

LEADING SELF FACILITATOR GUIDE



**SOUTH CAROLINA
BAPTIST CONVENTION**

Leading Self is an intentional investment in the life of pastoral leaders seeking to shepherd God's flock entrusted to them. As facilitator, you will guide them through an intentional journey of God's Truth and Wisdom from a trusted resource, and help them apply what they learn to their specific needs and Context. Utilizing five intentional lessons you will seek to equip leaders to lead God's people and advance God's mission in their context.

Leading Self provides a strategic process to guide spiritual leaders to establish or enhance spiritual disciplines, increase self-awareness, pursue self-learning, develop accountability/support relationships, and follow healthy rhythms of life. Each lesson seeks to create the right conversations to equip and encourage pastors to reflect on their current leadership capacities and develop strategies for growing as a leader seeking to honor God with his life and ministry.

This facilitator guide is intended to help you prepare to guide a pastor cohort with discussion and coaching essential to further their learning and preparation to grow as a pastoral leader and be faithful to shepherd those in their midst.

Pastoral ministry is a marathon of personal development and sacrificial service to God's Church. So, let's help our pastors set a good pace and start the journey together for the glory of God!

May the Lord equip you and strengthen His Church through this resource and the faithfulness of men seeking to serve for God's glory.

Leading Self Facilitator Guide

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PREPARING THE FACILITATOR

EACH SESSION AT A GLANCE

Pre - Work

Each session begins with pre-work for pastors to complete prior to their cohort attendance. Each lesson includes:

- Inductive Bible study
- Recommended resource review

Pastors will be guided by a Pastor Workbook and you as their facilitators. The pastor should bring his completed lesson with him to cohort for further interaction and feedback. Many of the elements in the pre-work will be incorporated in the cohort session, so advance completion is encouraged.

Cohort Session

Cohorts will meet monthly for approximately two hours. The facilitator will utilize a guide to engage participants in discussion and interactive learning to help them complete and refine the desired outcomes for each lesson. Participants will often share their pre-work with their peers to gain feedback and further the development of their preparation to lead a church through a revitalization process.

Each session will move through **Warm-Up -> Truth -> Wisdom -> Context -> Prayer**.

Participants will be guided through each unique session by a range of learning engagements and applications using training techniques to help each other explore, experience, evaluate, and be equipped as revitalization pastors and replanters. It is highly recommended that facilitators complete their training and work through each session before leading their cohort.

As participants learn new skills and further develop their ideas, they will also form a peer community of pastors and practitioners to lend support and wisdom extending well beyond the scope of the cohort.

Post-Session

Facilitators are encouraged to interact and pray for participants in between each session to provide ongoing encouragement and accountability. Simple reminders of upcoming meetings, opportunities to gather for fellowship together, prayer request text thread, etc. are all helpful ways to provide ongoing support for leaders.

THE ROLE OF FACILITATOR

As a cohort facilitator, you will guide the pastors on a journey of church revitalization. As a guide, your investment in the pastor's development will require you to fulfill several key roles often all in the same day:

- **Facilitator**

First and foremost, Leading Self is designed with intentional session to help pastors develop as leaders. Each cohort session will explore a new essential in three sections: Biblical Truth, Wisdom to Consider, and Contextual Application. This guide seeks to prepare you for each intentionally designed session that will challenge the participants to lead in faithful obedience to reach their community and strengthen the church they have been called to serve. As facilitator, your preparation and guidance are keys to the cohort's success.

- **Teacher**

Second, this guide contains short segments called Directive Teaching to allow you or someone you enlist to provide instruction for the participants. 90% of each cohort session is driven by the participant's pre-work and interaction around each topic leaving only 10% for instruction. It is not the facilitator's role to be the expert in the room as each pastor is serving in a different context with unique circumstances. As teacher, your best role is to speak from experience to equip the pastor to lead well in his context as guided by the Holy Spirit.

- **Coach**

Third, your pastors need a coach to ask the right questions and help them consider their options as they work through the lessons. Each session includes several open-ended questions to equip you to guide discovery and challenge pastors to overcome barriers as they seek to apply the content. Your role as coach is to help them reach their maximum potential as pastor and leader.

- **Accountability partner**

This cohort is designed to offer a slow pace of interactive learning that will require accountability among participants. To ensure completion and implementation, the facilitator should provide accountability for full participation by completing assigned pre-work, making cohort sessions a priority, and meeting with a mentor regularly. Understanding the tendencies of each pastor, the facilitator can maintain regular contacts to keep each participant progressing and growing as a leader.

- **Encourager**

Pastoral ministry is hard work over a long period of time, so each facilitator should be a constant source of encouragement personally while guiding a healthy cohort that lends support and care to all participants. Pastors should look forward to cohort because of who will be there and the encouragement they will receive.

- **Prayer partner**

As facilitator, you will have a first-hand knowledge to the needs, struggles, and victories of each pastor in the cohort. Whether you pray with the pastor in person or alone in your own prayer closet, the facilitator is a vital partner and intercessor. Kingdom advance in our at-risk churches is a spiritual work requiring continual petitions before God's throne of grace.

FACILITATOR GOLD STANDARDS

As facilitator, your interaction with cohort participants will greatly impact their learning experience. To better equip you to make the most of your times together, here are a few marks to aim for as you trust in God to work in your midst.

1. Be Prepared for Anything.

- a. Study the lesson and resources ahead of time so your presentation will be natural and well planned
 - Know the objectives
 - Practice the learning techniques
 - Practice your pace
 - Know your audience well
- b. Enlist help as needed so that you won't be busy with last minute details
 - Help with preparation or obtaining resources
 - Access to meeting location
 - Preparing guest speakers
 - Navigating technology
- c. Purchase/Print everything you need for cohort sessions
 - i. Material lists are provided with each session
 - ii. Copies may be needed
 - iii. Will you provide refreshments?
- d. Remind your participants, host, and partners in advance of each session.
- e. Pray for each participant, his church, and your facilitation.

2. Be Earlier than Early.

- a. Set up the room.
- b. Check technology before it's needed.
- c. Pray.
- d. Allow time for conversation with participants upon arrival.

3.. Create & Maintain the Right Learning Environment.

a. Space

- Remove clutter.
- Arrange a room to facilitate face-to-face interaction.
- Set the mood with music.
- Have materials on hand and in place.

b. Participants

- Understand their personalities.
- Know their context.
- Keep everyone involved.
- Help them progress.

c. Rhythm

- Guide the energy level.
- Take breaks as needed.
- Create helpful routines.

4. Wear the Right Hat at the Right Time.

- a. Facilitation requires different actions at different times, so know your role for each section.
- b. When giving directions, be clear.
- c. When teaching, be concise.
- d. Practice active listening.
- e. Stay fully engaged at all times.
- f. Be flexible and adaptive.
- g. Be confident and yet open to feedback.
- h. Above all, be a servant.

This cohort exists to equip pastors so that they become more effective leaders seeking to lead their congregation to share the hope of the Gospel in their community. As facilitator, you have the privilege of guiding pastors and their churches on their revitalization journey as a 1) servant, 2) partner, and 3) practitioner in a Kingdom Advance.

LEADING SELF SESSIONS

ORIENTATION SESSION (90 MINS + LUNCH)

Materials Needed:

- Tear Sheets & Markers
- 3x3 Post It Notes
- Writing pens & Journal/notebook
- Copies of Pastor Case study (one per person) on pg. 7
- Leading Self Pastor Workbook
- Leading Self Required Resource

Welcome & Introductions (10 minutes)

Directions: Introduce yourself (name, where you serve, how long you have been there) and one leader/person that influenced your life either positively or negatively.

Transition: Each of us has been shaped by the previous events and people in our lives. Ultimately, we have and are being shaped by God, but often he has used others and our circumstances to form us into the leaders we currently are.

- Some of us are pretty confident in our leadership capacity. Others are soft clay ready to be molded and shaped into a new leader.
- Some of us are disciplined and consistent, others more organic and haphazard.
- Some of us are walking closely with God each day, others are hoping our sermon prep is enough for our souls too.
- Some of us are caring for our bodies and minds, others are hoping to get in shape and build stronger relationships.

All this to say, as leaders seeking to lead God's flock we are where we are, but hopefully you've come today because you don't want to stay where you are. You want to be a better leader - a better follower of Christ, a better husband, a better friend, and ultimately a better pastor. You're in the right room at the right time. So, let's ask God to continue His work in us as we seek to grow as leaders.

Prayer

TRUTH: 1 Corinthians 11:1 (20 minutes)

Directions: Each session we are together, we will focus first on Scripture and trust God will equip us from His Word before we consider any wisdom from anyone or anything else.

- Ask 3 participants to read 1 Corinthians 11:1 from 3 different translations.
- Questions for discussion:
 - What is the context for this verse?
 - What's the purpose for the letter?
 - What's happening in the congregation?
 - What is Paul seeking to accomplish?
 - Why do you think he told his reader to imitate him?
 - If your children imitated you and grew up to be duplicates of your life, would God be pleased with them?
 - If members in your congregation imitated what they saw in your life, would it be good for their souls?
- **Name the Success:** I want you to think forward in time with me and complete the following sentence by recording your response on the provided sticky note. You can offer more than one response, but only write one response per note.
 - "If 1 Corinthians 11:1 were consistently carried out in my life for the next 90 days, I would see..."
 - Further explanation: If you faithfully followed Christ and called people to follow your leadership for the next 90 days, what would you see?
 - When you are ready, place your responses on the tear sheet I've provided.

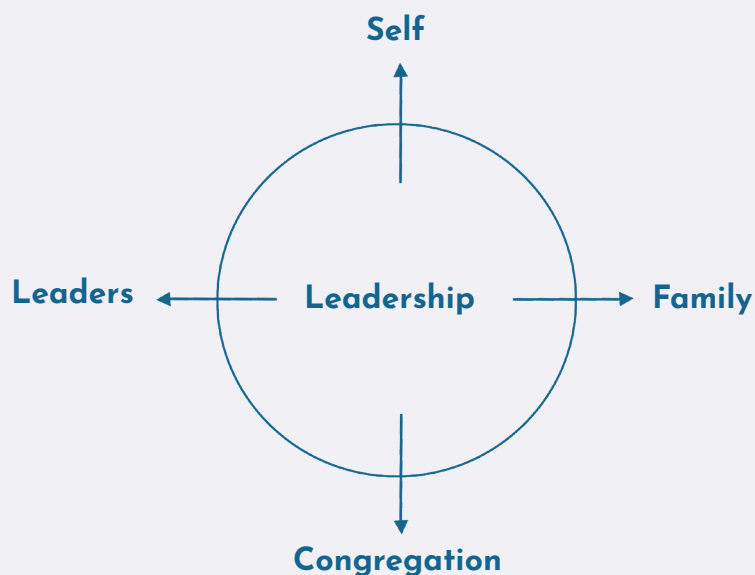
1 Corinthians 11:1
Ninety Days later...

Transition: Pastoral leadership is the ability to influence people spiritually and relationally. As seen in Scripture, leadership always expands outward. Consider Moses, Joshua, Nehemiah, Paul, Timothy, each of these men were equipped by God to lead God's people. Leadership begins with your pursuit and submission to God, which creates a foundational principle for our leadership development—you cannot effectively lead others until you lead yourself well. You must invest in your devotion to Christ and development as a leader so that you can effectively and consistently be used of God to lead His people.

WISDOM: Directive Teaching (5 minutes)

I want to introduce an illustration that will guide this series of cohorts for pastoral development, Four Dimensions of Pastoral Leadership, as adapted from Eric Geiger's model for leadership.

Four Dimensions of Pastoral Leadership*



1. **Leading Self** is most important, because if you can't lead yourself, you can't lead anyone else.
2. **Leading Family** is influencing your family and peers by your credible character, your commitment to your relationships, and your ability to communicate a servant's posture toward others.
3. **Leading Leaders** is influencing your church/ministry leaders.
4. **Leading Congregation** is influencing the church/ministry you are responsible for. Multiple levels of leadership influence are required at the same time in order to lead an organization.

Case Study - (15 minutes)

Directions: Each of you have a pastor case study to consider. I want you to imagine that you are his coach/mentor as you read his current reality and consider how you can help him to grow as a leader.

- Read the narrative individually. Then work together in groups of 3 or 4 to answer the three questions provided in your preparation for your first meeting.
- After the allotted time, call the groups back together and ask them to share their wisdom in a round-robin style (Record one response per question from each group, then repeat until most responses are recorded).
- Record the responses on 3 tear sheets, one per question.

Pastor Potholes: Let's shift gears to a group think for a moment. Using Pastor Paul as an example, what might be the top 5 barriers he potentially will face in his pursuit to becoming a healthy, multiplying leader in his church. (10 minutes)

Directions: Start a new tear sheet and make a list of their "pothole" responses.

- Debrief questions and application:
- Which of these is most common to a pastor you know?

Goals

Truths

Homework

Pastor Potholes

Transition: Every time we gather, you will be encouraged to apply what you have learned to your context - your life, your family, the congregation you serve. Here's how we will do this today.

You wouldn't be in the room if you weren't at least somewhat interested in being developed as a leader. Each of you has some degree of hope for personal development and "potholes" that are currently frustrating your progress to becoming a better leader.

CONTEXT: Message to Future Me (5 minutes)

Directions: If your mentor/coach were to send you a text message 90 days from now, what would be the most helpful leadership development question he could ask you?

Think about your current reality. Think about your aspirations to become a better leader. Think about your potholes. What would be the most helpful text he could send you 90 days from today? Write it down.

After about 5 minutes, say "now let's create some accountability." Open your calendar on your phone and add that text message to your calendar 90 days from now. If you want to take it to a higher level of accountability, send a meeting invitation to a pastor friend to talk about your text message to yourself 90 days from now.

CLOSING: Leadership begins with you.

"Leadership development is synonymous with personal development. As leaders grow personally, they increase their ability to lead. As they increase their capability to lead, they enlarge the capacity of their organization to grow. Therefore, the most crucial objective for any leader is personal growth ... The most important thing spiritual leaders do is cultivate their relationship with God"

(Spiritual Leadership, Henry & Richard Blackby).

NEXTSTEPS: Explain the purpose of LS and invite pastors to continue the cohort.

This cohort is designed to help you assess your current needs and strengths as a leader and then guide you toward developing disciplines to grow you as a leader in three key areas:

- Spiritual formation
- Emotional health
- Integrity and consistency

Each month you will be asked to prepare for cohort as guided by a pastor workbook. Every session will walk through three components focused on a particular topic aimed at developing leaders - Truth from God's Word, Wisdom from a recommended resource, and Context as you apply what you learned to your life and circumstances.

We will gather once a month and we will take about two hours to repeat the flow - Truth, Wisdom, Context in ways that encourage interaction, build relational trust, and help you think out loud.

- Have copies of Leading Self Pastor Workbook and the required recourse available for those wanting to join the cohort.
- Instruct them to Complete Session 1 before next cohort
- Next cohort date:
- Questions?

BREAK FOR LUNCH

PASTOR CASE STUDY

Pastor Paul at County Seat Baptist Church

Pastor Paul is a new pastor at FBC County Seat. He previously served as a youth director for 4 years in a neighboring town while he completed seminary training. Since graduation, he has been ordained and called to be the lead pastor with an all volunteer staff. The church has a board of deacons (many of them are related to one another) and the expected array of committies that serve the church.

Pastor Paul reached out to you because he realizes a mentor could be helpful to his ministry as a young, new pastor in a new church. Your first meeting is in two days.

Questions:

1. As his potential mentor/coach, what would you hope to accomplish during your first meeting?
2. What might be the most important truths you can convey to Pastor Paul during this initial meeting?
3. If you were to assign any "homework" before your next meeting, what might it be?

SESSION ONE

SESSION ONE: STRENGTHENING SELF-AWARENESS (120 MINS)

To lead ministry leaders to be at their best physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually to serve effectively and avoid the issues that distract and disqualify leaders from their roles.

Session 1 Outcomes

1. Pastor will deepen his biblical understanding of the negative effects of failing to take care of himself.
2. Pastor will increase his emphasis on establishing priorities he values the most.
3. Pastor will resolve to take practical steps toward “keeping close watch over yourself.”

Materials Needed:

- Tear Sheets & Markers
- Leading Self Pastor Workbook
- Leading Self Required Resource

Welcome & Introductions (10 minutes)

Directions: Introduce yourself (name, where you serve, how long you have been there) and one thing you hope this cohort will accomplish in your life.

Transition: Today we begin a journey together toward becoming better leaders - better friends, better husbands, better pastors. Our journey will be guided by three elements: God’s ongoing sanctification, wisdom from a recommended resource (A Pastor’s Soul), and the brotherhood of other leaders in this room.

Spurgeon in his classic, *Lecture to My Students*, writes,

It will be vain for me to stock my library, or organize societies, or project schemes, if I neglect the culture of myself; for books, and agencies, and systems, are only remotely the instruments of my holy calling; my own spirit, soul, and body, are my nearest machinery for sacred service; my spiritual faculties, and my inner life, are my battle ax and weapons of war.¹

Is this true of you? Are your tools for becoming a better leader your “spiritual faculties” or are you relying on something or someone other than God to shape you?

This first session will encourage us to pursue the disciplines and things that will shape us into the pastor/leader God has called us to be. You should have completed the first session in your pastor workbook, so we’ll look at your preparation and help you apply what you learned so that God can continue His work in you.

Prayer

TRUTH: John 15:1-11 (25 minutes)

Directions: Let’s reflect again on the Scripture passages you studied in preparation for today.

- Ask a participant to read John 15:1-11.
- Discussion Questions:
 - Which specific verse in John 15:1-11 speaks most directly to your current season of life, and why?
 - What does “abiding in Christ” mean to you personally? What are the biggest distractions or obstacles that make it difficult for you to stay connected to Christ?
 - Since spiritual fruit belongs to the vine (Jesus), not the branch (you), how does that change the way you view your successes and failures?
 - Would anyone be willing to share how he has experienced God “pruning” you to make you more fruitful?
 - What practical step did you identify to take this week to remain more dependent on Christ in your personal walk and in your pastoral ministry?

¹ C.H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954), 2.

Spiritual Selfie: How healthy are your branches? (10 minutes)

Directions: Let's slow down for a minute and allow God to speak through reflection on what we just read and inspection of our current reality. Take a look at these 3 images of a vine and identify which one best reflects your current spiritual wellness:

- Healthy vine with fruit
- Healthy vine with no fruit
- Withering vine with no fruit

Say: I know this is a new group, but can I push you to build trust with one another and ask you to share which picture you chose and why with another person in the cohort? As you finish, pray for one another.

Transition: Let's take a break and when we return, we will review the opening chapters of The Pastor's Soul and consider the wisdom offered by Jim Savastio.

BREAK

WISDOM: Personal Story: Before we jump into the four “Take heed” sections in the opening chapters of the book, someone take a couple minutes to share a funny story of a time when a parent or adult warned you against doing something, but you did it anyways.
(5 minutes)

Practitioner Perspective: Guided Debrief: In preparation for today, you were asked to read the first four chapters of the Pastor’s Soul. Jim Savastio focuses on four Take heed warnings: yourself, your doctrine, your flock, and because it matters. Let’s share some of our responses to the questions you answered. (20 minutes)

- Discussion Questions for Chapters 1-4 of The Pastor’s Soul: The Call and Care of an Undershepherd:
 - Consider again the implications of the three “I am _____” statements of pp.6-10.
1) I am a man; 2) I am in union with Christ; 3) I am a pastor.
Why do you feel it is important for you to maintain a proper perspective to the “Who am I?” question as we seek to serve God’s Church? (Chapter 1)
 - Consider the statement, “Do not think that because you have sound theology and rich spiritual experiences or great giftedness or usefulness that you are exempt from watching over your heart” (p. 19). How are you most tempted to exempt yourself from watching over your own heart?
 - Why is taking heed of your doctrine essential for you personally? (Chapter 2)
 - Which do you find yourself investing more time, taking heed of yourself or the flock entrusted to you? Do you feel this is a healthy balance? (Chapter 3)
 - Identify which of the four “It Matters” sections caught your attention most. (Chapter 4)
 - What additional comments would you add to the section of the book for other pastors to consider?

Group Expertise: Best practices to “take heed” (15 minutes)

Directions: Let’s form 3 groups to generate an abundance of wise counsel for our cohort. Each group will seek to answer the question, “What practical ways would you recommend for another pastor to take heed in these three areas: your life, your doctrine, your flock.” Each group will be assigned one of the three subjects and have 15 minutes to create a practical plan that is realistic and relevant to the subject.

- Use the tear sheet to help communicate the plan you develop.
- Instruct them to form three groups, then assign them their topic.
- Be ready to share your plan with the group.

Take Heed Plan

Transition: There is no shortage of things in this life that aim to disqualify or discourage pastors. 1 Timothy 4:16 is worth posting somewhere in our office to remind us to guard our lives and the flock entrusted to us around the clock. And it would be wise of each of us to invite someone else into our lives to help us keep watch so that we don’t fall into any temptations or snares of the enemy.

This last section of our time together is focused on your context, or more importantly your life. The temptation for all of us would be to avoid transparency, guard against sharing anything too personal, or go through the motions and complete the discussion like a Sunday school class but never actually apply what you’ve learned. Men, this cohort is for your development as a leader/pastor, so don’t shortchange what you can get out of this time. Lean in, invest well, reflect deeply, and make the most of the context portions each month.

CONTEXT: (25 minutes)

Directions (part 1): Each of you should have completed the "Leading Self Awareness Tool" and reviewed your responses. Knowing that God is still working in each of our lives, let's guard against any kind of comparisons. Your responses are your personal starting points and from today forward we will all seek to grow in some of these areas in our pursuit of becoming a better leader.

- Take a tear sheet and complete 2 tasks in an effort to create a personal development plan.
- Identify the one area of your life you want to develop first. Write this at the top of your sheet.
- Create a development plan by: Allow 10-15 minutes for them to work individually
 - Brainstorm several options that will strengthen the area
 - Choose one option from your brainstorm list and create a detailed plan that includes:
 - What you will specifically do?
 - How often you will do it?
 - How long you will do it?
 - List one person that could be your accountability partner

Directions (part 2): Go back to your partner from earlier today and take turns sharing your plan with each other. Invite them to give you additional ideas and feedback on your plan.

CLOSING: Men, as we close, take a picture of your plan so you can refer back to it often.

Don't forget that Jesus is our vine. We are his branches. We all want to bear fruit that will last longer than our tenure as pastor, so let's keep abiding in Christ and trust God to grow us as leaders to serve His Church.

1 John 2:3-6, "3 This is how we know that we know him: if we keep his commands. 4 The one who says, 'I have come to know him,' and yet doesn't keep his commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps his word, truly in him the love of God is made complete. This is how we know we are in him: 6 The one who says he remains in him should walk just as he walked." (CSB)

Prayer

NEXT STEPS:

Questions?

Instruct them to Complete Session 2 before next cohort

Next cohort date:

Category

My Options:

My Plan:

My Partner:

SESSION TWO

DEVELOPING AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS (120 MINS)

To encourage ministry leaders to move beyond surface acquaintances and establish close, life-giving friendships inside and outside their churches.

Session 2 Outcomes

1. Pastor will deepen his biblical understanding of love as the foundation of authentic relationships.
2. Pastor will increase his awareness of the barriers that can prevent authentic relationships.
3. Pastor will understand the practical steps that are needed to broaden deeper relationships.

Materials Needed:

- Enlist a seasoned pastor to interview and send him the interview questions in preparation before cohort.
- 3x3 Post-Its & pens
- TV/projector & WIFI for [Pastoral Friendship video clip](#)
- Leading Self Pastor Workbook
- Leading Self Required Resource

Notice the extra materials needed for this session.

Welcome (10 minutes)

Welcome back! Let's start by checking our progress to becoming better leaders. Does anyone have an update they would like to share?

How can we specifically pray for you or your family?

Transition: Today is all about relationships. We've all preached sermons on how God created us for community, encouraged people to be in Sunday school classes or small groups, and even planned intentional fellowship events, but according to statistics pastors are still some of the loneliest people in any professional vocation. So, my prayer is that God will use today's conversations to encourage each of us to intentionally pursue meaningful, life-giving, relationships both inside and outside of our congregations.

Prayer

TRUTH: John 13:31-35 (20 minutes)

Directions: Let's reflect again on the Scripture passages you studied in preparation for today.

- Ask a participant to read John 13:31-35.
- Discussion Questions:
 - When you reflect on Christ's words "as I have loved you," what specific aspects of Jesus' love feel most challenging for you to offer in your relationships?
 - What tangible ways have you demonstrated your willingness to receive love and help from your congregation—rather than just giving it – model the mutual "one another" love Jesus requires?
 - Why do you think many ministers are reluctant to pursue deep, abiding relationships?
 - Do you find your closest friendships exist within or outside the congregation?
Is there any intentionality to that?
 - What adjustments could you make to remove some of the barriers to making authentic relationships with Christian friends and with your family?

Hope + Fear: A Pastor's Friend

Directions: Hand out 2 sticky notes to each participant.

- Instruct them to take a couple minutes to identify one personal "hope" and one "fear" related to our current discussion on friendships.
- Examples - "I hope to make time for deeper friendships in the coming week." "I fear my sharing of personal concerns will be used against me one day."
- Once everyone is finished, collect them and scan over them before placing their sticky notes in two stacks in a central location without reading them individually.
- Offer a prayer for them based on their responses.

Transition: Let's take a break before we discuss the next few chapters in the Pastor's Soul.

BREAK

WISDOM: Personal Testimony: Find a partner and drift to a quieter part of the room to swap stories on how God awakened you spiritually. Tell each other your salvation story and then return to the larger group when you finish. (15 minutes)

Practitioner Perspective: I've invited _____ to join us today to offer his perspective on our discussion as a pastor of ____ years. I'll ask him a couple questions, and then you'll have a chance to ask additional questions related to the topic. (20 minutes)

- Interview Questions: (Send these to the pastor to be interviewed before cohort!)
 - When and how were you called to the ministry?
 - Out of all the qualifications for pastor listed in Scripture, which one have you guarded most closely?
 - At what point in your pastoral tenure did you first discover the value of having a trusted friend? What were the circumstances?
 - How have you overcome some of the common challenges for pastors to have a deep friendship?
 - Pastors, what other questions do you have for our friend and pastor?

Transition: Let's transition to our recommended resources and discuss what we read before applying it.

- Discussion Questions for Chapters 5-7 of *The Pastor's Soul: The Call and Care of an Undershepherd*:
 - Of the listed "qualifications" for pastor/elder mentioned in Chapter 5, which do you need to strengthen most? How might you seek to develop that qualification further?
 - What does embracing your weakness look like during this season of your life? Be practical and specific. (Chapter 6)
 - Reconsider the two love tests in Chapter 7. If someone were to ask your spouse about you using those two questions, how might she respond?

Transition: As we consider how we can apply these truths and wisdom to our lives, I want you to hear from one more trusted voice, Brian Croft.

CONTEXT: (10 minutes)

Directions: Play the introduction to the [video Pastoral Friendship](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjISOjI-DIM) (Start - 1:50)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjISOjI-DIM>.

Transition: "Pastoral friendship is the missing piece to a persevering ministry." In preparation for today, each of you were asked to list 10 people you know on a personal level and then indicate the depth of each relationship using a scale of 1-5.

- Discussion Questions:
 - What did you learn from this exercise?
 - What next step are you considering to deepen one or more of these relationships?
 - Is there anything this group can help you with that is directly related to our discussions today?
- Rewind the Video: Take a moment and reread the "hope" responses on each sticky note.

Beyond the Room: Before we close, I want to give you an opportunity to take a step to deepen a relationship. I'll give you a couple minutes to send a text inviting one of the people on your list to meet with you for coffee, lunch, or some outing together. Go ahead, send the message, and be intentional about strengthening your relationship with another brother.

"3 His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 By these he has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desire. 5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with goodness, goodness with knowledge, 6 knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with godliness, 7 godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. 8 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being useless or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." - 2 Peter 1:3-8 (CSB)

Prayer

NEXT STEPS:

- Questions?
- Instruct them to Complete Session 3 before next cohort
- Next cohort date:

SESSION THREE

MAKING ROOM FOR GOD (120 MINS)

To challenge ministry leaders to evaluate their own spiritual vitality and develop a plan for establishing or enhancing spiritual disciplines.

Session 3 Outcomes

1. Pastor will deepen his biblical understanding and dependence on the private and public spiritual disciplines that are essential for spiritual health and effective pastoral leadership.
2. Pastor will reflect on the grace shown to them through salvation and a call to ministry to reinforce their commitment to ministry and personal worship.
3. Pastor will develop healthy sustaining practices for private and public means of grace.

Materials Needed:

- Tear Sheets & Markers
- Leading Self Pastor Workbook
- Leading Self Required Resource

Welcome & Encouragement (10 minutes)

Directions: Let's start with encouraging one another from your recent times with the Lord. What has the Lord been saying to you through His Word recently? How have you been encouraged or reminded of His faithfulness? Don't retell your sermon from Sunday! Reflect on our personal devotions and share a thought that would be an encouragement or prayer request for others.

Transition: Prayer

TRUTH: 1 Timothy 4:1-16 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (25 minutes)

Name the Challenge (5 minutes)

Directions: Let's review the 8 potential reasons pastors may struggle with spiritual disciplines and take a collective poll to help us apply our Scriptures best.

I'm going to read each of the potential barriers listed by Dr. Lawless in his article and if you can say that barrier exists in your life, raise your hand. I'll keep track of how many identify with each statement.

1. They were never taught how to do spiritual disciplines.
2. They equate ministry activity with spiritual disciplines.
3. They've lost a sense of desperation for God.
4. They sometimes struggle with discipline in general.
5. They're not always the best time managers.
6. They can do much ministry without worrying about consistent spiritual disciplines. (Self-Dependence)
7. No one ever asks them how they're doing.
(No accountability)
8. They think they can trust few people with their struggles. (Secret struggle)

**8 Barriers to
Spiritual Disciplines**

Never Taught
Ministry = Discipline
Lost Desperation
Struggle w/Discipline
Time Management
Self-Dependence
No accountability
Secret Struggle

Directions: Let's consider these realities as we review our Scripture passages you studied in preparation for today.

- Ask a participant to read 1 Timothy 4:1-16.
- Discussion Questions:
 - In light of verses 1-3, why is it important for you to "train yourself for godliness"?
 - Consider verses 8-10 personally. How is your training going? How could you better intertwine the disciplines of physical and spiritual disciplines?
 - Make a list of the things Paul exhorts Timothy to do in verses 11-16. Which are you doing well? Which one needs the most work this coming month?
 - Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 again. What are the stated benefits of spiritual disciplines for you as a pastor?
 - What step did you identify to be better "equipped" and more "complete" to fulfill your calling?

Transition: If God's Word is vital for our ministry, shouldn't it also be vital for our own souls? The challenge we all have to fight for is our own need to have someone shepherd us, teach us, care for us, and at times rebuke us. This can't be ignored. After break, we will facilitate a discussion around two common challenges mentioned by Jim Savastio in our reading - every pastor needs a pastor and every pastor needs a church.

BREAK

WISDOM

Let's Build It! (15 minutes)

Directions: Form groups of 3 or 4 and I want to invite you to collectively build something that would benefit all pastors in any context.

If you were to build from scratch a healthy church that cared for their pastor and his family in ways that they would have opportunities to thrive spiritually and emotionally, what "raw materials" would be needed. (Think external to the pastor's actions, what resources are essential?)

Use a blank tear sheet to either list or creatively reflect the essential raw materials on a "shoestring budget." After about 10 minutes, allow each group to share their responses one "raw material" at a time in a round robin style until all the responses are listed.

Building Healthy Pastors

Discussion Questions:

- I realize this is imaginary for most of us, but what did we learn?
- How much of building this environment depends on the pastor?
- How might we encourage other pastors to find the missing "raw materials" that aren't in their current context?

Transition: Let's be real honest. As pastor to your family and the one responsible before God in regard to how you steward your own spiritual development and health, you have to work with what you have and pursue the raw materials that are missing in your context. It may be the congregation's responsibility and for whatever reason they aren't caring for you or your family well, but we can't stand back and wait for them to assume that responsibility. We must shepherd those entrusted to us and find ways to be shepherded by others so that you will be healthy spiritually and emotionally.

Guided Debrief: Chapters 8 & 9 of The Pastor's Soul: The Call and Care of an Undershepherd:

• Questions for Discussion:

- Jim Savastio emphasizes two common challenges for many pastors: We need a pastor and we need a church. To what degree are these challenges a reality in your life today? (Chapter 8)
- How are you currently seeking to meet either of the needs mentioned in question #1? (Chapter 8)
- What are your responses to the idea of pastor's developing a "Park Ranger Syndrome"? Which of the mentioned symptoms do you currently notice in your life? (Chapter 9)
- As you reflected on "keeping hungry, staying needy, and staying warm" (pp 76-81), what statements did you record to summarize your personal assessment of these exhortations?
- Consider his comments again, "Sometimes the simple act of going to our Bible again is what keeps us going. We may not push away from the table as full or as happy as we think we should, but it has brought us back to the Lord and spoken truth once more into our souls" (pp. 80-81). How have you found that to be true in your life? Does anyone have any encouragement for the rest of us?

Transition: Let's keep sharing and transition to our application time.

CONTEXT: (15 minutes)

Questions for Discussion:

1. We all study God's Word for a living. We all have good intentions to spend time in quiet communion with the Father. But life happens. Interruptions come like waves on the beach. What do you personally need to do to stay hungry and needy when the source of our grace is also the means for your livelihood?
2. If you were to start or strengthen one spiritual discipline, which one might it be?
3. Who pastors you? How often do you avail yourself to another's sermon series or discipleship?

CLOSING: Soul Care: Pastor to pastor

Directions: Pair up with another pastor/peer and start a conversation around your spiritual wellness. 100% trust and confidentiality needed! Be a pastor to one another for a moment and share your current reality and your hopes to renew your walk with the Lord before praying together. Take as long as you need and dismiss when you are finished.

NEXT STEPS:

1. Email participants a personal note a week or so after your session to encourage their pursuit of God.
2. Consider inviting them to a scheduled pastor retreat by sharing an upcoming event or encourage them to get away to refresh. Maybe even share options for prayer retreats that have been helpful to other pastors.
3. Remind them of the next meeting date

SESSION FOUR

FOLLOWING HEALTHY RHYTHMS (120 MINS)

To remind ministry leaders of the importance of following an intentional, consistent, and alternating pattern of life, work, and rest to ensure sustainable ministry leadership.

Session 4 Outcomes

1. Pastor will deepen his biblical understanding of the importance of following a consistent pattern of work and rest.
2. Pastor will increase his emphasis on establishing priorities to help develop a consistent pattern of work and rest.
3. Pastor will take practical steps toward developing a consistent pattern of work and rest.

Materials Needed:

- Tear Sheets & Markers
- Copies of Critical Review: 4 Key Areas to Establish a Healthy Rhythm
- Writing pens & Journal/notebook
- Leading Self Pastor Workbook
- Leading Self Required Resource

Welcome & Mid-Term Assessment (15 minutes)

Directions: We are more than halfway through our cohort journey, so let's pause to hear how God is growing you as a leader.

- Discussion Questions:
 - What can we celebrate together as you reflect on your recent effort to strengthen your spiritual disciplines?
 - What can we celebrate together as you've taken steps to pursue more meaningful pastoral friendships with others?
 - Take a minute to refer back to your initial assessment you took at the beginning of the cohort. What has been your biggest step forward in any of the categories you assessed?
 - What is one way we can pray for you today as you seek to continue your development as a leader?

Prayer

Transition: Today is all about rhythms. God designed this world with rhythms then commanded his people to observe rhythms in the Old Testament. And even in the life of Jesus, we see our Savior fulfilling God's plan in rhythms as he teaches, performs signs and wonders, and then retreats to pray and rest. More than likely, most of us have unhealthy rhythms that are unsustainable and tending toward disobedience. I hope today creates new patterns in your faithful pursuit to become a healthier, stronger leader. Let's begin with truth from God's Word.

"I have yet to meet a burned-out pastor who practiced Sabbath religiously." J.R. Briggs

Regardless of your theology of the Sabbath, I can say with certainty that you need rest! If you burn the candle at both ends, don't expect to function well and shepherd effectively. Isaiah 40:30-31 warns us that the strongest men eventually crash and burn out.

Prayer

TRUTH: (25 minutes)

Directions: Let's reflect again on the Scripture passages you studied in preparation for today.

- Ask a participant to read Matthew 11:1-30.
- Discussion Questions:
 - When you think about Jesus' invitation to "come to Me," what do you think that practically looks like in your current season of life and ministry?
 - How serious is your threat to burnout in this current season of ministry?
 - What adjustments did you discover you need to make in your work schedule that could help sustain your ministry longevity?
 - What are your thoughts about observing Sabbath?
(Facilitator Note: Allow for differing theology or practice and try not to be prescriptive)
 - Let's get specific and share ideas. What do you specifically do for rest?
What do you intentionally not do or refrain from doing?
 - How have you encouraged your members to pursue God's rhythm of work and rest?

Name the Success: (10 minutes)

Let's repeat an exercise we did a couple months ago. I want you to think forward in time with me and complete the following sentence by recording your response on the provided sticky note: "If I faithfully applied the truths we just discussed in Matthew 11:1-30 for the next 90 days, I would see..."

- Let's aim for at least 3 responses per person. You can offer more but only write one response per note.
- After a few minutes, instruct them to post their responses on the provided tear sheet.
- Debrief:
 - Read each response and rearrange them on the sheet grouping similar responses together.
 - Ask: What stands out to you as you review our collective responses?
 - Ask: Is there a question you want to ask for further clarification?
 - Ask: Is there a takeaway that you need to capture in your journal before we break?

Matthew 11:1-30
looks like...

Transition: Spurgeon wrote in his timeless devotional, Morning and Evening, "My faith rests not upon what I am, or shall be, or feel, or know, but in what Christ is, in what He has done, and in what He is now doing for me."

After break, we will discuss and apply chapters 10-15 from The Pastor's Soul.

BREAK

WISDOM

Transition: When a pastor's schedule gets busy, the rhythm of work and rest can be interrupted. Brian Croft identifies six physical health categories that have spiritual consequences for too much work and not enough rest: his eating habits, his sleep patterns, his weight gain, his need for friendships, his need for silence, and his need for rest. (5 minutes)

Guided Debrief: Chapters 10-15 of *The Pastor's Soul* by Brian Croft & Jim Savastio (15 minutes)

- Discussion Questions:
 - What is one take-away you gained from Croft's appeal for pastors to take care of themselves?
 - Which (if any) of these categories are you currently thriving in or satisfied with the most?
 - If you invested time to strengthen one of these six categories over the next month, which one would it be? Is that category also the one that needs the most attention?
 - Let's look closer at silence and rest. Croft advocates that every pastor should regularly practice silence and solitude. Is that even possible in today's culture? Do any of you have any wisdom to share from your spiritual practices?
 - Let's look closer at the three categories for rest in Chapter 15: a day off, vacation, and sabbatical.
 - How many of you strive to take a day off each week?
 - When was your last vacation? Did you actually rest?
 - Has anyone had a sabbatical? If so, what did you do and not do?

Critical Review: Andy Addis, *Rhythms, Moving from Surviving to Thriving in Ministry* (20 minutes)

Directions: I'm inviting you to critically review a model for spiritual rest as described in the book by Andy Addis, *Rhythms, Moving from Surviving to Thriving in Ministry*.

- Read the article summary and quotes individually.
- Discuss the analysis questions together in preparation for cohort discussion.
- Allow the group to share their responses to the analysis questions and interact with each other's responses.
- Ask: What other resources have you read that have helped shape your theology for Sabbath and rhythms?

Transition: There are many different options for finding rest, but the main idea we need to remember is that we all need to fight for and plan the rest that renews us spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Let's review what you prepared for today and give you opportunities to get input from your peers.

CONTEXT: (15 minutes)

Directions: Each of you were asked to review your calendar from a recent week. Let's use the accompanying tear sheet to share your findings. How many hours did you spend on each of the following categories?

- Discussion Questions:
 - What stands out to you from our collective responses?
 - In one word, how would you describe your work-rest rhythm for the last week? Month?
 - What is one false narrative you've believed regarding rest and work?
 - What is one thing this group can do to help you apply what you've considered today?

"Normal" Week of
a Pastor

How many hours?
Ministry:
Family:
Personal:
Rest:

I Will... (10 minutes)

Directions: Before we dismiss, let me encourage you to reflect on what we've discussed and consider making a commitment to apply one thing with the accountability of your friends. How could you finish the sentence, "In an effort to move towards a healthier work/rest rhythm, I will...."

Write your response in your journal and shortly you'll have an opportunity to share it with the group.

CLOSING: (5 minutes)

I'll close today with the closing quote from our reading, "Pastors, fight for your rest. And when you rest, let go. Submit it all to the Chief Shepherd. Allow him to revive your tired and anxious soul" (p. 118).

Prayer, Psalm 23

NEXT STEPS:

- Last session details
- Keep watch on one another until we gather again.
- Begin preparations for the next cohort, Leading Others.

Critical Review: 4 Key Areas to Establish a Healthy Rhythm

Andy Addis, Moving from Surviving to Thriving in Ministry

Directions: Take a few minutes to review Andy Addis' model for spiritual rest and then answer the analysis questions together.

In a calendar year, pastors should...

1. Annual: Take one to three weeks off

1/3 Rest, 1/3 Study, 1/3 Planning

"If you can't take three weeks, still take whatever time you can and divide it into three parts: rest, study and planning—a Sabbath break is scalable. So, if it's only one week, take two days for each component and observe a Sabbath day" (p. 52).

2. Regular - Take one weekend off every seven weeks

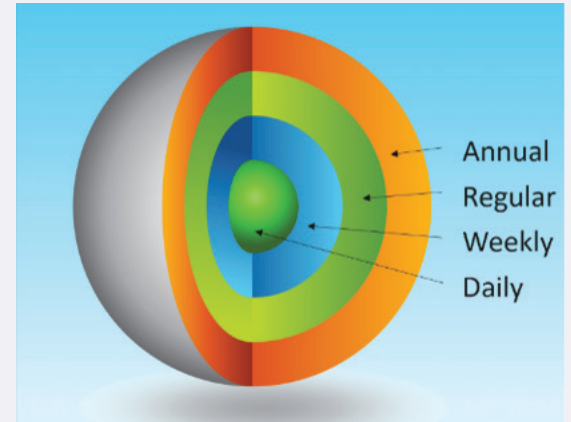
"But, most importantly, what having a weekend off every seven weeks does is give you hope. It's not a once-a-year vacation. It's not a one-in-a-million getaway specially approved by the personnel committee. It's an embedded rhythm that says even if I'm overwhelmed today, I know that I will get a break in "X" number of weeks. Knowing that a weekend off is coming and not that far away is surprisingly encouraging and rejuvenating" (p. 56)

3. Weekly - Protect one day weekly to honor the Sabbath

"Regularly observing a day of rest, remembering the Sabbath and keeping it holy is one thing to be preached but another to live. And when the congregation sees you living it out, they will begin to live it out in their own lives!" (p. 64).

4. Daily - Protect a part of your day for you & your family

"Every day is divided into thirds. Two-thirds should be dedicated to work. One-third given to your family" (p. 69).



Analysis Questions:

1. What do you like about this model for rest?
2. Is there any part that is unrealistic for your context and season of life? Why?
3. Is there any area that you might want to explore further? Which area and why?

SESSION FIVE

FINISHING WELL (120 MINS)

To encourage ministry leaders to be lifelong learners in order to keep growing personally and leading effectively - finishing well by effectively carrying out God's purpose long-term

Session 5 Outcomes

1. Pastor will deepen his biblical understanding of the importance of finishing well as a pastoral leader.
2. Pastor will increase his emphasis on establishing steps that will enable him to finish his pastoral ministry well.
3. Pastor will take practical steps toward developing a personal plan and spiritual discipline to complete his service in God's Kingdom.

Materials Needed:

- Tear Sheets & Markers
- Copies of article, [3 Things I Learned from a Pastor Who Endured for 70 Years](#) by David Schrock
- Writing pens & Journal/notebook
- Leading Self Pastor Workbook
- Leading Self Required Resource

Welcome (5 minutes)

Directions: Today's our last session together for this module, so I want us to finish strong which is actually our focus of the session. Many of us probably hope to stay in ministry until we retire or maybe even continue in some diminished role after retirement. But the question I want you to consider is bigger than "Will you make it to retirement and still be a pastor?" Let's rephrase it to ask, "What kind of leader/pastor will I be when I reach the end of my ministry?" Our focus should never be on finishing the task, but on trusting God to finish His work in us as we remain faithful. So, let's look ahead for a moment and frame our discussion times.

News From the Future: If the state Baptist paper wrote an article celebrating your retirement from many years of faithful ministry, how might the headline be worded? You can be creative, funny, or serious, the choice is up to you. Secondly, what three things would you hope to see included in the story? (15 minutes)

Directions: Encourage participants to record their headline and news in their journal and then ask for volunteers before proceeding.

Transition: Retirement should be a time where we can reflect on God's faithfulness over the years. Often we focus on a man's accomplishments, but today I want you to keep God's work in you as you aspire to grow as a leader. "Let me remind you of Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

Prayer

TRUTH: (25 minutes)

Hebrews 11 contains a list of faithful servants to remind us of their often sacrificial efforts to advance God's Kingdom. Then 13:7-8 reminds us, "7 Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (CSB).

- Discussion Questions:
 - Who are the pastors/leaders you have known who finished well?
What was true about them?
 - What is one valuable lesson you have learned from another pastor with a longer ministry tenure?

Directive Teaching: This session emphasized how Paul set an example for Timothy as he grew as a leader and served God's Church. Look again at your study guide and let's review four practical steps any pastor can take to finish well:

- **Maintaining a Growing Relationship with God** (1 Timothy 6:11-16)

Pastors who finish well maintain a growing relationship with God, especially in the "fourth quarter of ministry." At retirement, a pastor's spirituality often shifts from "what I do" to "who I am." Being and doing are always involved in a pastor's life, but as a pastor ages, what he does becomes more rooted in who he is.

- **Developing a Learning Posture for Life** (2 Timothy 4:13)

Leaders who finish well develop a learning posture for life from (1) the Bible, (2) life experience, (3) stories of successful people, and (4) mentors who are ahead of them in life's journey.

- **Empowering Others to Serve** (2 Timothy 2:1-7)

Pastors who finish well know that life is comprised of a series of relationships. Therefore, they focus on relational empowerment in their own and in their follower's lives. They empower others through several mentor/protégé relationships and empower others to lead by sharing God's resources. Whatever the designation—mentor, coach, counselor, teacher, sponsor, or role model—the effect is the same; a leader empowers others to lead, too.

- **Leaving a Positive Legacy** (2 Timothy 4:6-8)

Paul's confession to young Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:6-8 has been a motivation for all pastors who desire to finish well.

Discussion Questions:

- We have already discussed the first practical steps previously, and the fact that you're still here demonstrates the second in your life, Develop a Learning Posture. Ten years from now, what evidence would you hope to see from your faithful efforts to empower others to serve?
- Would anyone share a story of how someone empowered you to serve as pastor?
- Let's go back to the Baptist news article idea, what positive legacy would you hope to leave that would become part of that story?

Transition: This next exercise might feel a bit awkward, but trust me that I'm trying to keep the future in focus for you as you seek to become a healthier, stronger leader in God's Kingdom.

A Legacy Prayer (10 minutes)

Directions:

- Think of a younger man that is currently watching your life and ministry. Write his name down in your journal.
- Record a prayer that captures two requests: 1) God would enable you to finish well; 2) God would grow that young man into a leader that honors God for the next generation.
- Consider using any of the Scriptures we referenced today or any others that God brings to mind.
- When you finish, we will transition to break.

BREAK

WISDOM (25 minutes)

Transition: Just one more list to end our cohort! David Schrock in his article, 3 Things I Learned from a Pastor Who Endured for 70 Years, listed three attributes worthy of emulating in Vernon Lyon's ministry and life.

- Discussion Questions:
 - Which of the three attributes do you believe is most neglected in your generation of leaders, and why?
 - Who are the "older pastors" or seasoned believers you intentionally look to for perspective and example?
 - Pastor Vernon Lyons endured church splits, cultural shifts, and decades of ministry without modern tools like social media. What current pressures most threaten long-term endurance?
 - What other thoughts did this article generate for your pursuit of persevering?
 - Is there a characteristic that you would add to the list from your observation of a faithful long-tenured pastor? (Add any additional thoughts to the tear sheet).

70 Years of
Faithfulness
Looks Like:

Single-Mindedness

Character

Hard Work

Transition: For our last element before we close in prayer, I want you to pair up again and put your coaching hat on for one another for our remaining time.

CONTEXT (15-25 minutes)

Peer Coaching

Directions: Pair up and ask each other the following 2 questions. Feel free to ask additional questions **to** gain understanding as needed.

- Where are you most vulnerable to not finishing strong?
- What are you willing to do to strengthen this weakness in addition to trusting God to continue His work in you?
- Help your partner identify a plan and be willing to be his accountability partner.
- As you finish, return to the large group and we will dismiss together in prayer.

Closing Thank you and prayer -

What's Next?

- Invite pastors to continue together for the next series focused on "Leading Others."
- Perhaps, a participant would be willing to host a new "Leading Self" cohort.
If so, make arrangements to follow up with him and prepare him.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

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