

F.F. Bosworth: A historical analysis of his ministry development using social cognitive career theory

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The purpose of this article was to discuss the findings related to research on the life history of Fred Francis Bosworth (1877–1958). This article explored his life story and critically analysed the influential factors that may have contributed to his success in the ministry. It seeks to answer the question: 'How did Bosworth develop into a famous healing evangelist?' The historical case study method was used as the research design. It also employed a variant of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), which suggests that a person's career choice can be determined by his or her self-efficacy beliefs, goals and expected outcomes. This article is the first to offer a critical analysis of Bosworth's entire life and ministry and is also the first to use the concepts of SCCT to show how his adulthood success may have been influenced by the experiences of his childhood and youth. This article argued that several factors played a critical role in Bosworth's development. Although Bosworth and others have attributed his success primarily to his Pentecostal experience, this study contends that his childhood, as well as secular and business experiences played a more important role than has been reported in the literature. Furthermore, this article showed that Bosworth's path to success can be understood through the elements of SCCT. Through SCCT, one can see how Bosworth developed an interest in the healing ministry, how he chose to pursue the ministry as a career, and how he performed and set goals as an evangelist.

Introduction

F.F. Bosworth (1877–1958) was a Pentecostal pioneer who had a tremendous impact on the church during the first half of the 20th century. His influence on Pentecostal churches can be seen today in the Word of Faith movement. In addition to being a pioneer, Bosworth was a famous musician and the author of *Christ the Healer* (1948). Amongst the leaders in Pentecostal church history, he was one of the few men who played a role in both the early years of the Pentecostal movement and in the healing revival of the post-World War II era. He frequently found himself in the midst of exciting and sometimes controversial meetings that had historical significance. According to Faupel (2008), Bosworth was 'a most fascinating person' who appeared 'in the right places' at the right time.

When the Pentecostal movement exploded in 1906 in Zion City, Illinois, Bosworth was present and became a participant and leader in the movement (Gardiner 1990; Bosworth n.d.(a); Perkins 1921). He was also pastor of the church that hosted the meetings when the famous revival meetings of Marie Woodworth-Etter occurred in 1912 in Dallas, Texas (Alexander 2006; Warner 1986; Woodworth-Etter 1916). A few years later, when the Assemblies of God was being formed as a legitimate denomination, Bosworth served as one of the leaders. He created contention, however, when he opposed the AG's belief that speaking in tongues is the initial sign that one has been baptised in the Holy Spirit (Sumrall 1995; Alexander 2006). Bosworth also was present as a mentor to Evangelist William Branham and other tent revivalists in the 1940s and 1950s (Lindsay 1950). His writings on divine healing influenced many church leaders of his day, as well many who claim healing ministries today (Osborn 1950; Chappell 1988; Lindsay 1950; Simmons 1997). Bosworth was considered 'one of the nation's greatest authorities on the ministry of divine healing' (*The Voice of Healing* 1948a:4). He reportedly led more than a million people to faith in Christ (Gardiner 1990) and also conducted some of the largest evangelistic healing campaigns ever reported in the United States (Osborn 1950; Simmons 1997; *The Voice of Healing* 1948b:1). Over the years, he gladly stated he had more than 225 000 written testimonies from people who were healed as a result of faith in God (Bosworth 1948).

Despite Bosworth's many accomplishments, there is little known about his life history. His son, Robert V. Bosworth, has noted: 'Little has been written concerning the life and ministry of F.F. Bosworth and his brother, Bert, as it relates to *Christ the Healer* and their healing ministry' (Bosworth 2000). Whilst much is known about Bosworth's teachings on divine healing, there

is a dearth of information on his early years. There also is a lack of research on how he developed into a famous healing evangelist.

Although a number of devotional profiles have been written on Bosworth, most of the critical work has focused on his theology and teachings (Jacobson 2003; McConnell 1995; Hanegraaff 1993 & 1997; McArthur 1993). The most prominent themes have been his views on evidential tongues and divine healing in the atonement of Christ (Alexander 2006; Anderson 2004; Hollenweger 1972; Blumhofer 1993; Synan 2003). Some writings have sought to link him with the writings of E.W. Kenyon, who emphasised faith and positive confession in the ministry of healing. Others have emphasised his influence on the Word of Faith movement, which has roots in the writings of Kenyon and Kenneth E. Hagin (McConnell 1995; Simmons 1997; McIntyre 1997; Lie 2003; Perriman 2003).

This article presents a historical case study of Bosworth with a focus on the influential factors in his life and ministry. It examined his development and the paths that he took in order to become a successful minister of the Gospel. It is believed that knowledge of these factors and how they work in a person's life, will allow the church to know more about the role of various experiences and events in ministry development and in the shaping of a life for other religious work. The article was guided by a number of questions, however, the central question is: 'How did Bosworth develop from a small town farm boy into a famous healing evangelist?' In other words, what were the secrets to his success? In the sections that follow, this article will discuss the methodology and theoretical framework that was used for the research. This will be followed by a presentation on the significance of the findings. It will then close with the conclusions and implications, along with a recommendation for further research.

Methodology and theoretical framework

This research is essentially qualitative in nature. It was conducted using the historical case study method. Data was acquired from multiple sources that included personal interviews, periodicals, audio recordings, photographs, books and letters. The selection of data was based on its reliability and the information it provided for patterns and emerging themes. The data yielded essential information that covered Bosworth's entire life history. It provided a full portrait from which a number of patterns could be identified. Once collected, the data from these sources was reviewed and analysed for prominent themes and patterns. This information was categorised under certain headings and then interpreted using Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). SCCT is a theory that builds on Bandura's concept of 'self-efficacy', which is defined as a person's conception of his or her confidence to perform certain tasks. According to Bandura, self-efficacy comes from a person's previous performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, verbal

persuasion or social support and physiological states or reaction to barriers (Lent *et al.* 1994; Swanson & Fouad 1999:125). The idea is that one's career can be determined by one's self-confidence, performance in a given activity and the expected outcomes. This self-confidence would be nurtured by his or her environment, past achievements, learning by observing others, encouragement from others and perceived positive outcomes.

At its core, SCCT, as developed by Lent *et al.* (1994), focuses on 'self-efficacy, expected outcomes, and goal mechanisms and how they may interrelate with other person (e.g., gender), contextual (e.g., support system), and experiential/learning factors' (Lent *et al.* 1994:79). Using these factors, SCCT provides:

... a conceptual framework that attempts to explain central, dynamic processes and mechanism through which (a) career and academic interests develop, (b) career-relevant choices are forged and enacted, and (c) performance outcomes are achieved.

(Lent *et al.* 1994:80)

Lent *et al.*'s three-point SCCT model places emphasis on a person's interest, choice and performance.

'Interest' is determined by outcome expectancies and self-efficacy beliefs (Lent *et al.* 1994:89–91). Lent *et al.* propose that '[a]n individual's occupational or academic interests at any point in time are reflective of his or her concurrent self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations' (1994:91).

Example: A boy develops an interest in playing the trumpet based on his self-efficacy beliefs and he expects a positive outcome, such as praise and perhaps a scholarship from doing it. This *interest* may influence his choice in a particular career field, beginning with an increased choice in practicing. In time, this activity and development of skills may lead to the choice of a career in music.

'Choice' is determined by a person's input (e.g. gender, race, disability, personality and predisposition) and background context. These factors influence one's self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations (Lent *et al.* 1994:93, 96–97). They propose: 'People will aspire to enter (i.e., develop choice goals for) occupations or academic fields that are consistent with their primary interest areas' (1994:97).

Example: A girl grows up in a wealthy social-economic environment that affords her with the best education in language studies. In this environment, she develops her skills, learns there are many opportunities for women and that she can be well paid for her skills. This background enables her to develop beliefs in both her ability and her future, so she *chooses* to become a linguist.

'Performance' is determined by past performance accomplishments that influence self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectancies. This, in turn, influences performance goals and leads to performance attainment levels (Lent *et al.* 1994:98, 100–101). Lent *et al.* contend that '[a]bility (or

aptitude) will affect career/academic performance both directly and indirectly through its influence on self-efficacy beliefs' (1994:100).

Example: A boy begins selling lemonade as a fundraiser for a church event. He does well and takes a part-time job in a retail store. He makes many sales and develops confidence in his abilities. He gradually takes on bigger challenges in sales and succeeds with each one. Following each success, he sets a new goal and reaches new performance attainment levels.

This article employed a variant (or basic ideas) of SCCT. Only a *variant* of this theory was used because the study is historical and as a result, not suitable for interviews (of F.F. Bosworth), tests and surveys. Determining Bosworth's self-efficacy beliefs were derived from analysing the events and experiences in his life that pointed to the factors from which self-efficacy is born. In short, the article was an attempt to view the spiritual and theological phenomena in Bosworth's life through the lens of social research methodology.

The findings

Bosworth has attributed his success as a healing revivalist to practices such as prayer, preaching and the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Perkins 1921; Gardiner 1990; Bosworth 1954a, 1954b & 1954c; Bosworth n.d.(a); n.d.(b)). However, a number of other factors may have contributed more to his success than he and others have reported. It appears that the most significant influential factors in Bosworth's life were his childhood and adolescent experiences, the ministry of women in his life and his personal crises. Together, they provided key turning points and epiphanies that paved the way for his ministry in evangelism.

The central arguments for this article were based on a study of the emerging patterns and themes in Bosworth's life history, from which the critical influential factors in his life were extracted and examined. These patterns are:

- his employment
- his love of music
- his crisis moments
- his work with Christian women
- his use of healing experiences
- his later years in missions.

Amongst other things, the data showed that his experiences with ministry in the church actually mirrored some of his business interests in the secular world. It showed that it was through the ministry of women that he developed his spirituality. The data also showed how he grew as a result of his personal crises.

This article began with the belief that one could have looked at Bosworth's childhood and predicted his career path as a famous healing evangelist. It was believed that Bosworth's childhood would provide evidence that pointed to his future work in the ministry. As SCCT is used to help people determine their career paths, the researcher hypothesised that one could use the SCCT model to better understand

Bosworth's development. However, it was found that, whilst his childhood experiences played a significant role in his development, it would have been difficult to review these experiences and predict his future as a healing evangelist. Actually, it would have been easier to predict his work as a musician or businessman. The evidence for his interest in preaching and praying for the sick is more clearly seen during his adulthood, beginning when he was 29 and living in Zion City (Perkins 1921 & 1927; Bosworth n.d.(a)).

This finding allows for two possible interpretations. Firstly, it supports Lent *et al.*'s (1994) claim that a person's career path can take a turn: '... [I]nitial career choices are subject to revision by a variety of additional factors ...' (Lent *et al.* 1994:81). Lent *et al.* further note: 'Interests and skills developed during the school years ideally become translated into career selections – although social and economic factors frequently intervene to affect the level and content of choices pursued' (Lent *et al.* 1994:81). In Bosworth's case, this turn or 'revision' occurred dramatically in 1906 when he received his call to the ministry. It was influenced by his surroundings in Zion City, where a number of people, including Charles Parham, were teaching on the baptism in the Spirit and speaking in tongues (Gardiner 1990; Fockler c. 1925). Secondly, the finding might suggest that Bosworth continued with his interests in music and business, but in a different way. Instead of becoming a secular musician and businessman, he became a preacher who incorporated music and business into his spiritual vocation.

Self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goals

The SCCT model suggests that self-efficacy and outcome expectations come directly from learning experiences. According to Bandura, these experiences consist of performance accomplishment, vicarious learning, verbal persuasion and emotional arousal. What follows is a brief description of the route through which Bosworth's self-efficacy and outcome expectations may have come about for his work as a healing evangelist. Bosworth's performance accomplishment might be seen in his business endeavours during his youth and early adulthood. His background in sales, which involves persuasive speaking, provided a foundation for certain aspects of his ministry. As a child, he accomplished his first sale when he traded a cow and a calf in exchange for a cornet, and 'went home happy' (Bosworth n.d.(a):2). He and his brother experienced success working as travelling salesmen whilst he was still a teenager. Perkins writes about them as having at one point a 'flourishing but unlawful business' (Perkins 1921:22). In 1906, after his Pentecostal experience, he successfully sold pens as a way to make money and still share the Gospel with people (Gardiner 1990).

Bosworth's vicarious learning occurred through the ministry of several people who had prominent healing ministries. These included, amongst others, Mattie Perry, John Alexander Dowie, Cyrus B. Fockler, John G. Lake and

Maria Woodworth-Etter (Bosworth n.d.(a); Perkins 1921; Woodworth-Etter 1916; Fockler c. 1925; Cook 1996). For many years he ministered in an environment that was saturated with divine healing ministry.

In regard to verbal persuasion, it probably began when Maude Green invited him to a church meeting:

She urged me to go to this church and I went for three successive evenings and on the third night, because I did not like to grieve my friend, I was persuaded to go to the altar and was saved.

(Bosworth n.d.(a):3)

This verbal persuasion resulted in Bosworth's conversion. Later, after he contracted tuberculosis (TB), Mattie Perry gave him a word of prophecy about his future and told him that God had a special work for him to do. Before praying for his healing, she said:

Fred Bosworth, you are young. You are a Christian, and if you died today, you would go straight to Heaven. But I am here to tell you that if you die today, it will be the most selfish act you have ever committed. God's plan is that we should live to be at least three score and ten (Ps. 90:10). What about all the people that God has ordained for you to reach?

(Bosworth 2000:243–244)

Finally, in regard to emotional arousal, this factor in his development might be suggested by his experiences during and following his Pentecostal experience in 1906. On the day that he received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, he 'leaped to his feet, burst out in tongues, and sat down' (Gardiner 1990:334). This emotional experience was followed by an urgency to share his experience and the Gospel with other people. According to Gardiner (1990), he:

... began at once to tell abroad the good news, and although at that time he was a quiet, unassuming brother he became an outstanding herald of what God was doing.

(Gardiner 1990:334)

Bosworth's 'winning smile, [and] his fervor in telling his story' were effectively used to win over people to his presentation (Gardiner 1990:334–335). Before this Pentecostal experience, Bosworth said he was afraid that God would call him to preach. However, after the experience, he was afraid that God would not call him to preach (Bosworth n.d.(a):7–8).

In light of the data collected for this research, it can be said that Bosworth's development as a famous healing evangelist was impacted by his self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations and goals, as well as other factors. His development began with experiences in his childhood and youth that were shaped by his personal achievements, vicarious learning, social support and his reaction to various barriers in his life. Although known for having held many jobs during his early years, Bosworth's primary interests were in music and some form of business, which included jobs in retail sales and marketing. He also owned his own business. These experiences were later used to catapult him into an international ministry of preaching and divine healing. In his early years, he worked as a travelling salesman; in his later years, he worked as a travelling evangelist.

Evidence for Bosworth's self-efficacy, out-come expectations and goals was quite clear in certain instances. For example, he became so confident of his healing ministry that he once issued a challenge to sceptics and critics (Hofferbert 1950:2). He also engaged in a number of debates on the subject. Such confidence could also be seen in his later years, when he boldly invited people with illnesses to come up first for prayer. Once healed, he would use their cases as object lessons in faith (Bosworth 1954a, 1954b & 1954c). Bosworth believed that the work he was doing was not only biblical, but a proven way to inspire conversions. Because of this view, he aggressively promoted his meetings, travelled widely and constantly sought to reach larger numbers of people with his message (Perkins 1921 & 1927).

Interest, choice and performance

As noted previously, Lent *et al.* provide a three-point model that 'links interests, choices, and performance based on Bandura's (1986) social cognitive model' (Swanson & Fouad 1999:126). Lent *et al.*'s model has been described as a 'social cognitive framework that explains and predicts career behavior' (Swanson & Fouad 1999:126). What follows is an example of how this model was applied to Bosworth's life history. This analysis focuses on the four most prominent features in his career path: music, business, preaching and divine healing.

Interest

According to Swanson and Fouad (1999):

Interests (together with self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectancies) predict goals, which in turn lead to behaviors related to choosing and practicing activities, which then lead to performance attainments.

(Swanson & Fouad 1999:127)

In illustrating 'interest' as a segment of Lent *et al.*'s model, Swanson and Fouad use an illustration that closely resembles the actual experiences of Bosworth:

For example, a young man may have developed an interest in playing the drum based on his self-efficacy beliefs that he is competent as a drum player. He also expects positive outcomes from playing the drums, such as social interaction with friends or enjoying the music, as well as verbal reinforcement from his family. He then is predicted to intend to continue to play the drums and perhaps to form a goal to join a band. This leads to his increased choice to practice the drums and eventually to his skill development in drum playing.

(Swanson & Fouad 1999:127)

Bosworth discovered a love for music at a very young age. His exact age at the time is not known, but he developed an interest in music whilst attending a Civil War reunion with his father. This led to his efforts to purchase a cornet. Then, without a teacher or formal training, he used an instruction manual to teach himself how to play the instrument. He practiced relentlessly and soon began playing in a local band (Perkins 1921 & 1927; Bosworth n.d.(a)).

Bosworth's business interests were linked, in the beginning, to his music: 'When he was nine years old, he traded his cow and a calf for a cornet' (Sumrall 1995:38). This, according to Bosworth, was his 'first piece of salesmanship' and something of which he seemed proud (Bosworth n.d.(a):2). Soon after this experience, Bosworth's 'parents moved to University Place, a suburb of Lincoln, where [his] father kept a feed store' (Bosworth n.d.(a):2). Whilst still a child, Bosworth assisted his father in the store (Bosworth n.d.(a):2). A few years later, whilst in his teens, he and his brother took a job as travelling salesmen and set out to make their 'fortunes' (Bosworth n.d.(a):3). This was followed by another job in sales, in which he was successful. Whilst the data does not explicitly show that he set goals during his time in sales, because of the nature of the job this may be suggested in this instance. Bosworth went from job to job, but most of them required the use of some type of business skill. For this reason, one may conclude that his primary employment interest during his early years was business related.

Although it would be years before Bosworth showed an interest in preaching, the first spiritual step in that direction was his conversion at the age of 16 or 17 (Bosworth n.d.(a):3; Perkins 1921:24–25). His interest in divine healing was probably developed when he was healed of TB through the prayers of a female evangelist (Bosworth n.d.(a):5–6). Through this experience, he undoubtedly developed a strong conviction about healing through prayer. It is likely the first indication that he would have a future in praying for the sick. Later, whilst in his early twenties, Bosworth began reading *The Leaves of Healing* by John Alexander Dowie. His interest in healing and the ministry of Dowie prompted him to leave Fitzgerald and move to Zion City, a place that was known for divine healing (Perkins 1921:35–36). Whilst living in Zion City, Bosworth's interest in divine healing was further strengthened by his environment, which included thousands of people and many leaders who believed in divine healing (Hardesty 2003:51–53; Cook 1996). More on this will be seen in the 'choice' segment of this discussion that follows.

Choice

For Lent *et al.*, 'choice goals' is defined as 'the intention to engage in a particular action or series actions ...' (1994:94). In their comments on 'choice', Swanson and Fouad (1999) cite Lent *et al.* (1996) in noting:

... the process of making a career choice involves choosing a goal (e.g., becoming a scientist), taking action to implement that goal (completing courses in a biology major), and the subsequent consequences of those actions (successful graduation in biology).

(Lent *et al.* 1999:129)

Evidence for Bosworth's choosing music as a career goal can be seen in his practice, his passion and his willingness to seize opportunities that allowed him to showcase his talent:

Impatient to advance in his music, Fred procured a book for cornetists called Arban's method, the most advanced book-instruction obtainable. To the study of this carefully worked-out method, he applied himself with a devotion seldom

excelled by any youth in any pursuit. He helped in his father's store, and behind the counter when business was dull he was forever tooting away, mastering with accuracy and precision each lesson before attempting another, so that, in one winter, he had absorbed and incorporated as a part of himself Arban's knowledge of cornet-playing and had become a finished artist ...

(Perkins 1927:21)

This dedication to practice led to opportunities. Blomgren (1963:16) writes: 'He loved his music and the opportunity to play his cornet in local bands. He loved school somewhat less'. Bosworth eventually played a leading part in the Nebraska State Band. He also was frequently asked to perform for several literary societies near his home (Perkins 1927:21). Whilst living in Fitzgerald, Bosworth directed 'a large band, composed of two smaller bands which had united, because each wanted him for Director' (Perkins 1921:31). During the early 1900s, Bosworth's love for music led to a full-time position as band leader for Dowie in Zion City. Before his job as a band leader, Bosworth seemed destined to work in some capacity as a businessman or in a field in which he would use business-related skills, such as sales and marketing, customer service or administration. All of this changed, however, following a religious experience that resulted in his choice to become a preacher.

In October 1906, Bosworth received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Gardiner 1990:5–7, 334). At this time he also received his calling to be a minister of the Gospel. This experience, as noted previously, represents the 'revision' in his career path as suggested by Lent *et al.* (1994:81). It resulted in a career path in which music and business would take a backseat to preaching. At the same time, they would be interwoven in a vocation in which they would be used for a single religious cause. Instead of being only a musician or only a businessman, Bosworth became a preacher who incorporated his music and business skills into evangelistic healing campaigns. Based on the research data, it seems clear that his personality, background, predisposition and environment afforded him the means, the learning experience and opportunity to pursue the career path of a pastor and later, an evangelist in the healing ministry. His background as a travelling salesman and political campaigner prepared him for the work of a self-promoting minister and his support from the Pentecostal leaders in Zion City, Illinois and Dallas, Texas, prepared him for the spiritual aspects of his *chosen* career (Bosworth 1908; Gardiner 1990; Fockler c. 1925 Sumrall 1995; *The Fitzgerald Enterprise* 1900).

Performance

For Lent *et al.* 'performance' includes 'level of accomplishments (e.g., course grades) as well as indices of behavioral persistence (e.g., stability of academic major)' (1994:98). They suggest that performance attainments are partly affected by a person's goals, 'which help to mobilize and sustain task-relevant actions' (Lent *et al.* 1994:98). According to Swanson and Fouad, '[i]nterests (together with self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectancies) predict goals, which in turn lead to behaviors related to choosing and practicing activities, which then lead to performance attainments' (1999:127).

Having chosen a career as a minister, Bosworth set out to win the world and to minister to the sick in the process. His success began with single cases of sick people in homes and within small groups (Fockler c. 1925). This led to experiences that included larger meetings and more severe cases of sickness and disease (Perkins 1921 & 1927; Bosworth 1954a, 1954b, 1954c). In preaching, he began ministering to individuals and held small meetings. He eventually began preaching to thousands of people, using city-wide meetings, radio, a ministry magazine and books (Bosworth n.d.(a); Perkins 1921 & 1927; Bosworth 2000).

Evidence of Bosworth's performance can be seen in the progressive nature of his work, which grew in size, scope and notoriety. His aim and determination can be seen in his prayers and new ventures in ministry, beginning with his work as an evangelist in Indiana and Texas and later in his work of evangelism across the nation and in foreign countries. His sermon, *How to Have a Revival* (Bosworth n.d.(b); Perkins 1921), gives insight into his sense of faith and determination for succeeding in his type of ministry. He believed that prayer was essential to revival and that it should be carried out with persistence:

Nearly every one goes through a daily routine of prayer, but there is just one here and there who asks with his mind made up to prevail with God for the answer, and it is not real prayer until he is thus determined ... If it is right to pray for a revival, then it is wrong to stop praying until we know we are heard.

(Perkins 1921:179–180)

The concept of performance, or being goal-oriented, might also be seen in Bosworth's continuing labour to reach *more* people with his message. His determination is suggested by a number of sources, including an Addendum to an article on his life story:

There were two distinctive features of Mr. Bosworth's campaigns. First, he prayed until he knew it was God's will to go to a certain place. Second, having ascertained that fact, he determined to stay until there was a break-through and then to continue as long as God led him to do so ... Often there were no results at first, and the meetings seemed doomed to be a fiasco, but believing prayer and faithful preaching of the Word won the day.

With the coming of radio, Evangelist Bosworth saw the tremendous possibility of reaching even wider and vaster audiences. For fourteen years he conducted the National Radio Revival broadcast from a Chicago station.

(Bosworth 1981b:11–12)

Significance of findings

The findings in this article speak directly to a Christian audience. They are significant because of the insight they provide, however small, in understanding the development for ministry and the will of God. The findings provide examples and analysis of how the divine merges with the natural in preparing one for ministry. On a more specific level, in terms of audience, the findings hold significance for Pentecostals and Charismatics, who comprise 'the largest and most important Christian movement of this century'

(Synan 2001:1–2). The reason is that 'Bosworth is a very important figure' in Pentecostal history (Faupel 2008). The findings also are important to this audience because of their emphasis on divine healing. With this perspective in mind, the significance of this work is presented as follows.

Firstly, the findings suggested that self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goals can play a critical role in a person's ministry development and in understanding a subject from a historical perspective. Ministry is generally viewed as a vocation that requires a divine calling that is spiritual in nature. However, the research on Bosworth's life history suggests that other natural elements, particularly social cognitive factors, may be part of a person's divine calling. Secondly, the findings showed that SCCT can be a viable tool for shedding light on a subject who is both religious and historical. In this context, the article advanced aspects of SCCT by demonstrating its use beyond current applications, where it is used to help people determine their career paths. When used retroactively, SCCT can provide a better understanding of a subject's motivations, personality and social influences in his or her ministry development. Thirdly, this article was also the first known attempt at using the SCCT model to explore a topic in history. For the most part, '[r]esearch on social cognitive theory in career psychology ... has focused largely on the role of self-efficacy beliefs in vocational and academic interest, choice, and performance' (Lent *et al.* 1994:109). In short, this article provided knowledge that goes beyond career studies in a social science context.

Conclusion

As a result of these findings and the analysis of Bosworth's life history, there are several conclusions that may be reached about his ministry development. The first conclusion is that a person's development in the healing ministry may be linked to his or her childhood and early adulthood experiences. These experiences are critical whether they be positive or negative, solitary or corporate, religious or secular.

The second conclusion is that God may use a person's pre-conversion experiences as preparation for future ministry. This may be explained as follows: People have a natural bent or tendency toward a particular career endeavour. Consequently, they will do what comes naturally, depending on opportunities and circumstances. After a religious conversion, they may continue to do what comes naturally, but they will likely do it on a spiritual level and for a spiritual purpose. From the standpoint of Christianity, this would mean that God might use a person's natural abilities and experiences for his divine purpose. It may also be said that secular jobs and non-religious aspirations may be indicative of one's future calling. Certain aspects of the secular pursuits may be minimised after conversion (or spiritual calling), whilst some may be incorporated into the ministry. In this sense, secular experiences would be critical to a person's development and success in ministry. In Bosworth's case, his love of music and his business acumen pointed to a future

in entertainment and business. Following his Pentecostal experience, he began preaching and used both as part of his ministry.

The third conclusion is that all experiences in a person's life are critical to his or her development. However, some experiences may be more important than others. For instance, Bosworth's healing of TB proved to be a major turning point in his life. Additionally, it was after his Pentecostal experience that he became a preacher (Bosworth n.d.; Perkins 1921 & 1927). His work with William Branham also proved to be a life-changing experience that prompted him to modify his healing methods (Lindsay 1950; Stadskev 1952; Bosworth 1954a, 1954b & 1954c).

The fourth conclusion is that environment is a substantial factor in the development of a healing ministry. Although Bosworth had limited education, he apparently learned about the ministry and soon established his own through his association with people engaged in the ministry of healing. Whilst living in Zion City, he served God in an atmosphere that was saturated with the theme of divine healing. When Charles Parham came preaching about the baptism in the Holy Spirit, prayer meetings were held in Bosworth's home. Later, he worked with a number of other preachers, both men and women, who had healing ministries. These experiences afforded him an environment in which he could learn by example, receive on-the-job training and continue to grow as a healing evangelist.

Other thoughts on Bosworth

Given the nature of the research for this article and its conclusions with regard to the influences of Bosworth's secular experiences, including the environment of his early years, on his work as a minister, one may question the validity of his ministry. Specifically, one may ask: Was his ministry superficial? On a theological level, one could say that his ministry included teachings that were flawed and that they showed a lack of sound hermeneutics on some topics, as well as healing claims that could not always be verified. However, on a practical level, his work appeared to exhibit qualities of good leadership, integrity and sound business skills that resulted in a ministry that inspired many churches and thousands of people on an international scale. It would seem, then, that his ministry was not superficial. Instead, it had substance and was meaningful and quite productive, in some ways. Based on the research, it appeared that his ministry was credible, despite his influences, his lack of formal education and the controversy that followed him. This claim is suggested for several reasons.

Firstly, Bosworth's experiences seem to follow a biblical model. Some of the factors in his life that led to success were similar to the experiences of Moses and the Apostle Paul (Ex & Ac). The Scriptures indicate that after Moses and Paul had accepted their call to the ministry, they continued to use knowledge and skills from their secular (or pre-conversion) background. After entering the ministry, they used their

past experiences, including their knowledge and skills, for a spiritual purpose related to the things of God. Such was the case with Bosworth. One of the over-riding arguments in this study is the claim that a person's spiritual gifting or calling may be linked to his or her secular experiences. This would mean that a person in the ministry may draw on his or her past experiences in order to find success in a current religious endeavour. Although the past experiences may be secular and seemingly unrelated to ministry, it is believed that God may use the experiences, to one degree or another, as a training mechanism for a spiritual vocation.

Secondly, his work as a revivalist resulted in a number of churches being planted, including the First Assembly of God church in Dallas, Texas which remains to this day (Loftis 1992:7–10; Perkins 1927). During the late 1940s and 1950s, he served as a mentor to a number of widely known healing evangelists (Chappell 1988; Lindsay 1950; Simmons 1997). As a result of his teaching, many of the tent revivalists of that era began to emulate him as they reached out to thousands of people through revival meetings, books, and radio (Lindsay 1950, Simmons 1997, Weaver 2000; Harrell 1975).

Thirdly, his impact is attested by the longevity of his writings and the continual growth of the Word of Faith movement that follows his teachings on divine healing (Weaver 2000). For many years, Bosworth's book, *Christ the Healer* (1948) was required reading for ministers of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (King 2006:197). His book has also been used for many years by Rhema Bible Training Institute, the school founded by Kenneth Hagin, who was considered the father of the Word of Faith movement (Parkman 2004; Crowl 2004). Bosworth's writings continue to be cited by T.L. Osborn, who for decades has led an international ministry as a missionary-evangelist (Osborn 1949 & 1950).

Fourthly, his work as a Pentecostal pioneer is frequently cited in the literature. He is often depicted as playing a significant role in various parts of Pentecostal history (Anderson 2004; Alexander 2006; Blumhofer 1993; Hollenweger 1972; Synan 2003).

In spite of his flaws, personal crises and controversy, Bosworth left a legacy that many church groups continue to follow. From a spiritual standpoint, it may be said that he is an example of what God can accomplish through a person with imperfections, and limited resources.

Limitations

Despite the use of a thorough investigation of Bosworth's life history, the research for this article has a number of limitations. Firstly, it focused on a single individual in a single case study. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) note that a single case study has a major weakness: '... [W]e can't be sure that its results are generalizable to other situations' (2001:149). Vyhmeister (2001) holds a similar view: 'However, as case studies deal with individuals or small groups, they may not be representative of the total population. They do not lend

themselves to generalization' (2001:143). The study was also limited by its focus on history. Because the research topic was historical in nature, attempts to generalise its findings to a contemporary subject would be limited and even speculative, without further research. Another limitation is the application of SCCT. It is normally used in the context of social science and not in a theological (or spiritual) context that addresses one's faith. For this reason, it could not account for certain experiences in Bosworth's development. It should also be noted that SCCT typically involves face-to-face interactions with subjects and instruments used to analyse their responses. However, such engagement was not possible with this study.

Further research

Because of the narrow focus of this article, including its inherent weaknesses, subsequent research is recommended to support its claims on a broader scale. Future studies may extend this work by applying the SCCT model to multiple ministries. Such could be performed in both a historical and contemporary setting. Whereas the present study looked at a healing evangelist in a Pentecostal context, future investigations could examine evangelical ministers or others not affiliated with Pentecostalism. Future studies also may use the SCCT model to examine other forms of Christian ministry. These forms could include Christian writing, administration, music or art. Findings from such a study may confirm or disconfirm some of the claims made in this present study.

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