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# Ministers in Rural Churches of Missouri

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Most local religious groups have developed ministerial role-positions which specify duties, obligations, and privileges for incumbents. This report examines incumbents of these role-positions as found among rural religious groups in Missouri. To a considerable extent, we tend to think of professional workers such as ministers in stereotypical terms. An effect is to regard ministers as somewhat interchangeable units. A task of social description and analysis is to examine such stereotypes and to reveal the complexity of the situation in order to provide more realistic images. Our specific purpose is to present a realistic picture of rural ministers within the settings of congregations, communities, and work.

Since there is little systematic data on rural ministers, it is useful to take an inclusive approach. Among the factors we shall examine are social origins and experiences before entering the ministry, educational background, relationship to congregation, community and denomination, professional orientation, and theological and political position. After a profile description of rural ministers is presented, we will attempt to discern patterns on the basis of congregation type (church/sect) and theological position of ministers (liberal, conservative, and fundamentalist).

## The Study

The data for this report are from interviews with 382 ministers who served churches in a sample of rural Missouri townships. This same sample is the basis for data concerning 505 rural churches which were reported earlier. The sample consisted of all churches in a statewide sample of rural (no place as large as 2,500) townships (Missouri Research Bulletin 984).

The number of ministers is not the same as the number of churches for several reasons. A minister may serve more than one of the churches in the sample chosen; on the other hand, a church may have been without the services of a minister at the time of the interview. Also, only those ministers were included who conducted services on a regular basis (not necessarily full-time) in the church. This, for example, excluded supply ministers from seminaries and Bible colleges unless they were regarded as the regular minister of the church. Only four ministers refused to be interviewed. The discussion that follows is based on interviews with 382 regular ministers of the churches in the sample. A few of the ministers served churches outside the study area (in addition to their church or churches within the study area). Therefore, some of the data on size and location of charges includes these churches.

## Part I—The Rural Ministers—A Profile

### Background of Rural Ministers

*Social Origins*—Clearly, the rural ministers were local in terms of state and region, and furthermore, they were likely to have been rural residents during their youth. Another notable characteristic was that fathers of the rural ministers in the sample area were likely to have been farmers or other blue-collar workers with relatively few coming from families of professional background. Where the fathers were professionals, they were most likely to have been ministers.

The following are more specific details of the social origins of rural ministers. A majority (57 percent) were native Missourians; an additional 28 percent were born in states adjacent to Missouri. Thus, 85 percent were native Missourians or from surrounding states. During their youth, rural ministers were very likely to have lived in rural areas. Almost three-fourths (72 percent) spent most of their early years in places under 2,500 population. Twenty-eight percent had spent most of their youth in urban places, but only 12 percent had lived in places as large as 50,000 during their youth.

A majority of the ministers interviewed (52 percent) were sons of farmers and 26 percent were sons of other blue-collar workers; while 19 percent were sons of white-collar workers (9 percent in professional occupations and 10 percent in other white-collar categories). Most of the fathers of ministers in professional occupations were ministers (7 of the 9 percent). The occupation of fathers of 3 percent of the ministers was not recorded.

It is of interest to compare social origins of ministers with those of physicians practicing in rural areas. While the samples are not strictly comparable, a sample of rural physicians in Missouri proved to be somewhat more local in terms of Missouri birthplace (68 percent for physicians, 57 percent for ministers) and were much more likely to have come from families of professional and higher status occupational backgrounds as the following tabulation shows.

OCCUPATION OF FATHERS OF RURAL MINISTERS AND  
RURAL MEDICAL DOCTORS

	Rural Ministers (N=382) percent	Rural Medical Doctors (a) (N=71) percent
Professional & Semi-Professional	9	31
Proprietors & Managers	7	21
Clerical & Sales	3	4
Farmers & Farm Managers	52	34
Blue Collar & Service	28	10

<sup>(a)</sup>Source: Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station Research Bulletin 822, p. 16.

*Sex and age*—Most of the ministers serving rural churches were men, with only 4 percent female. Twelve percent were beyond the normal retirement age of 65 years. On the other hand, one-half were under 45 years of age and about one-fourth were under 35 years.

Age of Ministers	Percent	Cumulative Percent
-35	26	26
35-44	24	50
45-64	37	87
65	12	99
no answer	1	100

### Education of Rural Ministers

A characteristic of professions is the establishment of criteria for entrance which commonly includes educational standards. The seminary is the professional training school for ministers comparable to the medical school for physicians and the law school for lawyers. However, seminary training was not common among ministers in this rural sample. Only 29 percent had attended a seminary and one in five had a seminary degree. In addition, about 5 percent of the ministers had post-college work in graduate schools other than seminaries.

Another route of preparation for the ministry is through Bible colleges. Training in Bible colleges varies greatly and may include short term courses. Twelve percent of the ministers had some Bible school training. Of those who had attended Bible college, 30 percent had gone one year or less, 25 percent two years, 27 percent three years, and 18 percent four years. In total, just over 2 in 5 of the ministers had some formal preparation for the ministry through seminary or Bible college training.

On the other hand, a sizable proportion (40 percent) of the ministers had not gone beyond high school with the possible exception of Bible college. In the following tabulation, we have not included Bible school because of the varied characteristics of the training and lack of educational prerequisites for entrance. Even if one assumes that Bible school represents college level training, this does not distort the figures substantially since 84 percent of those who attended Bible school had some additional college training and are so classified in the tabulations.

Number of Years of Formal Education*	Percent of Ministers	Cumulative Percent of Ministers
12 or less (less than college)	40	40
13-16 (college)	26	66
17+ (post college)	34	100

\*Bible college not included.

A conclusion apparent from these figures is that there is no common educational criteria for entrance to the ministry among ministers of the rural churches in the sample. This is different than the other traditional professions of law and medicine.

### Perception of Rural Ministers Concerning Education

Most ministers have two "significant others" in terms of their professional role definitions; namely, their local congregations and the denomination with which their congregation is affiliated. When asked about their denomination's educational expectations, 43 percent of the ministers reported that there was no specific educational expectation or that it was less than college; 17 percent said college or Bible college but not seminary, and 40 percent at least some seminary training. The expectations were quite closely related to the actual educational level of the ministers making the response in that 70 percent with less than some college educations thought their denomination's expectation did not include college, while 75 percent with seminary training thought their denomination expected post-college training. In addition, 70 percent thought their congregation and denomination were in essential agreement as to level of education for a minister, but where discrepancies existed between denomination and congregation it was usually perceived that the congregation's expectations were lower (26 percent lower, 4 percent higher).

### The Minister and His Church

By definition, ministers provide leadership to local congregations. The congregations they serve vary greatly in size, resources, relationship to denominations, and relationship to community. Furthermore, tenure of ministers in a given church location may range from a very short period to situations in which the life of the church and the tenure of the minister are hardly distinguishable. The church may provide full employment for the clergyman or it may expect him to obtain most of his family income from secular occupations. The congregation which the minister serves may be part of the "mainstream" values of the local community or it may seek to establish an exclusive "moral community." These factors and situations provide the organizational basis for differences in the minister's role.

*Number of charges, size, and tenure*—A substantial proportion of ministers (37 percent) were serving two or more churches (15 percent had three or more, and 6 percent had four churches—the upper limit was five churches which occurred in only one case). The roll membership of about one-third of the charges served by the ministers (a charge includes all the congregations a minister serves) were under 70 members; for about two-thirds of the ministers it was under 170 members.

A relatively large number of the ministers were new in the profession with almost half in the first 10 years of their professional ministry. On the other hand,

more than one-fourth (27 percent) had more than 20 years of service. Tenure in their current charge was relatively short for most ministers. For almost half, it was less than three years, while only 16 percent had been in their present location more than five years. For 20 percent of the ministers, however, their present church was the only one they had ever served; 15 percent had served two charges; 17 percent three charges. The number ranged up to 21 different charges with about 3 percent having served 15 or more different charges.

Three out of four of the ministers in the sample had given continuous service to pastoral work since entering the ministry. The other 25 percent had left pastoral work for other vocational activities either within or outside the ministry, but had returned to pastoral work.

*Ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations*—It is common in sociological discussions of religious groups to make a distinction between church-type and sect-type congregations. Church-type congregations are essentially those of established denominations, sometimes called "mainstream" denominations. They are thought to be in congruence with the central values of the society. Sect-type congregations may represent alternative or dissident value systems and may tend to establish "moral" communities. The actual placement of congregations in one or another of these categories is more or less arbitrary although based on scholarship and judgement.\* Furthermore, it should be noted that individual congregations within the same denomination may exhibit more or fewer of the church and sect characteristics. Each congregation has both sect-like and church-like characteristics; therefore, the church/sect-types in reality represent the dichotomization of a continuous variable.

Denominations identified as church-types are: Southern Baptist Convention, Disciples of Christ, Protestant Episcopal Church, Federated and Non-denominational Community Churches, Lutheran Churches, Methodist Churches, Presbyterian Churches, Roman Catholic Church, and United Church of Christ.

Sect-type denominations were more numerous, some represented by only one or two congregations in the sample. The sect-type denominations with more numerous congregations in the sample were: Church of Christ, Assembly of God, Freewill Baptist, and Pentacostal.

About two-thirds (62 percent) were ministers of church-type congregations and somewhat over one-third (38 percent) were ministers of sect-type congregations. The characteristics of ministers classified according to church and sect-type congregations are compared in Part II of this report.

*Secular occupations of ministers*—One of the more interesting characteristics of the ministers of rural churches in Missouri is the large number who were regularly engaged in secular occupations. We pointed out in another report that many rural churches survived on very limited resources (Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station Research Bulletin No. 984); a leading reason for this ability is that many ministers obtained their principal financial support from secular

\*The actual placement of denominations follows Lawrence Hepple, Missouri AES Research Bulletin No. 633A, 1957, p.35. Hepple's delineation was based largely on Elmer T. Clark, *The Small Sects in America*. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York, 1949.

employment. About half of them (48 percent) were engaged in a secular occupation on a regular basis. Of these, almost two-thirds (65 percent) were engaged in secular occupations more than half-time (25 hours a week or more) and 20 percent reported working 48 hours a week or more in secular occupations.

More than half of the secular occupations could be classified as blue collar, including farming. Sixteen percent were in clerical and sales occupations and eight percent could be classified as business managers and proprietors. Almost one in five of those engaged in secular occupations were in professions; a common combination was ministry and public school teaching.

Occupations and occupational histories of ministers engaged in secular occupations are varied. As an example, a minister in his 30s serving a middle-sized church had held a number of different jobs including working in a steel mill and a lumber yard, doing construction work and operating a service station. At the time of the interview, he was employed full-time as an elementary school teacher. Income from the ministry was a relatively small part of his total income.

Another part-time minister in later middle-age had served seven different churches since 1940. He had engaged in a variety of occupations including farming, aircraft worker, and evangelist. When interviewed he was employed as a used car salesman.

A minister who had spent his entire 10 years in the ministry serving one small congregation was employed full-time as a school custodian and depended almost entirely on that job for income. Another man combined employment as a school custodian, school bus driver, and odd job carpentry with his ministry.

Others were self-employed including a proprietor of a soda pop bottling company, an owner and operator of an automobile garage, an operator of a print shop, and an owner and principal worker in a small construction business. In general, the secular occupations of ministers were the usual occupations of the community.

Behavior of ministers with regard to secular employment conformed quite closely to their perception of expectations of denomination and congregation. About three in five of the ministers thought their denominations expected them to have outside employment. About 84 percent of the ministers with less than a college education expressed this belief compared with 31 percent of the ministers with post-college work. Eighty-three percent of the ministers thought their congregation's expectations coincided with those of their denomination.

There were similarities and differences between full-time ministers and those engaged regularly in secular occupations with regard to characteristics of their congregations and relationships to them. Part-time ministers tended not to have been in the ministry as long as full-time ministers. As shown in Table 1, over 60 percent of the full-time ministers had been in the ministry more than 10 years compared with 38 percent of the part-time ministers. Part-time ministers were also more likely to serve only one church and the charges they served were likely to be smaller (Table 1).

TABLE 1--PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME MINISTERS<sup>(a)</sup>  
RELATIONSHIP WITH CONGREGATIONS

Ministers' Relationship with Congregation	Part-time Ministers (Percent)	Full-time Ministers (Percent)	Signif. of Diff. *
Years since first pastorate			
0 - 2	22.9	8.6	
3 - 10	38.8	29.9	
11 - 20	19.7	25.9	
20 +	18.6	35.5	(+)
More than one church in charge	27.3	44.9	(+)
Size of charge (roll members)			
under 70	43.2	25.9	
70 - 179	41.0	24.4	
180 +	15.8	49.7	(+)
Tenure in present charge			
under 2 years	47.5	43.7	
2 - 3	25.1	29.9	
4 and over	27.3	26.4	(-)
Continuous service in ministry since first church	73.8	75.1	(-)

\*By chi square test at 5 percent level.

<sup>(a)</sup>Part-time ministers defined as those having regular secular occupations.

There were no differences, however, between part-time and full-time ministers in length of tenure in their present charge, and about equal proportions of the two types of ministers had been in continuous service in the ministry since they took their first pastorate (Table 1). These later findings may be interpreted as evidence that part-time ministers are not casual entrants into the ministerial profession when compared with full-time ministers.

*Professional mobility aspirations of rural ministers*—As an indication of mobility aspirations, ministers were asked if their present charge presented an adequate challenge, if they would prefer a larger town and/or larger congregations, and if they would consider other types of ministry. Most of the ministers (75 percent) believed that their present charge made good use of their talents and pre-

sented appropriate demands on their professional skills; while one-quarter reported that their present situation did not present an adequate professional challenge. More than half (52 percent) would not go to a larger town by preference while 42 percent would prefer a larger place and 4 percent indicated they would prefer a smaller place. Forty-five percent said the size of their charge was about right, 49 percent would prefer a larger congregation while three percent expressed preference for a smaller congregation (3 percent did not respond to the question).

Ministers were also asked if they would consider other types of ministry on a full-time basis if the opportunity should arise. The percentages that responded positively are as follows (percentages are not additive because a minister could respond positively to more than one category):

	Percent
Foreign missions	22
Teaching	28
Armed forces chaplaincy	17
Denominational administration	16
Institutional chaplaincy	24
Full-time evangelist	5

On the basis of these responses it appears that most of the ministers of the rural churches were not professionally mobile in their aspirations.

### What Do Ministers Earn?

Both the amount and source of income was varied. The median income for ministers' families from all sources was \$5,870. It ranged from under \$1,000 to more than \$25,000.

Ministers' salaries from churches represented half or more of the family income for about four of ten (41 percent) of the ministers and almost all ministers had some other incomes (Table 2). Fees and honoraria did not represent a substantial proportion of the incomes of most ministers, however, accounting for five percent or less of the total for 92 percent of the ministers.

As we have pointed out, 48 percent of the ministers received income from regular secular employment. Income from secular occupations accounted for half or more of the family income for 31 percent of all ministers and for 60 percent of the ministers engaged in secular occupations. Other household members contributed to family income in 35 percent of the families. They provided half or more of the income in seven percent of the families.

Income from property rental or return on investments of one kind or another was reported by 15 percent of the ministers. This amounted to one-fourth of the family income in about 4 percent of the families and half of the family income in about 2 percent of the families. Eleven percent of the families received

TABLE 2--PERCENTAGE OF MINISTERS' FAMILIES THAT RECEIVED  
50 PERCENT OR MORE OF THEIR INCOME FROM  
DESIGNATED SOURCES

Source of Income for Ministers' Families	Percent of Families Obtaining 50 percent or* More of their Income from this Source
Ministers' Salary	41
Fees and Honoraria	None
Rental Allowance or Value of Parsonage Use	None
Secular Occupation of the Minister	31
Investments and Property	2
Other Household Members	7
Pensions/Social Security	4
Other Sources	1

\*Does not equal 100 percent because some families did not receive 50 percent or more from any one source.

some income from pensions and/or social security. In 4 percent of the families this source accounted for one-half or more of the family income.

*What part-time and full-time ministers earn*—Part-time ministry should not be equated with low income relative to full-time ministry. In fact, the income differential between part-time and full-time ministers favored part-time ministers. Whereas 18 percent of the part-time ministers had family incomes of under \$4,000, 28 percent of full-time ministers were at that level of income. At the other end of the income distribution, 33 percent of the part-time ministers compared with 19 percent of the full-time ministers had family incomes in excess of \$7,800 (Table 3).

TABLE 3--FAMILY INCOME OF PART-TIME AND  
FULL-TIME MINISTERS

Income	Part-time Ministers (percent)	Full-time Ministers (percent)
	(N=182)	(N=194)
-\$4,000	17.6	27.8
4,000 - 5,799	25.3	26.8
5,800 - 7,799	24.7	26.8
7,800	32.4	18.6

$\chi^2 = 11.7$ , d.f. = 3, significant at 5 percent level.

Of course, by virtue of the nature of the categories, part-time and full-time ministers depended on different sources for their incomes. Less than 20 percent of the part-time ministers received one-half or more of their incomes from church salaries compared with 62 percent of the full-time ministers. Full-time ministers were more likely than part-time ministers to receive income from other ministerial duties in the form of fees or honoraria (67 percent and 37 percent respectively) and housing perquisite (88 percent and 47 percent respectively). Part-time and full-time ministers depend on other members of their families for income in about the same proportions (40 and 31 percent respectively).

### What Do Ministers Do?

*Time spent in 12 ministerial activities*—Ministers were asked to indicate the average amount of time devoted to each of 12 ministerial activities (Table 4).

TABLE 4--HOURS PER WEEK DEVOTED TO 12 MINISTERIAL ACTIVITIES BY RURAL MINISTERS

Activities		HOURS PER WEEK									
		-1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9+
Sermon Preparation	%	1	4	10	9	11	9	10	4	11	31
	Cum. %	1	4	15	24	35	44	54	58	69	100
Private Meditation and Study	%	1	3	10	10	10	9	9	6	6	34
	Cum. %	1	4	14	24	34	43	52	58	64	98
Conduct Worship Services	%	1	10	18	26	16	9	9	2	4	6
	Cum. %	1	11	29	55	71	80	89	91	95	101
Visiting Sick Members	%	7	13	21	12	12	5	6	3	4	17
	Cum. %	7	20	41	53	65	70	76	79	83	100
Calling on Prospective Members	%	20	22	17	12	10	5	3	2	4	5
	Cum. %	20	42	59	71	81	86	89	91	95	100
Other Pastoral Calling	%	23	15	15	9	7	6	5	1	4	13
	Cum. %	23	38	53	62	69	75	80	81	85	98
Counseling Members With Special Problems	%	26	22	19	9	8	5	3	2	2	4
	Cum. %	26	48	67	76	84	89	92	94	96	100
Administrative Work	%	29	14	15	7	8	3	3	3	4	15
	Cum. %	29	43	58	65	73	76	79	82	86	101
Attendance of Church Committee Meetings	%	40	25	14	5	7	3	2	1	1	2
	Cum. %	40	65	79	84	91	94	96	97	98	100
Attendance of Denominational Meetings	%	42	27	15	4	6	3	2	-	1	-
	Cum. %	42	69	84	88	94	97	99	99	100	100
Attendance of Inter-denominational Meetings	%	74	17	6	1	2	-	1	-	-	-
	Cum. %	74	91	97	98	100	100	101	-	-	-
Attendance of Civic Club Meetings & Community Action Programs	%	65	16	10	3	2	2	-	-	1	1
	Cum. %	65	81	91	94	96	98	-	-	99	100

The amounts of time were added for each minister to yield a total time spent per week in 12 activities. While these cover the normal ministerial activities, it is possible that some activities were excluded. At the same time, the procedure of adding separate categories to reach a total may over estimate the time devoted to activities. Where very high total hours for the 12 categories were recorded this may be the case. It is also true that people in professions such as medicine and religion may regard virtually all of their waking hours as devoted to professional activities.

About one in five ministers reported devoting a total of less than 20 hours a week to the 12 ministerial activities and just over half (54 percent) reported less than 40 hours a week to these activities. The less than 40 hours devoted to ministerial activities is reasonably accounted for by ministers who are employed in secular occupations.

Perhaps of more interest is the amount of time devoted to the several categories of ministerial activity. In Table 4, the category in which the median falls is designated by a double line. This means that at least one-half of the ministers devote this much time or more to the activity.

The activities of ministers can be grouped according to the role expectation of ministers. Ministers are expected to prepare and deliver sermons and engage in other public services. Contributing to this is private study and meditation. Taken together these activities may be thought of as the ministerial-priestly role. Another set of activities centers on interpersonal relationships with members and prospective members in the form of counseling and pastoral calling. This can be termed the pastoral role. Finally activities dealing with administration, the affairs of denomination, interdenomination, and community can be grouped together as the administrative and related activities role.

*The ministerial-priestly role*—Sermon preparation, study and meditation and conducting services consumed a sizeable proportion of the ministers' work week. Of the 12 individual activities, sermon preparation and study and meditation were the two which on the average were reported as taking the most time, while the median category for conducting services was three hours.

*The pastoral role*—Pastoral calling in the form of visiting the sick, calling on prospective members, "other calling" and personal counseling were activities of importance in terms of time spent (Table 4). The median number of hours spent on each of these activities was between two and three per week.

*The administrative role and related activities*—Somewhat more than half the ministers reported spending three hours or more a week on administrative work. In addition, one hour was the median category for attending church committee meetings and attending denominational meetings which have been included in the administrative role category. Relatively few ministers spent as much as one hour per week in interdenominational and civic affairs.

*Preference for time spent on 12 ministerial activities*—After ministers had indicated the time spent in each of the ministerial activities, they were asked the following question: "If you were able to do your work in exactly the way you

would prefer, would you spend more, less, or about the same time in each of these activities?" Then each of the activities were repeated.

About two-thirds (65 percent) of the ministers would like to spend more time in sermon preparation and a similar proportion would like to spend more time in study and private meditation. Virtually none would choose to spend less time in these two activities. Most ministers (71 percent) thought they were spending about the right amount of time conducting worship services although 26 percent would like to spend more time and 3 percent would prefer to spend less time in this activity.

More than half of the ministers would like to spend more time in counseling, visiting the sick, and in other pastoral calling. Few thought that they were now devoting too much time to these activities. An even larger percentage (71 percent) would like to have more time for calling on prospective members.

Administration is the activity that the largest proportion of ministers (almost one in five) would choose to spend less time than they do now. However, 28 percent of them see a need to devote more time to this activity. In general, ministers did not devote much time to attendance at church committee meetings, denominational meetings, interdenominational meetings and civic/community meetings and for the most part they did not feel the need to devote more time to these activities. At the same time, relatively more would like to spend less time in these activities than was the case for the other activities with the exception of administration.

In general, ministers would like to have more time for the activities in the ministerial-priestly and pastoral roles and would not want to spend more time in the administrative and related activities role. Thus for the most part it appeared that ministers were devoting most of their time to activities they regarded as most important.

*What part-time and full-time ministers do*—It is not surprising that ministers with regular secular employment reported fewer hours a week in ministerial

TABLE 5--HOURS PER WEEK DEVOTED TO 12 MINISTERIAL ACTIVITIES BY PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME MINISTERS

Time Devoted to Ministerial Activities per Week	Part-time Ministers (percent)	Full-time Ministers (percent)
	(N=183)	(N=197)
Under 40	69.9	39.1
40 or more	30.1	60.9

$\chi^2=35.7$ , d.f.=1, significant at 5 percent level.

activities than did full-time ministers. It is also of interest that a substantial proportion (30 percent) of the ministers with secular employment reported devoting 40 hours or more a week to ministerial activities (Table 5).

Part-time ministers spent significantly less time in each of the 12 ministerial activities with the exception of conducting services, in which case, the time spent by the two categories of ministers was similar (Table 6). While there were significant differences in time devoted to study and meditation and sermon preparation, the largest differences occurred in administration, counseling, pastoral calling of various types, and committee work both within the congregation and denominational.

TABLE 6--HOURS PER WEEK DEVOTED TO EACH OF 12 MINISTERIAL ACTIVITIES BY PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME MINISTERS

Time Spent per Week in 12 Ministerial Activities	Part-time Ministers (percent)	Full-time Ministers (percent)	Signif. of Diff.*
	(N=183)	(N=197)	
Sermon Preparation			
7 hours or more	39.3	51.8	+
Meditation and Study			
7 hours or more	36.6	55.8	+
Conducting Services			
4 hours or more	41.5	48.7	-
Administration			
1 hour or more	28.4	55.3	+
Counseling			
2 hours or more	36.6	66.0	+
Visiting the Sick			
3 hours or more	45.4	72.1	+
Calling on Prospective Members			
2 hours or more	51.9	65.0	+
Other Pastoral Calling			
3 hours or more	33.3	58.3	+
Church Committee Meetings			
1 hour or more	47.0	72.6	+
Denominational Meetings			
1 hour or more	49.7	65.0	+
Interdenominational Meetings			
1 hour or more	16.4	35.3	+
Civic and Community Meetings			
1 hour or more	25.1	43.1	+

\*By chi square test at 5 percent level.

### Professional, Theological, Social, Moral, and Political Beliefs of Ministers

*Responses to professional items*—Questions were asked regarding the ministry as a profession. They were designed to tap beliefs about commitment to the profession, about education for the ministry, about relationships with congregations, denomination, and other ministers. Responses were recorded on a five-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with the statement. The middle category was for the neutral or undecided response (Table 7).

TABLE 7--RESPONSES BY RURAL MINISTERS TO STATEMENTS ON PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Statement*	Percent in Each Category				
	SA	A	U	D	SD**
A young man aspiring to the ministry should finish college and seminary	27	56	1	14	2
Ministers' associations needed to protect ministers from congregations	4	31	3	58	5
Ministry should be regarded as a profession comparable to law or medicine	14	58	2	24	3
Ministers' associations to define proper ministerial conduct	5	51	2	40	2
A seminary-educated man should be given preference over others for vacant pastorate	6	40	2	46	5
Because of knowledge of congregation's need a minister should be permitted to develop programs without approval of denominational officers	9	41	5	41	4
Ministers' associations are needed to protect minister from denominational officials	1	26	6	63	4
Ministry should be regarded as a life-time career	35	63	1	2	-
Ministry should be considered a full-time not a part-time job	34	65	-	1	-
Should be free to say from pulpit what he thinks regardless of wishes of parishioners	35	60	1	5	-
Unfair for parishioners to make comparisons between new minister and his predecessors	16	72	1	11	-

\*Abbreviated in some cases.

\*\*SA=strongly agree, A=agree, U=undecided or neutral, D=disagree, SD=strongly disagree.

While there was high consensus among ministers on some items, there was almost complete dissensus on others (half agreed and half disagreed).

Almost all respondents thought that the ministry should be considered a full-time rather than a part-time job and that it should be considered a lifetime career rather than an occasional pursuit. A large majority also thought that a minister should be free to say from the pulpit what he believes to be appropriate regardless of the wishes of the people and they thought it unfair for parishioners to make comparisons between a new minister and his predecessors.

Ministers were in general agreement that a young man aspiring to the ministry should have a seminary education although 16 percent disagreed with this statement and it elicited a strong agreement from only 27 percent on the five-point scale. At the same time ministers were not in agreement that other things being equal, a seminary graduate should be preferred over other candidates for a vacant pastorate (46 percent agreed, 51 percent disagreed, 2 percent neutral).

It was on items concerned with relationships with congregations, the denominations and with ministerial associations that the greatest differences of opinion occurred. Thirty-five percent agreed, 63 percent disagreed, and 3 percent were undecided with the statement that ministers' associations were needed to protect individual ministers from possible unjust treatment of congregations. Twenty-seven percent agreed, 67 percent disagreed, and 6 percent were undecided on a parallel question that would advocate ministers' associations as protection against possible unjust treatment by denominations.

There is wide division of opinion as to whether ministers should form associations for the purpose of defining proper ministerial conduct—56 percent agreed with the desirability of forming such an association, 42 percent disagreed, while 2 percent were undecided.

There was also substantial disagreement among ministers as to whether based on their knowledge of the congregation's needs (the professional prerogative) a minister should be permitted to develop programs without approval of denominational officers (49 percent agreed that he should, 45 percent disagreed, and 5 percent remained undecided).

*Theological beliefs*—Ministers were asked to identify their theological beliefs from among the following: liberal, neo-orthodox, conservative, and fundamentalist. Stark and Foster have shown that such self-identification of theological position is closely related to orthodoxy of beliefs.\* If those who identified themselves as neo-orthodox (9 percent) are combined with liberal, then the ministers were divided quite evenly among liberal (30 percent), conservative (37 percent), and fundamentalist (31 percent). One percent were unwilling to classify themselves in the above categories.

The relationship of theological position of ministers to denomination was examined. There were 26 denominational designations in the sample with two

\*Rodney Stark and Bruce Foster "In defense of orthodoxy: notes on the validity of an index" *Social Forces* vol. 48, no. 3, March 1970, pp. 383-393.

or more ministers represented. In addition, there were seven denominations (all sect-type) represented by only one minister which we have grouped together as "other small sects." Two measures of theological position *for denominations* were determined. The first was to identify the modal frequency in the three theological categories; thus the modal theological position of a given denomination was determined by identifying the theological category (liberal, conservative, or fundamentalist) with the greatest frequency of ministers. The second way of classification was to assign scores of 1, 2, and 3 respectively to liberal, conservative, and fundamentalist positions and compute average scores of ministers for the denomination. When average scores were interpreted as 1-1.6=liberal, 1.7-2.3=conservative, and 2.4-3.0=fundamentalist, there was almost complete correspondence between theological position of the several denominations on the basis of the two measures. The only exception was for Missionary Baptists which the modal score placed in the fundamentalist category and the average score in the conservative category.

The theological position of denominations on the basis of the modal score of ministers is as follows:

Denominational Designation	No. of Ministers in Sample	Modal Theological Position
<u>Church-type</u>		
Southern Baptist Association	87	conservative
United Methodist Church	61	liberal
Negro Methodist	5	liberal
Disciples of Christ (Brotherhood)	19	liberal
Disciples of Christ (Non-Brotherhood)	8	liberal
Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (South)	7	conservative
United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.	6	liberal
Cumberland Presbyterian Church	3	conservative
Roman Catholic Church	17	conservative
United Church of Christ	5	liberal
Lutheran Churches	6	conservative
Federated and Community Nondenominational	9	conservative
Protestant Episcopal Church	4	liberal
<u>Sect-type</u>		
Church of Christ	23	conservative
Missionary Baptist	24	fundamentalist
Free Will Baptist	11	fundamentalist
Fundamental Baptist	2	fundamentalist
General Baptist	13	conservative

Denominational Designation	No. of Ministers in Sample	Modal Theological Position
<u>Sect-type (continued)</u>		
Primitive Baptist	5	fundamentalist
Independent Baptist	3	fundamentalist
Pentecostal Churches	14	fundamentalist
Assemble of God	17	fundamentalist
Church of God	11	fundamentalist
Church of the Nazarene	3	fundamentalist
Independent Christian	4	fundamentalist
R. L. D. S.	5	liberal
"other small sects"	7	fundamentalist

There is a certain face validity to the theological position modal scores when arranged by denominations. All of the fundamentalist modal positions were among the sect-type denominations and among the 14 sect-type denomination possibilities only one was designated liberal and two conservative. On the other hand, among church-type denominations, none had a fundamentalist modal score. The division between conservative and liberal designation among church-type denominations also appears quite reasonable; for example, Catholic, Lutheran, and Southern Baptist were conservative; Methodist, Episcopal, Disciples of Christ, and United Church of Christ were liberal. In addition when we look at the divisions within the Presbyterian body it is not unreasonable that the Southern and Cumberland bodies are classified as conservative and the Northern body as liberal.

In this profile of ministers, it should be remembered, however, that within any denomination, there is the possibility of its having the complete range of theological positions. Thus, for example, among Methodist ministers, 52 percent designated themselves as liberal, 33 percent as conservative, and 15 percent as fundamentalists; among Southern Baptist ministers the percentages were respectively 10 percent, 53 percent, and 36 percent; and among Pentecostal Churches 7 percent, 21 percent, and 71 percent.

*Ministers' beliefs about social and moral issues*—Opinions on a selected list of issues that were current at the time of the study were sought. Twelve issues were posed and ministers were asked whether they supported or opposed them; provision was made for a neutral response. The issues were divided *a priori* into two types on the basis of their content—social issues and moralistic issues. In general, social issues deal with problems of the community and nation, while moralistic issues deal with personal behavior. Subsequently, the issue items were factor analyzed in order to check if they did in fact cluster into these two types. The result of the factor analysis was that the *a priori* division was confirmed as the best division into two groups. In the following discussions we have arranged the items according to this division—social issues and moralistic issues (Table 8).

TABLE 8--POSITION OF MINISTERS ON SELECTED SOCIAL AND MORAL ISSUES

Issue	Support (percent)	Oppose (percent)	Neutral (percent)
<b>Social Issues</b>			
Federal Aid to Education	69	24	7
Capital Punishment	38	42	19
Racial Integration	77	10	13
Poverty Program	55	18	27
Continuation of the War in Vietnam	45	29	26
Foreign Aid	59	18	23
<b>Moral Issues</b>			
Sunday Closing Laws	68	14	18
Sale of Alcoholic Beverages	9	80	10
Smoking	12	65	23
Social Dancing	24	62	14
Mixed Swimming of the Sexes	45	26	29
Social Drinking	9	84	7

There appears to be more consensus (as measured by the size of the percentage in the largest category) on moral issues than on social issues. A large majority oppose social drinking and sale of alcoholic beverages. There was substantial opposition to smoking, and perhaps somewhat surprisingly, to social dancing; while Sunday closing laws are supported by more than two-thirds of the clergymen. On five of the six moral issues there was consensus by 60 percent or more of the ministers in the direction of a moralistic position. On moral issues, support of behavior such as smoking and use of alcoholic beverages probably should not be construed as advocacy, but rather as having the right to engage in those activities without moral judgement.

Response to the social issues was more variable. Only federal aid to education and racial integration received support of 60 percent or more of the ministers. Support was especially divided on capital punishment and the war in Vietnam. On the social issues a relatively large proportion were neutral, perhaps indicating the penchant for some religious groups to avoid secular affairs.

Ministers were also asked if they had taken a public stand on these issues—that is, if they had made their views known through public statements or actions (Table 9). One might not expect a public stand by ministers for issues on which they were neutral, although it is possible. A public stand on these issues had been taken in varying degrees, but more than three-fourths of the ministers have spoken or acted on social drinking and sale of alcoholic beverages, and a high proportion of the clergymen have taken a stand on social dancing.

TABLE 9--PERCENT OF MINISTERS WHO TOOK A PUBLIC STAND ON  
SELECTED SOCIAL AND MORAL ISSUES

Issue	Percent Taking Public Stand
<b>Social Issues</b>	
Federal Aid to Education	62
Capital Punishment	33
Racial Integration	63
Poverty Program	38
Continuation of the War in Vietnam	42
Foreign Aid	31
<b>Moral Issues</b>	
Sunday Closing Laws	41
Sale of Alcoholic Beverages	77
Smoking	58
Social Dancing	59
Mixed Swimming of the Sexes	26
Social Drinking	80

ing. In general, public stands were more likely to be taken on moralistic issues than on social issues (here, aid to education and racial integration are exceptions). Specifically, most of the clergymen had not taken a public stand on capital punishment, the poverty program, continuation of the war in Vietnam, or foreign aid.

For all issues the most likely place for a public stand to be taken was within the church in the form of sermons, board meetings, group discussions, and teaching situations. Moralistic issues were confined somewhat more to church situations than were social issues.

*Political positions of rural ministers*—An effort was made to determine ministers' political position in a broad sense. The choice of political position offered to ministers was liberal or conservative. Several volunteered the term "moderate." More than half (54 percent) identified themselves as politically conservative and 42 percent as liberal. Three percent identified themselves as moderate and 1 percent did not answer the question.

The most recent presidential election had been in 1964 with the principal candidates being Lyndon Johnson and Barry Goldwater. Forty-five percent of the ministers reported that they had voted for Johnson, 31 percent for Goldwater, 5 percent for other candidates, 18 percent had not voted and 1 percent did not respond.

## Part II—Rural Ministers of Church-type and Sect-type Congregations Compared

Earlier we identified congregations of "mainstream" denominations as church-type congregations and those of less established denominations as sect-type congregations. It is suggested that these types represent different organizational sets which are reflected in program priorities\*. It is reasonable to expect that the ministers of church and sect-type congregations would show differences in social origin, education, relationship to congregation, and professional, theological, and political beliefs and it is our purpose to examine these relationships in this section.

### Background of Rural Ministers by Church-type and Sect-type Congregations

Both church-type and sect-type ministers were likely, and in about the same proportion, to be natives of Missouri or adjacent states. However, sect-type ministers were more likely than church-type ministers to have grown up in a rural setting and their fathers were more likely to have been blue-collar workers (Table 10).

TABLE 10--BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF MINISTERS OF RURAL CHURCHES BY CHURCH-TYPE AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Characteristic	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)	Signif. of Diff.*
	(N=240)	(N=142)	
Native of Missouri or adjacent states	82.1	88.0	(-)
Youth Location in rural area	66.0	85.5	(+)
Father was a white collar worker	25.0	9.9	(+)

\*By chi square test at the 5 percent level.

A substantial difference in educational level existed between church-type and sect-type ministers (Table 11). Three-fourths of the ministers of sect-type congregations did not have college work with the possible exception of Bible college training. This compares with 20 percent of the ministers of church-type

\*J. Kenneth Benson and Edward W. Hassinger "Organization set and resources as determinants of formalization in religious organizations," *Review of Religious Research*, vol. 14, no. 1. Fall 1972, pp. 30-36.

TABLE 11--EDUCATION OF MINISTERS BY CHURCH-TYPE  
AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Education*	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)
	(N=240)	(N=142)
Less than college	20.0	75.4
Some college	32.1	17.6
Post college**	47.9	7.0

\*Exclusive of Bible Schools.

\*\*Includes graduate school as well as seminary.

$X^2=119.2$ , d.f.=2, significant at 5 percent level.

congregations. In contrast, almost one-half of the ministers of church-type congregations had post-college training, most often in seminaries, compared with seven percent of the ministers of sect-type congregations. The educational level of church-type and sect-type ministers was consistent with their perceptions of denominational expectations. Fifty-nine percent of the ministers of church-type congregations reported that the denominational expectation was seminary training and 72 percent at least college. In contrast, 8 percent of the ministers of sect-type congregations said that the denominational-educational expectation was seminary and 32 percent at least college. The difference was statistically significant ( $X^2=96.9$ , d.f.=2).

### The Minister and His Church by Church-type and Sect-type Congregations

There was a major difference in the size of the charge of church-type and sect-type ministers with church-type ministers averaging substantially larger congregations than sect-type ministers. Part of the difference is due to the fact that 46 percent of the church-type ministers compared with 22 percent of the sect-type ministers served more than one congregation (Table 12).

In some other ways ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations did not differ markedly. About the same proportions had been in the ministry less than ten years, they had about the same pattern of tenure in their present charge, and they had similar experience with regard to continuous service as a pastor since entering the ministry. A difference of some magnitude occurred in number of charges ever served, with ministers of sect-type congregations less likely to have served more than one charge. Overall, then, sect-type ministers when compared with church-type ministers appear to be more closely identified

TABLE 12--THE MINISTER AND HIS CHURCH BY CHURCH-TYPE AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)	Diff. Signif. *
	(N=240)	(N=142)	
1. Size of charge (roll membership)			
- 70	17.1	62.7	(+)
70 - 180	32.9	31.0	
180 +	50.0	6.3	
2. Only one church in charge	54.4	78.2	(+)
3. Tenure in present charge			
less than 2 years	44.2	47.9	(-)
2 - 3.9 years	30.4	23.2	
4 years and over	25.4	28.9	
4. Minister in his first 10 years of ministry	51.2	47.9	(-)
5. Number of charges ever served			
one	15.9	27.5	(+)
2 or 3	34.3	28.2	
4 or more	49.8	44.4	
6. Continuous service as a pastor since first church	77.5	69.7	(-)

\*By chi square test at 5 percent level.

with a single church which is likely to be smaller and is more likely to be the only church the minister has ever served. The general pattern is for sect-type ministers to be less mobile than church-type ministers in their ministerial careers.

*Secular occupations of ministers by church-type and sect-type congregations*—While about half (48 percent) of the rural ministers were regularly engaged in secular occupations, this proportion increased to 69 percent for ministers of sect-type congregations and was reduced to 37 percent for ministers in church-type congregations. The difference was statistically significant ( $X^2=37.1$ , d.f.=1). Perception of secular employment reflected quite closely the actual situation in that 83 percent of the ministers of sect-type congregations and 48 percent of the ministers of church-type congregations thought their denomination expected outside employment. The difference was statistically significant ( $X^2=45.0$ , d.f.=1).

### What Do Ministers Earn by Church-type and Sect-type Congregations?

Family incomes were somewhat higher for church-type than for sect-type ministers (Table 13). Whereas more than one-third of the sect-type ministers reported family incomes under \$4,000, that level was recorded for only 16 percent of the church-type ministers. On the other hand, the family income of 29 percent of the church-type ministers compared with 20 percent of the sect-type ministers was \$7,800 or more.

TABLE 13--FAMILY INCOME OF MINISTER BY CHURCH-TYPE  
AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Income	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)
	(N=240)	(N=138)
-\$4,000	16.2	34.3
4,000 - 5,799	26.1	26.3
5,800 - 7,799	29.1	19.7
7,800 -	28.6	19.7

$\chi^2=18.3$ , d.f.=3, significant at 5 percent level.

The sources of income for church and sect-type ministers were quite different (Table 14). Ministers of church-type congregations depended more heavily on church salary, fees connected with ministerial activities, and housing perquisites than did ministers of sect-type congregations. Ministers of sect-type congregations, on the other hand, were more likely to get income from secular oc-

TABLE 14--INCOME FROM MINISTERS' SALARY AS A PERCENTAGE OF  
TOTAL FAMILY INCOME BY CHURCH-TYPE  
AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Ministers' Salary as a Percentage of Total Family Income	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)
	(N=240)	(N=142)
- 15 percent	17.5	36.6
15 - 49	31.2	39.4
50 - 69	16.7	9.2
70 and over	34.6	14.8

$\chi^2=31.5$ , d.f.=3, significant at 5 percent level.

cupations. Other members of the family contributed to family income in about equal proportions for ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations.

### What Do Ministers Do by Church-type and Sect-type Congregations?

We discussed the time ministers devoted to 12 ministerial activities in Part I. Here with the same qualifications we will consider the difference in time devoted to activities by ministers of church and sect-type congregations. As shown in Table 15, 14 percent of the church-type ministers and 28 percent of the sect-

TABLE 15--HOURS PER WEEK DEVOTED TO TWELVE MINISTERIAL ACTIVITIES BY CHURCH-TYPE AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Hours per Week for twelve activities	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)
	(N=240)	(N=142)
- 20	14.2	27.5
20 - 39	33.7	36.6
40 - 59	29.6	21.8
60 and over	22.5	14.1

$\chi^2=13.7$ , d.f.=3, significant at 5 percent level.

type ministers devoted less than 20 hours a week to the 12 ministerial activities and 48 percent of the church-type ministers and 64 percent of the sect-type ministers reported less than 40 hours a week devoted to these activities. On the other hand, 22 percent of the church-type ministers and 14 percent of the sect-type ministers had an accumulated total hours work week of 60 or more hours. The difference between ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations was statistically significant. The difference in time devoted to ministerial activities between ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations is accounted for by the greater proportion of sect-type ministers with secular occupations. Also, it should be noted, that ministers of the church-type congregations were more likely to have more than one congregation and thus their time is spread over more congregations.

When we looked at time devoted to specific activities (Table 16), some differences between church and sect-type ministers are apparent. Sect-type ministers tend to devote as much time as church-type ministers to sermon preparation and meditation and study, and more to conducting services. They devoted somewhat less time than church-type ministers to the pastoral activities of counseling and calling on members for one reason or another but the pattern was similar for the two categories. The greatest differences, however, occurred in time devoted

TABLE 16--HOURS PER WEEK DEVOTED TO EACH OF TWELVE MINISTERIAL ACTIVITIES BY CHURCH-TYPE AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Twelve Activities	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)	Signif. of Diff.*
	(N=240)	(N=142)	
Sermon preparation (7 or more hours)	49.6	40.1	(-)
Meditation and study (7 or more hours)	49.2	42.2	(-)
Conducting services (4 or more hours)	40.0	54.2	(+)
Visiting the Sick (3 or more hours)	65.4	50.0	(+)
Calling on prospective members (2 or more hours)	59.1	57.8	(-)
Other pastoral calling (3 or more hours)	53.4	34.5	(+)
Counseling (2 or more hours)	56.6	44.3	(-)
Administration (3 or more hours)	50.8	28.2	(+)
Church committee meetings (1 or more hours)	71.7	40.8	(+)
Denominational meetings (1 or more hours)	63.8	43.6	(+)
Interdenominational meetings (1 or more hours)	27.5	24.6	(-)
Civic and community meetings (1 or more hours)	40.8	23.9	(+)

\*By chi square test at 5 percent level.

to administrative work and related church committees and denominational meetings and to civic and community meetings. Sect-type ministers clearly concentrated their time on the activities related to preparing for and conducting services and pastoral calling while church-type ministers (who spent more total time) were more likely to extend their activities to administrative, organizational, denominational, and community activities.

#### Professional, Theological, Social, Moral and Political Beliefs of Ministers of Church-type and Sect-type Congregations

*Responses to professional items by church-type and sect-type congregations*—As we noted earlier, there was high consensus among ministers on some professional

items. This consensus was present for both sect-type and church-type ministers so that virtually all ministers of both types regarded the ministry as a career, as a full-time vocation, thought that a minister should be able to say what he thinks from the pulpit and thought that it is unfair to make comparisons between a new minister and his predecessor (Table 17).

TABLE 17--RESPONSE TO PROFESSIONAL ITEMS BY MINISTERS OF CHURCH-TYPE AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Professional Statement	Church-type	Sect-type	Signif. of Diff. ***
	(percent agreeing)**	(percent agreeing)**	
	(N=240)	(N=142)*	
A young man aspiring to the ministry should finish college and seminary.	94.2	64.8	(+)
Ministers' associations needed to protect ministers from congregations.	35.4	32.4	(-)
Ministry should be regarded as a profession comparable to law or medicine.	78.7	59.2	(+)
Ministers' associations to define proper ministerial conduct	59.2	23.2	(+)
A seminary-educated man should be given preference over other for vacant pastorate.	60.0	49.3	(+)
Because of knowledge of congregation's need a minister should be permitted to develop programs without approval of denominational officers.	26.7	28.2	(-)
Ministers' associations needed to protect ministers from denominational officials.	53.3	44.4	(-)
Ministry should be regarded as a life-time career.	97.1	97.9	(-)
Ministry should be considered a full-time not a part-time job.	98.7	98.6	(-)
Should be free to say from pulpit what he thinks regardless of wishes of parishioners.	95.0	93.0	(-)
Unfair for parishioners to make comparisons between new minister and his predecessors.	89.2	86.6	(-)

\*Some variation in (N) because of no response.

\*\*Strongly agree or agree.

\*\*\*By chi square test at 5 percent level.

Differences between church and sect-type ministers occurred with regard to level of education a minister should have, preference for a seminary graduate to fill a pastorate, the comparison of the ministry to the prototype professions of medicine and law and to the need for ministerial associations.

*Theological position of ministers by church-type and sect-type congregations*—The self-reports of theological position of ministers showed differences between those in church-type and sect-type congregations. Almost one-half of the sect-type ministers reported that they were fundamentalist in theology followed by conservative and liberal. Among church-type ministers the largest number chose the conservative theological position followed by liberal and fundamentalist. The difference was statistically significant (Table 18).

TABLE 18--THEOLOGICAL POSITION OF MINISTERS IN CHURCH-TYPE AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Theological Position	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)
	(N=238)	(N=140)
Liberal	35.7	22.1
Conservative	43.3	28.6
Fundamentalist	21.0	49.3

$\chi^2=32.7$ , d.f.=2, significant at 5 percent level.

*Ministers' beliefs about social and moral issues by church-type and sect-type congregations*—With only one exception (poverty programs), there were differences in response patterns between ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations which were large enough to be statistically significant (Table 19). Furthermore, the direction of the differences, with the exception of "federal aid to education" and possibly "continuation of war in Vietnam," were what one might expect; that is, ministers of church-type groups took a more reformed position on social issues and a more liberal position on moral issues. At the same time, it should be pointed out that even though the differences were statistically significant the disjunctures are not large except for certain moralistic issues.

Perhaps even more characteristic of the church/sect positions was the difference in the neutral category. On social issues, without exception, a higher proportion of the ministers of sect-type than church-type congregations responded in a neutral manner. In contrast, ministers of church-type congregations, without exception, were more likely than sect-type ministers to respond in a neutral fashion to the moral issue items. This tends to confirm the idea that sect-type ministers are more likely than church-type ministers to be con-

TABLE 19--POSITION OF MINISTERS ON SELECTED SOCIAL AND MORAL ISSUES BY CHURCH-TYPE AND SECT-TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Issue	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)	Signif. of Diff.*
<b>SOCIAL ISSUES</b>	(N=240)	(N=142)	
Federal aid to education			
Support	67.5	70.4	
Oppose	27.5	18.3	
Neutral	5.0	11.3	(+)
Capital Punishment			
Support	37.6	38.7	
Oppose	46.9	35.2	
Neutral	15.5	26.1	(+)
Racial integration			
Support	86.7	61.3	
Oppose	4.2	19.0	
Neutral	9.2	19.7	(+)
Poverty programs			
Support	55.8	52.8	
Oppose	18.3	17.6	
Neutral	25.8	29.6	(-)
Continuation of war in Vietnam			
Support	48.5	39.4	
Oppose	30.1	26.1	
Neutral	21.3	34.5	(+)
Foreign aid			
Support	64.2	51.1	
Oppose	16.7	20.6	
Neutral	19.2	28.4	(+)
<b>MORAL ISSUES</b>			
Sunday closing laws			
Support	62.5	76.8	
Oppose	17.5	9.1	
Neutral	20.0	14.1	(+)
Sale of alcoholic beverages			
Support	13.3	2.8	
Oppose	73.3	91.5	
Neutral	13.3	5.6	(+)

TABLE 19--(Continued)

Issue	Church-type (percent)	Sect-type (percent)	Signif. of Diff.*
Smoking			
Support	15.9	4.9	
Oppose	59.8	73.9	
Neutral	24.3	21.1	(+)
Social dancing			
Support	35.1	5.6	
Oppose	47.3	85.9	
Neutral	17.6	8.5	(+)
Mixed swimming of the sexes			
Support	56.9	26.2	
Oppose	12.6	48.2	
Neutral	30.5	25.5	(+)
Social drinking			
Support	12.6	2.1	
Oppose	78.2	93.7	
Neutral	9.2	4.2	(+)

\*By chi square test at 5 percent level.

cerned with moral issues while church-type ministers are more likely to be concerned with secular affairs.

*Political position of ministers by church-type and sect-type congregations*—There was little difference in the reports of ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations on their positions in the political spectrum. Fifty-four percent of the church-type ministers compared with 60 percent of the sect-type ministers reported that they were politically conservative, a difference which was not statistically significant.

### Part III—Characteristics of Rural Ministers by Theological Position

It was indicated in Part I that most ministers were willing to identify themselves as liberal, conservative, or fundamentalist. Furthermore, such a designation succeeded in dividing ministers in about equal categories (liberals 30 percent, conservatives 37 percent, fundamentalists 31 percent). We will examine social origins, work situation, and beliefs by theological position of ministers. Special attention is directed toward the relationship of theological position to belief about social and moral issues.

#### Background of Rural Ministers by Theological Position

*Social origins by theological position*—Fundamentalist ministers were most likely (64 percent) and liberal ministers were least likely (46 percent) to be Missourians by birth. Approximately two-thirds of the liberal and conservative ministers had spent the larger part of their youth in rural places (under 2,500 population) compared with 83 percent of the fundamentalist ministers; a difference which was statistically significant. While a preponderance of the fathers of ministers in each of the categories were blue-collar workers, liberal ministers were most likely (28 percent) followed by conservative ministers (22 percent) and fundamentalist ministers (8 percent) to come from families of white-collar workers. The difference among theological positions was statistically significant.

*Age and education by theological position*—The age pattern of liberal and conservative ministers was almost identical with some tendency for fundamentalist ministers to be older, but the difference was not statistically significant ( $X^2=4.0$ , d.f.=4).

The greatest difference in educational level existed between fundamentalist ministers and ministers of the other two theological position (Table 20). About

TABLE 20—EDUCATION OF MINISTERS BY THEOLOGICAL POSITION

Education of Minister*	Theological Position		
	Liberal (percent)	Conservative (percent)	Fundamentalist (percent)
	(N=116)	(N=143)	(N=119)
High school or less	29.3	30.8	62.2
College	19.8	30.1	30.2
Post college work	50.9	39.2	7.6

\*Excludes Bible School.

$X^2=60.5$ , d.f.=4, significant at 5 percent level.

half of the ministers who identified themselves as liberals compared with about 40 percent of the conservatives and less than 10 percent of the fundamentalists had post-college work .

### The Minister and His Church by Theological Position

Ministers self-designated as fundamentalists tended to have smaller charges than either conservatives or liberals with almost no difference between conservative and liberal ministers in this regard. Liberal ministers, however, were much more likely (55 percent) to serve two or more churches than were either conservative (33 percent) or fundamentalist ministers (25 percent). The tenure of the three types of ministers in their present charge was similar.

### Professional, Social, Moral, and Political Beliefs of Ministers by Theological Position

*Responses to professional items by theological position*—Responses to items designed to measure professional commitment and beliefs were not very sensitive to differences in theological position of ministers. As was noted before, four of the eleven items produced such a high level of consensus among ministers that little variation could be expected. The difference among theological positions on four of the remaining seven items was large enough to be statistically significant. Two of the four items which were sensitive to differences in theological position dealt with the desirability of having ministerial associations (Table 21). Liberal ministers were more likely than either conservative or fundamentalist ministers to say that "ministers' associations are needed to protect ministers from congregations;" while both liberal and conservative ministers were more likely than fundamentalist ministers to say that "ministers' associations are needed to help define proper ministerial conduct." When it came to the statement, however, that "ministers' associations are needed to protect ministers from denominational officials," no difference was apparent on the basis of theological position with about one-half in each theological category agreeing with the statement.

*Social and moral issues by theological position*—It might be expected that the theological position of ministers would be related to beliefs about social and moral issues. We have listed and discussed these issues previously and indicated how ministers in general responded to them.

On social issue items there is some tendency for the responses of theological conservatives to be intermediate to liberal and fundamentalist ministers. The general pattern is for the aggregate responses of conservatives and fundamentalists to be quite similar to each other and different from responses of liberal ministers. It is also apparent from observing Table 22 that liberal ministers are least likely and fundamentalist ministers most likely to be neutral on these issues. For each of the social issue items, differences among ministers of different theological positions are statistically significant with the difference between liberal

TABLE 21--RESPONSES TO PROFESSIONAL ITEMS BY THEOLOGICAL POSITION OF MINISTERS

Professional Statement	Theological Position			Signif. of Diff.***
	Liberal (N=116)*	Conservative (N=143)*	Fundamentalist (N=119)*	
A young man aspiring to the ministry should finish college and seminary.	87.1	88.1	73.9	(+)
Ministers' associations needed to protect ministers from congregations.	45.7	28.0	31.9	(+)
Ministry should be regarded as a profession comparable to law or medicine.	79.3	71.3	63.0	(+)
Ministers' associations to define proper ministerial conduct.	56.0	53.8	26.9	(+)
A seminary-educated man should be given preference over others for vacant pastorate.	59.5	55.2	55.5	(-)
Because of knowledge of congregation's need a minister should be permitted to develop programs without approval of denominational officers.	30.2	25.2	26.9	(-)
Ministers' associations needed to protect minister from denominational officials.	49.1	51.7	48.7	(-)
Ministry should be regarded as a life-time career.	94.8	97.9	99.2	(-)
Ministry should be considered a full-time not a part-time job.	98.3	97.9	100.0	(-)
Should be free to say from pulpit what he thinks regardless of wishes of parishioners.	92.2	94.4	96.6	(-)
Unfair for parishioners to make comparisons between new minister and his predecessors.	88.8	87.4	90.8	(-)

\*Some variation in (N) because of no response.

\*\*Strongly agree or agree.

\*\*\*By chi square test at 5 percent level.

TABLE 22--RESPONSES OF MINISTERS ON SELECTED SOCIAL AND MORAL ISSUES BY THEOLOGICAL POSITION OF MINISTERS

Issues	Theological Position of Ministers			Signif. of Diff.**
	Liberal (percent)	Conservative (percent)	Fundamentalist (percent)	
	(N=116)*	(N=143)*	(N=119)*	
<b>SOCIAL ISSUES</b>				
Federal aid to education				
Support	80.2	62.9	63.9	
Oppose	15.5	32.2	22.7	
Neutral	4.3	4.9	13.4	(+)
Capital Punishment				
Support	24.1	44.4	42.8	
Oppose	62.9	35.2	32.8	
Neutral	12.9	20.4	24.4	(+)
Racial Integration				
Support	93.1	78.3	62.2	
Oppose	0.9	10.5	16.8	
Neutral	6.0	11.2	21.0	(+)
Poverty program				
Support	77.6	41.9	46.2	
Oppose	6.9	26.6	19.3	
Neutral	15.5	31.5	34.5	(+)
War in Vietnam				
Support	38.2	47.5	50.4	
Oppose	40.9	23.1	21.0	
Neutral	20.9	29.4	28.6	(+)
Foreign aid				
Support	75.0	54.5	50.0	
Oppose	9.5	19.6	23.7	
Neutral	15.5	25.9	26.3	(+)

TABLE 22--(Continued)

Issues	Theological Position of Ministers			Signif. of Diff. **
	Liberal (percent)	Conservative (percent)	Fundamentalist (percent)	
	(N=116)*	(N=143)*	(N=119)*	
<b>MORAL ISSUES</b>				
Sunday closing law				
Support	56.9	69.9	75.6	
Oppose	19.8	12.6	10.9	
Neutral	23.3	17.5	13.5	(+)
Sale of alcoholic beverages				
Support	17.2	9.8	1.7	
Oppose	65.5	81.1	93.3	
Neutral	17.2	9.1	5.0	(+)
Smoking				
Support	24.1	9.1	2.5	
Oppose	44.0	68.5	82.2	
Neutral	31.9	36.4	15.3	(+)
Social dancing				
Support	45.2	23.8	4.2	
Oppose	33.9	63.6	85.7	
Neutral	20.9	12.6	10.1	(+)
Mixed swimming of the sexes				
Support	60.0	50.0	26.9	
Oppose	7.8	23.9	43.7	
Neutral	32.2	26.1	29.4	(+)
Social drinking				
Support	18.3	6.3	1.7	
Oppose	70.4	84.6	96.6	
Neutral	11.3	9.1	1.7	(+)

\*(N) may vary because of no response.

\*\*By chi square test at 5 percent level.

ministers and the other two categories contributing most to the overall difference.

On moralistic issues, the difference in pattern of responses is even more consistent among the three theological positions. Without exception, conservative ministers in aggregate stand between liberal and fundamentalist ministers in support or opposition to a moralistic stance. In contrast with response patterns on social issues, there tends to be substantial differences between conserva-

tive and fundamentalist ministers on these issues. When a statistical test is applied the differences in aggregate responses for the positions was significant for each item considered. A high level of consensus existed among fundamentalist ministers on moral issues and it appears that, at least for fundamentalist ministers, moralistic precepts are important definers of theological position.

A further observation from Table 22 is that liberal ministers were most likely and fundamentalist ministers least likely to be neutral on moralistic issues. The different response patterns by theological position (especially between liberal and fundamentalist ministers) with regard to the neutral category, seems to be particularly pertinent. Liberal ministers more commonly report a position on social issues while fundamentalist ministers more commonly report a position on moralistic issues.

*Political position by theological position*—The relationship between political ideology and theological position has been explored by Benton Johnson\* (1966) and by Jeffrey K. Hadden\*\*. Both Johnson and Hadden found that conservative and fundamentalist theological positions were associated with conservative ideology and voting behavior; while liberal theological positions were associated with liberal ideology and voting behavior. The data from the rural Missouri ministers is in general agreement with those findings. Ministers expressing a liberal theological position were likely to say they were politically liberal, while theological conservative and fundamentalist ministers were likely, in about an equal degree, to identify themselves as politically conservative (Table 23).

TABLE 23--POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF MINISTERS OF RURAL CHURCHES  
BY THEOLOGICAL POSITION OF MINISTERS

Political Ideology*	Theological Position		
	Liberal (percent)	Conservative (percent)	Fundamentalist (percent)
	(N=112)	(N=139)	(N=116)
Liberal	82.1	22.3	31.9
Conservative	17.9	77.7	68.1

\*Those reporting "moderate" and no responses not included.  
 $\chi^2=99.8$ , d.f.=2, significant at 5 percent level.

Voting behavior is a test of political ideology. Generally, it is thought that the Republican party represents a more conservative position than the Democratic party. In the 1964 election, the Republicans offered a candidate (Barry

\*Benton Johnson, "Theology and party preference among Protestant clergymen," *American Sociological Review* vol. 31, no. 2 April 1966, pp. 200-208.

\*\*Jeffrey K. Hadden, *The Gathering Storm in the Churches*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Anchor Books, 1970.

Goldwater) who was unambiguously conservative; however, the Democratic candidate was not so clearly liberal and Missouri tradition, which presumably the clergy reflects, is Democratic. Conservative and fundamentalist clergymen were more likely (in a ratio of more than 2 to 1) to vote for the Republican candidate than were liberal clergymen although the vote of conservative and fundamentalist clergymen was about equally divided between the two principal candidates. In general, then, there was a relationship between theological position and political ideology and voting behavior consistent with that found in other research on the question.

### Social and Moral Issues by Theological Position and by Church/Sect

We have shown earlier that differences in social and moralistic issues exist among ministers on the basis of the church/sect distinction. We have also shown that fundamentalist ministers were concentrated in sect-type congregations while liberal ministers were likely to be in church-type congregations. Therefore, the question arises as to whether the relationship between theological position of ministers is a simple reflection of the church-sect distinction. In order to answer this question we have separated ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations and considered responses to the social and moral issues by theological position of ministers *within* each of these types. In order to simplify the tabular presentation, only the percentage supporting or opposing an issue are recorded in Table 24.

Division in this way did not eliminate the relationship of theological position to social and moral issues. Instead it revealed some patterns not shown when either church/sect or theological position were considered separately.

The division on the basis of church and sect does not affect greatly the relationship between theological position and response on social issues (as distinct from moral issues). For ministers of sect-type congregations, the range of percentage differences by theological positions tended to be somewhat less, but generally speaking, the pattern and magnitude of percentages in support or opposition to a given issue was similar by theological positions for minister of church-type and sect-type congregations. The most notable exception was for the item on racial integration which substantially smaller proportions of conservative and fundamentalist ministers of sect-type congregations supported.

The division by church and sect had a different effect on the relationship between theological position and moralistic issues (as distinct from social issues). It tended to sharpen the relationship for ministers of church-type congregations and to blur it for ministers of sect-type congregations. Sect-type ministers of all theological positions tended to take a highly moralistic stance. Ministers of sect-type congregations who regarded themselves as liberals were as likely as ministers of sect-type congregations who regarded themselves as fundamentalists to oppose sale and use (social drinking) of alcoholic beverages. Also among sect-type ministers the conservatives were most likely of any of the theo-

TABLE 24--RESPONSES OF MINISTERS ON SELECTED SOCIAL AND MORAL ISSUES BY THEOLOGICAL POSITION AND CHURCH/SECT TYPE OF CONGREGATION

Issues	Theological Position of Ministers			
	Liberal (percent)	Conservative (percent)	Fundamentalist (percent)	Signif. of Diff.*
<b>SOCIAL ISSUES</b>				
Support federal aid to education				
Church-type	80.0	62.1	58.0	(+)
Sect-type	80.6	65.0	68.1	(-)
Oppose capital punishment				
Church-type	68.2	36.3	34.0	(+)
Sect-type	48.4	32.5	31.9	(-)
Support racial integration				
Church-type	95.3	84.5	78.0	(+)
Sect-type	87.1	62.5	50.7	(+)
Support poverty program				
Church-type	78.8	40.8	46.0	(+)
Sect-type	74.2	45.0	46.4	(+)
Oppose war in Vietnam				
Church-type	44.0	23.3	18.0	(+)
Sect-type	32.3	22.5	23.2	(-)
Support foreign aid				
Church-type	78.8	58.3	52.0	(+)
Sect-type	64.5	45.0	48.8	(-)
<b>MORAL ISSUES</b>				
Support Sunday closing laws				
Church-type	50.6	64.1	80.0	(+)
Sect-type	74.2	85.0	72.5	(-)
Oppose sale of alcoholic beverages				
Church-type	56.5	75.7	98.0	(+)
Sect-type	90.3	95.0	89.9	(-)
Oppose smoking				
Church-type	38.8	63.1	90.7	(+)
Sect-type	58.1	82.5	75.4	(-)
Oppose social dancing				
Church-type	19.0	52.4	84.0	(+)
Sect-type	74.2	92.5	87.0	(-)

Table 24 Continued

Issues	Theological Position of Ministers			Signif. of Diff. *
	Liberal (percent)	Conservative (percent)	Fundamentalist (percent)	
Oppose mixed swim- ming of the sexes				
Church-type	4.8	12.6	24.0	(+)
Sect-type	16.1	53.8	58.0	(+)
Oppose social drinking				
Church-type	64.3	80.6	98.0	(+)
Sect-type	87.1	95.0	95.7	(-)

\*By chi square test at 5 percent level.

logical positions to take a moralistic stance. A further observation is that self-reported fundamentalist ministers of church-type congregations tended to be as moralistic as fundamentalist ministers of sect-type churches. The same was not true, however, for conservative and liberal ministers of church-type congregations when compared with conservative and liberal ministers of sect-type congregations.

Generally, then, knowledge of theological position of ministers was useful in distinguishing response patterns for *social issues* for ministers of both church and sect-type congregations. It was even more so for distinguishing response patterns for *moralistic issues* for ministers of church-type congregations, but not for ministers of sect-type congregations.

#### Political Position by Theological Position and by Church/Sect

Consideration of the relationship between theological position of ministers and their political ideology is not changed much when ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations are considered separately. On voting behavior, theological position is somewhat more closely related to theological position for sect-type ministers than for church-type ministers (Table 25).

TABLE 25--VOTE IN MOST RECENT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF  
RURAL CHURCHES BY THEOLOGICAL POSITION OF MINISTERS  
AND CHURCH/SECT TYPE CONGREGATIONS

Vote for President*	Theological Position		
	Liberal (percent)	Conservative (percent)	Fundamentalist (percent)
	(N=70)	(N=91)	(N=40)
Church-type			
Goldwater (R)	24.3	42.9	45.0
Johnson (D)	75.7	57.1	55.0
	X <sup>2</sup> =7.3, d.f.=2, Significant		
Sect-type	(N=21)	(N=26)	(N=41)
Goldwater (R)	14.3	69.2	58.5
Johnson (D)	85.7	30.8	41.5
	X <sup>2</sup> =15.7, d.f. =2, Significant		

\*Only voters for the two principal candidates included.

## Summary and Conclusions

Ministers of rural Missouri offer an intriguing study in similarity and contrasts. They share to a large degree a common background of being native Missourians from rural areas. Furthermore, they are likely to come from farm families or other blue-collar working families. Ministers of rural churches on the whole were relatively young as professionals go with half of them under 45 years and one-quarter under 35 years.

It is career aspects of rural ministers that shows great diversity. For a profession, the difference in educational level is astounding ranging from primary school to post seminary. Either we must conclude that among rural ministers education is not a limiting criterion for professional status or that a substantial proportion stand outside the profession. We are unwilling to credit the latter proposition because ministers were almost unanimous in regarding the ministry as a life-time pursuit to which they would prefer to devote their entire time. Also, questioning revealed that most ministers regarded seminary education as desirable for a young person entering the ministry although a substantial proportion perceived that the same value on education was not held by congregations they served nor denominations with which they were affiliated.

In another respect, that is in participation in collegial groups, many rural ministers are at variance with the model of professional behavior. While the relative isolation of rural ministers from each other may hinder the development of local ministerial associations, for many ministers such associations are not regarded as desirable as a means for setting professional standards or for support in relationships with congregations on the one hand or denominations on the other. This autonomy is especially pronounced among ministers of sect-type congregations.

Congregations that ministers serve vary in size, composition of membership, and relationship of minister and congregation. The large number of denominations contribute to this diversity and efforts to group denominations by church and sect types only partially resolves the problem. The experience of ministers in regard to tenure in local congregations is quite varied; while some spend their entire career serving a single congregation (and minister and church become closely identified with each other), others are frequent movers serving many churches during their careers.

Characteristics of clergymen in terms of background and educations tend to minimize social distance between minister and congregation. While we do not have data on the beliefs of congregation members, it is probable that the ministers reflect closely the opinions of parishioners on social and moral issues. Characteristically, the rural ministers take a highly moralistic stance and by their own assessment most are theologically conservative or fundamentalist. Social distance between clergymen and congregations is further reduced by the congregational expectation and the fact of secular employment for almost half the ministers. Secular employment among ministers of small congregations is an accommodation which helps to explain the survival of rural churches in apparent defiance of social and economic trends.

The minimum activity of clergymen consists of preparing for and conducting regular services. Most ministers would like to have more time to spend on preparation for sermons and for meditation and study. They would also like to have more time to spend on counseling and various types of pastoral calling. Relatively little time was spent in community activities or committee meetings of a denominational or interdenominational nature and on the whole it was not felt that more time was needed for these activities. Administration was the activity on which more ministers claimed they would like to spend less time than they actually did, although, the number who would like to spend less time on this activity was about matched by the number who would like to spend more on it. On the whole it is apparent that the ministers' time was devoted to the internal activities of the congregation in contrast to activities of the denomination or the secular community and that they preferred to allocate their time in this manner.

In this report we divided the ministers on the basis of two factors; namely, church organizational set (church/sect), and theological position of the minister

(liberal, conservative, fundamentalist). Each of these divisions proved to be informative with regard to minister's background, beliefs, and behavior.

Ministers of sect-type congregations were more likely than ministers of church-type congregations to have grown up in rural areas and to come from blue-collar (including farm) families; they were, however, no more likely to have grown up in Missouri or adjacent states. Substantial difference in favor of church-type ministers were present in educational level with but few of the sect-type ministers having post-baccalaureate training.

Church-type ministers tended to serve larger charges and they were more likely to have more than one congregation in their charge. Sect-type ministers tended to be somewhat less mobile with a greater proportion having served but one church in their ministerial career.

An income difference between church and sect-type ministers favoring church-type ministers existed although it was not exceptionally large. Sources of income, however, were quite different with relatively more sect-type ministers depending on secular occupations.

On the whole sect-type ministers tended to devote less time during a week to ministerial duties, a fact accounted for by their greater involvement in secular occupations. Sect and church-type ministers spent about equal time in sermon preparation, study, and conducting services. The largest difference occurred in administration, denominational meetings, church committee meetings, and community affairs. This reflects the simpler organization of sect-type congregations and their greater attention to religious services (see Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station Research Bulletin 984). Furthermore, sect-type ministers were less likely to regard ministerial associations as defining proper ministerial conduct.

Almost one in two of the sect-type ministers compared with one in five of the church-type ministers identified themselves as theologically fundamentalist (church-type ministers were most likely to say they were theologically conservative). This self-designation was consistent with the manner in which church and sect-type ministers responded to a series of social and moral issues. On the social issues, sect-type ministers were consistently more likely to be neutral; on the moral issues, they were more likely to take a "moralistic" position while church-type ministers showed greater neutrality.

Finally we considered the effect of ministers' self-designated theological position (liberal, conservative, fundamentalist) on characteristics, beliefs, and behavior. Although fundamentalist ministers were concentrated in sect-type congregations they were present in church-type congregations as well and church-type ministers were more likely to report their theology to be conservative than liberal or fundamentalist. Fundamentalist ministers were most likely to be native Missourians from rural blue-collar families with little difference between conservative and liberal ministers on these characteristics. The major difference in education also appeared between fundamentalist ministers when compared with conservative and liberal ministers.

Theological position was reflected to some extent in responses to professional statements, but was more clearly and consistently related to responses to items in social and moral issues. Liberal ministers tended to differ from conservative and fundamentalist ministers on social issues; while liberal and conservative tended to differ from fundamentalist ministers on moral issues. Generally speaking, fundamentalist ministers were least likely to take a stand on social issues while liberal ministers were least likely to take a stand on moral issues.

Due to the fact that there was considerable overlap between church/sect and theological position we examined the relationship between theological position and social/moral issues of church-type and sect-type ministers separately. This did not eliminate the relationship between theological position and responses to items on social and moral issues. The pattern of responses of ministers by theological position was generally quite similar for church and sect-type ministers on social issues. On moral issues, sect-type ministers tended to be highly "moralistic" in spite of their theological position. This moralistic stance was, in general, equalled by fundamentalist ministers of church-type congregations but not by conservative and liberal ministers.