

Looking into the Future:

Results and Analysis of Survey Conducted of
Ordained Assemblies of God Ministers in the U.S.
Regarding their Projections of what Ministry
will be like in Ten Years

June 2017

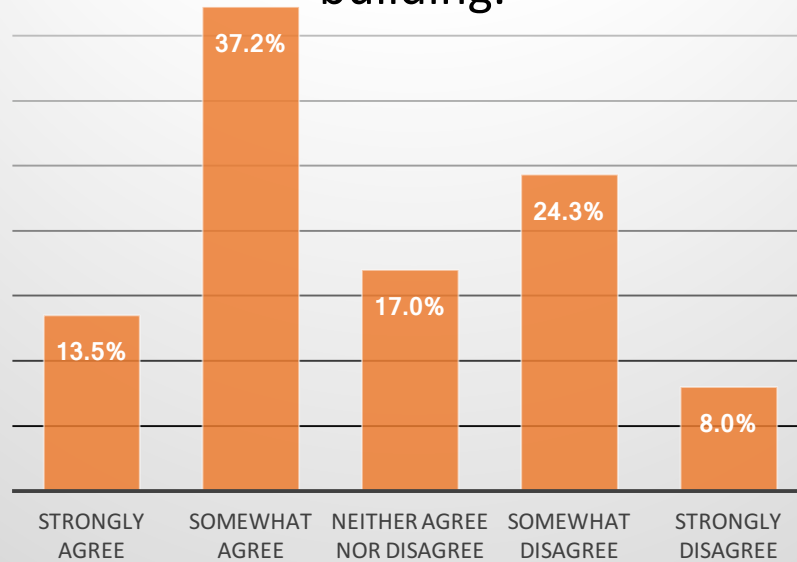
Mario M. Duque

“If you were to project what ministry in the U.S.
will look like 10 years from now,
what would you predict?”

Survey responses:

Half of ministers expect more ministry to take place outside the church building.

Ministry will be almost completely in the community instead of the church building.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	13.5%	250
somewhat agree	37.2%	687
neither agree nor disagree	17.0%	315
somewhat disagree	24.3%	449
strongly disagree	8.0%	147

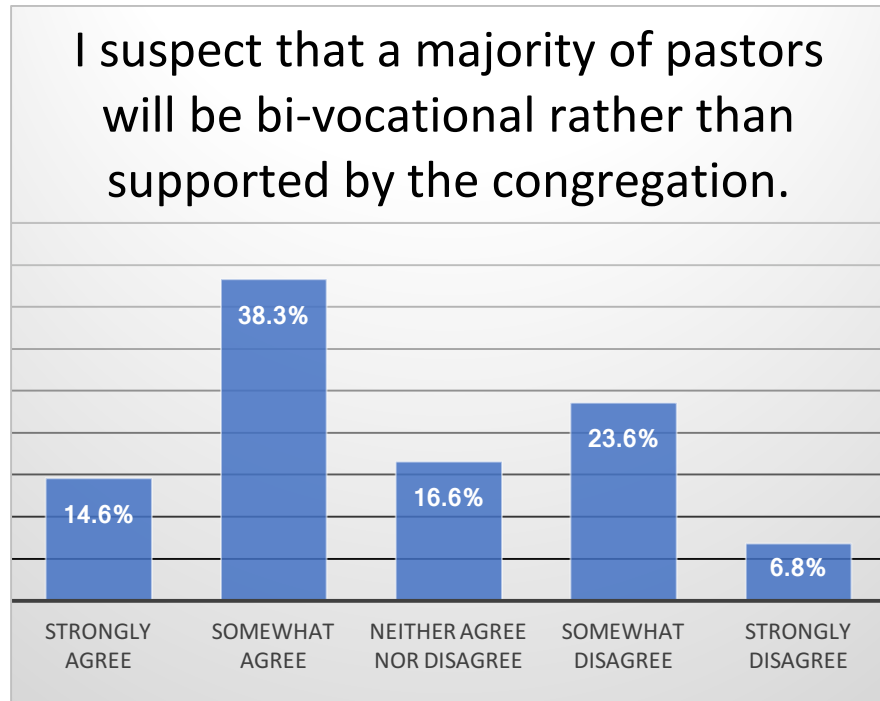
Analysis

Slightly more than half of respondents agreed with this statement while less than a third disagreed. These results were fairly constant for all age categories except the 29 and under. In this group 65% agreed with the statement while only 20% disagreed. There was no disparity between environs.

Comments

A possible point of contention in this statement is the use of the word “completely.” Also, what constitutes a “church building” might be in question. Nevertheless, it seems clear that a majority of the ministers believe more ministry will take place in the “marketplace” outside of traditional church times and places. It is imperative that ministers be prepared to operate in these arenas and to train others to do likewise.

Expect
pastors to
have a
second job.



<u>Answer Options</u>	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	14.6%	270
somewhat agree	38.3%	708
neither agree nor disagree	16.6%	307
somewhat disagree	23.6%	437
strongly disagree	6.8%	126

Analysis

Slightly more than half of respondents agreed with this statement while less than a third disagreed. Ministers who identified as suburban had a slightly lower agreement rate. However, 75% of the ministry students who took this survey agreed with the statement.

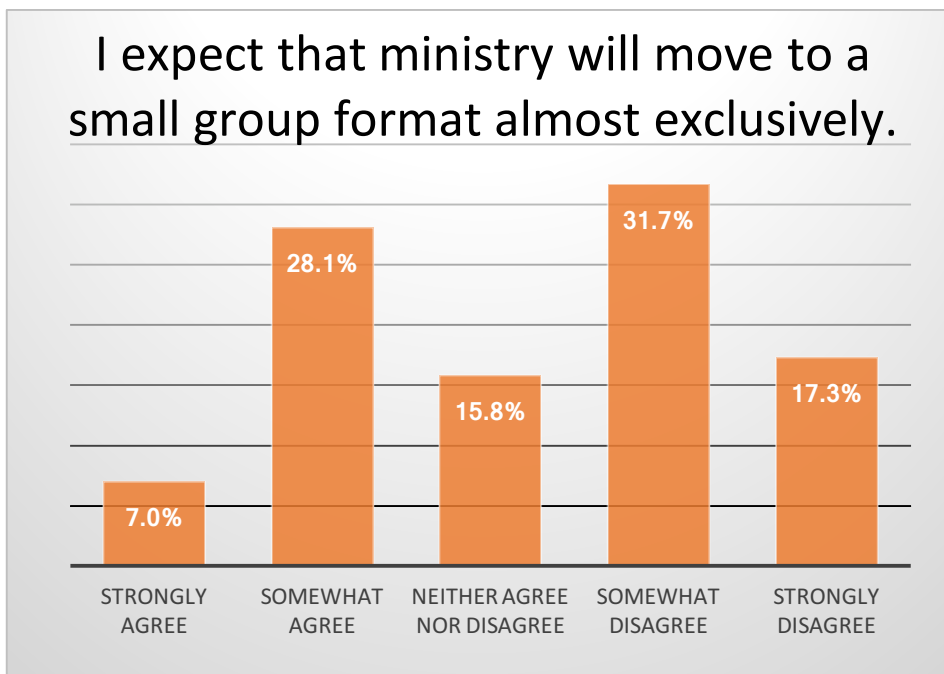
Comments

More than half of respondents (53%) believe that the majority of pastors will have employment outside the church. Currently only 35% of senior A.G. pastors and 45% of church staff works an additional job.¹ It would be beneficial to know how many of the respondents were themselves bi-vocational and then compare their predictions. There is a new and still small movement of pastors who are bi-vocational by choice rather than need.² These ministers believe that in their community they can be more effective by working a secular job as well as being a minister. This possible trend, economics, persecution, and more smaller churches can all contribute to a rise in bi-vocational ministry. It might be beneficial for ministers in training to be required to strategically find secular employment while attending school to help them develop proper bi-vocational patterns.

¹ Based on self-reported data (AG Ministers and Finances Report 2016, Office of the General Treasurer)

² Rainer, Thom S. "Eight Characteristics of the New Bivocational Pastor," January 18, 2016.

Do not expect small groups to catch on.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	7.0%	130
somewhat agree	28.1%	520
neither agree nor disagree	15.8%	292
somewhat disagree	31.7%	586
strongly disagree	17.3%	320

Analysis

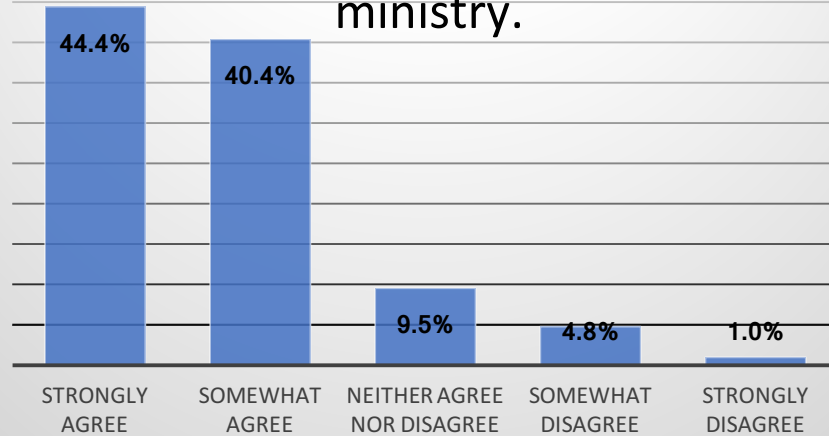
This was the only statement that amassed more disagreement than agreement. Slightly less than half of the ministers disagree with this statement (49.03%) while only about a third agree (35.17%). The highest disagreement level was among the 30 to 39 year olds by a margin of nearly two to one disagreeing. This statement also had the highest number of respondents who said they strongly disagreed. The only group that agreed with the statement was the under 30 who were 45.72% in agreement and only 37.14% disagreed. (The over 70 group barely agreed but their responses were nearly equally split.)

Comments

There have been numerous attempts to establish small group ministries in the U.S. with only minimal success. Although some churches have been very successful, overall this concept has not caught on in America as it has in other societies. The respondents to this survey do not see that trend changing. There might be an aversion to the term “small groups” even by ministries which utilize this methodology. Ministers must be prepared to develop a more relational ministerial approach in which the “small group” is organically developed and not artificially structured. Those who are committed to discipleship done primarily in small groups must understand the societal resistance to such an approach which presently exists in the U.S.

Diversity will be the new normal.

I expect significant ethnic and cultural diversity to be the new normal in ministry.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	44.4%	820
somewhat agree	40.4%	746
neither agree nor disagree	9.5%	175
somewhat disagree	4.8%	88
strongly disagree	1.0%	19

Analysis

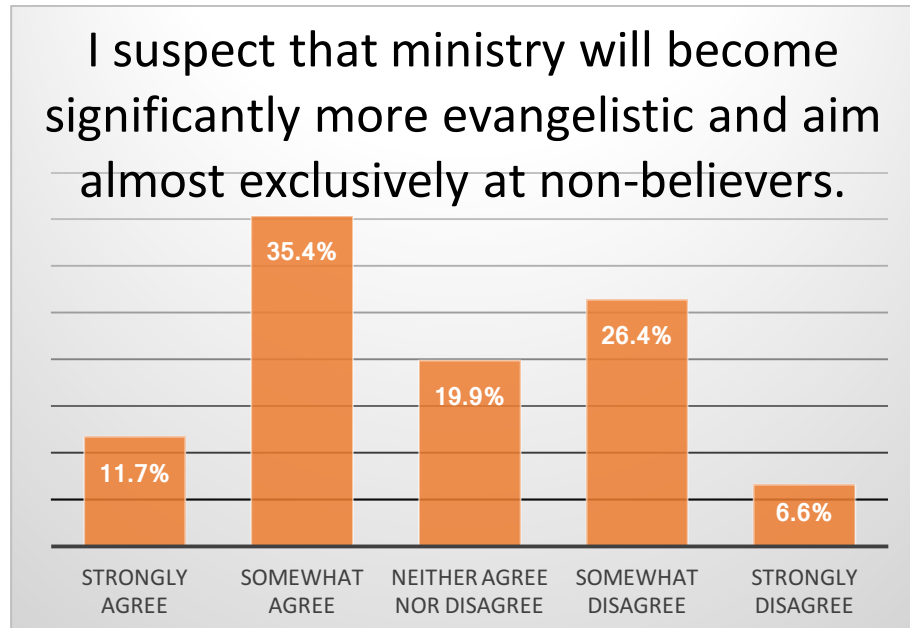
Consistently in every age category more than four out of five respondents agreed with this statement. This statement had the second highest level of agreement. Conversely, out of the 1,848 total respondents only 19 strongly disagreed.

Comments

This is a very encouraging finding from the survey. Certainly, American society is becoming more diverse. However, Sunday morning church attendance in the U.S. still has a ways to go.³ For the Assemblies of God to prepare our ministers to serve in an ethnic and culturally diverse society this diversity must be organically created in the local church, ministry schools, and the organization of the fellowship. Ministry will not be segregated nor will it be integrated into one dominant culture. Future ministry will be culturally diverse. How this will look is still being worked out.

³ Lipka, Michael. "Many U.S. Congregations Are Still Racially Segregated, but Things Are Changing." *FactTank: News in the Numbers*, December 8, 2014.

Possible reemphasis on reaching the lost.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	11.7%	216
somewhat agree	35.4%	655
neither agree nor disagree	19.9%	368
somewhat disagree	26.4%	487
strongly disagree	6.6%	122

Analysis

More respondents agree with this statement than not, 47% to 33%. This rate holds true for each age category except for the younger groups. Ministers under forty agree with this statement at a slightly higher rate, roughly two to one.

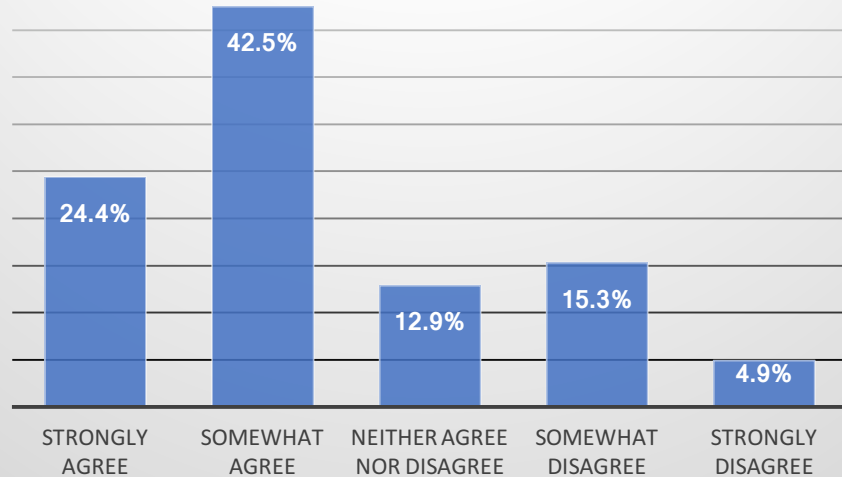
Comments

This prediction is a little troubling. As society becomes more secularized⁴ the need for evangelism increases. Yet, less than half think there will be a significant increase in the evangelistic efforts of ministry. Perhaps the respondents believe troubling times will cause the church to be more internally focused. This does not mean they do not think it necessary, only that over 50% are not convinced the church will do more evangelism than is being done now. This is a crucial area that requires more preparation both to address the need for doing evangelism and the ways it can effectively be done. It is encouraging that younger ministers believe ministry will be more evangelistic at a rate of 2 to 1, and ministry students at 3 to 1.

⁴ Pew Research Center, Nov. 3, 2015, "U.S. Public Becoming Less Religious"

More leading as a team.

I suspect that leadership will move away significantly from the visionary leadership model of a single individual to a shared leadership team model.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	24.4%	451
somewhat agree	42.5%	785
neither agree nor disagree	12.9%	238
somewhat disagree	15.3%	283
strongly disagree	4.9%	91

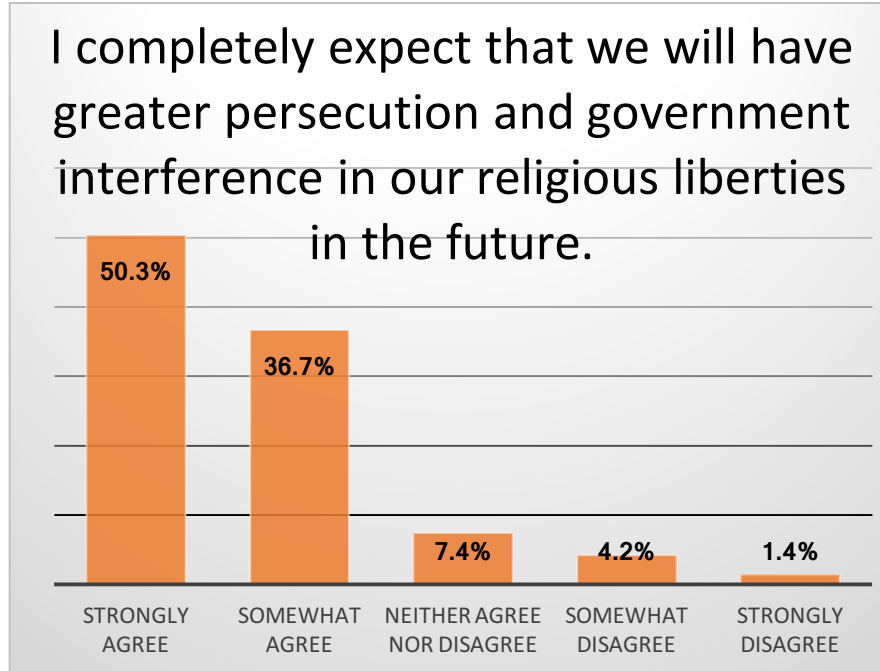
Analysis

Respondents agreed with this statement by a margin of three to one. This margin was true for most age groups. The 30-39 bracket agreed slightly less while ordained ministers under thirty agreed by a much greater margin, ten to one.

Comments

This prediction should cause changes in how we prepare ministers for future roles. There needs to be less emphasis on developing individual leaders and more attention given to a leadership team model. Both theoretical and practical instruction is needed. There needs to be additional research on ministry models that operate in this fashion.

The church will lose its home field advantage.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	50.3%	929
somewhat agree	36.7%	679
neither agree nor disagree	7.4%	137
somewhat disagree	4.2%	78
strongly disagree	1.4%	25

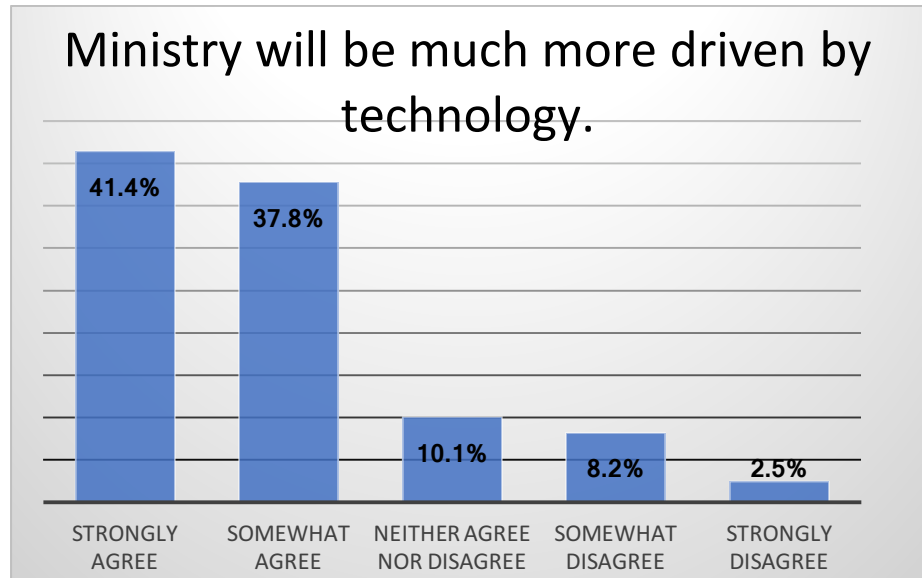
Analysis

This assertion had the highest agreement level of any statement in this study. The respondents expect greater persecution and government interference by an overwhelming margin of more than 14 to 1. The margin was less for the 30-39 year olds (roughly 8 to 1) and still less for those under 30 (nearly 5 to 1). Nevertheless, every age group expects to face greater challenges to their religious freedoms.

Comments

Persecution and government interference with Christianity has sometimes led to greater commitment, boldness, and evangelism. This does not mean believers should promote persecution but neither should they surrender under such trials. The Church needs to prepare for ministry in a country in which Christians no longer enjoy a “home field advantage.” The main way in which individuals or groups are punished or rewarded in a capitalistic society is economically. Future ministers need to be prepared to function with greater expenses and less income. Benefits such as housing allowances and tax exempt statuses for ministries will likely be eliminated. Ministers will have to choose between holding fast to certain doctrines or keeping more of their money. Proper financial planning during these still fat years will alleviate distress in the lean years to come.

How much technology?



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	41.4%	765
somewhat agree	37.8%	698
neither agree nor disagree	10.1%	187
somewhat disagree	8.2%	151
strongly disagree	2.5%	47

Analysis

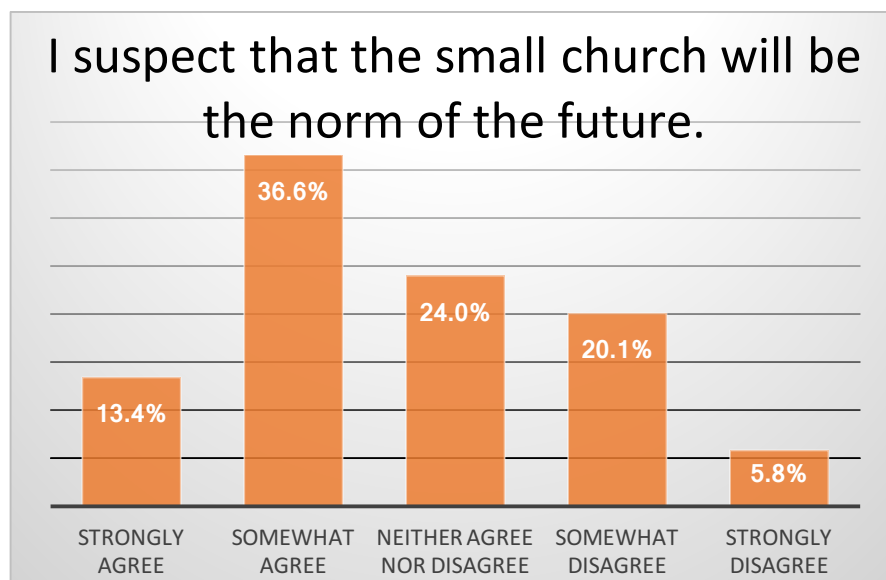
Respondents agreed with this statement consistently throughout all age categories at a rate of about 8 to 1.

Comments

Although there is consensus that ministry will be more driven by technology it is not known if this refers to new technology or the need for churches to catch up with current technology. Certainly, ministry needs to be up to date and utilize appropriate technological tools. However, ministry should not unduly burden itself trying to keep up with every advancement especially if to do so would take away from its task of making disciples. Ministers should consider if more technology will truly create better ministry. Few churches, if any, can keep up with all of the tech businesses’ new inventions. What the church can do, better than any other organization on Earth, is promote and enhance relationships. There is some current data suggesting that social media is making people less social. This is leading some to look for relationship outside of technology. Reports are coming in from college pastors about students routinely going off the grid for a season. The New York Times has now run two articles about coffee shops that purposely do not offer Wi-Fi, in order to promote more lively interaction.⁵ Ministers would do well to consider not just what advances new technology can make but also the unintended consequences which might create opportunities for ministry.

⁵ Mele, Christopher. “Coffee Shops Skip Wi-Fi to Encourage Customers to Actually Talk.” *The New York Times*, May 9, 2017, sec. Technology.

Half the ministers expect the small church to be the norm of the future.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	13.4%	248
somewhat agree	36.6%	677
neither agree nor disagree	24.0%	443
somewhat disagree	20.1%	372
strongly disagree	5.8%	108

Analysis

Agreement with this statement was consistent throughout all age categories. Roughly about half agreed, one quarter disagreed, and one quarter had no opinion. College ministry majors, however, were nearly split with 39% in agreement and 31% disagreeing.

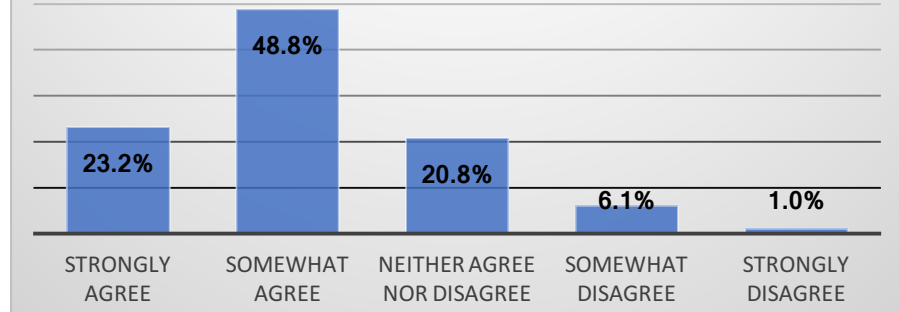
Comments

Respondents believe that smaller churches will be the norm in ministry ten years from now. Small churches have always been the majority. In the era of emphasis on growth, increase, and more is better, sometimes ministers in small churches are made to feel inferior. This does not bode well for ministers who are trained to be a part of larger congregations and then find themselves in smaller churches. Successful small churches and their ministers need to be studied, written about, and presented as viable models.⁶ Furthermore, if ministry will become more relational, as the respondents believe, the small church is usually more proficient in relational ministry. Also, it is smaller churches that are more suited to survive in an era of persecution and government interference.

⁶ Karl Vaters is providing some great material in this area, <http://news-smallchurch.com>.

Ministers need to prepare for an influx of Muslim converts.

I suspect that there will be a significantly greater demand for ministry to Muslims who have converted to Christianity.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	23.2%	429
somewhat agree	48.8%	902
neither agree nor disagree	20.8%	385
somewhat disagree	6.1%	113
strongly disagree	1.0%	19

Analysis

Agreement with this prediction was consistently high throughout all age categories and environs. Just over 70% agreed with this statement while less than 9% disagreed at any age level.

Comments

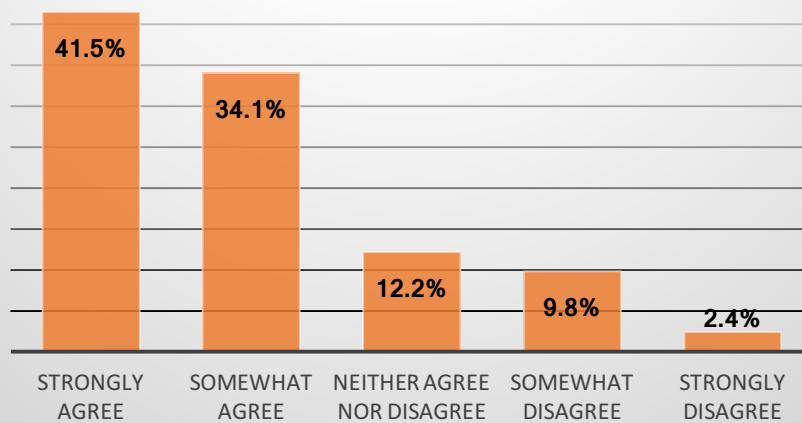
This is the one focus in the present study that does not merit inclusion. During initial interviews and preliminary open ended surveys, ministry to Muslims did not emerge often enough to be included. It was barely ever mentioned at all. This topic was deemed necessary by the author’s own suspicions that the influence of Islam as the fastest growing religion in the world,⁷ and with one of the youngest demographic,⁸ should concern American Christians. It was troubling that this mission field received very little attention within the U.S. Surprisingly, 7 out of 10 respondents believe there will be a “significantly greater demand” to disciple Muslim converts to Christianity. There does not seem to be a great effort in reaching this group within the U.S. While this author welcomes such an expectation, he is concerned these sentiments are merely wishful thinking. If these predictions are in fact false, then there exists a great need to prepare ministers to reach out to Muslims in the U.S. If this statement is accurate then there is an even greater need to train ministers to make disciples of those who have previously followed the teachings of Muhammed.

⁷ Pew Research Center, April 5, 2017, “The Changing Global Religious Landscape”

⁸ Lipka, Michael. “Which U.S. Religious Groups are Oldest and Youngest?” *FactTank: News in the Numbers*, December 8, 2014

More of the supernatural is expected, especially by the younger ministers.

I suspect that supernatural manifestations of the Spirit will be a significant characteristic of ministry.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	41.5%	766
somewhat agree	34.1%	631
neither agree nor disagree	12.2%	225
somewhat disagree	9.8%	182
strongly disagree	2.4%	44

Analysis

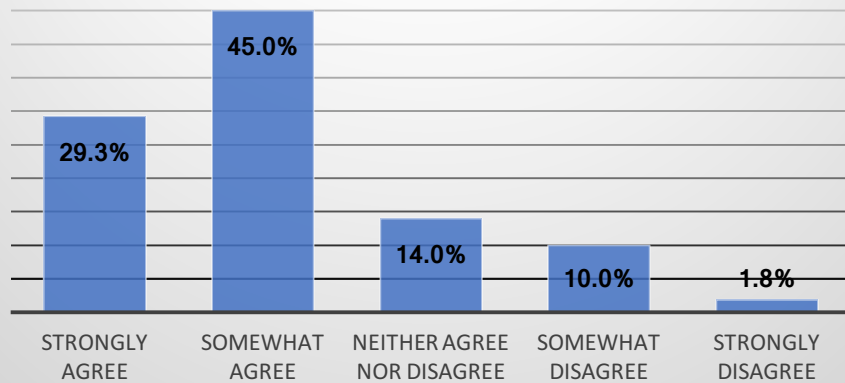
This statement received a consistently high level of agreement with over 75% of respondents saying they agreed and only about 12% disagreeing. Similar results were reported across all age and environs demographics. Furthermore, the highest agreement to this prediction was among the youngest respondents. Among respondents aged 30-39 agreement was 78%. For those under 30 it was 86%. Ministry students agreed at a level of 88%.

Comments

There is obviously a belief that the future will bring more supernatural manifestations. It is not surprising that the younger generation especially foresees the miraculous happening more frequently. Today's media is replete with super humans, the walking dead, zombies, vampires, and other previously normal people who evolved or were somehow affected and took on supernatural qualities. The real issue is from what source will the paranormal emanate? If the Pentecostal Church initiates and prepares ministers for the supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and God grants such manifestations, then there will be a generation of ministers who are truly endowed with signs and wonders following their ministry. But if the churches fail to provide this teaching, the expectation will endure creating a vacuum, one which the secular worldly society will attempt to fill absent of the third person of the Trinity.

Relations
will
define
future
ministry.

Ministry will revolve more around personal relations instead of the mass meetings of today.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	29.3%	541
somewhat agree	45.0%	831
neither agree nor disagree	14.0%	258
somewhat disagree	10.0%	184
strongly disagree	1.8%	34

Analysis

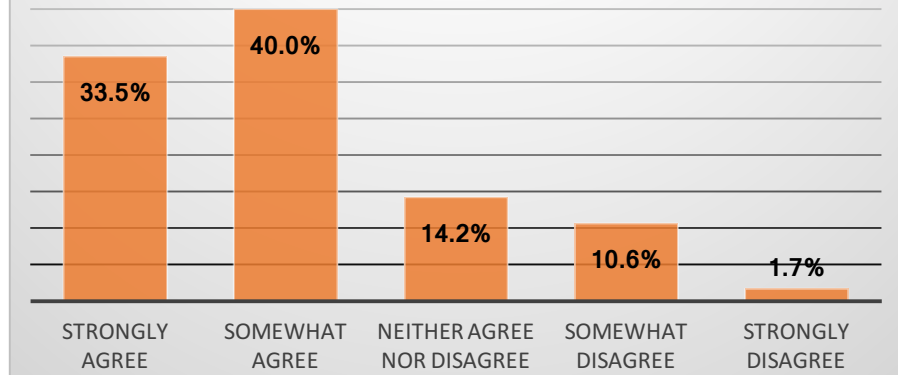
Roughly three quarters of respondents believe ministry will be more relational. This was true for all environs indicated. The youngest and the two oldest age demographics agreed at a slightly higher rate.

Comments

It is intriguing to note that while 3 out of 4 respondents believe future ministry will be more relational, only half think the small church will be the norm and only one third think small groups will be the main format used. Of the total respondents 52% believe future ministry will operate more within small churches, small groups, or both. However, of those who believe ministry will be more relational 70% responded that they expect more small groups and/or small churches while only 13% disagree. More relational ministry implies less but deeper connections. Although larger churches can create opportunities for relational ministry, it will need to be done primarily in smaller settings. If ministry will revolve less around mass meetings then more people will need to be involved in more situations. Ministers will need to be prepared for deeper involvement with less subjects and for equipping more of God's people to do God's work in building up the Church.

Polarization will describe the spiritual climate.

I suspect that there will be a significant increase in polarization between believers and non-believers in the community.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	33.5%	619
somewhat agree	40.0%	739
neither agree nor disagree	14.2%	262
somewhat disagree	10.6%	196
strongly disagree	1.7%	32

Analysis

Three quarters of the total respondents agree there will be more polarization between believers and non-believers by the year 2027. Although a majority of respondents agree with this statement in every category looked at, the number who agree increases with age. Just over 60% of the ministers under forty agree. Among college ministerial majors there is 55% agreement.

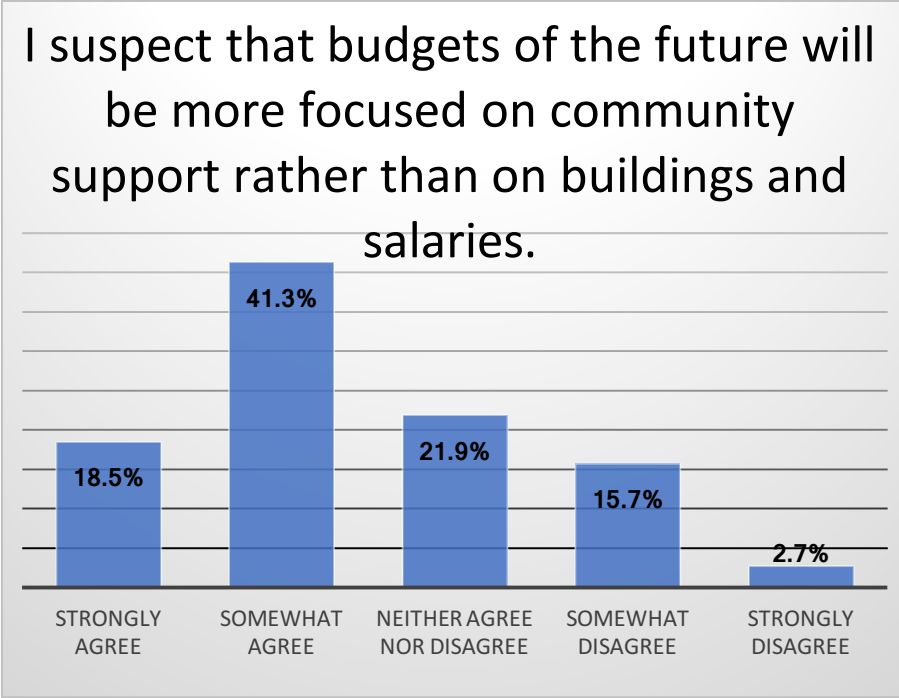
Comments

Polarization might be the one area where there is already a trend emerging. This can be seen on three fronts. First, traditional Christian values and representatives are caricatured and devalued in the media. Second, nominal believers who previously identified as Christian are more regularly claiming to be of another religion or a “none of the above.”⁹ Finally, there is a societal trend towards polarization and intolerance. There is evidence to suggest that reliance on social media is making people more isolated, and indifferent to evidential support for opposing points of view. The ability to only see or like what one agrees with may be creating a dislike and prejudice against what is viewed as the other side.¹⁰ Ministers will need to be prepared to cross greater divides in a society which concedes less and less common ground.

⁹ Stetzer, Ed “Churches in America,” July 5, 2016

¹⁰ For more on this see Prado, C. G., ed. *Social Media and Your Brain: Web-Based Communication Is Changing How We Think and Express Ourselves*. Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, An Imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2017.

More money to be spent outside the church.



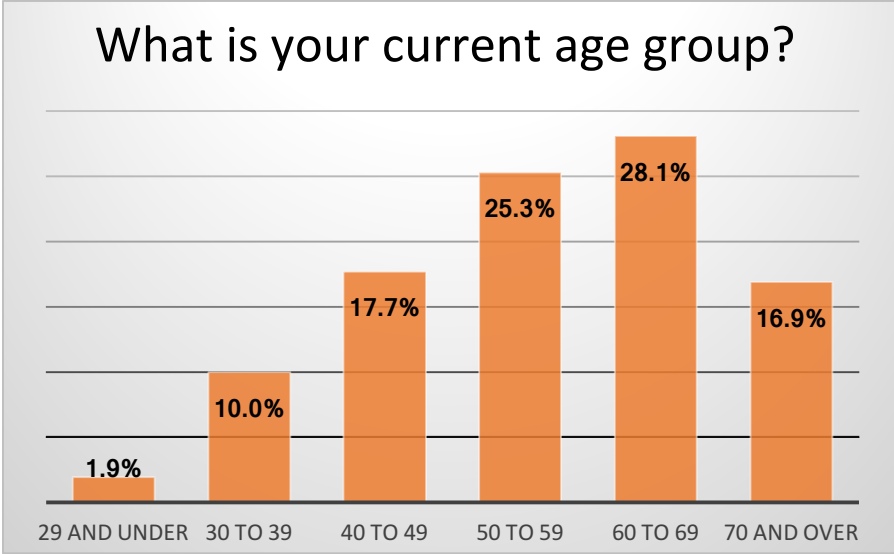
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
strongly agree	18.5%	341
somewhat agree	41.3%	763
neither agree nor disagree	21.9%	404
somewhat disagree	15.7%	291
strongly disagree	2.7%	49

Analysis

Nearly 60% of respondents agreed with this statement. This rate was consistent for every demographic and group surveyed.

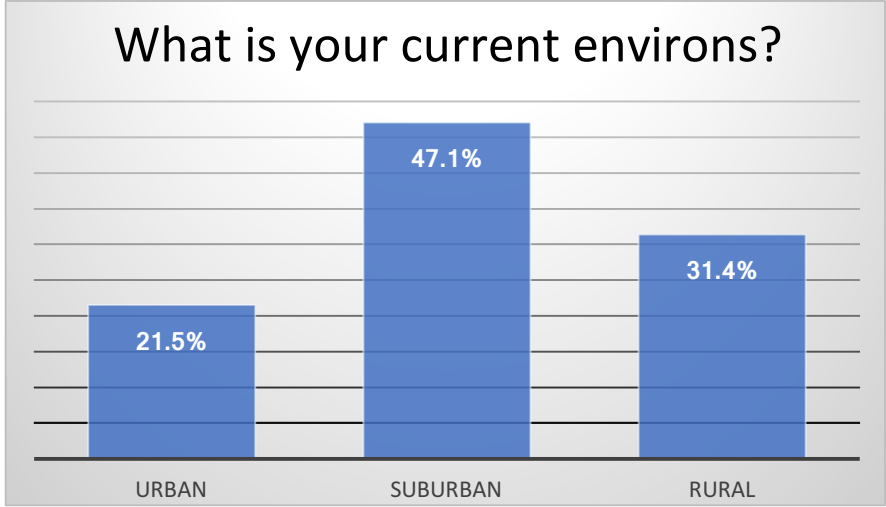
Comments

If the saying “money talks” is accurate then the respondents to this survey foresee a church that is seriously committed to the community in which it lives. What also needs to be considered is that more of the budget going outside the church walls means less of it being spent within the congregation. This could mean less paid staff, more bi-vocational ministers, smaller or multi-use facilities, or overall less resources serving ministries that operate for those within the church. Financial preparation needs to be taking place now. Ministers and those preparing for ministry need to take steps to minimize debt, avoid high maintenance facilities, provide opportunities for ministers to have a second career, and to properly train lay people for the work of the ministry.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
29 and under	1.9%	35
30 to 39	10.0%	185
40 to 49	17.7%	327
50 to 59	25.3%	467
60 to 69	28.1%	518
70 and over	16.9%	311

- 50% of ordained A.G. ministers are under 60
- 55% of respondents to this survey were under 60



<u>Answer Options</u>	Response Percent	Response Count
Urban	21.5%	394
Suburban	47.1%	862
Rural	31.4%	574

• Environs data is not available for A.G. ministers

Responses to Open-ended Statement

Respondents were given the opportunity to respond to the open-ended survey statement of “I suspect that ministry will” with any additional comments. There were 1,092 supplementary remarks. These were sent to an outside collaborator for categorization. This collaborator assigned each comment to one of the topics within the survey and also created five additional categories. These additional categories were as follows:

- Ministry will be more difficult, 22 comments
- Ministry will be more focused on millennials and younger generations, 7 comments
- Ministry will be more missional and strategic, 6 comments
- Ministry will be more orientated towards discipleship, 4 comments
- Ministry will have diverse scheduling, 2 comments

Open ended questions in a survey are useful because they allow respondents to add a response which the researcher may have missed. It is also useful in that what a respondent takes time to write out is a signal of what he or she is most passionate about. By far the two most common responses to the open-ended question was that ministry will be more relational, and that there will be more supernatural manifestations like in the book of Acts. That there were few additional topics mentioned in this section further validates this study.

The Purpose of this Study

Every decade or two brings monumental changes to society. As such the way people respond to ministry changes. Ministry then responds in kind in order to continue its effectiveness. Sometimes the cultural changes catch churches unaware and ministry opportunities are missed. When this happens the church occasionally follows the lead of the secular society and at best is limited in its effectiveness. At worst heresy arises. The purpose of this study is to look ahead with the intention to understand these times, the times coming, and to know what the Church ought to do.

The book of Ecclesiastes states that there really is not anything truly new (1:9). Yet, the more things remain the same the more they change. Human created culture will continue to be corrupted due to the Fall. How this corruption is revealed will change. People will still sin and fall short of God's glory. How these sins are manifested may be different. Souls will continue to be reached with the Gospel message and believers will still need to be disciplined in the ways of Christ. How to best communicate the unchanging Message and how to demonstrate the eternal love of God will need adjustments.

Most ministers are fairly good at learning their environment. Pastors especially look at their communities and recognize the needs, real and felt, have a vision for what God wants to see happen, and can institute a process to minister to those God gives them. To recognize a national movement, however, requires categorizing as many of these developments as possible, connecting the dots, and then recognizing the trends. What the Holy Spirit is doing in a church or in a community may be an individualized case. When the Holy Spirit is showing something repeatedly to many ministers across the nation it is proper to say that a trend is emerging.

The purpose of this report is to begin an examination into what Assemblies of God ministers across the United States believe the Holy Spirit is showing them regarding this society in the next ten years. This information will be valuable as training, preparation, and planning takes place. The Church will find safety in making plans based on the foresight of a multitude of counselors.

Limitations of Study

Every study or survey has limitations. For this present study, the main limitation is that it is limited to ordained A.G. ministers who received the email and chose to respond to the survey. The predictions presented here are merely the opinions, educated guesses, of imperfect people. However, these results are a proper representation of the views of ordained ministers within the Assemblies of God across the U.S.

Methodology

The inquiry presented in this paper began in 2013 as conversations with ministers across the U.S. They were asked some form of this question: “Based on everything you know about everything, what will ministry in the U.S. be like in ten years?” In 2016, this same question was posed to a select group of ministers across the nation. Their responses were then categorized by a third party. The responses that continually arose were presented as part of a survey conducted in March of 2017. (There is one exception and it was commented on during the discussion of that specific statement on page 11.)

The 2017 survey reported on here presented the following question: “If you were to project what ministry in the U.S. will look like 10 years from now, what would you predict?” Fourteen possible responses were listed. The respondents were asked to signify for each statement whether they strongly agreed, somewhat agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, somewhat disagreed, or strongly disagreed. There was an additional open ended question in which respondents could comment on what they believed ministry will be like in ten years. For the most part these open-ended responses were not presented in this paper.

The survey was sent via a web link in an email to over 17,000 ordained Assemblies of God ministers within the U.S. In an effort to minimize the oversaturation of surveying within the fellowship ministers with other levels of credentialing and those within AGWM were not included. Of these, 1,848 ministers responded to the survey. The author believes this represents a confidence level of over 95% with an accuracy margin of error of less than +/- 3%.

The collection of demographic information on the respondents is limited. Only three such questions were asked. These were age bracket, environs, and state of residency. In the general reporting only the age category and environs were analyzed. This is due primarily to the restraints of time and resources. The median age of ordained Assemblies of God ministers in the U.S. is sixty years old. The median age of respondents to this survey is slightly lower. Fifty-five percent of the respondents were under sixty. However, the total number of A.G. ministers under forty who are credentialed, especially at the ordination level, is suspected to be disproportionately low. Further study on the projections by ministers under forty is necessary before giving too much credence to the current findings from that age group. Nevertheless, the findings presented here should be seen as an accurate representation of those younger A.G. ministers who have chosen to pursue the highest level of credentialing within the fellowship. The respondents self-identified as 21.53% urban, 47.1% suburban, and 31.37% rural. It is not known how this corresponds to the totality of ordained A.G. ministers.

In the preceding pages the reader found graphs showing raw data, an analysis of the data, and some brief commentary from the author. The sum of percentages may not always total 100.0% due to rounding. The survey was also completed by 47 domestic missionaries in the U.S. and 69 college students currently preparing for ministry at two A.G. schools. Their responses are not part of the data presented in this report. However, comparisons with these two additional groups might have been mentioned in the author’s comments. It is hoped that this information from many ministers will assist in the preparation of future individual ministries.

Conclusions

The purpose of this report has been to get a glimpse of what ministry is expected to be like in the year 2027. The analyses and comments presented here are initial and limited in scope to the author's context and experience. This projection has been based on a consensus of ministers, each of which has his or her own ministry perspective. In keeping with the principles of the A.G. this report has sought to present the assessment of many and not just a few. There are six areas in which respondents agree on the future forecast at a rate of 7-8 for each one who disagrees. These six responses can be matched into three pairs.

An overwhelming 87% of the respondents believe there will be greater persecution and government interference, and 73% expect greater polarization between believers and non-believers. Some sociologists are indicating there is a growing intolerance to opposing viewpoints in American society.¹¹ They blame this at least in part on social media and point to the latest presidential election result and its aftermath as possible signifiers. Technology is making it possible for people to filter out any contrary opinion and to create a steady diet of only that which is "liked" by the consumer. Without exposure to different beliefs any voice that conflicts with the held opinion is deemed erroneous and need be eradicated. David Kinnaman (president of Barna Group) states in his latest book *Good Faith* that Christians are increasingly viewed as irrelevant and as extremist. Intolerance and polarization will thereby provide the base for persecution of the Christian perspective. Ministers must be prepared for the very real possibility that they will soon be operating in a more hostile environment.

By almost similar margins most of the respondents believe ministry will include more diversity and be more relational. These two aspects have the potential for overcoming the previously mentioned predictions. Ministry based on personal relations, that cross cultural divides, can overcome polarizing inclinations. People tend to be anxious about the unknown. Ministry that becomes personal will dispel this fear and create a more agreeable environment for producing what the Bible terms "good soil." Ministers need to recognize how they can remain true to the Gospel while connecting with those who oppose it.

The third pair of statements which received very high agreement levels were that ministry will be more technological and that there will be more supernatural manifestations. At first, technology and the paranormal seem to be on opposite spectrums. However, it is technology which is feeding this desire for the transcendent, especially as it is portrayed in movies and television. Acceptance of, if not outright belief in, the supernatural is growing. This does not mean people are becoming more open to the Spirit, but rather they are believing more in that which is otherworldly. Absent of a true Pentecostal move of God this desire for supernatural manifestations will find satisfaction in the occult, paganism, and science fiction. The Church needs to prepare itself by looking at past Pentecostal movements and seeking God for new wonders.

¹¹ Prado, 2017.

About the author

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Afterward

Training ministers for future ministry requires a glimpse into the future. Preparing oneself to train said ministers requires even more forth-seeing. When I realized God was telling me to prepare myself for a future ministry of helping to train new ministers, I recognized that their ministry would be different from how we did things in the past or how we do church today. I began thinking about what ministry will be like ten years from the present. I would ask every minister I spoke with to ponder this thought with me.

The survey presented in the preceding pages represents the culmination of my nearly four-year inquiry. Whatever God has in store for the church ten years from now, assuming we are still here, one thing is for sure, it will be different from how we do it now. A failure to look forward will cause ministers to be constantly playing catch up. It is my aspiration that this study will assist ministers in preparing for the future.

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Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord.
Psalm 22:30