference for work in an urban area. One student who expressed an interest in doing something "toward the betterment of society" stated his desire to work in a city in the following paragraph:



My only desire is to serve as a pastor in an urban community. An ideal city would be one with a population of about fifty thousand, and a large field for missionary work. There I wish to have a small mission congregation. Into this I could pour my life's work, and under God's guidance, build it into a large and prosperous church. My goal will be to see its membership grow from eight to eight hundred; to see that first small station be replaced by a large and beautiful house of God, to which its members could flock every Sunday; to see a large parochial school erected, to which the children could attend and learn of Jesus their Savior; and to see its members active in its various social organizations. This would be a church which I, with the help of God, had built up. For what more could an individual ask?

Four other individuals mentioned that they would prefer a small mission station in which to start their ministry:

Another goal of mine, particularly in early years in the ministry, is not to go to a large congregation or a well settled one, but rather to a very small mission station where there is a great future for our church, to even maybe start out with nothing at all. Somewhere where you can tell that you are truly working for the glory of God and trying to do your part.

Finally, another four men indicated their preference to be "country parsons." If the figures in the last three areas are indicative of the attitudes of the entire class, then the group seems to be evenly split in interest among rural, urban, small and large congregations.

I want to be a 'country parson.' I want to have just a small parish in a locale where I can be God's tool for soul-winning and keeping. As His servant I will distribute the Sacraments and the Word. I want to guide my people to a loving, full service. God grant that I might have an active lay group. My guides in life have been sincerity, humbleness and prayer. God grant me faith; may His will be done.



## CHAPTER VII

### FACTORS MOTIVATING STUDY FOR THE MINISTRY

In the preceding chapters we have analyzed many of the factors which have contributed toward final decisions to enter the ministry. Although definite figures are not available defining the precise age at which the average student at Concordia Seminary made his decision, one would estimate after analyzing several hundred subjective essays, that for the most part the decision was made at an early age. The survey made of 1,687 ministers, described in The Education of American Ministers, found the median age of decision to fall between the ages of seventeen and twenty years.<sup>38</sup> Almost 40 per cent fell into this age group. The Baptist survey confirmed this fact, discovering the median age of decision to fall within the same age limits. Over 41 per cent of their 182 seminary seniors listed this as the period in which the decision to become a minister had been made.<sup>39</sup>

On the day on which the incoming class arrived at Concordia Seminary the students were asked to fill in a questionnaire. One of the first questions read: "What factor prompted you to prepare to enter this seminary?" Since only two lines were allotted for the answer, it will be seen that

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<sup>38</sup>Brown, op. cit., p. 112.

<sup>39</sup>Hartshorne and Froyd, op. cit., p. 130.



the questionnaire had definite limitations. In its wording it perhaps tended to encourage a stereotyped answer. However, since the average individual cannot objectively determine basic motivation in his life, the question will serve our study.

When the average seminarian is asked to state briefly why he entered Concordia Seminary, he states that it was the result of personal desire and interest. Fifty-four of the 175 members of the class under examination expressed this opinion. Many who wrote short sentences of explanation expressed the thought that it had always been a "childhood ideal" or "an ambition" for as long as they could remember. By far the majority of the students listed this as the dominant reason for their entering the seminary.

The answers procured from the questionnaire were tabulated and are presented in Table 17.



TABLE 17

What Factors Prompted You to  
Prepare to Enter this Seminary?

| <u>Reason Given</u>                                      | <u>Listed by</u> |
|--|------------------|
| Personal Desire and Interest                             | 54               |
| Serve Lord in Best Possible Way                          | 23               |
| Serve Fellowmen  | 19               |
| Home   | 16               |
| Past Training  | 13               |
| Duty to Spread Gospel                                    | 12               |
| Pastor   | 11               |
| Prepare for Ministry                                     | 11               |
| None   | 11               |
| Personal Call  | 9                |
| Further Work of Church                                   | 9                |
| Realization of Saving Work of Lord                       | 7                |
| Father is Pastor   | 7                |
| Trying School--to see if Ministry is<br>Preferred Career | 6                |
| Best Suited for this Occupation                          | 6                |
| Influence of Friends or Relatives                        | 6                |
| Shortage and Need of Pastors                             | 4                |
| Little Satisfaction in Previous Work                     | 4                |
| Desire to Enter a Profession                             | 4                |
| Desire to be in Daily Contact with Word                  | 3                |
| Standards and Reputation of School                       | 3                |
| Interest in Theology                                     | 2                |
| Christ's Command on Scripture Reading                    | 2                |
| Public Speaking Enjoyed                                  | 1                |
| Knowledge of Personal Corruption                         | 1                |
| Personal Disagreement Regarding Religion                 | 1                |
| Friends here   | 1                |
| Saved from Death by Lord                                 | 1                |

Rating second in importance were answers which centered about the thought of serving the Lord in the best possible way. Twenty-three students expressed the belief that they could serve God to the fullest or express their gratitude to Him for His many gifts only by entering into the full-time parish ministry.

A third group emphasized the factor of service to their fellowmen as the determining influence in their decision to



enter the ministry. In this area some expressed pity for the damned. Others expressed this thought positively by stating that they wished to bring peace and assurance of salvation to other people.

Home was the fourth factor listed by the students. Sixteen students mentioned that their parents, or in some cases brothers, had been the determining factor. Seven others indicated the influence of their homes by stating that their fathers were pastors. In spite of this indication, every other attempt at analysis of the importance of the home allots a far greater position to it than was suggested by the group on these questionnaires. When the students wrote at length about their goals in the ministry (in the essays referred to in the preceding chapter), fifty students mentioned the home as the dominant or contributing factor in their determination to become ministers.

Thirteen of the students were rather non-committal in their answers for they merely indicated that past training had prompted them to enter the seminary. Several of these thirteen mentioned the influence of the preparatory school. Others simply stated that the seminary was "the next step" in their theological education. It is of note that this was the first reaction which entered their minds.

Twelve students specifically expressed a feeling that they had a duty to spread the Gospel. In essence this obligation was quite close to the factor listed above as "serving the Lord in the best possible way."



Another dominant influence was the individual student's pastor. Eleven listed their pastors as the prime source or motivation of their initial thinking about the ministry.

Since the entire list of twenty-eight factors is shown in Table 17, it will not be necessary at this time to analyze all of them. We do, however, note the following: Eleven students could list no particular factor. It is also pertinent to note that only nine students out of the total group mentioned a sense of personal call. This is particularly significant in view of the fact that the Baptist survey indicated that 44 per cent of their students listed a "sense of call" as the dominant reason for entering the ministry.

#### Source of Motivation

When one inquires of the student the source of his motivation for the ministry, he confronts an exceedingly complex picture. Few people are able to critically analyze the promptings which they feel within themselves. As a result, many of the papers presented a mingling of numerous factors which eventually contributed to a desire to enter the Lutheran ministry. We note the case of a minister's son as a concrete instance:

The work, however, has not always appealed to me and it was only the encouragement of my parents that kept me at it. A year or two ago I finally decided to make up my mind and I truly think that God has a place for me in the ministry . . .

Just two paragraphs later, this student wrote:

Though I have often been rebellious against the hands that pushed me into the ministry, I have always wished to teach.



But he concluded:

Thus I have decided to be a minister because I can think of no more glorious task and shall always consider it my privilege to be counted among those whom God has chosen as shepherds of His flock.

In spite of this lack of clarity an attempt was made to classify each paper as to the dominant source of motivation. In only a few instances were papers grouped under a dual source of motivation.

A striking difference was noted between the primary factors listed by the students on their questionnaires and the actual source of motivation which they developed in their essays. Although only sixteen students mentioned their homes as a dominant factor in the questionnaire--with another seven stressing the factor of their fathers as ministers--fifty students elaborated upon the major contribution made by their early home training and the consequent encouragement of their parents. One concludes, therefore, that the dominant source of motivation for the ministry comes from the parents of the future minister. Even where a pastor was mentioned as a factor or "a call from the Holy Ghost," usually the home contributed the original incentive.

The students fell into several loose groupings. The first was that in which the father of the student was a pastor. The student who is quoted below was one who attended preparatory school for two years without having any enthusiasm or desire to serve God. He outlined his development and the primary position played by his home as follows:



Before I had ever entered elementary school, I told everyone - without thinking - that I was going to become a Lutheran minister. This announcement obviously did not stem from anything but the fact that my father, both grandfathers, and five uncles were Lutheran pastors. Practically no other profession or occupation was known in our relationship. But as I grew somewhat older and began to think more for myself, I slowly but steadily lost interest in becoming a servant of the Word. Instead of preaching I now thought seriously of teaching - either in a Lutheran or a public school. This remained my choice until my first year in public high school. During the progress of that year, I became more and more imbued with the urge to do as much as possible for God and His Church, until at last I reverted to my earliest choice for my life's work, namely, the Holy Ministry. Now I finally was absolutely positive as to my future calling in life, and so I prepared to enter \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

Another group of students were quite proud of the fact that they were not entering the ministry because it was "traditional" in their family. One of these, who expresses the conviction that his choice involved more "decision" and "soul struggle" because it arose from a non-ministerial background, designated the home as an indirect agent:

The religious training my parents gave me undoubtedly laid the foundation for my eventually accepting His calling. However, there is no single reason which I can give to account for my present studying for the ministry. To enroll in a pre-theological school had never entered my mind until I was encouraged to do so by my pastor on my confirmation day. Although at the time I put it out of my mind, frequently the Spirit became reactivated when certain sermons 'struck home.' It was not until I met my present fiancée that I really began to think seriously about entering a prep school.

The conclusion that the home is an important factor even where other influences are developed is supported by a student in the following quotation:

During my formative years I liked to believe that I had made the decision to become a pastor by myself. Everyone



likes to believe that he has made his own decisions in important matters. It is possible that I did actually make the decision myself, but if I did, I still owe this choice to the guidance of my parents which caused me to think along these lines, and to their acquiescence which made it possible for me to keep this ambition. What a blessing Christian parents are!

The second major source of motivation lay with the individual's pastor. In all, eighteen students mentioned their pastors as dominant influences in their becoming ministers. In answer to the question of why he is entering the ministry one student wrote:

. . . I must let my mind go back to the days of my youth which were spent in confirmation class under the guiding hand of my pastor. In those days I'd come home with my mind filled with many good Bible passages and their application to life, and I guess I'd even preach little sermons to my mother while helping her around the house.

A considerable number of students dated their interest in the ministry to the period of confirmation. As one student wrote:

My interest in religion dates back to my confirmation class days. My mother, being a good German Lutheran, encouraged me to attend Sunday School and confirmation classes. In my confirmation classes my minister would describe many of his personal experiences in the ministry. These experiences interested and intrigued me and I began to think about studying for the ministry.

Third in importance for the source of motivation was the reference to the awareness of a definite call by the Holy Ghost. In no case did a student relate an instance in which he felt called by the Holy Ghost at a specific moment. In all, fourteen students mentioned a call by the Holy Spirit. A typical reaction was expressed by one student who recorded that his initial interest in the ministry was established



during his parochial school days and was accentuated by his Christian home. In preparatory school he was suddenly confronted by the realization that he was below the average student in mental ability. Accepting this fact as a challenge, he surpassed many of his classmates scholastically. In his own words he observed:

Strengthening my ego by observing my class standing, I began to consider other professions, especially those offering more social and economic prestige. Somehow, however, every time I debated the 'pros and cons' of a prospective endeavor, my conscience would invariably demand an answer to the common question: 'Just for what reason have you been placed here on this corrupt, sinful earth?' Within me I knew well the answer - to serve Jesus Christ and Him only. Truthfully, I often attempted to suppress that cry from within. Yet at the end of every debate with my conscience, it won out, being guided, I am sure, by the Holy Spirit, though I called upon His holy guidance far too infrequently.

. . . This and all other goals, I realize, can only be accomplished through the work of the Holy Ghost; and so it is my duty to do all in my power to assist the Spirit of God to actually enter my heart and dwell there.

A number of students were motivated to begin their study for the ministry by an awareness of the "increasing inroads of secularism" in American culture in general and in the church specifically. Fourteen students wrote paragraphs in which they developed this theme. They expressed concern about the "absence of a vital application of the principles learned in church to the minute-to-minute life of the church-goer, or its twin, the futile legalistic mode of 'obeying' Biblical precepts."

For some the problem was primarily theoretic in nature, that is to say, they observed the "floods of rationalism and



secularism" in a rather objective way. One student gave up "an avid interest in electrical science in order to become a poorly paid preacher" because he was sensitive to this present trend:

By becoming a Lutheran minister of the Word and Sacraments of God, it is my hope to be able, although it might be in only a small measure, to counteract the tendencies of the modern age. It is my hope that I might, by the grace of God, be able to help stem the floods of rationalism, secularism, and, above all, indifferentism which are welling up in the western world during this modern age. And that by so doing I might be instrumental in turning some of the thoughts of the people back to a saner and more religious approach to life.

For another the problem of materialism and secularism was not merely observed at a distance, for as he wrote:

I have always lived in poverty in a poor section of a large town and have seen, perhaps even have lived the lowest level of American life. I have seen tramps lying drunk in the gutter, children raised in beer joints, teen-agers out for excitement in their meager lives, young couples divorced shortly after their marriage, etc. That is the atmosphere of my early life. My own life was similar and yet something high has crept into my thinking. Something away from any of my natural thoughts. Thoughts of good and thoughts of love. Luckily I was enrolled in a Christian day school. I have had three separate fathers and a very shaky background. My real father passed away about six years ago. Since then I have been on my own. Through all of this I have always thought I would like to help my fellowman. Maybe to help him pull himself up. To make him happier. I feel I can do this in the ministry. May the Lord help me.

Ten other students were prompted to enter the ministry out of a sense of gratitude to God. When this group surveyed all that the Lord had done for them in Jesus Christ, they expressed their determination to show their thankfulness by now spreading the message of the Gospel to others. One



student who expressed a desire to enter the foreign mission field described his source of motivation as follows:

The goal which I have set before me is fostered by love and thanks to my God for sending His Son to save me and all other believers from eternal damnation. My desires and goals are the same as any other Christian--to spread the sweet message of eternal salvation to those who have not heard it. I do not really consider this a goal; it is merely what every Christian, by love to his Savior, wants to do.

The desire to reform served as a strong influence for many students. A total of sixteen men stated that one factor which had driven them on in their study for the ministry was the awareness of serious deficiencies in present church life and practice. Ten men noted weaknesses among the clergy and the organized church. One student who had been debating between farming and studying for the ministry said:

I have always noticed some things in my home congregation which I thought ought not be. I had grown up twenty miles from the nearest church and beyond what my parents taught me concerning Christ and the Redemption I received no Christian education. Sure we got to church but we got there after Sunday School was out and left right after service was over. We got no vacation Bible school because we had no place to stay. We had no parochial day school in the congregation. The school I went to was a public school to which only Ukranian Catholic children went and most of the time they had a Catholic teacher. I went to college at 14 and I immediately signed my name to the roster of ministerial students because that was what my parents expected. Well, this summer I decided that I wanted to go into the ministry to try to correct some of these things . . .

Another reason I came to see was that the young people in my home congregation are woefully neglected. The services are German and most of the children and teenagers know little or no German. There were no young people's societies and now that there are, they are neglected by the young people because they are not used to going to these. They actually don't realize



what these are for. They come to these meetings only because they can get the car that night and after the meeting is over they can tear around in the car and do their usual necking. This should be corrected. After I realized why I wanted to become a minister, I thought about how to improve my church.

This attitude of reform also expressed itself in a desire to improve the church life of parishioners. One student concluded that "people actually were coming to church in order to be preached at, that they actually sat in their pews waiting to hear the same thing over and over again in 'preachy' language. . ."

After expressing his chief goal of becoming an ambassador of Christ, one student described his desire to change church life:

For years I have noticed and deplored the fact that some of our congregations are spiritually dead, a fact which makes me feel sick at heart and angry. Well, I want to do something about it. I would like to resurrect these 'dead' parishioners and give them new life, new zeal to work for Christ. I'd like to keep them on their toes with the help of the Holy Spirit. Of course I realize that it would be a slow process and that I would have to use much tact and diplomacy. I would like to ask each member of the congregation individually why he comes to church on Sunday morning. You see, I firmly believe that a lot of people come to church because it is the acceptable thing. After all, a man's reputation is enhanced if he is known as a frequent church-goer or if he gives 'generously' for the cause of the church. Many people attend services to please parents, to set an example for children, to keep abreast with latest gossip. Then, I would like to do something about it. With the backing of the Holy Ghost and with true Christian sincerity I would 'remodel' my people.

In all, six students described sermons either by their pastors or by special speakers as being an important contributing factor to their decision for the ministry. In



every case the sermon was coupled with other factors, perhaps the urging of parents or personal discussion with pastors. One student who had been considering the field of politics was swayed by an address by a leading churchman:

In the fall of my last year at prep school I was privileged to hear a talk by Dr. O. P. Kretzmann. In this talk Dr. Kretzmann gave some information concerning his trip to the Far East, emphasizing the spiritual vacuum in the modern Japan, also the great need for Christian missionaries to put the Gospel into this vacuum. He also mentioned that bringing Christ to these spiritually dead people was the greatest thing that could be done for the cause of world peace.

It was this part of the speech that particularly struck home to me. Maybe I could win souls for Christ and still accomplish my 'political goal.' I had always wondered: Was I going into law for merely materialistic goals, for money, honor, prestige, or was I actually justified in using my talents in such a profession? I realized that God expected me to use my talents in the best way possible. Hearing Dr. Kretzmann's address, I swung toward the ministry.

A student who discontinued his studies during the course of the first year began his description of his goals in the ministry by telling of his initial impulse as coming from a sermon:

About the time that I was confirmed, I heard a sermon on missions. The sermon was very stirring, stirring enough to make me decide to go into the ministry. My decision was not very rational. It was for the most part emotional.

For some the promptings toward the professional ministry were "negative" in nature, that is, in some cases it was not primarily a positive love for the work of the ministry, but rather a dislike for another occupation. Some sensed this as they worked at various jobs during the summer months.



Their objection was that they felt "no real satisfaction" in their work. One student wrote:

I want to accept a calling. Several relatives and pastors suggested that I consider the ministry, but I had long planned to be a teacher or school administrator. Then I changed my mind. Dissatisfied with my course of study at the university and frustrated because my aspirations were not maturing, I began to see that my interest was primarily the church.

Another student frankly stated that he had to decide between the ministry or "common hard labor":

I was still undecided and didn't know positively what I would enjoy doing the most for a life's work. I was definitely faced with the problem of either busying myself as a common hard manual laborer or going to college and studying for the ministry. I finally decided that I wanted to go to a certain co-ed preparatory college. . .

A sensitivity to thoughts of eternity or fears of hell prompted five students to enter the ministry. One student who came from a pastor's home reflected:

An earthly life of perhaps 65 years, death and eternity are in store for the human infant. Man's life-span is infinitesimal when compared with the eons of eternity, yet this period is the great probation of man, after which he is rewarded accordingly for eternity. If the attitude and conduct of an individual during his 65 years determine whether he spend eternity in bliss or perdition, the most important thing he can do is find the means of salvation through Christ. One can, therefore, render no greater service or do anything more vital than to be an agent, through the Holy Ghost, in showing an individual the way to salvation, and reconciliation with God through Christ. Any such consideration is motivation enough for entering the holy ministry.

A second pastor's son mentioned his early fears of hell and eternal damnation as being significant in his final decision to enter the ministry:

Another important reason what that when I was a young child I would shudder every time I thought of hell and



eternal damnation. In fact, thoughts of eternity tended to frighten me so much I felt weak and sick. As I became older my thoughts of eternity would turn toward the bliss and happiness of those who went to heaven. Yet, my dread of hell still continued. At these times I realized how much the world needs the Gospel and I was determined to become a pastor and thus devote my entire life to being an instrument of the Holy Ghost in saving souls.

Four others indicated their basic reason for entering the ministry as lying in Jesus' command to bring the Gospel to others. A couple of the men proceeded to discuss the part which Bible-reading had played in their decision. One student summarized his motivation in the following paragraph:

When I decided to become a minister of the Gospel, I made this decision for one basic reason. The reason was this: to answer Jesus' command to go and teach of Him to the best of my ability. This decision to become a minister was not forced upon me by any other person of my acquaintance. Nor did the opposition to this decision come from others, but from within my own heart.

For a couple of students the tuition-free education offered by the Missouri Synod was a motivating factor in their attending a preparatory school and seminary. A student showed that this financial item determined his present course of study:

Minister, mother, and money--the presence of the first two and lack of the last--when present in combination form that scientific phenomenon known to the initiate as an irresistible force. Minister suggests, mother desires, money decides.

That is just what happened. And two weeks later \_\_\_\_\_ found himself quite alone in an institution that prepared men for the ministry.

The remaining sources of motivation tended to be individual. The students who expressed them had for the most



non-typical backgrounds. Most of them did not enter the seminary through the customary channels of full preparatory school training. Two students, for example, mentioned that they were influenced by the church's current need for ministers. Several described experiences in the army as important. Rather than describing individual incidents of a spectacular nature, most of this group were stimulated in their interest in Christianity by rubbing shoulders with members of other religious groups. A typical statement of this group is quoted below:

While in the army I discovered that there are other religious groups besides Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian in the United States. I also made the astonishing discovery that there exist several other synods besides the Missouri Synod. (Up until this time I was unaware of this fact.) During this period of contact with men of other faiths, I was forced to go to my Bible in search of answers to their many questions. This seems to be the point in my life when the bud of faith in my heart started to grow.

Another group of men reached their decision for the ministry while studying at secular universities. In most cases it was the witness of consecrated Christians who challenged them to become Christian ministers:

My decision to enter the ministry came when I was studying at Cornell University. I had belonged to the Lutheran Church for about two years before I entered college. My spiritual life was strictly of the Sunday morning variety. During the course of the year at Cornell I came into contact with a group of young Christians who in word and deed glorified their Savior. At one time or another along in that year the Lord gave me the desire to study for the ministry. How much I knew then of the purpose and challenge of the ministry I have forgotten with the past. Sufficient to say that I had a strong enough desire for the ministry to leave



college, lose two years, and start over at one of Synod's junior colleges.

We summarize this information on the source of motivation by presenting it in tabular form:

TABLE 18  
Source of Motivation<sup>40</sup>

| <u>Factor</u>                                 | <u>Listed By</u> |
|---|------------------|
| Home  | 50 students      |
| Pastor  | 18               |
| Called by Holy Ghost                          | 14               |
| Secularism                                    | 14               |
| Gratitude                                     | 10               |
| Desire to Reform Church Practices<br>(Clergy) | 10               |
| Reform of Church Members                      | 6                |
| Sermon  | 6                |

#### Influence of the Preparatory Schools

Since all but a few of the members of the entering class at Concordia Seminary attended at least the junior college division of one of the synodical preparatory schools, one would have expected to have found considerable discussion, both pro and con, concerning the colleges' influence in the development of their vocational set. One is therefore somewhat surprised to find that only twenty-two students mentioned the preparatory schools in writing of their goals in

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<sup>40</sup>It is interesting to compare these findings with those presented in The Education of American Ministers: "The person whose influence was most controlling in bringing about the decision was in the order named: the pastor (337), mother (172), friend (127), father (93), some other minister (43), Sunday School teacher (32), college teacher (29), and others in less proportion." Brown, op. cit., p. 112.



the ministry and the development of their present vocational awareness.

The preparatory school plays a crucial role in the development of the academic and vocational attitudes of the incoming seminarian. For the most part the student has spent six years in training at a synodical preparatory school before he enters Concordia Seminary. A consideration of the twenty-two expressions given showed that approximately half spoke in glowing terms of the role the preparatory school had played in their lives, while the other half spoke of the school in entirely negative terms. In all, twelve students expressed negative reactions to the present preparatory school system.

One student who had given up an early desire to become a doctor entered the preparatory school eager to "further my knowledge of the Bible." He wrote as follows:

Upon graduation from high school and after many talks with my pastor on the subject, I entered a seminary prep school. It was here, for reasons which I will not mention, that I lost some if not most of my initiative for further study for the ministry; and it was here that my first real doubt entered upon the scene, and it was only because of the urging of some of my friends and one of my professors that I finally decided to enter the seminary.

One of the most frequently quoted complaints was the fact that the religious and chapel exercises of the school lacked vitality. Dr. Coates developed this point in great detail in his thesis.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Coates, op. cit., pp. 161-208.



This attitude was reflected by one man as follows:

While at school I set up one other definite goal. Religious instruction at \_\_\_\_\_ seemed to be treated as a secondary matter. I hope to someday see a worthwhile God-pleasing religious program functioning there.

Another specific feature of the existing system criticized by the men was the fact that it encouraged them to make their decisions for the ministry at too early an age. One student who is still unsure of his call to the ministry said:

I say if I continue at the seminary because as yet I do not know definitely whether I will make a good pastor. I decided to set my course when I was quite young, too young actually to realize what I had chosen--not that I am sorry that I made the choice but at that time I didn't know enough of what the duties of a minister of Christ required, what talents and abilities are necessary to fulfill the obligations of a pastor, and I was also too young to recognize what abilities or weaknesses I possessed which might either aid or hinder me in this work.

Most of the criticisms of the students could be summarized by the fact that they did not find at the preparatory schools the Christian philosophy and attitudes which they had expected. Many pointed out that they had not formed too exalted a view of what they expected. However, they could see "no difference" between the preparatory school and a regular secular school.

Prep school was not much of a change from any other school except that the studies were somewhat different than they had been, or probably would have been in an ordinary high school. What I mean by this is that there was a 'ministerial attitude,' if one might call it that. Everybody was comparatively young, and I think there were very few who looked ahead and seriously contemplated the fact that in a few years they would actually be called upon as pastors to work in the harvest.



If anyone did look ahead with that realization, it was only momentary; it all seemed so far away.

The student who was quoted above as criticizing the religious program of his preparatory school underwent a certain change of attitude insofar as his reaction to the total program of the preparatory school was concerned. He stated that he entered the preparatory school to prove to himself that he could "live with myself as a layman." He continued:

This task may have been easily accomplished for one could become thoroughly disgusted in the life of a juxtie. Thanks be to the peace and comfort of His Word, I stuck it out until I slowly fell in love with 'the bunk.'

Some of the finest comments in praise of the existing preparatory system came from men who entered the schools with little intention of becoming ministers but there were persuaded to change their minds:

When I first entered Synod's preparatory school for the ministry in \_\_\_\_\_ back in 1944, I had little intention of becoming a Lutheran pastor. However, now six years later, my mind has changed and I fully intend, God willing, to serve as a pastor in the Lutheran Church. I firmly believe that I was not a victim of a system. No, gradually I became aware in my mind that I wanted to become a pastor.

Other students wrote of the fine experiences and training gained in the preparatory schools as being instrumental in the formation of their present ideas and goals as pastors. This positive influence of the preparatory school in the molding of a true vocational awareness is described by the following student:

My experiences and training in preparatory school have had a tremendous effect in helping to mold my ideas and



goals as a pastor. I have become more conscious of the fact that the ministry is indeed an office of great responsibilities, such as the minister toward his congregation and to his fellowmen in bringing souls to Christ. I have come to realize that a minister must have all the training possible to carry out his responsibilities successfully and intelligently.

In conclusion it should be stated that in the minds of most students a distinct change of attitude takes place between the high school and college years. One student who also complained about deciding for the ministry at the "too early age of twelve" wrote of his apathetic attitude toward the ministry while he was in the high school division. He wrote:

My real knowledge of the truth came when I graduated into the college division at \_\_\_\_\_. Previously I had been following the tide of ministers' sons, who were following in their fathers' footsteps, and others who were consecrated in their work. It was at this time that I came to the full knowledge of Christ and the saving Gospel. Finally the Holy Ghost, working through me, had permitted me to see the purpose of the work of Christ, and the reason why He had brought me to the ministry.



## CHAPTER VIII

### MISGIVINGS ABOUT PREACHING

As a second check on the class' feeling of preparedness and sense of calling for the ministry the men wrote an assigned essay on the topic, "My Misgivings About Preaching." The students were instructed to give a great deal of thought to the topic and then summarize their analyses in approximately one typewritten page.

In analyzing the 175 essays seventeen different categories were distinguished. The first five categories were grouped under the general heading of "Misgivings in Speaking." The following four categories concerned misgivings about the "Writing of Sermons." The third set was smaller in number and grouped about misgivings concerning the "Effect of Preaching." Finally five areas were distinguished in which were indicated the reasons which prompted these misgivings. Eight students intimated that they had no misgivings.

This chapter is important because it deals with deficiencies which the students sense both in their past preparation as well as in their attitudes. Although many of the students merely expressed concern about themselves in facing an audience, others indicated a more penetrating insight by questioning their own persuasive powers or the results effected through mere speaking. It is as we question the class concerning its sense of its own deficiencies



that we deepen our insights into their maturity and sense of vocational awareness.

In Table 19 these five areas of analyses are summarized:

TABLE 19

## Misgivings About Preaching

Speaking

|                                       |    |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Fear and Nervousness               | 46 |
| 2. Lack Persuasion                    | 32 |
| 3. Memorizing                         | 26 |
| 4. Speaking before Audience           | 20 |
| 5. Physical Difficulties, e.g., voice | 11 |
| 6. Fear of Condescending Attitude     | 4  |

Writing

|                                       |    |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Style                              | 45 |
| 2. Doctrinal and Content Difficulties | 44 |
| 3. Variety in Preaching Weekly        | 22 |
| 4. Textual Problems                   | 13 |

Effect (on People)

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. No Audience Interest       | 7 |
| 2. No Change in Hearers       | 7 |
| 3. Critical Audience Reaction | 4 |

Causal Factors

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| 1. Question Personal Capabilities | 33 |
| 2. Sense of Responsibility        | 13 |
| 3. Personal Life                  | 8  |
| 4. Previous Failures              | 6  |
| 5. Basic Motivation               | 5  |

No Misgivings

8

In general the students demonstrated approximately equal misgivings concerning the preparation of the sermon and its final delivery. Since there were, however, a greater number of misgivings indicated concerning speaking, that is, the



actual delivery of the sermon, we shall first look at the papers from this point of view.

### Speaking

Twenty of the students indicated that their greatest misgiving involved the difficulty of merely facing a group of people and speaking to them confidently. The following quotations indicate that for many this forms the greatest obstacle in entering the parish ministry. One student wrote:

Perhaps the greatest misgiving that I have now is that I find it difficult to face a crowd and tell them just what I think. This weakness will pass after due experience, but the matter of getting the experience and having to go through all the torture first is what makes the misgiving. I find that when I get up in front of a crowd that I can't think as clearly as when I am sitting down and considering the matter. Perhaps it is just the fact that I have to think more congruently while speaking before a group.

From another student:

After sitting in a group looking up at the speaker for so many years, it is rather a terrifying thing to be standing alone with every eye in the congregation upon you. It gives me a feeling of awe and terror. I suppose this is only a natural reaction but it certainly gives a person a funny feeling in his stomach. Within myself I feel that I can get up and tell others about God and I soon hope to do it.

By far the largest group of students specified one aspect of the speaking difficulty, namely, that of nervousness or fear. Forty-six students, which is 26 per cent of the class, explicitly mentioned fear or nervousness. Under the causal factors listed in Table 19, which we shall consider later, it will be noted that a large number of the



students indicated that this reaction arose from an unfortunate speaking experience at a rather early age:

Probably the most evident misgiving of preaching for me as well as many other fellows is nervousness. I personally am of a very nervous nature. I become nervous reading before a small group of fellows in my class. I even become nervous when I practice my violin before members of my family. Because I have been plagued by this my whole life, I have learned quite well to disregard it and act nonchalant.

The second student quoted indicated a faulty emphasis in former speech training as one of the major factors in his present difficulty:

The fact that worries me most is my inability to speak before a group of people. I have tried it on several occasions and I have choked up something terrible. My voice becomes very shaky and frequently I forget sections of the speech, and on one occasion I forgot the whole thing. Due to certain misfortunes like this, I don't have any confidence at all anymore. I think this is because of the fact that in our one and only speech class in prep school we stressed very minor things and completely forgot about the most important thing, that is of putting across a certain message. We were so careful of gestures, foot movements, and voice inflection and so forth that oftentimes we forgot what we were saying. Instead of gaining confidence from that class, we became very discouraged.

For a group of twenty-six others the chief misgiving concerning preaching was the fear of forgetting the message as it had been prepared. The second excerpt indicates a common misgiving, that is, the thought of speaking before friends and relatives in their home congregations. In interview many students expressed regret at the realization that the attitude with which most of the congregation would listen to their first sermons would be one of curiosity rather than a sincere attempt to hear the Word of God.



Student 1:

My chief and foremost misgiving about preaching is that I will forget what to say. By this I do not mean that I will have the sermon memorized verbatim but that an idea will not come to me right away and that I will ramble on and on with many words but not enough meat.

Student 2:

This, plus the fact that I will be standing before a large crowd of people, many of whom are my own relatives, brings up the second of my fears. What if I should freeze up? I have seen it happen to many men when they first began to speak, and it is a pretty sorry sight both to the person himself and to the congregation. I realize that this also should not bother me as I have spoken before crowds before and taken several altar services, but still the anxiety persists. What if it would happen to me?

A group of eleven students specified their particular misgiving, or one of their misgivings, as a personal affliction involving their voice. Two short excerpts are quoted:

Student 1:

One of my misgivings about preaching concerns my voice. Oftentimes I have trouble making myself understood, partly because I have a certain sinus affliction that causes my nasal passages to be somewhat blocked, and partly because I talk too fast and do not enunciate properly. The whole effect is that my voice sounds like a mumble. Maybe it's not as bad as I put it, but it does need watching and practice.

Student 2:

Another misgiving is my voice which is high-pitched and husky. The modulation is very limited and I am afraid it will tire easily if exerted for periods of time.

A careful analysis of the papers indicated that the misgivings of students reached beyond an initial fear of audience or concern about recalling the message. Thirty-two students wrote paragraphs regarding anxiety over the failure of their message to deal with the needs of people and therefore lack



persuasiveness. Behind these comments lies an awareness that the task of preaching is more than that of merely imparting information. After some months of seminary training, the students indicated a realization that the task of preaching involves "with the Spirit's help" the actual changing of men. This area of concern was indicated in the following quotations:

Student 1:

If I really pin it down I suppose two things are involved. First, I don't think that my sermon was up to par. It just wasn't warm and persuasive as it should be. I had always liked sermons which I knew were answering my need. And now I know that my sermon isn't answering the need of the people of a congregation. I just can't seem to meet them. The sermon goes past them. I seem to be answering needs which don't exist, for people that don't exist.

Student 2:

'The Ambassador is sent into the kingdom of darkness to proclaim deliverance for the enthralled souls of men, to bring the glad tidings of joy that unto lost mankind is born a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.' It is things like this that make me wait with anticipation to get into preaching. But I too have certain conceptions that I wonder about. When I think of preaching while here at the Seminary in a congregation you know nothing about, it seems that it will be rather difficult to meet such people's particular needs, and will no doubt make sermons in such cases a bit more difficult. I think I do look forward to preaching in my own congregation much more someday, where you have more of a chance to get to know the real needs of the people, just how they live, etc.

The final misgiving involved in the area of speaking concerned a fear of "talking down" to the congregation or else being more concerned with rhetoric and style than with the message. The first student quoted below is concerned



with speaking to the average member of his congregation. Others writing in this vein have indicated that the separation experienced for six years or more in the preparatory school environment has not contributed to sensitivity on their part to either the problems of people or their method of thinking and speaking.

The second quotation comes from a student who is basically interested in religious drama. It is noteworthy that he has a fear of being pre-occupied with his actual delivery rather than with the persuasive purpose of his sermon.

Student 1:

When I think of this question, three distinct thoughts arise immediately in my mind. The first of these is that I do not know the common, average people well. This is due to the fact that I have been taking specialized studies for such a long time that I have gotten out of touch with people to a great extent. When such a situation arises, it is impossible to sympathize with people. Preaching is essentially reaching out and helping people out of their difficulties. However, if a person does not know the difficulties of his people, he cannot effectively help them. He cannot know their peculiar faults and pet sins against which he must warn them. Of course it is possible to warn them in general terms, but that will not be effective, for the people can too easily pin something like that onto the people in the pew behind them.

Student 2:

I do feel that I may preach down at people. Self-confidence can do that to a person. Or perhaps the self-confidence is merely an indication of something deeper that makes people talk down their noses at others.

Sometimes I feel that I may try so much to impress people with my speaking ability that I will distract from my message. I have heard several men whose style and not whose content was my chief object of admiration. Or maybe such interest is present only in a small group.



## Writing

The second area of misgivings concerned sermon preparation. For many the immediate problem was that of:

(1) Analyzing the Scriptural text; (2) Articulating the Scriptural doctrines involved; (3) the style to be used in preaching; and (4) Difficulties involved in writing fresh sermons of the required length weekly.

Since the homiletical method in which the class was being trained emphasized the drawing out of every major Scriptural thought in the text, thirteen of the students expressed concern over this factor in sermon preparation, as is shown by the following quotations:

Student 1:

I am sure there is something, for despite the fact that I sincerely want to preach the Gospel of salvation in Christ, nevertheless I have a dominant feeling of inferiority and incapability. This dreadful sensation bears on my conscience and I feel that I would rather not be a preacher if I were not properly fit for the task, fearing that I would be a detriment and ruination to the Kingdom of God through my shortcomings. I know that I have many shortcomings, and I imagine within myself that I have many more. For instance, I feel myself confronted with the fear that I may mispresent a doctrine in the body of the sermon, or wrongly apply it, or that I may fail to say what is necessary for my hearers to hear. However, I have noticed recently that this fear decreases somewhat as the days go by and as I learn more and more from every one of my classes about God and things pertaining to His Kingdom.

Student 2:

One of these points which came out while I was writing my sermon was that it would be comparatively easy to speak to unchurched people, but what was I going to say to people who were already Christians. This looms before me as one of my difficulties. Then, too, I feel that I do not have sufficient understanding of the



Scriptures and of doctrine to qualify as a preacher. I worry that my sermons will become trite and repetitious.

Almost an equal number of students expressed difficulty in finding the doctrine and then presenting it in sermonie form. In all, forty-four students expressed doctrinal misgivings. Their sensitivity to this problem is shown in the following two quotations:

Student 1:

A second misgiving is doctrinal. I feel that my doctrine will be weak and will not be stated in a way to help the people. Sometimes I feel a little mixed-up on doctrine. I listen to the professors explaining it and they do a wonderful job, including their Latin phrases. But that is what bothers me for these Latin phrases can never be carried over into your parish preaching and teaching of your people.

Student 2:

For the student the misgivings are probably rather shallow; some things are over-emphasized, others overlooked. I can say that the aspect of facing a crowd does not bother me; I do feel I must pay particular attention to what I say and how I say it. The latter is usually more obvious, I think, but not as serious a problem as the other. The latter, which involves the actual teaching of the Word concerns me quite a bit. If we stick to the principle of thorough indoctrination, (we must) I as a pastor must be sure that my teaching is Biblically sound and made real to the people. How tragic when a person is thoroughly convinced of an untruth or of 'no-truth!' What a judgment there will be of teachers who failed to meet their responsibility!

As was indicated above, a third misgiving which loomed large was that of expressing doctrinal thoughts in an organized and persuasive fashion. Forty-five students, which represented 26 per cent of the class, mentioned this problem.



## Student 1:

All the steps in preparing the sermon were relatively simple, but very helpful to achieving the last goal. However, I found one step in the matter very troublesome and it has bothered me somewhat. That is the problem of expressing the thoughts so well organized beforehand. The previous work was helpful, but I found that when it came to the actual putting the thoughts on paper, they did not come out the way I had planned. With much excitement I went about reading the first draft after I had written it, hoping and expecting to find what I had thought out so well in the first place. But it wasn't there. Even after revision the thoughts which I so much wanted to get across were not there on paper.

## Student 2:

Another one of my misgivings is that I will not put what I have to say 'across' in the way in which the whole audience will be reached. That I will use words, or fail to use other words, which will cause the people to lose interest in what I am saying at the moment. This to me is my greatest misgiving.

The final concern expressed by twenty-two students was associated with a fear of writing at least one sermon every six days. The first student, after stating that he is daily becoming more certain of his vocation, wrote about his dominant fear. The second student mentioned this factor as a second misgiving.

## Student 1:

Now about fears concerning preaching. Chiefly I am worried about my training here. I keep thinking of the shortness of my four years here, and yet the fullness of those years. Somehow I have the dreadful picture flashing before my mind's eye of a young and promising preacher who preaches fine sermons for perhaps two months after his installation and then suddenly realizes that he is empty, that he has already, so to speak, 'blown his wad,' that his vast reservoirs of knowledge and experience have not been vast enough. Even the thought of being in such a situation frightens me.



## Student 2:

Another misgiving which I have about preaching concerns the time element. I don't see how I will be able to turn out three or four sermons a week when the occasion demands, such as the holiday season through which we have just passed. I'm not concerned about the times when I will have to either attend a meeting or work on a sermon. I will simply neglect the meeting. It is when two or more sermons are clamoring for my attention at the same time that I will be at a loss. I hope the quality of my sermons need never suffer because of this.

## The Effect

The final area of misgivings centered about a whole-hearted concern that a change be effected through preaching. This concern was manifested by the students in three ways. Some students, expressing their own reactions to sermons, feared that their hearers would have little interest in what they had to say. A second group expressly stated that they doubted the efficacy of preaching. They asked whether people really are changed through attendance at worship services. The third group feared a critical or hostile reaction to their sermons. The following two quotations describe the misgiving concerning a lack of interest on the part of the audience.

## Student 1:

My chief misgiving about preaching is this, that I don't see how an audience can follow a sermon through from beginning to end without losing the train of thought. I know I can't do it. I have honestly tried on a number of occasions, but eventually I always catch myself day-dreaming. I believe that this is the case with many other people. The problem, then, is how can I make my sermons interesting enough to gain and hold the attention of my audience for the entire length of the sermon. Cheap sensationalism is out of the question. It's a big



problem and frankly I don't think I can meet it. I am certain that every time I deliver a sermon, I will be able to look out over the audience and see some blank stares. Such preaching will be ineffective.

Student 2:

Will I be able to offer something to everyone in my audience? This is a serious problem. How often has our own interest in a sermon wandered after about five minutes of listening. How often do we notice restless, inattentive kids fooling around for lack of some better pastime while the preacher is talking. Will I be able to hold the attention of everyone in my audience most of the time? Will I be able to lead a diversified audience in worshipping their Lord, in bringing their equally diversified problems to church for solution and rest? Will I be able to manipulate the Word so that it gets under their skin and provokes, stimulates or irritates them into action?

The fear of not seeing results or not actually effecting a change in people was expressed by a thoughtful student in the first quotation below. The final reaction of a small group of four students is given in the second quotation.

Student 1:

In our American orientation we are accustomed to 'getting results,' seeing things work out, touching the work of our hands. In the preaching situation, genuine results are probably difficult to discern and calculate. What will my reaction be after a few months of preaching, of putting long hours into a dozen manuscripts with perhaps only the manuscripts and a few hackneyed compliments to show for it?

Student 2:

I always took great comfort in that one hymn. I don't know the exact words but I shall make an attempt. -- 'If you cannot preach like Paul or sing like angels, You can tell then the love of Jesus Who has died for all.' But for some the love of Jesus is not sufficient. Nowadays when you stand in a pulpit, you face a mob of critics, men and women who not only evaluate the content but style and delivery as well. Can I cope with all their expectations?



## Causal Factors

The investigator must now pause to ask himself what in the background and training of this class of future ministers has produced these rather serious misgivings concerning the central task of the ministry. A further analysis of the essays revealed that the dominant factor which prompted a feeling of fear or insecurity in either the preparation or the delivery of the sermon involved an awareness of the immensity and responsibility of the task they were performing in preaching. Many students expressed this fact indirectly as the reason behind other misgivings; but there were thirteen students who specifically stated that their principal misgiving directly involved an awareness of their responsibility before God and man.

The first quotation below comes from an older student in the group who indicated "considerable insecurity in the area of homiletical, rhetorical and liturgical methodology," but then he expressed his real concern as follows:

My principal misgivings involve responsibility. The full implications of occupying a niche where a real ambassador of Christ is expected to be weigh heavily upon me as the hour of my first sermon approaches. I am increasingly oppressed by a feeling of unworthiness and inadequacy. It is difficult for me even at this stage to reconcile my own sinfulness with the ministry of Christ.

The second student quoted is so sensitive to the responsibility which weighs upon him that he doubts his capability in preaching. It is interesting to note that this student, along with many others, expressed a grave



concern over his former limited background in reading which is now beginning to plague him:

At times the task of preaching the Gospel seems to be too great a task for me to accomplish. At times I tremble somewhat when I look at the responsibilities before me, especially when I realize that I am responsible for all those souls which the Lord will place under my supervision. The thought that for every Sunday in the year I will have to give these people some food for thought and not just preach words without meaning also frightens me. The responsibility is great but with the Lord on my side and with His promise that He will be with me and teach me what I should say is most encouraging. As I write this there still is some doubt in my mind that I am capable of preaching something worthwhile. I see that I am lacking in many things, especially in reading.

One of the earlier quotations indicated that the students' fear of audiences had arisen through faulty speech training. Six others specifically mentioned that their fear is a direct result of former failures in attempts to speak before a group. One such quotation will suffice:

The one thing that would hold me back from preaching would be the fact that I have never spoken before a crowd and dread the first time. When we had our semester of speech at \_\_\_\_\_, I forgot everything that I had memorized when I spoke in front of my own classmates. This is the thing that I fear. If I forgot everything in speaking to my own classmates, I surely will be perfectly blank upon the entering the pulpit. I was asked by my father to take the liturgy when at home over the holidays and didn't even have the nerve to do this. I don't know if any of the other fellows in the class do this or not, but I seem to freeze up and speak with a very quivery voice. When a person freezes up like this, it brings on another problem. This is that I cannot make any gestures. I can solve this problem of speaking by overcoming my inferiority complex, but that isn't as easy as it sounds. In taking the liturgy at home I feel that the people will remember that I acted far from a preacher's kid when I was yet at home and they won't even think much of the idea of me taking the liturgy, much less the sermon. The reason that I forget the things that I am going to say in a



sermon or a speech is because I try to think ahead and this seems to bring on a lapse of memory.

After analyzing their difficulties in expressing themselves, thirty-three students questioned their personal capabilities for performing the exacting tasks of the public ministry. Most of the paragraphs involved were directly connected with one of the specific matters already considered. The first quotation is typical of these. A second group, however, were concerned about their lack of maturity, both in physical age and in background. This was expressed with clarity by the second student.

Student 1:

And then I'm afraid that in a general way I'm not fit to ascend a pulpit to preach. By that I mean I'm not nearly as educated as I would like to be. But I consider that my own fault, because in prep school I wasted most of my time. All of this will affect the content and delivery of the sermons, and I'm afraid they would not be very enlightening or helpful to the audience.

Student 2:

Not until I have gained the necessary experience and wealth of material and knowledge do I feel that I'll be able to enter the pulpit not knowing exactly what words I'm going to use. I greatly doubt my ability to do that now, for it seems to me to be a skill that comes with maturity in preaching--a maturity I am far from possessing now. My misgivings may be unfounded, but they are most definitely real. I'm afraid to attempt such preaching now would result in much boring repetition and loss of the clearness and polish of expression which I may have in my manuscript, which has been gained through much time and effort. Such is my misgiving about preaching in the ideal manner suggested--a misgiving which undoubtedly will be dispelled in time.

Sensitivity to the task of the ministry was also expressed by eight students who listed their "personal lives" as major



hindrances to a sincere and effective proclamation of the Gospel. A number of these students seem to be referring to specific items in their past lives where others merely indicated awe at the prospect of their preaching God's Word. A paper which fell between these extremes is quoted below:

As I look forward to the time when I shall be privileged to witness for my Savior from the pulpit, one misgiving in particular bothers me. This is that as I stand there witnessing of the blessed hope that lies in me, the Devil will put the thought in me that because of my past sins I should never have the nerve to don a pulpit robe. This thought would immediately stir up a very complex set of emotions and might make my preaching ineffective for that occasion. I say that the Devil would put that thought in my mind because I am sure as I write this, it is he who would prompt such thoughts at such a time. It has worried me in the past and even today I feel very unworthy of this great privilege.

A final factor which prompted many of the misgivings and doubts in the minds of the students was that of the basic motivation or purpose of preaching. After discussing his responsibility for "those of my flock missing at the throne of grace," one of the best students in the class wrote the following:

One final misgiving of mine is rather theoretical in nature. Just what is my position in the pulpit? That I am a cog in the celestial machinery trying to persuade my hearers I well realize. But I cannot even do that! The people are enabled to be persuaded by the Holy Ghost. The train of thought continues: God doesn't really need me at all. Those whom He has predestined to eternal life, God will send the saving Gospel, regardless of me. These quailings, however, are all overshadowed by a greater realization that ours is truly a unique privilege in being God's representatives. When we truly realize that we are His ambassadors, all misgivings about preaching should fade in our realization of the blessed mandate and privilege which Christ has conferred upon us.



Another student asked whether his forcefulness in the pulpit will become lessened by a preoccupation with self rather than with the message:

But there are some misgivings of a different sort that center about the activity of preaching - the wondering about how much of what I will say will be only words, because I know that much of what I shall be preaching about isn't in me as a forceful vital thing; that I shall preach about Christ without realizing basically what I'm saying. This, however, will be given to me if I take it, and here then comes the other side of such misgivings - that I won't want to take it, that I will choose myself to deal in words in order to witness to myself instead of to Christ. This represents, to me, the temptation of preaching. One has a position of attention, and one is always, no matter how sincere one may think himself to be, tempted to subtly - just a little - play the grandstand for personal prestige. Even in homiletical books one detects a faint note of appeal to the pride of the pastors who might read there how they can be better preachers, with the associations of respect and personal glory (to be sure, of a refined type; certainly not notoriety that will then attend to those preachers). One thinks to himself that certainly he will not be that crass that he will use the pulpit for his own means, but the temptation is insidious because the situation is not crass at all; it requires a searching conscience to see it . . .

In conclusion we note that eight students indicated, after a careful consideration of their position and ability, that they had absolutely no misgivings about preaching. The following quotation comes from one of these students, who is well above the average in ability and performance:

I have absolutely no misgivings about preaching. I think that it is extremely important, terribly exciting but trying, and wonderfully profitable. A great part of my fond admiration for preaching is due to my esteem for my home-town preacher. I hope to have even greater zeal for preaching after I have preached a first sermon. At any rate, this is the type of reaction I have had from conducting the altar service. Former small misgivings about liturgy vanished when I was put into a position where I had to make it talk and mean something for others.



## CHAPTER IX

### HOW SET FOR MINISTRY HAS CHANGED

After analyzing all of the factors which make for vocational awareness, we shall conclude by describing the changes produced by one semester of seminary training. Each member of the class was requested to write a short but thoughtful essay on the topic, "How My Set for the Ministry is Changing." The following results have been drawn from a careful analysis of 165 of these essays.

In analyzing the results an attempt was made to determine three things: (1) The direction of the change, (2) the positive reasons for the change, and (3) the negative factors which produced a change.

First, then, we shall look at the direction of the vocational change.

Although many students stated that their present set for the ministry is more or less fluctuating, seventy-five students indicated a decided vocational change. This represented approximately 43 per cent of the class. Most of these students stated that a "real change" had come over them during the first semester of seminary training. As typical statements of those who experienced an increased awareness of vocational drive, we cite the following two examples.



## Student 1:

The set which I had on first setting foot on the campus has changed a great deal. First of all, I was not sure that I wanted to serve my Lord in the garb of a pastor. I had the privilege of teaching last year and I really was overwhelmed with that experience. I was sure of the fact that I wanted to serve the Lord in a full-time capacity, but I did not know whether it should be as a minister or as a teacher. I think that now things are pretty well settled and I can get down to preparing for the ministry with the throttle wide open.

## Student 2:

When I entered the seminary in September, I was sure I didn't want to be a minister. I was ready to go back home and work in the factory, but after talking to a few fellows, I decided to stay and give it a try. After sitting through classes for a few months, my outlook toward the ministry began to change, and after I finished the final draft of my first sermon, I had definitely decided that I wanted to be a minister.

Not all included in this group, however, experienced as great a change as they had expected. The following student, for example, indicated in his essay a decided change in his set, yet expressed discouragement that the change was not as great as he had expected:

My set for the ministry has not changed as I had expected that it would. When I reached the seminary, I expected to become more aware of what it means to be a minister of God's Word. But this change has not taken place. I still act as I did in high school, just getting by without too much to spare. By that I mean not putting anything extra to what I have learned, to round off the corners and to help it stick in the mind. This I feel is a definite lack which must be corrected. If this habit persists, I don't feel that I have a proper set for the ministry.

In other aspects I have changed. I have a fuller realization of what it means to be a servant of God's Word. That it entails much more than preaching and making calls and conducting the Ladies' Aid. This deep and spiritual meaning of the ministry is that something that makes us want to stop at nothing, let nothing



stand in the way of being more and more able to carry out Christ's commands of 'Go ye and preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.'

Typical of several essays is the statement of the next student who mentioned his coming to the seminary as a result of the closely knit connection between the preparatory school and the seminary. He indicated an increase of vocational awareness resulting from courses which are specifically directed toward the parish ministry:

Before I entered the seminary this last fall, I felt that I really did not want to go into the ministry and I was merely coming down to this school as a matter of following the natural course that prep school had set me on. Even after being here for a couple of months my feelings did not change and I was seriously considering transferring to another school in the pursuit of another profession. I feel now that I had set myself against becoming a minister rather unfairly, because I had almost made up my mind before I even came to St. Louis that I would not want to go into this work and that I would not like the seminary or anything about it.

Just exactly when the change came or what caused it to come about, I do not know; but I do know that now I am glad that I stuck it out. It wasn't a sudden change but very gradual so that one might say that it was upon me before I realized it. Perhaps this change was aided by the fact that I finally realized that it was not something that I had to go into, but rather something of my own choice. If any of the subjects that I am taking this year also contributed to this change, I would say that it was my Homiletics course. I am not saying this because I am writing this paper for Homiletics, but this course was the first taste that I really had of what the practical work of a minister consisted of. Up to this time the courses taken in prep school and the majority of other courses taken this first year seemed in a way rather foreign to the ministry. Not completely so, but learning how to preach seemed to me to be something that pertained more directly to the work of a minister. At least I know now that I want to enter the ministry.



A second large group indicated no basic change of attitude. Thirty members of the class fell into this category. For the most part they indicated that no change had taken place because they possessed a high sense of vocational calling when they entered the seminary. The following two excerpts are typical of these statements.

Student 1:

My set for the ministry hasn't changed radically in months gone by since September. I have always felt very strongly that I wanted to go into the ministry and if anything, that desire has deepened. There have been factors for this and in this little discussion I will try to show the effect of Homiletics I on me.

Student 2:

Although many new viewpoints and ideas have been suggested to me since the first of the school year, I think my concept of myself as a minister is practically the same. This stands primarily in connection with my attitudes toward the ministry itself. I find that what I am learning at the seminary is not effecting so much a basic change of this picture, but is more of a confirming of it as proper, and an enlarging of it by historical ideals.

The third large group entered the seminary with a vague or apathetic view of the ministry and at the conclusion of over one semester of seminary training, their attitude had remained essentially the same. Eight members of the class found themselves in this position.

Student 1:

When I arrived here in the beginning of September last year, as far as I can recall, I had a very vague, if any at all, set for the ministry. As nearly as I can guess, it was sort of an inertia; it was easier to go on here than to quit. I hadn't done very much thinking at all as to the problem of whether to go on or not. Then some of those papers that we had to write for the



first semester of Homiletics started me thinking and as a result I don't know right now whether or not I really want to go on in the ministry. My set for the ministry, if I define the term right, is rather apathetic; I feel as though I am just drifting along at school here until I can find something more definite. That, in brief, is what my set for the ministry is, though not changing very much.

Student 2:

As far as I can tell, in my own mind my set for the ministry is not changing. It is still the same as when I came down to the seminary last September. Then I didn't know whether I wanted to become a minister or not. Now I still feel about the same way, unless it has changed a little more to the feeling of not wanting to become a minister. In the end it all boils down to one thing, and that is that I don't know what I wish to do in life, or I should say what I wish to choose for a life's work.

One student in this group who has an apathetic attitude toward the ministry expressed the following as a possible solution:

I've been thinking of dropping out of the Sem for a couple of years to sort of catch up with myself. I've been doing very poorly the first year here, and I'd hate to come back next year and do the same way. I feel in all seriousness that a break of a couple of years would do a lot of good. I would want to come back, and if I would, it would be with the assurance that God wants me here. Then I would be older and more anxious to settle down and apply myself to the service of our Lord Jesus.

Several complained that their apathetic view was due to having decided for the ministry at too early an age. Apparently many desired a stronger sense of calling; they expressed a sincere desire to become ministers but had to admit they lacked a sense of vocation. The following quotation is representative:

The biggest change that I feel is necessary is yet to come, and that is in my desire to become a minister.



In all truth and sincerity I want to be a minister but I still feel that something is lacking. I don't know just exactly what I should look for, but it seems to me that there should be some driving incentive pushing me on. The love of God does that, I know, but the love of God is manifest in laymen, too. What I feel I need is a greater measure of zealousness for the job ahead of me. May God grant that I get it.

Finally in the fourth large area were seven students who stated that their drive for the ministry was weaker now than when they entered the seminary four months preceding:

Student 1:

But, sad to say, my interest hasn't increased; but on the contrary, has waned. I honestly do not believe, however, that it is the fault of the course or the professors, but I place the bulk of the blame on myself. I would give anything if I could truly become interested in the work, but as to the present time I have not yet found myself. The desire to become an ambassador of Christ is still present, but the initiative is gone.

Student 2:

To be sure, my set for the ministry is changing. In September I came to the Sem with the one idea in mind of becoming a minister, but lately I've begun to change my mind about the whole thing. I'm just not so sure anymore that I want to be a minister. This is the first time I've ever had any doubts and it seems rather odd that they should come up at this time.

When I left prep school, I thought I had a pretty firm foundation in at least a few of the principal doctrines of the Lutheran Church, but to come down here only to find that you know nothing at all is pretty discouraging. At the beginning of the year I took this for granted and blamed myself for my inability to grasp the meaning behind these doctrines, but as the year progresses I find myself no further along the path of understanding them than at the beginning of the year.

Next we shall look at some of the specific areas in which this vocational change took place. By far the largest group, twenty-four students, indicated that the greatest



asset of the first semester at the seminary had been a clarification of the tasks of the ministry and a general awareness of the unity of the many tasks involved in the ministry.

Student 1:

To be honest, I have not been conscious of any radical change in my set for the ministry. However, many aspects and issues of the work of the ministry have become a lot clearer and more concrete.

The responsibilities and qualifications of the ministry have become a lot clearer than they were last year at this time. For one thing the place of the sermon in the actual pastoral work has taken on new meaning. Just what goes into sermonizing has become clearer for me. Fortunately with this responsibility the source of the strength to meet this responsibility was also pointed out. Otherwise the feelings of inadequacy would have overcome me completely. The significance of the Bible, the Word, the Christocentricity of preaching has made a lasting mark on my set for the ministry.

Student 2:

It is not hard for me to see a great many changes in my set for the ministry since last September. To me they are most gratifying and welcome.

While I had a vague idea of what the ministry consisted of when I entered the Sem, now I think that I have a skeleton sketch of the duties and functions of a minister. Now I see more clearly just where the office of the ministry fits into the total picture of the Body of Christ.

While last fall I rather half-heartedly looked forward to preaching, now I eagerly await my first opportunity to do some actual work as an ambassador of Christ.

The next greatest area of change indicated a strengthening of the set for the pastoral ministry. Twenty-one students said that the first semester had instilled in them a greater desire to serve as parish pastors. The following two students originally indicated an interest in teaching, whereas now the pastoral ministry has stronger appeal.



## Student 1:

When I first came to the seminary, I intended especially to prepare myself for teaching in one of the synod's schools. My hope was to teach languages and religion, although I did want to have a parish at least for a while.

While I'm still interested in teaching, I'm gradually beginning to consider spending my whole life in the parish ministry. I like the idea of entering the parish ministry more as I see what work it includes. However, I'm not so eager to enter the ministry that I'd like to go out right now. I now have begun to see how much more I must learn before I'll be ready and I want to learn as much as I can before I leave here.

## Student 2:

When I came to the Sem six months ago, I had absolutely no idea of what the ministry was all about, and in fact I had little idea of just why I was here. I knew that I wanted nothing to do with the parish ministry, and that my major field of interest was education on the secondary level. I felt, I think, that in order to teach at one of our prep schools, I had to attend the Sem--it was just one of those necessary evils. As I look back now, I often think that I didn't even have the vaguest idea of what this Christianity was all about--I was, in fact, a Lutheran only by birth and not by conviction.

Well, I wasn't here very long before things began happening. I started classes with all of the answers and came away with none--everything that I had before accepted without question was questioned, and as a result I became very confused. And then it happened: out of the wreck and ruin that was left of my theology started rising a new theology of conviction. And with this change my set for the ministry changed. Suddenly this whole business of Christianity took on a new meaning. I began to realize that it was not mine to choose where I would serve--but serve I must.

Several students indicated a growing awareness of the manifold tasks involved in the ministry. Their common expression was that there was more involved in the ministry than they had imagined. It was interesting to note that there were many ministers' sons in this group.



## Student 1:

The major change in my set for the ministry can be stated very simply. It seems that I am gradually coming to the realization that there is more to the business of being a minister than preaching, and there is more to preaching than merely delivering a nice sermon. Last year I had the privilege of teaching in a Litheran parish school. Thus I had the opportunity to watch the minister at work very closely. The general impression I received at that time was that the minister was there to make calls on the people and to deliver a good sermon come Sunday. That this impression was faulty goes without saying. I failed to realize what was connected with witnessing.

## Student 2:

'There's more to it than I thought.' This best expresses the angle at which I am now looking at the ministry. Though I have been in close contact with this profession for most of the years of my life, I never realized the wide background that the minister must have in order to be successful, in order to serve God and man to the best of his ability. Before I entered the Seminary, I thought that the minister had to know a little about a lot of things. Now I feel that I must add something to this: the minister also has to know a lot about a lot of things.

One of the problems which loomed largest in the minds of the students was that of preaching. Well over half of the students wrote a paragraph or more concerning their reactions to the preaching ministry. Seventeen students expressed an increasing desire to proclaim the Word. These students felt that one of the clearest symptoms of their growing vocational awareness was that of an intense desire to preach.

## Student 1:

The more I study here at the seminary and especially now that I am being given the opportunity to write sermons, the more anxious I have become to preach.



However, I have for some time treated the study of sermon writing as purely a scholarly study which I enjoy very much and will need very much in the future. In fact, the field of Homiletics is one in which I would really like to specialize. However, now that the invitation for me to preach has come, I am really diving into my work with more fervor than ever.

Student 2:

After these many weeks of training in the Word of God, there has come a new light into everything. To stand before a congregation preaching Christ is--now more than ever--my longing desire. What can be more wonderful than to bring Christ to the people of this sin and war-torn world? I think that I can honestly say that my set for the ministry is changing gradually toward the good, primarily because I can see the joy the pastors find in preaching and working for God. Especially do I see the happiness bursting forth from the instructors of Homiletics I.

Thirty-one students stated specifically that the method of sermon writing had become clearer for them.

Student 1:

After just a little more than a semester at the Seminary, I can see now that many of the ideas I had previously had about being a preacher must change, or already have changed. The most notable change I recognize is in the field of sermonizing. I say that not because this is a Homiletics paper but because it is a fact. I once had the idea that a sermon was similar to any other speech, but of a religious nature, extolling the grace of God and the saving power of Jesus Christ. I hardly need mention how quickly that notion became history and new ideas concerning the real art of preaching developed.

Student 2:

I came also to the sem with a confused idea of what it is to write a sermon. I believed that a minister merely sat down at a given time during the week and began 'verbalizing at random' on a certain topic. I know now what an organized, step-by-step process writing a sermon is, and how a sermon can be made effective. I feel much more at ease toward my preaching now than I did when I came here, because I know if the proper pattern is followed, enough diligence is applied,



enough perspiration given off, and enough prayers said, an acceptable sermon is bound to be produced, no matter if the writer is a D.D. or not. I think Homiletics I has succeeded in giving me the right concept of preaching.

Another fourteen individuals stated that they now had more confidence in their ability to both write a sermon and deliver it. The following short quotation is representative of this group:

Another misgiving was that I would forget what I wanted to say but after going through the process of preparing a sermon I feel more secure. After working through a text to such an extent, the ideas drawn from it seem to stick more closely. The fear of forgetting has been greatly overcome to a large extent by this extensive work with the text. The reading of some books also helped to create this feeling of security. Such books as 'Screwtop Letters' have helped me to realize that we have a message which people have a need to hear.

There were nevertheless nineteen students who expressed misgivings concerning this important function of the ministry, namely, preaching. Two students stated that they were decidedly less secure now than when they entered the seminary.

Student 1:

But just as I am beginning to see doctrine in Scripture, so also I am becoming aware of how little I actually do know. This sense of deficiency in my knowledge of Scripture has worked two ways. It has given me an incentive and a drive to get busy and study my theology. On the other hand, I somewhat hesitate to preach for I feel I am not quite qualified as yet. The desire and the incentive is present, but the confidence is lacking. I say this reluctantly. Five months ago I had the confidence stemming from ignorance and not the really honest incentive.

My hesitance to preach is not because of a fear that I might make a blunder in my first sermon or that I might preach heresy. Chiefly it is a matter of principle. There exists the feeling: 'Who am I to stand there and preach to people whose faith and knowledge of Scripture



is probably far greater than my own?' -- I realize this is not the right attitude, but it nevertheless exists.

Student 2:

On the other side of the picture is the process of sermonizing. The trouble probably lies with me but as yet I have great difficulty in writing decent outlines and other work. At times I will work for hours and not get anything through my head. Needless to say, this has become just what it should not be -- a drudgery.

I cannot put my finger on the source of this problem other than perhaps the fact that through my ignorance, bullheadedness, or whatever it may be called, I have the silly idea that I could write a sermon better using my own methods.

An important area of change was the student awareness of the clarification and deepening of theological concepts. Nineteen students expressed an expanding of their own theological backgrounds.

Student 1:

One of the main changes in my set for the ministry has been my whole idea of religion and theology. When I first came here last fall, I thought I knew most of the answers. But I soon found out that my ideas were very shallow. Through my courses in Symbolics and Homiletics I have come to realize how different and much deeper the fundamentals of our religion really are. Many of my concepts have changed or were broadened. I am sure this will help me to write better sermons and give the people a firmer hold on their religion.

Student 2:

When I first came to the seminary and heard what some of the professors said about the Christianity that I had always taken for granted, I was disappointed and confused. I understood no one, and knew only that I disagreed with almost everyone . . .

Then gradually some of the points that were being discussed in class began to sink in. The study which I did in respect to the first and second sermons that I



wrote served to clarify matters quite a bit. It has been only since the beginning of the second semester that I began to understand what was being talked about in some of the classes. Though I still don't feel that I understand everything that is said, I am being 'tutored' by an upper-classman . . .

My attitude toward the ministry has followed the same cycle as my attitude toward the seminary.

As one might expect, many students were confronted with a depth of theology not yet experienced. There were a certain number of "growing pains." Five students expressly acknowledged that the theology they formerly held was shallow. At the same time they felt they had not yet had the opportunity to form an integrated view of the theology to which they were exposed during the first semester:

I came also to the Sem with what I thought was a small, yet fairly well organized and correct idea of the main tenets of Christian doctrine. Right now I am somewhat confused and puzzled as a result of the thought-provoking doctrine course which we are receiving this year. Some of my prep school and confirmation class convictions have been shattered, some expanded so much that I'm left behind, and others confused, so that right now I have few basic truths to work with. I know I will never be a theologian.

Another large group of students, sixteen members of the class, expressed either a strengthening of their own faith or else a positive increase in their awareness and grasp of the meaning of the Christian life. For many the outstanding attitudinal change in the first half of the year was this deepening awareness of communion with God, the significance of the "means of grace," and the realization of the tremendous task to which they have dedicated their lives. The following two quotations summarize this attitude of the class.



Student 1:

With this realization [of the real purpose of the sermon] has also come a strengthening of my own weak faith. The words of the Bible no longer feel strange coming from my lips. Having fallen into the straits of skepticism, I did not believe the words of the Bible. Now, however, these same words hold a much deeper meaning for me. Today I view them as guides for a life which will be pleasing to the Lord and to those with whom I come in contact.

Student 2:

In many ways my religion is becoming clearer and more meaningful to me . . . We say we should live in the world as a Christian, but oftentimes my thoughts have been full of 'dos and don'ts' apart from my being one of Christ's, or one of God's in Christ. Not until I sat through numerous 'tedious' classes at the seminary did this thought begin to open itself to me. As one of the members of 'Christ's Body,' these 'dos and don'ts' come to me. The life of the Christian is not a Sunday thing. The life of God in the Christian is something that permeates his whole life. It gives him obligations. It gives him responsibility. This is the life that some of my hearers will have. All need to grow. Others will not have it so fully, and some not at all. But as far as my set for the ministry is concerned, I am beginning to look at my approach to people more from this angle. 2 Corinthians 5 is becoming more meaningful in this line, too.

As was indicated indirectly in some of the above quotations, a large number of students mentioned a new awareness of both the motive and reason for preaching. Sixteen of the students made a direct statement concerning this fact:

I expected a course in which would be included things like delivery and sermon style, and perhaps a section on rules on how to say things tactfully and persuasively. The attitude that the preaching must be overflowing with His message and that 'out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh' has been fostered instead. I agree with this. The overflowing heart covers up minor defects in delivery and teach true tact. And this is important not only to pulpit preaching but to the whole work of a minister.



Many other statements expressed an increasing desire both to understand the problems of people and to help them. Other students expressed a similar thought under the term "witness." The first of the following quotations stresses the desire to aid people whereas the following two quotations emphasize the thought of witness.

Student 1:

I sense a greater need than heretofore that the Gospel of Christ must be brought to the people, and especially with a third world war just around the corner, I feel that ministers really have a job to do. I now also see that the ministry does not mean merely to preach a sermon on Sunday morning, confirmation instruction perhaps a few months of the year, the young people's meetings, a funeral here and a wedding there. It is more than that, it is a continual administering to sin-sick souls with the medicine of life, ever endeavoring to win them from the claws of Satan, and bring them to the foot of the cross of our Savior, Jesus Christ. I see now that the minister doesn't have any days off, no holidays with pay--a conscientious minister, that is. I feel a greater desire to help people who are in need, and while that spark is ever so small, it has grown since I came to the seminary.

Student 2:

Though the following change cannot be directly applied to the job of the ministry, it was certainly brought about by my studying for the ministry thus far. And that is that I can now speak more freely to people about Christ. The emphasis placed on witnessing at the Sem is undoubtedly responsible for this change which I consider very important if I am to continue in my study to become a minister.

Student 3:

One of the biggest factors that helped me decide that I wanted to be a minister was the one about witnessing to other people. Telling other people about Christ. Standing up in that pulpit and telling people about Christ. I always thought that preaching was a matter of routine . . . It never dawned on me before that a text would say so much in so few words. Now I realize



this fact, I get ten times more out of the sermon on Sunday morning, and I am beginning to see some of my needs, and also the needs of other people. Now, more than ever before, I want to be a minister and help people who are in need.

A total of thirty-five students mentioned an awareness of certain deficiencies either in their innate ability or in their past training. Specifically eight of these students mentioned the fact that they felt their ability did not rank with that of the other members of their class. Seven others said their major deficiencies lay in the actual writing of a sermon. The greatest difficulty listed was doctrinal. Eleven members of the class mentioned a fear of preaching heresy or the making of incorrect statements. A smaller number described a feeling of weakness in personal witnessing, in speaking in public, of doing personal counseling and of carrying on the administrative side of the parish. In the first quotation below the student expressed his extreme self-consciousness. The second student quoted suggested that part of the difficulty comes from his youth and lack of maturity.

Student 1:

In my set for the ministry nothing is being changed very much. Socially, I still am quite self-conscious among people. I guess maybe it's not so much self-consciousness but the inability to take part in a conversation so that when I'm out in a crowd, I just sit trying to look intelligent and friendly. This thing bothers me quite a bit.

Student 2:

I also have a sort of queer feeling that people will regard me as a mere boy still and will not listen to the preaching but will hem and haw about my age, etc. I know already that age does not matter in our witnessing, but I believe it would help.



I feel very uncomfortable in talking to people. I just hope and pray that I'll be able to converse with people so that I will think that I am on the same level with the people I'm talking to. I'm always afraid they will pounce on me for some little error.

For some the sense of deficiency has become more acute since they entered the seminary. For many, as will be seen later, this has been interpreted as an increased motive for study whereas in other cases this awareness of deficiency has discouraged the student:

About the only thing that has changed in my ideas about the ministry is that I no longer have the confidence in myself that I once had. Previously I had looked with joy and anticipation upon the years that I would be out in the 'actual ministry'; but now I have a slight feeling of hesitancy and fear of the time that I will have a church of my own for I have begun to realize my inadequacies and lack of skill in preparing God's Word for a truly persuasive sermon for the people. Perhaps this feeling is good, bringing me closer to God and presenting to me the challenge to improve and to learn to do better. I still want to be a minister; that desire has not diminished but rather increased. But I now realize more than ever that certain shortcomings have to be remedied.

We will not at this time give specific quotations regarding the difficulties in writing or speaking. These were adequately described in Chapter VIII, "Misgivings About Preaching."

Finally many expressed a new drive for academic study. Most of these fifteen students said that the sense of the value of the individual course was lacking in preparatory school and as a result, they manifested little particular interest. Others stated specifically that formerly they had been concerned only with receiving a passing grade; now



they were concerned primarily with grasping the content of the course. One student wrote:

After spending a semester here at the seminary, I have begun to see how some of these classes will affect my future work. My ambition now is to get a knowledge of the subject and not only a mark. Now I find the classes interesting and take notes, which is a new thing for me. I find it easier to study dull subjects because they are supplementary to some course which I like. My goal in life is now before me and this too helps my attitude toward my studies. Also the courses here overlap. What you learn in one course will be of benefit in another one. This is how my set for the ministry has changed.

From another student:

My set for the ministry has changed since I first came to the Seminary. This change has not been a radical change, but it has been a change. The importance of being a tool of the Holy Spirit and the responsibilities which go along with it have prompted me to go at my studies in a different light. Now I am beginning to see why I have to study and master many things which at first seemed to offer no particular interest to me. As I see the importance of persuading that soul to turn to God or to say with God, I recognize the value of Hebrew and Greek, the importance of a background in history, education and music, and also the need to learn how to homiletically prepare a sermon that will best present the Gospel message to the hearer.

However, this realization of the importance of the ministry and the necessity to master the studies connected with it has also brought with it a feeling of 'not good enough.'

Most of the students indicated the reasons for their changing views toward the ministry. Many said that they came to the seminary with an idealized picture of what they had expected to find. In every case one semester was sufficient to present to the student a mature picture of both the positive and negative features of the seminary. The following student describes this metamorphosis:



Looking back now after several months under the guiding hands of Concordia Seminary, I have to admit that some attitudes toward the Christian ministry have been changed. More than a few forces at work have caused these changes for the better--and for worse.

The early awe once held for the word 'seminary' and for myself as a 'seminarian' has been brought down to reality. The first feeling in the large institution was to herd together with former buddies and make the necessary adjustment to new associates as slow and painless as possible. A broadening fellowship was soon found to be both a necessity and a pleasure. By now the term 'seminary family' has gained some meaning. Similar familiarizing with the faculty and the physical set-up of the campus broke down the early barriers in that direction. However, besides the results of widening experience in a positive way, I find myself too often taking for granted the whole set-up here. Hyper-criticism took the shine from much that was offered here--professor-wise and course-wise . . .

Unfortunately, feelings of dissatisfaction were aimed nearer on occasion. I found myself neglecting at times the opportunities of worship and letting a day slip by without reading a Bible portion.

As was indicated above, many students expressed a positive reaction to their present course of studies. Six specific courses were referred to as dominant factors in producing this change. Forty-nine individuals mentioned Homiletics<sup>42</sup> as the greatest factor which had produced their changed attitudes. Biblical Theology and Symbolics were listed by fifteen students as playing a dominant role. Five students mentioned the practical insights gained in their Orientation course. Two others expressed appreciation for

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<sup>42</sup>To be aware of a possible bias, it should be mentioned that these essays were written as an assigned paper in the first-year Homiletics course.



the word studies which were carried on in their Hebrew course and one indicated a positive reaction to the professor and the methodology of the New Testament Greek course. The following brief quotations were typical of paragraphs found in scores of the essays.

Student 1:

Concerning individual courses and profs and their effect on my set for the ministry, what I have said will of itself temper what followed. Hebrew became a burden, by lack of imagination and five hours a week. Greek on the other hand rose from college drudgery to become an anticipated and inspiring hour every other day under the capable hands of Professor \_\_\_\_\_. Biblical Theology remains an ever stimulating joy, with sincere wishes that it could be given give hours a week and leave the stingy two per week to Hebrew.

Student 2:

My set for the ministry is definitely changing due to Homiletics and most of my other courses. In Hebrew we have a word study one day a week. The words we have had so far have helped me immeasurably. The research and study put in on these words, although it may not have been too great at times, has given me a greater feeling of security and preparedness.

Student 3:

The courses in Homiletics and in Biblical Theology have given my own ideas something on which to build and grow. I know this may sound a little dramatic throughout, but perhaps you too have been through the barren courses of doubt and mistrust. If you have been, then you can readily see that something substantial on which to build can make a difference in outlook. I do not mean to say that all my doubts and fears have been conquered but at least they do not hold the same sway they held several months ago.

Besides mentioning the present course of studies as dominant factors in producing a change in vocational awareness, the students received strong motivation from outside



preaching and the anticipation of field work this summer. In all, nineteen students mentioned this contact with the actual tasks of the ministry as instrumental factors in producing a greater drive for the ministry.

Student 1:

Since the beginning of the year I have come in contact with realities in the study program, field work trips, and in extra-curricular activities which have brought the meaning of the ministry much closer to me. My attitude toward the whole job of preaching is much more meaningful now than it was at any time during the first semester of work here. Right now I am looking forward to the summer vicarages and eventually the ministry.

Student 2:

Last Christmas vacation when I was home, I took the Liturgy at my home congregation. Since then I am no longer afraid to go and talk and am ready to preach in front of a congregation.

But the fact that I was afraid of speaking to the congregation was the main reason, I think, that I did not want to become a minister. For I think that I am able and hope to become a minister.

Student 3:

With the thought of my human inadequacy and unworthiness I entered the sacristy this morning as I preached my first sermon, but when I stepped into the pulpit, the words came out in more meaningful sentences than I believe I understood them when I wrote and studied it prior to preaching it. But all this could well have been shattered again when I descended the pulpit to receive an abundance of congratulatory wishes on my preaching, when I myself could feel and wished to say, 'Not me, but Christ in me.' It is this human element that still furnishes my chief misunderstanding as to the ministry . . .

A couple of men mentioned the testing and counseling program carried on by the dean's office as a distinct asset in his orientation to the ministry. The following is one



of the clearest expressions:

Before I arrived here at the Seminary, I had the feeling that I had not acquired all the knowledge that I should have absorbed in my preparatory training. I was introduced into Seminary life in a pleasant and orderly manner through various meetings at the beginning of the school year. We were orientated into campus life and made to feel that we were here first of all to find our weaknesses through various tests, and secondly, to combat these weaknesses and replace them with good habits in order to prepare ourselves as well as possible for service in Christ's kingdom. The results of our psychological tests were discussed with us in a sincere manner, thus showing us our weak points quite plainly. This gave the student a great opportunity to take hold of himself, look at what he really is and thus make plans for betterment.

During the course of the first semester, I seemingly failed to apply myself to the task of using my abilities to their greatest extent and building them to greater bounds. I did not take my studies seriously enough, and therefore now realize the results. The instructors tell us what they expect, and therefore it is best for the student's own welfare to carry out the assignment. It will all contribute to the future minister's work as a leader to his people in some way, I visualize.

Important in the total picture are not only these positive factors for change, but also those negative factors which the students listed. In contrast to the many students who mentioned the general atmosphere of the campus as a positive influence in their lives, four said the campus life contributed to a decrease in their sense of calling. Most students expressed gratitude that many weaknesses noted among the more immature students at the preparatory schools were not present here. Many commented positively on the fine sense of fellowship and helpfulness found among the students. The following student, however, expressed disgust with seminary life:



To tell the truth, when I first arrived here, I was ready to turn around and return home. I was thoroughly disgusted with what I saw and what went on here. The Seminary certainly was not the picture of what I thought that it would be and I think that a lot of other fellows have the same idea. The school is not very much different from prep school. Everyone that I talked to seemed to tell me that the sem was an altogether different place. Perhaps I will do the same thing at the end of this year. I would like to return to prep school right now in comparison with the life that I am now living here. I had a better attitude towards my studies, but I am not saying that I am not applying myself here, because I received the best report card this last semester that I have gotten in college. But report cards do not mean everything. They do not express exactly what you do know and if you are able to apply the knowledge. I am afraid that some of my knowledge is in just such a bracket. As an example, it is coming out when I attempt to work out a sermon. There is something lacking and I do not know what it is.

Still another student mentioned specific details of seminary life which have discouraged him:

I have found out that the theological student . . . tends to stick with earthly rather than heavenly joys. I have been trying to figure this out. Why? I have looked everywhere but have not found the answer. I think that the answer lies somewhat in the hearts of the students; and some of the answer lies in the attitude of the professors. Now I know that the profs up here at Concordia are selected men, special men, for their peculiar field, and should be held in all respect because of this. That is granted; but couldn't some of these profs have a change of heart--for the better? Wouldn't it make for better student-teacher-preacher relationship? I wonder.

Another thing: As one walks down the halls of our dorms, one can hear swearing--not from first-year men alone, but also from fourth-year men. Some of us fear to take a visitor on campus because of the fact that we might be embarrassed by somebody swearing rather loudly up and down the corridors.

Rating equally important as a negative factor for a number of students was the questionable value of certain courses. Since several students seem to have trouble with



languages, Hebrew was mentioned several times as the presenting of an obstacle:

With a little added interest from the outside and maybe primarily with my connection at a small mission church, I received a small spark of enthusiasm which helped me to force myself through Hebrew and gain a very high interest in some of my other classes such as Biblical Theology and Homiletics. But as time passes on I feel myself developing an intense hate for Hebrew which I can observe is hindering my studying for the ministry in several ways. It is certainly not the professor, for to say the least, I do admire him. But putting so much stress on a subject such as Hebrew seems utterly ridiculous and fruitless to me, as much as I have tried to prove to myself differently.

Another important feature which has produced a negative result is the carrying on of theological discussions in what some students consider to be "too esoteric a fashion":

In the classes discussions about justification, sin, etc., leave me somewhat in the dark. In classes such as \_\_\_\_\_ all these things are discussed from the negative point of view. The prof spends the class hours telling us what it is not, but not what it is. Take the doctrine of faith, for instance. He told us all about what faith was not, and when he got done, faith was something different from what I had learned it was. But he never, to my knowledge, told us what faith is. Questions asked in \_\_\_\_\_ class are all answered in a roundabout way.

Two students expressed disappointment resulting from lower grades than they felt they deserved. Another presented a basic philosophical difficulty concerning the worth and meaning of life and therefore the task of the ministry.

Student 1:

When I first came here, it was my hope that we as students would put aside these prep school ideas which, in some cases, are still evident and do exist. I find it rather discouraging, after having put in much time to prepare the required work for the next day or so, that I still receive a lower grade than the next fellow who does nothing but sleep during and after classes.



Student 2:

How can I say that my set toward the ministry is changing when I was never definitely decided on any attitude toward it? My relation to the ministry has never found a certain fixed set. I have never been sure of any definite attitude in respect to theological work. I have deceived myself many times by believing that I have at last discovered my purpose here, but that is all that it has been, -self-deception.

Perhaps it would be easier to state my reasons, or purpose in being here if I were at all sure of why I even exist. Or do I exist? Is this world all a fantasy, nothing but the thoughts and hopes of men, which are in themselves the only real things of life? Or is there life? Sure I can see the world, but can I believe my own senses? A dream is just as real as the world. Can I even be sure that there are such things as thoughts?

What are thoughts? The scientists tell us that they are electrical impulses. What is matter? A bunch of electrical charges. Thoughts and matter, -both the same thing. What is electricity? That question deserves a capital question mark.

With a philosophy that is such a jumble, how can I say that I had or have such and such a set for the ministry and that it is changing in such and such a way?

One student put his finger on a vital point when he suggested that the seminary was geared only for those students who had already made a definite commitment for the ministry.

A large part of his paper is worth quoting:

My set for the ministry has not changed any while I have been here at the seminary. I am still very undecided about the ministry. I have been trying all school year to decide definitely one way or other. However, I have not made any headway. This is due in part to the fact that I have been slightly disappointed here at the Sem. It is rather difficult to explain, but it seems to me that the system here is set up for those who have definitely decided to become ministers, which is well and good. But there is nothing concrete for the person, as myself, who has not definitely decided for the ministry. There seems to be something lacking which I can't place my finger on.



. . . The other courses here at the Sem are very good and are necessary for the ministry. But again I think that they serve only the person who has definitely decided for the ministry. He is here for that reason, and thus the courses give him the material which he needs to know in order to prepare for the ministry. I, however, have not received anything which would help me to decide, thus I am in the same dilemma in which I was at the beginning of the semester.

Certain other negative factors were mentioned by a few students. They concerned: (1) Presentation of the ministry in too elevated a fashion by the average professor; (2) the disadvantages of being separated from people for such an extensive period through the preparatory school and seminary training; and (3) the disadvantage of having discontinued training for the ministry for several years after preparatory school.

As a final summary of the material presented in this chapter, we shall indicate these changes in vocational awareness in tabular form in Table 20.

Increased vocational awareness  
Change in Personality and Attitudes

#### Reasons for Change:

##### Current Courses:

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Exegetics                       | 15 |
| Biblical Theology and Symbolics | 5  |
| Orientation                     | 3  |
| Greek                           | 3  |
| Hebrew                          | 3  |
| Preaching and Field Work        | 10 |
| Campus Atmosphere               | 2  |
| Testing Program                 | 1  |



TABLE 20

How Student Set for the Ministry Changed  
After Six Months of Seminary Training

Direction of Change:

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Number indicating Strengthening of Vocation | 75 |
| Basic Attitude Not Changed:                 |    |
| High at outset                              | 30 |
| Apathetic; still vague                      | 18 |
| Worse                                       | 9  |

Manifestation of Change:

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Clarification of <u>Unity</u> of Ministry     | 24 |
| Set for <u>Pastoral</u> Ministry Strengthened | 21 |
| Preaching:                                    |    |
| Method of Sermon Writing Clearer              | 31 |
| Misgivings about Preaching Still Present      | 19 |
| Increased Desire to Preach                    | 17 |
| More Confidence in Preaching                  | 14 |
| Less Confidence in Preaching                  | 2  |
| Clarification of Doctrine                     | 19 |
| Clearer Motive for Preaching                  | 16 |
| Increased Drive for Study                     | 16 |
| Fuller Realization of Christian Life          | 15 |
| Increased Witnessing                          | 10 |
| Greater Desire to Help People                 | 9  |
| Increased Doctrinal Confusion                 | 5  |
| Change in Personality and Attitudes           | 3  |

Reasons for Change:

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Current Courses:                | 49 |
| Homiletics                      | 15 |
| Biblical Theology and Symbolics | 5  |
| Orientation                     | 2  |
| Greek                           | 2  |
| Hebrew                          | 2  |
| Preaching and Field Work        | 19 |
| Campus Atmosphere               | 2  |
| Testing Program                 | 2  |



Factors Producing Negative Changes:

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Certain Courses Conducted on Too High an Intellectual Plane | 11 |
| Low Level of Campus Life                                    | 6  |
| Value of Certain Courses Questioned                         | 6  |
| System Separates Student from People                        | 3  |
| Grades Lower than Anticipated                               | 2  |
| Ministry presented as Goal Beyond Grasp                     | 2  |
| School not Geared to Student Not Sure of Vocation           | 1  |
| Out of School Too Long                                      | 1  |
| Basic Philosophy  | 1  |

As a second means of viewing changes in student attitudes, a comparison was made of the quality points earned by the students during the first semester of seminary training with their entrance quality points. Conclusions must be drawn very carefully from this type of comparison because it is impossible to keep certain factors consistent, that is, the scoring systems of professors in the various schools will of necessity differ. The material, however, is presented in Table 21 for its basic value.

2.14 - 2.38  
 1.98 - 2.16  
 1.82 - 1.97  
 1.66 - 1.81  
 1.50 - 1.65  
 1.34 - 1.50  
 1.18 - 1.35  
 .92 - 1.07  
 .76 - .92  
 .60 - .76  
 .44 - .60  
 .28 - .44  
 .12 - .28  
 .00 - .12

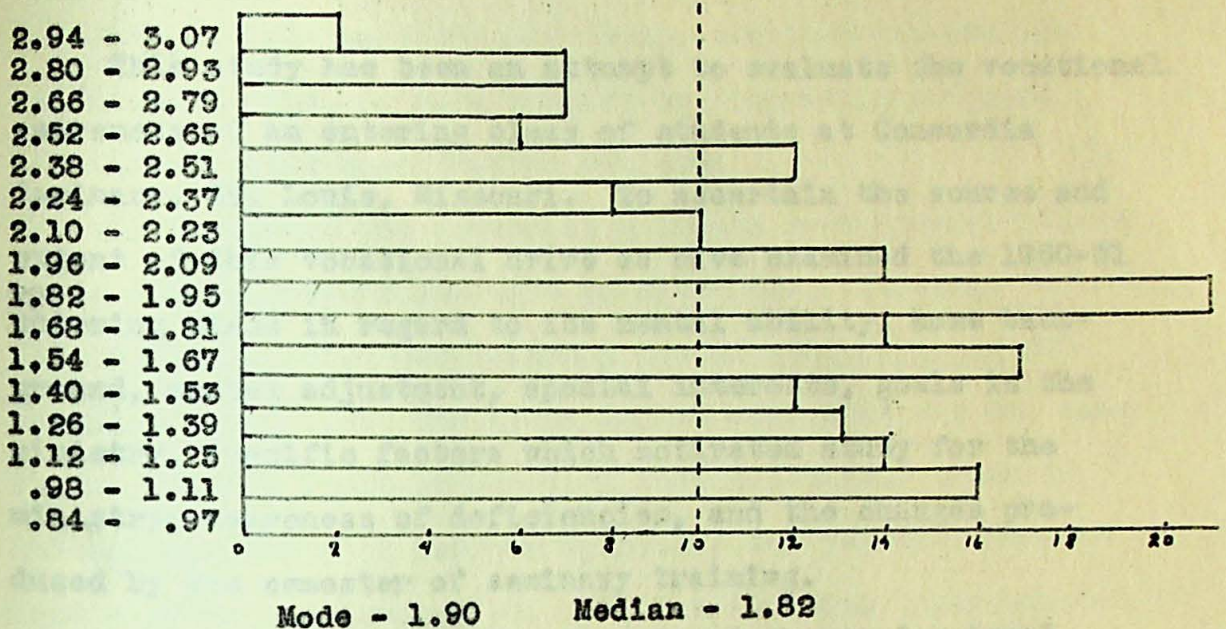
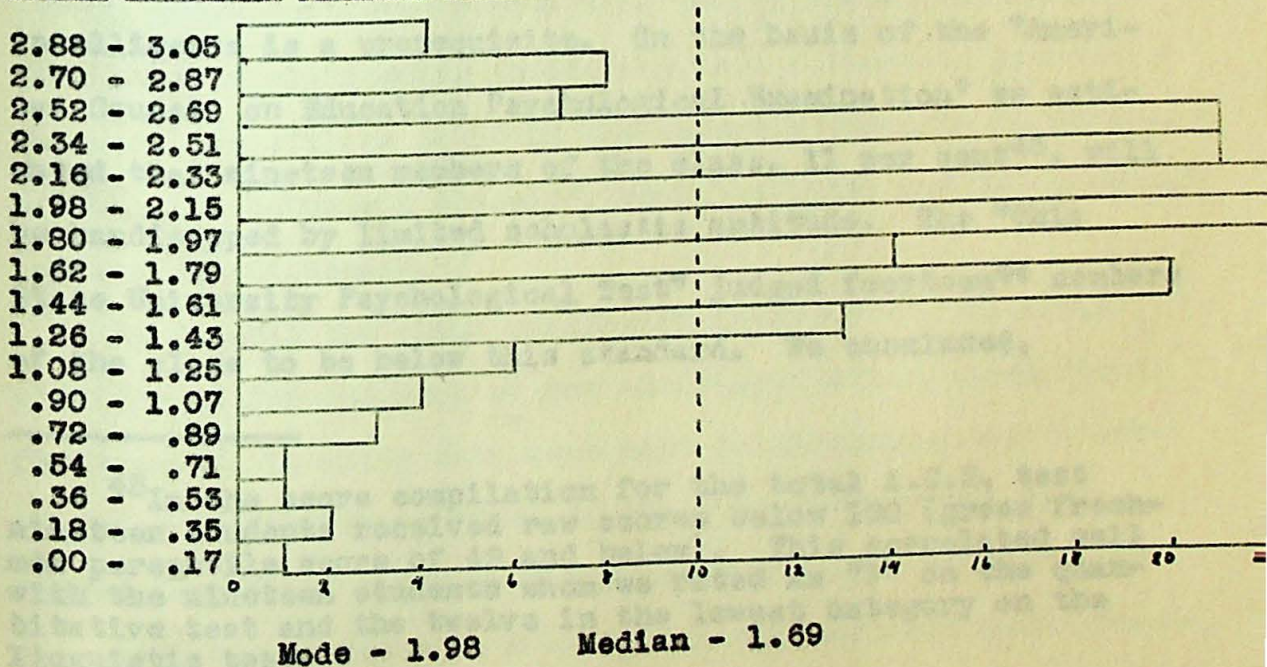
Mode - 1.92

Median - 1.65



TABLE 21

## Comparison of Student Quality Points

Entrance Quality PointsFirst Semester Quality Points



## CHAPTER X

### CONCLUSION

This study has been an attempt to evaluate the vocational awareness of an entering class of students at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. To ascertain the source and extent of this vocational drive we have examined the 1950-51 entering class in regard to its mental ability, home background, mental adjustment, special interests, goals in the ministry, specific factors which motivated study for the ministry, awareness of deficiencies, and the changes produced by one semester of seminary training.

Because of the exacting demands of the professional ministry a basic level of scholastic aptitude or general intelligence is a prerequisite. On the basis of the "American Council on Education Psychological Examination" we estimated that nineteen members of the class, 11 per cent<sup>43</sup>, will be handicapped by limited scholastic aptitude. The "Ohio State University Psychological Test" judged fourteen<sup>44</sup> members of the class to be below this standard. We concluded,

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<sup>43</sup>In the score compilation for the total A.C.E. test nineteen students received raw scores below 100 (gross freshmen percentile score of 42 and below). This correlated well with the nineteen students whom we rated as "F" on the quantitative test and the twelve in the lowest category on the linguistic test.

<sup>44</sup>Similarly the Ohio test rates fourteen students below the 43rd percentile of college freshmen.



therefore, that approximately sixteen members of the class, 9 per cent, will have serious difficulty in meeting these requirements because of limited mental ability.

In general the tests also indicated that the average entering student has more ability in linguistic subjects than in strictly quantitative subjects.

In analyzing the personality traits most commonly found among the first-year students we noted the following:

(1) The class rated consistently low on self-reliance and social skills. (2) The class scored approximately the same as the average adult in sense of personal worth, sense of belonging, number of nervous symptoms, and relative freedom from anti-social tendencies. (3) The incoming seminarians showed their best adjustment in family relations. Other strong characteristics were a high set of social standards, freedom from withdrawing tendencies, and a sense of personal freedom. As will be noted in the appendix there is no apparent correlation between a student's mental ability and his personal and social adjustment.

In general the class manifested interest in the areas significant for the work of the ministry. Other occupations, for example, in which they were most interested showed teaching to rank far beyond other fields. Law and social work scored second and third in their interests. As would be expected, the students as a whole did not indicate much interest in the mechanical, computational and scientific areas.



In both their persuasive and artistic interests they scored higher than the group of clergymen. Apparently the group's poor comprehension in reading manifested itself in lower literary interest than either the seminary class of 1949-50 or the group of practicing clergymen. The class demonstrated the area of social service to be its dominant interest. However, even here it evidenced less interest than did the group of ministers or social workers. In considering their interests we noted that twenty-two men have attempted to follow up their special interests by taking additional courses at other colleges and universities.

On the basis of subjective essays written by the members of the class we attempted to evaluate the degree of vocational awareness possessed upon entering the seminary. We concluded that fifty students manifested a strong sense of ministerial drive. Another eighty-eight students demonstrated an average degree of vocational awareness. Twenty-four students were found to have a weak or apathetic feeling about entering the ministry.

In the light of these facts we tried to ascertain the factors which brought this group of students to a seminary campus. An analysis of a multitude of factors showed that beyond all doubt the home is the major factor in determining a man's vocation for the ministry. In the great majority of the cases the men were reared in homes in which both parents were Lutheran. Contrary to a popular belief on the campus,



the majority of the students do not come from homes of ministers. Nearly two-thirds of the class were reared in the homes of laymen.

The second greatest influence in the formation of a man's determination to enter the ministry seems to be his pastor. A large number of students spoke of their years of confirmation instruction as the period in which the original seed of ministerial interest was sown. An equal number of students were driven to the ministry by a strong feeling that they were called by the Holy Ghost and by the advances which they noted being made by materialism and secularism. Gratitude to God for His manifold blessings ranked next as a motivating force. Finally, a good number of students are entering the seminary in order to reform certain practices which they have noted in contemporary church life.

If we were to classify the goals of the men as to whether they were basically theocentric or anthropocentric in orientation, we would conclude that they were predominantly theocentric. Three times as many students stressed goals concerning the spread of the Gospel rather than goals relating to social service. The one specific aspect of church work in which the class manifested most interest was youth work. Another goal which was significant, even though it did not rate too high in the final tabulation, was that of finding personal assurance of faith through the work of the ministry.



As the class looked forward to the parish ministry, it expressed certain misgivings about preaching. By far the greatest problems seem to concern the writing of the sermon and the actual fact of facing an audience. But the thinking of the class went deeper than this. A large number feared that they would lack the ability to be truly persuasive. Others felt the audience would not be interested in what they had to say. Still others doubted that their preaching would effect a real change in the lives of their people. Most of the class felt a sense of responsibility when they surveyed the enormity of the tasks confronting them.

Approximately half of the class indicated a strengthening of vocational awareness after six months of seminary influence. The men described this change in various ways: a sizable number said they were more aware of the unity of the total work of the ministry; other felt more confident homiletically and experienced a desire to spread the Gospel to people; some students who had been uncertain about the pastoral ministry were encouraged toward this goal.

The students reacted in various ways to the greater depths of theology to which they were exposed. A small group felt confused; a group four times as large, however, spoke of a new doctrinal clarification. Many were thrilled at the new insights they were receiving into the meaning of a Christian life. This expressed itself in a renewed desire to help people by witnessing to them of the Savior.



We noted two major factors were responsible for this change: certain courses of study, and outside preaching assignments plus some limited field work.

While two students mentioned the general atmosphere of the campus as a positive influence, more felt that the campus created a predominantly negative reaction. A still larger group expressed their feelings that certain courses were conducted on too high an intellectual plane. In the same vein others questioned the value of some of the required courses. Although these negative reactions were quantitatively small, they will bear further investigation.

The danger involved in a study of this type is to lose sight of the individual. Although we conclude that the majority of the students have been strengthened vocationally by seminary training, we cannot overlook the twenty-seven individuals who still express vocational uncertainty.

#### Recommendations

(1) Since the professional ministry requires men with certain personality traits as well as mental ability, we recommend a continued and increased awareness on the part of the preparatory school of the development of the whole man.

Some men are graduating with a fine intellectual background but are seriously lacking fundamental personal and social adjustment.



Students are particularly to be encouraged in the developing of self-reliance and the basic social skills.

(2) The student should be given insights into the need for developing interest in areas essential for the tasks of the ministry.

Since most interests are "cultivated," it would be well to challenge the interest of pre-theological students in the fields of social service, persuasion and literature.

(3) The seeds of a vocational awareness should be planted as early as possible and nurtured during the six years prior to the student's matriculation into the seminary.

A gradual description of the work of the ministry should be presented to the men.

The responsibilities and joys of the vocation should be emphasized.

The student should come to see his future position in relation to God's total design in the church.

(4) Since the individual home remains the greatest "recruiting agency" in the total picture, the integrated work of the church in "home education" and parental training is to be encouraged and increased.

(5) Individual pastors are to be alerted to the crucial vocational period through which the boys are passing in their confirmation classes.

Next to the home, the pastor ranked as the major influence in a boy's determination to become a minister.



(6) We recommend that further studies be conducted to determine the advisability of asking a boy to make his vocational decision at the conclusion of his junior high school training.

We should determine whether fourteen years is the best age at which to begin the student's pre-theological work.

(7) With the yearly increase in the number of men who are not sure of their vocation to the ministry, it is recommended that the seminary faculty utilize every opportunity presented in the curriculum to instill an increased awareness of the tasks and goals of the ministry.

A sensitivity to intellectual and vocational misgivings is a vital factor in the strengthening of a student's calling.

(8) In view of the positive vocational influence which outside preaching assignments and field work have been for the first-year class, it is recommended that an organized program of field work be reinstated on the first-year level.

(9) Because of the influence of campus life on the entire outlook of a student, it is recommended that the attempts to improve the spiritual attitudes of the student body be continued.

Much of this improvement will arise from closer faculty-student relationships.

The present organized attempts to create "fellowship" within the individual dormitories is meeting with some resistance in actual practice.



(10) Since the incoming student undergoes a severe adjustment to the depths of theology to which he is suddenly exposed, it is heartily recommended that the preparatory schools make an attempt to equip the student with the basic skills and attitudes of handling Christianity as a dynamic concept.

The majority of the students express dismay concerning the religion courses taken in college after one semester of seminary training.

In particular they have difficulty in adjusting their thinking to the task of formulating their theology from the Bible rather than merely articulating the categories of the catechism.



## APPENDIX

### CORRELATIONS

Because of the volume of material with which we have been dealing we have been forced to confine our analysis to the vertical plane, that is, showing the pattern developed within the class on any one point. In order that the reader might gain an appreciation of how these factors of mental ability, personality adjustment, special interests, etc., combine within an individual to produce an over-all drive for the ministry, we shall present several student profiles.

On the basis of the results derived from the A.C.E. and Ohio tests the writer selected twelve students representing the following categories: (1) Unusually high ability; (2) Average ability; and (3) Very low ability. In these profiles we shall attempt to correlate native intelligence with mental health, interest areas, reason for entering the seminary, strength of vocational awareness, and the way in which the vocational set is changing.

In surveying the following pages the reader will be aware of the difficulty of precise analysis inasmuch as our subjects are dynamic personalities. He will be forced to give cognizance to the importance of the human element. In view of the following one cannot make the simple equation that the student of superior ability or personality will



make the most effective minister. It is rather surprising to note how many students of the lowest mental ability have a strong sense of vocation. Conversely a couple of the most brilliant members of the class have serious personality difficulties and a weak sense of vocation. One must be cautious in attempting to draw generalizations which are too sweeping.

In order that the reader may examine the "raw materials" of the interpretation, all the pertinent data is presented.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>The following facts should be kept in mind in the perusal of the student profiles presented: Under "Mental Health" withdrawing tendencies and nervous symptoms are expressed in terms of "freedom from" these weaknesses.

The percentile ranks the students in comparison to the national average--the higher the score, the better the adjustment; thus a percentile ranking of 5 would indicate a very poor adjustment, that of 99 the highest.

The percentiles under "Interest Areas" are evaluated in terms of seven percentiles; thus a score of 7 indicates the highest preference, a score of 1 the lowest.

Teaching, Writing.

Strength of Vocational Aspirations

Strong.

Interpretation:

This student scored in the highest percentile in the class in both parts of the Otic and Tatic. He has unusual mental capacity, his personality is extremely weak in certain characteristics, and he has certain belligerent attitudes which are well expressed. He rates very low on social adjustment and on social skills. His social skills were also unusual. His interest in serving people was a very low one. During the first seven months of voluntary training, he has made great strides in overcoming this original weakness. He attributes the change to a growing insight that his future ministry is dependent upon these personality changes.



## Student A

Ability: Superior.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National Percentile Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Self-Adjustment           |                                 |
| 1. Self-Reliance          | 15                              |
| 2. Personal Worth         | 60                              |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies | 35                              |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       | 20                              |
| Social Adjustment         |                                 |
| 1. Social Standards       | 65                              |
| 2. Social Skills          | 15                              |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies | 40                              |
| 4. Family Relations       | 20                              |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Musical        | 7 |
| 2. Literary       | 6 |
| 3. Clerical       | 6 |
| 4. Persuasive     | 3 |
| 5. Social Service | 1 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"Belief that it has more to offer educationally. Interest to know what makes present-day liberals in Mo. [Missouri Synod] what they are."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Teaching, Writing."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Strong.

Interpretation:

This student scored in the highest percentile of his class in both parts of the Ohio and A.C.E. tests. Though he has unusual mental capacity, his personality adjustment is extremely weak in certain characteristics. In spite of a certain belligerent attitude which he manifested initially, he rated very low on self-reliance and had many nervous symptoms. His social skills were also minimal. His actual interest in serving people was also very low for a future minister. During the first seven months of seminary training, this man made great strides in overcoming this original handicap. He attributes the change to a growing insight that his future ministry is dependent upon these personality changes.



## Student B

Ability: Superior.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National</u> | <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| <u>Self-Adjustment:</u>   |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Self-Reliance          |                 |                   | 15          |
| 2. Personal Worth         |                 |                   | 35          |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies |                 |                   | 35          |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       |                 |                   | 40          |
| <u>Social Adjustment:</u> |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Social Standards       |                 |                   | 35          |
| 2. Social Skills          |                 |                   | 15          |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies |                 |                   | 15          |
| 4. Family Relations       |                 |                   | 35          |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Computational  | 7 |
| 2. Musical        | 7 |
| 3. Scientific     | 7 |
| 4. Mechanical     | 6 |
| 5. Literary       | 5 |
| 6. Persuasive     | 1 |
| 7. Social Service | 1 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

(No answer given.)

Other Occupational Interests:

"Electronics, Music."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Weak.

Interpretation:

This student also ranked in the uppermost percentile on all areas of mental ability. But as in the case of Student A his personality adjustment is poor, both in his self-adjustment and his social adjustment. Two interest areas considered important for the parish ministry, persuasive and social service, received his lowest rating. When the student entered the seminary, he had some inclination for teaching. After seven months of seminary training, he is "still in considerable doubt as to the advisability of making a major decision regarding my specific goal . . ."



## Student C

Ability: Superior.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National</u> | <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Self-Adjustment           |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Self-Reliance          |                 | 85                |             |
| 2. Personal Worth         |                 | 80                |             |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies |                 | 75                |             |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       |                 | 30                |             |
| Social Adjustment         |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Social Standards       |                 | 75                |             |
| 2. Social Skills          |                 | 70                |             |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies |                 | 30                |             |
| 4. Family Relations       |                 | 20                |             |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Mechanical     | 6 |
| 2. Artistic       | 6 |
| 3. Scientific     | 5 |
| 4. Social Service | 5 |
| 5. Persuasive     | 4 |
| 6. Literary       | 4 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"The desire to put my talents to work for Christ's Kingdom since He has been so wonderful to me."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Medicine, Social Work."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Strong.

Interpretation:

Student C scored slightly under the two preceding students in scholastic ability, but still rated among the upper eight men in his class. His mental health is also good, showing particular strength in self-reliance and social skills, two areas in which the class as a whole was weak. His interests are also consistent with his vocation to the ministry. In general this student, who did not receive his training in a preparatory school, showed a strong sense of vocation.



## Student D.

Ability: Superior.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National</u> | <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Self-Adjustment           |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Self-Reliance          |                 | 15                |             |
| 2. Personal Worth         |                 | 35                |             |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies |                 | 90                |             |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       |                 | 85                |             |
| Social Adjustment         |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Social Standards       |                 | 85                |             |
| 2. Social Skills          |                 | 55                |             |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies |                 | 90                |             |
| 4. Family Relations       |                 | 55                |             |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Computational  | 7 |
| 2. Social Service | 6 |
| 3. Musical        | 6 |
| 4. Literary       | 2 |
| 5. Persuasive     | 2 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"The ministry seems to me the most interesting work, and that for which I am best suited."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Psychiatry, Social Work."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Above average.

Interpretation:

Student D is the fourth representative of those who rated at the top of the class in mental ability. His personality is also good for the most part. His particular weaknesses are connected with self-reliance and his sense of personal worth. He is strong in his social tendencies and interest in other people. In all of his essays he manifested a predominantly anthropocentric approach, that is, rather than stressing service to God, love of the Savior, etc., he emphasized the work of the Lutheran Church in contrast to the Roman Catholic, etc. However, he does show a sense of vocation above the average member of the class.



## Student E

Ability: Very Low.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National</u> | <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Self-Adjustment           |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Self-Reliance          |                 | 40                |             |
| 2. Personal Worth         |                 | 95                |             |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies |                 | 85                |             |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       |                 | 85                |             |
| Social Adjustment         |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Social Standards       |                 | 75                |             |
| 2. Social Skills          |                 | 20                |             |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies |                 | 90                |             |
| 4. Family Relations       |                 | 95                |             |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Mechanical     | 6 |
| 2. Artistic       | 6 |
| 3. Social Service | 6 |
| 4. Persuasive     | 2 |
| 5. Literary       | 1 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"Love for my Savior."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Bricklaying."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Strong.

Interpretation:

This student indicated a total of "0" ability on the A.C.E. test. The individual test scores on the Ohio rated low and very low. He has a serious reading problem; he scored at the bottom of his class on the Iowa Test. He managed to get through three years of preparatory school by memorizing his lessons. His personality adjustment, however, is unusually fine. He shows a great interest in people. In spite of his limited ability his drive for the ministry is high.



## Student F

Ability: Very Low.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National</u> | <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Self-Adjustment           |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Self-Reliance          |                 | 40                |             |
| 2. Personal Worth         |                 | 85                |             |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies |                 | 75                |             |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       |                 | 90                |             |
| Social Adjustment         |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Social Standards       |                 | 75                |             |
| 2. Social Skills          |                 | 70                |             |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies |                 | 80                |             |
| 4. Family Relations       |                 | 95                |             |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Musical        | 7 |
| 2. Social Service | 5 |
| 3. Clerical       | 5 |
| 4. Literary       | 3 |
| 5. Persuasive     | 2 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"I always had the feeling that I was called to become a messenger of Christ. To bring the Gospel to the unchurched."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Social Work. Administration Work."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Strong.

Interpretation:

This student scored very low among the members of his class in mental ability. In contrast, his personal and social adjustment are good; only in self-reliance is he somewhat lower. He indicated his family relations to be unusually satisfactory. He is aware of a definite call to the ministry. In spite of his limitation in native mental ability, he expresses great happiness as he anticipates the work of the ministry.



## Student G

Ability: Very Low.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National</u> | <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| <u>Self-Adjustment</u>    |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Self-Reliance          |                 | 25                |             |
| 2. Personal Worth         |                 | 85                |             |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies |                 | 45                |             |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       |                 | 40                |             |
| <u>Social Adjustment</u>  |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Social Standards       |                 | 90                |             |
| 2. Social Skills          |                 | 20                |             |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies |                 | 40                |             |
| 4. Family Relations       |                 | 55                |             |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Mechanical     | 6 |
| 2. Clerical       | 6 |
| 3. Scientific     | 6 |
| 4. Social Service | 4 |
| 5. Persuasive     | 2 |
| 6. Literary       | 1 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"The desire to learn the Word and pass it on to others."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Farming, Carpentry."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Strong.

Interpretation:

In no area of the A.C.E. or Ohio tests did this student score above the second percentile (out of a total of seven percentiles) of his class. There are wide fluctuations in the component parts of his personality. His social standards and sense of personal worth are very high. At the same time he shows many nervous symptoms, tends to withdraw and be anti-social. His social skills are unusually weak. In general he does not manifest interest in the areas important for the ministry. Student G does, however, indicate a strong desire to enter the ministry.



## Student H

Ability: Very Low.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National Percentile Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Self-Adjustment           |                                 |
| 1. Self-Reliance          | 5                               |
| 2. Personal Worth         | 5                               |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies | 10                              |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       | 15                              |
| Social Adjustment         |                                 |
| 1. Social Standards       | 75                              |
| 2. Social Skills          | 15                              |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies | 5                               |
| 4. Family Relations       | 10                              |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Clerical       | 7 |
| 2. Computational  | 6 |
| 3. Scientific     | 6 |
| 4. Persuasive     | 4 |
| 5. Social Service | 2 |
| 6. Literary       | 1 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"The desire of my father and the attitude to take things as they come."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Official in Baseball, Major League. Archeology."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Weak.

Interpretation:

This student scored very low in both areas of the A.C.E. and the Ohio tests. His literary interest as well is very low. The test further indicates that the student is very poorly adjusted. In his self-adjustment he nowhere rated above the fifteenth percentile. With the exception of his social standards, the same is true for his social adjustment. His home background was rated as "very unsatisfactory." It seems the student is studying for the ministry primarily because of the promptings of his father, who is a minister.



## Student I

Ability: Average.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National</u> | <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| <u>Self-Adjustment</u>    |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Self-Reliance          |                 | 85                |             |
| 2. Personal Worth         |                 | 45                |             |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies |                 | 99                |             |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       |                 | 55                |             |
| <u>Social Adjustment</u>  |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Social Standards       |                 | 85                |             |
| 2. Social Skills          |                 | 70                |             |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies |                 | 80                |             |
| 4. Family Relations       |                 | 65                |             |

Interest Areas:

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Persuasive       | 7 |
| 2. Social Service   | 6 |
| 3. Literary         | 6 |
| 4. Family Relations | 4 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"To serve God as a pastor. My interest to prepare for work in which public speaking is a chief thing."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Law, Politics."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Strong.

Interpretation:

Although this student is of average mental ability, his personal adjustment is good. His sense of self-reliance, social skills and freedom from withdrawing tendencies are well above that of his class. His fields of interest also lie in areas essential for the ministry. His sense of vocation is strong.



## Student J

Ability: Average.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National</u> | <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| <u>Self-Adjustment</u>    |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Self-Reliance          |                 |                   | 25          |
| 2. Personal Worth         |                 |                   | 75          |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies |                 |                   | 75          |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       |                 |                   | 40          |
| <u>Social Adjustment</u>  |                 |                   |             |
| 1. Social Standards       |                 |                   | 75          |
| 2. Social Skills          |                 |                   | 95          |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies |                 |                   | 80          |
| 4. Family Relations       |                 |                   | 85          |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Social Service | 7 |
| 2. Persuasive     | 7 |
| 3. Artistic       | 4 |
| 4. Literary       | 3 |
| 5. Musical        | 3 |
| 6. Clerical       | 3 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrances:

"I wanted to spread the Gospel of Christ as my father has been doing."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Social Worker, Lawyer."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Average.

Interpretation:

This student rated just slightly below average in mental ability. In the Ohio test he rated average. His personality adjustment is above average. Only in "nervous symptoms" was he somewhat low. His major fields of interest indicate special interest in two areas of vital concern for the ministry. Thus far he has not done the reading which would be desired. His work has not gone much beyond actual class requirements. His sense of vocation is average.



## Student K

Ability: Average.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National Percentile Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Self-Adjustment           |                                 |
| 1. Self-Reliance          | 40                              |
| 2. Personal Worth         | 45                              |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies | 55                              |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       | 30                              |
| Social Adjustment         |                                 |
| 1. Social Standards       | 50                              |
| 2. Social Skills          | 55                              |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies | 30                              |
| 4. Family Relations       | 35                              |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Artistic       | 7 |
| 2. Persuasive     | 5 |
| 3. Literary       | 4 |
| 4. Social Service | 4 |
| 5. Mechanical     | 4 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"I want to be a minister."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Law. Carpenter Trade."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Average.

Interpretation:

This student's scores on the A.C.E. and the Ohio ranged from the lowest percentile on the "Q" test to the sixth percentile on Test 1 of the Ohio; thus his ability seems to be just slightly under average. Though he manifests no definite problems, his adjustment is weakest in "nervous symptoms" and "anti-social tendencies." Yet his social skills seemed to be slightly better than average. His reading rate and comprehension are very poor. In general he shows an average amount of vocational awareness.



## Student L

Ability: Average.

Mental Health:

|                           | <u>National Percentile Rank</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Self-Adjustment           |                                 |
| 1. Self-Reliance          | 5                               |
| 2. Personal Worth         | 5                               |
| 3. Withdrawing Tendencies | 10                              |
| 4. Nervous Symptoms       | 30                              |
| Social Adjustment         |                                 |
| 1. Social Standards       | 85                              |
| 2. Social Skills          | 15                              |
| 3. Anti-Social Tendencies | 15                              |
| 4. Family Relations       | 45                              |

Interest Areas:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Social Service | 7 |
| 2. Persuasive     | 5 |
| 3. Scientific     | 5 |
| 4. Computational  | 5 |
| 5. Literary       | 4 |

Factors Prompting Seminary Entrance:

"I really don't know."

Other Occupational Interests:

"Mathematics, Physical Education."

Strength of Vocational Awareness:

Weak.

Interpretation:

This student's individual test scores fell between the second and fourth percentile on the four sections of the A.C.E. and the Ohio tests. His self-reliance and sense of personal worth are terribly low. He also demonstrated definite withdrawing tendencies, though he does tend to be close to a group of other students from his former prep school. He is concerned about helping people. He often holds up his father, who is a pastor, as his ideal. His weak sense of vocation is connected in his mind with the realization that his own way of life will have to be changed.



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