



TITLE Pastoral Leadership Styles: Their Effect on the Growth of Southern Baptist Churches in the Western United States

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this research project was to determine what leadership attributes pastors exhibit that positively affect the growth of Southern Baptist Churches in the Western United States.

METHODOLOGY

Southern Baptist pastors (N= 1,258) from the Western United States (Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming) were contacted by email and 88 accepted the invitation to complete the Leadership Practices and provide demographic information. The typical respondent had 25 years of ministry tenure. Thirty-two churches of their churches had experienced growth rates between 2005 and 2010 of negative five percent or more, 10 had growth rates between negative five percent and positive five percent (both of these two groups combined into “non-growing” category), and 46 churches had growth rates above five percent (labelled “growing”). Interviews were conducted with seven pastors. Cronbach alpha internal reliability coefficients in this study were: .68 for Model; .82 for Inspire; .78 for Challenge; .61 for Enable; and .85 for Encourage.

KEY FINDINGS

The most frequently engaged in leadership practice was Enable, followed by Model and Encourage, and then Inspire and Challenge. Pastors of growing churches engaged in the five leadership practices more than pastors of non-growing churches, although the differences were not statistically significant.