

**THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A PASTORAL CARE APPROACH:  
ADDRESSING PASTORAL NEEDS WITHIN THE MIDDLE CLASS  
RESULTING FROM JOB LOSS DUE TO RESTRUCTURING AND  
RE-ENGINEERING OF THE ECONOMY**

by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study to define the characteristics of a pastoral care approach that will be able to provide the care needed for those middle class couples who have been affected by the restructuring and re-engineering of the economy.

Selected individuals were interviewed, with questions framed around the goals of the interviews, exemplifying a semi-standardized format. The intention was that the interview process would provide sufficient information for developing a particular set of pastoral care criteria.

The method used provided a framework that brings into dialogue scriptural understandings, the position of The United Church as it relates to the topic, a particular understanding of the middle class, definitions and understandings of work, and various approaches to pastoral care. Some of these particular perspectives and understandings are as follows: The middle class was identified by Max Weber. Weber argued that class was based on values, both social and economic, and on the various life chances that were available to the individual. Basically speaking, middle class people share common values that provide social stability.

I used a definition of work that describes it as a way of experiencing God's presence in the world by being part of the ongoing creation. Work connects us to God. It is an innate part of human nature.

This definition is based on my theology of work. This definition includes the idea that it reflects our ability to be co-creators. Work enables a person to achieve his or her potential as a child of God. Work is a calling from God that requires a responsive action by the individual. Any attempt to prevent a person from exhibiting this response, which what job loss does, in effect takes away the right of the individual to practice his or her innate nature as a human being blessed by God.

Although there are a multitude of definitions of pastoral care, my sense of pastoral care is that it seeks to develop wholeness within a person. By taking the four functions of pastoral care as outlined by Clebsch and Jaekle: healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling, and rooting these definitions in the wholeness encompassed by Christ, pastoral care can provide the medium for enabling the communication of the word of God in an active way to a person in need, in the context of the situation.

My theology of ministry carries with it a base firmly grounded with the criteria of the Wesley quadrilateral: scripture, tradition, experience, and reason. It is a theology based on a need for a pastoral response to God's creation. It is a theology that seeks wholeness for all aspects of God's creativity. People came into this world as innate gifts from God

**for a purpose. That purpose was to be co-creators with God as God continues to reveal Godself to the world. There will be times when, as co-creators, we will need to be prophetic voices of God addressing any injustices prevalent in society.**

**It was from these perspectives and understandings that the research was undertaken.**

**The result has been the following identifiable characteristics: Attention needs to be given to the method companies use to inform employees of their unemployment. Advance notice can help eliminate much of the anger and grief. There is a need for ethics in business in the way that they relate and deal with employees; a need for a “tough love” approach when sharing feelings with partners and places of business; a need for a clear understanding of identity and self-discovery; a need for a balance between work and family responsibilities; a need for an affirmation of character and all its components.**

## Autobiographical Statement

I am a minister in The United Church of Canada. I presently serve St. James United Church in Waterdown, Ontario. I have been in ordained ministry since 1989. St. James is my second pastorate in that time. Prior to my call to serve in the ordained ministry of the church, I was a farmer. My wife Christine and I raised three children on the farm. My theology of ministry evolved around my understanding of the wonder and beauty of God's creation, so evident in rural living.

I view myself, presumptuous or not, as a middle class Canadian, with middle class values. Those values include hard work, honesty, and fairness. At the outset of my ministry I became more conscious of my church, (The United Church) being primarily a middle class church with values similar to mine. The fairness aspect encouraged me to inquire into the ability of the church to administer pastoral care to anyone in need. It was my assumption that that meant being able to administer pastoral care irrespective of class or position in society. I still believe that assumption to be an honourable one, and a truism of the church.

However, as the economic situation changed in the 1990's derailing many middle class dreams and expectations, I was thrust into examining my understanding of how pastoral care was being administered, specifically to middle class people. As our church continues, to use a now familiar phrase, "boldly go where no one has gone before"<sup>1</sup> (certainly in recent years), I have sensed a strong pull to continue to proclaim the church's conviction of fairness to all, and sought a way in which I could be of service to a group that in my view, appears to have been left aside.

This Doctor of Ministry thesis and the project on which it is based, have provided me with an avenue from which this service could be utilised.

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<sup>1</sup>This phrase has been made popular through the Star Trek phenomenon.

## Acknowledgements

I certainly would be amiss not to mention at the beginning, the inspiration and source of energy to pursue such a project. That source is God, to whom I offer praise and thanks. This has been a challenging experience for me. Without the further help of many people, who have been involved in various ways, I'm not sure that I would be writing this. To all I offer my sincere gratitude.

My classmates of 1996 and I, covenanted to support each other come what may. I thank them dearly. I especially mention my road partner Dr.Eleanor Snyder whose enthusiasm and encouragement was infectious. To my Ministry Base group, members of my thesis committee, Dr. Mary Ellen Sheehan, Director, blessings on you all. They have pushed and challenged me. I also wish to acknowledge and thank all of the participants who were part of this project in ministry, and whose stories have led to this thesis. Lastly, a special and heartfelt thank you to my wife Christine, whose love, patience and understanding have kept me reasonably sane throughout the years.

## **Dedication**

**I dedicate this work to the gracious lady who brought me into this world, my late mother Joan Doreen Davies, and to those whose love surrounds me every day; my wife Christine, daughters Melissa and Caitlin, and my son Sandy. God bless you all.**

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## INTRODUCTION

I was ordained in 1989 in The United Church of Canada and I am presently ministering to and with St. James United Church of Waterdown, Ontario. St. James is a Pastoral Charge that is part of a larger collection of charges called Halton Presbytery. The Presbytery consists of a number of small rural communities, medium size towns and larger cities such as Burlington, Mississauga, and Oakville. The Presbytery overviews and oversees all of the Pastoral Charges within its boundaries. It is in this Presbytery that I conducted my research and have my ministry base.

My research interest came out of my experience of over eight years at my previous pastoral charge in Oxford Presbytery of Plattsville-Washington, Ontario. While being minister at Plattsville-Washington, I was also charged with Presbytery-level responsibilities which included participation as chairperson on the Education & Students, Nominations, and Visioning committees, along with membership in the Pastoral Relations, Settlement, and Manse committees. I also served as Chair of the Presbytery. These responsibilities involved dealing with personnel, and often opened up opportunities for me to be in close contact with all of the Pastoral Charges, rural and urban, and to practice pastoral care with many of them. I had to meet with ministers, lay representatives, students, support communities, church boards and committees. I was privy to personal information and situations that required competency, compassion, understanding, and a sensitive ear for all sides.

During my pastoral duties, I was exposed to a growing number of people who experienced shattering news about their work; the companies for which they had been

working were downsizing, and they became redundant. They had been living lives built around the security of their employment, and their worth as gifted and talented individuals. Their security and much more had been taken away. When I moved to Halton Presbytery, I found that the situation I had encountered in Oxford Presbytery was not isolated. The Halton area provided the necessary base from which my research could be carried out without changing the question.

The focus of this research is pastoral care, or to be more concise, the characteristics of a pastoral approach. My goal was to interview a number of people who had experienced job loss due to the restructuring and re-engineering of the work force in direct response to the changing economy. Those people I interviewed were both employees and spouses. The research was based on the following question:

**What are the characteristics of a pastoral approach for responding to the needs of middle class persons who have experienced job loss due to the re-engineering and restructuring in the workplace?**

To enable me to explore and research this question, it was important that I clearly set out the context. In today's economic reality, men and women in the workforce are experiencing the loss of executive positions and other white-collar jobs, with little possibility of moving in other career / employment directions. This has led to personal crisis. The word "crisis," from the Greek *krisis* or *krinein*, meaning "to separate," implies a turning point or decisive moment in experience. These people have been separated from a way of living that had seemed to be theirs for the taking. The negative impact of this crisis

goes far beyond the individuals who are losing their jobs. Their families and friends also suffer. Further, there are consequences that could lead to deeper divisions among our economic classes: the newly threatened middle class may become more protective and isolated, and withdraw from any kind of community responsibilities for fear of further loss for themselves.

There can be no doubt about the increased sense of economic insecurity which is felt by people in all walks of life. My area of concern is to highlight those of a particular socioeconomic class, namely those of the middle class, to whom the repercussions of downsizing have had such detrimental results. In order to facilitate this, I have set out to clearly identify a theoretical framework that would serve as a point of reference. The framework will be set out in chapter 2.

I will explore this theoretical framework as it seeks to bring into dialogue: scriptural understandings, the position of The United Church as it relates to the topic, a particular understanding of the middle class, definitions and understandings of work, and an understanding of pastoral care. Each will be explored for its respective biblical, theological and sociological aspects.

Work is the first category to be explored. In order to build up theological insights into the nature of work, we begin with the biblical witness. The historical development of the pattern of work beginning with Genesis 1:26-28 will be explored. This passage reflects an understanding of work as a person's calling into existence on earth to be fruitful and multiply. I will look at the development in the New Testament of the understanding of work in the life of the Christian community.

I will be looking at the theological insights on work, using Pope John Paul II and Joe Holland as key resources. The losses imposed on people due to re-engineering in the corporate community in order to make the workplace compatible with the new technological advancements can be multifaceted. We are not only talking about loss of work, but also about status, questioning of one's worth, and threat on the family. The losses may include faith when a person's understanding of who or what God is and what God requires can be questioned. Pope John Paul II said that work is one of the characteristics that distinguishes humans from other creatures, and that the church is convinced that work is a fundamental dimension of humankind's existence on earth.<sup>2</sup> Thus, any action that prevents work is an action against God's creation.

Another valuable resource on work for this study is that of Joe Holland.<sup>3</sup> Holland suggests that the old theologies of industrial capitalism and scientific socialism are at the end of their time, and a new holistic culture is emerging. His suggestions are explored. The re-engineering reality is forcing the church to look at human work as key to what is now the essential social question. The Church is mandated to call attention to the dignity and rights of people, and to the fact that work is a fundamental dimension of that dignity and those rights. I have sought to look at an understanding of work that also reflects the

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<sup>2</sup> Pope John Paul II, Laborem Exercens, as printed in The Priority of Labor: A Commentary on "Laborem Exercens." Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, by Gregory Baum (New York and Toronto Press, 1982) p. 95.

<sup>3</sup>Joe Holland. Creative Community: Toward A Spirituality Of Work. (NY: Paulist Press, 1989).



spiritual side, and its importance in helping people find values and integrity in the work that they do.

Chapter 2 will also explore a biblical and theological approach that offers support to my claim that those people I have identified as middle class qualify as part of the prophetic response advocated by Christian heritage. For this point, recent teachings of The United Church of Canada, along with work by Walter Brueggemann and Gerhard Von Rad will be used as key resources.

The United Church of Canada has a social tradition of concern for equality and fundamental human welfare. This includes the provision of basic needs for all people, a stance motivated by the biblical vision of God's love for each individual. Historically, The United Church of Canada has emphasised providing assistance for those in the lower economic strata. The UCC has provided strong leadership and care in this regard. However, economic situations have changed so that middle class people are now also in need of particular care. This new situation has created tension in the way the UCC has understood the prophetic challenge to meet these pastoral needs. My understanding of Church is that it is to be used as a bridge between that which denies life and that which affirms life in our society. If we see the Church as prophetic<sup>4</sup> and called to represent God's purpose in the world for all people, and if we reflect upon that premise, we will see the

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<sup>4</sup> I understand the role of the Church as telling the story of God in the world in such a way that it brings a sense of newness to society, and also an alternative to any oppressive situation. Brueggemann says that "prophetic ministry enables people to see their own history in the light of God's freedom and his will for justice." Walter Brueggemann, The Prophetic Imagination (Philadelphia; Fortress Press, 1987) p. 110.

beginning of that bridge-building process for individuals who choose to affirm life. This aspect of the prophetic will be explored in chapter 2.

Chapter 2 will also explore the social impact on the middle class. A key resource will be Jeremy Rifkin's book The End Of Work.<sup>5</sup> In this book, Rifkin examines the technological innovations and market-directed forces moving us closer to a workerless world. He raises the question of whether we are prepared to face the consequences. Within the theoretical framework of chapter 2, I will explore the social impact as it pertains to the middle class using Rifkin's work along with work by John Dalla Costa, Robert Wuthnow, and Charles Heckscher.

Erik Wright, a sociologist, asks, "How can the social categories which are commonly called 'middle' class be situated within a conceptual framework built around a polarised concept of class?"<sup>6</sup> He then struggles with the problem looking at class structure, class consciousness, class boundaries, and class identity. His aim is to understand the interconnectedness of the elements and how they impact on society. Wright notes the differences and similarities of a Weberian inspired class analysis as contrasted with that of Marx.<sup>7</sup> It is from Wright's analysis of Weber that the characteristics of the middle class are explored in this study.

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<sup>5</sup>Jeremy Rifkin. The End Of Work. (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995).

<sup>6</sup>Erik Olin Wright, Class Counts. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> One key difference is Weber's emphasis on life chances compared to Marx's emphasis on exploitation. Life chances are directly shaped by market situations. It is due to market situations that companies are restructuring and re-engineering, and thereby determining life chances for both the person involved and their families.

A pastoral approach would be incomplete without regard given to the spiritual questions. Jack Hawley, a management consultant on matters of organisational transformation, suggests that people need the opportunity to become open to the spirit within and to receive the energy needed to be able to rechannel it in ways that can be productive and fulfilling.<sup>8</sup> I believe that this can be a very practical and valuable approach to those who have lost their jobs. It can offer them an opportunity to regain a sense of peace, of purpose and of meaning. The exploration of the various elements that Hawley says we need for the reawakening to occur is pursued in chapter 2.

Chapter 3 presents the research path and the process. It provides the methodology used to gather the necessary data, including the process of analysis, along with reasons for choosing the path and process taken and used. The assumptions present at the beginning of the research will be outlined. The chapter will seek to explain the action in ministry, the why and the how. I will explain what I had expected to get from the action.

Chapter 4 will present an analysis of the data. That analysis will be listed under the questions used in the interviews, along with categories that arose as the interviews proceeded. The analysis presented in the chapter will only be a brief summary of the actual interviews. There are approximately 120 pages of verbatim data, much too onerous to

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<sup>8</sup>Jack Hawley. Reawakening The Spirit In Work. NY: Simon & Schuster, 1993. Hawley suggests that we already have within us whatever we need to get through this life with a sense of dignity, respect, integrity and human spirit. We just have to re-find it. He uses five elements; respiriting, revering, repowering, recharactering, and reinspiring.

present in its entirety. I have, therefore, tried to present a concise and informative paragraph for each category and each person.

Chapter 5 will be a presentation of my reflection on the action in ministry, with the findings. The concluding Chapter 6 will outline the contributions of the study, detailing the implications for ministry and changed pastoral practices. The chapter will also identify any learnings for the researcher.

## CHAPTER 1

### CONTEXT OF MINISTRY: THE CONTEXT, THE QUESTION.

#### Introduction

In 1819 the famous economist David Ricardo wrote that the amount of employment in an economy was of no consequence, as long as rent and profits, out of which flowed its new investment, were undiminished. "Indeed?" replied Simone de Sismondi, a well-known Swiss critic of the times. "Wealth is everything, men are absolutely nothing? What? ... In truth then, there is nothing more to wish for than that the king, remaining alone on the island, by constantly turning a crank, might produce, through automata, all the output of England."<sup>9</sup>

The crank was turned in the Industrial Revolution, providing opportunities for those with talent. The middle-class of entrepreneurs, traders, factory owners, doctors, lawyers, and teachers were winners. They were able to use their positions or situations in life to benefit from the changes. "Thrift and hard work" would reap their rewards. For many of these people this "reward" became the reality. In the long run, the industrial system affected almost every aspect of economic and social life. Today, we are in another "revolutionary age" where the crank is turning but the "winners" do not necessarily include the middle-class. Ricardo's statement is becoming the reality. This provides the context for the research, and will set the stage for the question.

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<sup>9</sup>Jeremy Rifkin, The End Of Work, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1996), p. xi.

## **I. The Context**

### **i. Issues of Employment Security**

We are living in an age of such technological advancement that more work can be achieved with fewer workers. Re-engineering is the new “catch-word” as companies move to make themselves computer-friendly. The age of welcoming technologies to improve and better society is now in question. While society needs to welcome improvement that will benefit safety, health care, and community living, it needs to be vigilant when technology threatens the culture, security, self worth, and the self esteem of its people. Re-engineering is the threat to today's society that requires more than being vigilant. The ramification of such change is a fundamental transformation for societies throughout the world. Jeremy Rifkin laments how the information age, with its sophisticated software technologies, is moving civilisation closer to a near worker-less world.<sup>10</sup> The Industrial Economy is moving to a knowledge-based economy. Robots are replacing workers on the assembly lines. National economies are moving to a global economy. The impact of such change is as profound as in the Industrial Revolution, when machines replaced millions of workers. It was a time when a way of life was destroyed for many.

This new age has resulted in an unemployment level that has never been as high since that of the depression of the 1930's. As the global workforce continues to be hit by the information age juggernaut, the prospects of surpassing the depression year figures appear not only to be inevitable, but almost upon us.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid, p. xv.

For many years, society has come to accept the growing number of unemployed people as part of the technological advancement. The information age that has been forecasted for some years is here. Governments have supported and introduced re-training for blue-collar workers to suit the new computerised and knowledge-based age. As this new sector grows, forecasters have been quite open in acknowledging that it will not be able to absorb all the millions of people forced out of employment as a result of this new technology. However, the computerised advancement has been so rapid that even fewer people are required than forecasters had predicted. We are creating a group of permanently displaced workers that will have very few prospects for work in the future. For many people, this means that the middle class dream that was so much part of the Industrial Revolution is finished.

Statistics Canada has released studies that show that workers on the factory floor, in the farmlands, in fishing boats, and in the forest industry are part of a disappearing breed. Many are being replaced by lower-paid part-time workers who sell services rather than things. A growing chasm between the top executives and those on the ground floor is eliminating the dream of so many Canadians. Canadian Labour Congress past president Bob White predicts this trend toward a disappearing middle class will lead to greater unrest. "More people are asking how we can build a sustainable economy and society in which we are seeing a widening of wage gap and wealth concentration in fewer and fewer

hands."<sup>11</sup> As the gap widens, and the dream disappears, many in the middle class are finding their sense of security shattered.

In the Halton Region, there has been a population increase of 9% over the years 1991 - 1996; in the previous five years the increase was 15%. Forecasts for the next ten years show an increase of 30%. The employment rate was 5.1% increase over the previous five years. These figures indicate that the region is a growing area, yet the early 1990's saw a dramatic decline in the rate of increase. Those same years also saw household growth compile their lowest figures compared to the previous five years. Building permits were the lowest in the period of 1988-1999. The Halton Region has a labour force of 82% white collar workers, a work force that was ideally suited to the restructuring that was going on at the time. The figures would indicate that from 1991-1996, the economic trend was slower than the previous years, and also much slower than the forecasted next ten years. This certainly conveys a sense of economic decline for a region said to be one of the fastest growing in the country. The region is also a young region in terms of population age, 11% over 65 as against the Ontario figure of 12%.<sup>12</sup>

In March of 1997, a man in his early 50's came into my office. For purposes of description and to preserve his identity, I shall call him John. John was a partner in a small company that managed human resources. His reputation was held in high esteem by many in the business community. Aware of this, one of the larger local companies approached

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<sup>11</sup> Bob White as quoted by Yvonne Zacharias, Middle Class Dream Ends, (The Record Newspaper, 16 October 1996), p. c8.

<sup>12</sup>These statistics are from the Halton Region Planning Service and 1996 census as obtained from the internet site of haltonbusiness.com.



him with an attractive senior position in their human resources department. John sold his interest in the partnership and accepted the offer. He had been employed in this new position for twelve years when he was called into the office and advised his position was no longer needed. There had been no discussions, and in fact only positive comments on his work. Within a few weeks he learned that a replacement had been appointed for his previous job. The replacement was a person with less experience, much younger, and was paid a lower salary.

John had been looking for employment for fifteen months, and had sent out 150 resumes. He said to me: "Am I ever going to get a job? Who knows? There are times when I feel ashamed facing my family not being able to support them. And then knowing that I had my own business and gave it up against my wife's advice. I've betrayed them." John's story is symbolic of many.<sup>13</sup>

Executives, skilled workers, middle managers, professionals and other white-collar workers are waking up to the realities of the nineties. Pink slips are no longer exclusive to blue collar workers and middle class dreamers. They are being made real to people without regard to status, education, seniority. We can call it downsizing, restructuring or re-engineering. It does not matter; the result is the same. Unemployment has reached the middle class and it is hitting them like a runaway train. Many of those in the middle class

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<sup>13</sup> During this work, I will be using the parable of the Good Samaritan, but from a different perspective. John and others like him can be seen as taking the place of the victim at the side of the road. It is from this perspective that I will seek to give some reflection on the characteristics that will arise from the research.

are finding themselves in a crisis. The sense of security for this particular group has been severely rocked, and in some instances, crushed.

ii. Middle Class Expectations / Assumptions

For some years the middle class has been the core of our affluent subdivisions. Their buying power has driven the economy. As long as they were working and purchasing, prospects of employment were encouraging. Now they are being seen at home during weekday work hours. They are turning up at schools delivering their children. A new picture of the middle class is beginning to emerge.

The expectations of people within this middle-class group become a reflection of the expectations of the community and of society itself. The middle-class has its culture to maintain. Preserving this culture results in stress and anxiety as it tries to hold on to an image that has been cultivated over the lifetime of the Canadian Confederation.

The research of Charles Heckscher indicates that most white-collar workers have a strong loyalty, either a bureaucratic or corporate loyalty.<sup>14</sup> Bureaucratic loyalty is task driven with its reward coming out of completing the task itself, and not through personal rewards. This enables many civil servants to remain in positions following political elections that choose contrasting ideological governments. Corporate loyalty is different. It is to one's company. It creates a dependency of the workers on the hierarchy to whom they owe allegiance. Either way, loyalty brings an understanding of trust between a

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<sup>14</sup>Tbid, p. 20-22.

company and its middle managers. Any breakdown can result in inadequate work being done, or lack of commitment to the benefit of the company.

Dennis McCann<sup>15</sup> notes the connection between the scriptural passage from John 10:11-18 describing the similarities of the hireling and its actions, and the situation of today's workers. The hireling worked for his pay and seems to have done the job. However, he did not have the connection, the affinity, with anything that was outside of, or extra to, the job. This is becoming more the norm, yet I am not convinced that most people are doing it by design. It is part of the ramifications of re-structuring. Admittedly, one of the reasons why people used to do extra work was overtime pay, but for some people, there was another reason. It was the sense of community and loyalty that was part of the job and part of the culture in which they lived and worked. There was a sense of unity within the workplace between management and worker. What loyalty does is provide a motive for co-operation. It reflects an atmosphere of good will.<sup>16</sup> Once loyalty is broken there is nothing that can counter the anxiety that prevails with such uncertainty that comes from a lack of trust.

This erosion of loyalty within the workplace filters down into family relationships, community living, one's faith, and loyalty to God. People start to think or act in such a way that conveys they do not have what it takes anymore. They are too busy looking after themselves to care for others, or other things. "Am I my brother's or sister's keeper?" This used to be part of a culture that emphasised a family environment. Restructuring, or re-

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<sup>15</sup>Dennis P. McCann, Christian Century, (May 17, 1995): 542.

<sup>16</sup>Heckscher, p. 27.

engineering, brings an end to a sense of community and the things that tie people together. This is not restricted to the organisation but also to those in the communities in which they live. Heckscher says that some managers remain loyal to a company even though they do not believe in the policies, and that this represents a hope that things will return to the comfort of the past.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps a better explanation would be that managers are either fearful of losing their positions if they question policies, or that they are in denial of what is happening. It creates an uneasy environment that has repercussions for the business culture.

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines culture as "the integrated pattern of human behaviour that includes thought, speech, action, and artefacts and depends on man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations."<sup>18</sup> A successful business happens when the culture of the business is reflected in the culture of the workers. "As the primary (but informal) means of communication within an organisation, the cultural network is the "carrier" of the corporate values."<sup>19</sup> Terrence Deal and Alan Kennedy emphasise how important a strong culture is in an organisation. It not only defines who it is, but also enables people who work there to feel good about what they do, and therefore become more efficient and committed. A strong culture is the driving force behind any success.

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>18</sup>Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 1993, Tenth ed., s.v. "Culture"

<sup>19</sup>Terrence E. Deal and Allan A. Kennedy, Corporate Cultures, (Don Mills: Addison-Wesley Publishing company, 1996), p. 15.

Employees need to be able to accommodate the culture of the particular business and work within it. Middle management culture has shown itself to be flexible in the sense that it enables people to adapt to the different philosophies of organisations, therefore enabling freedom and mobility. They also share commonalities. These include dedication to hard work and a loyalty to the organisation. This is also reflected in how the culture is part of their way of living. There is tendency for this group to congregate in certain areas. They share common values that shaped the suburbs and defined the 'good life' for mainstream North American culture. They were the envy of the blue-collar workers who hoped that "their children could penetrate those ranks."<sup>20</sup> They represented stability. They were well paid, well respected, well treated. This works rather well for these people until change comes. Change through a gradual evolution of a working relationship can usually be accommodated. But when change is forced through outside interest, the well-honed culture is threatened. When organisations bring in outsiders to help with restructuring, they are automatically changing the culture of the organisation. When this occurs there is disruption, there is fear, there is frustration, and there is confusion. "Many managers underestimate the time it takes to achieve real and lasting change in an organisation. It is always possible for a senior manager to "reorganise"- to shuffle the structural boxes in an organisation."<sup>21</sup> The problem is that many "outsiders" fall prey to the eagerness of having to produce immediately. They like to be seen taking control of the situation, and therefore often act quickly not allowing time for managers to "reorganise." Any change needs to be

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<sup>20</sup>Deal and Kennedy, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, p. 158.

sensitive to an organisation's culture and its need to either accommodate or move at an acceptable pace.

Rifkin says that as corporations restructure their organisations through re-engineering, they are "eliminating layers of traditional management, compressing job categories, creating work teams, training employees in multi-level skills, shortening and simplifying production and distribution processes, and streamlining administration."<sup>22</sup> The process of co-ordinating information throughout the company is being done with the new computerised technology. Decisions can be made quicker; time is becoming the necessary ingredient of efficient company business.<sup>23</sup>

The speed of the re-engineering taking place in corporations is, in effect, not allowing those affected by the changes to have the time to be prepared for the "bad news." The rapid pace can lead to a perception of insensitivity and lack of loyalty on behalf of the modern corporation. As companies are compressing several jobs into one through the re-engineering process, middle management is disappearing. Alfred Chandler says "the men and women in "garden variety" middle-management jobs are getting crucified by

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<sup>22</sup>Rifkin, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup>There is a humorous but telling story of a man who had a check-up and then went in to see his doctor to get the results. The doctor said he had bad news and worse news for him, which did he want to hear first? The man was a bit nonplussed and said he would rather hear the bad news first. The doctor said, "The bad news is that you only have twenty-four hours to live." At this the man jumped up, totally flabbergasted and distraught. He paced the doctor's office and complained, "Twenty-four hours to live? I can't possibly get my affairs in order that quickly. I can't believe this, it is incredible! What could be worse news than this?" The doctor said, "The worse news is that I was supposed to tell you this yesterday, but I forgot." This story was remembered from the past. Its origin cannot be recalled. But it does serve to illustrate the rapid pace of change with the new computerised technology, and the possible dire consequences.

corporate re-engineering and the introduction of sophisticated new information and communication technologies."<sup>24</sup>

According to Rifkin, "An increasing number of the newly unemployed, give up all together. Some retreat behind closed doors, spending more and more of their time in darkened living rooms.... A few turn to alcohol... ." <sup>25</sup> After lengthy periods of unemployment many begin to turn their rage inward. Concerned that they may never work again, they wonder whether they are to blame for their situation. They develop a loss of self-esteem, of self worth. They feel that they have betrayed their families.

We spend most of our lives working to acquire the things that will make our lives meaningful and provide security. When that security is taken away, we grieve. If the loss is great, the very foundations of our life are shaken into despair. A man who was unexpectedly removed from his job he had held for many years put it this way: "I was so stunned by what they told me, I walked around as if I was in a trance. What they said did not register. I heard the words but they had not reached me yet." This shock is a temporary escape from reality. For some people this is not temporary, and they remain in this dream world rather than face the reality of the loss. As a result, the shock can turn to depression, and in some cases, physical illness.

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<sup>24</sup>Alfred Chandler, The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in America, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 97, cited in James Beniger, The Control Revolution Technological and Economic Origins of the Information Society, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 224.

<sup>25</sup>Rifkin, p. 171.

The vulnerability of these people to health problems is a major concern. It is a concern affecting the immediate family and those in the wider community. The health of a community is dependent upon the health of its people. Unhealthy communities lead to stress and strain on services provided by governments. This unhealthiness is also a threat to society, as it permeates the family process active within a community. Middle class youths are having their world threatened, either through their parents' unemployment, or the lack of prospects for themselves. "In generally affluent Westchester County, just outside of New York City, police report the emergence of more than seventy rival middle-class gangs in just the last few years. Suburban youth gangs are popping up with increasing frequency across the country."<sup>26</sup> These kinds of behaviours are also occurring across Europe at a rapid rate. One can ask: Can Canada be far behind? Such negative developments change the culture of the nation, and set the groundwork for the next generation.

### iii. Role of Church<sup>27</sup>

What do these effects from restructuring and re-engineering mean? Rifkin says that it could lead to the beginning of a new social transformation and a rebirth of the human Spirit. He also says that it could lead to the demise of civilisation as we have come to

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid, p. 211.

<sup>27</sup>I use the word 'church' to indicate either a particular denomination or a local congregation. Only when I am referring to the universal Church will I use 'Church'.



know it.<sup>28</sup> Our whole way of defining ourselves in relation to our work is subject to rethinking. As we reflect on these consequences, it is important for us to look at the purpose of the church in all of this, especially for individuals affected by the re-engineering transformation of society. We must also look at what the church can be for the rest of the community and for the whole of society. As we become familiar with the purpose of the church, and the possibility for it to serve, as one of my colleagues expressed, "as a bridge between that which denies life and that which affirms life in our society," we understand that the role of the churches is an integral part of the discussion.

The United Church of Canada has often found itself in both camps, denying and affirming life, and has suffered the consequences for such positions. However, this could provide an opportunity to bridge the gap and provide support for the individual and society to cross over toward the option for meaningful life. The implications for the United Church, if it were to take this opportunity seriously, could result in a fundamental transformation within itself.

The church today needs to be able to transcend the pessimism of the current employment situation and empower people to be able to hope again. In this context, I share that common story from scripture of the good Samaritan, but told with a different group of characters. A person from the middle class of society is made redundant. His<sup>29</sup> loss of employment and the subsequent repercussions that could lead to a loss of status,

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<sup>28</sup>Rifkin, p. 212.

<sup>29</sup>The participant could be either male or female. Those involved in the research were both. All direct quotes throughout the thesis will be as quoted. The researcher has attempted to show an inclusiveness to gender wherever the situation has presented itself.

self-esteem, self-worth, leave him crushed and bruised, lying at the side of the road. Along comes a blue collar worker who sees the man and says, "Too bad, now you know how the other half lives." And on he goes. Next comes a representative from the church, who stops and says, "I'm sorry, I don't have time - I'm too busy with those who really need help. You will have to adjust to your new state." And on he goes. A third person comes along, stops and says, "Let me help you - let me be a listening ear. Let me try and help you deal with your loss and get you back into community." Continuing with our rendition of the story, we paraphrase the question that Jesus asked in the Luke passage: "Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of restructuring?" The answer in scripture is "The one who showed him mercy." The aim of this study is to discover the characteristics needed to show that mercy.

## II. The Question

In his critique of this scriptural passage, William Barclay says that the answer to "Who is my neighbour?" involves three things. "(i) We must help a person even when that person may have brought their trouble on themselves.<sup>30</sup> (ii) Any person who is in need is our neighbour. (iii) The help must be practical and not just feeling sorry."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>This is often seen as the case for those who have appeared ambivalent to the needs of the unemployed in the past, and whose actions have contributed to their predicament due to lifestyle choices.

<sup>31</sup>This is part of Barclay's interpretation of the Good Samaritan from Luke 10:25-37 taken from William Barclay, The Daily Study Bible : The Gospel of Luke. (Burlington, Ontario: Welch Publishing, 1975), p. 140. Barclay has been used here to illustrate the three characteristics that need to be considered when looking at the question of "Who is my neighbour?"

The traditional wisdom of this Lucan passage has been to see the person at the side of the road as one of the neglected of society. That person has been assumed to be a representative of the poor class. The purpose of Christian Ministry is to provide a service of hope and promise to one another within a Christian framework. It is to ensure that everything is done to restore wholeness for all people of this earth. The task of this research is to define characteristics of a pastoral care approach that would enable people to see what is needed to show mercy, as the Samaritan did, to a group who has been seen historically as privileged.

Keith Russell offers a modern day parable that puts the three characteristics together showing its possibilities for today. The parable is about a program offered at Sing Sing Prison. The prison is a maximum-security facility for long-term prisoners. Every year twelve to fifteen men from a number of prisons around New York State are transferred into Sing Sing and enrolled in the program. It is a one-year training program to prepare the men for various aspects of prison ministry. They must learn to work, live, and study together. They become a sectarian and eschatological community within the household of the prison. The environment in which they live and work is violent and hostile. Some of the guards, officials, and other prisoners are overtly hostile to what they do. To overcome this, the men must create a community based on what it means to follow and live according to Christ in the prison. The success is illustrated by the number of graduates from this program who are operating as chaplains or assisting in other ministries throughout the New York State prison system. All are providing an alternative community

to the despair and violence around them. They offer hope to the hopeless.<sup>32</sup> Is this a way of responding to the systemic problem of unemployment as it now invades the middle management workers, as it has been for the systemic problem of prison life in New York State?

The followers of Jesus were called to take prophetic stances that challenged the system that produced systemic detriments to society. We are asked how we can become leaders either as an individual or as a group in the struggle with what has become systemic and destabilising to life. Can we, as society, unmask the unemployment blight on our society that de-humanises so many, and can the church develop a pastoral approach to enable people to re-gather self-worth and self-esteem?

The phenomenon of downsizing has placed many people in a new position. We no longer refer to "they - the unemployed," but rather "us - the middle class." There is an uneasiness which has spread over North America, and indeed throughout the western world, in the wake of downsizing. It has proven to be an occasion to think seriously about ourselves and our identity. It is out of this context that the question mentioned earlier has arisen:

What are the characteristics of a pastoral approach for responding to the needs of a middle class person who has experienced job loss due to the re-engineering and restructuring in the workplace?

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<sup>32</sup>Keith A. Russell, In Search Of The Church, (Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute), p. 3-4.1994.

**The characteristics will be viewed as a base from which to address the pastoral needs, which will arise from the interviews, of clearly identified middle class people. The aim of this work is to identify these characteristics so that they can be used in a practical form of care, that in turn can be used within a congregational, and/or, a business setting.**

## CHAPTER 2

### THE THEORY AT WORK

#### Introduction

My research included a study of various strands of theory applied in its ministry action. As the researcher, I have attempted to substantiate in a methodological way the theory in play in order to create a credible and defensible position for a middle class section of society who are in need of a pastoral approach relative to their situation. This chapter will explore some aspects of biblical, theological, spiritual and sociological background with regard to a definite list of criteria. The criteria will be explored under the sub-headings of work, middle class, prophetic dimension of ministry, pastoral care and The United Church of Canada.

#### I. The Theoretical Framework

##### i. Social Understanding of Work

The closing decade of the twentieth century can be seen as a crucial period with the emergence of a new industrial revolution. What the implications of the changes this revolution will bring over the long-term is far from clear, but already we can see their pervasive effects on organisations and living standards, and on family and household structure. The change in the nature and understanding of work is forcing us to change our thinking about work. Our understanding until now has been conditioned by the modern

world as it developed out of the industrial revolution of the late eighteenth century. As the money economy took over from the traditional classical feudal system, a sharp division between landowners and the workers developed, and work became a commodity. A person's skills could then be sold to a landowner in exchange for money or accommodation and basic necessities.<sup>33</sup> As the industrial revolution worked its way through society, and its effects were seen in the development of artisans and factories, in the expansion of white collar occupations, and in the creation of skilled and unskilled workers, people became identified more and more by the work that they did. Paul Ballard says that along with that identification came the understanding that work was the way people were given social status and recognition. He adds that people are plugged into the community system as a result of having work. The way a person is seen in community is a reflection of the place their work accords them.<sup>34</sup> Today's situation is forcing us into a pattern in which work will not have the same role.

The purpose of this research is not to pursue a modern definition of work that incorporates ever-increasing technological innovations. Trying to define a concrete

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<sup>33</sup>Paul Ballard says that there are several phases that distinguish the evolution of our understanding of work: 1) Gradual transition from mediaeval society; 2) Industrial work patterns; 3) Development of industrial capitalism; 4) Importance of occupational groups: growth of bureaucracy, white collar occupations, and the expansion of the professions; 5) Alternative life styles; 6) The development in the industrial society; 7) The problem of leisure. Ballard argues that through all of these phases a framework has evolved that has enabled people to understand their relationship to society. Paul Ballard, Towards A Contemporary Theology Of Work. (Cardiff: Collegiate Centre, Faculty of Theology, University College, Cardiff in association with the Industrial Committee, Council of Churches for Wales, 1982.) p. 4-12.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid, p. 12. Ballard also says that this was not a new concept of social structures. They had been around for a long time, but it was the first time the nature of work and employment had been of such significance.

definition of the word “work” has been an on-going task for centuries, without conclusion. Work can mean anything that one wants it to mean at any given time, according to any cultural understanding, in any particular context. It is also not the purpose of this research to develop a new and complete theology of work, although the basic characteristics of such a theology should appear throughout this thesis. A theology of work that reflects the nature and consequences of work, while allowing for changing technological innovations, along with changing capitalistic philosophies in a constantly evolving global economy, all within a growing secular world, can only be a snapshot. In order to accommodate these fluid situations, we must seek to identify a fluid or ever-evolving theology of work.

What is being suggested in this study is an understanding of the importance of work and a call for a return of work to its roots within society where it is able to show its human character. Whereas Miroslav Volf sees the “vocational understanding of work developed within the framework of the doctrine of creation” to be “inapplicable to modern societies and theologically inadequate,”<sup>35</sup> I am suggesting that an understanding of work in that very light is needed in order to reconnect it with its human character. It is my contention that this approach will be helpful when dealing with the modern day phenomenon of middle class job loss with its accompanying losses. I do not believe that this approach ignores the obvious fact that we live in a dynamic and rapidly changing society, and that a dynamic understanding of work is needed. What it does do is recognise

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<sup>35</sup>Miroslav Volf, Work In The Spirit: Toward A Theology Of Work., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.) p. vii,ix. Volf’s thesis seeks to define a theology of work that would best represent modern day society. He proposes a paradigm shift from a vocational understanding of work that is derived from the doctrine of creation to a pneumatological theology of work based on the concept of charisma.



that while the vocational understanding of work is open for misuse and misinterpretation, it is no different than a pneumatological<sup>36</sup> understanding of work. Both have their deficiencies, yet at the same time share the connection to God. Both have interpretational vulnerability.

In contrast to Volf, there is Joe Holland who argues that the old theologies of industrial capitalism and scientific socialism are at the end of their time. We are, therefore, encouraged to recover the authentic understanding of work that will allow people, whoever they are and wherever they live, the opportunity to live within society with a sense of meaning and purpose. In other words, contrary to Volf's view of the inadequacy of such a return to work viewed through the framework of the doctrine of creation, as I have already stated, Holland reaffirms such relevance and value of our faith tradition that speaks to our identity in relationship to God's creation of humanity. It is this view taken by Holland with which I have affinity and which provides a basis for my understanding of work.

Holland suggests that work is about human participation in the communion of life's ecological, social, and divine creativity, and that only by reclaiming this understanding can people deal with the work crisis in modern culture and be assured of their value in society.<sup>37</sup> This understanding is based on a belief that work is intended by God to be a

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<sup>36</sup>The theological basis for a pneumatological understanding of work is the charismatic nature of Christian activity.

<sup>37</sup>Holland's thesis is that this can be explored through four inter-related themes: the modern degradation of work; the post-modern spiritual vision of work as it relates to the co-creativity of the social, ecological, and divine communion; the process of a post-modern holistic economy; and the pastoral implications of the post-modern culture.

way of experiencing the divine presence in the world, and this can only be done by reclaiming and affirming our God-given nature.

Holland contends that there are three interpretations of work that prevent the realisation of its spiritual significance, all three being essentially dualist in character.<sup>38</sup> A brief explanation of these interpretations will provide valuable background for the discussion of the importance not only of work, but also of its connectedness to God.

The first is "The Classical Religious / Secular Dualism." This concept goes back to the origins of human culture, though it was appropriated by Christianity. It is a way of thinking that separates some work from other work. Religious people were called to do religious work - - work from God - - whereas nonreligious people did secular work, as if it were not from God. Holland reminds us that the word "secular" has a profoundly religious meaning that appears to have been ignored.<sup>39</sup> Holland's second interpretation is "The Modern Public/Private Dualism." This interpretation is essentially one that separates the private life from the work life. The private life could have spiritual meaning, but the work life in the secular world is stripped of such meaning. The third interpretation, "Work as an Instrument of The Economy," relegated work to serving the economy, thereby becoming an object of production.

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid, p. 19-30.

<sup>39</sup>The word secular comes from the Latin *saeculum*, which means cycles. The word *saeculum* in turn comes from the Latin word *secus*, which means sex. The secular world therefore, is participant to the same cycles as those of sexual reproduction - birth and death. This understanding therefore connects the secular to the creator. See Holland, Creative Communion: Toward A Spirituality Of Work. p. 20-21.

All three interpretations separate the person from his or her work, and ultimately from seeing that work's connectedness to God as creator. This becomes the problem for Holland, who believes that all work is religious.<sup>40</sup> Holland's understanding would indicate that work is a way in which we reveal God's creativity in society, and when we say that human beings are made in the image of God, then we are saying that they are creative beings. This was certainly the theme of Pope John Paul II in his Encyclical Laborem Exercens. John Paul made it quite clear that in his understanding of the nature of human work, humanity is called to work. "Work is one of the characteristics that distinguishes man from other creatures."<sup>41</sup> Human life is built up day by day as humankind exhibits that which God has placed within, and does so in an environment that reflects a harmony with the rest of creation.

The way in which we understand work today owes a lot to the thoughts of Adam Smith. Smith said that "Man was made for action and to promote by the extension of his faculties such changes in the external circumstance both of him and others, as may seem most favourable to the happiness of all."<sup>42</sup> As Volf indicates, Smith's definition can be seen, in some light, as acknowledging the possibility of recognising that humankind is made to work. However, his assertion that work is a means for achieving the happiness of

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<sup>40</sup>Holland, p. 36.

<sup>41</sup>Pope John Paul II, Laborem Exercens, as printed in The Priority of Labor: A Commentary on "Laborem Exercens," Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, by Gregory Baum (New York and Toronto Press, 1982) p. 95.

<sup>42</sup>Adam Smith, The Theory of Moral Sentiments. (New York: A. M. Kelley, 1966) p. 153-154 as cited in Miroslav Volf, Work In The Spirit, p. 49.

others obviously shifts his understanding of work to mean that work should satisfy humankind's needs rather than being an essential part of humankind's humanity. I do not intend to dialogue with Smith with regard to his understanding and how it has been, in my view, a detriment to society. I do, however, mention Smith's understanding to illustrate that, even within his definition, there is the recognition or acknowledgment that humankind was made for action.

While it has become acceptable to see the purpose of work to produce something of value which meets some human wants or need, we have failed to take into account the aspect of work that has psychological, social and spiritual significance. It is the omission of this significance that has allowed a negative connotation of work to develop. This is evident in the assumption that work is only linked to usefulness, and when that usefulness is no longer needed, workers are no longer needed. This key aspect of the understanding of work that has been omitted is one that offers each person a sphere of service, and therefore an opportunity to fulfil his or her basic existence in this world. People's confidence is heightened when they know that they are needed, and that to a small degree the world depends upon them. Work in this vein allows people the opportunity to develop and achieve their own potential. It is through our ability to work that we can in some measure become the co-creators of our own destinies. Work, therefore, becomes not only a part of human nature, but fundamental to human identity. The form which work takes in different cultures may vary, but the importance of work to people wherever they are is universal.

As children of God, it is a privilege to share in the work of God that is both creative and redeeming. To restrict this opportunity is to take away our God-given ability to employ the many and various gifts<sup>43</sup> that God has provided, gifts that make it possible for all of us to play a part in the life and work of the community to which we belong. These gifts are intended for us, and they are not to be wasted or taken away by others. It is not only society that gets cheated when these gifts are being taken away, but also God. If we conclude that the relation of work to human nature and society is to enable people to achieve their full potential as members of the human community, then work is both a right and a duty for everyone.

It is significant that we find the idea of people's need to work as an expression of their being in the world within the writings of Karl Marx. As I mentioned Adam Smith's understanding of work simply to illustrate my own point that humankind is made for action, I offer the same privilege to Marx. Marx's view is that work is a process between nature as an object and human beings as participants.<sup>44</sup> Marx states that the purpose of work is to "mediate the metabolism between man and nature, and therefore human life itself."<sup>45</sup> Marx clearly saw the connection between humankind and nature and the need for the former to survive in nature by expressing itself through work. Work in this case is a natural expression of humankind and not an instrument of usefulness. Marx's view on the

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<sup>43</sup>I do not see why these gifts cannot be seen either as charisms or as tools of our vocation.

<sup>44</sup>This view is echoed in Pope John Paul's Laborem Exercens, p. 104-16.

<sup>45</sup>K. Marx and F. Engels. Marx-Engels Werke. (Berlin: Diaz, 1972)p. 57 as cited in Miroslav Volf, Work In The Spirit, p. 57.

primary purpose of work, then, endorses my own statement that it enables people to develop their own potentials.

We often ignore Marx's views in this direction partly due to his emphasis on the alienating aspect of work.<sup>46</sup> There is no question that the lack of connectedness to the work they are doing not only has negative effects on the workers, but also has implications for society. It becomes a valueless society as people work less for the common good, and more for the faceless companies. To work in this environment is to be participant in repressive critical and creative ideas that undermine workers' pride in what they do. It takes away a sense of dignity and worth by treating their work as something foreign to their interests. This leads to a lack of appreciation of the creativity of what they have within them. Instead of work exposing their gifts and their abilities, work becomes for work's sake. I believe Marx to be right in condemning such an attitude to work. It is a way that is detrimental to the human condition. But, it is more than that, and this is probably where I separate myself from Marx. It adds to the failure of acknowledging God as creator. This, then, advances the thought of the separation of people from nature, and therefore from the rest of God's creation. It erodes the human communion with nature and opens itself to the abuse of nature.

Holland indicates that work is intended by God to be a way of experiencing the divine presence in the world. This allows for reflection on the priority of labour within society. In the degradation of work, we are undermining the viability of the earth, the

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<sup>46</sup>Alienation that expresses itself with workers being powerless, exploited, and estranged from themselves. Volf gives a good summary of Marx's understanding of work that will suffice for this research. See Volf, pp. 55-65.

human condition, the spiritual depth of life, and our sense of the divine presence of God. This is where the spiritual dimension of work comes in.

The biblical witness offers a wealth of material for reflecting on the meaning of work, beginning with the act of Creation. God's work, the work of the Spirit, the work of people, the work of Christ, are woven throughout the biblical narrative. In the Bible, work as human activity is not limited to that which is paid labour. All work is to be valued as it contributes to God's intentions for humankind. There is a strongly realistic attitude to work in the Old and New Testaments. The recognition of work being a calling from God is linked, not only to our identity as people in the image of God, but also to the need for a response to God as we engage in the world around us. People find God through and in their daily lives as they act out who they are in a way which reveals God. The work that the Hebrew writers had in mind was ordinary, everyday work. This kind of work never comes to an end. It is the kind of work without which people could not be fed or clothed or housed. It is the kind of work that enables communities to function. The writers of the Hebrew scriptures looked upon work as a normal part of the divine ordering of the world, and no one was exempt from it. Exodus 20:9 says that "Six days shalt thou labour." This scripture indicates that humankind is by its very nature called to work.

If we consider the Genesis stories, we see that they do not represent work as coming into being as a result of sin. Before the Fall, humankind is created to "replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over it."<sup>47</sup> This command of God is continued after

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<sup>47</sup>Genesis 1:28. Although we can debate the understanding of what it means to "subdue," this does not change the fact that, whatever the interpretation is, the participant of work is involved and that work is initiated by God as part of the creation for humankind.

the exile of Cain, as Cain founds a city in his exile, and so perpetuates the command of God to Adam in the garden that he was to “till it and keep it.”<sup>48</sup> Work is a necessity for humankind and it is its proper nature to work. To be denied that opportunity to work is to be treated as less than a human being. To do the work for which humans were created by God - - “to dress” the earth and to “keep” it -is to fulfil the intention of the Creator. Work itself, therefore, is a blessing. It is through work that we become co-creators of our own destinies. The lack of access to work means a stunting of one’s development as a person under God, but also a stumbling block or obstacle to be fully human in our relationship with God.

In the New Testament, the word work is used to reflect the work of God. We are called to be co-operators, and we allow God to work through us. We become, in effect, co-workers with God.<sup>49</sup> Even work that is not connected to God has scriptural support. Paul writes to Thessalonika, to those converts who had abandoned their daily work, either as a result of believing the imminent return of Jesus, or relying on the support of wealthier converts. Paul explains that their daily work must continue.<sup>50</sup> The changes from Paul’s day to now are unbelievable. Who could have foretold the technological advancements that were to come, advancements that would affect the way work was perceived? Jesus came into the world to make God’s word alive in a refreshing and vibrant way. He came to work in order to enable people to claim their identity as part of God’s creation. He

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<sup>48</sup>Genesis 2:15.

<sup>49</sup>See for example scriptures: John 6:29; Philippians 2:13;1 Cor.3:9; Mark 16:20.

<sup>50</sup>11 Thessalonians 3:6-12.



made it clear what his work was for, and what the work of those in society was for. One key aspect of his work was healing, making whole God's creation. He sought to make people aware of their relationship with God, and their role in working with, and exhibiting the work of God in their every day life. When the Pharisees questioned him about the disciples plucking the heads of grain on the Sabbath, and as they watched him heal the man with the withered hand,<sup>51</sup> Jesus replied in essence, "what had to be done had to be done." He came to bring wholeness; that was his work. To put that work off to a more convenient time was to put off that to which God had intended. We cannot be prevented from being who God intended us to be. I believe that we are called to be co-workers with God, and that therefore work is fundamental to our identity and our connection to God. It not only gives us identity, but it also acknowledges God as the ground of our identity as we live out our sense of communion or connectedness with God

I believe work is meant to be a blessing to those blessed by God in creation as human beings. As we have separated work from its connectedness to God's creation, we have allowed work to be seen apart from our innate nature. Therefore, we have allowed job loss to be a purely economic and social concern that becomes subject to the changing economic trends, rather than an identity concern.

Jeremy Rifkin's book, The End Of Work<sup>52</sup> looks at these changing economic trends as he examines the technological innovations and market-directed forces sweeping across the developed world that are moving us closer to a worker-less world. This is a

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<sup>51</sup>Mark 1:23-3:6

<sup>52</sup>Jeremy Rifkin. The End Of Work. (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995).

world that Paul could not imagine. Rifkin raises the question of whether we are prepared to face the consequences of a technology that is moving more quickly than the human ability to adjust to it. In the past, new sectors have always emerged to absorb displaced workers. Today, the only new sector that has emerged is that of the knowledge sector.

Automation has been with us for a long time. The side effects have been visible and known throughout history. The inaction of society to adjust and respond to the changing situation has much to do with what has become the innate desire for profits over the social impact. Society has become one of mass consumption. Rifkin attributes this growth to business. The American business community needed to encourage people to change its philosophy of being content to earn enough to provide for basic needs and a few luxuries. This occurred at a time when many goods were still being made at home. Business led a campaign to educate the public to believe that homemade goods cannot be as good as store-bought goods. Advertising was used to get the message across.<sup>53</sup> Business was successful - - consumerism was set loose. There was an increase in employment, but not as numerous as had been predicted. However, instead of re-investing in new employment opportunities, business found other uses for the increased profits: new labour saving technology. This was the 1920's - - yet it is also the 1990's. Although blue-collar workers have been the major recipients of the downside of new technologies, white collar workers are now finding themselves just as vulnerable. New technologies that have

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<sup>53</sup>Rifkin, p. 19-24. Rifkin outlines how business transformed the worker into a status-conscious consumer.

resulted in re-engineering of the plants have also led to the restructuring of white collar employment in the workplace: The result is job loss.

How do we count the cost of a job loss? What is the human cost? We can offer figures. We can discuss the economic cost to a community. Retail sales can be observed. We can follow the real estate business. We can see the change in school enrolment. We can do all of these; there are all kinds of studies and reports that will attest to the calamity caused in all of these areas. But how do we determine the cost of a lack of self-confidence, a lack of sense of belonging, a lack of sense of power to be oneself? What are the social implications? I have noted earlier the importance of work to humankind. Employment means expressing one's innate nature to work. To strip one of this opportunity is to strip one not only of his or her nature, but of his or her purpose to live as fully human.

#### ii. A Biblical Reflection on Understanding Middle Class

It is my belief that a biblical understanding of the middle class will provide ultimate evidence for the care of such a social class. A vision of the kingdom prescribes certain fundamental criteria for human society. In that kingdom there is peace and harmony, justice and prosperity. People have a dignity of their own because they are made in the image of God, independently of what they achieve or fail to achieve. Therefore, it follows that any economic or social system which allows for the division of people into classes is highly questionable. It does not, however, alter the fact that all humans have the potential for creativity.

Robert Smith argues that social classification was present in biblical times. The Greek philosophers Aristotle and Plato were both aware of the effects of social class. Aristotle saw the middle class as a defining element in a democratic system of government. A large middle class would stabilise the system; a small middle class would lead to dictatorship. The middle class was seen by Aristotle as an important part of a stable society. Smith argues that there is every reason to believe that the early Christians were part of this stabilising group in its day and that they caused the disturbance they did due to their influential position.<sup>54</sup> I do not intend to offer a dissertation on the merits of such a position, but I do want to draw on its possibilities in order to seek grounds for the biblical support of care for the middle class as identified in this research.

Smith asks us to consider four pieces of work. First, a reminder through the work of Howard Kee<sup>55</sup> that the early disciples abandoned their families, their livelihood, their security in order to follow Jesus. These people obviously had some kind of social security before Jesus called them, and this is a security that we often associate with a middle class. Second, Smith suggests we consider work by John Gager,<sup>56</sup> who believed that the early Christian movement was a millenarian movement that attracted the

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<sup>54</sup>Smith believes that the church has added to the perception of Jesus and his early disciples as being part of the lowest classes of society and believes that there is sufficient biblical and subsequent evidence to suggest otherwise. See Robert Smith, "Were the Early Christians Middle-Class? A Sociological Analysis of the New Testament." Currents in Theology and Mission. Vol.7, No.5 (Oct 1980) : 260-276.

<sup>55</sup>Howard Clark Kee, Community of the New Age. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977) as cited by Smith, p. 260-262.

<sup>56</sup>John G. Gager, Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1975) as cited by Smith, p. 263.

disinherited. The Romans had taken power and the middle class of the area had had their 'creativity' curtailed by Roman practices of taxation and financial control. It has been said that historically, most revolutions were successful only when the middle-class became involved. When disinheritance hits the middle-class, the middle class is then better able to take a hard look all the way down the line at the systemic inequalities in society. This is very important for a healthy, wholesome community. It offers a common ground within which people of different status can communicate with a sense of understanding. In order for a movement to gain momentum, it has to enable people to begin to connect and thereby develop a sense of community that can be supportive; then that community can move towards a search for necessary change. By working together, people in community can be challenged to look at the need to be mobilised. This certainly seems appropriate to the early Christian movement.

Third, Smith asks that we consider Gerd Theissen's work<sup>57</sup> on biblical texts, that those texts affirm the relinquishing of material goods and family connections and the importance to the early church of preserving such texts. Theissen also reminds us of the early supporters of the Christian movement. The people who supported Paul, Barnabas, Peter and company did not abandon their social security even in the light of the message they adhered to. In fact, they were able to support and promote the Christian message through their middle class security.

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<sup>57</sup>Gerd Theissen, Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978) and "Itinerant Radicalism: The Tradition of Jesus' Sayings from the Perspective of the Sociology of Literature" The Bible and Liberation. Political and Social Hermeneutics. (Berkeley: The Community for Religious Research and Education, 1976), p. 84-93 as cited by Smith, p. 264.

Fourth, Smith wants us to look at the gospel according to Matthew.<sup>58</sup> Matthew's community does not appear to be poor. "Matthew is not all alone in the New Testament, and there are contemporary voices declaring that many, and perhaps most, Christians in the period before Constantine were members of the middle class."<sup>59</sup> Matthew's gospel is written for an established Jewish-Christian audience. It was a community that was encountering new tensions in the period after the revolt. It was exposed to a population shift as people move into the city from outlying areas. The established community had to deal with landless peasants and other rural people as they became a part of a new diverse community. Smith's assertion of the social standing of Matthew's faith community is supported by Keith Russell. Russell says, with regard to the community, that it "appears to have been materially prosperous... Matthew seems to be dealing with the middle and upper strata of society."<sup>60</sup> Matthew's attack against the scribes and rabbis of his time would also seem to indicate that they were a part of his audience. Smith suggests that Matthew's households included many landholders, merchants, businessmen, and entrepreneurs.

They were people who would appreciate the words on debtors and courts in 5:25-26, be startled by the suggestions regarding generosity (so unbusinesslike!) in 5:39-42 and the casual attitude toward sound financial planning in 6:19, be captivated by the dealer in pearls (13:45-46), be confounded by the logic of the landowner in 20:1-16, and

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<sup>58</sup>Smith, p. 265.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 271.

<sup>60</sup>Russell, p. 23.

require warning about the fate of those who have this world's goods but fail to share their resources with "the least of these my brethren" (25:31-46).<sup>61</sup>

I look at these positions in light of the Christian ideal of the "priesthood of all believers." I sense an understanding through scripture that to be a part of that "priesthood" is to exhibit care to those who are in need, without regard to social class. The gospel was for all classes, and its early followers represented such a wide spectrum of the social order.

The middle-class in Canada, as in most countries, shares general uniformity of possessions and behaviours. These could include: a detached home, one or more cars in the driveway, activity in community and church affairs, higher education. Even reading and voting habits or choice of marriage partners may be determined by class background. The majority of middle-class people reside and behave within a common milieu. They identify with one another. Most advertising reflects the middle class way of life and its high level of consumption. Society itself often judges whether or not people are middle-class according to where they live (the prestige areas), how they dress, the kind of jobs they have, and the churches they attend. The expectations of individual people within this group become a reflection of the expectations of the community and society itself.

Max Weber proposed that class was based on values. A group of people formed a common class if they shared common values. Those values were not confined to economic factors, although economic assets were a key ingredient. Another key ingredient was the power and freedom to dispose of those resources when needed. Class also included social

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<sup>61</sup>Smith, p. 266.

behaviour that could be defined partly by common habits of outward activity. Weber's definition was based on people who had life-chances in common. Economic class was often seen akin to social class in that it represented one's status in society. He also recognised that those who represented the higher and lower classes tended to support status-enhancing activities, and, that they were more inclined to separate class from status to suit their own situations.

Seymour M. Lipset points out, "Those in privileged status positions seek to dissociate status from class, that is, to urge that status reflects factors such as family origin, manners, education, and the like-attributes that are more difficult to attain or lose than economic wealth."<sup>62</sup> Society's judgement of whether a person is middle class or not often seems to take either economic status or social status as a criterion according to its purpose. Weber, on the other hand, saw the two as important ingredients in class analysis. He also understood that changing economics can have a dramatic effect on the class position of people, and that the ingredients of class and status were important because they showed the dynamics of social change.

The "middle" classes, according to Weber, include "groups who have all sorts of property, or of marketable abilities through training, who are in a position to draw their support from these sources."<sup>63</sup> This definition includes those who are independent business people. It is this researcher's understanding that in Weber's terms, the middle class is more

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<sup>62</sup>Seymour M. Lipset, "Social Class," in Social Stratification: Canada, edited by James E. Curtis and William G. Scott (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada Ltd., 1973), p. 24.

<sup>63</sup>Max Weber, Max Weber: The Interpretation of Social Reality. Edited by J. E. T. Eldridge (London: Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1971), p. 88.



likely to be affected by economic changes as it is more attuned to the connectedness of its class and status. It becomes more vulnerable as a class as both aspects of its identity become threatened as a result of economic changes. The life-chances which enable it to be a part of a particular class are withdrawn. Its members no longer have the freedom to draw support from their abilities, as they become either less marketable or unmarketable due to age, prejudice, or economic restraints. This is exactly what downsizing and the subsequent restructuring of the economy imposes on society.

In Paul's letter to Corinth, he writes to a group of people who were in desperate need. Many of those who had heard his message were struggling to let go of what they knew and live what they had heard. But even more than that, they had difficulty coming to terms with what the actual message was. They were trying to understand it in their own terms. They were becoming a fractured community of faith.

Corinth had been a thriving community before being ransacked in 146 BCE. In 44 BCE the city was re-founded as a Roman colony by Julius Caesar. The city reflected the "social, economic and political system of the Roman empire."<sup>64</sup> The social order was, according to David G. Horrell,<sup>65</sup> "best visualised as a large pyramid." At the top was a small ruling economic elite, often ruled by inheritance along with an accumulation of wealth. The rest of the pyramid was made up of everyone else, most of whom were poor in relation to the elite. Yet as the shape of the pyramid shows, a number of people were

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<sup>64</sup>David G. Horrell. The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), p. 65.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

better off than others. It is possible that an upper and lower middle class existed above the lowest class of both slaves and free people that made up the pyramid's wide base. The difference between the top and bottom of the social order was enormous, not unlike the situation today in many countries. It was to this social context that Paul came to spread the gospel message.

Paul met some of these people at a number of invitation-only meetings which would have been "organised by rather well-to-do households."<sup>66</sup> He also met in the "workshops and probably the synagogue."<sup>67</sup> The debate is ongoing as to the social composition of the early Corinthian Christian community. Early critics point to a community that was a movement among the lower classes; however later critics argued that a small but influential number of people would also be a part of the early church community. It is not the intent of this research to offer an extensive view of the social composition of that early community, but it is the intent to offer a realistic understanding of the diversity of the group.

There are a variety of instances in the Corinthian letter to indicate wealth and social position among the church community.<sup>68</sup> The intent of these references is to show how Paul addressed a variety of people from different levels of the social pyramid. He did

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid, p. 76.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid, p. 77.

<sup>68</sup>For example see: 1 Cor.1.11,14,16,17; 6.1-8; 8-10; 11.17-34.

not come to bring a message to one group to the exclusion of another.<sup>69</sup> In fact, whenever there were divisions within the community, especially when power and influence were concerned, Paul spoke vehemently against anyone having power and influence over another.<sup>70</sup> Paul's criticism was not against having wealth, but rather using it in a boastful, arrogant, and oppressive fashion. The fact that Paul responded to the criticisms in the community that speak of such boasting and arrogance indicates that he needed to address this issue in light of the gospel message.

Paul stressed the need for unity. His illustration of the body with many members symbolised the body of Christ. It was not a new analogy.<sup>71</sup> Paul therefore used a familiar analogy that spoke of the need to include all people. He did not instruct the people according to a code of uniformity, but rather, according to a code of accepting people for who they were. He was concerned for what bound them together. They had come together in the name of Christ. There was no separation by class, culture, or sex. People could be in the unity of Christ as they reflected the Christian lifestyle. As J. Stanley Glen says, "[Paul's] emphasis on the many opposes any tendency to transform the membership

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<sup>69</sup>Horrell says that "we can confidently conclude that the Christian community at Corinth included a range of people from Corinthian urban society. Some were slaves and household servants, others were probably householders of some wealth and position. A considerable degree of social diversity was encompassed among the community." See Horrell, p. 100-101.

<sup>70</sup>See 1Cor.3.1-5.

<sup>71</sup>See Horrell, The Social Ethos Of The Corinthian Correspondence. p. 178-179. Horrell explains the use of the analogy by Seneca, Epictetus, Dio Chrystom, and others.

of the church into a single type.”<sup>72</sup> Paul was concerned for a wholeness within the church community that reflected the love of Christ. He felt it important that people in the dominant segment of the social order receive the gospel. That is the point this researcher wants to make.

### iii. The Prophetic Dimension of Ministry

Caring and proclaiming prophetic truth are joint disciplines of the church. The traditional formula of Jesus as prophet, priest, and servant confirms such an understanding. A prophet seeks to apply an understanding or vision of God to a present situation. A prophet wants to voice an understanding of God’s will, to eliminate all suffering, and, at the same time, to show a pastoral sensitivity to the situation.

But first we must back up and view briefly elements of prophecy that will lead us, in turn, to an appreciation of the importance of the prophetic voice for our day. Gerhard Von Rad’s understanding of the prophets and prophecy will determine the direction in this part of the research. The starting point for Von Rad is that there are many different theologies in the bible, and that they are not necessarily reconcilable.<sup>73</sup>

In ancient times, the spoken word had tremendous power. Words were thought to have a power we seldom attribute to words today. The ancient prophets believed that

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<sup>72</sup>J. Stanley Glen. Pastoral Problems in First Corinthians. (Philadelphia: the Westminster Press, 1964), p. 160.

<sup>73</sup>See Gerhard Von Rad, Old Testament Theology, Volume Two, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1965), p. 410-429 for a summary of his position with this regard.

YHWH had commissioned them to speak words on YHWH's behalf. The prophets used a variety of techniques and literary forms to get the attention of the people. Even though the eighth-century prophets Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah, differed greatly in many ways, these differences were mere trivialities in comparison to the one conviction which linked them together. This conviction was "so novel and revolutionary when compared with all their inherited beliefs,"<sup>74</sup> and their teachings "struck their contemporaries as being a departure from the religious standards of the time."<sup>75</sup>

As YHWH spoke to these men alone, enlightening only his chosen, the prophets were indeed set apart from the ordinary people and their contemporaries, thus making them loners. They knew God in an intimate relationship and knew what he had in store for Israel. Not only were they "deeply rooted in the religious traditions of their nation,"<sup>76</sup> but they also strove to interpret these traditions in the light of their own day, bringing to them a newer, fresher life than ever before. And this provides the key for us, for our time, and our interpretation of the prophetic voice. For instance, these bold, radical men chose often to address their listeners with unorthodox phraseology, using "monstrous similes, with an apparent complete absence of any feeling for dignity or propriety."<sup>77</sup> This new element in their proclamations was unique, as beforehand the language of the cult was very reverent, and a conventional phraseology had been developed to speak to God.

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 178.

The prophets were totally aware of their world, politically, socially, and economically. It was characteristic of the prophets to draw events from history to show God's work and purpose for his people, thereby constantly reviewing and refreshing the Israelite saga. Many of the allegories the prophets used presented God as a patient loving Father, with a sense of purpose. The scripture had always been re-interpreted through the ages, and made relevant to the day, but the new element here is that all the prophets believed and emphasised Israel's failure, and the impending "day of the Lord." (Amos 5:18) Thus we see that YHWH was not finished with Israel and "did not intend to withdraw from her history because of failure."<sup>78</sup> God was and is effective in all people's history, past, present, and future.

It was only in the nineteenth century that scholars realised there was a "definite break between the message of the prophets, and the ideas held by earlier Yahwism."<sup>79</sup> This discovery opened a whole new realm of interpretation of the scriptures and a new approach to the prophets for the people of that day. Prophecy had previously been thought to follow the establishment of the Law, prophets being mere mirrors of the Pentateuchal tradition. But once prophetic teachings were found to exist in Deuteronomy and the Priestly Document, the prophets could rightly take their place of value and individuality out from under the shadow of the Law. However, we can question whether or not the scholars of this era gave the prophets too much credence, as they were "never as original, or as individualistic, or in such direct communion with God and no one else, as they were

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

believed to be.”<sup>80</sup> Von Rad states that these “classical prophetic critics” did not realise the degree to which the prophets were influenced by old traditions, which “they re-interpreted and applied to their own times.”<sup>81</sup> They were involved in the cults and myths common to the ancient east, including primitive magical ideas, which, together with their religious interpretations, shaped their message. Thus the classical definition of prophecy, that is, the coming directly of new ideas from the close communion of the prophet and God, has had its credibility challenged. So has the idea of the complete disassociation or dissimilarity, due to divine spirituality, between the “religion of the prophets” and the “cultic religion of the priests,” been challenged.

Still today some biblical critics are busy tearing down the structures that have been built epitomising the prophets as divine interpreters. Yet, as Von Rad points out, there are questions about how far back should you swing, and “what constitutes the original element in their message.”<sup>82</sup> Obviously the prophets must be fully recognised for the importance that their teaching owes to tradition. This is not the time and place to carry on such a critique of what must be re-established or re-defined. What material, for example is indeed “prophetic?” Can the prophets’ teachings can even be evaluated from their social and theological standpoint? However, it is the time and place to recognise that there are different ways of understanding the prophetic message.

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

A debate on the relationship between the prophetic and pastoral roles in ministry has been ongoing. In 1967, Donald Browning argued that these two functions had been turned into two “movements,” neither informed by the other.<sup>83</sup> Each aspect of ministry - worship, preaching, evangelism and education - is to be seen as a part of pastoral care. Each aspect is also participant in the prophetic voice of God that, as Christians, we find in the ministry of Jesus as prophet and priest. To separate the prophetic and the pastoral is to do an injustice to the potential of Christian ministry. It is not the intent of this research to enter fully into the debate, but rather to make note of its significance. My aim is, however, to stress the importance of the prophetic and pastoral functions of ministry, especially as they relate to the research.

Prophetic ministry has often drawn the ire of some people. There are those who do not want to hear, and those for whom a prophetic message is the exclusive domain of the materially and economically poor. Walter Brueggemann says that “The task of prophetic ministry is to nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us.”<sup>84</sup> The dominant culture, in the context of this research, has primarily focussed its attention on the needs of the poor and marginalised who are identified as those “outside the system.” The consensus has been that these people are economically challenged the most. In order to suggest to the dominant culture an alternative perception, the nature of the neediness of the middle

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<sup>83</sup>Donald Browning. “Pastoral Care and Public Ministry,” The Christian Century. Vol. September 28, 1967, p. 1176-77.

<sup>84</sup>Walter Brueggemann. The Prophetic Imagination. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), p. 13.



class participants of this research have to be defined. How those needs are defined will determine the characteristics that come out of this research. How they are addressed will be participant to those providing the pastoral care and employing a pastoral approach that uses as a base the characteristics of this research. We can argue about the enslavement of this particular group. How can affluence at any level be seen as enslavement? If one becomes participant in a particular culture, in this case middle class culture and all of its implications, does one become trapped unwittingly? To be on the receiving end of an attack on the norms of societal class distinctions has ominous repercussions, not just for those in question but also for society itself. The witness of the prophets was powerful, because a message that was vital to the health and stability for everyone would cause disruption of the social order. In their disruption and initial de-stabilising effect, the prophets were able to regulate social, political, and religious change, and thereby preserve social stability amid the disruptions that came with change.

According to Robert Wilson:

prophets may appear on the periphery of a society and direct their activities toward social and religious change. Peripheral prophets of this sort frequently appear in groups which lack political, social, or religious power within the society and which use the authority of the prophetic message to attempt to rectify their powerless state. ...

... Second, prophets may appear within the established power structure of the society. In this case they usually have the function of maintaining the social order, although this maintenance does not preclude criticism of the society. Prophets of this sort are not usually opposed to social and religious change but are interested in insuring that change takes place in an orderly way.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>Robert R. Wilson. Early Israelite Prophecy. James Luther Mays, Paul J. Achtemeier Eds. Interpreting the Prophets. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), p. 7.

Christian prophetic ministry is nothing short of the Christian gospel message that anticipates inclusive interest in all people, without distinction, whether of status, class, or any other societal stereotyping. Challenging the status quo was and is today a key part of prophetic ministry. Its aim of denouncing injustice was and remains for the common good. Underlying this thesis is the belief that an injustice has been done, and therefore a prophetic response is not only legitimate, but also the appropriate response to the needs of the situation. In this way the prophetic can interpret the will of God for those in this study. The role of the prophetic is to bring the message of Jesus to light in situations of need. The implication is that Jesus' message will echo the passion of God for God's people. Ministers have always been called to this task, to share that passion without prejudice. That passion is for the individual as well as communities. It is the researcher's contention that the individuals may receive the prophetic voice for their situations, and perhaps become God's instrument of prophetic voice themselves. Their voices would then liberate and empower others who have similar experiences. It is this understanding of the prophetic that ties in with being pastoral, and therefore any practice of pastoral care needs to include a prophetic voice.

#### iv. Theories of Pastoral Care

Donald Capps says that "pastoral care is most effective when it is based on a strong theoretical foundation."<sup>86</sup> To provide a starting point for the consideration of this

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<sup>86</sup>Donald Capps. Pastoral Care: A Thematic Approach. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1979), p. 9.

participant, we need to know what pastoral care is, what its goal is, and how to approach it.

What is pastoral care? There is a plethora of definitions. This research will work on Clebsch and Jaekle's premise that there are four functions to pastoral care: healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling,<sup>87</sup> and that together these functions contain the essence of the meaning of pastoral care. This viewpoint is based on the researcher's understanding that such functions reflect a centring around wholeness and are rooted in the religious which in turn reflects the essence of Jesus Christ. Whatever the definition, pastoral care, in its broadest sense, is basically the communication of the word of God in an active way, to people at their point of need. It is that to which people are called to be in relation to others: to care; to be present with, to reach out, to touch, to listen to, to share. It is essentially the bringing together of the person who is in need with the revelation of God, found in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus, then, becomes the walking model of pastoral care for Christians.

But one cannot be content merely with an understanding of Jesus and his ministry in the world. There has to be action. The relationship between the person in need and Christ needs to be a committed relationship that is empowered to reflect Jesus as we find him in the gospels. The church is called, therefore, to demonstrate in an active way that its rich traditions have relevance and value for the people of today. The situation before the church, seen in the light of faith, calls us back to the very essence of the Christian

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<sup>87</sup>William A. Clebsch and Charles R. Jaekle, Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective. (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1964), p. 4.

message, creating in us a deep awareness of its true meaning and of its urgent demands. This means more than seeking to understand a person's needs; it means accepting them along with whatever the pain may be that is associated with those needs, and accepting them as real and valid. Added to this, there needs to be a willingness on our part to enter into the suffering with them. Suffering always represents a loss or losses of some kind.

The researcher is especially concerned, for this particular study, with the suffering incurred due to job loss as a result of restructuring and re-engineering. The pain can include, among others, these kinds of losses: loss of self-esteem, self-worth, social status, relationships, financial security and dreams and visions. The church, from its earliest days, has been involved with those who were grieving; grief was always understood as an experience of pain and sadness that people could not refrain from participating in.

There have been a number of studies done to document the link between loss and health.<sup>88</sup> R. Scott Sullender is concerned about why some people become ill, while others respond with renewed strength. His explanation is that people who can grieve freely are renewed, while others, who do not express their grief, internalise it and are susceptible to ill health.<sup>89</sup>

C. Murray Parkes has expressed the necessary perspective:  
Grief is a process, not a state. (It) is not a set of symptoms which start after a loss and then gradually fade away. It involves a succession of clinical pictures which

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<sup>88</sup>R.Scott Sullender mentions Holmes and Rahe, and Colin Murray Parkes in particular. I do not wish to do a full investigation into the literature, but to mention that it is seen as credible, and raises an issue that will be of interest to the study at hand. See Howard W. Stone and William M. Clements, editors. Handbook for Basic Types Of Pastoral Care & Counseling. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991).

<sup>89</sup>Ibid, p. 215.

blend into and replace one another. Each of these stages.... has its own characteristics and there are considerable differences from one person to another as regards both the duration and form of each stage. Nevertheless there is a common pattern whose features can be observed.<sup>90</sup>

It is necessary for a bereaved person to go through the various stages of the grief process in order to achieve a sense of new life. Several different schemes have been proposed as ways of seeing this process. Parkes suggests the stages of “numbness and denial, yearning, disorganisation and despair, and the reorganisation of behaviour.”<sup>91</sup>

An understanding of grief as a process and a detailed knowledge of behaviours at each stage is important. The information may be used to clarify that what the person is experiencing is normal. It is not uncommon for a person reacting to loss to feel as though he or she is falling apart. It is also important to provide the basis for understanding pathological grief. An understanding of the grief that fixates on a particular behaviour of a stage of grief can provide the provider of pastoral care with a focus on which to work.<sup>92</sup> Parkes provides only one way. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross’s On Death And Dying, while written for the loss of human life, nevertheless offers criteria,<sup>93</sup> in the view of the researcher, from which to work when dealing with losses around unemployment and its consequences.

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<sup>90</sup>C. Murray Parkes. Bereavement: Studies of Grief in Adult Life. (International Universities Press, 1971), p. 6-7.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>93</sup>Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, On Death And Dying, (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1969) Ross’ five stages of grief are: Denial and Isolation, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance.

What is the goal of pastoral care? Edward Thornton<sup>94</sup> uses the phrase “finding the centre” to represent the goal of pastoral care. The problem, as Thornton sees it, is to define what that centre is in the function of pastoral care. He acknowledges that there are ongoing challenges that effect an understanding of pastoral care, because it reflects, as it always will, caring as a response to God. Thornton describes a movement that went from an early understanding of pastoral care as caring and shaping our way of living so that it emanated caring, to a systems approach to pastoral care, and, from there, on to a concern for a person’s own being. He concluded that this evolution of thinking raised the importance of the spiritual element of caring, and this must be the key to any definition of the goal of pastoral care.

Howard Clinebell echoes this when he says that the goal of pastoral care is “the broad, inclusive ministry of mutual healing and growth through the life cycle. . . . The overarching goal of pastoral care is to liberate, empower, and nurture wholeness.”<sup>95</sup> The key to wholeness is spiritual growth. “It seeks to liberate our belief systems, our values, and our relationship with God so that our lives will become more open to these deep wellsprings of healing and growth.”<sup>96</sup> Thornton explored this spiritual dimension and

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<sup>94</sup>See Edward E. Thornton, Finding Center in Pastoral Care, in Gerald L. Borchert and Andrew D. Lester, eds., Spiritual Dimensions Of Pastoral Care. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1985), p. 13-26.

<sup>95</sup>Howard Clinebell, Basic Types of Pastoral Care & Counseling. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), p. 26. He adds nurturing to Clebsch and Jaekle’s four functions, although I would see nurturing as part of each of the functions and I see no need to have a separate section. I will use the four functions throughout this work as presuming an aspect of nurture in each.

<sup>96</sup>Howard Clinebell, Counseling for Spiritually Empowered Wholeness. (New York: The Haworth Pastoral Press, 1995), p. 77.

traced it through the question “What must I do?” to that of “What must I know?” and to Carl Rogers’s “What must I say?” to “What must I be?” The solution, for Thornton, was to go back to the beginning. He went back to the heart of the Judeo-Christian tradition and claimed that the centre must be Sainthood.<sup>97</sup>

Sainthood is that relationship with God that evokes a God-consciousness within oneself, and that determines how one responds. A rightness with God would reflect a true understanding of “wholeness” in relation to God.

How do we approach pastoral care? This is the crux of the research. We begin by acknowledging that a pastoral approach cannot be primarily doctrinal, because the dynamic process of life cannot be controlled, and should not be manipulated to fit a particular understanding. That does not mean doctrine is not a part of an approach. For example, grace and the Holy Spirit need to be key elements in the communication of the gospel through a pastoral approach. We begin by looking at the three options proposed by Peter Berger, namely, deductive, reductive, and inductive. These provide the basis from which to view approaches to pastoral care.<sup>98</sup>

The deductive approach stresses the word of God. It is a very clear-cut traditional approach that tells the person receiving pastoral care what to believe. It is a very

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<sup>97</sup>Thornton says that Sainthood has nothing to do with esoteric knowledge or keeping religious rules. It is not something that you can make happen. See Thornton, p. 16-20.

<sup>98</sup>Berger identified three types of theological response to the problem of religion in society. All of these types provide the basis for a model of pastoral care. See Peter Berger, The Heretical Imperative: Contemporary Possibilities of Religious Affirmation (1979), as cited in George M. Furniss, The Social Context of Pastoral Care. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), p. 97-102.

structured approach that imposes an understanding of a scriptural response to a receiver's need, irrespective of his or her particular understanding. There are clear-cut boundaries that are based on past traditions. There is no room to entertain experiences that do not serve to preserve the past. This method allows for domination and exclusivity. It is, in the view of the researcher, a very intolerant and authoritative approach that offers little respect for a receiver's individual faith. The deductive paradigm will not be sufficient to address the changing aspects of work and the workplace. Many of the paradigms of the past have no relevance in today's technological revolution.

The reductive style is very open in that it accepts a pluralistic and secular approach to care. Religion is nothing more than a coping method that some people may want. It downplays religion within the model of pastoral care. It places modern culture above any religious understanding. In comparison to the deductive paradigm of strict and concise boundaries, this method is noticeable because of its lack of precise boundaries. Truth becomes relative; each person is allowed his or her own truth. If the definition of pastoral care is to include a theological attachment, then I am not sure how the reductive approach qualifies as such. If the basis of pastoral care is a recognition of wholeness with God, then this approach has no such foundation from which to proceed.

The third option proposed by Berger is the inductive approach. This method allows the person to share his or her views and feelings, which are heard in the context of both the particular situation and religious tradition. Whereas this method allows for individual experiences, it does so in relation to the tradition of the faith. There is a rootedness in the past, with a flexibility that allows for living in the present and addressing



real needs. It allows for thinking “outside of the box.” By that I mean that while there are boundaries, they are not all based in cement. It allows the caregiver to work out of his or her faith, recognising that it is ongoing and evolving with new experiences. There is an acceptance that one is working in relation to and with God, and not subject to human manipulation.

Howard Clinebell’s “Dimensions of wholeness”<sup>99</sup> offers another approach.

Although the approach is presented in terms of growth counselling, this researcher sees its value in defining a contextual pastoral care, which is the nurturing context of pastoral counselling according to Clinebell. His approach is to ask people to begin by recognising what God has given them. People have been blessed in many ways. Circumstances often cloak the awareness in darkness for people. If we are able to be aware of our senses, the darkness clears and we become aware of our surroundings and our place within them. Clinebell argues that once we become aware of our potential and the reality of a situation, then we will realise our need for help from God.

Our way of living has been programmed by society and it has been allowed to become complex and stress-heavy. We are led to believe that bigger and faster is better, and that we can run our bodies to ruins in the pursuit of material well-being and personal satisfaction. If we are to be healthy, sound in body and mind, we need to acknowledge our abusive lifestyle and seek to revitalise.

A revitalised person is able to look at the condition of his or her intimate relationships and evaluate them. A change in employment status can affect relationships

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<sup>99</sup>Clinebell, p. 31.

far beyond the immediate family. Intimate relationships extend, to some degree, to others around us, our workplace, our communities and the wider global community. They exhibit the essence of who we are in our actions of caring and sharing. Any breakdown affects all of the other relationships. A revitalised person is able to see the effects and seek ways to address them.

Clinebell adds a further dimension. A healthy person would be more in tune with nature, and consequently would experience a lessening of stress and anxiety. This would help create a positive environment not only in which to live, but also in which to work, because it adds to the prospect of being productive and contributing to the betterment of society. To this degree, this dimension of being in harmony with nature would be relevant, but not necessarily key to a pastoral approach. The workplace obviously would benefit from this view, and perhaps employers would help create an environment that is conducive to the well-being of the worker. This, in itself, opens the door to a better understanding between employer and employee. Clinebell suggests that we look at these dimensions in light of our relationship with God. This is the underlying key to pastoral care: a relationship with God.

Don Browning says that “changing cultural context of western societies have eroded a previously taken for granted consensual moral context, that the practices of pastoral care need to be altered. Context had become so unstable that primary issues of morality and ethics need to be attended to in pastoral care relationships.”<sup>100</sup> Moral context

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<sup>100</sup>Don Browning, The Moral Context Of Pastoral Care, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976)

becomes fundamental to pastoral care if pastoral care is about seeking truth for an individual. This is important, especially if that truth is to represent a wholeness in communion with God. “Only when we acknowledge our moral context can we proceed with pastoral care.”<sup>101</sup> In other words, we need to know what we believe about an issue before we can offer the right care. This would necessitate having a background from which to work. This study offers such a background with its theoretical framework.

Ian Percy’s “Six Stations of the inner journey”<sup>102</sup> adds another possible essential ingredient to the pot when developing characteristics needed for an approach to pastoral care. Percy is a facilitator, conference designer, and speaker on how to set people’s spirits free. His “Six Stations” are components of a journey that people find themselves on in life. They are briefly: the Innocent Station, where we have trust and the offering of hope; the Independence Station, where we find our uniqueness and importance of self; the Institution Station, where we realise that the various institutions that we are involved with are dominating our lives, and seeking to have control over us; the Irritation Station, where we realise that we have compromised ourselves in favour of these institutions and have an anger within that needs to be expressed; the Insight Station, where we can look back in light of our anger to our beginning where trust and hope was before us; and the Integration Station, where we can put the other stations together and make sense of where we have been and who we are and where we need to go.

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<sup>101</sup>Ibid, p. 15-16.

<sup>102</sup>Ian Percy. Going Deep. (Toronto: Macmillan Canada, 1997), p. 89-120. Percy also explains how these six stations can be used within the business world in its management model.

This approach is not far removed from the formation of a template advocated by Howard W. Stone. Stone says that we always need to address particular situations of pastoral care in light of specific theological concepts, for example; salvation, sin, grace, or forgiveness.<sup>103</sup> This is true. However, the researcher views all of these as part of a theology of wholeness, and wholeness is the theological basis of all pastoral care. Thus by looking at each situational need in the context of the particular social situation, pastoral care can be addressed in light of any theological assessment, provided that wholeness is at the centre.

Let me say a few words about wholeness. At the beginning of creation, we were made in wholeness that came from God. Pastoral care is centred on this same source of wholeness. It is a wholeness that enables us to live and stand firm against any invasion that detracts from our human dignity. Wholeness brings peace to ourselves, to our heart, our soul, our mind. It helps us to discover our God given gifts and our role in society. Wholeness offers us a sense of community.

I believe that whenever we enter into a relationship with others who are in need, we enter into a relationship with Jesus. As we do this, we are led to the door of wholeness. Jesus came into this world to bring together that which was broken.. He came to bring wholeness that offered a new strength and energy. The wholeness that he offers needs room within the individual to take root. For this to happen, we have to make room.

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<sup>103</sup>Howard Stone says that for all situations, we need a theological assessment and therefore a theological template, a template that is flexible and allows the care giver to give a more accurate pastoral assessment. See Howard W. Stone, Theological Context for Pastoral Caregiving: Word in Deed. (New York: The Haworth Pastoral Press, an imprint of The Haworth Press, Inc., 1996), p. 25-37.

This is where pastoral care comes in. We seek to empty ourselves of our guilt, our grief, our longing, our denials. We then seek to allow truth, understanding and belonging to enter. This becomes the foundation on which wholeness builds itself, until it takes over our lives. Wholeness allows us to be inspired by God in our every day living. It enables us to be nourished and therefore strength to be nurturers to each other.

In summary, I restate my central questions: What is pastoral care? What is its goal? How does one approach it? In my view, pastoral care needs to reflect a theology of wholeness, which in turn reflects the essence of a living Christ. Any approach to pastoral care would have to provide a way in which people of other social and cultural persuasions might accept the validity of the needs of those of this study. Pastoral care needs to have a spiritual dimension that allows for the freeing up of the individual to see the importance of the self. It is important that the individual can look past a societal perception that a middle class person is still better off than a person of low income or no income. Societal context is important and relevant. Pastoral care needs to reflect the cultural setting of the individual along with an understanding of the cultural influence of the institutions involved, and how people can be controlled by their position at work. Finally, pastoral care needs to offer a ray of hope for the individual. To this degree, the tradition of the faith becomes central on a rightness with God, which in turn, reflects the four aspects of pastoral care as outlined by Clebsch and Jaekle.

v.       **The United Church of Canada**

At the 6<sup>th</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada in 1934, the Committee on Christianising the Social Gospel proposed a "transformationist" approach for the church in relation to the social order.<sup>104</sup> The committee stressed the need "to interpenetrate our civilisation with the spirit of Christ, and to transform those agencies and institutions of society that are foreign to that spirit." The church proposed that society reflect an active concern for all people. The church wanted to ensure that attention is being paid to all people through its programs, activities and effective lobbying.

Coming from both its Methodist background and commitment to the social Gospel, The United Church of Canada has a social tradition of concern for equality and fundamental human welfare. This includes the provision of basic needs for all people, a stance motivated by the biblical vision of God's love for each individual. As has been noted, pastoral care is about providing basic needs to any person in need. Although the United Church of Canada has a background of being committed to all people, historically, it has emphasised the provision of assistance for those in the lower economic strata. The UCC has provided strong leadership and care in this regard. However, this has left a void in the provision of pastoral care, where that care is defined as an ability to enter into the suffering of the middle class due to re-structuring and re-engineering in the workplace.

Exchange magazine has been published by the Division of Mission in Canada for twenty years. In a special theme issue of Winter 1998, it reviewed articles that it had

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<sup>104</sup> The United Church of Canada. "Report of the Commission on Christianising the Social Order." General Council Records and Proceedings. (1934)

covered over those twenty years. The magazine states that “Next to bible study programmes and small group worship materials, stories of pastoral care programmes is the next most frequent request.”<sup>105</sup> The articles over those twenty years have been many, and varied. However, job loss for the middle class has not been one of them. This in no way is to infer a lack of concern for this group, however, it does illustrate a preoccupation with a more visible section of the population. This research does not want to get into dialogue about the merits of such a preoccupation, but merely wants to state the perception by the researcher of the church’s actions.

## **II. Summary**

This exposition of certain theoretical aspects at work in my research project is intended to give credible support for the point that I am making in this research, namely that there is a strong case for my opinion that a distinctive pastoral approach for the middle class is needed. The challenge is to find a methodology of encounter which encapsulates the theory in process. The move from theory to action will unfold in the next chapter.

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<sup>105</sup>The Division of Mission in Canada, Exchange, Winter 1998, (Toronto: Division of Mission in Canada, 1998), p. 1.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH PATH AND PROCESS

#### Introduction

Chapter 2 outlined the theory at the heart of this research. This chapter will seek to explain the method that was used to elicit the necessary data to answer the research question. It will highlight the assumptions present at the outset of the research before the action in ministry was taken. The action itself will be explained along with the process of gathering the data for analysis.

#### I. Research Method

The research was undertaken under the premise that all knowledge and understanding are culturally produced, contextually bound, and personally interpreted. It was the aim of this research to look at an individual's understanding of a particular experience in his/her life, and to enable him/her to freely share it. The research sought to look at the experience without prejudice or prejudgment. This phenomenological perspective of qualitative research<sup>106</sup> was pursued with the intent that only the basic elements of the inquiry be studied, without concern for what is accidental. As is the case with any qualitative methodology, the purpose of this phenomenological perspective is to explain and pose understanding. I was aware of the possible bias in recording the data

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<sup>106</sup>Qualitative methodology is used to provide insight, meaning, and understanding about a person's experiences. See Bruce L. Berg, Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences, Third Edition, (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1984), p. 26.



from the interviews therefore the interview tapes were transcribed verbatim. The participants were to recall particular events and feelings from a past experience that had been identified by the research question.

## **II. Assumptions**

The research was undertaken with awareness of the assumptions that were a part of the researcher's experience. It was hoped that assumptions and past experiences could be put aside. This didn't mean denying the existence of preconceptions and presuppositions. It meant being able to set them aside and view with clearer vision what was going on in the events and activities, to see them for what they were. It is difficult to describe an experience for what it is without judging the experience from a particular viewpoint. However, it is important to discover what people are experiencing, how they interpret their experiences, and how they structure their world around them. I attempted to conduct this research in such manner, with the following assumptions clearly laid out:

- That the middle class has been touched by the economic restructuring in a way never previously experienced.
- That this crisis has impacted all the relationships of these individuals, especially their intimate and family relationships.
- That married people in particular are experiencing a profound impact from this crisis.
- That middle class identity has been shaken and changed.
- That there is a need to seek a pastoral care approach that has not been used previously.

- That characteristics can be formulated to provide an approach to the care needed.
- That non- middle class people can accept the need for such help for those middle class people who have been affected by the changes.
- That I have pastoral skills enabling me to create a friendly and safe environment in which the participants will speak freely.
- That persons will be open and straight forward in the interviews.

### **III. Action In Ministry**

The action in ministry was twofold:

1. To interview identified individuals.
2. To analyse the data, in order to define and develop criteria for the characteristics of an appropriate pastoral approach.

I chose the interview method in order to facilitate a process that would enable the individuals to make their voices heard, give them the opportunity to get in touch with themselves, and to attune them to life's realities. It was my expectation that the interview process would yield sufficient data to provide necessary information for developing characteristics for an approach to pastoral care. I was aware of the nature of the interview process. In order for it to succeed, first impressions would be important. People accept others emotionally first, and justify logically later. If I was going to achieve my goal of extracting the information that I was seeking, I would have to keep my objectives in mind, yet at the same time, be prepared to receive questions. Despite the obvious pitfalls of the

interview process, I saw this method as the best way of pursuing my question.

#### **IV. Data Collection: Participants, Method**

##### **i. Participants**

The participants were found within the boundaries of Halton Presbytery of The United Church of Canada. Letters were sent to a selected number of ministers from Pastoral Charges within the Presbytery outlining the project, and asking each minister to forward the invitation to appropriate participants. The ministers were later contacted by phone for their response. The response was good. Interest from the various ministers was extremely high. The ministers dealt with the notice of invitation in different ways: a number of them posted notices in their bulletins for interested people to call either their offices or call the researcher; others, themselves, contacted specific individuals. Apparently, some of the respondents were quick and enthusiastic in agreeing to meet, while others needed time to consider before making a decision. The names were then forwarded to me via phone by the respective ministers.

The final selection of the participants was screened by me through telephone conversations. The selection was done in light of my definition of middle class, and whether or not the individuals fit the criteria. The screening process eliminated a number of people for a variety of reasons: For instance a couple of people had not been given complete information at the beginning. A single mother, and a person whose spouse would not agree to meet, were disappointed, yet they understood that they did not meet the criteria as identified in the following paragraph. I also met with two other couples for a

first interview, but subsequently found they did not match the criteria, although the telephone screening interview had indicated otherwise. However, both situations raised issues for further exploration that are outside the bounds of this research.

It was important to ensure that a balance of participants<sup>107</sup> could be attained. The research project had been put together with the intention of interviewing five couples. These couples were to be from the middle class, with one of the partners having lost a job through downsizing.<sup>108</sup> All were required to have United Church backgrounds and to have been recently active. It was the intention of the researcher to select only those people who were still unemployed. However, it became apparent that those who had found employment were still struggling to cope with their loss. As the number of responses were from individuals in this category, and their brief interviews indicated an attraction for me to pursue, I decided to change the criteria as it referred to this particular aspect to accommodate and include those who had found employment.<sup>109</sup> Once the participants had been chosen, each participant was required to sign a consent form. This was done at the first interview. Although the research was intended for five married couples, a sixth couple

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<sup>107</sup>The participants were to include both male and female who had been made redundant.

<sup>108</sup>I chose married couples for my project. It is my view that by concentrating on this criterion, I was better able to manage and evaluate the data. I was in no way trying to infer that only married couples need a pastoral approach to help them deal with today's realities. In fact, the screening interviews acknowledged the need for further research to concentrate on single parents, single persons, and physically-challenged persons. Although they were noted, the research did not explore their situations.

<sup>109</sup>The prospect remains for further work to be done using only those individuals who are still without work.

was added due to eliciting the interest of the researcher in the original screening interview. This made a list of twelve people to be interviewed.

## ii. Method of Obtaining Data

The original intent was to have three interviews. During the first interview, however, it became apparent that two interviews would be sufficient. What happened was that during the first interview with the first participant, the questions moved more quickly than I had anticipated, and I found myself moving into the beginning question of the proposed second interview. Interviews 1 and 2 were therefore combined. The interviews were taped, with the participant being informed when the tape was turned on, and later, turned off.<sup>110</sup> In conjunction with the interviews, the participants had consented to keep a journal, for which a book was provided by the researcher. The journal was to allow the participants to add additional material following the interview, if appropriate. The journals were to be either collected by the researcher or mailed by the participants.

All interviews were semi-structured and conducted by the researcher. They were arranged for a mutually agreed time and place. The venues ranged from personal homes(18), a church basement(2), and a church office(2), to a breakfast room at a Holiday Inn(2). The meetings at the participants' homes varied according to the degree of privacy provided. They went from a quiet room separated from any distractions, to rooms that were part of an open concept where other people moved through at different times.

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<sup>110</sup>Although approval was given over the phone, one individual was extremely reluctant to be taped at the initial interview and had to be persuaded.

There were two interviews with each individual. Each interview varied in time, and was conducted separately with each participant. Field notes were taken by the researcher following each interview.

The questions<sup>111</sup> were framed around the goals of the interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to allow the interviewees opportunities to tell their stories and to provide data for the researcher from which characteristics could be identified for a pastoral approach. Therefore, the questions took an invitational approach of asking them to “tell me ...” to share those stories. The taped interviews were later transcribed verbatim.<sup>112</sup>

The questions allowed new themes to emerge. New themes were subsequently identified and are included. The verbatim reports were analysed for their content and are presented through the interpretive lens of the interviewees. The field notes, although intended to be objective in nature, must bear an acknowledgement from the researcher of a possible participative influence and interpretation. The tense used in the field notes is present tense in order to reflect their context in a given time and particular situation. Although the participants’ response to journaling following the interviews was limited to one, the researcher decided to include it with the data. The individuals were notified about the journals, and asked to complete them if they felt they had more to say. The only conclusion that I can gather is that the interview process was sufficient, and the interviewees comfortable enough that all had been said.

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<sup>111</sup>The questions are found in Appendix C.

<sup>112</sup>The accuracy of the verbatim reports was dependent on the clarity of the voices. There were occasions where the voice is unrecognizable or muffled. These instances are noted in the verbatim reports. Long pauses were also noted, as were laughter and other outside noises.

There is a summary following each section providing reflection. These summaries are then used to formulate a conclusion.

## V. Coding Method

The questions that were asked were intended to allow the interviewees the freedom to express themselves in such a way that the necessary data required to conclude the research would be freely obtained. In order to make sense of the data, and to be true to its content and context, the taped interviews were transcribed verbatim. In collecting the data, I was looking for more than the words used by the participant. The physical movements, tone, and inflection of the voice were important material that would allow a more rounded understanding to the words. This data was noted in the subsequent field notes taken by myself. The categories were based on the questions asked, which in turn, were based on the researcher's liberally adapted understanding and interpretation of Clinebell's Six Dimensions of Wholeness.<sup>113</sup> They were chosen with the intention of gathering a wide spectrum of data that would seek to care for the wholeness of the person.

The data was carefully sorted according to the categories that arose from the questions. The data that did not fit into a category was assigned a new category that would reflect the content of the data. New categories did arise during the interviews. The data was also subdivided into primary interviewees and their spouse. The summary of

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<sup>113</sup>Clinebell, p. 31.

each category was then used to highlight recurring characteristics that would provide the response to the research question.

It was by looking at the data, in light of the field notes, and in conjunction with theory, that I wrote the section on reflections on the study, to be found in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

#### Introduction

The interviews were cordial and productive. This chapter will not describe the data in their entirety. The sheer enormity of the verbatim reports prevents such a presentation. Therefore, summaries of the data will be given. The data is presented according to the questions. The field notes are presented as they were taken, without editing, to reflect the tone and immediacy of their origin.

The data collected through the process of the individual interviews provided over 120 pages of single spaced verbatim documentation. The following is a condensed summary of each response given to the questions. In order to present the thoughts of the interviewees, the commentary is that of the participants and their spouses, and is not the author's interpretation. The author's interpretation will be presented in Chapter 5. Where possible, I have included the actual wording. In order to protect the confidentiality of the participants, I have given them aliases. I chose to name them alphabetically, beginning with the first participant whom I called "Alan" and "Alice," and moving down the alphabet to No.6, "Frank" and "Fiona."<sup>114</sup> The responses I have recorded are to the questions asked. The participants will be identified as follows: the main interviewee by the prefix 1., the spouses by prefix 2.

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<sup>114</sup>The participants and their spouses are in order: aliases - Alan & Alice; Brian & Brenda; Chris & Cathleen; David & Doreen; Evan & Eunice; Frank & Fiona.

- I. In response to the questions.
  - i. Tell me about the losses and how they have affected your thinking about life, yourself, your family.

1. Alan

Alan experienced the first job loss when his company downsized its operations. His position was made redundant. Foreknowledge of the impending action was non-existent. It was a complete surprise. The participant was to leave at that instant, or come back and clear out his desk the next day. He chose to come back the next day. However, when he returned the next day, he also took the time to make a list of all the outstanding items and projects in his portfolio to leave with whomever was in charge of the department. Even in the midst of what Alan called as the most traumatic experience in his life, an experience that would have far reaching implications for himself and his family, he responded in the only way that he knew. He needed to finish his work to the point that he was able.

He received a settlement package that he viewed as good. This package was complemented by an outplacement counselling package, also seen as excellent by Alan.

The second job loss came after a long drawn out process. The company's actions that led to his ultimate dismissal began as they started taking away many of his responsibilities. This was aided by changing the office space, making the space smaller. Subsequently he found himself faced with having to make a number of presentations in situations where he believed his job was on the line.

This loss was seen by Alan as having psychological implications. The process used by the employer was seen by the participant as “working on my head.”<sup>115</sup> This led to a number of behavioural problems at home. He was eventually dismissed. The reason given was that he was not doing the job required. He was also told that they were not reducing the job. In actuality, the job was eliminated. This led to another form of loss, according to Alan, as a loss of naivety in how could the employer be so dishonest. This dishonesty by the employer was difficult for Alan to comprehend, especially as they (company) had made a deliberate and calculated effort to diminish his role and a conscious effort to make his position less palatable week by week.

The ongoing trauma had placed Alan in a position where he never knew from day to day whether he would be dismissed or not. There was no severance settlement with this job loss.

The biggest loss experienced as a result of being dismissed the first time, in Alan’s view, was one of self-esteem. He had been in a position for three years, where he was responsible for 250 people covering a number of operations. Losing his position raised questions for him: “Are my skills no longer required.” “ Am I still employable?” These, along with various questioning of his abilities, raised the question of self-worth. He began to question his value to the workplace. He also lost that working relationship with his co-managers of the other departments, which added to the loss of self-esteem and his confidence.

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<sup>115</sup>All quotes in this section of summaries are taken directly from the verbatim report.

He saw the second loss as bringing a more traumatic effect on his mental state. The dishonesty of the company in its actions took his feeling of loss of self-esteem and self-worth to a new level, far surpassing his experience with his first loss. It also had much more of an impact on his financial position. Loss of income was more of a struggle due to the lack of a settlement package. The financial loss led to various cutbacks at home.

#### 1. Brian

“Your job has been restructured and now you can speak to the outplacement person.” This was news that greeted Brian one morning. The messenger then left the room. The next communication was that Brian could either go back to his office or go straight home. “We don’t want to make you feel bad.” Brian decided to go to his office and clear things out. He was escorted there by another employee whose role it seemed was to make sure he didn’t take company goods. (This was Brian’s opinion.) There had been no indication of the eventuality of him being dismissed. The news had come as a complete shock.

Brian associated a number of losses with the dismissal: A loss of money, as it was a well-paid job; a loss of position of power and respect; a loss of contact with the people whom you would expect to keep in touch; a loss of expectation for retirement; a loss of zeal for a career, and a loss of self-worth and self-esteem.

You’ve poured your guts into a place and that’s the way I had always worked. They take you back to your office and I’m sitting there and I got furious to the point ‘well can I take this, can I take this?’ And then they say ‘give us the pass to the parking garage’ you’re not allowed in the building anymore. You’re judged almost to be a criminal, you’re going to go back and do something wrong that’s why you can’t have your pass. You’re going to come back and look at information you shouldn’t look at because you’re going to do something bad. I was going to

throw my pass at the Human Resource person that was doing this but in the realisation to the fact it's not her fault. She's just being instructed so all your automatic systems kick in that your mother and father taught you. When my boss said to me -your letter and all that stuff . . . . passed it over to me - all I could think of was "thank you." I mean it was just . . . . there was no feeling of rage just the feeling of it was lost, just gone. Driving home I said 'I'm dreaming' by the time you get home you realise that it's true and then you have to (big sigh) go through the situation when you have to tell your wife. And we men are stoics. I didn't cry and all that stuff. (Laughing) she didn't have the same restraints on her that I do. (Brian)

The loss of enthusiasm for work is seen by Brian as his biggest loss. His dismissal took away his identity. He lost that key part of who he saw himself as. His position at work gave him his position in life. Losing that has lost him that part of life that motivated him to get up in the morning with a sense of purpose. He acknowledges that this loss has been heavy on his family. Instead of his personality being able to help him deal with the loss, that personality has been changed, and this has led to a change in the climate at home.

#### 1. Cathleen

The company was a subsidiary of a large multinational company that was sold. The reason for the sale was not made clear. According to Cathleen, there were two positions of thought. One was that the company needed to go back to their core business and therefore the need to restructure. The second position was that there was pressure for cash and revenue for the parent company. This was the position that Cathleen took.

Cathleen had come in to work, sick with the flu, and four months pregnant. She was shocked to be told that she had been fired; there had been no warning. In retrospect, she realised that over a considerable period of time, a number of changes had been

undertaken in the company, and perhaps she should have seen something on the horizon. She had a new boss who had a mandate that didn't quite fit with the mandate for which she had originally been hired. Cathleen was aware that the company was doing a huge amount of restructuring, but couldn't believe that all of this could affect "the golden haired child," which is how she saw herself. She had had the "golden haired" career, with numerous opportunities, and with promotion after promotion in an industry that was not known for its flexibility with female staff. The job was filled with someone more junior, and eventually the job ceased to exist.

Cathleen's second job loss was due to the economic downturn. The company had laid off 25% of its white collar force two years prior. At the time of her news, 500 blue collar workers had been laid off the previous month, and news of further cuts to white collar jobs was widely known throughout the company. The news was not totally unexpected, and the settlement was generous.

Cathleen saw herself as being identified by her work; therefore the job loss was seen as the only loss for her.

You lose you job you lose everything.... I always expected to be president (laughs); was brought up to be very ambitious and push myself and so worked very long hours. Didn't expect to get married and have children when I was in business school and even when I had children worked pretty significantly, so my identity was quite tied up with my work, so when I lost my job I lost connection to what I thought I was good at, I lost connection with my whole circle of friends, I was quite unrooted. (Cathleen)

Cathleen took the losses as an affront to who she was. To be in a leadership role was to her more important than the money, although the income was important for the family lifestyle. She felt that her identity had been taken away. Also at play in her thinking

was that she had purposely sought to avoid working the way that her father had had to work. Cathleen believed that as a result of her education, (two degrees in business), she was not going to be stuck in a working class situation and be participant in such working class inevitabilities. Job loss was one of those inevitabilities, and this was painful for her to take.

#### 1. Doreen

The first job loss for Doreen was, according to her, handled well. She had lots of notice and had a smooth transition into another job. The company was restructuring and were quite open with its agenda. They provided a good settlement package.

The second loss was more traumatic and unexpected. Doreen received a phone call to attend a meeting that was being held a number of hours journey away. She attended the meeting just to be told that she didn't have a job. There had been no indication of what was about to happen. It came as a complete shock. Travelling all that way for such news was viewed by Doreen as "humiliating and cruel."

The third job loss was even more of a shock. "No explanations - just like a ton of bricks - they just escorted us out of the building." The company never did inform Doreen of the reason why she was dismissed. She believed that it was widely known that this particular company had grown too fast and couldn't afford the expansion. In hindsight, Doreen realised that something had to happen, yet it never occurred to her that her job could be involved.

A number of jobs were eliminated, her job being one; it was absorbed into another part of the company. Despite her past experience of job loss, she saw this one as the one

that hurt the most. Doreen felt that she had done everything that she had been required to do, and had given the company her fullest devotion and loyalty.

She acknowledged a multitude of losses. There was a loss of self-esteem, and a sense of rejection. She had gone through university, and had been moving ahead as planned before experiencing what she felt were blows to her identity. A job loss to Doreen meant that she was left “an empty shell.” She admitted that she “had difficulty in knowing what to do for a whole day without having to leave for work.” The third job loss was the most traumatic and most difficult one to come to terms with. She couldn’t see any logic to this particular situation and couldn’t understand why this had happened to her.

#### 1. Evan

Evan’s first job loss was due to a downsizing of the public service. Decentralisation in the provincial civil service meant transfers to different parts of the province for many of its employees. Evan was involved in what he saw as a number of confusing arrangements. He was led to believe that he was moving to one area. This was changed at the last minute to another area, which was again changed, and ultimately Evan was let go.

He was called in and told that he was no longer needed. They didn’t want him to return to his desk if he didn’t have to. Evan decided to return and clean out his desk. He was offered and accepted another job in a different part of the civil service. This position didn’t last long, as funding ran out and he was let go again. This was, technically, his second job loss.



Although there was no prior notice in either situation, Evan understood that changing governments often meant change in the civil service, and government funding was always unpredictable. The settlement package seemed appropriate at the time and was deemed sufficient by government to disqualify the participant for unemployment insurance. He was out of work for a period of two years.

His third and most severe job loss, in his opinion in terms of trauma, occurred a few weeks after he had been told that his latest job was being renewed. He tells of how the whole department in which he worked was called together for a video conference call. It was with this call that the news was given that they were all gone. The whole department was out-sourced.

Evan acknowledges multiple losses in this situation. He had understood work as defining to a degree who he was. It was a key part of his identity. He had experienced losses before, but this time he experienced a loss of self-esteem. He said, "You have a feeling of not being good enough. . . . of not being worthy of being given a job." His son's university career had to be sacrificed due to lack of funds. The son was told that he could not get funding because his parents owned a house.<sup>116</sup> Evan experienced a loss of friends, or perhaps more correctly in Evan's view, an understanding of who his real friends were in times of need. He went through what he saw as a bout of depression. This was compounded as another son left home. Evan acknowledges that there had been disagreements prior to the job losses. However, he saw the subsequent losses as

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<sup>116</sup>Whether this was policy or a callous comment by an employee of the university is not clear.

exacerbating the situation. The comments from his son were, “Why do what society wants when society doesn’t care for you - they kick you in the teeth!”

### 1. Frank

Frank’s job loss came as a result of the company being sold. He had been part of the conversion team and spent a year working on how the company could be integrated into the new company. The subsequent loss of employment came as a shock, especially in light of his close association with the conversion team. There was no reason given for the decision. Frank’s opinion was that it was quite clear that the cultures of both companies were different and that they could not exist together. The settlement package included a bonus equivalent to a further three months salary, and an outplacement service provided for three months.

Frank didn’t initially see the job loss as precipitating any further losses. However, as time progressed, he felt that the loss had begun to play a part on his self-worth. “Am I obsolete? - What am I going to have to try and do now, in order to get something? Really do I have the skills that are needed out there?”<sup>117</sup>

(The responses from the spouses.)

### 2. Alice

The job loss was seen as a loss of security for Alice. Her spouse had provided the financial security for the family. He had been the one with the secure income and full time employment. Alice saw the last job loss as instrumental in the change in their relationship;

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<sup>117</sup>These were actual words used by the subject in question.

their roles were reversed. She had been the one whose temperament was up and down; Alan, on the other hand, was the stable one. Alice attributed this to the job loss and the way that they had dealt with it. This was seen by her as a loss in terms of their relationship. There was also a feeling of loss in terms of having confidence in the business world. There was, "... loss of confidence in the whole organisation which is supposed to reward people who work hard and were good managers." She also saw the job loss as giving rise to a feeling of "a sense of loss of identity as a valuable human being, a loss of rights. . . . a feeling that we've been exploited and used." She felt a sense of evil and that they (her family) had been victims of an immoral company.

#### 2. Brenda.

Brenda saw a number of losses, including the obvious job loss and the significant loss of income, but perhaps more importantly, a loss of self-esteem for Brian. She was also aware of how they (these losses) impacted on her and their family.

#### 2. Chris.

Chris didn't sense any loss for himself, but he was concerned about his spouse Cathleen and what the loss meant for her. He did admit that there was some difficulty for him in understanding the severity of the way she took the news.

#### 2. David.

David saw that his spouse had lost her job, but she had lost jobs before. His main concern was to be supportive.

#### 2. Eunice.

Eunice said that she experienced a loss of income, but that was all.

## 2. Fiona.

The job loss resulted in Fiona losing her trust in the workplace. She is really concerned about a loss of security for their retirement.

### Summary:

According to the participants, the job losses were primarily the result of downsizing and restructuring. The ways in which companies proceeded to enact the changes were varied. A number of companies were straightforward with the news, and had offered some prior notification. Others used rather draconian methods.

The losses incurred by the six participants included a loss of sense of identity, self-worth, and self-confidence, a loss of friends, and a loss of power and influence. These were fairly consistent and predictable. They were said to be identity-shattering for most. There were a multitude of losses for two, and somewhat less debilitating factors for one.

The predominant factors for the spouses were loss of security, and loss of trust and confidence in the workplace. The level of anxiety for spouses ranged from mild concern to significant anxiety. The effect on family was felt by most as being disconcerting.

(The following data will be presented with the participant and his or her spouse following each other.)

- ii. **Tell me how you have been dealing with the experience and feelings.**

1. **Alan**

**Alan conceded that his self-esteem took a sizable hit. He realised that he became agitated, especially while trying to come to terms with the new financial situation. This was accentuated by his son's perception that his father's demeanour had changed. Alan had always had difficulty expressing his feelings; he therefore endeavoured to receive counselling to help him deal with all that he felt to be "working its way through my mind." Alan didn't feel that this counselling had any effect on him.**

2. **Alice**

**Alice said that she felt the importance of the faith community and how it afforded an avenue for her to verbalize her feelings. She has used this community to help her deal with how she felt.**

1. **Brian**

**Brian said that he does not talk to his spouse about his feelings, because he feels that "she is too judgmental." He believes that he needs someone who will just listen and not try to fix things. Brian is very close to his sister, to whom he says he "shares most of his feelings." He also tries to deal with his feelings by himself.**

2. **Brenda**

**Brenda said that her spouse says she's "like an ostrich who buries her head and thinks things will just go away." She feels that she deals with her feelings, "by putting**

them away 'inside', on a daily basis, and so perhaps he is right." Brenda voiced a yearning to be able to open up more to her spouse, but she feels that she might say something that she should not. She worries a lot about the future, retirement, and something happening to her spouse.

#### 1. Cathleen

Cathleen had been working with a support group prior to her job losses. The group told her that "You have the capability to heal your own hurts if you have sufficient support and attention, and if the world worked well and young people had sufficient support and attention, they would grow up without all the prejudices and hurts people carry." She re-connected with this group, and used them to help her articulate and deal with her feelings. She also met with a private therapist to help her handle her emotions.

#### 2. Chris

Chris said that he didn't experience a sense of personal loss. But he was concerned about his spouse and her well-being. He had no real anger against the organisation that had fired his spouse. He did express confusion with the time it seemed to take her to get over the loss.

#### 1. Doreen

Doreen said that she "felt depressed at first, but didn't have time to stay depressed." She said that she would "often deal with feelings by motivating herself with self-talk."

#### 2. David

David said that “his feelings didn’t count, all that was important was my wife’s feelings.” He believed that “if she snapped at him for any reason, it wasn’t personal, he just had to be supportive.”

1. Evan

Evan said that he was “a laid back person who is not easily bothered.” Yet, at the same time, he said “I continue to go to family counselling.”

2. Eunice

Eunice said that the “experience was nothing more than any one else would experience.” She also said that “she goes to family counselling.”

1. Frank

Frank said, “my spouse is a sensitive and perceptive person, who would always know where I stood, and would know how to get me to express my feelings.” He also said that “there were times when I felt that I was a nervous wreck.”

2. Fiona

She dealt with the loss by trying to come to terms with the news. The news was not unanticipated, but still when it came, she and her spouse were unprepared, and she became consumed with the blow.

**Summary:**

The participants were not representative of couples who verbalize their feelings openly with each other. Four members of the group sought counselling as an avenue for dealing with what was happening to them. The church was helpful to one participant.

iii. **Tell me how your relationships have/have not changed.**

**1. Alan**

Alan said that his relationship with his spouse “didn’t change, although she has become more aggressive in her approach to snap me out of any down times that I have.” “When we are stressed, we snap at each other more often.” The relationship with his son changed. His son realised that “dad was not superman and can lose his job just the same as anyone else.” Alan’s relationship with friends never altered, “primarily due to the lack of close friends in the first place.” His relationship with the workplace changed dramatically, as he became “more cynical.”

**2. Alice:**

Alice acknowledged that their relationship as a couple changed as the role of the secure person in the relationship was exchanged. She realised that she could “no longer depend on my husband to be the stable person that he once was.” The situation also forced them to look at lifestyle issues, especially when dealing with the consequence for their son, and the need to “ensure that his sense of security would remain firm for him.” Her son became more aware of the changing situation as he would experience their emotional outbursts.

**1. Brian:**

Brian said that he “is more honest with his spouse, and that this isn’t always helpful.” He believes that his careless attitude bothers his spouse. Brian said that the relationship that he has with his children has changed. He has become “more carefree



towards them.” He is free-er with his money and has adopted a lapsed approach to some of the house rules.”

2. Brenda:

Brenda’s relationship with her spouse has changed. “He doesn’t have the drive for life, or for work anymore.” This irritates her, and she wishes that he would take a stand and get back into a working situation for which he is qualified. It has changed her relationship with the workplace. She can no longer see herself going back to an office position where such an experience that beset her spouse may be a reality for her.

1. Cathleen:

Cathleen said that she feels that her relationship with her spouse is better. She believes that they understand each other more. The relationship with her children seems “to be much better.” She is connecting with them on a level that is new to her, and enjoyable. “By changing my workaholic attitude, and by putting a priority on my home-life, it has made it much easier for me in my relationships.” There is, in her view, “less rigidity” in her husband, and therefore “it has made it easier for me to be with him.”

2. Chris:

Chris stated that he feels “that we have been pushed apart in some ways.”

1. Doreen:

Doreen said that she finds herself “talking with David more on issues of family and lifestyle balance, and how my work has gotten in the way.” The relationship with her daughter has “always been a struggle,” and the job loss hasn’t helped the relationship.

2. David:

David didn't see "any change in their marriage relationship." The relationship with his daughter continues to be "a handful."

1. Evan:

Evan said that his relationship with his spouse has changed. He sees her as being "less tolerant when things get pressing financially, and she lets me know about it." His job losses have made his relationship with one particular son worse. The son has now left the home. His relationships with his other boys have become closer and more supportive. The workplace relationship has changed his thinking. He says, "I no longer sees myself as having a full time job." He sees his future in the workplace as being filled with a "number of short term contract work assignments."

2. Eunice:

Eunice said that there had been no change in any of her relationships.

1. Frank:

Frank didn't think that their relationship had changed, although he did conclude that in some ways there was a "certain feeling of distance" between them.

2. Fiona:

Fiona said that her "underlying relationship with Frank and our son didn't really change," and therefore she sees herself as being fortunate

Summary:

There were some discrepancies in the responses. A number of people didn't discern any change in their relationships with spouses, whereas their spouses did se

changes. Many did see changes in their relationships with their children, some positive, some not. The affiliations with the workplace were predominantly changed for the worse.

iv. Tell me what you do for fun and recreation.

1. Alan: He likes to spend time in the outdoors with nature.

2. Alice: She likes to have quiet walks.

1. Brian: He enjoys music and church activities.

2. Brenda: She belongs to a sorority chapter. She works on church activities and likes to help others.

1. Cathleen: She reads junk fiction and plays the piano. She likes to take hot baths and listen to music. She also goes out with girl friends to dinner.

2. Chris: He likes talking with a couple of friends. He likes to spend time once the kids are in bed to either watch TV or read the paper.

1. Doreen: She is not good at relaxing. She has planted a number of plants in the garden but believes as soon as she gets another job they will be left to die.

2. David: He likes to golf regularly. He coaches his son's softball team, is involved in church activities, skates twice a week, and likes to do things with the family.

1. Evan: He says that they do not do anything. When they are feeling particularly down they put in a video and watch a movie.

2. Eunice: She doesn't believe there is such a thing as fun. They do not relax, they have "no time for it and fun costs money."

1. Frank: He continued to share the same forms of relaxation. He likes music, movies and being outdoors. He did a number of 'family stuff' activities.

2. Fiona: She likes to hike, to read, interact with her children, play with the family. They had made a deliberate effort to concentrate on their children to make sure that they didn't lose out in their parents' difficult times.

**Summary:**

The activities varied. Only one couple professed to doing things together on a regular basis. One person didn't believe that there was such a thing as fun, since fun costs money. There did not appear to be any changes in the relaxation activities as a result of the job losses. One couple made a determined effort to ensure that their children did not lose out as a result of the difficult times.

- v. Tell me how you have seen God in all of this. Tell me about your relationship with God and how it has changed over this time.

1. Alan:

Alan said that God was there all along. "God's presence was in the people around me." He didn't question his faith. "Faith became an important part of the way I was able to deal with my situation." He had a sense that he had something to lean on besides his family.

2. Alice:

Alice said that she received the news at work, where she was in the presence of the church secretary and her minister. Therefore, she had “a sense of the presence of God around me as being comforting and caring.” She felt lucky to be in that situation. Her faith assured her that the loving arms of God surrounded her.

1. Brian:

Brian’s relationship with God was “not clear at the time.” He didn’t have a “reliance on God as a force in my life.” Faith was not part of his coping mechanism at the time. He said that his faith has become more prevalent since his job loss. He has become involved in his church with Bible study and Sunday morning attendance. He sees his faith as developing an understanding of God that requires “a recognition of being thankful even for the small things in life.”

2. Brenda:

Brenda had an understanding that “God had always been a part of my life.” She did momentarily ask the question “Why us?” but soon thought, “Better it happen to someone who had a belief rather than someone without God in their lives.” She sees her relationship with God as one that has grown stronger since her spouse’s job loss and their attempt to deal with its repercussions.

1. Cathleen:

At the time of her job loss, Cathleen said that she “didn’t have an intimate relationship with God.” She didn’t feel any connectedness to God. Her faith was not an active faith; she had grown up with a church background, but that had been let go during her adult years. Her job loss motivated her to look to “a place that appeared solid.” “The

church and its minister provided the place and the person.” She now has a very active faith. She is very energetic in her church activities. The church plays a significant role in the lives of her family.

2. Chris:

Chris’ relationship with God was “not a close one.” His faith was not an active faith. He saw the importance of faith for his children, but didn’t sense the need of it for himself until they moved to a new area and started to get involved in the church. He sees his faith as one that has gradually evolved over time. It has “not been affected by the job loss of my wife or the situation that it created, but rather due to my stage in life.”

1. Doreen:

Doreen said that her job loss was not earth shattering and therefore not important enough to make her question God and God’s presence. Her faith never waned, and the relationship that she has with God hasn’t changed. She continues to believe that God is present with her, guiding her personally. Her faith today is stronger as a result of experiencing her loss. She says that “there is a need for help in terms of more than the everyday help in living my life.”

2. David:

David said that he has a strong attachment to “the presence of archangels being with me and looking after both myself and my wife.” He feels that he has been blessed. God has always been with him. There was a time when expressing his inner feelings became a reality. He attributes this to the arrival of new ministers at their church.

1. Evan:

Evan was brought up in a religious household, and had a belief in God in an “abstract way.” It was not until he had to deal with job loss that his relationship with God became a personal one. It is his conviction that God has intervened in a variety of ways to “aid us financially.”

2. Eunice:

Eunice said that there were times when she questioned God, asking “Why me?” But she basically relies on what she sees as God’s promises to help them through. Her faith has grown stronger, “despite periods of wavering.” The relationship that she has with God is closer.

1. Frank:

Frank believes that “God is always present no matter what happens.” There is “an understanding of a reassurance and calmness” that he accredits to the presence of God. He believed that his faith was significant enough to enable him to deal with things as they came along.

2. Fiona:

Fiona said that she has never experienced the absence of God. “There has always been a sense of God within me.”

Summary:

God was seen as having a presence in the lives of most of the participants prior to the job losses. There were a number of lapsed relationships with God that were rejuvenated by the situation. Those with a less active faith became more active, although

there were two who admit to having questioned why it had happened to them. All of the people now have a very operative faith.

- vi. Tell me how much effort you put into developing your spiritual health.

1. Alan:

Alan has had regular attendance at church for many years, participating in church programs along the way. He has always enjoyed the outdoors and being aware of the natural things that are a part of God's world. This is seen as a very important and a spiritually enhancing time for him. He said that he has a need to always be thankful to God for who he is and what he has. A part of this can be attributed to his upbringing.

2. Alice:

Alice takes "at least one half hour each day for quiet, prayerful, meditative time." "Singing or humming a mantra of some kind" is also a part of her spiritual enhancing routine. As a result of her spouse's job loss she began a more earnest approach to self-care, investigating her physical, spiritual, and emotional health with a therapist.

1. Brian:

Brian's spiritual health "is up and down." There is an attempt on his part to try and manage his spiritual health by using "tricks," such as keeping a smile on his face while walking down the street..

2. Brenda:



Brenda said that she does not believe that she devotes enough time to her spiritual health. However she does consider herself “more spiritually healthy than others.”

1. Cathleen:

Cathleen said that Church fills part of her spiritual need. She has become more involved in study groups with a “more conscious eye on community needs.” Prayer plays an active role in her life, whereas prior to her job loss, it was non-existent.

2. Chris:

Chris has become “more determined and conscious” with regard to his spiritual health. The “focus and interest on bible study, trying to piece together how to live, work and be spiritual at the same time,” has emerged, he believes, out of the job loss predicament.

1. Doreen:

Doreen sees a period of quiet time in the morning as part of her daily ritual. It is a new thing in her life that has emerged out of the need for “an improved relationship with my daughter.” This relationship had deteriorated at the same time as her job loss, although she does not see it as a consequence.

2. David:

David has always seen prayer as playing a key role in his life. The same prayer ritual of being thankful for health, family and friends has been said every day. He has put a higher priority on church attendance.

1. Evan:

**Evan said that he has not put much effort or thought into his spiritual health, although prayer has become a part of his daily routine.**

**2. Eunice:**

**Eunice uses prayer and “devotional material” to aid her spiritual health.**

**1. Frank:**

**Frank believes that his spiritual health is good, “I have not had such a thing as a spiritual cold.” He has always had a belief that there is a need for quiet, reflective, peaceful times. This had been his practice prior to his job loss.**

**2. Fiona:**

**Fiona said that spirituality is important to her, and that she maintains a spiritual connection. She has “an active faith with constant questions” that has always been a part of her thinking about God.**

**Summary:**

**Attention to the spiritual life varied among the people. Those for whom the relationship with God was close prior to the job loss paid attention to their spiritual health. Those who had no close relationship paid little or no attention. Following the job losses, all the people recognised the need to either continue or improve their spiritual health in tangible ways.**

- vii. **Tell me what you have experienced as motivating and empowering.**

**1. Alan:**

**Following his first job loss, the opportunity to explore other areas of work became the motivating force for him. Subsequent to his last job loss, he sees the “opportunity to do his own thing” as a motivating factor for him. However, he says that “this has not happened as of yet.”**

**2. Alice:**

**Alice is motivated by her ability and opportunity to express her creativity. This is effectuated in ways that make her able to “empower people to discover admirable things about themselves.” “The privilege to work with a team of people is not only a motivating factor, but also empowering” for her. The job loss for her spouse has made her to stop and realise “how advantageous it is to have a job that is not predicated on a bottom line.” This too, has had a motivating effect for her.**

**1. Brian:**

**Brian finds empowerment in “not having to be responsible and presenting a brave face in front of people.” There is an appreciation in not having to be “artificial.”**

**2. Brenda:**

**Brenda said that she has no idea of what motivates her, “except the need to get up and do the best” she can.**

**1. Cathleen:**

Cathleen has become motivated to help others to recognise and deal with the struggles in their lives. She sees empowerment as having a “different interpretation to it now,” than it did prior to her job loss. She finds herself “empowered by her survival and the ability to share this experience with others.”

2. Chris:

The key motivating factor for Chris, he says, is his desire to look at himself in the mirror and say that he has done his best. This includes his work, his relationship with his spouse, and his home life. He does not want to be in a “position later in life, and regret not having spent time with family.” Chris has a yearning for people to be able to say that he was a person with integrity and that he cared for others. He is driven by his desire to do his best and to maintain a balanced life.

1. Doreen:

Doreen is motivated by the “insatiable desire to pursue my career.” Her motivation is to get the job that will entitle her to the “position of prominence” that she believes that she needs to have, so that she can be “fulfilled.”

2. David:

David believes that the “particulars that motivate and empower” him are conditioned by the way he was raised. He continues to want to have the “freedom to do the things I want to do without any restrictions.” It is a freedom that he attributes to the constant presence of God’s archangels pushing him through life.

1. Evan:

Evan's motivation used to be the idea of a job well done. The anticipation of a decent salary and advancing in his career were also motivating factors. The satisfaction of helping others also contributed to his motivation. Following his job loss, he has become motivated out of "fear" for his "family and lifestyle," both of which could be threatened if he were subjected to a prolonged period of unemployment. He needs "to have the ability to look after and provide" his family with the necessities of life.

2. Eunice:

Eunice's motivation comes from the aspirations that she has for "financial and time freedom." She is driven by the desire to be able to do the things that they dream of. The "opportunity to be with family, to travel, and to help other people become closer to God" all have their place in motivating her.

1. Frank:

Frank admits to being task oriented. This drives him in his pursuit of wanting to start something, and see whether he is capable of it or not. He has an "insatiable need to be in control and to be the decision maker."

2. Fiona:

The opportunity to experience and share the joys of life provides the motivation that takes Fiona through each day. She also sees herself as "being very fortunate, and that in itself is motivation enough."

**Summary:**

All of the people are individually driven. Their motivation is provided by the need to prove themselves. Only one person assessed herself as being fortunate in society, and said that this provides sufficient motivation for her.

**viii. Tell me how your understanding of work has changed.****1. Alan:**

“The initial understanding of work is to enable one to fulfill the basic needs of food, shelter, clothing. Added to this is the need to perfect one’s skills and to seek personal fulfillment. This changes when there is a job loss. Work becomes a matter of being paid for your skills and nothing else.”

**2. Alice:**

The job loss suffered by her spouse has led Alice to give more thought to work in its broadest sense. This understanding would be “to see work, whether it is as employment, vocation, or volunteer work, as necessary in order for one to be valued.”

**1. Brian:**

Brian sees work as “being the means to an end.” He has become “cynical about work and the way that it is portrayed through advertising.” However, he does confess that work is the “identifying aspect of many people,” including himself.

**2. Brenda:**

**Work is seen as a way of being able to financially help raise Brenda's family.**

**1. Cathleen:**

**Since Cathleen's last job loss, work is seen to "play a less significant role." The position that work takes is being pushed aside by the importance of other things, predominately family requirements. This is in stark contrast to her previous understanding of work that "took prominence over everything else." "The significance of a church community plays an important role in the balancing of work and family."**

**2. Chris:**

**Chris says that he struggles with the question and purpose of work. Since his spouse's job loss, he has given considerable thought to the significance of work. He wants work to be "that which enables him to do the best with whatever skills he has, and to enable him to give more to his family and to the community."**

**1. Doreen:**

**Doreen admits to loving work. Her self-worth comes from her ability to express herself through work.**

**2. David:**

**David's understanding of work has changed as a result of his wife's job loss. It has forced him to see the significance of having "a balance with work and family." "The pull of work has had control" over his wife. This has resulted in her being excluded from a number of family commitments. David said that this hasn't changed in the ensuing term.**

**1. Evan:**

Evan sees work as “a means to an end.” “Work provides the money for a livelihood. It can be the way that some people are defined. Work can also be satisfying in so far as it makes a person feel good about him or herself.” This understanding has not changed for Evan.

2. Eunice:

Eunice sees work simply as “a way to make money in order to survive.”

1. Frank:

Frank sees work as being limited to those activities that are paid for. “Work is the expansion of energy to do something. It is the effort that someone puts in to something. If you want to make things happen, you have to work. People need to have work in order to have a balance in their lives.”

2. Fiona:

Fiona believes that “work is important inasmuch as you have to make a living, and you need to have money to feed yourself.”

Summary:

Work is seen as a basic necessity by most of the people. Whether work is to satisfy a person’s creative need or purely to satisfy the basic needs of a family, it is important. The way that the people have changed in their understanding of work varies. Some have become cynical, and accord it less of a prominence in their lives; others continue to flounder, trying to find a balance with work and family in their lives.



ix. **Tell me what question you would like to ask if you were asking the questions?**

1. **Alan:**

**“What about the future?” If he loses his present job, then he would see himself as struggling wherever he goes.**

2. **Alice:**

**“There is the neighbourhood perception that you just go find another job.” The question for her though, is what does her husband want to do with his life? “It becomes very cultural, in that respect, in seeing work as a vocation rather than as simply a job.”**

1. **Brian: No question.**

2. **Brenda:**

**“How would you see yourself in the future?” She would like to have more money, to feel comfortable, and to be able to relax.**

1. **Cathleen:**

**“How can the church be there and supportive for people in their times of crisis - but then that’s the purpose of this work!”**

2. **Chris:**

**“How does the job change affect people? What is the role of the church? Can the church come and play a role?”**

1. **Doreen:**

**“What is it that I really want out of life? What are the goals?”**

2. David:

**“What impact is the current impact going to have on future decisions?”**

1. Evan: No question.

2. Eunice:

**“Where do you see yourself in five years time?” She would like to be closer to the freedom that she desires, and closer to her family.**

1. Frank:

**“How we felt about the first session?”**

**We spent probably a good one half hour talking about what it was like having you here, and to go through those questions and to actually to go through a lot of that, pieces of that again and to talk about it in a kind of after the fact analytical way and look at it from a distance now a bit and to really tell the story to someone who’s listening too, and has some interest in how it went and what it was like. I’m not sure that we’ve ever done that with anyone else in that kind of a fashion. It was really satisfying. . . . we quite enjoyed doing this.**

2. Fiona:

**“I was wondering if you were interested in the church’s role, what they could have done - did - whatever. It was surprising that the focus was only of my personal reaction.”**

**In hindsight . . . . helped with a job loss support group which was great. But keeping people feeling part of the church, and that they have something to contribute. . . . not feeling sorry for them. . . . then after the meeting last week, I was thinking, it was really interesting in that it made me feel like there was some kind of closure and you were allowed to feel the way that you were feeling that it would be a good idea that when the person is re-employed or found another path in life in which they feel that’s what they want to do, if there was some sort of celebration that the church could do for that person, to give it closure, to give it authenticity to the experience. Because I think of the middle class it’s. . . . you’re really not that badly off, that you go through the sense that you are not allowed to feel that bad, because this isn’t that bad compared to what other people go through.**

The semi-structured interview process presents the opportunity for other areas to arise out the discussions. This was true with this research. These areas were: loyalty, stress, positive ramifications, and identity. It should be noted that not all of the participants had words to say about the following areas.

## II. Areas of Discussion Arising Out of the Interviews.

### i. Loyalty

1. Alan: People have to be loyal and agree with the objectives of the place where they work.

2. Brenda: She talked a number of times about how her spouse was a loyal person, so loyal to his work. She didn't see how this could be so in the future, "they really don't care about the individual."

1. Cathleen: She believes that there is a lack of loyalty with organisations, and that you cannot trust job security anymore. Her belief is that her loyalty needs to lie at home.

2. Chris: His loyalty lies with himself. It is from there that he can express loyalty to his family and to other people. He sees the need to express loyalty to his spouse, although he believes that he has fallen short of this, as he has tended to look more towards himself.

2. David: His loyalty is to his family, and always has been. There are no certainties in the workplace any longer, and therefore loyalty is not an issue in that area.

1. Evan: He tends to be a loyal individual, even in light of what he has gone through. He believes that he will always be loyal to whatever job he undertakes.

2. Eunice: Her loyalty is to the family. There is no loyalty to the workplace.

1. Frank: He had tremendous loyalty to his place of employment, and would not entertain any thought of pursuing other opportunities. However, since the job loss, that facet of loyalty has changed. If other opportunities should arise, he would look into them.

2. Fiona: She believes that she has always been a loyal person. She will always endeavour to do her best and be loyal, even with the knowledge that employment is no longer safe, and companies no longer see loyalty as important.

#### Summary:

The topic of loyalty evolved out of the discussions. There is a consensus that loyalty to the workplace is no longer a given, although for some, loyalty is tied up with doing the job as best one can. The importance of family loyalty has become more prevalent with the people. The question of loyalty did not appear to be a major irritant. It is more or less taken for granted that to be loyal to your place of employment is not a necessity, and neither does the workplace require or expect it.

#### ii. Stress

1. Alan: He expressed a concern that when they are both stressed they snap at each other.

1. Cathleen: Although she feels that she cannot completely relax, she does find some comfort through prayer.

1. Evan: He was concerned primarily about the stress on his children. They were still upset with the treatment from the first job, and then the second loss just compounded their convictions. They feel both (job losses) were unfair. He also expressed how stressful it was for him, and how he lost 10-12 lbs in one week. He still feels stressed by the financial situation and continues to go to family therapy to help relieve the stress within the family.

**Summary:**

The effect of stress was raised only by three of the people, and then only once as a significant aspect of the job loss.

**iii. Positive Ramifications**

1. Brian: He realised that self-worth is not defined in terms of the position you have in the workforce, and that it is good to be home.

2. Brenda: She sees herself as a stronger person.

1. Cathleen: She was able to realise that her son was a gift and how important it was to spend time with him.

2. Chris: He has become more conscious of the realities of the workplace. He is more aware of what the priorities are and that you have to do your job, but that you also have to look after yourself.

1. Evan: He wasn't a goal setter before, but now is.

2. Eunice: Her faith in God has increased.

2. Fiona: She started to realise that the things they enjoyed the most didn't cost money. Her spouse was able to spend more time with the children, which was very positive. It is something that most men do not have the opportunity to do - although that must be tempered with the fact that he couldn't enjoy it as much as he would have liked because of the circumstances.

#### Summary:

A number of people mentioned the positive components that arose as a direct result of the job loss situations. The growth of faith, and the appreciation of the importance of family, have been beneficiaries. There has been individual growth and gains of self-confidence for a number of spouses, who have found themselves in key roles as financial contributors to the family.

#### iv. Identity

1. Alan: He identifies himself as being more tolerant than before his job losses. He can appreciate that not everyone is pushed out the door for incompetence. It could be a "matter of the wrong person in the wrong slot, at the wrong time." He is far more accepting of others and does not believe that people ought to be judged by the material values of the society.

2. Alice: She identifies herself as being like a person who has never had a cancer before and now has an awareness. Work identifies her in part, but it is not the totality of who she is. If she didn't have her work, she would have an identity crisis, but it would not leave her unidentifiable.

1. Brian: He saw himself as being identified by his work, and in some way attributes his lack of sleeping since his job loss to not having his work to tire him out. Today, he has trouble defining who he is. He believes that he is more understanding, less judgmental, and trying to find a balance. His definition would be that he is "a work in process." This is a contrast to his belief prior to his job loss. At that time, he saw himself as "I was done, I was good."

2. Brenda: She sees herself as an equal in terms of her financial contributions to the family. She feels that she had been taken for granted for years, yet now has gained a degree of self-confidence. This change has arisen in response to the position thrust upon her with her husband's job loss.

1. Cathleen: Her identity has changed. She used to equate her self-worth with her work. She has come to the conclusion that she never had any control over her life, and now she does have control over the choices that she makes. Cathleen now chooses not to do work at home, whereas before she would not have hesitated. Work would have taken precedence.

2. Chris: He sees himself as a hard working, committed person, who tries to do the best he can. This identifies him at his place of work, in the community, and at home with

his family. Whether this has been as a result of his spouse's job losses is difficult to ascertain. However, the timing does coincide.

1. Doreen: She struggles with her identity as she remains out of work. Her work made her feel important. She needs her job to give her an identity. She has a supportive husband and church community. It is in her struggling relationship with her children, from whom she does not. She feels, gain the sense of importance that her work gave her. This brings home the significance of work for giving her identity.

2. David: His identity is based on his ability to balance his work, his role as Mr. Mom, and his supportive role for his wife and family. His identity is whatever role he has to play at a given time.

1. Evan: He is a manager first, auditor second, frustrated singer, a father, and a husband. In that order. He has no qualms about the fact that he sees identity as work-related. "You are trained that way, that's how the world looking in sees you."

2. Eunice: She is still looking for who she is. She could say that she was a mother, a wife, a sister. The job loss experienced by her husband has made her realise that she has an unclear picture of who she is.

1. Frank: He has a very clear picture of his identity as "a student of life."

2. Fiona: She sees herself as a very thoughtful, strong, happy person. She likes to help others and sees that as part of her identity.

#### **Summary:**

The identification with work is commensurate with most of the people. The job loss predicament is believed by some to have had a constructive effect in terms of allowing



them a different perspective from which to witness themselves. A number have embraced this opportunity, others have not.

(Field notes were also taken. These notes can be found as Appendix.D.)

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS

#### Introduction

What are the participants saying in the data, and what is the data saying about the participants? The following reflections seek to address the questions.

#### I. Reflections of the Action in Ministry

##### i. Impact on Self-Identity

In my experience, it has become quite fashionable to bash the “middle-class,” especially when seeking to be politically correct. The middle-class have accepted such send-ups and presumed prejudices of its culture by realising that they are perceived as the majority of Canadians that had done rather well. They had, in Weberian terms, “common life chances” that enabled them their position in society. They had felt a sense of security that had permitted them the opportunity to explore and take advantage of their life chances. They had achieved a level of economic and social status from which they could strive to be influential within their community. Once you had made it into the middle class, it was difficult to fall back out again. As if by natural law, people effortlessly found themselves substantial and respected citizens. - job raises were offered, bank interest of personal savings outpaced inflation; property values rose. Yet, in reality, to reach this stature took work, and often a great deal of it, along with discipline, persistence and other

**middle class virtues. Given these widespread and reinforced traits, the Canadian landscape would take care of the rest.**

**Changes began to occur back in the 1980's when booming interest rates created job shortages and necessitated job restructuring. But the opportunity for alternative employment, and the aiding of investment incomes by the increased interest rates, lessened the shock on the middle-class. However, by the 1990's it was no longer so easy to join the middle class, and people on the fringes were actually falling out of its ranks every time a factory closed or the cost of living indexes increased. The middle class was no longer secure, as the employment opportunities that had existed in the 1980's to offset the turn in the economy were no longer present. Those life chances of the middle class were being taken away.**

**There is no question that both national and global economic life have become more competitive. This is due in part to the development of increased or better communications, enabling the transfer of information anywhere in the world. The elimination of trade barriers, with the reduction of regulations limiting access to markets, has also increased competition with consequences for labour markets everywhere.**

**Globalization and new technology have both destroyed and created jobs, although not necessarily in the same countries. Employment can now be found where labour is convenient and cheap. The beneficiaries of this change are the consumers in a number of countries, who now have a wider choice of products, as well as a likelihood of lower prices for some goods and services. Countries in the developing world have access to employment as a result of lower overheads and labour costs. On the reverse side,**

countries like Canada become too expensive to capture the ever-increasing number of jobs created by the new technologies and open markets. Companies which do not keep their costs under control and keep abreast of new technology will not survive. Competition is no longer a domestic or even a North American problem; our workforce is in competition with the world's workforce. It appears to me that we have reached a crossroads in our understanding of work and its relationship to the individual and to the community. We have allowed work to be seen as an economic means to an end, rather than as a means in itself. This view is the accepted reality of the participants in this research.

The focus of this study was not to encourage protectionism as a means of safeguarding jobs at home, nor to suggest that we seek ways of opting out of globalized agreements to preserve our industries. However there can be no doubt that there is an increased sense of economic insecurity felt by people in all walks of life. It is not, in fact, easy to find statistics to back up the common perception that job changes are much more frequent now than they were ten or twenty years ago. People today are reluctant to quit a job if they feel that a new job would be even less secure. Undoubtedly, many of the new jobs now being created are temporary,<sup>118</sup> and many small companies creating them are themselves in a precarious position. Some uncertainty is inseparable from economic enterprise, and some people thrive on it. There are others, however, who are especially

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<sup>118</sup>I use the term "temporary" not to insinuate that they are specifically planned for a particular length of time, but rather that they are jobs in a new technological workplace that has to prove itself to have a lasting effect. As technology increases, a growing number of these new companies are being swallowed up or closed, at the same time other companies are emerging. The jobs involved are therefore precarious. There is a great deal of uncertainty in the life span of new technological companies.

vulnerable and who have been made to feel increasingly so in recent years. The participants in this work believe that long-term employment with one employer is a thing of the past. They expect to be part of a company that will be engaged in restructuring or re-engineering. Their attitude and understanding of work have changed.

While there is no question that work is a basic necessity for those in the study, there remains the possibility that it is largely a means of personal fulfilment. The study has shown a great and important desire in the participants for a balance between work and family life: this balance is fundamental to their well-being. A more cynical understanding of work as being less important is only a half-truth for most people. While all emphasise the importance of family life and how they to afford it more time; most of the participants cannot find a better balance. It raises the question:: can there be an acceptable balance between the requirements of the economy, the home, and the individual? Work has lost its pre-eminent spot in many of the participants' lives, yet remains important. Is this due to the deep seated middle-class work ethic that refuses to go away, even in the most serious of times? To call into question the Protestant ethic, that provided the foundation of this country, is to call into question a fundamental part of not only the religious life, but also a key characteristic of the middle class. While many people see work as a bothersome necessity, a necessary medium of exchange for commodities such as shelter, food, clothing, or "extras," the people represented in this study do not.

The question of balance sought by the participants is not a new concept. In its previous life-form, work was downgraded in importance, in order to raise the level of importance for leisure. This certainly was the prevalent 1960's - 1970's interpretation of

the place of work in the daily lives of people, although not all people were comfortable with it or even agreed. This study illustrates a need to continue to view work as an important outlet and demonstration of a person's abilities and self-worth, while still allotting substantive importance to family/leisure time. A real balance is sought, with acceptance of the fact that sacrifices have to be made, and that a clear sense of identity has to be recognised by the individuals. This question of identity will be picked up and explored in subsequent pages.

How a company restructures while maintaining balance with regard to its employees presents a number of issues. It is the way in which the process is undertaken by the company, which is crucial to the employee's handling of the experience, and the subsequent issues. When there is precognition of an impending restructuring of a company, the angst is lessened. This does not mean that the change is acceptable, but rather there is some time in which to begin the grieving process. Some participants in this study who had no forewarning of job restructuring, disclosed unresolved anger which still continued four to five years after the crisis had occurred. Those who had been forewarned were able to move forward, although not without mixed feelings.

This raises a question that companies/employers must address. Do they have an ethical responsibility to their employees? In other words, should they have a balanced strategy for carrying out the restructuring process with a respect for and a concern for the individual? This research would indicate that they do. This conclusion is substantiated by John Dalla Costa's argument for a global ethic. Dalla Costa believes that such an ethic, penetrating the business community and becoming a part of its identity, would benefit and

ultimately profit individual companies.<sup>119</sup> The key to such an ethic is to unlearn the present systems that have been operating the company, and to be prepared to change the traditions and assumptions that have been a part of the business world. The advantages of a global ethic are that they promote honesty, fairness, justice and integrity with a balanced approach. These are values that are requisite to a healthy community. They are also values that were consistently cited as lacking by the participants in this research with regard to the ways in which companies informed them of their job losses. Dalla Costa asserts that as companies have downsized, they have alienated themselves from their workforce. They have generated an imbalance that has created a climate of fear that not only exists for those who remain, but also affects those that have been participant to downsizing. A demoralised workforce will be taking that attitude on to its next place of employment. This conclusion is supported by this research.

Dalla Costa suggests a model that would help correct this imbalance, a model called "Downsizing with Dignity." First, this model would have a critical ethical factor of fairness. All people would be made aware of the context and would understand what was to happen to them. This would mean a justification of the company's decision. Second, the critical values for such a model would need to be courage and selflessness. Companies are

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<sup>119</sup> John Dalla Costa, The Ethical Imperative: Why Moral Leadership Is Good Business, (Toronto: Harper Collins Publishers Ltd., 1998) While reflecting on the data I was reminded of Costa's book which I had read during the research, but did not cite during the theory section. The goals of a model for a global ethic are to ensure that business and ethical considerations are integrated into one stream. There must be a mechanism that will allow for change to mission, structure and the business culture. There must be a perspective on the complexity of ethical business management, as well as the implications from the decisions that are to be made. The model needs to incorporate the key principles of ethical behavior giving them equal weight. p. 145-148.

not known for displaying courage in articulating decisions when they apply to the workforce. To place a priority on the employees' well-being subsequent to a decision of downsizing becomes a question of courage when it is compared to the reality of the shareholders, whose bottom lines are dividends and share prices. This would be important in order to facilitate the necessary strategic and ethical decisions, and to initiate institutionally the reciprocity of sacrifice.<sup>120</sup> The stories that were shared in the research resonated with the processes carried out by companies who downsized without warning, and who were seen and experienced as unjust, unfair and uncaring to the participants. Remnants of the trauma are evident in the inability of many participants to deal with what is essentially the grief process. To be unemployed is to be bereft of the cornerstones which work provides to stabilise an individual. Without that stability, individuals are obliged to reassess how they see themselves and their roles in the community. Although there are consistencies in the kinds of losses incurred by the individuals, the way of responding and dealing with those losses vary. Confidence, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-respect are threatened to various degrees. When a capable individual is rejected from their job, self-introspection can bring about a profound change in the way a person regards oneself. Some people are hit harder than others, as each individual responds differently to loss, whether it is a job, a loved one, or a serious illness.

Some of the participants refuse to accept the grief associated with the losses incurred and thus carry the burden of unresolved grief. The denial approach does not work. Loss is a reality, an enormous reality for some people. Every attempt at denying this

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<sup>120</sup>Tbid., p. 274-281. See Example 2: "Downsizing with Dignity".



is both dishonest and counterproductive. The more committed we are to the work that we do, the more havoc the loss creates. We cannot move on the road to recovery unless we have completed our grieving for the loss. This research has shown how a number of people have attempted to put aside the grieving process. The grief associated with their loss was, and to some degree remains, intense and multifaceted. It has affected their emotions and their lives. Their identities are so intertwined with work, that to lose their job is to lose part of their lives. Grief cannot be left unattended as it needs attention in order to heal. To work through and complete grief means to face our feelings openly and honestly, to express our feelings fully, to tolerate and accept our feelings and live with them for however long it takes. However, accepting and expressing feelings are not areas of emotional activity that are readily acceptable to the participants of the research.

## ii. Impact on Family Relations

It is commonly accepted in our society that males, in general, have difficulty in expressing their feelings. This research has shown that females, within the selected group, whether a participant or a spouse, had the same difficulty. A number of them had given the appearance of sharing their feelings with their spouse, but when interviewed separately, it became clear that many of their feelings towards their spouses had not been expressed, but had been held back. Their feelings had not been forgotten, merely contained. Suppressing hurt feelings of anger, disappointment and fear hold serious implications for a person's health, and ultimately for his or her relationship.

Feelings are vital signs; they tell us when we need something. To deny one's feelings is to fail to understand oneself. The research participants who fail to express or accept their feelings will continue until they become aware of their true identities. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, in her book On Death and Dying,<sup>121</sup> recognised that the feelings we experience, when reacting to the news of terminal illness, follow a logical progression, a process of grief through which we are enabled to cope. It is the view of the researcher that Kübler-Ross' analysis of the grieving process is also applicable to work-related loss. The degree to which people express and come to terms with their feelings reflects on the motivation and empowerment in their daily lives. The people in this study found their motivation for work as the need to prove themselves.<sup>122</sup> What if we have a low perception of our self-worth? Would we still be motivated by this lower expectation of our capability? To be motivated to prove oneself, one has to have a positive and realistic understanding of one's true worth. To lose a job that in turn creates a loss of self-worth and self-esteem can dramatically affect a relationship. Many of the qualities of a good relationship are obscured by everything else that seems to take a higher priority. The tending and nurturing, loving and caring, are put aside. The effort needed to maintain the relationship is of secondary importance to that of coping with the loss of the job. Conflicts stir up

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<sup>121</sup>Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, On Death and Dying, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997). The five stages are: Denial and Isolation, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance. While some of the participants were able to experience a number of levels, none of them could leave behind the anger. The residual level of anger was not consistent, however, some of them having a higher level while others maintained a lower level.

<sup>122</sup> This was the case for all except one person who saw herself as being very fortunate. This in itself was motivation enough for her. She was a spouse of one of the participants.

emotions which clamour for expression, yet there is no room for expression because the relationship has changed, not intentionally, but changed nonetheless.

It is not only good, but necessary, for people in relationships to have compassion, sensitivity, affirmation and encouragement for each other. These qualities enable the expression of emotions, feelings, thoughts, and anything else that is what can so easily be called, "the agenda table" of an individual. This is particularly important when one of the partners has experienced a loss of some kind. While it is important to cultivate these qualities of caring, they should not be administered indiscriminately, as they can degenerate into a sentimentality that paves the way for the disintegration of a relationship. There are people who go to great lengths to avoid any kind of turmoil or unrest in a relationship. They prefer to keep the peace rather than express what they feel. To a number of people, this is more important than bringing emotions into an already overwhelming situation. Thus one partner may appear insensitive if they were to express exactly how they feel, especially if the other one wants to hide or deny the feelings. This research reveals a number of people who have suppressed their feelings while trying to provide the necessary care and support for their spouses.

The effect of this suppression is to deny essential commitments and attitudes within a marriage relationship. Marriage is the most intimate interpersonal relationship. A successful marriage is based upon each individual's commitment and willingness to share openly with the other. To communicate effectively, people must exchange facts and feelings so that each gets an accurate picture of the other's state of being. This is

problematic when an individual does not offer accurate information by hiding his or her true feelings.

It is my view that there is some evidence of potential conflict in the relationships of a number of the participants in this research. This conclusion is drawn from the dialogue of the interviews, as well as the body language noted and recorded in the field notes. The data suggests the need for honing interpersonal skills: skills that have been taken for granted, or perhaps overlooked in terms of their importance. These skills, while viewed by people in the workforce as crucial to success in their workplace, become ignored by those same people at home when faced with the crisis that downsizing brings to their lives and relationships.

All human beings have specific needs in their relationships, and their emotional and spiritual healths are threatened if those needs are unmet. A need to practice 'tough love' is an important part of the process of helping people deal with their losses. There are some things that need to be done because we love and care for another person, despite the fact that he or she might see things from a totally different perspective. Sometimes such an action can be seen as confrontational, though it is essential for the personal development of that person. Both a person who has experienced a job loss and/or the spouse who has to deal with different possibilities for the future, have their personal development stalled by what is happening to them.

One of the hazards of confrontation is that when overused and misused, thus becoming a lethal weapon of hostility that can destroy self-esteem and relationships. On the other hand, when used properly, it can produce benefits. It can identify irritations in

relationships, keep realities in focus and help evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of an individual. Though confrontation appears to focus on the negative rather than the positive, it can become a tool for positive action when used as an interpersonal skill.

Communicating to one's spouse that his or her well-being is important enough to warrant confrontation can be a demonstration of concern.

Confrontation cannot be used effectively when it is detached from other interpersonal skills. It calls attention to behaviour that is preventing a person from being him or herself. It also points out inconsistencies between a person's behaviour and their commitments. It is a tool that can help someone look realistically at problem areas in their life, in order to bring change and growth. It attempts to break through participative emotions and myths. These myths can be the perceived expectations of a middle class, either imposed by a societal view, or by family expectations thrust upon individuals from parents, grandparents and so on. The breakthrough is to truth and reality. This leads to self-disclosure, where one can share one's innermost thoughts and feelings. This is exactly what the study indicates is vital to the participants in the research and to others in similar situations.

Confrontation also opens itself to possible negative consequences. Sometimes the person does not listen properly or understand what is being said, and the relationship becomes worse. The real question is whether a person can live within the context of such a relationship, when truth is evaded, or when a person's well-being is of less importance than the level of comfort in the relationship. Either way communication, so fundamental

to a successful marriage, can only occur when there is a willingness to hear and try to understand one another.

Good communication does not just happen. It takes a lot of work. Open communication is a willingness to share honestly, to try to hear and understand another person's feelings. It is a sensitivity that acknowledges the importance of the other person's thoughts and feelings, and it leads to trust and confidence in one another. The foundation for such communication is empathy, a key characteristic when dealing with people who have suffered a loss. Yet, it is a characteristic that is often mistaken for sympathy, and sympathy is not something that most people want to hear, especially those who believe they have suffered unjustly.

Empathy is that needed component. It receives feelings, but does not judge them. It states others' feelings so that they know they are being understood correctly, and it expresses continued care for the other. An empathetic person never argues about the validity of feelings, but provides an arena for people to express them. Lack of empathy eventually generalises to thoughtless and insensitive behaviour towards others. It is, perhaps, the most vital skill needed before a relationship can cope with the changes that evolve from the news of downsizing. When people are struggling themselves, it is difficult to have empathy for other people. The lack of empathy is evident in many of the relationships studied in this research.

To have empathy for your spouse requires a sense of intimacy. This means entering into the interior person of the other. It is a process of change of inner perspective, a change from "I" to "We," from caring not just for oneself, but recognising the importance

of sharing whatever is happening with the other. This requires a lot of time, often more time than one partner is prepared to commit, and also more time than one person, who has suffered a dramatic attack on their self-esteem, is willing to expose him or herself to, in what has become a vulnerable situation.

A good relationship needs an understanding of what constitutes genuineness, a characteristic that perhaps is seen as old fashioned, yet is central to the practice of honesty and integrity. These are key elements in any relationship that is real. Genuineness, and therefore trustworthiness, is the very foundation for intimacy. It builds security, provides a foundation for caring, and reduces any need for pretence. People who lose their employment undergo a break in the genuineness of a relationship that was built upon their ability to work. To have that break repeated at home in their personal relationships can be shattering. However, in the research, many participants said that this was not the reality for them. Their spouses did not intentionally allow a break in that genuineness. However, this perception will be challenged later in this work, purely by presenting the data.

It is important for the spouse of a victim of loss to ensure that there is an understanding of trust in the marital relationship, to enable the sharing of his or her innermost thoughts and feelings as it relates to the reality of the employment loss. When spouses are unwilling to entrust their feelings to each other, they have little opportunity to respond to one another in a way that will help them not only come to terms with what has happened, but also to be able to move ahead.

Genuineness is an important aspect of communication that should not be confined to the home and family relationships. This research has shown that there is a need, and a

value to be gained, when the person losing a job, along with his or her spouse, has an opportunity to express his or her true feelings to the employer.

### **iii. Impact on Community Interaction**

Unemployment and low self-esteem often go hand in hand. It is hard to feel good about yourself in a work-oriented society when you don't have a job. The challenge of unemployment has affected our society to such an extent that we have to take a look at the belief that identity and self-worth are based on what we do. If we are only as valuable as what we do, then we are in trouble. This has become evident in the research, as many of the participants' identities were tied to their work. One interesting aspect of the research is the number of people who refuse to admit to the control that work had over them. There was a reluctance by some participants to believe that they were not in control of their lives. To admit that work took prominence in their lives over their families, was difficult. Yet, the interviews suggested that this was the reality for five out of the six participants who had lost their jobs.

We are the products of our culture, and to understand ourselves we have to understand the world in which we live. We have to remember that we can be influenced by culture but we are not made by culture. We can choose, instead, to be influenced by that identity given to us by God, who created us. Only by reclaiming our indigenous identity can we be separated from the character thrust upon us by the surrounding culture. This is a process that needs work by the study's participants.



Jack Hawley says that we already have within us whatever we need to get through this life with a sense of dignity, respect, and integrity.<sup>123</sup> Therefore, we need to recognise not only the human condition, but also the presence of God. The essential component is a part of our identity. We just have to re-find it. First of all, Hawley suggests, we need to have “Respiriting.” This, according to Hawley, is the grounds for an explanation of the nature and importance of living with a spiritual awareness. The spirit is the “us” that is beyond our body, our mind, our thoughts. It is that which gives us life - - our zest and energy. I would suggest that it is the part of human nature and our identity that reflect our innate ability to work. To deny this spirit within is to deny something that is fundamental to our creation.

It is this “Respiriting” that Hawley believes management needs in order to transform its organisations. There is a need for a management model that brings together the intellectual, the logical, and the organisational, along with the feeling, the emotion, the sense of human worth, the respect for dignity, and the need for morale and trust. A model that was shaped by these principles would enable management to put sparkle and vigour back into the daily lives of its workers. The participants in this research have demonstrated that they have little trust for companies today. These people have experienced a lack of

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<sup>123</sup>Jack Hawley, Reawakening The Spirit In Work, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993). Hawley is the founder of Team Climate Associates, based in California. According to Hawley, the book is about living life gracefully, living a full life, and being more alive while on this earth. It is about regaining integrity in the workplace, and about the fusing of spirit, character, human values, and decency. It is about meaning, peace and purpose, health, happiness, love, death, and truth. His work provides a path of enlightenment not only for managements transforming organisations, but also for individuals reclaiming their sense of self-identity and transforming their daily lives and their connectedness to the creator.

respect from their employers that can only place them in a tentative mode when working in the future. The suggestion by Hawley would allow people to feel they were listened to. It would allow everyone to get in step with him or herself and to be attuned to life's purpose and to a healthy environment. This process would allow people to become open to the spirit within and potentially to receive the energy to work, and to be able to rechannel that energy in ways that are productive and fulfilling. However, such an outcome would be dependent upon them seeing work as a part of a natural outflow of their human nature.

The theory active in this work emphasises that it is the innate necessity to work that is part of a person's identity, not the type of work. People need to be valued for whom they are and for their human attributes. Their value should not be accredited to their position in the workforce, although this is exactly how the participants in this study estimate themselves. The data clearly echoed this. There is a deep belief in the minds of the participants, as shown through the data, that work is part of the way in which they can express who they are. This does not mean that they are identified by work, but rather that work is a God-given attribute that allows them expression in society. In fact, by their own admission they had contributed to their own dilemma by allowing work to consume them rather than accepting work for what is. They have become products of a society that seeks to downplay, or to ignore, the relationship between God as creator and people as co-creators, and therefore as innate workers.

Simply finding employment does not rectify the problem of low self-esteem that unemployment creates. The study found that money had not become the motivating factor

in employment. Lifestyle was not the key to the participants' lives: it was work itself, inspired, challenging work, that enabled them to use their creative abilities. The research found that a number of the participants, whose self-esteem had been attacked, remained under pressure and damaged long into the next employment situation. The participants, in effect, become damaged goods. This is similar to an automobile being in an accident and needing bodywork and/or mechanical work. The car, while reconstructed to be road worthy and with a return to an outward appearance of acceptability, is nonetheless still a car that has been damaged. One can never assume that that vehicle will be as new again even though the parts may be new. There is no way of knowing if other damage has been done. A vehicle breakdown may or may not occur, and although this may not happen for a long time, nevertheless the accident's origins can be traced back to the original accident. The damage to self-esteem can remain with an individual for an undetermined length of time. It is quite possible that the person may never recover even if he or she finds suitable, rewarding, and lasting employment. This is certainly possible in a number of those interviewed for this study.

The long-term implications are unpredictable and immeasurable. It is quite possible that the person may become a "recovering-self-esteem person" for life, much as an alcoholic is always a recovering alcoholic for the rest of his or her life. Taking hold of the present and the future is difficult, especially for those who have been damaged by the past. It is difficult because it requires dealing with three kinds of fear: fear of pain, fear of failure and fear of the unknown. Each of these fears can immobilise us, and an immobilised person can't make choices. Many people have difficulty taking hold of the present and the

future because they don't know how to. In order to take hold, one has to overcome fears, learn skills and persist until new habits are developed. One of the problems facing the participants in the research is their failure to acknowledge that they even have these fears. Another problem for many of them, in my view, is the reluctance on part of the participants to make the commitment to deal with these fears on a consistent basis. They often refuse to give up the pleasant feeling of not having to struggle with a particular fear and excuse themselves from the effort, without admitting to their unwillingness to pay the price of rehabilitation. This came across a number of times in the study, with both the participants and the spouses. There appears to be a lack of acceptance of vulnerability, which would seem to be understandable under the circumstances.

To be vulnerable requires courage. And for the participants of this research, a relational courage is needed that does not apply only to husband-wife relationships, but also to the raising of children, and to the building of significant relationships with friends. It is difficult for those for whom work has been a priority and an important part of their identities to come to terms with self-discovery in their relationships, especially with their children. What if they realise that they are not good at being a parent, a mother, or a father? What if they are far less capable at home than they are at their work? This was certainly the situation for at least one of the study's participants. Yet for another, it was a time of enlightenment, in which she discovered that she was a mother, not just a manager of whatever title her job gave to her. To be exposed in this way is to be open to further loss, or to revelation. There are times when work helps counter the lack of social skills, whether the necessary innate skills are actually missing or merely unpracticed.

#### iv. Impact on Values

It takes courage to face any difficult circumstance, whether it is in the workplace or the result of a moral decision. Every day we make choices that show whether we are courageous or not. We choose between the right thing and the convenient thing, sticking to a conviction or caving in for the sake of comfort, or approval. We choose to take either a carefully thought-out risk or crawl into a shrinking shell of apparent safety, security and inactivity. These choices come our way every day. We face them so frequently that we forget that we are even making them, and we sometimes find us going with the flow instead of carefully making courageous choices. To have courage means to have a healthy character. What seems to have happened with the people in the study is that they have had their character attacked.

This is a key concern in this study, because character promotes core ethical values. It is from these values that people are enabled to be intentional in their actions. They are able to bring thinking, feeling, and behaviour to bear upon their daily situations. Job loss and the possible ramifications can derail a person's intentionality in their actions. The present study confirms such results.

Character development is one of the most important tasks facing us today. Without it, our country, our families, and all the individuals with stories congruent with those in this study are in danger. I believe that we are born with qualities of character that are part of the innateness in each person that needs to be nurtured and enlivened. They represent the values from which we are expected to live. For the participants of this study, those values have been shaped by the expectations of the middle class culture in which they not

only see themselves, but that also fit the criteria of this study, supported by the theory contained in chapter 2. There is obviously a confusion about the values of the 1990's: on the one hand, there is the perceived ignorance of values, and on the other, the reality of the importance of these values for many people, because the values will not only stabilise their lives, but also stabilise society. To all of the participants in this study, values are important. To share common values and use them to take advantage of life opportunities are key aspects of this middle class group. Making such values a priority in daily life may be difficult, but their necessity is not challenged. Robert Wuthnow says, "work is not something devoid of values, separated from the rest of our lives.... The quest for values have too often been framed in meaningless generalities.... Calling for more attention to values is merely to identify the problem. To move positively toward its resolution requires paying closer attention to the way in which choices are actually made."<sup>124</sup> While it is necessary for a clear understanding of the place of values in our society, this can only be done if we integrate them into our thinking and into our commitments. The discussions within this study have centred around the way choices are made. The verdict as derived from the interviews is that choices have been made by employers, regardless of the values that we equate with a moral society. The result has been traumatic for many employees.

Downsizing is debilitating; it can take away character. Character is what provides uniqueness and wholeness in life. All the various aspects of character need to be encouraged, namely courage, trustworthiness, responsibility, respect, fairness and caring.

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<sup>124</sup> Robert Wuthnow, Poor Richard's Principle. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996.), p. 11-12.

There is no question about the need to have courage and self-discipline in order to live by our inner being. People need wholeness, goodness, courage, self-discipline, and inner truth. There is a need for a sense of honesty, honesty that is important in the life of an individual, and that also has to be mirrored in the life of the workplace, and within society itself. History will show that conflicts occur when honesty is absent. That is evident in this study on a number of levels: We have seen it in the relationship of the couples in the research, and how those relationships have changed when the couples have failed to be honest about their feelings. We have seen it in the relationship between the participant and the place of employment. The building up of one's reputation for being reliable, loyal and honest has been overridden by apparent market-driven decisions that have placed honesty into an insignificant corner. The consequences are immense.

Companies lose heart when they lose the faith of their employees. Downsizing, and the way it is undertaken, has, in many situations, led to this loss of faith in employees. There is a lack of integrity. The integrity of a company will be reflected in the way it treats its workers, and, conversely, in the way its workers trust it. If the employees experience a lack of trustworthiness on the behalf of their employer, it is only a natural reaction for the employees to want to respond with the same treatment. Respect disappears, and tolerance and consideration for management decisions become nonexistent. Responsibility is questioned because management, by its actions, has shown no responsibility towards its employees. Management in this case has shown no sense of caring or compassion, and has not played by the rules, according to a cultural understanding within the middle class. This understanding has held that working hard according to one's abilities will be rewarded

within the workplace. The character of the workplace is destroyed and leads to a similar demise in the employees. The participants have demonstrated this reality.

Holland believes that employees can overcome the temptation to mirror the employers' lack of character by responding to the spirit within themselves. Then they will be fearless within, as they respond to the inner truth with right actions. This is right not only for workers but for management too. We are asked to live who we are - - to live our character. If we are not allowed to do so, then those restricting that freedom are refusing a basic human right, namely, the right to reflect one's nature.

The necessity for people who have experienced downsizing to have the opportunity to work constantly on rebuilding their character and to have that process affirmed in the workplace becomes important if the workplace is going to make use of the potential in each of its workers, and if the employees are going to have the courage to face the new realities before them.

In times of rapid change and insecurity, churches and other religious institutions are often seen as places of refuge in which people can find shelter, comfort and nurture, and direction. This concept includes an affirmation of character and values. This affirmation may rest on the belief that God does not change, and neither do the truths on which our faith is built. It is dangerous, however, if this means that religion is backward-looking, a nostalgia for the way of life that was appropriate to a previous generation. To avoid any possible misunderstanding of this kind, it needs to be made clear that the future of work and workers belongs to God, just as much as they did in the past. The society in



which we live needs to be a little closer to the vision which the Christian gospel reveals.

Faith and hope in the future are indispensable virtues.

v. Impact on Life of Faith

This brings to the forefront a recommendation that Hawley makes, called “Revering.”<sup>125</sup> One would assume that being polite, caring and respectful would be natural expressions of a successful business. However, assumptions have never been a part of business. To have reverence is to have dedication, eagerness, enthusiasm, admiration, and devotedness. All these qualities are important aspects of deep, intense caring, and they are usually associated with religion. Hawley speaks of how important it is to be loving and to be conscious of how that love is used in the business world. He defines love as giving and as energy, and that these are combined when you love as an expression of that spirit within you. If you can love this way, it will show that you not only care, but that you want to empower others, and that you respect others for whom they are. But you have to believe.

Belief, in itself can be a wonderful healer. It can provide strength and self-esteem, self-worth, power, and energy. The power of positive thinking works well, but only if the thinking is right for each person. Therefore we need to think good things, positive things, healthy things. But, most of all, you need to have faith in yourself and believe that things can work out. The on-going restructuring of companies has marginalised all of these

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<sup>125</sup> Hawley, p. 48.

elements, as witnessed in the interviews in this study. The power within people has been taken away. The energy that empowers the spirit within people has been drained.

A crisis can bring a faith into question. It can lead a person to lose his or her faith. It can place serious doubt on a person's faith. All of the people involved in this research had faith of some kind prior to their losses. A number had a good faith, and some a tentative faith, and a number had a dormant faith. All of the people ended up with an active faith and a participation in the life and work of their home congregation. Faith was an important ingredient in their coping, according to its role in their lives. Faith is a belief and trust in something beyond ourselves on which we depend for meaning and support. Faith has always been the cornerstone of a disciplined life. These people were used to a disciplined way of life, although the extent of that disciplined lifestyle changed for a number of them as a result of their situations and new realities.

A number of the participants learned, through their experience, that faith works when it is needed most - in times of personal doubt and despair. Their faith, apart from individual experience, was basically untested, because they had yet to fully apply or utilize it to their own advantage in order to understand the new situation. This was the case both for those who had suffered the actual job loss, and for their spouse.

To overcome the new realities, each participant had to take a leap of faith, which meant an act of commitment in the search for new employment. This meant taking risks. Disappointment could play a role in the risk-taking ahead, and, for some, there were real disappointments. Those who were prepared for the risks and who accepted the consequences were able to find a new level of trust and support in their lives. This

provided hope, which in turn, gave them confidence that freed them from the darkness and despair they felt over their job loss. Those who were not prepared to take risks carried on life in a more subdued and uninspired way that detracted from their abilities. The latter group will have dire consequences to face down the road as retirement approaches. These people have settled for things the way that they are. For them life will not improve. They are even grateful, to a degree, that things will not get worse. In a way they have lost control over their lives. They have accepted lower expectations on one level, yet at the same time have not accepted them in their mind. They have opted, probably by default, for a level of living that seems secure. If they were to take a risk, they would face the uncertainty, and the possibility of further losses and dire straits: This they are not prepared to do. They have, in fact, settled for a faith that is comfortable, unchallenging, and uninspired.

There is a dilemma facing the church. Should it be devoting its energy towards the political dimensions of the downsizing and restructuring phenomenon, or should it address the vast range of moral and spiritual issues which arise all the time for individual Christians in relation to their situations at work? When does a clever business manoeuvre become an immoral deception? How can the pressure of work be reconciled with family life? The list is a long one. An easy way out for the church is to offer suggested readings on how these questions can be addressed, either by individuals or by a group. And to a point, this is happening. Yet this cannot be an occasion for the church to preach socialism to the middle-class, pointing out to them their economic advantage over the "poor", even in their (middle class) predicament. I tend to believe strongly that the church needs to

address the moral and spiritual issues. I believe that the church is strong when working from such a position. I believe that this was the way of Jesus in the world, sharing the good news of how to live both morally and spiritually. This work has echoed the importance of such an approach. One of the participants expressed a need to have the freedom to express her loss as real, without feeling guilty alongside a group within society to whom his loss is insignificant compared to its own lack of housing, education, and support.

The church must hold itself as the community who must live by the conditions of The Kingdom. Yes, there can be no Kingdom of God without social justice and humanitarian assistance. Yes, the church in its commitment to follow Christ has accepted the responsibility by taking a visible and public role in critiquing the injustices and insensitivities of society. But the church must also be the prophetic voice, bearing a witness to Christ's vision for a restored humanity and human dignity for all, irrespective of class and status. In this role, the church has to address concrete situations and offer guidance. The church's responsibility is to speak up out of its prophetic tradition, a tradition that is continually shaped by the changing culture and experiences of its members and adherents. I believe this to be shaped by the values of faith that are based on the moral and spiritual keys of the kingdom of God. To enable the church to be active in this way is a faithful form of ministry, and those who work on the behalf of the church are required to assume a pastoral role that speaks continually in the prophetic voice. The followers of Jesus were called to take prophetic stances, challenging the system that adversely affects their society. This study would indicate that the church can and ought to be active within

the spiritual realm also, and this would not only reflect the gospel, but would reflect an approach to those in need in a pastoral way that could be therapeutic.

We are called as the church to respond to the call for justice. As people of faith, our lives are derived from and lived in relationship with God. We live in a covenant with God and one another in God's household. This means that the church can be the most creative and transforming element in society. Most of the participants in this study have expanded their commitment to the church as a result of their situation. They understand that a spiritual emphasis in their lives can help them to move forward, (although there is a suggestion, in the responses of one particular participant, that would lead the researcher to believe that the spiritual emphasis is more for his survival rather than to help him move forward). Nevertheless, there is a need for a spiritual power to be more than present in their lives; there is a need for a power that needs to be active. It would be so easy for these people to be spiritually devastated by their losses, yet they have been awakened to the strength of the Spirit. What is required is an avenue to help restore their spirituality to a level that surpasses the level it was at before. The degree of our spiritual passion is affected by the conditions in and around us. But spiritual passion, or power, is also affected by the people who form our personal worlds. By surrounding ourselves with people who do more than try to understand, and who actually encourage us to deal with all that is at play in our lives, we can be exposed to a spiritual power that can move us forward in a positive way.

## **II. The Characteristics Identified**

**On page 2 of the introduction, the question of this research was identified. It was: What are the characteristics of a pastoral approach for responding to the needs of a middle class person who has experienced job loss due to the re-engineering and restructuring in the workplace? A theological framework was given to substantiate the research, and a brief description of the data from the interviews was presented. Trying to capsulate the intent of the interviews with a brief summary was not easy. As the researcher, I tried to be objective; however, I do acknowledge that my bias may have appeared in the selection of the material to be offered.**

**I tried to incorporate my interpretation and reflections on the data in light of the theory. Again, it was my intention to be objective and let the data speak for itself. This chapter will provide the response to the question by listing, with a brief explanation and reflection, the characteristics that spoke out through the data. The findings highlighted a couple of characteristics that are primarily the domain of the place of business, rather than part of a congregational approach. They are listed and cannot be ignored in terms of a more complete pastoral approach.**

**The research would be incomplete without a recognition of the implications for the church and for business. It was my hope that the research results would be a resource that would extend beyond religious boundaries. However, it is clear that the results are a product of a clearly identifiable group from a specific area. It may be more advantageous to encourage this study to be replicated in other areas. It is the hope of the researcher that this work could provide the framework for such further research.**

To try and put these characteristics in context, I have attempted to offer some brief reflection of them, where applicable, in terms of the parable that was used of the Good Samaritan back on pages 22-23.

There were eight characteristics identified by the research. Although two of them, genuineness and empathy, could have been included in character affirmation, I decided to keep them separate to ensure that they were seen as important on their own. The question that has arisen through the findings is: are these purely characteristics of a pastoral approach, or are they representative of the characteristics of the participants in need, or are they both? I would argue that they are both, and that they will, therefore, need to be the central characteristics of any constructive pastoral approach.

The first two characteristics relate specifically to the business world and the way in which it conducts itself. One cannot ignore the relevance of such findings. They contribute greatly to understanding the decisions taken by the restructuring body, and to the well-being of the individual

#### i. Timing

The characteristic that stood out among the others was the method used to inform employees of their unemployment. It was found that when advance notice was given, the employees could deal with the difficulty. This is not to say that it was acceptable. The pain and hurt were still a reality. The difference was the severity and continuation of the anger. When the news was sudden, the anger and grief were long lasting. In many cases, the anger was still prevalent at the time of the interviews. If we recall the parable of the Good

Samaritan in its revised form pp. 22-23, we find a man who had lost his job, crushed and bruised, lying at the side of the road. It is more than a mere mugging. In more severe terms, he has been raped in a sense, and had lost a big part of whom he was. If he had known that this was a dangerous and unpredictable place, he could have prepared himself, and made himself ready. Perhaps he would have gone in a different direction. He could have been looking for another job knowing his time was coming. But he didn't because had been led to believe that this was a safe place. He lay there in shock. If only he had some inkling of what was to happen - - but no. He thought that they put people away in prison for doing what they did to him, but it will never happen in this case. People just don't understand. They'll say, "Its okay you still have something left." "But what is left?" he thought to himself. My identity, a part of whom I am, has been ripped away from me, and it will never be the same again.

It is so true. Things are never the same again. If companies were to give prior warning, the attack would be far less severe as people could be prepared.

## ii. Ethics

Closely attached to timing, and indeed not separate from, is the need for ethics in business, especially in the way that business relates to and deal with employees. The ethical behaviour of a company is reflected in the loyalty of its employees. A company that has rejected an ethical base can expect a demoralised workforce. This can have a negative effect on the work produced. I did question whether loyalty needed to be a characteristic, but decided that a good code of ethics would provide for a sense of loyalty.



What does this mean in terms of the Good Samaritan parable? What would the “raped” victim lying at the side of the road say about ethics? Ethics are supposed to be about morals, scruples, principles, integrity. There is no evidence of any of these in the way he had been attacked. It is as if they did not exist. What does it say about a company’s principles and integrity when they treat people in this fashion? In order for values to mean anything they have to be a part of what people do every day. Ethical responsibilities do not stop when people represent a company and are involved in carrying out company dictates. Can people in those positions refrain from being consumed by the culture of the business, and act according to values and principles that reflect an ethical society? That becomes the question. I reiterate what I said back on page 127. Dalla Costa’s model called “Downsizing with Dignity” provides the criteria for an approach by business that would ensure a critical ethical factor of fairness. Dalla Costa’s call for a global ethic that would provide the framework for managing the priorities of people and the company would allow people to be made aware of the context in which the decision had been made, and to better understand what was to happen to them.<sup>126</sup>

Are ethics a necessity for a pastoral approach that would be in use in a congregational setting? Let us go back to Dalla Costa. He says, “The action of the global economy has been a “detraditionalisation.” The reaction of people to the global economy has been to seek understanding, rooting and meaning in traditional spiritual belief.”<sup>127</sup> The Christian Church has been built around strong traditional values. These are values that

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<sup>126</sup>Dalla Costa, p. 274-281.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid, p. 25.

have been identified through God's acts in history according to the Christian faith. These acts seek to promote wholeness in all in God's creation. Those values have been reaffirmed over the centuries as people have become more aware of the need to coexist in a harmonious way. I am fully aware of how many religious groups have used their interpretation of ethical values to be exclusive, oppressive and sources of disunity, even within the same denomination. This research has not sought to get into a discussion with religious ethics. At the same time, it does want to make clear the possible complications if they are left to be used as nothing more than moralism. For this research, I only want to point to the necessity of shared ethical values: How they are defined becomes a matter of dialogue within a faith community. An individual congregation is a faith community that by name itself reflects a common understanding and affinity to shared values of the faith. Any pastoral approach used in a congregational setting will need to take into account those shared ethical values: Without them, you have no faith community.

For the man lying at the side of the road, who was the one who showed him mercy? It was the one who responded to ethical values that reflected his understanding of Christian care. There is nothing to show that the other two passers-by were not ethical people. There is no reason to believe that they were not good people. But it does show that they either did not share the same ethical values, or were not prepared to live by them. Again we return to the statement I made earlier: ethical values mean nothing if they are not part of our everyday lives.

### iii. Question of Balance

Many people in the research enjoyed their work. At the same time, they also lamented the lack of time they had for their families. They acknowledged the need for a balance between work and family. It would seem to me that this would necessitate both the work and the home being places where the individual is able to be himself or herself. By this, I mean that each place values the other as important to the individual's well-being. Although this is a desire for the individual, it cannot be ignored by the place of work. An employee who has a good self of meaning in his/her life can be a very productive employee. Being able to balance the workplace requirements of time and energy with those required in the home does not come without much effort. For many this is a process of learning to free themselves from the pull of work, and at the same time learning how to attach themselves to the pull of home. This learning is a learning of balance. It is, in scriptural terms, in my view, about learning to both Mary and Martha: working and also taking time to offer care and compassion. If we go back to the parable of the Good Samaritan, it is that third person who takes time to listen and care, and to work to get the hurt person back into community. This one was not only "neighbour to him who fell," but also saw the need for both acts in order for a more complete exercise of his God-given love for others. It was this person who exemplified the attributes of both Mary and Martha in a practical way.

How can we promote this kind of balance within the congregational setting? Again, bible study discussion groups become a key place to start. By exploring the Mary and Martha story in the context of the question of this research would be a good

beginning. A question of balance is not about sacrificing dreams of a career, but it is about being able to live a healthy life in community. This means living a life that enables a person to be refreshed and have a sense of meaning in his or her life, one that shows that the person is more than an employee.

#### iv. Character Affirmation

Character defines who a person is. An affirmation of character is a confirmation of a person's attributes. When a person loses a job and incurs numerous other losses as a result, it is easy for that person to question his or her attributes or qualities. Character is a combination of a number of qualities that give shape to life. The person in our parable was told by two passers-by that being a part of the middle class was a detriment to him getting help. The qualities that have helped shape him; his social culture, his life chances, his shared values - - all those qualities that have given him an identity as a middle class person stand in the way. He is left struggling, crushed, bruised, and lonely, because of whom he was seen to be. It is my view that middle class people who lose their jobs have not been a priority for society, much less the church. It should not be a crime to be middle class. It should not be an excuse for the church to be politically correct rather than to respond with pastoral care. Earlier in the theory section on middle class, I mentioned how it can be argued that the early church was predominantly made up of middle class people. Church membership over the centuries, up to and includes the present time, has been predominantly middle class. It has been the middle class who have been financing, caring, and supporting those in less fortunate settings. People have relied on those middle class

people to be faithful to their Christian values. Those qualities that identified them have been viewed as admirable. But suddenly, when the situation is reversed, those qualities are seen as detrimental.

There is a need to reaffirm that those qualities that give meaning to individuals, and that give shape to life. There is a need to reaffirm that middle class status is as God-supported as any other. In giving life to this in a congregational setting, educational background about middle class and culture would be a necessity. It is important that people in the various economic and social cultural groups have a better understanding of each other.

#### v. Empathy

The ability to recognise and respond to other people's emotions is a must in any pastoral approach. Once people are able to develop empathy on a conscious level, it becomes self-reinforcing, as it answers a deep-seated need to connect with others. The participants in this work do not want sympathy, but they do want it understood they are hurt. Their feelings and grief are real and cannot be shrugged off with platitudes like "Too bad, now you know how the other have lives" or "I'm sorry, I don't have time - I'm too busy with those who really need help. You will have to adjust to your new state."<sup>128</sup> Clinebell says, "The art of reflective empathetic listening is essential in all caring and counseling... listen to feelings (as well as words) including feelings that are between the

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<sup>128</sup>See p. 22.

lines, too painful to trust to words.”<sup>129</sup> To have empathy does not mean that you are expected to solve the problem, or even to agree, but it does mean that you are able to put aside your own cares and have “an emotional investment in the other and relative openness to one’s own feelings.”<sup>130</sup> The participants in this research sought no more than for others to see that there is a legitimate need for pastoral care and acceptance of their situation.

#### vi. Genuineness

Genuineness is an essential ingredient in a relationship. A pastoral approach is dependent upon the relationship between the caregiver and the receiver. The third passerby in the parable said, “let me try and help you deal with your loss and get you back into community.”<sup>131</sup> His goal was to help the man get back on his feet, back into his middle class community and all that it involved. He didn’t seek to change him or challenge him to adjust. There is something very genuine about a person who helps others without reference to whom they are. This is my understanding of church and its role in society. It was a key part of the social tradition of concern for equality and human welfare that came with the Methodists as they entered into union with The United Church of Canada. Genuineness is about honesty and integrity. In scripture Paul says that “love does not

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<sup>129</sup>Clinebell, p. 75.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid, p. 77.

<sup>131</sup>See p. 23.

envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own.”<sup>132</sup>Love is about genuineness. It builds trust in a relationship.

A number of the participants showed a lack of this example of genuineness with each other. To be more exact, their difficulty in relating exactly how they felt about each in the depths of their losses gives rise to the question of complete trust in the relationship. Some of the participants were hurt by the actions or non actions of the other, yet no indication was given during the interviews that this hurt was shared with the partner. Genuineness needs to begin with the couple.

To offer pastoral care is to enter into a relationship with one needing care. A congregation that cares about others is a community of faith which is willing to enter into relationship with others. They are genuine about their faith. It may be the job of the congregation to work with couples and take them through a process that will seek to eliminate their resistance of being completely open and vulnerable.

#### vii. Respiring

Whenever a person experiences a loss, there is often a renewed need for a sense of purpose and meaning. This is the need that connects us to others, and to those aspects of society in which we have our being. The recognition of this interconnectedness brings a self-awareness of the spirit within the person, which in turn can transform a person. This can affirm a sense of dignity, self-respect, and a conscious awareness of human worth. It can also affirm an identity that is important and clearly identifiable. Job loss can hinder the

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<sup>132</sup>I Corinthians 13:4b-5b (NKJV)

spirit, and when it does that, the person can lose the capacity to embrace God. It is my belief that it is God who can provide the necessary care and help to enable a person victimised by job loss. Therefore, a loss of a connectedness to God would need to be addressed by any pastoral approach.

It has been my view for many years that the Spirit is that essence of God that dwells within each person. Some people are aware of it and use it. Others ignore it and leave it alone. Still, others have it covered up in guilt or lack of self-worth. 2 Corinthians says, “the Spirit gives life,” reminding us of the words of Genesis 2:7 “And the Lord God formed man out of dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living soul.” It is life that the man at the side of the road in our parable wants. It is life that the participants want in this research. Not any life, but life accorded to them by God. People need to have this spirit within come alive again and take control. Spirit gives a person a sense of meaning and purpose. Releasing the spirit within us gives us energy to be able to face the challenges that confront us. In a congregational setting, this may be part of the worship service, and/or it may necessitate a study of the gifts of the spirit and how they give us life.

#### viii. Communication

To communicate effectively, people must exchange facts and feelings so that each gets an accurate picture of the other’s state of being. We all need to be heard and understood in order to maintain a sense of self-worth. Quality communication, the kind that helps people to understand each other, does not just happen. It requires effort. Open



communication is a willingness to share feelings, and also to hear and try to understand. It is a sensitivity to another's feelings. Jesus was the ultimate communicator. The first two passers by from our story didn't attempt to dialogue with the victim. They passed judgment and on they went. The third passer by wanted to hear from the victim, saying, "Let me be a listening ear."<sup>133</sup> He wanted to know what had happened and how could he help. He wanted to try to understand his predicament. He wanted to have an open line of communication with the victim. "Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of restructuring? The answer in the scriptural story is "The one who showed him mercy." Mercy has a number of meanings, but included in them are: patience, kindness, charity and compassion. The third passer by showed the victim mercy.

How can a congregation show such mercy to middle class victims of downsizing? The goal of the Christian is to communicate the story, and to communicate the historical and present day acts of God to everyone. The lines of communication need to be opened between individuals and between faith communities. A congregation that listens actively with patience and compassion is a congregation which is communicating. This communication can come in the form of worship, outreach, bible study, or any other form of witnessing the Christian faith.

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<sup>133</sup>See p. 23.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

#### Introduction

The primary aim of this study was to identify characteristics of a pastoral approach for middle class persons who have lost their jobs due to the downsizing and restructuring of the economy. The results indicate that there are a number of implications for ministers, congregations, and the church. These implications will furnish the basis for changed pastoral practices.

#### I. Implications for Ministers

The role of the minister in a congregational setting is to care for his/her parishioners by bearing witness to the gospel, in other words, by being pastoral and prophetic. In this role, ministers can find themselves facing parishioners on both sides of various issues. This research indicates that those making the decisions of restructuring and those on the receiving end are both in need of pastoral care. The prime implication for ministers is to ensure that everyone feels cared for. This raises the question of how does a minister best handle church members who are caught up on side of an issue that they are inflexible and cannot see the other side? Ministers must develop creative ways to bring these sides together and into the overall pastoral care ministry. They must draw people

more deeply into the healing reality of the community. The minister must devise a strategy of how to offer a trustworthy relationship out of which hope can grow.

It is imperative that ministers create the environment in which parishioners can feel comfortable in telling their stories. A minister who has been vocal in condemning business for their restructuring will find it difficult to appeal to those in the congregation who have had the task of making, and/or, relaying the decisions. However, the minister, cannot abdicate his/her responsibilities to be purveyors of pastoral care to both sides. This study would indicate that by sharing the characteristics that have come out of the research, a better understanding and more accommodating environment could occur.

Ministers have a responsibility to create a climate of understanding within the congregation. It is their responsibility to guide people into meaningful relationships where real dialogue can take place. They must try to engage both sides in a dialogue that allows stories on both sides to be heard so that all participants have access to the full range of possibilities within the context.

Ministers need to see themselves as being purveyors of prophetic ministry when dealing with pastoral care. They have a responsibility to offer an assurance that there is an alternative to the situation that the parishioner is in. This does not mean that they must have the answer, but it does mean that they can open the door of understanding and hope. Ministers are to seek ways of bringing wholeness to those in need, thereby helping people in their relationship with God and each other.

## **II. Implications for Congregations**

**A congregation is a community of believers, called to discern, celebrate and act out God's word in the world. It is the role of the congregation to make themselves a worshipping, resource filled, caring and understanding community. Congregations need to understand that they have a pastoral responsibility for all members of God's community. Congregations can have within its body people giving out 'pink slips' as well as people receiving 'pink slips'. Therefore, a congregation needs to express support and care to both groups without prejudice. A healthy congregation will be one that is willing to learn more about cultural and social classes and their expectations. The characteristics outlined in this research can enable congregations to gain a better understanding of people on both sides of the restructuring issue. They cannot ignore the difficulties that have impacted on their fellow parishioners as they (congregations) are asked to respond to the gospel in caring for each other. Issues such as forgiveness, acceptance and identity become more pronounced and vital to a faithful congregation.**

**Congregations are to be seen as community centres epitomising the Christian message in its acts of caring. A congregation needs to be a place that provides a home for those in need of wholeness, to grow and flourish. It is to be a place where brokenness on both sides of an issue are seen as valid and in need of care. A place where the prophetic ministry of Jesus is at the centre of its ministry of pastoral care. A community where acts of ministry are conducted in a holistic fashion encompassing every facet of the individual's**

interaction with society. It is a community where people of different class and social culture are accepted and cared for.

This study illustrates the responsibilities of congregations to listen and be faithful in that listening. Listening can force congregations into changing their perceptions of others. When the preservation of keeping what we have comes at the expense of helping others, then we are not truly listening. A congregation cannot stay the same when they have entered into a dialogue with those in need. They become vulnerable and accountable to the message of the gospel.

### **III. Implications for the Church**

The church is in this world to share a gospel of care for all. This research would indicate the need for the church to be as the 'pastor' to the various congregations. The church acting in this capacity would enable congregations to be aware of the various pastoral needs as a result of the particular issue of this research as it relates to their parish and to similar parishes. Focussed studies of the various characteristics identified through this work, can help create an inviting and tolerant faith community that has an openness in trying to understand the pastoral needs of people on both sides of the issue. The church, therefore, has a responsibility to provide various study outlines that can help this learning process. It will need to be seen as sharing the gospel that speaks of liberation for those affected by restructuring, whether they are employees or employers. The church will need to educate parishioners in areas that helped provide the theoretical framework for this

research. Areas such as middle class and its culture, and the prophetic of pastoral care are key instruments in trying to understand pastoral need. The church in its role of seeking the wholeness of all its people will need to explain what that wholeness means in terms of one's identity as a child of God irrespective of class and financial well-being.

#### **IV. Implications for Changed Pastoral Practices.**

These reflections lead us to the ultimate question of what does this research mean in terms of pastoral practice? Most pastoral practices are dealing with the minister and the one(s) in need. In my opinion, it is the individualistic approach that works well, for many pastoral needs. However, the reflections of this research indicate that an approach which speaks to the faith community as a whole could be more beneficial. This does not diminish the need for opportunities for individual stories to be told, as these opportunities must remain the first act of a pastoral approach. What it does mean, is that this issue has ramifications for whole communities.

We start at the heart of Christian life: the Sunday service that most church members attend. The Sunday service is where we pray together every week for peace and justice in the world, for those who are sick, and for God's kingdom to be made evident on earth. This is the place where we should pray each week as a matter of course for God's help in our daily work, and for social justice for all.

The differences of tradition and membership will result in differences of style as well as in content. As churches have members of different political allegiances, these

differences must also be respected. Condemning particular governments' philosophy from the pulpit does not create an inviting environment for those of different political persuasions. If a church cannot stay focussed on the gospel of care for all people, it cannot expect to be a pastoral place of refuge for those on both sides of this issue. In order for a pastoral approach to be adopted and be effective, it must be allowed to vary from place to place, although the key characteristics need to stay in place as the basis of any approach..

Pastoral practices within the congregations may vary in style. Some congregations are more apt to have study and prayer groups. Studying the various elements of the research question with a particular focus could be beneficial, leading to mutual support or outreach, and providing a solid base from which to view the characteristics outlined in this work. Other congregations may be more inclined to do literary discussions, perhaps in the form of a dialogue combining the characteristics of the study with related readings.

Congregations should be asked to share more actively in the work needed to be done. Pastoral care cannot stay at the church door. Any pastoral approach needs to be taken into the workplace. As people in the congregations go out to work, they ought to be taking their pastoral learnings with them: learnings that enable them to continue being pastoral. Places of business should be advised of the need for and the availability of a pastoral approach that could accentuate their method of enacting decisions of re-engineering and restructuring

## **V. Learnings for the Researcher**

**In the midst of this experience, I found myself with a reinforced sense of outrage that such a proportion of our population should be ignored. I am more convinced that the dynamic of Christian faith can energise an approach to the issues. The tradition of faith needs to offer more than a body of scripture. If that is our only view of the tradition, then it undermines the credibility of faith itself. Thankfully, our faith tradition offers us something very specific to drive our search for answers to the questions raised by the research question itself. Our faith tradition is backed by stories of actual history, of a society reflecting the shape God gave to the world, a world in which work is a key aspect of our human identity and our relationship with God. In these reflections, I have sought to listen to the data from the interviews. As I listened, I heard that changes of attitude are needed, especially in the understanding about the nature of work and middle class culture. I heard that people in other situations and other social classes need to appreciate the pastoral need of each other. It is not just the lower income people of society who needs a pastoral hand. It became obvious to me that you cannot have a pastoral approach in isolation. Individuals, congregations, and places of business all need to be in line and party to such an approach.**

**Looking back on this study, there are a number of areas where I would have done things slightly differently. There is obviously more information to be retrieved from the participants of the study themselves. Should the number of interviews have been increased? Hindsight would say yes. I believe that the intent of the research was right; yet,**



as it evolved, it became clear that it can only tell part of the story that needs to be told. The two interviews only scratched the surface. Interviews with the children of the couples, would have provided a different viewpoint from which to look at the repercussions of a job loss. It would also be a benefit to talk with the family as a whole, in order to see how differently each person acts and responds when in the presence of others who have shared, to a degree, the experience.

The study showed that the need for further research is essential. There are a variety of other groupings that need to be studied. Downsizing has not discriminated. It has not affected just married couples, and dual-income families.<sup>134</sup> No group has been excluded in the economic changes that continue to lead to the expansion of the ever-increasing casualties.

There are participants who have not found employment. Exploration of those who have worked unsuccessfully to gain employment and have come to a feeling of exasperation, would certainly offer quite different and more critical data than that obtained from those who have been able to gain employment. There are single parents, both male and female, who have to deal with a number of the same issues, with the added burden of having only one income. How do they cope with the financial blow? There were participants who had distanced themselves from the church, and participants who had no

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<sup>134</sup> A couple of the spouses involved in this study had jobs that brought in added income, yet the monies were not sufficient to keep a household.

connection to church. I heard of other couples who had separated as a result of downsizing .

A number of people in this study had been in upper management positions and involved in making the decisions, only to find themselves victims of downsizing following a take over! A study of these people would provide an inside look at how the process works and what it felt like being on the receiving end.

The choices of participants are numerous. One could even compare one group with another in order to see which coping mechanisms are better able to deal with loss than others. Children, both those at home and those away from home, can offer different, yet equally vital data. We often ignore the feelings and implications for older children who have their own family units. Are there ramifications, emotionally and psychologically for these people? Are they a part of the family discussions, and are they fully aware of what is happening?

Do adults change more through job loss when they have young children - - or is it the same for childless couples? How do single people with no family responsibilities respond to their situations? They are truly a forgotten segment in the downsized community, yet, loss is loss. This group is easy to marginalise when the need for assistance is being assessed.

Downsizing can also be used as an excuse for discrimination. How can we differentiate between being a casualty of downsizing and being a casualty of prejudice? Prejudice can be of any kind, but perhaps a physical disability that is exaggerated through

pressure of work would be the kind that could easily be overlooked. The future studies exposed by this study are many. The dilemma is to prioritise them, however, all have their own valid reasons for being top priority.

These are all learnings that have helped create a better listening and pastoral knowledge for the researcher in his future pastoral endeavours. Since this research was conducted, more literature on the subject has become available. It would be important for those who are working with the characteristic outlined in this study to familiarise themselves with such updated material, with the purpose of added to or expanding on those characteristics.

## **VI. Conclusion**

Middle-class people make up a large part of this country's workforce. An unhealthy middle class can create havoc within the economic structure of the country. The ramifications are far reaching. Health care and its over crowded agenda for increased spending will be in even worse shape as more unhealthy middle-class casualties join the ranks of those in need of medical care. Behavioural problems in schools can only increase in the children of parents who are subject to such losses, whether of job, health, or relationships, if the children are not cared for and counselled. All kinds of relationships will be vulnerable to the pressures that such losses can bring.

This study must be seen as only a beginning in the quest for equality in addressing the economic repercussions that have swept and continue to sweep the country. The

**middle-class cannot be continually put aside while the needs of other sectors of the population are addressed. It is the middle-class who drive the economy that provides the funds for the social programmes that sustain the less fortunate. Without a healthy middle-class, there are no social programmes for those seen to be in need.**

**APPENDIX A:  
THESIS PROPOSAL**

**1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF APPLIED RESEARCH THESIS**

I was ordained in 1989 in The United Church of Canada and I am presently ministering to and with St. James United Church of Waterdown, Ontario. St. James is a Pastoral Charge that is part of a larger collection of charges called Halton Presbytery. The Presbytery consists of a number of small rural communities, medium size towns, and larger cities such as Burlington, Mississauga, and Oakville. Waterdown is a medium size town in one of the fastest growing communities in Ontario. The Presbytery has overview and oversight of all of the Pastoral Charges within its boundaries. It is in this Presbytery that I will do my research.

My research interest comes out of my experience over the last eight years at my previous pastoral charge of Plattsville-Washington, Ontario, in Oxford Presbytery. While being minister at Plattsville-Washington, I was also charged with Presbytery level responsibilities which included participation service on the following committees: Chairs of Education & Students, Nominations, Visioning; member of Pastoral Relations, Settlement, and Manse. I also served as Chair of the Presbytery. The responsibilities dealt with personnel, and often opened up opportunities for me to be in close contact with all of the Pastoral Charges, rural and urban, and to practice pastoral care with many of them. I had to meet with ministers, lay representatives, students, support communities, church boards and committees. I was privy to personal information and situations that required a competency in compassion and understanding and a sensitive ear to all sides.

During my pastoral duties, I was exposed to a growing number of people who experienced shattering news about their work. The companies for which they had been working were downsizing, and they were people who became redundant. Having believed that their position had meant long-term security, they had built their lives around that security and had grown accustomed to the benefits of such middle class living.

It appears that the situation today is different from the economic recession of the early 1980's, when there was more opportunity for executive and white collar workers to refocus their careers. In today's economic reality, the workforce is experiencing the loss of executive positions and other white collar jobs, with little

possibility of moving in another direction. This has led to personal crisis. The word "crisis," from the Greek *krisis* or *krinein*, meaning "to separate," implies a turning point or decisive moment in experience. These people have been 'separated' from a way of living that had seemed to be a birthright. This crisis has had a negative impact that goes far beyond the individuals who are losing their jobs. Their families and friends also suffer. Further, there are consequences that could lead to deeper divisions among our economic classes. The newly threatened middle class may become more protective and isolated, and withdraw from any kind of community responsibilities for fear of further loss for themselves.

## 2. STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

My area of concern is to define the characteristics of a pastoral approach of ministry that will be able to provide the care needed for those middle class couples who have been affected by the downsizing and restructuring of society. I will use a definition of middle class as explained by Erik Wright that reflects a Weberian understanding of class.<sup>135</sup> The concern has arisen out of my experiences as a minister and from my belief that pastoral care should begin with the church and ultimately provide an example to the business world.

Howard Clinebell, a pastoral theologian, defines pastoral care as: "The broad, inclusive ministry of mutual healing and growth through the life cycle.... The overarching goal of pastoral care is to liberate, empower, and nurture

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<sup>135</sup> Max Weber says that we speak of class when "(1) a number of people have in common a specific casual components of their life chances, in so far as (2) this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the possession of goods and opportunities for income, and (3) is represented under conditions of the commodity or labor markets.[These points refer to "class situation,..".]". Hans Gerth and C.W. Mills, *From Max Weber*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958) as cited in Erik Wright, *Class Counts*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.) p. 31. It is from this perspective of class that I look at the middle class. They are people who are grouped together with a general uniformity of possessions and behaviours. The majority of middle class people stay within a milieu in which they live and take their cue to behaviour. They have a sense of identity with one another. Society often makes a judgment about whether one is middle class based on their background, schooling, where they live and the kind of job they have, often managerial. The definition of middle class that I will use encompasses all of these characteristics, not merely income.

wholeness."<sup>136</sup> This definition is ideally suited to my research interest. It allows me to work towards defining those characteristics that will go towards a holistic approach to the pastoral needs of the middle class group in my study. John Carmody, also a pastoral theologian, suggests a number of characteristics significant for a holistic approach.<sup>137</sup> I intend to use his work as well in my attempt to flush out the necessary dimensions of pastoral care that will concur with the pastoral care definition as noted above, and will provide a framework from which to work.

My research question is framed in this way:

What are the characteristics of a pastoral approach for responding to the needs of a middle class person who has experienced job loss due to the re-engineering and restructuring in the workplace?

### 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND ASSUMPTIONS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY

I intend to provide a framework that brings into dialogue scriptural understandings, the position of The United Church as it relates to the topic, a particular understanding of the middle class, definitions and understandings of work, and Clinebell and Carmody's approaches to pastoral care. I believe that these elements will provide the framework to enable me to conduct my study. I will consider these elements now briefly using the headings Biblical and Theological, Sociological, and Spiritual, in order to sketch out my theory base.

#### Biblical and Theological

##### a) Work.

In order to build up some theological insights into the nature of work we begin with scripture. I will look at the historical development of the pattern of work beginning with Genesis 1:26-28. This passage reflects an understanding of

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<sup>136</sup>Howard Clinebell, Basic Types of Pastoral Care & Counseling. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), p. 26.

<sup>137</sup>John Carmody, Holistic Spirituality. (NY: Paulist Press, 1983), p. 3.

work as a person's calling into existence on earth to be fruitful and multiply. I will look at Genesis 2:15 as it relates to tending the garden and to keeping it. I will look at work as self-expression( Psalm 128), work as it relates the person to society. (Deut.10:12-22) I will look at the development in the New Testament of the understanding of work in the life of the Christian community. (Luke 9:24-25; Cor.12:1-12; Matthew 6:25-34).

I will be looking at the theological insights on work, using Pope John Paul II and Joe Holland as key resources. The losses imposed on people due to the re-engineering taking place in the corporate community forcing them to restructure their organisations, making the workplace compatible with the new technological advancements, can be multifaceted. We are not only talking about loss of work, but status, questioning of one's worth, and threat on the family. The losses may include faith where a person's understanding of who or what God is and what God requires can be questioned . Pope John Paul II said that work is one of the characteristics that distinguishes humans from other creatures, and that the church is convinced that work is a fundamental dimension of humankind's existence on earth,<sup>138</sup> and any threat to prevent this is an action against God's creation.

Pope John Paul argues that the church is convinced that work is a fundamental dimension of man's<sup>139</sup> existence of earth. He contends that the book of Genesis is clear in its plan for people to work. Adam and Eve are given a garden to cultivate and to produce. Work provides the mandate and reflects the very action of the Creator. Work is to be seen as a virtue, and anything that prevents this fulfilment or takes away the dignity of a person is not compliant with God's will. True work constitutes a foundation for the formation of family life. Work becomes seen as an extension of one's faith. John Paul provides an understanding of work that will be a valuable source for my project.

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<sup>138</sup> Pope John Paul II, Laborem Exercens, as printed in The Priority of Labor: A Commentary on "Laborem Exercens." Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, by Gregory Baum (New York and Toronto Press, 1982) p. 95.

<sup>139</sup> The encyclical refers to human beings exclusively as men and to work almost entirely in terms of male labour.



Another valuable resource on work will be Joe Holland.<sup>140</sup> Holland suggests that the old theologies of industrial capitalism and scientific socialism are at the end of their time and a new holistic culture is emerging. He suggests that work is about “human participation in the communion of life’s ecological, social, and divine creativity.”<sup>141</sup> The re-engineering reality is forcing the church to look at human work as key to what is now the essential social question. The Church is mandated to call attention to the dignity and rights of people, and to the fact that work is a fundamental dimension of that dignity and rights. I will be seeking to look at an understanding of work that also reflects the spiritual side, its components and its importance in helping people find values and integrity in the work that they do.

b) Middle Class.

I will be exploring a biblical and theological approach that offers support to my claim that those people I have identified as middle class qualify as part of the prophetic response advocated by Christian heritage. For this point I will be using recent teachings of The United Church of Canada and Walter Brueggemann as key resources.

Let me begin by putting my concern in the form of a story, paraphrasing the Good Samaritan from Luke 10:25-37. A person from the middle class of society is made redundant. His<sup>142</sup> loss of employment and the repercussions that lead to loss of status, self-esteem, self-worth, leave him crushed and bruised lying at the side of the road. Along comes a blue collar worker who sees the man and says, “Too bad, now you know how the other half live.” And on he goes. Next comes a representative from the church, who stops and says, “I’m sorry, I don’t have time - I’m too busy with those who really need help. You will have to adjust

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<sup>140</sup>Joe Holland. Creative Community: Toward A Spirituality Of Work.. (NY: Paulist Press, 1989).

<sup>141</sup>Ibid, p. 4.

<sup>142</sup>The participant could be either male or female. Those involved in my research will be both.

All quotes throughout the proposal will be as quoted. I will not be changing gender quotes to give a more inclusive understanding, although that may be my belief.

to your new state.” And on he goes. Another person comes along, stops and says, “Let me help you - let me be a listening ear. Let me try and help you deal with your loss and get you back into community.” Continuing with our paraphrasing of the story, we ask the question asked by Jesus in the Luke passage: Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of restructuring? The answer in scripture is “The one who showed him mercy.” The aim of this study is to discover the characteristics needed to show ‘mercy’. In his critique of this scriptural passage, William Barclay says that the answer to “Who is my neighbour?” involves three things: “(i) We must help a person even when that person may have brought their trouble on themselves.<sup>143</sup> (ii) Any person who is in need is our neighbour. (iii) The help must be practical and not just feeling sorry.”<sup>144</sup>

The traditional wisdom of this Lucan passage has been to see the person at the side of the road as one of the neglected of society. That person has been assumed to be a representative of the poor class. The purpose of Christian ministry is to provide service of hope and promise to one another within the Christian framework. It is to ensure that all is done to restore wholeness for all people of this earth. The task of this research is to define characteristics of a pastoral care approach that will enable people to see what is needed to show mercy like the Samaritan did, to a group who historically have been seen as privileged. The Good Samaritan story opens up a number of areas that need to be explored. There are themes such as: mercy, wholeness, liberation, relationships, healing. I believe that all of these themes have origins in Genesis 9:12-16.<sup>145</sup> While the Samaritan passage will be my base, the Genesis scripture will provide background from which to explore the dimensions of the covenant as it relates to the mentioned

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<sup>143</sup>This is often seen as the case for those who have appeared ambivalent to the needs of unemployed in the past, and whose actions have contributed to their predicament due to lifestyle choices.

<sup>144</sup>This is part of Barclay’s interpretation of the Good Samaritan from Luke 10:25-37 taken from William Barclay, The Daily Study Bible : The Gospel of Luke. Burlington, Ontario: Welch Publishing, 1975., p. 140. While I will be using Charles Talbert, Joseph Fitzmyer, John Crossan as key resources for interpreting and understanding this text, I use Barclay’s reply to ‘Who is my neighbour’, to illustrate three characteristics that need to be considered.

<sup>145</sup>The Genesis passage reflects God’s everlasting covenant with all of creation.

themes. I see myself exploring areas of prophetic ministry along with New Testament scriptures such as; Colossians 3:12-17, a passage that asks people to be clothed in the various attributes of Jesus, and 1 Corinthians 12:12-26, a passage that reminds us of our being of one body.

c) **The United Church of Canada: Pastoral Care and the Prophetic.**

At the 6<sup>th</sup> General Council of The United Church of Canada (UCC) in 1934 the Committee on Christianising the Social Gospel proposed that the church change its approach in relation to the social order.<sup>146</sup> The committee stressed the need to transform those agencies and institutions of society that were foreign to the spirit of Christ. The church proposed that society reflect an active concern for all people. The church wanted to ensure that attention be paid to all people through its programs, activities and effective lobbying.

Coming from both its Methodist background and its commitment to the social Gospel, The United Church of Canada has a social tradition of concern for equality and fundamental human welfare. This includes the provision of basic needs for all people, a stance motivated by the biblical vision of God's love for each individual. Historically, The United Church of Canada has emphasised providing assistance for those in the lower economic strata. The UCC has provided strong leadership and care in this regard. However, economic situations have changed so that middle class people are now also in need of care. This new situation has created tension in the way the UCC has understood the prophetic challenge in meeting these pastoral needs.

A resource developed by The United Church, entitled Unemployment isn't Working<sup>147</sup> seeks to respond to the economic reality by providing an outline for congregations and outreach ministries to explore this new reality. However, it

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<sup>146</sup> The United Church of Canada. "Report of the Commission on Christianizing the Social Order." General Council Records and Proceedings. (1934).

<sup>147</sup>In light of the economic reality, the United Church has received a number of calls as to how can the Christian community respond to the economic situation. The Division of Mission in Canada within the United Church, through The Work and Employment Task Group of Unit IV, has developed a resource to encourage congregations and individuals to explore this reality and seek ways to develop strategies.

does not offer a pastoral care approach that could deal with the additional complexities of middle class culture in turmoil. My understanding of church is that it is to be used as a bridge between that which denies life and that which affirms life in our society. If we see the church as prophetic<sup>148</sup> and called to represent God's purpose in the world for all people, and if we reflect upon that premise, we will see the beginning of that bridge- building process for individuals who chooses to affirm life.

When The UCC speaks from its core beliefs and traditions<sup>149</sup>, it speaks with a voice that not only reflects the social gospel and its mandate to seek social reform, but also with a "prophetic consciousness."<sup>150</sup> To enable the church to be active in this way requires that it take a pastoral role that continually speaks prophetically. As Jesus' followers we are committed to continue to challenge the systems that are harmful to society.

In order to look at the tension between the prophetic and the pastoral, I will be using works by Robert Wilson, Charles Gerkin and Walter Brueggemann. I believe that they will offer key resources for an understanding of the prophetic that will highlight the ethical and liberating dimensions of a pastoral approach for the middle class.

#### Sociological

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<sup>148</sup> I understand the role of the Church as to tell the story of God in the world in such a way that it brings a sense of newness to society, and also an alternative to any oppressive situation. Brueggemann says that "prophetic ministry enables people to see their own history in the light of God's freedom and his will for justice." Walter Brueggemann, The Prophetic Imagination (Philadelphia; Fortress Press, 1987) p. 110.

<sup>149</sup> The church published its social policy positions In The Public Arena in 1988 through its Division of Mission in Canada. This policy booklet was supplemented with a record of the actions taken by the General Council of The United Church on a variety of social issues in 1993.

<sup>150</sup> See Brueggemann, The Prophetic Imagination, p. 13. He says that "The task of prophetic ministry is to nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us." The UCC has never shied away from a position that seeks an alternative to societal norms.

Jeremy Rifkin's book The End Of Work<sup>151</sup>, examines the technological innovations and market-directed forces sweeping across the developed world and moving us closer to a workerless world. He raises the question of whether we are prepared to face the consequences of technology that is moving quicker than the human ability to adjust. I will seek to explore the social impact as it pertains to the middle class using Rifkin's work along with work by John Dalla Costa, Robert Wuthnow, and Charles Heckscher. I believe that these authors will provide key resources, especially as they relate to the moral and ethical underpinnings of society. These resources will shed light on the social impact on the individual, the community, the work place and middle class culture.

Erik Wright, a sociologist asks, "how can the social categories which are commonly called 'middle' class be situated within a conceptual framework built around a polarised concept of class?"<sup>152</sup> He then sets out to struggle with the problem looking at class structure, class consciousness, class boundaries, and class identity. His aim is to understand the interconnectedness of the elements and how they impact on society. Wright notes the differences and similarities of a Weberian inspired class analysis with that of Marx.<sup>153</sup> It is from Wright's analysis of Weber that I intend to explore the characteristics of the middle class. I will use Wright as a key source for class analysis.

I will also seek to explore the psychosocial impact of job loss with regard to this defined middle class using statistical information from Canadian Mental

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<sup>151</sup>Jeremy Rifkin. The End Of Work. (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995).

<sup>152</sup>Erik Olin Wright, Class Counts. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997)

<sup>153</sup> One key difference is Weber's emphasis on life chances compared to Marx's emphasis on exploitation. Life chances are directly shaped by market situations. It is due to market situations that companies are restructuring and re-engineering and thereby determining life chances for both the person involved and their families.

Health Association<sup>154</sup> along with a resource by Kates, Greiff and Hagen.<sup>155</sup> I see these two resources as being helpful to me in my research, and will provide a beginning in my aim to understand the impact on middle class.

### **Spiritual**

Jack Hawley, a management consultant on matters of organisational transformation suggests that people need the opportunity to become open to the spirit within and to receive the energy needed to be able to rechannel it in ways that can be productive and fulfilling.<sup>156</sup> I believe that this can be a very practical and valuable approach to those who have lost their jobs. It can offer them an opportunity to regain a sense of peace, of purpose and meaning. I will seek to explore the various elements that Hawley says that we need for the reawakening to occur.

I want to explore this spiritual aspect of work and of the individuals further. To enable me to do this I intend to use work by Howard Clinebell and John Carmody. Clinebell's "Six Dimensions of Wholeness"<sup>157</sup> are part of his

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<sup>154</sup>The statistical information builds on work done in the 1980's. The new work is able to review its findings in its 1983 report in light of the action or lack of action in the subsequent years.

<sup>155</sup>Nick Kates, Barrie Greiff and Duane Hagen, The Psychosocial Impact Of Job Loss. (Washington: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1990)

<sup>156</sup>Jack Hawley. Reawakening The Spirit In Work. NY: Simon & Schuster, 1993. Hawley suggests that we already have within us whatever we need to get through this life with a sense of dignity, respect, integrity and human spirit. We just have to re-find it. He uses five elements; respiriting, revering, repowering, recharactering, and reinspiring.

<sup>157</sup>See Clinebell, Basic Types, p. 31 for an explanation of each of the following dimensions.

- i. Enlivening one's mind.
- ii. Revitalising one's body.
- iii. Renewing and enriching one's intimate relationships.
- iv. Deepening one's relationship with nature and the biosphere.
- v. Growth in relation to the significant institutions in one's life.

**Liberation-Growth Model of Pastoral Care.** I want to integrate these dimensions with Carmody's approach to Christian spirituality in holistic terms.<sup>158</sup> This integration will allow me to explore every aspect of the relationship between the person and work and society. This approach also provides background to the questions to be asked during the interviews.

I will also be using work by Joe Holland that suggests that work is about human participation on the communion of life's ecological, social, divine creativity. This resource will add strength to the Carmody resource.

#### **Assumptions**

- That the middle class has been touched by the economic restructuring in a way never previously experienced.
- That this crisis has impacted all the relationships of these individuals especially their intimate and family relationships.
- That married people in particular are experiencing a profound impact from this crisis.
- That middle class identity has been shaken and changed.
- That there is a need to seek a pastoral care approach that has not been used previously.
- That characteristics can be formulated to provide an approach to the care needed.
- That non- middle class people can accept the need for such help for those middle class who have been effected by the changes.
- That I have pastoral skills to enable me to create a friendly environment in which the participants will speak freely.
- That persons will be open and straight forward in the interviews.

#### **4. THE ACTION IN MINISTRY**

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vi. Deepening and vitalising one's relationship with God.

<sup>158</sup>See Carmody, Holistic Spirituality, p. 3. The factors are: work, love, prayer, politics, sex, social services.

The action in ministry is two-fold:

1. To interview individuals identified.
2. To analyse the data to define and develop criteria for the characteristics of an appropriate pastoral approach.

The plan is to use the interview method to enable the individuals to have their voice heard and give them the opportunity to get in touch with themselves and to attune them to life's realities. The intention is that the interview process will gather necessary data to provide sufficient information for developing characteristics for an approach to pastoral care.

### STEP ONE: GATHERING DATA BY INTERVIEWS.

Selection and number of participants:

The participants are to be found within the boundaries of Halton Presbytery of The United Church of Canada. I will be looking for five couples representing middle class couples where one of the partners has lost their job through down-sizing.<sup>159</sup> All will be required to have United Church background and have been recently active. I will personally contact the Pastoral Charges within the Presbytery outlining my project and asking the minister to forward the invitation to appropriate participants. The final selection of the participants will be done through a screening interview by telephone by the researcher to ensure a balance of participants.<sup>160</sup> The research project will be clearly outlined to them. Once chosen and agreements are made, each participant will be required to sign a consent form. The consent form will be read over the phone at the time of the screening interview and signed at the beginning of the first interview session.

Interviews:

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<sup>159</sup>I have chosen married couples for my project. It is my view that by concentrating on this criterion, I would be better able to manage and evaluate the data. I am in no way trying to infer that only married couples need a pastoral approach to help them deal with today's realities.

<sup>160</sup>The participants will be both male and female redundant workers. I also want to make sure that the participants are continuing to struggle for ways of coping. I realize that those who have now found employment and have come to terms with this change in life would provide interesting and important data. But in order to restrict the variables I have chosen those who have not been so fortunate.



- All interviews will be semi-structured and conducted by myself as the researcher.
- The interviews for the project will be arranged for a mutually agreed time and place.
- There will be three interviews for each individual in the couple. Each interview will be 40 minutes in length and conducted separately with each participant.
- Interviews will be recorded on audiotape set up by the researcher.
- Field notes will be taken by the researcher following each interview.<sup>161</sup>

#### **The Format of the Questions:**

The questions are to be framed around the goals of the interviews, but with the flexibility of a semi-standardized interview format. The purpose of the interviews is to allow the interviewees the opportunity to tell their stories and to provide data for me on which to reflect and from which to formulate a pastoral approach. Therefore, the questions will take an invitational approach of asking them “tell me ...” in order to share those stories.

#### **Interview 1: My goals are -**

- To gain an understanding of where the person is situated.
- To name the loss and the participant’s understanding of it.
- To name and share the feelings generated by the experience of loss.

#### **Questions:**

1. Tell me about the losses that you have incurred due to the change in your situation.
2. Tell me how that has affected your thinking about life, yourself, your family.
3. Tell me how you have been dealing with the experiences and feelings.

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<sup>161</sup>Notes will be taken by the researcher in order to record any significant feelings of the researcher during the interviews. I believe that this will be valuable information when analyzing the data.

**Interview 2:** When we experience a loss (e.g. employment, status) it affects the normal process, and we feel the effects of stress. The aim of this session is to focus on how loss of employment affects the identity and relationships of the person.

My goals are -

- To look at the participant's intimate relationships - (family, personal, community, work)  
How have they been - what are they now - hope for the future.
- To look at how the participant relaxes.

Questions:

1. Tell me how your relationship has/not changed with your spouse / other family members
2. Tell me how your relationship with the workplace has changed.
3. Tell me what you do for fun and recreation as an individual and as a family.

**Interview 3:** This session is to focus on the spiritual aspect of what has happened and what is happening. This section is important as it differentiates from an approach that is purely self-help and not concerned with the spiritual dimension, to one that looks at the wholeness of the person.

My Goals are -

- To see where the participant's relationship is with God. Where is God in all of this?
- To look at the significant institutions in the participant's life. Can they envision work - family - self in a way that is freeing, motivating, and empowering?

Questions:

1. Tell me how you have seen God in all of this.
2. Tell me about your relationship with God, and how it has changed over this time.
3. Tell me how much effort you put into developing your spiritual health.
4. Tell me how your understanding of work has changed.
5. Tell me what you have experienced as motivating and empowering.

Journaling:

The participants will be asked to keep a journal between interviews. They will be asked to note their thoughts and reflections on the interview. This will allow for a participant to reflect on the session, but also to add the thoughts that have been stimulated by the interview, thus offering a more complete version of the person's innermost thoughts and feelings. This information will be as vital as the interview itself. The journals will be collected for data analysis. They will be returned to the participant if the participant requests it. If not they will be destroyed following defence of the Thesis.

The participants will be asked a final question, "How would they answer my research question?"

#### **Researcher Role:**

My role will be as Observer. This will allow me to build on the semi-structured interview process. My role will provide the access to capturing the immediate experience.

#### **STEP TWO: DEFINING THE CHARACTERISTICS.**

Following the collection of the data and its analysis,<sup>162</sup> I will use the analysed data to define the characteristics appropriate for an approach to pastoral care for the group identified in my proposal.

#### **5. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OPERATIVE IN THE STUDY**

I have chosen a qualitative research method as it will allow me to share in the understanding and perceptions of people, and how they manage to deal with job losses in their lives.

I will explore, through the interview process, the various phenomena involved. I will be looking at how the individuals took the news of their new situation how they reacted, how they felt. I will be looking at how their families took the news, and what this meant for them. I will also be looking at the relationship within the community and how the person's new situation has changed that relationship. My exploration will include the relationships with the workplace and with God.

I will be seeking to learn about the innermost feelings of the person in light of the changing phenomena around them. My interest will be on how they interpret

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<sup>162</sup>The outline of analyzing the data is explained under Data Analysis.

their experiences, so that I can gather a deeper understanding of the nature of that experience, and therefore be able to offer a helpful response.

#### **DATA COLLECTION**

In order for me to make my research project thorough, meaningful and valid, the method of collecting the data will need to be compatible in its unpacking, exploring, and data gathering. All data collected will be coded so as to protect, as much as possible, the anonymity of the participants.

I plan to use Semi-Standardized Interviews that will be audio taped. This will be supplemented with data from the Journals written by the participants. My own notes of the interview experiences will complete the data collection.

#### **DATA ANALYSIS**

I will seek to organise the data by creating files.

1. Identity files: identifying the research participants, using codes.
2. Tape file: coding the tapes for each session by number.
3. Document file: transcripts of the interviews (transcribed from tapes by researcher).
4. Content file: any field notes, conceptual baggage, reflections.
5. Process file: the steps used in the process of research; dates, contacts, times, sites.

#### **Understanding The Data:**

The analysis of the data from the interviews, the journals, and the field notes will be based on reoccurring themes, patterns, theories that emerge from each session.

#### **Validation**

The use of the principle of triangulation<sup>163</sup>, with field notes, participants' journals, and taped interviews, will allow the researcher to validate the data.

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<sup>163</sup>Triangulation of data provides the opportunity for one source of data to provide the understanding and context for another source of data. This then allows a better understanding of their meaning.

### **Time Line**

⇒	Dec - Jan 1998-9	= Interviews
⇒	Feb - Mar 1999	= Analysis of data
⇒	Apr - July 1999	= Reflection & Report on findings

### **Researcher's Bias**

My bias comes out of my assumptions that there is a need for pastoral care for the particular group outlined in my research project. It is my belief that middle class people have become the forgotten people of the church. The United Church is a proud proclaimer of the church as 'The whole people of God.' My perception of our church is that it has restricted its outreach of care with a preference for the poor. It is my belief that The United Church while acknowledging a change in economic and social status of the middle class, has not made a determined effort to provide the care needed to enable those people to feel included and part of that 'whole people of God.' These beliefs are part of my bias that I bring to my research.

### **Ethics**

Each participant will read and sign a consent form prior to the interviews.

## **6. RISKS AND LIMITATIONS**

One of the realities that I face with such a project is limited time and resources. A series of ongoing sessions would provide the best possible way to develop a closer relationship with the participants and a better opportunity to elicit more information. A further limitation may be the reluctance of the participants to be open and forthcoming during the interviews. This could limit the validity of the data. The biggest risk could be if emotional distress is brought back to the forefront during the interview. I will provide the name of someone that can give independent crisis counselling, but I cannot know whether it will be sufficient. I also risk the temptation to do pastoral care during the interviewing and thereby contaminating the data.

## **7. THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY**

I anticipate use of this approach to be available not only to United Church ministers, but for other denominations and to secular groups with persons in

**similar situations. I also anticipate that counselling organisations would find the approach helpful for them as they seek to empower those in need to cope and move forward.**

**APPENDIX B:****CONSENT FORM**

**You are being invited to participate in a research project conducted by myself, Arthur Davies, a Doctor of Ministry student at the Toronto School of Theology, Toronto.**

**The research study is to define characteristics of an approach for pastoral care for those middle class persons who experienced loss due to the restructuring / re-engineering of the economy in the late 1990's. The study will look at how to redefine the identity of that group in a way that reflects social status, expectations, redefinition of work and employment, self-worth, self-esteem.**

**The study is designed to look at the experiences of the individuals. It is the hope of the researcher that the resulting characteristics will provide a pastoral approach for the whole family even though not meeting with the family as a whole.**

**You will be asked to share your stories of the challenges and opportunities you experience with job loss. We will look at the stress and its effect; value systems and lifestyle; the place and power of a support network.**

**You are being asked to participate in three interviews. As well, you will be required to make a journal entry following each session. The interviews will be held at mutually agreeable times and place.**

**The potential risks associated with this study are the possibilities of buried emotional feelings being brought back to the surface. I will have appropriate counselling available as necessary. You will have the right to end the interview at any time.**

**I expect the project to benefit you by providing you with a venue to share your story with confidentiality.**

**Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from this study. Your name and any other identifying personal information will not be recorded , or will be changed sufficiently, keeping only the necessary details to validate the results. You will have to right to veto this information if you wish.**

**I will be using an audiotape recorder to ensure that I retain accuracy of the conversations. These tapes, as well as the journals, will be for my attention only. Both the tapes and the journals will be destroyed once the study and the thesis has been successfully defended. The defended thesis becomes a public document at the conclusion.**

**I understand the above information and voluntarily consent to participate in the research project as described above.**

**Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature of Researcher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_**



## APPENDIX C:

QUESTIONSInterview 1: My goals are -

- ▶ To gain an understanding of where the person is situated.
- ▶ To name the loss and the participant's understanding of it.
- To name and share the feelings generated by the experience of loss.  
To look at the participant's intimate relationships - (family, personal, community, work) How have they been - what are they now - hope for the future.
- To look at how the participant relaxes.

Questions:

1. Tell me about the losses that you have incurred due to the change in your situation.
2. Tell me how that has affected your thinking about life, yourself, your family.
3. Tell me how you have been dealing with the experiences and feelings.
4. Tell me how your relationship has/not changed with your spouse / other family members
5. Tell me how your relationship with the workplace has changed.
6. Tell me what you do for fun and recreation as an individual and as a family.

Interview 2: This session is to focus on the spiritual aspect of what has happened and what is happening. This section is important as it differentiates from an approach that is purely self-help and not concerned with the spiritual dimension, to one that looks at the wholeness of the person.

My Goals are -

- ▶ To see where the participant's relationship is with God. Where is God in all of this?
- ▶ To look at the significant institutions in the participant's life. Can they envision work - family - self in a way that is freeing, motivating, and empowering?

Questions:

1. Tell me how you have seen God in all of this.
2. Tell me about your relationship with God, and how it has changed over this time.
3. Tell me how much effort you put into developing your spiritual health.
4. Tell me how your understanding of work has changed.
5. Tell me what you have experienced as motivating and empowering.

**APPENDIX D:**

**Field Notes** (Field notes are presented as first, then second interviews)

*i. First Interviews*

The field notes were made following the interviews. Some were made in the car, others were made on return to home, or at the office. While trying to note the visual aspects of the interviews, it soon became clear that some interpretive work was done in the note making. The notes are presented as they were written. They have not been edited or changed.

**Alan:** We met in the basement of a church, mid point from where we both lived. On arrival he was courteous and cautious. I discerned an uneasiness, possibly due to not being sure of what to expect. We began with small talk and explained the process before turning on the microphone. He was ready with an answer for my first question almost immediately, as if anticipating. His voice at the beginning was sure and precise, this quickly changed as we talked about the losses themselves. There seemed to be a sense of honesty about his answers. His body language was fairly consistent until we talked about relationships, particularly with his spouse, although talk about his son invoked a similar, yet not as dramatic a response. There were long pauses after the relevant questions were asked. He began to fidget. He began scratching the back of his neck, moving in his chair, moving his head back and a changing the tone of his voice (it became lower). This only happened with this topic. He also seemed more reflective. As I observed his actions and facial movements with regard to these particular questions, I concluded, rightly or wrongly, that he was embarrassed by his misfortune and the fact that he couldn't be as strong as she was. There were some moments when talking about friendships when his voice lowered and became reflective and sounded rather sad.

The meeting ended with a picture of satisfaction on the face of the participant that this had been a good beginning. We arranged to be in touch the following week to schedule our next meeting.

**Alice:** We met in a small meeting room at a church. We were private and there were no distractions. She was very cooperative and tried to choose her words carefully. I sensed a level of sadness and hurt in her voice. She still holds some bitterness for her spouse's second loss. There was some emotion shown when talking about the change in their relationship and the loss of a sense of

security for the family. She 'slouched' over the table a number of times, especially when she seemed to be reflecting on painful moments. Eye contact varied. She would often be looking at the table, or straight ahead, especially when the answers were long.

**Brian:** I was greeted at the house by his spouse. The three of us talked together, briefly, before the participant and I moved to a basement room for our interview. There was a joking sense to his demeanour as we sat down to begin. There was a note of bitterness in his voice almost from the beginning, often broken with words of humour and couldn't-careless attitude. He began to talk about his job loss with great description and bitterness. His voice was firm, his body movements were few as he retold his experience. He fidgeted a little when talking about the loss of relationships with people at work. He seemed to be bothered about his loss as it related to being respected. It was important to him to be respected for what one did and how good one was at doing the job. As he talked I could sense that I was talking to a shell of the person who had been working in a very good and financially secure position. It became very sad to listen to him as he tried to inflect humour into the conversation. It was as if he needed to illustrate that he couldn't care less any more. He talked about wanting to enjoy life more and that this is where his life was at this time, yet there wasn't the same kind of conviction in his voice as when he had talked about his work and its importance to him

His eye contact had been good for most of the conversation until we talked about his relationship with his spouse. It was at this point that eye contact changed and he looked down quite a bit. I sensed that he didn't think that she was as understanding as he would have liked. Any talk about relationships seemed to bother him. I sensed that he was caught in his own world of feeling sorry for himself and was not prepared to allow himself to 'fall' again from a position of authority and the only way to ensure that is to not put himself into such a position.

**Brenda:** Right from the beginning I sensed a dilemma in the tone of her voice and in some of the answers. She seemed to want to be honest, yet at the same time be supportive of her husband, and often the two were not the same. I perceived that she felt that she had to defend him at times. I almost felt as if she believed that she had let him down. The interview previous had been one of bitterness, this one was one of sadness. When she talked about their relationship, I wasn't sure or not, whether she was sad for him, or angry, or disappointed, that he wouldn't "take a stand and get a better job." I discerned that she is not happy with the way that he approaches life now. She seemed to be worried about the future.

Her voice and body language tightened up a little when talking about how she feels that she is taken for granted. She would often look away and then turn and face me with such responses as “that’s the way it is supposed to be.” She certainly came across as a sad person who is trying to make the best of things.

Following the interview, we went back upstairs. Her spouse’s tone of voice to her was different than how it had been earlier. I sensed tension, as if he was concerned with what she may have told me. As I sat in the car later, I reflected on how bitter he was, and how sad she was.

**Cathleen:** We met at the house. She had such enthusiasm from the beginning. She was so eager to talk. Eye contact was good all the time. I sensed that she was totally honest with all her answers. She talked in great detail. Whenever she talked about the golden child image, she would push her hand through her hair as if to illustrate. She loved talking about work and her abilities. The words just flowed whenever work was mentioned. She was a little thoughtful and careful with her words when we talked about relationships, especially with her husband and her children. There was a tone in her voice that suggested that she was regretful that things hadn’t been better in those relationships. She seemed convinced that it was mostly her fault. Her approach to work was so consuming that she hadn’t had time to do the ‘motherly, wifey’ things. She was not reticent about talking freely about her relationship, although her tone was lower. She didn’t fidget or look uncomfortable throughout the whole interview. She seemed really interested in all the questions. I sensed that while she was devastated by her losses, she nevertheless was appreciative of the newly found relationship with her son. She certainly didn’t appear as if the losses would prevent her from moving forward and achieving her dreams, even though they may be not quite as grand as before. It was a very easy interview.

**Chris:** We started the interview with his spouse working in the kitchen. He was obviously aware of her close presence and chose his words carefully. As she left the vicinity he opened up more and was more fluent. He seemed more interested in the research than in how they had been affected by her job loss. He didn’t seem too interested when talking about the loss. His eyes and interest perked up when talking about what he felt and what he thought.

His voice and eye contact wandered as we talked about his relationship with his wife. There was a sense of disappointment that the job loss had not motivated her to seek that balanced approach that he feels is necessary for any relationship, especially for raising a family and combining it with a career. There was a note of sadness that she will never change. His concern was more directed to

his spouse's need to be challenged rather than her being identified by her job. His voice was more reflective in nature when on this participant. He was comfortable in his posture, didn't fidget or get distracted.

Doreen: We met in the living room of her house. The room was an open concept that lent itself to a number of distractions from the front door, to the kitchen, and to the stairs. All came into play during the interview. She was business like. It was as if I was interviewing her for a position. Occasionally she would let her guard down and say what she actually felt. She seemed a little put out that this had happened to her - she was after all indispensable. She gave the clear impression that her spouse's role was to be supportive and look after the home and the children (as well as do his job), she had a career and this took precedent.

All her answers seemed to be centred around impressing me that she was a career woman, good at it and proud of it. There was a sense of family responsibilities, especially with the children, as being interference and not worthy of her talents. She said that she needed to be psyched up a lot, and I attributed her demeanour to reflect that she was in that psyched up mode for the interview. There was no question throughout the interview that her job in the managerial ranks was her life. I left feeling if anyone was identified by her work it was this person. I felt that she was performing for me, as if to show me that she was managerial material.

David: We met in the same space, with the same distractions. I got the feeling from the outset that I was going to hear what needed to be heard in order for him to be supportive of his spouse. I'm not sure where the spouse was during the interview. The kids were moving through the area fairly frequently. It is possible that his answers were a reflection of the possibility that others would be able to hear, maybe not everything, but certainly a part of the interview. There were occasions when I sensed a deep concern that he had about his spouse's commitment to her career at a possible expense of her family. But every time he would start down this road he would quickly correct himself and point out how great she was, and how supportive he is of everything that she does. There were long pauses before his answers whenever we talked about how he felt about things.

I didn't sense any real commitment to express his real feelings, although he did say that they were not important. I had a feeling that sometime in the near future, especially if his spouse takes a job that is far away rather than one closer to home, there could be ramifications. I also sensed that they had conversed a lot before I had arrived and would do so following, although I did stress the need to keep things that we had said to ourselves.

**Evan:** We met in the living room which was reasonably open to other areas in the house. A number of family members were also present in the house at the time. It is possible that he was aware of their presence, and therefore was very careful in his answers. I am not sure whether he wanted to impress me or whether he wanted to make sure that he said the right things in case others overheard. I was struck by his business approach to the interview. He was very detailed in his replies, almost a job interview feeling. There was a definite 'we' approach in his answers. As the interview moved along, he began to perspire. (the room was not hot) It struck me as being nerves. The more we talked, the more he seemed to be bothered by his nerves. I had no way of knowing whether this was a new condition, or whether it had arisen due to his job losses. I failed to pick it up at the time and pursue it. His words of 'wife and children not being a burden', were stressed more than most of his other responses. His voice and eye contact changed as we talked about his relationship with his wife. The relationship did not seem to be as he would like it to be. There seemed to be a change after his job loss. I got the feeling that his role with their new business was motivated by his spouse. Although I didn't sense any opposition, only a willingness to let her lead him.

We did talk more after the microphone was off, he was much more relaxed and at ease, even in the presence of his spouse.

**Eunice:** We met in the same space. She was on the defensive from the beginning. She had agreed to meet and be participant to the consent form which included an acceptance of taping the interview, yet she protested strongly when I prepared to start. It took a few minutes to persuade her until she agreed to continue. From that time on, she seemed to want to impress me, and prove that she was a rock and that she hadn't been changed by the experience. (rock was her word) There was a definite attempt by her to control her answers to a minimum. I sensed a lack of openness. She had a defensive wall around her and when that wall started to come down and her feelings began to come out, she immediately retreated. She obviously felt the need to be in control of the interview. I wondered whether this was also a part of her character in the relationship, or whether this had occurred due to the job loss experienced by her spouse. I sensed, in the way that she responded, that she felt that she could have dealt with the job loss better than her husband had done because she was a stronger person. This was one interview where I questioned whether I was reading too much into her actions and responses. We talked after the interview and she was more relaxed, as was her husband.

**Frank:** We met in the living room of his house. The spouse left. He made himself comfortable and appeared ready for whatever I was going to ask him. I had a sense that he wanted to make sure that I wasn't going to catch him off guard, or in a vulnerable position. Although he seemed willing to answer my questions, I never felt that he was willing to be completely open. There was a sense that he was either holding something back, being reluctant to express his deep feelings, or reluctant to accept or admit his feelings. He seemed to be very proud of how he had handled his situation. That seemed important to him.

**Fiona:** We met in the living room of her house. Her spouse left the room to go downstairs to the basement. There was a good feeling as we started the interview. There was a sense that, not only was she interested in the research, but that she wanted to share everything as best she could. Her posture was comfortable, and she never fidgeted or became distracted. There was a sense in her posture and eye contact, that she felt this could also help them. There was a sound of honesty in her voice with every answer. There was a tone to her voice that indicated that they had been through this experience together.

*ii. Second Interviews:*

**Alan:** He seemed really comfortable and willing to say whatever was on his mind in relation to the questions. I got a sense that he was enjoying the interview and opportunity to talk. He had come to terms with his situation, with a degree of sadness and bitterness, yet was willing to face the reality. He was comfortable in his chair. His eye contact was really good, and his answers were directed to me and not off into space.

**Alice:** We met in the same location as for our first interview. She was more relaxed than the first time. She was more open and talkative. There was a certain acceptance in her voice. A note of sadness, yet, a willingness to accept that they are not going to have the kind of lifestyle they had anticipated. She has come to terms with life in the nineties, and the only important thing is family.

**Brian:** He appeared more relaxed than the first time, but less excited. I sensed that he was willing to answer any questions, that it did not matter, he had nothing to hide. As the interview progressed, I felt that he was trying to sound as if he had accepted his situation, but that was not his true feeling. He was trying to say that he was involved with church so that must be good. I sensed a denial of coming to terms with his situation and a reluctance to admit to his bitterness.

**Brenda:** She seemed a little more nervous than the first time. Her eye contact and body language was more protective than in our first interview. Her



voice was softer. She seemed to be comfort when talking about herself, and a little less comfortable when talking about her spouse and family. She does not seem to be a happy person, although she does seem to welcome the importance of her contribution to the family needs, financially.

**Cathleen:** We talked as she ate her breakfast. (We had a time limit as she was on the way to work) She was really open and talked freely. There were feelings and emotion expressed in her voice and in her facial expressions. A genuineness about her feelings and struggle with a decision that needs to made soon. I felt that she really feels that she is a better person now as a result on her situation. (We talked longer than we had anticipated, but she didn't seem to mind.)

**Chris:** He really liked to talk. His voice was clear and firm. Eye contact was good all the way through, except whenever we talked about his spouse. I sensed that he was trying to give the appearance of feeling good about the way things were. He appears to have lost the desire to get ahead and achieve, and seems more ready to level out and contribute to the community. Whether this is a thankful acceptance of the situation or a reluctant endorsement, I'm not sure. I tend to think that his body language indicates a reluctant acceptance.

**Doreen:** Her posture was good and gave the impression that she was in control and ready. Our discussion was good, yet not free flowing. I had to draw things out from her. She seemed very frustrated that she can't be moving ahead like other people with her background. She does not appear prepared, to accept the present situation as an opportunity that could improve her relationship with her daughter. Her focus is still on herself and her career.

**David:** All of his answers were well thought out. Each answer was given following a long pause. The words were carefully selected. It seemed important to him to be supportive and build up his spouse and to defend her. However, as we got closer to the end his voice lowered, his guard seemed to come down. His feelings seemed to be in the open. He expressed with his voice and face and body language, frustration in how he had always made the sacrifices, and that although he had always accepted that position, this was an opportunity for his spouse to give time and attention to the family, yet she doesn't seem to be willing to do that. There was a sense of anticipating real hurt in the future in their relationship.

**Evan:** We had a very relaxed interview. He was confident and attentive. A sense of "I'm in control of my life." He seemed more interested in talking about their Amway dealership, and how its going to be the key the answer to their prayers. I sensed a reluctance to really come to terms with the reality of his

situation. He seemed to want to ignore it and has become obsessed with their new enterprise.

**Eunice:** A very difficult interview. Her answers were short. She seemed as if she wanted to be accommodating but didn't know how! She seemed to be afraid that she might become vulnerable, and that she would say something that would indicate that she had been hurt by the whole situation. She wanted to appear strong and able to deal with anything. I sensed that it was a facade and that she is bitter.

**Frank:** It appeared that he saw the whole interview process as an interesting exercise and that it was good to be a part of it. He certainly didn't want to appear that he was not in control. His movements didn't change much, his eye contact was good.

**Fiona:** She was very attentive from the beginning. I felt that she was open and answered every question as best she could. I also had a sense that she was happy to be a part of this process. This was made evident as we came towards the end of the interview. She reflected on how she had thought back to our last interview and how helpful it had been to her.

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