

10 Commandments Of Pastoral Leadership: A Theological Study Of Pastoral Leadership In The Brethren Church (Ashland, Ohio)

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Introduction

Writing a theology requires a framework. To build confidence in the framework, the theologian must reveal the foundational assumptions basic to such construction. Thus, the brick and mortar of this paper is built with a two-step logical progression. First, a sound theology must be based upon Scripture. After all a study of God should be founded upon his Word. Secondly, the human side of Scriptural interpretation brings discovery and discussion to the theological process. This is, of course, from where all the various theologies emerge.¹

The human process of dealing with the divine can be seen in terms of the following analogy. There are three streams that feed a biblical theology, each of which can be posed as a question. The answers then ultimately fill the "theological pool" from which the adherents to the theological tradition drink. First, what are the current official documents of the church? This is sometimes referred to as the dogma.² Second, what are the writings of thinkers in the past who have commented upon the theological understandings of their time? These are historical in nature and help provide a basis for understanding how the dogma was developed. Third, what are the writings of contemporary theological thinkers? This gives a current contextual flavor to the dogma that helps today's followers understand and hopefully adhere to such tenets of the faith.

Before examining each of these feeder streams for pastoral leadership specifically, some explanation is necessary regarding the Brethren theological process in general. The Brethren Church finds its identity among the classification of churches known as "free churches" or "believers churches."³ These have an historical aversion to systematized thinking. This is true for their understanding of God, the Bible, church government, etc.⁴ The Free Church emphasis is upon "right living" not on "right thinking," the assumption being that the true measure of spiritual maturity lies in action, not in thought or rhetoric. In short, a person living rightly certainly must think correctly. Why talk about it or write it out?⁵

This mindset results in devotional writing more than theological documentation.⁶ Thus, the Brethren Church, as a part of this Free Church tradition, has little overt theology in any of the three streams mentioned above. Of the theology that has been espoused in its 300-year history, the vast majority is dedicated to the ordinances of baptism and communion.⁷ To find any theology even remotely related to pastoral leadership, the researcher must examine the

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writings on the body life of the church. Though not explicitly addressed theologically, there are some clues as to the Brethren views on pastoral leadership and the biblical texts that inform them.

Undeniably, there will be some overlap between the theological concepts delineated below. However, for ease of study and discussion, what follows will be presented as the “10 Theological Commandments of Pastoral Leadership.” Much like the 10 Commandments of the Old Testament, these theological concepts will be presented in both the positive and negative forms depending upon the concept presented. There will be Scriptural sources and, where available, evidences for each commandment from the three streams mentioned earlier.

Commandment #1: Thou shalt not be the holy one

Leading as a pastor in the Brethren Church requires a foundational understanding of the Brethren view of the church. A key starting point for comprehension emerges from 1 Peter 2:9-10. The Protestant Reformation’s injunction that the church is “the priesthood of all believers” was crucial in the development of a denominational mission statement a little over a decade ago. The opening words of this statement read, “The Brethren Church is a priesthood of believers....” The General Conference Moderator at the time explained, “It stresses each Brethren person’s role as a priest for the church.”⁸

Interestingly, when a pastor reared in another tradition assumed the pastorate in a Brethren church during the late 1970’s and wrote in the denominational magazine of his ideas of differing levels of belonging in the church,⁹ the reaction was alarm. Later editorials ranged from lengthy reasoned biblical responses to the simply put, “Where is any equality of believers? We are all priests.”¹⁰ Of course the Brethren humbly realize their priesthood was made possible by Jesus, the High Priest’s, atoning death which rent the temple curtain allowing free access to the Holy by all.¹¹

The implications of this theological point for pastoral leadership are two-fold. First, the pastor is called to ministerial service by the local church; thus, there is a sense that though the role is now different, the essence is still the same. Though the pastor will perform what may be considered “priestly” duties, there is the very humbling yet helpful reality that God can and will use any number of his “priests” within the church to accomplish his task. In short, the pastor will handle the holy things of the church, but this does not make the pastor the holy one.

Second, to further this point, the Brethren view of pastoral ordination, unlike that of many denominations, is functional in nature rather than positional. Thus, all authority and responsibility are tied to the task of pastoring, not to the pastor personally.¹²

The upside of these points for the pastor is confidence in delegating tasks to capable lay people in order to create a truly shared ministry in the church. The downside can be seen when there is little respect given by church

members to the pastor. Much like Jesus' situation in Nazareth, "Only in his hometown . . . is a prophet without honor,"¹³ the Brethren pastor can become ineffective simply due to the contempt for leadership by the church membership.

Commandment #2: Thou shalt not seek to be the head of the body

A second aspect of the Brethren view of the church is found in the biblical metaphor "the body of Christ" cited in 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. This is an extension of the priesthood concept in that it recognizes an equality of belonging for all in the church. However, it differs, in that the body analogy recognizes unique parts/roles for each individual. Thus, by focusing on Paul's body parallel, the church membership can find individuality confirmed in the gifts of the Spirit while seeing commonality displayed in the fruit of the Spirit.¹⁴ Keeping the aforementioned in mind though, does not obfuscate the real focus of this commandment -- not on the body, but rather the Head -- which is Christ!

The significance of this theological point for pastoral leadership can be found in both the body and the Head. The latter point makes it clear that there is only one true Leader in the church. And because all members of the body have access to the Head, there is no need for an intermediary. This point in and of itself provides freedom for the pastor, and ultimately for all involved. Yet, taken to an ugly extreme, there can be a rejection of any human leadership in the church.

A helpful distinction concerning this issue can be found in the following thoughts on relationships in church government, "since all are on equal standing before Christ, congregationalism recognizes no absolute authority in the church except Christ's."¹⁵ The key word, of course, is "absolute." Just as it is reasonable to see Christ as the only absolute authority, so it is to recognize the need for some level of human authority that is not of an absolute nature.

As for pastoring the body, there is an unexplainable mixture of joy and fear in providing leadership to a lively, dynamic group of unique individuals.¹⁶ This entails a unique approach to church polity. The foremost Brethren writer on this topic, Jack Oxenrider, relates this connection thus:

Because this principle of the body of Christ was and is paramount to the Brethren idea of the church, the organizational principles which the Brethren Church employs must reflect the essential qualities of the body imagery. Those qualities are coordination, cooperation, interdependence, shared responsibility, mutual accountability, interdependent relationships, and the inclusion of every individual member into the comprehensive whole.¹⁷

The next commandment will complete this point.

Commandment #3: Thou Shalt Believe The Best About The Church

The final commandment that focuses on the nature of the church in Brethrenism is the high view of church membership.¹⁸ The early church examples of Acts 1 and Acts 6 are readily cited as the model for congregational government. The choosing of Judas' replacement and the choosing of the seven for a ministry of service are seen by the Brethren as an apostolic example of total community involvement in the governing process.

Three Brethren writers revealed key concepts of how this high view of church membership informs healthy congregationalism. Oxenrider begins with the theological concept of redeemed humanity and its link to church government. He states, "The very concepts of mutual responsibility, voluntary accountability, and the practice of shared leadership are predicated on a view that regenerate people are capable of accepting responsibility, being accountable, and fulfilling leadership roles."¹⁹

An old school contribution on this issue is presented by Smith Rose who when describing the rationale for Brethren polity describes an idyllic church membership. Rose writes,

Brethren Church government has been congregational as this was believed to be apostolic. This assumed that each member of the congregation would through an awareness of God's will through His written word, through prayerful communication with Him, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit make the decisions that were pleasing to God.²⁰

Current day historian/theologian Dale Stoffer cites the sobering duty such an eclectic church government with a high view of its members, places upon the Brethren. Stoffer relates the expectancy of the early Brethren that still persists to this day, "Such a process for discerning truth places a great deal of responsibility upon the entire body -- for knowing the content of the faith, for critiquing current forms of Christianity, for individually and corporately being open to the Spirit's direction."²¹

The practical import for the Brethren pastor related to this commandment is simple to state and yet difficult to counteract. If indeed, a pastor is able to pastor such a mature group of disciples, then believing the best about the church will be easy. However, if such expectations of the church membership are unrealistic, then true pastoral leadership becomes virtually impossible.

Commandment #4: Thou shalt be inclusive in decision making

Consideration of the first three commandments will help the Brethren pastor appreciate the necessity of inclusivity in the decision making processes in the church. As was mentioned above, the narrative accounts of Acts 1 and 6 form a normative approach to making decisions in today's Brethren Church. Because the Brethren see themselves as priests who are members of the body of

Christ, with each member being an invaluable contributor to the democratic process, there is a dangerous propensity toward “radical congregationalism.”

Stoffer discusses this extremism as follows:

I find that some churches seem to feel congregational government means that the entire congregation must be involved in making every decision, not only the major ones regarding selection of pastor and building of facilities, but also the lesser ones of what color to paint the nursery and what Sunday school curriculum to use. Such radical congregationalism becomes unworkable in any but the smallest congregation. (Even here it is poor stewardship of time).²²

This thinking is reflected not only in the practical experiences of pastors, it is also a part of the Brethren mindset recorded in their official documents. At times it is even forcefully expressed as exhibited in this example from the *Manual of Pastoral and Congregational Procedures*, “The New Testament church, our divine model, is a very democratic organization. *The will of the majority, honestly expressed, is its law*” (italics mine).²³

Commandment #5: Thou shalt not rush decisions

This commandment is closely related to the first four, yet provides an important nuance for the Brethren pastor to consider. In the political world it is true that on a voting issue the majority wins; however, in the church there is the fear of disenfranchisement for the minority who “loses.” Thus, maintaining a cohesive fellowship leads the Brethren Church to trade clear-cut majority/minority democratic processes for the more palatable consensus system.

Unfortunately, the strength of guarding church unity is at times offset by the impotence of delays when timeliness is essential. Again, much like the potential errors of extremism mentioned in radical congregationalism, so it is with the necessity of consensus building on even the smallest of issues. Oxenrider distinguishes issues of “policy and purpose” as those that are worthy of seeking a consensus on “God’s will for the congregation at that time and place.”²⁴

The wise Brethren pastor will seek balance in dealing with commandments four and five. For the few decisions of great importance, leadership must seek large-scale input of the membership, and show patience in the often slow and difficult process of consensus building in the body. For all other decisions, pastoral leadership should be prayerful, purposeful, and timely. When speaking of decision making, Brethren scholars point out the need for pragmatism in the role of pastoral ministry,²⁵ trust by the body extended to their pastors,²⁶ and recognition of respect for pastoral authority and responsibility in the church.²⁷

Commandment #6: Thou shalt be accountable

This commandment is important for all healthy relationships in the church; however, it is essential for pastors and others in positions of authority. The Brethren have cited Ephesians 5:21 as the basis for this theological tenet, with Paul counseling the church members in Ephesus to mutually submit one to another.

Oxenrider wrote extensively in the early 1980's on the connection between accountability and church government. First he succinctly states, "The key to unity is voluntarily-shared responsibility and mutual accountability."²⁸ Next, he reveals the intimidating nature in such relationships, "For people to agree to be accountable, they must be secure in themselves and in their relationships. People will not volunteer to be under obligation to a person or organization that they do not respect."²⁹ Finally, the genesis for such a healthy environment of respect is properly placed:

In the local church accountability begins with the pastoral and congregational leadership. When those in leadership begin to act with love, trust, security, and respect, they develop an atmosphere in which accountability can flourish.³⁰

The expression of accountability for the Brethren pastor is best evidenced through modeling. Remembering the identity value of church membership as expressed in the preceding commandments and looking ahead to the concept of servant-leadership that will be discussed next, pastors must be willing to risk vulnerability and transparency in leadership. Accountability in the church depends on the respective roles of leaders and followers not obscuring the fact of equal standing before Christ. One nationally known Brethren leader stated it thus, "We are all sinners saved by grace, and the area beneath the cross is level ground. There are no 'greater' or 'lesser than' people in the Body of Christ."³¹

Commandment #7: Thou shalt be a servant-leader

Although the topic of servant-leadership has gained increasing popularity in the past few years, it has been a hallmark of the Brethren from their inception. Stoffer writes of Brethren Church founder Alexander Mack that he "sought to serve his flock with a sensitive humble spirit."³² The foremost Brethren theological thinkers of the 19th (Peter Nead) and 20th (J. Allen Miller) centuries, concurred in their writings. Nead's thinking has been summarized as follows, "Ministers should remember that they are servants and not masters of the church."³³ Miller furthered this point by including *all* in leadership, "All officers are to remember that they are not the rulers but the servants of the church."³⁴

The official documents of the Brethren Church touch briefly on this subject as it relates to pastors today. After listing many responsibilities

associated with the office, *A Manual of Procedure for The Brethren Church* states one final area of pastoral duty, “. . .under the direction of the church, administer government and discipline.”³⁵ The very concept of leaders being placed “under” the church may appear counterintuitive to some, but for the Brethren this is the essence of servant-leadership.

The words of Jesus himself form the biblical corpus for this concept of servant-leadership. In Luke’s gospel, Jesus settles a power struggle between his disciples regarding “greatness” with this statement, “The greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.”³⁶ The fact that this teaching occurred during the last supper, which in John includes the personal example of Christ assuming the role of a servant by washing his disciples’ feet, has not been lost on the Brethren.³⁷ To this day they are among the few Christian groups who still practice this symbolic act of humble service as they celebrate Communion.

Concerning the practical workings of this commandment in church polity, a former denominational executive addressed an interesting phenomenon in the following analysis:

Understanding our sin nature, we sometimes fear that our leaders may take a controlling attitude rather than that of a servant. So we tend to grant responsibility and authority to groups of people --boards or committees or the congregation as a whole -- rather than entrusting leadership to a few. The result is creation of bureaucracies -- groups who encumber their decisions with the burden of regulations and limitations. At times such groups unconsciously discourage ministry rather than empowering and enabling it!³⁸

For the Brethren pastor an awareness of such a subtle nuance is invaluable to effective church leadership. A final helpful thought concerning servant-leadership comes from long-time Ashland Theological Seminary theology professor Jerry Flora,

“Every one of us has a ministry, and no one should be called ‘the minister.’ All of us are ministers, that is, servants. Some have been given the service of pastoring or shepherding, but shepherds don’t give birth to sheep -- sheep have sheep!”³⁹

Commandment #8: Thou shalt not assume a position of authority

In a similar vein, the Brethren have been averse to hierarchy and a wariness of those who seek positional authority. Mark 10:35-37 records the request of James and John to be placed in heavenly seats of distinction. Jesus’ response in the following verses taught not only his two disciples then, but they also instruct the Brethren of today. Seeking positional authority and being Christlike are incongruous to the Brethren mind.

Oxenrider's studies provided this assertion: "Brethren, because of their aversion to hierarchy, their commitment to the equality of community, and their functional view of the priesthood of all believers, have had little use for directive, autocratic structure in the overall organization of the Brethren Church."⁴⁰ Speaking of organizational structures, an independent consultant hired by the Brethren Church to evaluate their financial and organizational health in the mid-1990's observed:

In most organizations, there are formal lines of organization, with appropriate boxes and lines, which describe how decisions are made, who reports to whom, and generally who is in charge at any level. Often these same organizations have the informal structure, which is never put on paper. The informal organization is how the church actually operates.⁴¹

The astute Brethren pastor will realize the natural suspicions affiliated with a leadership position, and will work through the many and varied *informal* structures to provide effective leadership.

Commandment #9: Thou shalt equip the saints

The Brethren pastor who sees the pastoral role as one of facilitating ministry will find widespread acceptance within the church. Ephesians 4:11-13 provides the biblical evidence for such facilitation. Oxenrider posits in his ministry model for church organization, "It is the basic function of the persons in leadership -- such as deacons, moderator, officers, and pastor -- to serve as resource persons to the ministry groups and to the task-oriented sub-groups."⁴² He follows this functional description with a relational emphasis, "Of all the resources a leader has at his disposal, the only resource that can follow is people. Thus the only resource which can be led is people."⁴³ How apropos for the spirit of this commandment to be one of balance in leadership. Having direction (task) and followers (relationship) is perhaps seen most clearly in "equipping the saints."

Commandment #10: Thou shalt be called

Finally we end where we could have easily begun. In fact, adherence to the other nine commandments and neglect in this one will result in frustration and failure in the pastorate. For the Brethren, the call to pastoral ministry is a partnership between God and his church.⁴⁴ Stoffer records this connection with the thinking of an early Brethren leader, "Nead contends that ministers, who have been entrusted with the preaching of the Word, derive their authority from Jesus Christ. Yet, this authority is never self-assumed, for the Lord uses the church to choose His ministers."⁴⁵

The *Manual of Pastoral and Congregational Procedures* gives a lengthy description of the calling process. Three basic concepts emerge from 1 Timothy: Number one, "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands."⁴⁶ Number

two, "He must not be a recent convert."⁴⁷ Number three, "They must first be tested."⁴⁸ Though these passages sometimes refer to differing tasks or positions in the early church, they are all concerned with leadership.⁴⁹ A number of persons and groups work in conjunction with the Holy Spirit to confirm a pastor's calling. Clearly, of all leaders within the church, the Brethren pastor must be called!

Concluding Reflections and Suggestions

What has been presented thus far has been done with an understanding that this is a very abbreviated look at the theology of pastoral leadership in the Brethren Church. I readily admit a limited understanding of the history and theology of the Brethren. It is hoped, however, that this discussion will become a catalyst for further investigation by those who are more qualified to tackle the task with scholarly vigor. What follows is an attempt to open the dialogue for future study, not lend the final word. Hopefully, such a study will make a meaningful contribution to those about whom and for whom we write -- the Brethren pastors.

The first three commandments above dealing with the nature of the church as described in the Bible must be balanced by a sober appraisal of the church's actual current composition. Can the Brethren afford to continually subject their pastors to unrealistic leadership expectations based upon faulty conclusions about the true nature of the church? Rather than asking the Brethren to abandon the biblical picture of the church, I am instead suggesting that a more complete depiction be presented. The Brethren have always been guided by the truth of Scripture, yet how can they give credence to the realities of the church as it is, all the while striving for the ideal of what God's Word calls it to be? Only as the whole counsel of Scripture is sought can these inequities reach a balance. This can only be accomplished by acknowledging the fallen nature of our world and the frailty of humanity, while at the same time seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the current cultural applications of biblical concepts.

Commandments four and five, those dealing with decision-making, should be re-examined in light of today's society. The church cannot respond to the governing needs of the "now" by using yesterday's methods. Fully democratic processes and consensus seeking are values more indicative of the American infancy into which the Brethren of the 1700's were thrust -- a vastly different social structure than that of the early church presented in Scripture. Have the Brethren asked their pastoral leadership to submit to church traditions that are based more upon socio-historic standards than biblical ones?⁵⁰ The Brethren should explore Scriptural texts dealing with autocracy and representative democracy in the decision making process. Perhaps today's words of "efficiency" and "effectiveness" are really in step with the biblical council of good stewardship.

A more realistic theology of the church and a more balanced theology of church polity would have a profound effect on commandments six through ten presented earlier in this work.⁵¹ Briefly stated here are some possible ramifications of an unhealthy church.

The accountability issues of commandment six are certainly valid portrayals for life together in community. For the Brethren pastor, however, being a transparent and vulnerable model carries great risk. An insecure and suspicious church body often rejects such pastoral modeling. This fact, combined with the potential excesses of radical congregationalism, can result in pastoral submission ending in pastoral termination!⁵²

Likewise, the servant-leadership discussed in commandment seven is an important biblical injunction; however, the practical outworking of this concept can prove hazardous to the Brethren pastor. An unhealthy church body can refuse the leadership aspect and abuse the pastor's service. The "hired hand" or "chaplain" metaphors have been used to describe such Brethren pastorates.⁵³ The result is oftentimes a disillusioned, burned-out pastor!

Further, the eighth commandment imploring the Brethren pastor to avoid positional authority is biblically sound. Though the Brethren have unofficially spurned positional authority, they have officially dealt with the pastorate in a manner similar to other denominations that have embraced hierarchy. This mixed message of Brethrenism has often confused Brethren pastors and can contribute to unhealthy congregations.⁵⁴ A schizophrenic church government damages both the sheep and the shepherd!

Commandment nine finds its strength and foundation in Ephesians 4:11-13, where equipping the saints is a hallmark of healthy church leadership. However, busyness, independence, and spiritual shallowness in the church's membership short-circuits pastoral attempts to enable and empower. Seeking to equip saints who are not faithful, available, or teachable can lead to great frustration for the Brethren pastor. The Brethren pastor may respond in extremes -- workaholism or sloth -- neither of which is beneficial for the pastor or the church being served!

Pastoral calling, as described in the tenth commandment, is a wonderful Scriptural example of the combination of the mystical (God calls) and the practical (the church confirms). Remembering that the pastoral candidate comes from the body and is affirmed by the body, God may remain an unseen and unheard entity in the process. Unfortunately, some pastors are hired to lead Brethren churches without the call of God to empower and guide!

Finally, a few disclaimers are in order. First, what has been written describes possibilities that may be more representative of the few extreme cases than the general rule for Brethrenism. However, many of these possibilities have become realities and can easily spread to healthy bodies if left unchecked.

Second, what has been described as Brethren issues are certainly not limited to this small strain of Christianity. Many Christian groups struggle with

similar issues. Yet, the Brethren cannot settle for a “misery loves company” attitude and a throwing up of our theological hands.

Third, some of what has been presented as problematic have no foreseeable solutions, from my vantage point. Of course, that can be considered a hopeless statement; however, it is actually hope that causes me to write. Perhaps others, from their vantage point, can provide insights that when combined will lead to greater theological understanding and health.

Notes

¹Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), 21-22.

²The American Heritage Dictionary defines dogma as “Theology: A system of doctrines proclaimed true by a religious sect.”

³John H. Yoder writes of this grouping of churches that it “differs from the other streams of evangelicalism...in that it has no one founder, no one classical place or generation of origins, no foundational corpus of normative writings, no primary institutional bearer of its theological identity, and no accredited body of teachers and writers whose way of working we could observe. See John H. Yoder, “Thinking Theologically From A Free-Church Perspective” in *Doing Theology in Today’s World*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 251.

⁴See the preface of *The Free Church & the Early Church*, edited by D.H. Williams (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), vii-xiii. Williams gives a brief but thorough introduction to this aversion to theological thinking, some reasons for it, and some preliminary rebuttal to such thought.

⁵Barry L. Callen, *Radical Christianity*. (Nappanee, IN: Evangel Publishing House, 1999), 83.

⁶Dale R. Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1650-1987*. (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1989), 2.

⁷Jack L. Oxenrider, “What Do Brethren Believe About the Church?,” *The Brethren Evangelist*, June 1982: 6.

⁸Kenneth Sullivan, “Setting Direction for The Brethren Church,” *The Brethren Evangelist*, May 1990: 6.

⁹Stephen Swihart, “Biblical Leadership in the Church,” *The Brethren Evangelist*, May 1978: 9.

¹⁰Letters to the Editor, *The Brethren Evangelist*, October 1978: 20.

¹¹See Gospel accounts in Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, and Luke 23:45 for references to the Temple curtain tearing during Christ’s time on the cross. See the book of Hebrews for multiple references to Jesus as our “high priest.”

¹²See *The Brethren Church Manual of Pastoral and Congregational Procedures*, 16.

¹³Mark 6:4, NIV.

¹⁴Roy A. Andrews, “Spiritual Gifts Coordination: Integrating Spiritual Gifts Into A Biblical Model Of Administration/Leadership” (Masters Thesis, Ashland Theological Seminary, 1993), 17-21.

¹⁵John T. Byler, “What On Earth Is Church Polity?,” *The Brethren Evangelist*, June 28, 1975: 13.

¹⁶See The Brethren Church *Manual of Commissioning, Licensing, and Ordination Procedures*, 64. J. Allen Miller, noted Brethren leader from the early 1900's writes of this phenomenon in his article "The Origin and Spirit of the Brethren People," He states, "In seeking to characterize what I like to call the spirit and the genius of Brethrenism I always find myself at a loss for words. In the first place this is true because it is a LIFE that I am trying to depict. And what makes this all the more difficult at least for me is the fact that it is not the life of a particular man or woman but the life of a community that I am trying to describe. Yes, it is a life. To appreciate it one must really enter into it."

¹⁷Jack L. Oxenrider, "What Do Brethren Believe About the Church?," *The Brethren Evangelist*, June 1982: 7.

¹⁸Jack L. Oxenrider, "A Brethren Management Theory," *The Brethren Evangelist*, September 1982: 4.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Smith F. Rose, "Brethren Church Government," *The Brethren Evangelist*, June 28, 1975: 13.

²¹Dale R. Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1650-1987*. (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1989), 84.

²²Dale R. Stoffer, "Let Us Be Brethren," *The Brethren Evangelist*, June 1988: 8.

²³See The Brethren Church *Manual of Pastoral and Congregational Procedures*, 36.

²⁴Jack L. Oxenrider, "A Working Brethren Model," *The Brethren Evangelist*, August 1982: 12.

²⁵Frederick T. Burkey, "Challenges and Opportunities," *The Brethren Evangelist*, March 1979: 10.

²⁶Dale R. Stoffer, "Let Us Be Brethren," *The Brethren Evangelist*, June 1988: 8.

²⁷Larry R. Baker, "Power Struggles and the Pastor's Role in the Church," *The Brethren Evangelist*, February 1993: 10.

²⁸Jack L. Oxenrider, "Defining Church-Pastor Relationships," *The Brethren Evangelist*, October 1982: 9.

²⁹Ibid., 10.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Mary Ellen Drushal, "Brethren Megatrends 2000," *The Brethren Evangelist*, June 1990: 8.

³²Dale R. Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1650-1987*. (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1989), 68.

³³Ibid., 126

³⁴Ibid., 209.

³⁵See The Brethren Church *A Manual of Procedure for The Brethren Church*, 4.

³⁶Luke 22:26, NIV.

³⁷See John 13:1-17.

³⁸Ronald W. Waters, "Leaders for a Growing Church," *The Brethren Evangelist*, March 1993: 4.

³⁹Jerry R. Flora, *The Message of Faith*. (Ashland, OH: The Brethren Church, Inc. 1996), 105.

⁴⁰Jack L. Oxenrider, "Understanding Organizational Design," *The Brethren Evangelist*, July 1982: 6-7.

⁴¹Norman L. Edwards, "The Brethren Church: Financial and Organizational Study," February, 1994: 14.

⁴²Jack L. Oxenrider, "A Working Brethren Model," *The Brethren Evangelist*, August 1982: 14.

⁴³Jack L. Oxenrider, "A Brethren Management Theory," *The Brethren Evangelist*, September 1982: 4.

⁴⁴The *Manual of Pastoral and Congregational Procedures* cites, "Ordination possesses both divine and human aspects. It is a formal recognition of God's call in a person's life and affirms both that those spiritual gifts needed for a special calling are present and that God promises grace to fulfill the responsibilities of the task. But ordination also includes human components. It assumes that God's calling must be ratified by human witnesses as well who can testify to the evidence of the divine call. The act of laying on of hands is also performed by persons with the appropriate authority who can likewise vouch for the person's character and integrity. In the ordination process, God and human beings cooperate to provide the best possible leadership for the further advance of God's kingdom purposes."

⁴⁵Dale R. Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1650-1987*. (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1989), 126.

⁴⁶See 1 Timothy 5:22.

⁴⁷See 1 Timothy 3:6.

⁴⁸See 1 Timothy 3:10.

⁴⁹Unlike many denominations, the Brethren have not understood Scripture to present levels of hierarchy in leadership that are normative for all times and situations. Terms such as "overseer," "elder," and "bishop" are all lumped into one category as an ordained clergy. Laypersons are ordained as "deacons" and "deaconesses." See J. Allen Miller, *Christian Doctrine – Lectures and Sermons*. (Ashland, OH: The Brethren Publishing Company, 1946), 106.

⁵⁰Erickson concludes his chapter on the "The Government of the Church" with a brief yet interesting historical appraisal of the three major forms of church polity functioning today. See Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), 1086-1087.

⁵¹After listing seven assumptions about Brethren management theory that were idealistic, Oxenrider refutes what I have stated; however, his appraisal is over twenty years old and he is no longer a part of the Brethren Church to give an updated evaluation. Nevertheless, I have included his comments here to be considered by future researchers. "The accusation will be made by some that such a theory of leadership and church organization is impractical and idealistic – that it fails to take into account the fact that the church exists in a fallen world and that there are problems of carnality within the church. These charges are false. The Brethren Church grew out of a reaction to these very problems within the world and the institutional church. It was a reaction to these very things that gave birth to the Anabaptists and, later, the German Pietists, both of which are the parent movements to The Brethren Church." See Jack L. Oxenrider, "A Brethren Management Theory," *The Brethren Evangelist*, September 1982: 6.

⁵²General Conference Moderator for 1990 wrote in the denominational magazine the following candid comments regarding this unfortunate circumstance, “A fund should be established that would provide for counseling, restoration, and assistance to pastors and their families who have been chewed up and spit out by a local church. I am embarrassed to even admit this happens in Brethren churches, but it does, and it needs to be dealt with at every level” See Mary Ellen Drushal, “Brethren Megatrends 2000,” *The Brethren Evangelist*, June 1990: 9.

⁵³Longtime Brethren pastor Larry Baker, after assessing the reasons for congregational/pastoral conflict, wrote the following, “In some congregations the pastor is neither expected nor allowed to exercise his responsibility and authority. He is viewed as an employee of the congregation with ‘chaplain’ responsibilities.” See Larry R. Baker, “Power Struggles and the Pastor’s Role in the Church,” *The Brethren Evangelist*, February 1993: 10.

⁵⁴Oxenrider writes about this issue in the following, “A well-defined and understood organization is a key to the effective ministry of a local Brethren church and to the effective function of the pastor within that church. Where church structures are confused or ill-defined, increasing difficulty will result. Where organizational structures are confusing or hidden, the pastor will experience great difficulties in his role of directing the affairs of the church. A clearly understood and used organizational structure is essential for the effective leadership-management of the Brethren Church.” Jack L. Oxenrider, “A Working Brethren Model,” *The Brethren Evangelist*, August 1982: 14.