



Preventing Burnout and Compassion Fatigue: An Analysis of 2 Timothy 1

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Organizations of diverse industrial contexts face significant challenges as they grapple with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic as employees face unprecedented levels of burnout and compassion fatigue. Research shows that stress-related burnout is prevalent in other-focused industries such as social work, psychology, and pastoral ministry (Diaconescu, 2015; Hendron et al., 2012, 2014). While significant academic and media attention remains focused on some of these frontline workers, clergy burnout and psychological distress during the crisis remain largely overlooked (Greene et al., 2020). Although not involved in patients' medical care, the clergy provide a critical role in supporting individuals, families, and

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communities in coping with crises and traumatic situations. According to Taylor et al. (2006), most Americans turn to their faith to cope with traumatic situations and their aftermath.

Being a part of a faith-based community can be a protective component for psychological health following a disaster or crisis event (Milstein, 2019). As such, ministry leaders' spiritual, psychological, and physical health is a significant concern. Previous studies on clergy burnout note the tendency not to prioritize self-care, and ministers often experience work overload, emotional isolation, and the inability to rest due to ministry demands (Jackson-Jordan, 2013; Lewis et al., 2006). A Canadian military study found that heavy workloads and compassion fatigue contributed to clergy burnout, potentially leading to other disorders, including depression (Auld, 2010). Exposure to other people's traumatic experiences referred to as secondary or vicarious trauma (Hendron et al., 2014), exacerbates the issue. According to Baum (2014), the shared experience of a crisis compounds the strain on the minister as they try to help their parishioner while actively coping with their own experiences during the crisis.

The purpose of this study is to explore burnout from a biblical perspective by conducting an exegetical analysis of 2 Timothy 1:1–18. In this passage of Scripture, the Apostle Paul addresses the psychological trauma and emotional burnout experienced by Timothy, the church pastor at Ephesus. Paul states, “Recalling your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy” (*New International Version*, 2011, 2 Tim. 1:4). Timothy's grief and calamity may have reached Paul (Zondervan, 2019). In 2 Timothy 1:6–14, the Apostle recognized that Timothy faced significant challenges and urged him to stand his ground and endure suffering in ministry service. The Apostle acts as a mentor and provides the young minister with coping tools to remain effective in his leadership efforts.

BURNOUT AND COMPASSION FATIGUE DEFINED

Burnout is a complex construct related to various intrapersonal interactions that influence one's ability to function within a professional role (Jackson-Jordan, 2013). Maslach et al. (1996) define burnout as a complex set of symptoms that include emotional exhaustion, a high degree of depersonalization exhibited in adverse and detached reactions, and a low sense of personal accomplishment. After decades of disagreement on a universal definition of burnout, the World Health Organization

(WHO) in 2019 defined burnout as “a syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed” (Moss, 2021, p. 2). Additional consequences of burnout include cynicism, detachment, and a feeling of ineffectiveness in the workplace (Bakker et al., 2005; Bühler & Land, 2003; ; Leiter & Maslach, 2009; Leiter & Spence Laschinger, 2006; Peterson et al., 2008; Schaufeli & Greenglass, 2001).

The core symptom of burnout is emotional exhaustion, wherein an individual is emotionally drained and lacks the emotional energy to adequately fulfill their responsibilities (Bakker et al., 2005; Leiter & Spence Laschinger, 2006). Maslach et al. (1996) define emotional exhaustion as a feeling of emotional overextension and overtiredness in one’s work. Depersonalization in the burnout cycle is a state in which individuals have mentally distanced themselves from their work, including the people they interact with, influenced by the extent to which emotional exhaustion is present (Leiter & Spence Laschinger, 2006; Schaufeli & Greenglass, 2001). Characteristics of depersonalization include detachment, callousness, a negative attitude, and insensitive, dehumanizing interactions with people (Bakker et al., 2005; Bühler & Land, 2003; Schaufeli & Greenglass, 2001; Storlie, 1979). Further, feeling ineffective or lacking in accomplishment is subjective and is affected by depersonalization (Leiter & Spence Laschinger, 2006; Schaufeli & Greenglass, 2001). Personal accomplishment describes competence and achievement in the individual’s work (Maslach et al., 1996). Additional consequences associated with burnout include impaired job satisfaction, absenteeism, decreased productivity, reduced organizational commitment, impaired physical health, reduced quality of life, loss of purpose, emotional problems, loneliness, lowered self-esteem, marital conflict, and a substantial loss of closeness and enjoyment in relationships both personally and professionally (Ayala and Carnero, 2013; Guntapalli et al. 2014; Maslach et al., 1996, 2001; Melamed et al., 2006). In summary, according to Storlie (1979), individuals suffering from burnout feel that “no matter what you do or how hard you try, you cannot make a difference” (p. 2109).

Compassion fatigue occurs when a caregiver experiences natural behaviors and emotions resulting from a desire to help a traumatized or suffering person (Figley, 2002). Reexperiencing emotional trauma is a defining criterion of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Compassion fatigue can be a by-product of a caregiver’s experience from indirect exposure to trauma survivors (Craig & Sprang, 2010). According to Coetzee

and Laschinger (2018), compassion fatigue refers to the disengagement of caregivers from their patients, creating a reduction or inability to provide appropriate patient care. Craig and Sprang (2010) suggest that individuals caring for those with trauma are at high risk for developing compassion fatigue. In a study by Scott and Lovell (2015), burnout and compassion fatigue are firmly, negatively, and statistically related.

BACKGROUND 2 TIMOTHY I

The purpose of Paul's letter to Timothy is unique among the other Pauline letters and does not address church order or Christian roles, making it "fully and truly a personal letter" (Witherington, 2010, p. 302). It is not clear that Paul's letter, unlike his other writings, was intended to be read aloud to a congregation. However, Paul continues the theme of suffering for the faith found in 1 Timothy 1:3–18 and reinforces Timothy's responsibility in the local church (Towner, 2006). This inner texture analysis of 2 Timothy reveals the text's progression pattern into three sections: the opening of the text in the greeting, 2 Timothy 1:1–2, the middle of the text body verses 2 Timothy 1:3–15, and the closing 2 Timothy 1:16–18. This socio-rhetorical analysis explores the Apostle Paul's efforts to reverse the emotional, mental, and spiritual strain under which Timothy pastored with the interpretive intent of discovering lessons that may apply to contemporary pastoral leadership burnout.

The book of 2 Timothy was written by Paul while imprisoned in Rome and after his first trial during the Neronian persecution, which began in A.D. 65 (Witherington, 2010). In contrast to his first imprisonment, where Paul lived in a rented home with more freedoms, he is now imprisoned and chained like a common criminal (Hindson & Mitchell, 2008). Thus, while Paul's death is not imminent, he knows it is near (Fee & Gasque, 1988). According to Gaius of Rome, also quoted by Eusebius, Paul's execution as a Roman citizen occurred in A.D. 67 (Witherington, 2010). During this period, Paul faces abandonment by followers, loneliness, apostasy in the churches, established congregations struggling, and his most beloved coworker, Timothy, seems ashamed of Paul's condition and possibly cowardly in accomplishing his ministerial duties (Fee & Gasque, 1988; Witherington, 2010). According to Witherington (2010), Paul's writing of 2 Timothy modified the epistolary convention to suit rhetorical ends, aims, and forms. Table 17.1 provides

Table 17.1 Rhetorical Outline of 2 Timothy 1

<i>Rhetorical section</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Epistolary prescript and greeting	2 Timothy 1:1–2
Thanksgiving prayer/exordium	2 Timothy 1:3–5
Propositio: Stir up the gift, draw on the power	2 Timothy 1:6–7
Be prepared to testify, suffer, and guard the deposit	2 Timothy 1:8–14
Transitus/closing	2 Timothy 1:15–18

Source Christopher Clem

the rhetorical outline for 2 Timothy 1:1–18 as structured by Witherington (2010).

2 TIMOTHY 1:1–2: EPISTOLARY PRESCRIPT AND GREETING

Paul began the letter following customary practices for the historical period using the sender’s name as the first word in the letter (Collins, 2002). “Twenty of the twenty-nine words in the salutation in 1 Timothy are also found here” (Witherington, 2010, p. 306). Paul then referenced his apostleship and authority as coming from God and not from self-appointment, man’s will, or a heritable right (Bruce, 2008; Witherington, 2010). The object of Paul’s apostleship is the declaration of the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus. The “in-Christ” formula is consistent throughout the Pauline and Pastoral letters communicating the message of eternal salvation through Christ Jesus (Witherington, 2010). God promised that all who believed in Jesus would receive eternal life, and Paul’s apostolic mission was in harmony with that promise (MacDonald et al., 2008). According to Witherington (2010), there is a significant stress on eternal life in all three Pastoral Epistles. It is not surprising that Paul, possibly facing his imminent death, mentions this in his final salutation.

Paul transitions and addresses the reader, Timothy, as “my dear son.” The affectionate discourse arose from Paul’s instrumentality in Timothy’s Christian faith growth as a young man and the years of faithful Christian service shared by the two men (Bruce, 2008). However, according to Witherington (2010), Paul calls Timothy a “beloved child,” not a “loyal child,” as the focus in the letter will address Timothy’s behavior. Additionally, Paul’s reference to Timothy as a son carried the social significance

of intimacy and authority that a father held over a son culturally. Paul's greeting consisted of grace, mercy, and peace. When writing to churches, Paul would include the greeting of grace and peace; however, in the letters to Timothy, he adds the word mercy in the greeting, implying that God's loving-kindness is necessary for the minister (Macdonald et al., 2008).

In summary, the analysis of the epistolary prescript yielded the following themes. First, speak to the relationship between Paul and Timothy. Second, the Apostle extends his typical salutation of grace and peace by adding the term "mercy" (*English Standard Version*, 2 Tim. 1:3). The addition of mercy served the rhetorical intent of extending to the young Timothy's words of mercy. From the use of mercy in the salutation to the content in the following statements, it seems evident that Timothy was facing a crisis, and the Apostle sought to author an encouraging letter to him.

According to Scott and Lovell (2015), loneliness remains the most robust explanatory variable in pastor burnout; therefore, healthy intimate relationships remain critical to minister health. Accordingly, healthy close relationships for ministers can significantly reduce the effects of burnout and compassion fatigue. In studying physicians, Greenawald (2020) identified peer connections as essential to safeguarding against the harmful effects of burnout and social isolation. These relationships may include but are not limited to family, friends, mentors, and peers. Cree-Green et al. (2020) identified mentorship and peer-to-peer relationships as essential to providing support against burnout and reducing isolation. Further, Brooks et al. (2018) linked support systems and organization coaching such as collegial interactions and mentorship as essential to preventing burnout and fatigue.

Principle One: Organizational Leaders Must Foster Opportunities for Healthy Relationships Such as Mentoring and Peer Networks to Reduce Feelings of Isolation in the Workplace.

2 TIMOTHY 1:3–5: THANKSGIVING PRAYER/EXORDIUM

While the Apostle sought to extend mercy, it is also clear he wanted to challenge Timothy vigorously; therefore, the purpose is to establish rapport with his reader (Witherington, 2010). The passage is ripe with emotion-fused language as Paul appealed to the emotions of joy and love while additionally reminding Timothy of his family lineage

of faithful Christ-followers. Writing from a Roman prison and recognizing that his martyrdom is imminent, Paul reflected on his spiritual heritage and ministry, expressing thanksgiving and clear conscience of his efforts regardless of his current circumstance (Carson et al., 1998). Paul's recollection of his heritage is a source of thanksgiving and cause for prayer (Bruce, 2008). Further, Paul links Old Testament faith and New Testament faith through common Jewish ancestry that he and Timothy share, providing further indirect motivation to Timothy in his ministry (Witherington 2010).

Returning to an emotive tone, the Apostle Paul reminds Timothy that he always remembers him in prayer. Additionally, he reminded Timothy of the tears he shed at their parting and the joy Paul would experience at reuniting with his friend. These tears represent the demonstrative and uninhibited emotion Paul feels for his friend (Bruce, 2008). According to Carson et al. (1998), joy and tears may exist side by side when emotion is strong. Paul's emotion demonstrated love and esteem for his friend and spoke eloquently of his graciousness, tenderness, and humility (MacDonald, 2008). Timothy's tears indicated a timid but loyal man of sincere faith (Witherington, 2010). Paul remembers and reminds Timothy of his godly heritage and the genuine or unhyprocritical (*anypokritos*) faith received from his mother and grandmother and continues in him. Paul's words conveyed concern again by implying that Timothy's relatives' faith lives in him also (Fee & Gasque, 1988). Paul deliberately appealed to that connection to encourage or possibly shame Timothy into action, implying that Timothy must bravely carry on the family tradition of faith (Witherington, 2010).

In conclusion, the following themes surfaced in the passages. First, Paul desired to extend mercy to Timothy; however, he recognized that hardship or shame had compromised his protegee's potential and required forceful intervention from the Apostle. Second, the Apostle reminds Timothy of their strong relational bond, creating a foundation for corrective parenesis. Thirdly, Paul referenced both his and Timothy's strong spiritual heritage to motivate him to act decisively and reject cowardice in the face of opposition. Healthy family relationships positively impact a minister in their fight against burnout (Greene et al., 2020; Jordan-Jackson, 2013; Muse et al., 2016). In the first four verses, Paul references familial relationships of sonship, a shared heritage, and his mother and grandmother. Here the Apostle reminds Timothy that he is not

isolated but has people supporting him in prayer against ministry stressors. Further, research shows that peer-to-peer relationships in ministry bolster a ministers' health (Greene et al., 2020). Finally, Paul reminds Timothy of their shared ministry experiences and encourages him to follow his teaching pattern. Further, Leiter and Maslach (2010) posited that consistent communication between leaders and followers can be a robust defense against burnout.

Principle Two: Organizational Leaders Must Foster Healthy Relationships that Allow Space for Honest and Challenging Conversations.

2 TIMOTHY 1:6–7: PROPOSITIO

A rhetorical *propositio* reveals the rhetorical situation or exigence that must be overcome to improve the situation (Witherington, 2010). Paul's thesis was this: "Timothy is not fulfilling his ministerial calling as he ought, partly due to a spirit of fear or timidity, and so he needs some jump-starting" (p. 313). Paul transitions the conversation by reminding Timothy of his spiritual calling and the gift (*charisma*) bestowed upon him by God through the laying on of the Apostle's hands (Bruce, 2008). Culturally, church elders' laying on of hands occurred in front of the congregation, thereby publicly validating an individual's ministry call (Fee, 1988). Paul reminds Timothy that his ministry commissioning occurred by laying on of the Apostle's hands, further signifying their close relationship and providing further motivation to him in pursuing his ministry mission.

Thematically, Paul connects the theme of Power to the Holy Spirit and then to God, implying that ministry strengthening comes through divine agency (Towner, 2006). Further, the two verbs' unqualified past tense suggests that ongoing empowerment for ministry work exists through continued partnership with God and the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit brings Power (*dunamis*) to accomplish the mission, love (*agape*) without which service is valueless, and self-control (*sophronismos*) essential to all who would influence others for God (Bruce, 2008; MacDonald, 2008).

In verse six, Paul exhorts Timothy to "fan into flame" God's calling on his life for "God has not given a spirit of fear but of power, love, and self-control" (English Standard Version, 2 Tim. 1:5–6). Paul exercises both the familial and mentoring relationship between them to exhort Timothy

to regenerate his faith and accomplish his ministry. The encouragement to reignite his ministry passion indicated the danger of “spiritual dryness,” an emotional exhaustion indicator (Chandler, 2009). Also implied in the text is a resurgence of personal spirituality empowered by the Holy Spirit and activated through prayer. Research showed that prayer and spirituality connect ministers to God and form resilience against burnout and compassion fatigue (Jordan-Jackson, 2013).

In summary, timidity can foster shame or cowardice in the Gospel’s communication undermining the mission. Secondly, to combat fear and timidity, Paul instructs Timothy to act and rekindle his ministry calling. Third, ministry effectiveness requires an ongoing source of Power and connection to the Holy Spirit, God, and Jesus. People find strength and purpose through connecting with God, and thus, spiritual formation is essential to promoting spiritual well-being (Nelson, 2012). Renewing one’s calling and spiritual formation is essential to burnout prevention as spiritual dryness is a predictor of emotional exhaustion (Chandler, 2009).

Principle Three: Organizational Leaders Encourage Their Followers by Validating Their Purpose and Encouraging Spiritual Well-Being.

2 TIMOTHY 1:8–14: TESTIFY, SUFFER, AND GUARD THE DEPOSIT

The overall structure of the rhetorical unit in this section is bracketed by the command “do not be ashamed” and Paul’s reminder to Timothy that “he is not ashamed” of the Gospel (Witherington, 2010, p. 316). Additionally, the Apostle reminds Timothy that what the world sees as culturally or socially shameful, i.e., suffering and imprisonment for the Gospel, Timothy must see things from God and the Apostle’s perspective in the context of eternal significance. Paul attempted to persuade Timothy to follow in his footsteps utilizing four paradigms, twice as many as he used in 1 Timothy and Titus. The increased number of paradigms underscores Paul’s attempt to have Timothy “revert to type” following the Apostle’s example (p. 316). This underscores the father/son relationship’s social and cultural texture and the apostle/pastor dynamic, where the former leads and instructs the latter.

According to Fee (1988), the missional calling is hard to accept and comprehend due to the heavy demands on a disciple, particularly regarding suffering for the mission’s sake. This assertion, combined

with Timothy's personality, explained his hesitancy to fulfill his missional calling. Therefore, Paul provides Timothy with specific advice on how to stay faithful by adhering to the sound pattern of teaching and behavior provided by the Apostle (Bruce, 2008). Additionally, Paul calls himself a prisoner of Christ and not of Nero (ESV, 2 Tim. 2:9), reminding Timothy that God's universal purpose extended to his calling (Witherington, 2010). Sharing the Gospel of truth, together with the divinely bestowed gift, comprises what God had entrusted to Paul; for their safe-keeping, Paul entrusts them to God and encourages Timothy to do the same (Bruce, 2008).

Paul is conscious of the false teachers' continued threat to the Gospel and is mindful of giving Timothy support to combat the danger (Carson et al., 1998). In verse 13, Paul is deeply aware that this can be achieved only through the Spirit's help, who is the faithful guardian of the truth (Carson et al., 1998). Therefore, in verse 14, Paul encourages Timothy to guard this deposit in partnership with the Holy Spirit, who dwells within him. Paul continued to use emotive language and imagery, suggesting that God gives power, love, and self-control when the world gives fear. Paul reminds Timothy that while he suffers in a dark prison and faces suffering and death, Christ appearing (*epiphaneia*) has abolished death and brought life, light, and immortality to Christians giving eternal hope (Bruce, 2008).

The Apostle Paul recognizes the danger Timothy faces dealing with burnout and compassion fatigue. Paul communicates a series of positive protective components to reduce and reverse the adverse effects of burnout, including healthy intimate relationships with family and mentors, the resurgence of personal prayer and spirituality, and reminders that he is not alone in his ministry. Further, Paul encourages Timothy to remember the Apostle's teaching as a source of ongoing education and encouragement as he pursues his ministry calling. These components created a robust defense against the effects of compassion fatigue and burnout in Timothy's life and ministry. In sum, Paul communicated four successful strategies to combat burnout and compassion fatigue identified in modern literature. These include healthy intimate relationships, prayer, spirituality, and organizational interventions and support.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

According to Scott and Lovell (2015), loneliness remains the most robust explanatory variable in pastor burnout; therefore, healthy intimate relationships remain critical to minister health and productivity. According to Headington (1997), 70% of pastors reported not having a close friendship to provide support and edification. Therefore, fostering healthy close relationships for ministers can significantly reduce the effects of burnout and compassion fatigue and is an essential component of creating and maintaining minister well-being. These relationships may include but are not limited to family, friends, mentors, and peers.

Family and friend relationships for clergy provide a central support system for ministers to resist burnout and isolation. A study of American Protestant ministers by Meek et al. (2003) found that 62% of clergy members considered exemplars of ministry success referenced their family unit as an essential element of their emotional and spiritual health (p. 343). Further ministers cited their spouse as a critical factor in their psychological and emotional support as friends, prayer partners, and honest confidants. Extra-familial friendships for clergy provided a crucial element of support for ministers, with 42% identifying these relationships as critical to maintaining well-being. In summary, clergy families and friends provided positive connectedness that remedies social isolation and alleviates pastoral ministry stresses.

A study of clergy burnout and psychological health in the United States found that ministers with a mentor (26%) reported higher ministry satisfaction scores than their counterparts (Francis et al., 2013, p. 326). Out of the variety of support strategies investigated in the study, only mentoring relationships and education sabbaticals positively impacted ministry satisfaction prompting researchers to recommend mentoring relationships as a positive deterrent to burnout. A study by Meek et al. (2003) found that 45% of clergy in their study referenced mentorship as a critical factor in reducing burnout (p. 343). In summary, familial, peer-to-peer relationships, and mentors can bolster ministers' health, reduce isolation, and provide support against burnout (Greene et al., 2020).

Principle Four: Organizational Leaders Should Encourage the Development and Maintenance of Healthy Relationships Which Bolster Emotional Health and Resiliency.

PRAYER

When challenged with extreme difficulty or stress, clergy often find strength and purpose through connecting with a higher power through prayer. Willard (1990) noted that prayer is conversing and communicating with God wherein the individual becomes a co-laborer with God to accomplish good things and advance his Kingdom's purposes. In the Christian tradition, prayer is one of the primary spiritual disciplines. A study of Christian ministers in the United States found that 66% of the respondents, identified as exemplars of clergy health and learning, practiced spiritual disciplines, including prayer. Through prayer, this group maintained a connectedness to a higher power, experienced spiritual health, combated stress, and increased personal effectiveness in their lives.

While analyzing prayer and spiritual disciplines, "psychologists have unfairly maligned these Christian beliefs in years past, but there now appears to be a growing recognition that these beliefs can be healthy." Additionally, pastors practicing spiritual disciplines tended to trust in the character and provision of God rather than their self-efficacy, thereby acknowledging their weakness in dealing with difficult situations and transferring their reliance on God and His capability to guide their actions. Further, when an individual converses with God through prayer, whether on their behalf or others, the effects are pervasive and strengthen all aspects of the person's personality (Willard, 1990).

Principle Five: Organization leaders should encourage the practice of prayer, which creates and maintains a connection with God's transformative work, providing a protective barrier against burnout.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

Spiritual formation and spiritual renewal are vital to pastor effectiveness, burnout prevention, and minister restoration (Gemignani, 2002; Nelson, 2012). According to McNeal (2011), spiritual renewal is the foundation of a pastor's personal and professional effectiveness. Historically, Christ-followers practiced specific spiritual disciplines or practices that deepened their faith (Foster, 1988). Chandler (2009) discovered that experiencing the love of God through life patterns and practices fostered spiritual renewal and created a connection with God's transformative work reducing the adverse effects of burnout.

In Christian discipleship, spiritual formation is the outgrowth of the application of spiritual disciplines facilitating the transformation of a Christ-follower into Christlikeness. Disciplines are defined as “any activity within our power which brings us to a point where we can do what we at present cannot do by direct effort” (Willard, 1998, p. 106). The spiritual disciplines transform the entire state of the soul by a renewal of the whole person from the inside involving thought, feeling, and character that manifests in outward behavioral changes. The general spiritual disciplines include solitude and silence, prayer, fasting, scripture memorization, regular corporate and individual praise, and worship.

In a study on clergy effectiveness, Chandler discovered that spiritual dryness positively and significantly contributed to burnout and was the single most significant predictor of burnout for ministers (2008). Of the clergy in the study, 29% referenced spiritual dryness as the primary source of burnout in their ministry demonstrated through the dimension of emotional exhaustion (p. 283). In summary, an ongoing relationship with God created and sustained through spiritual formation and renewal provides the most significant deterrent to burnout in the life of a minister.

Principle Six: Organizational leaders should encourage spiritual formation through spiritual disciplines, which protect against burnout, enhance wellness, and increase effectiveness.

ORGANIZATIONAL INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

According to Chandler (2009), intervention and training regarding burnout, its effects, and prevention at the organizational level could significantly and positively impact ministers. Unfortunately, many pastors experience a lack of organizational support and believe that their primary value to the denomination comes through church growth. “Pastors are asking their organizations to set the stage by first rethinking basic job requirements and then educating congregations and support staff about the many responsibilities and needs of the pastor” (para. 34). Since pastors traditionally train in Bible schools and seminaries, ministry training centers can assist clergy to develop healthy personal practices to reduce stress and burnout through focused curricular consideration (p. 285). Additionally, providing holistic self-care within ministry training contexts can contribute to personal self-care and foster positive engagement with self, church, family, and others, potentially reducing burnout

(Wuellner, 2005). In summary, denominations, ministry organizations, and seminaries can contribute to burnout prevention and reduction for ministers through education and training, potentially leading to healthier life balance, improved performance, overall well-being, and reduced early departure from ministry.

Principle Seven: Organizational leaders should provide specific and ongoing training and support to educate, train, and strengthen their constituencies against the effects of burnout.

2 TIMOTHY 1:15–18: TRANSITUS/CLOSING

The closing section of the pericope provides an account of two different responses to disloyalty and loyalty. Paul provided a rhetorical comparison of two scenarios that Timothy knew of Phygelus and Hermogenes’s abandonment compared to Onesiphorus’s sacrifice and commitment (Witherington, 2010). This section’s significance is that Onesiphorus is not ashamed of Paul’s situation, continuing the theme of commitment (Fee, 1988). Paul is hinting that Timothy should not be ashamed of Paul, just as Onesiphorus was not (Witherington, 2010). Further, Onesiphorus is presumed dead at this point (Fee & Gasque, 1988), as “visiting a serious criminal was taking a high risk in the first century,” and it appears that his visits with Paul cost him his life (Witherington, 2010, p. 325).

In summary, Paul, for the third time in the pericope, referenced shame as a distress factor and provided both positive and negative examples of healthy responses to the emotion. According to Fee (1988), this appeal again reminds Timothy that the Spirit residing in him does not lead to cowardice in the face of hardship but provides strength to endure suffering to accomplish the mission. Further, Paul reminds Timothy that he, following Christ, suffered in fulfilling his mission, and Timothy is invited to join with them in a worthwhile endeavor.

Principle Eight: Organizational Leaders Must Address Burnout and Fatigue Such that It Reduces Personal Shame and Provides Renewed Purpose and Strength.

SUMMARY

Burnout and compassion fatigue poses real and significant barriers to the success of organizations and their employees. Further, ignoring burnout and compassion fatigue negatively affects employees, leaders, and the organizations they serve. Left unresolved, burnout, and compassion fatigue lead to high levels of turnover and low levels of organizational and career commitment. This chapter demonstrated that burnout existed in the life of Timothy, a first-century pastor. Further, the research revealed positive steps to mitigate or eliminate the challenge faced by this minister in 2 Timothy 1. Given the risks related to burnout and compassion fatigue for individuals, their families, churches, communities, and organizational denominations, systemic change is needed to promote personal and spiritual well-being.

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