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MARITAL SEPARATION: A RELIGIOUS
LIFE CRISIS EVENT

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Ann Marie Scheerbaum

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M.A. degree in Psychology

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MARITAL SEPARATION: A RELIGIOUS
LIFE CRISIS EVENT

By

Ann Marie Scheerbaum

A THESIS

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

MARITAL SEPARATION: A RELIGIOUS LIFE CRISIS EVENT

By

Ann Marie Scheerbaum

This research investigated the impact of marital separation on individuals who were active members of a religious congregation. Adhering to traditional religious beliefs, viewing marriage as a sacrament, divorce as a sin, and denominations as disapproving of divorce were positively correlated with religious stress. Continued participation in church activities (called "religious adjustment") was positively correlated with religious support and approval of the separation by clergy and congregation. Religious opposition from clergy and congregation decreased religious adjustment. Traditional religious beliefs, closeness to clergy and congregation, and number and frequency of contact with friends were positively correlated with religious support. Marriage officiants gave less support and more opposition. Individuals who were likely to show skepticism towards traditional religious answers or who were initiators with children experienced greater opposition. Further research on mini-networks within global networks plus continued exploration of the impact of social opposition on life crisis events is indicated.

To my mother and father
Ann and Al Rosavage
with love

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INTRODUCTION

Marital Disruption as a Stressful Life Event

Recent research studies indicate that marital disruption (divorce and/or separation) is a highly stressful life process or event which increases the probability of psychological and physical disability (Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978). Stress is an abstract construct that requires explanation. As Rabkin and Struening (1976) stated, "Stress, like anxiety, is a broad and general concept describing the organism's reaction to environmental demands" (p. 1014). Hans Selye (1956), a pioneer in stress research, called it a "general adaptation syndrome" in which stress can be "good" stress (Eustress) or "bad" stress (Distress). "Stress," however, usually refers to Selye's concept of "distress" and can be defined as a condition in which there is a marked discrepancy between the demands made on an organism and the organism's capability to respond. When this occurs, stress can have serious implications for the future of the organism (Caplan, 1981). The reactions to stress are generally considered to be either physiological, such as rapid heart rate, trembling, etc., or psychological, such as nervousness, fear, anxiety, depression (Rabkin & Struening, 1976).

One way that stress can be measured is by examining personal life changes, such as bereavement, loss of a job or marriage, in fact anything which "alters the individual's social setting" (Rabkin & Struening, 1976). Holmes and Rahe (1969) further refined this definition by labeling social stressors as "any set of circumstances the

advent of which signifies or requires change in the individual's life pattern" (Holmes & Rahe as cited in Rabkin & Struening, 1976, p. 1014).

In a life event scale developed by Holmes and Rahe (1967), divorce is listed as the second most stressful life event, preceded only by death of a spouse. The effects of marital disruption cited by Bloom, Asher, and White (1978) include: Increased admissions to psychiatric facilities, higher probability of motor vehicle accidents, illness, alcoholism, and death by homicide, suicide, or malignant neoplasms. In addition, Vebrugge (1979) found that separated and divorced persons have the worst health status of all marital categories.

Evidence also suggests that the period of marital separation, prior to the divorce decree itself, is the most stressful time period (Albrecht, 1980; Chiriboga, Roberts, & Stein, 1978; Crosby, Gage, & Raymond, 1983; Weiss, 1975). During this period individuals go through several of the difficult stages that Bohannon (1970) has labeled the "stations of divorce." These are: Legal--the civil divorce; emotional--severing emotional ties with the marital partner; economic--dividing the wealth; co-parental--child custody; community--public acknowledgment that the marriage is over; and psychic--one's own acknowledgment that the marriage is ended. Another "station" that Bohannon omits, however, is spiritual/religious--acceptance or acknowledgment from the individual's religious community (religious congregation and clergy) that the marriage is ended. In addition, the spiritual/religious station also includes the separating individual's own willingness to accept the dissolution of the relationship when he/she views marriage as a religious ceremony, rite, or sacrament. Religious congregation, for the purpose of this paper, is defined as those individual's who belong to the same religious parish as

the separating individual. Clergy is defined as any minister or priest who is assigned to the individual's parish.

Marital Separation as a Stressful Spiritual Event

In view of the fact that, as of 1983, there were 131,000,000 church members in the United States (Pargement, Silverman, Johnson, Echemendia, & Snyder, 1983), it is highly likely that marital separation creates a spiritual/religious crisis for many of the approximately two million people (Spanier & Thompson, 1983) who are liable to experience marital disruption each year. Also, although church laws are becoming more lenient about divorce (Weiss, 1975); nevertheless, many Christians view marriage as a religious sacrament and, therefore, permanent. As Bernard (1981) states:

There is something very awesome about 'What God has put together let no man put asunder.' Churches have traditionally taken the stand that condoning divorce could be directly translated as being anti-family. As a result 'sin' has often been added to the other inherent burdens of divorce (p. 69).

According to Gerald Twomey, a Catholic priest and author of When Catholics Marry Again, ". . . the marriage of Christians is both a human reality and a sacred mystery, raised by Christ and His Church to the dignity of a sacrament" (p. 28). The issues of the permanence of marriage is not merely a Catholic one, however, for most Christians view divorce as a sin and contrary to the teachings of Christ, or at the very least less than God's ideal (Bustanoby, 1978; Carlozzi, 1984). The Jewish religion also views marriage as a religious rite and has a divorce ceremony in which the wife must participate if she is to have any "legitimate" children in any subsequent marriages (Weinglass, Kressel, & Deutsch, 1978). In point of fact, however, for clergy, "the best divorce is no divorce," and although most clergy accept that

divorce is often inevitable and even desirable, their first responsibility is to try and save the marriage (Kressel, Lopez-Morillas, Weinglass, & Deutsch, 1979; Weinglass et al., 1978).

Given all of the above information, the fact that marital separation is a stressful life event and a potentially stressful spiritual event seems to be well established. One can go a step further and state that all individuals who are active members of a religious congregation will experience at least some religious stress (worry over the religious/spiritual meaning of marriage; feel they are committing a sin, be concerned with their church's view of divorce, etc.). The severity of this religious stress, however, may be mediated or affected by other variables.

Social Networks as Sources of Support

One factor that is believed to act as a mediator or buffer between life stress and adjustment is social support (Cassel, 1974; Lefcourt, Martin, & Ebers, 1981). Cobb (1976) in his review of the literature on social support concluded that it has beneficial effects for such life events as pregnancy, hospitalization, employment termination, and bereavement. According to Gottlieb (1981), "Social support. . .is purported to be a key situational moderator of or buffer to the effects of psychosocial stressors on health" (p. 228). In this model, therefore, there should be "a significant interaction effect between stress and social support when psychological adjustment is the dependent variable" (Caldwell & Bloom, 1982, p. 649).

A second model of social support hypothesizes that social support has a direct effect on adjustment, which means that the more social support, the better the psychological adjustment. Support for this main effect model comes from studies by Andrews, Tennant, Hewson, and

Valliant (1978) as well as from research by Lin, Simeone, Ensel, and Kuo (1979).

Social support can take several forms. For example, Fiore, Beehan, and Coppel (1983) distinguish between emotional, cognitive, and tangible support. Emotional support consists of comforting expressions, both verbal and physical, to the individual; allowing the individual to express his/her feelings or concerns, and responding in a non-judgmental way to the situation and/or problem. Emotional support, therefore, implies an open, caring atmosphere in which the individual can freely express concerns without fear of judgement or condemnation.

Cognitive support consists of providing concrete information to help the individual understand the problem.

Tangible support consists of providing needed services such as financial aid, babysitting, or a place to live; that is, concrete behavioral services beyond role expectations.

In regard to marital disruption, however, Wilcox (1981) points out that,

while speculation regarding the role of social support in the process of coping. . .has been extensive, empirical research directly relevant to the question has been limited, with the bulk of the literature descriptive in nature (p. 101).

He goes on to state that, rather than drawing from empirical evidence, professionals rely on verbal reports from separated individuals indicating beneficial experiences with social support from friends, family, and others in their network (Weiss, 1975). These verbal reports, however, are consistent with research by Caldwell and Bloom (1982) who examined the impact of social support on the stress of marital disruption. They found that the most "dominant" dimension of social support during marital separation is the source or the group of

people involved. These groups are typically parents, relatives, siblings, and professional community support networks. Storm, Sheenan, and Sprenkle (1983), in a study of separated women's communication patterns, reported that most women (92%) appear to turn to other women for help with their decision to separate and over 80% of them continue to contact family and friends for support after the separation has occurred.

Social Networks as Sources of Stress

However, despite convincing evidence that social support acts as a buffer between life stress and adjustment, or that it has a direct effect on adjustment, there is also evidence that social networks can exacerbate stress and hinder successful adjustment. Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend (1981) suggest that "socially undesirable events may lead to rejection and stigmatization rather than support" (p. 19) and caution researchers to assess norms and expectations of network members when examining these networks as support systems. Barrera (1981) maintains that "major sources of support could also constitute major sources of strain" (p. 76) and indeed there is research that supports this theory. For example, Fiore et al. (1983) studied spouse caregivers of patients with Alzheimer's disease and found that "the extent of upset with the social network, either as a result of unmet expectations of support or of negative input from important others, was the best predictor of depression" (p. 433). Revenson, Wollman, and Felton (1983) in a study of adult cancer patients, report that respondents often found "support" from their network members increased their negative mood, decreased their autonomy and self-worth, and often constituted an additional source of stress. Walker, MacBride, and Vachon (1977) in a study of bereavement, found that widows' networks were often not supportive of

their need to develop personal identities as single women, and suggest that the "nature of the crisis" may dictate how supportive or stressful one's social network actually is.

Network members' attitudes and values about the life crises events of divorce and separation, therefore, may be crucial in determining not only the amount of support, if any, they can give, but also whether they themselves may be an additional source of stress. For example, Goode (1956) found that the disapproval of an individual's divorce by family and friends increases the stress of marital disruption. Research by Green (1983) showed that external pressure to remain married from work-mates and friends is negatively correlated with subsequent divorce adjustment. Weiss (1975) interviewed divorcing women who indicated they felt resentment towards parents because of their insistence on knowing all the details of the marital breakup. Tolsdorf (1981), in a study of the social networks of thirteen families in the process of divorce, found that network interaction can be "both supportive and destructive" especially because family and friends usually end up taking sides in the marital conflict.

It seems clear, therefore, that social networks can be either supportive, non-supportive, or stressful when individuals are in the throes of life crises, and that one variable which seems to determine how support systems react is the members' evaluation of the event itself as either acceptable or not acceptable. It is likely, therefore, that even though individuals may turn to their social networks for help during stressful life events, they may not receive support if their network disapproves of their behavior or action. It seems that the relationship of social support, social network, specific life event crises, and network members' attitude about that life crisis event needs

to be examined empirically so that we can get a better understanding of how social support can best be mobilized and utilized by individuals undergoing life stress.

Religious Congregations/Clergy as Support Systems

One potential source of both support and stress during marital separation is the individual's religious community (religious congregations and clergy). As stated above, it seems inevitable that, of the two million people who undergo marital disruption each year, a significant portion of them will be affected by the sixth station of divorce--spiritual/religious.

Although there is little concrete information in the research literature about reactions of the religious congregation to the marital separation of a member, clergy have stated that there is often a "subtle social rejection" from individuals with "traditional" backgrounds (Weinglass et al., 1978). In a letter to his Episcopal congregation, Carl Carlozzi (1984) condemns the prejudice of the parish family towards the divorcing couple:

As a priest, I see people who love their God and who for the whole host of reasons, are going through, or have been through, the hell of a marital breakup. And I see them coming into our body of believers and finding that because of some fellow worshippers, the pain of their hell is then intensified through judgments based on hearsay, innuendo, and facts which are simply not in evidence. This ought not to be so in parish families (p. 10).

That a religious congregation may be a source of stress is further evidenced by this comment from a man who recently attended a retreat for separated and divorced Catholics:

Last year when I saw this retreat house was offering a weekend retreat for separated and divorced Catholics, I said to my wife, 'What's wrong with those folks? Anyone can make a marriage work if they just try hard enough at it.' And now I stand before you a newly separated and badly hurting man. I'm so sorry that I judged you, and I'm afraid of the judgment of others (Twomey, 1982, p. ix).

A minister who runs divorce support groups also revealed that individuals often feel judgment and alienation from their religious congregation, or even if they do not receive overt condemnation, they may not receive aid or support in any way, either (Lacey, personal communication, September 20, 1984).

As stated earlier, most clergy initially feel obliged to try to save the marriage and often view divorce as a "necessary evil." Weinglass et al. (1978), in an exploratory survey of the role of clergy in marital disruption, point out that clergy may be hindered in their ability to be supportive due to restrictions placed on them by the official church dogma regarding divorce. One other problem that has not been addressed in the literature is the fact that if clergy performed the marriage ceremony they may find it difficult to reconcile their need for the marriage to be successful with the reality of its failure. Regardless of how it is manifested, therefore, it seems evident that clergy and religious congregation can have a profound impact on the religious experience of divorce.

Personal Religious Orientation

If clergy and religious congregation can have difficulty with the religious aspects of marital disruption so can separating individuals. Research suggests that individuals who have strong beliefs in the value of marriage will have more difficult adjustments to marital disruption (Goode, 1956; Spanier & Castro, 1979). Lewis and Spanier (1979)

speculate that one of the most significant variables that mediate between marriage and voluntary separation is religious doctrine and commitment.

Over the years, religious researchers have theorized about the various ways of being religious. The most popular conception has been Gordon Allport's distinction between extrinsic (immature) and intrinsic (mature) religious beliefs (1950). Batson and Ventis (1982) re-examined Allport's earlier writings on mature and immature religion and concluded that Allport was really describing mature religion as encompassing

two distinct and apparently independent orientations to religion--the end (intrinsic) orientation, which concerns degree of devout adherence to religious beliefs and practices, and the quest orientation, which concerns degree of open-ended, critical struggle with existential questions (p. 168-169).

Batson and Ventis further found that Allport's concept of immature religion was not

the polar opposite of either the end or quest orientation, but a third distinct and independent orientation--the means (extrinsic) orientation, which concerns the degree one uses religion as a means to other, self-serving ends (p. 169).

Finally, Batson and Ventis view means, ends, and quest as "three independent continuous dimensions, each uncorrelated with the other two" (p. 165). Thus, individuals can be viewed as "religious" in a three-dimensional framework since they will receive a score on all three continuums. High scores on specific continuums, however, can lead to different consequences. For example, Batson and Ventis postulate that adherence to religious beliefs can be restricting for those who use religion as a "means to an end" and can be both a source of freedom and a source of bondage for those who view religion as an "end in itself." They state:

For people who use their religion as an extrinsic means to self-serving ends, religion is likely to be perceived as an oppressive set of prescribed beliefs and behaviors. For them, it is restricting, a drag. But for people whose religion is an intrinsic end in itself, it is likely to be perceived as an important source of personal freedom. For them, it is a joy; it provides freedom from existential doubt and fear (e.g., fear of death), as well as from a variety of self-destructive behaviors (e.g., excessive drinking and lust). But the freedom obtained by the devout, intrinsic believer is obtained at a price: it is freedom with bondage, bondage to the belief system itself (p. 205).

Finally, Batson and Ventis maintain that

the dual emphasis with the Quest orientation on skepticism toward traditional answers and critical reflection on 'religious questions' [is] not. . .likely to produce either liberation from existential fear and doubt or the dramatic behavioral changes that the devout, intrinsic believer enjoys (pp. 207-208).

However, they believe that, although individuals with a quest orientation toward religion will not see religion as necessarily restricting or freeing, they may exhibit a "reduced readiness" to bind themselves to their current religious beliefs.

Two studies of these theories (Batson, 1980; Batson, Duncan, Levy, Major, & Miller, 1980), although far from conclusive, have indicated that the above hypotheses are reasonable, and suggest that further research on means, end, and quest would help in our attempt to understand how different religious orientations affect the lives of individuals. Individuals who are going through a "religious taboo" such as marital separation or divorce may experience different degrees of religious stress depending on whether they score higher on means, end, or quest.

For example, Batson and Ventis maintain that higher scores on the intrinsic end orientation may lead to "absolutistic and uncritical

reliance on traditional, orthodox doctrine and practices" (p. 169), which could conceivably increase the religious stress of marital separation; whereas, higher scores on the "quest" orientation may indicate a reduction in absolutistic thinking and an increase in flexibility regarding religious questions or issues and reduce the religious stress of marital separation. Finally, a high score on religion as a "means" could indicate that the individual will experience more religious stress by opposition or loss of support from the religious congregation or clergy.

Other Mediating Variables

In order to accurately assess the impact of personal religious orientation and social support from church and/or clergy on religious adjustment to marital separation, it is important to obtain some additional information about the separating individual. Other important variables are:

- 1) Gender: In a review of four studies examining gender differences in pre- and post-separating men and women, Bloom and Caldwell (1981) found that, prior to separation, women reported more severe psychological symptoms than did men; however, during the early post-separation period, men reported significantly more severe symptoms than did women. Also, results of a study by Astor-Dubin and Hammen (1984) indicate that women show a greater inclination to seek help from others in coping with depression; whereas, men employ more cognitive strategies such as intellectualized detachment, using self-statements like "I thought that if I start focusing on other more positive things I'd feel better" (p. 87).

2) Initiator versus non-initiator: Several researchers have reported that separation or divorce is less stressful for the person who initiates it, even if there are not overwhelming differences in marital dissatisfaction or pre-separation discomfort between initiators and non-initiators. In addition, in most cases where being the initiators appears to play a mediating role in post-separation adjustment, its effects are greater for women than for men (Pettit & Bloom, 1984). It may be, therefore, that the impact of initiator status on the stress of marital disruption is confounded by gender. In the case of the religious divorcing individual, the situation may be further confounded by the possibility that an initiator may receive more judgmental attitudes from the religious congregation and clergy who view marital dissolution as contrary to their religious beliefs.

3) Children: Adjustment to marital disruption has been found to be more difficult for individuals with children (Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1976). This appears to be greater for women than for men. In fact, research evidence suggests that more men than women are likely to be helped with child care problems, and that, therefore, single fathers have an easier time of it than single mothers (Bandwein, Brown, & Fox, 1974; Hetherington et al., 1976; Ferri, 1973). In terms of the religious separating individual, the presence of children may adversely affect the amount of religious social support for the initiator and positively affect the amount of religious social support for the non-initiator. It seems likely that the religious congregation and clergy will be less judgmental of the person who has children and has been forced, so to speak, into disrupting the family unit, and more judgmental of the one who "breaks up" the family.

4) Religious affiliation: In a study of life crisis among the religiously committed, Ebaugh, Richman, and Chafetz (1984) found that sectarian differences exert a consistent effect regardless of member characteristics, on reactions to crises. Therefore, sects which traditionally are viewed as opposed to divorce or have strict rather than liberal views are liable to increase the religious stress of marital separation.

Other demographic variables that need to be included are length of time in the congregation, amount of congregational involvement prior to separation, number, importance, and frequency of contact with friends in the congregation, and whether the clergy married the couple. In addition, the individual's previous relationship with the clergy, and religious divorce attitude (i.e., their view of divorce as a religious/spiritual event) prior to separation need to be assessed.

Hypotheses

In light of the above literature review on social support, personal religious orientation, the stress associated with marital separation, and, in particular, the religious aspects of marital disruption and the religious stress that can occur, the following hypotheses are postulated:

- 1) There will be a negative correlation between religious stress associated with marital separation and religious adjustment to marital separation.
- 2) a. Religious social support from the religious congregation will have a direct effect on religious adjustment to marital separation. There will be a positive correlation between congregation social support and religious adjustment.

- b. Religious social support from the clergy will have a direct effect on religious adjustment to marital separation. There will be a positive correlation between clergy social support and religious adjustment.
 - c. Religious social support from the religious congregation will mediate the effect of religious stress on religious adjustment. Congregation social support, therefore, through its interaction with religious stress will have an indirect effect on religious adjustment to marital separation.
 - d. Religious social support from clergy will mediate the effect of religious stress on religious adjustment. Clergy social support, therefore, through its interaction with religious stress will have an indirect effect on religious adjustment to marital separation.
3. a. Religious opposition from the religious congregation will increase religious stress. There will be a positive correlation between religious opposition from the religious congregation and religious stress.
- b. Religious opposition from clergy will increase religious stress. There will be a positive correlation between religious opposition from clergy and religious stress.
4. Personal religious orientation will affect the religious stress of marital separation in the following manner:
- a. Scores on religion "as an end" will have a positive correlation with religious stress.
 - b. Scores on religion as a "quest" will have a negative correlation with religious stress.
 - c. Scores on religion as a "means to an end" will interact with religious opposition and its effect on religious stress. The

higher the score on "means" the greater stress associated with religious opposition.

5. Women will experience greater religious stress due to low religious social support than men. There will be an interaction between low social support, gender, and religious stress.
6. There will be an interaction between the presence of children and initiator status. The presence of children will decrease social support for the initiator.
7. Religious stress will be affected by the following other variables:
 - a. The individual's perception of the church's stance on divorce.
 - b. The individual's perception of divorce as a sin.
 - c. The individual's previous relationship with clergy and religious congregation.
 - d. The individual's personal religious divorce attitude.
 - e. Initiator or non-initiator status.
 - f. The presence of children.
 - g. The amount of involvement in church related activities.
 - h. Traditional or nontraditional religious affiliation.
 - i. The individual's perception of marriage as a religious rite or sacrament.
8. Religious social support during marital separation will be affected by the following variables:
 - a. Divorce attitude on the part of clergy.
 - b. Divorce attitude on the part of the religious congregation.
 - c. Marriage performed by clergy of congregation.
 - d. Number of close friends in the congregation.
 - e. The frequency of contact with friends in the religious congregation.

- f. The amount of time the individual has been a member of the religious congregation.
 - g. Gender of the separating individual.
 - h. Clergy's perception of divorce as a sin.
 - i. Religious congregation's perception of divorce as a sin.
9. Religious opposition will be affected by the following variables:
- a. Divorce attitude on the part of clergy.
 - b. Divorce attitude on the part of the religious congregation.
 - c. Religious congregation's perception of divorce as a sin.
 - d. Clergy's perception of divorce as a sin.

METHOD

Subjects/Procedures

Seventy-one individuals, 53 females and 18 males, returned completed questionnaires. These subjects were all members of a Christian congregation at the time of marital separation and had been separated at least six months. The mean time of separation was 33 months, with a range of 6 months to 96 months. All but six of the respondents had children with the mean 2.4 and the range 0 to 8.

Only Christian congregations were asked to participate because the Batson and Ventis orthodoxy subscale (Batson & Ventis, 1982) was developed only for Christian denominations and would, therefore, not apply to non-Christian denominations.

Subjects were recruited through the ministers of churches in the Greater Lansing and Jackson areas. Letters were sent to 38 ministers (see Appendix A) asking them to contact those individuals in their congregations who had been separated from their spouse while a member of a Christian denomination. A brief explanation of the research was included in the initial letter.

Approximately one week after mailing the letters, follow-up phone calls were made and a more detailed explanation of the purpose of the research was given if the minister desired additional information. One concern expressed by the majority of ministers was the preservation of anonymity for their parishioners. It was explained to them that the packet contained a stamped self-addressed envelop which the subject

would use to mail in the results. In addition, there was no requirement for names or addresses. Finally, the minister, church office, or church bulletin were the avenues of obtaining volunteers, therefore the researcher would have no need or way to obtain names of individuals. Upon receipt of this information, all but one minister agreed to assist in obtaining subjects, although six churches discovered they had no one that met the criteria and did not accept any packets. Two ministers invited the researcher to present the project to divorce support groups that met in their churches.

The researcher also offered to meet with the ministers, explain the research more fully and/or show them the questionnaires. Eight ministers stated an interest in a face to face interview and subsequently met and talked with the researcher prior to accepting any questionnaires.

Two hundred and twenty nine questionnaires were distributed to the 29 churches and the two support groups. One hundred forty (61%) were either picked up from the church office by separated individuals in the congregation or were mailed to them by clergy. Of these 140, 71 completed questionnaires were returned to the researcher giving a response rate of 51% (see Appendix C for number of packets delivered to each denomination). Included in the packet of questionnaires was a letter to the potential subject briefly explaining the research (see Appendix A).

All 71 subjects filled out the Marital Separation Questionnaire and the Religious Life Inventory (minus one or two questions from a small number of subjects). Sixty-one subjects filled out the Social Support Questionnaire and 39 subjects filled out the Religious Opposition

Questionnaire. Implications of the response rate, especially to the Religious Opposition Scale, will be explained in the Discussion.

Seventeen Christian denominations were represented in the sample (see Appendix C). These denominations were combined into three groups: Mainline Protestant (e.g., Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran); Liberal Protestant (e.g., United Church of Christ, Congregational); and Traditional (e.g., Catholic, Mormon). "Traditional" referred to a strict view of the unacceptability of divorce (see Table 1).

Table 1
Religious Groups

	Mainline Protestants	Liberal Protestants	Traditional
n	43	15	12
Percentage	61	22	17

Measures

Marital Separation Questionnaire (developed by the investigator). This questionnaire consisted of 48 questions including yes-no response items, Likert Scale items, and request for demographic data. Specific questions focused on pre-separation and current involvement in church-related activities, relationship with clergy and congregation, as well as personal attitudes towards such issues as divorce, sin, and the sacrament of marriage (see Appendix B).

Two subscales were developed from this questionnaire: The Religious Stress Subscale and the Religious Adjustment Subscale.

The Religious Stress Subscale consisted of items 25 through 29 on the Marital Separation Questionnaire (see Appendix B). Scores were averaged: Potential range was 0 to 3, actual range was 0 to 2.4, the mean was .83, and the coefficient alpha was .82.

The Religious Adjustment Subscale consisted of items 30, 32 through 36, 39 through 42, and 44 of the Marital Separation Scale. Scores were averaged: Potential range was 0 to 5, actual range was 2.3 to 5.0, the mean was 4.0, and the coefficient alpha was .62.

Religious Life Inventory (RLI) (Batson & Ventis, 1982) (see Appendix B). This scale measures whether individuals view their religion as a means to an end, an end in itself, or a quest. This scale does not type individuals into one of the three categories; rather, it shows the degree to which each individual may be categorized on all three dimensions. All three factors, therefore, are independent of each other.

The scale was developed by combining Allport and Ross's (1967) Extrinsic and Intrinsic Scale with four new scales labeled "External," "Internal," "Interactional," and "Orthodoxy." Factor analysis produced three independent factors which Batson and Ventis labeled "Religion as a Means, Religion as an End, and Religion as a Quest." Once the relationship between the scales and the underlying factors was determined, Batson and Ventis computed an individual's score on each of the three factors relative to other individuals. Thus, they have developed an empirical measure of the degree to which an individual orients towards religion in each of the three ways, as a means, end, and quest (1982, pp. 157-158). Batson and Ventis carried out their factor analysis using a principal component analysis with orthogonal rotation,

thus they are confident that all three factors are independent of one another.

Coefficient alphas for the six subscales were as follows:

Interactional = .50, External = .54, Extrinsic = .78, Intrinsic = .78, Internal = .84, Orthodoxy = .93.

Means, End, and Quest were computed by obtaining a Standard Score (SS) for all six subscales and then using the following formulas:

$$\text{Means} = (.9 \times \text{SS Extrinsic}) + (-.2 \times \text{SS Intrinsic}) + (.3 \times \text{SS External})$$

$$\text{End} = (.3 \times \text{SS Intrinsic}) + (.3 \times \text{SS External}) + (.3 \times \text{SS Internal}) + (.3 \times \text{SS Orthodoxy})$$

$$\text{Quest} = (.9 \times \text{SS Interactional}) + (-.2 \times \text{SS Orthodoxy})$$

See Table 2 for the mean, standard deviation, and range of the three religious orientations. See Table 3 for the correlational analyses of all three scales with each other.

Religious Support/Religious Opposition Questionnaire (developed by this author adopted from Fiore et al., 1983) (see Appendix B). Subjects were asked to fill out two lists composed of clergy and up to 10 individuals per list from their religious congregation that they knew personally prior to marital separation. They were asked to record frequency of contact prior to separation and degree of closeness to the individual. Using a Likert Scale, subjects rated each individual on frequency of emotional, cognitive (biased or unbiased), and tangible religious opposition and support. The average amount of support and opposition was computed by dividing the total amount of each item by the number of clergy or congregation members listed. See Table 4 for the means, standard deviations, and ranges of these computed variables.

Table 2
Personal Religious Orientation

n=71	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Means	.01	.98	-2.6 to 2.2
End	-.02	.95	-2.1 to 1.8
Quest	.02	1.0	-3.0 to 2.7

Table 3
Pearson Product Moment Correlational Analysis
of Means, End, and Quest

n=71	Means	End	Quest
Means		-.32**	.21*
End	-.32**		-.31**
Quest	.21*	-.31**	

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 4
Average Religious Social Support and Opposition

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mode	Range
<u>Religious Social Support</u>				
<u>n=50</u>				
		Clergy		
Emotional	3.6	1.4	5.0	0-5
Cognitive	3.0	1.7	5.0	0-5
Tangible	1.8	1.8	0.0	0-5
<u>n=57</u>				
		Congregation		
Emotional	3.2	1.2	5.0	0.8-5
Cognitive	2.1	1.5	0.0	0.0-5
Tangible	2.3	1.5	1.0	0.0-5
<u>Religious Opposition</u>				
<u>n=29</u>				
		Clergy		
Emotional	.66	1.0	0	0-4
Cognitive	.59	1.1	0	0-5
Removal of Tangible Aid	.57	1.3	0	0-5
<u>n=33</u>				
		Congregation		
Emotional	.93	1.1	0	0-4
Cognitive	.65	0.8	0	0-2
Removal of Tangible Aid	.68	1.1	0	0-3

Code: Likert Scale

0 = never

1 = sometimes

3 = often

5 = almost always

RESULTS

Religious Stress and Religious Adjustment

It was hypothesized that religious stress would be negatively correlated with religious adjustment. Pearson Product Moment Correlational analysis demonstrated that these two subscales were unrelated ($r = .03$; $p < .38$). Possible reasons for this essentially zero correlation will be explored in the discussion section.

Religious Support and Religious Adjustment

It was hypothesized that religious support would increase religious adjustment. The relationship between religious adjustment and religious social support from congregation and clergy was measured using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (see Table 5). The correlations of cognitive and tangible support with religious adjustment were not significant for congregation or clergy support; however, religious emotional support from both clergy and congregation was significantly correlated with religious adjustment.

Religious Support, Stress, and Adjustment

It was hypothesized that religious support would mediate the effect of religious stress on religious adjustment. Given the fact that there was no correlation between religious stress and religious adjustment, this hypothesis was only tested for the support variables that were significantly correlated with either religious stress or religious adjustment. These two variables were: Emotional support from

Table 5

Pearson Product Moment Correlational Analyses of Religious
Support and Religious Adjustment

	Congregation (n=56) r	Clergy (n=49) r
Emotional	.37**	.25*
Cognitive	.02	.04
Tangible	.03	-.02

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

clergy and from congregation. Multiple regression analyses was run using these two factors with religious stress and an interaction term to predict religious adjustment. Results indicated that the interaction of religious stress with religious emotional support had no effect on religious adjustment.

Religious Opposition and Religious Stress

It was hypothesized that religious opposition would increase religious stress. The relationship between religious stress and religious opposition from clergy and congregation was analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The correlations of emotional and tangible opposition from clergy and congregation with religious stress were not significant; however, cognitive opposition did increase religious stress if it was from congregation ($r = .35$; $p < .01$) but not if it was from clergy (see Table 6). Additional analysis

revealed no significant relationship between amount of religious support and religious stress (see Table 6).

Table 6

Pearson Product Moment Correlational Analyses of Religious Support, Religious Opposition, and Religious Stress

	Congregation	Clergy
	r	r
	<u>Opposition</u>	
	(n=33)	(n=29)
Emotional	.02	.09
Cognitive	.35*	.12
Tangible	.07	-.03
	<u>Support</u>	
	(n=57)	(n=50)
Emotional	-.08	.09
Cognitive	-.06	.18
Tangible	-.07	.07

* $p < .05$.

Personal Religious Orientation and Its Effects

It was hypothesized that an individual's personal religious orientation would affect the amount of religious stress associated with marital separation. Results of Pearson Product Moment Correlational analysis can be found in Table 7. Scores on religion as a "means" and as a "quest" had no relationship with religious stress. Religion as an end; however, was positively correlated with religious stress.

Table 7

Pearson Product Moment Correlational Analysis of Personal Religious Orientation and Religious Stress (n=71)

	r
Means	.06
End	.28*
Quest	.03

* $p < .01$.

It was also hypothesized that scores on religion as a "means" would interact with religious opposition and its effect on religious stress. Given the fact that correlations between "means" and stress and between "means" and opposition were not significant, this hypothesis was not testable. Additional analysis of the relationship between religious orientation and religious support and opposition revealed a significant positive correlation between religion as an end and emotional and tangible support from clergy. There was also a significant correlation between "end" and cognitive support from congregation (see Table 8),

scores on "quest" were significantly correlated with emotional, cognitive, and tangible opposition from congregation and tangible opposition from clergy (see Table 9). Finally, an individual's perception of clergy warmth and friendliness immediately after marital separation was positively correlated with religion as an "end" and

Table 8

Pearson Product Moment Correlational Analysis of Religious Support and Personal Religious Orientation

	Emotional r	Cognitive r	Tangible r
Clergy (n=50)			
Means	.10	-.06	-.05
End	.24*	.22	.38**
Quest	-.11	.09	-.07
Congregation (n=57)			
Means	-.15	-.18	-.05
End	.16	.27*	.08
Quest	.04	.20	.28*

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 9

Pearson Product Moment Correlational Analysis of
Religious Opposition and Personal Religious Orientation

	Emotional r	Cognitive r	Tangible r
Clergy (n=39)			
Means	.12	-.01	.07
End	.09	.26	.08
Quest	.29	.09	.31*
Congregation (n=33)			
Means	.03	-.06	-.08
End	.19	.24	.03
Quest	.32*	.32*	.36*

* $p < .05$.

negatively correlated with religion as a "means" (see Table 10).

Congregation warmth and friendliness was not significantly correlated with religious orientation.

Gender, Religious Stress, and Religious Support

It was hypothesized that there would be an interaction between religious support, gender, and religious stress. Point biserial correlational analysis revealed no significant relationship between gender and either religious stress or religious support; therefore, this hypothesis was not testable.

Table 10

Pearson Product Moment Correlational Analysis of
Personal Religious Orientation and Warmth and Friendliness
of Clergy and Congregation after Marital Separation

	Clergy (n=68) r	Congregation (n=67) r
Means	-.22*	-.04
End	.21*	.07
Quest	-.05	.14

* $p < .05$.

Initiator Status, Children, Religious Support,
and Religious Opposition

It was hypothesized that initiators with children would experience less support from clergy or congregation than non-initiators with children. Individuals who stated that marital separation was "mutual" or that they alone initiated separation were combined to form two groups, initiators with children ($n = 40$) and non-initiators with children ($n = 25$). Given the fact that only four subjects without children were initiators of separation and only two subjects without children were non-initiators, no analysis was done on these two groups due to the small number of subjects per cell. Point Biserial Correlational analysis revealed no significant relationship between initiators with children and amount of religious support (see Table 13); however, additional analyses of religious opposition and initiators with children revealed that emotional opposition from clergy and congregation as well as tangible opposition from clergy were significantly correlated with

initiators who had children (see Table 14). It should be noted, nonetheless, that point biserial correlational analyses of initiator status by itself with religious support and opposition showed the same results as above. (see Tables 13 and 14).

Religious Stress and Its Determinants

Individuals' perceptions of their denomination's stance on divorce, their own perception of the acceptability of divorce, whether they thought divorce was a sin, and whether they viewed marriage as a religious sacrament were positively correlated with religious stress. Additional analysis revealed that individuals who perceived their clergy or congregation as trying to stop their separation experienced greater religious stress than those who saw their clergy or congregation as not trying to stop their separation. Also the warmer and friendlier congregation members were after separation, the less religious stress was felt, although warmth and friendliness of clergy was not correlated with religious stress. Relationship with clergy and congregation prior to separation, amount of time per month spent on church activities, initiator status and religious affiliation were not related to religious stress (see Tables 11 and 12).

Religious Social Support and Its Determinants

Number of friends immediately prior to separation was significantly correlated with emotional support from clergy and with tangible support from clergy and congregation. Frequency of contact with friends was significantly correlated with tangible support from congregation. Additional analysis revealed that closeness with clergy was positively

correlated with emotional, cognitive, and tangible support from clergy; closeness with congregation was positively correlated with emotional and tangible support from congregation (see Table 13).

Twenty (28%) individuals stated their minister at the time of separation had also married them; 51 (72%) individuals were not married by their minister at the time of separation. Individuals whose minister married them received less emotional, cognitive, and tangible support from their clergy than those individuals whose ministers at the time of separation had not married them (see Table 13).

Approval or disapproval of divorce in general by clergy or congregation (except for tangible support from congregation), whether clergy or congregation viewed divorce as a sin, gender, and the amount of time individuals were members of the congregation were not correlated with religious support (see Table 13).

Additional analysis revealed that emotional, cognitive, and tangible support from clergy but not from congregation were significantly correlated with how warm and friendly the individual perceived them to be after the marital separation (see Table 13).

Table 11

Pearson Product Moment and Point Biserial Correlational
Analysis of Religious Stress and Its Determinants

	n	r
Individual's view of marriage as a sacrament	71	.39**
Relationship with clergy prior to separation	70	-.01
Relationship with congregation prior to separation	71	-.09
Amount of time per month spent on church activities	70	.08
Clergy attempt to stop separation	71	.27**
Congregation attempt to stop separation	71	.40**
Warmth and friendliness of congregation after separation	67	-.37**
Warmth and friendliness of clergy after separation	68	-.09
Individual's view of divorce as a sin	70	.47**
Individual's perception of church's official view of acceptability of divorce	69	-.37**
Individual's personal view of the acceptability of divorce	65	-.38**
Initiator status	71	-.09

** $p < .01$.

Table 12

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Religious
Affiliation and Religious Stress

Religious Affiliation	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Mainline Protestant	43	.74	.60
Non-mainline Protestant	15	.70	.66
Traditional	12	1.13	.63

$F(2, 67) = 2.09. \quad p < .13.$

Religious Opposition and Its Determinants

Approval or disapproval of divorce in general by clergy or congregation and whether clergy or congregation viewed divorce as a sin were not correlated with religious opposition. Additional analysis revealed that those individuals whose clergy at the time of separation were the same ones who married them received more cognitive opposition from clergy than those whose clergy had not married them (see Table 14).

Additional Determinants of Religious Adjustment

Additional analysis revealed that emotional and tangible opposition from clergy and congregation were negatively correlated with religious adjustment. However, only cognitive opposition, from congregation was correlated negatively with religious adjustment. Also, approval by congregation of an individual's separation was positively correlated with religious adjustment as was an individual's perceptions of clergy or congregation warmth and friendliness immediately following the marital separation (see Table 15).

Table 13

Pearson Product Moment and Point Biserial Correlational Analysis
of Religious Support and Its Determinants

	Clergy				Congregation			
	n	Emotional r	Cognitive r	Tangible r	n	Emotional r	Cognitive r	Tangible r
Gender	50	.08	.04	.07	57	.01	.04	.01
Length of time member of congregation	50	.09	-.16	.01	57	.01	-.15	.07
Initiator of Separation	50	-.05	-.04	-.10	57	-.12	.02	-.15
Initiator with children	44	-.08	-.13	-.11	51	-.08	-.06	-.19
Number of friends	48	.38**	.05	.30*	56	.04	.11	.34**
Frequency of contact with friends	50	.05	-.02	.15	57	.21	.19	.47**
(table continues)								

(table continues)

	Clergy				Congregation			
	n	Emotional r	Cognitive r	Tangible r	n	Emotional r	Cognitive r	Tangible r
Closeness to congregation or clergy	48	.55**	.37**	.42**	56	.45**	.11	.34**
Approval of divorce in general	44	-.01	.04	-.05	51	.07	.13	.27*
View of divorce as a sin	33	-.25	-.21	-.17	36	.22	.02	.09
Warmth and friendliness after separation	50	.47**	.23*	.24*	55	.19	.18	.15
Clergy at separation married couple	50	-.35**	-.25*	-.25**	-	-	-	-

* $p < .05$.** $p < .01$.

Table 14
Pearson Product Moment Correlational Analysis of Religious
Opposition and Its Determinants

	n	Clergy		n	Congregation	
		Emotional	Cognitive		Emotional	Tangible
Approval of divorce in general	23	.29	.31	30	.17	.28
View divorce as a sin	20	.03	.17	20	.19	.26
Marriage officiant was clergy at time of separation	29	-.01	.32*	-	-	-
Initiator	29	.32*	.02	33	.34*	.13
Initiator with children	26	.35*	.06	30	.36*	.10

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 15

Pearson Product Moment and Point Biserial Correlational
Analysis of Religious Adjustment and Its Determinants

	Clergy		Congregation	
	n	r	n	r
Approval of individual's divorce	63	.26*	64	.50**
Warmth and friendliness after separation	67	.37**	66	.25*
Emotional opposition	29	-.55**	33	-.49**
Cognitive opposition	29	-.18	33	-.48**
Tangible opposition	29	-.65**	33	-.48**

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to examine the impact of marital separation on individuals who, because of their active involvement in a religious congregation, would be likely to view this life crisis event as a spiritual crisis as well. It was hypothesized that personal religious beliefs and worry about the religious aspects of separation (religious stress) would affect continued participation in church activities, importance of church friends, etc. (religious adjustment). In addition, religious support and opposition from clergy and congregation would have significant impact on religious stress and religious adjustment. Finally, religious support and opposition would be influenced by the attitudes of the clergy and congregation towards the separated individual and to marriage and divorce in general.

Religious Stress and Religious Adjustment

The most unexpected finding of this research is the lack of correlation between religious stress and religious adjustment. There are several possible explanations: First, the two scales emphasize different experiences. Religious stress measures thoughts and feelings about the religious aspects of separation (e.g., "When you first became separated from your spouse, how often did you worry over the religious/spiritual meaning of marriage?"); whereas, religious adjustment measures participation in church related activities,

continued membership in a pre-marital separation congregation, and relationships with clergy and congregation. In other words, religious stress involves intrapersonal issues while religious adjustment involves interpersonal and group activities.

Although a negative correlation between religious stress and religious adjustment was anticipated, in view of the fact that respondents attributed both increased and decreased participation in church activities to their separation, it seems that continued network interaction is not related to marital separation in a straightforward manner. Membership and activity in a church group may not be an adequate measure of adjustment for individuals who continue to remain active in a religious congregation.

Another important consideration is that all participants were members of a congregation at the time they filled out the questionnaires; consequently, they do not fully represent separated individuals who experience religious stress over marital separation. It is possible that individuals who are no longer members of a religious congregation left because of unresolved feelings about the religious aspects of separation or because of negative interpersonal experiences within their congregations.

In addition, it is important to keep in mind that social desirability is a drawback of the questionnaire method of research (Kidder, 1981). Given that items on the religious adjustment scale ask about present relationships with church, clergy, and congregation, it is possible that respondents, in an effort to present their church in a positive light, were generous in their responses to these questions. Self report bias could be important in all the results of this project, especially considering that most subjects learned about this research

from their clergy, and could, therefore, represent the more satisfied church goer. On the other hand, several clergy informed the researcher that they were contacting individuals who had not been satisfied with the church's response to their separation. Some churches put notices in bulletins or newsletters rather than contact specific individuals.

Also, an advantage of the questionnaire method is that respondents have greater assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. Thus, they may feel freer to express negative views or reactions (Kidder, 1981). In this case, because respondents were not asked any identifying information and all answers were kept confidential, clergy need never know their responses unless individuals choose to share this information.

Finally, largely due to the essentially zero correlation between religious stress and religious adjustment, no buffering effect of religious support was found. Previous research, which demonstrated that social support, through its impact on stress, affected adjustment (e.g., Caldwell & Bloom, 1982; Wilcox, 1981) primarily measured adjustment in psychological (i.e., anxiety, depression), or health related terms. "Behavior" was defined in terms of symptoms, life satisfaction, or feelings of well-being, not in terms of activity in group function or closeness to friends within the social network. Future research on social networks needs to focus on intrapersonal and interpersonal measures of adjustment.

Determinants of Religious Support

Religious support from both clergy and congregation was found to be affected by several factors. The closer subjects were to clergy prior to separation, the more emotional, cognitive, and tangible support they received. It may be that these subjects simply came in contact with

their clergy more often prior to separation or that a bond of friendship existed between them. Interestingly, although closeness to congregation was also positively correlated with emotional and tangible support, there was no significant relationship between closeness to congregation and cognitive support. Cognitive support supplies concrete information regarding the church's view on marriage and divorce; therefore, congregation members may feel less need to provide this type of support to close friends believing it will be provided by clergy. In addition, the separating individual may not seek out this information from other congregation members.

Number of friends was positively correlated with tangible support from both clergy and congregation. Frequency of contact with friends and tangible support from congregation were also positively correlated. Although Monroe, Imhoff, Wise, and Harris (1983) found a relationship between number of friends and amount of support, other research found no effects (e.g., Husaini, Neff, Newbrough, & Moore, 1982; Thoits, 1982). It must be kept in mind, however, that the bulk of research on social support has examined the entire network; whereas the present research is looking at one specific subset of an individual's network. The people in this mini network are assumed to share similar religious beliefs with the separating individual. It may be that some individuals are more active practitioners of their faith, naturally have more friends within the congregation, and also see them more frequently, while others are less active in the group activities within the church and consequently have less friends. This apparently is unrelated to the length of time the individuals are members of the congregation which was not correlated with support from either clergy or congregation.

Warmth and friendliness from clergy after separation was positively correlated with emotional, cognitive, and tangible support from clergy; however, this factor was unrelated to all three types of support from congregation. This result is somewhat difficult to interpret. Perhaps because the item did not refer to friends in the congregation, but rather to all the members, what we are seeing is that fellow church members may say "hello" in a warm and friendly manner to each other but not engage in any sort of intimate conversation. Thus, the separated individual may perceive warmth and even "friendliness" but not relate in-depth to many of the other members of the congregation. On the other hand, clergy are more apt to counsel the separated couple as part of their ministry (Weinglass et al., 1978), therefore, those clergy who give more support may be perceived as warmer and those who offer less support may be perceived as colder and less friendly due to the disappointment individuals feel who get little religious support from their spiritual advisor.

Religion as an end was positively correlated with emotional and tangible support from clergy and cognitive support from congregation. Also, religion as a quest was positively correlated with tangible support from congregation. According to Batson and Ventis (1982), the end orientation "...concerns degree of devout adherence to religious beliefs and practices" (p. 168); therefore, clergy may view these individuals as deeply concerned about the religious aspects of separation and more in need of comforting words such as "You are still a good Christian." Tangible support may result from the frequent contact needed to provide religious emotional support. In regard to cognitive support, perhaps clergy view these individuals as already knowledgeable about church laws and not in need of assistance to obtain this

information. It is not clear why only cognitive support would increase from congregation members. They may feel that because individuals are sincere in their faith they deserve assistance in finding out the exact position of their church on divorce. If these individuals are receiving adequate emotional and tangible support from clergy, they may not ask for or appear to need this support from others.

The positive relationship between quest and tangible support from congregation is more difficult to interpret. Perhaps these individuals do not request or appear to need much emotional or cognitive support because they are facing these issues with what Batson and Ventis (1982) call a "skepticism toward traditional answers and critical reflection on 'religious questions'" (p. 207). Nonetheless, they may still be in need of financial aid, babysitting, etc. and are thus provided help in this area from friends in the congregation.

It was hypothesized that clergy who married the separated individual would give less support. This was confirmed for all three types: emotional, cognitive, tangible. As suggested above it is likely that clergy who perform the marriage ceremony and, therefore, give the church's blessing on the union have a vested interest in saving the marriage. However, it is also possible that these separated individuals may be more reluctant to approach their clergy for support due to feelings of guilt or failure.

The hypotheses that clergy's and congregation's disapproval of divorce in general and their view of divorce as a sin would be negatively correlated with religious support was not confirmed by this study, except for the fact that the less congregation members approved of divorce in general, the less tangible support the individuals received. Reasons for these results are not immediately evident. Since

we are relying on the separated individual to answer for the clergy and congregation member on this private belief, it may be that they are incorrect in their understanding of the other's position on the matter. It is noteworthy that as many as 38 of the 71 respondents either felt unable to answer this item at all or indicated that they did not know what their clergy or congregation member felt about these two issues.

Initiator status with or without children was not found to correlate significantly with religious support. Although this hypothesis was not confirmed, it is interesting that there was an interaction between initiators with children and religious opposition. (See Determinants of Religious Opposition below.) One possible explanation is that individuals were not restricted to naming the same individuals on the support and opposition lists therefore we may be dealing with two groups of individuals within the congregation, one viewed as supportive, the other viewed as oppositional.

Gender was not found to be significantly correlated with religious support. There are two likely explanations for the fact that this hypothesis was not confirmed. This sample was heavily biased with 53 females and 18 males. An unsuccessful attempt was made to solicit more questionnaires from men. Several clergy stated that there were fewer separated or divorced males than females in their congregation. Second, research on gender differences in social support (e.g., Astor-Dubin & Hammen, 1984) indicates that women show a greater inclination to seek help. However, clergy and congregation may not wait to be approached but offer support unasked. If this is the case, both men and women can be expected to receive approximately the same amount of support. Further research with a balanced number of males and females coupled

with a question regarding request for support could help resolve this issue.

Determinants of Religious Opposition

A surprising result of this research is that only 39 or the 71 subjects filled out the religious opposition scale. Despite the fact that subjects could check "no opposition" for each individual listed, 20 of those who did not put any names down wrote a note stating they received no opposition from clergy and congregation; 11 merely left the questionnaire blank. One respondent indicated she found the support and opposition questionnaires "confusing" and needed further clarification. However, the fact that statistical significance was obtained for many variables associated with religious opposition despite the relatively small sample size suggests that these results are powerful indicators of the phenomenon being examined.

The hypothesis that the more clergy and/or congregation disapproved of divorce in general or viewed divorce as a sin, the more religious opposition subjects would report was not confirmed. As stated above, respondents may not have been sure of where their clergy or congregation stood on this issue and consequently didn't answer the question or made an educated guess. It is also possible that disapproval of divorce in general does not necessarily lead to punitive action against congregation members who become separated. In principal, clergy or congregation may find divorce objectionable from a religious perspective, but in practice may not extend this attitude into behavior towards others.

Individuals whose ministers married them experienced significantly more cognitive opposition from clergy. This finding, coupled with lower

emotional, cognitive, and tangible support suggests that, while these clergy did not engage in significantly more emotional or tangible opposition; that is, they apparently refrained from judgmental attacks against the individual, they engaged in a more passive form of opposition (i.e., less support) except when it came to providing information regarding the church's stance against divorce. This result strengthens the argument that marriage officiants have a vested interest in preserving the marriage of two people they join together.

Another intriguing finding is the significant correlation between religion as a quest and emotional, cognitive, and tangible opposition from congregation and tangible opposition from clergy. As discussed above, quest orientation is manifested by a "skepticism" toward traditional beliefs; therefore, these individuals may be targets of more active arguments based on church doctrine or teaching. A possible explanation for the lack of significance between quest and clergy emotional and cognitive opposition is that congregation members may be less apt to share their skepticism towards traditional answers or questioning of beliefs with clergy who could be perceived as less receptive to these views. Why clergy would remove significantly more tangible aid, however, is puzzling and requires further analysis.

Finally, initiators with children were found to experience significantly greater emotional opposition from both clergy and congregation as well as tangible opposition from clergy than non-initiators with children. This was also true when initiator status was examined by itself. However, given the fact that only four initiators and two non-initiators did not have children, it is impossible to partial out the effects of children in this research. It is noteworthy that initiators with children received more emotional opposition -- more

judgments from both clergy and congregation that they were "committing a sin" or were "not being good Christians," etc. This strongly suggests that actively seeking marital separation is looked on as "wrong" or a "mistake" by the religious community and that this gets communicated to parents who choose to leave the marriage. These results are not necessarily in conflict with previous research which showed that initiators had an easier time if it compared to non-initiators (e.g., Pettit & Bloom, 1984; Spanier & Thompson, 1983). As mentioned above, "adjustment" in the present research was defined in interpersonal, not psychological or health related terms; thus the outcome measures are not comparable with each other.

Determinants of Religious Stress

This research suggests that religious stress, the inner struggle with the spiritual aspects of marital separation, is most affected by personal beliefs regarding divorce and marriage. Religion as an end was positively correlated with religious stress. This makes sense given the fact that end orientation concerns a deep commitment to current religious beliefs and practices. The hypothesis that quest would be negatively correlated with religious stress was not confirmed. Perhaps those separated active church members who score high on quest continue to experience religious stress over the breakup of a marriage even if they feel free to question their traditional religious beliefs. Religion as a means was uncorrelated with either stress or opposition and, therefore, an interaction between means and opposition which would increase religious stress could not be tested. One possible explanation is that religion as means does not measure religiousness per se, rather it measures the impact of the social environment on individuals'

religious practices. In addition, according to Batson and Ventis (1982):

...development along the extrinsic, means orientation should involve little change in an individual's cognitive structures, for development on this orientation does not require that existential questions be seriously confronted at all (p. 162).

If this is the case, the inner religious experience of marital separation may not be related to religion as a means because means does not measure intrapersonal religiousness.

It is interesting, however, that further analysis of religious orientation reveals there was a negative correlation between warmth and friendliness after separation and "means," and that "end" was positively correlated with warmth and friendliness. It may be that, since means is associated with using religion for self-serving ends, those individuals are not perceived as taking religious aspects of the separation seriously in contrast to those persons with high end scores who may be perceived as sincerely struggling with religious stress. On the other hand, given that means is assumed to be associated with a need for group recognition, these individuals may be more sensitive to subtle withdrawal from others in their church. Scores on religious stress, however, would not be expected to increase for these people because there is little if any inner struggle with the religious aspects of the separation.

Contrary to expectations, relationships with clergy and congregation prior to separation, amount of time per month spent on church activities, initiator status, and religious affiliation were not related to religious stress. In addition, religious support and opposition, except for cognitive opposition from congregation were not

significantly related to religious stress. All of the above, except for initiator status and religious affiliation, are interpersonal in nature. One could argue that religious affiliation, in that it involves a religious "group" is also interpersonal. Intrapersonal stress over the religious aspects of separation does not appear to be affected by interactions with other church members or clergy. Interestingly, however, several kinds of opposition did affect religious stress. Cognitive opposition from congregation but not from clergy was significantly correlated with religious stress. It may be that clergy discussing the church's official stance on divorce is expected and, therefore, not as traumatizing as friends in the congregation actively trying to convince people of the unacceptability of divorce. Along these lines, the more congregation members or clergy actively attempted to stop subjects from leaving their spouse, the greater stress that was experienced. Since this type of opposition is aimed at the individual's own marriage, it may be that subjects feel more pressure and consequently more religious stress over the action.

It is surprising that initiators, who received significantly more opposition and less support did not report significantly more religious stress. Perhaps because initiators, in general, "consistently perceive more benefits to marital separation" (Pettit & Bloom, 1984, p. 507), they are less affected by others' reaction to their decision.

Contrary to research by Ebaugh et al. (1984), who found that religious affiliation affected reactions to crises, there was no relationship between religious affiliation and religious stress. The fact that 60 of the 71 subjects did not change religious affiliation suggests that this sample is biased toward the satisfied church goer.

As suggested above, a sample of separated individuals who are no longer active church members may show different results.

As mentioned earlier, personal religious convictions were significant factors in religious stress. Subjects who viewed marriage as a sacrament, divorce as a sin, their church's official view of divorce as unacceptable and who themselves viewed divorce as unacceptable experienced significantly greater religious stress. The religious stress of marital separation, therefore, appears to be profoundly affected by personal religious orientation and beliefs, somewhat affected by religious opposition, and minimally affected by religious support from clergy or congregation, although warmth and friendliness of congregation members after the separation was associated with less religious stress.

Determinants of Religious Adjustment

The lack of a relationship between religious stress and religious adjustment has already been discussed above. Factors that did affect religious adjustment were all interpersonal in nature, suggesting that continued group participation and importance of friends and clergy are what is affected by support and opposition from clergy and congregation. However, only emotional support from both congregation and clergy was significantly correlated with religious adjustment. Perhaps unbiased information is expected as part of the church's responsibility and tangible support can be obtained elsewhere. The warmer and friendlier clergy and congregation were after the separation as well as the more clergy and congregation approved of the separation were also positively related to religious adjustment, further emphasizing the importance of positive experiences with group members.

Although cognitive and tangible support did not significantly affect religious adjustment (i.e., participation in church activities, importance of friends), cognitive opposition from congregation plus tangible opposition from clergy and congregation were negatively correlated with religious adjustment. Again, it appears that congregation members providing religious information against divorce coupled with removal of tangible support by clergy and congregation have significant impact on continued participation in church related activities and friendships. Given the fact that religious emotional support increases the likelihood of continued church participation, and cognitive and tangible opposition decreases this likelihood, it seems that people who receive little support for themselves as "good Christians," are told that their church is against divorce and also find themselves being deprived of previously available tangible support, are apt to significantly decrease their activity in a church community and become distant from congregation friends and clergy. It appears, therefore, that opposition plus lack of support is what strongly determines how important friends continue to be and how much participation takes place in church activities. It would be interesting to sample a group of individuals who left active participation in organized religion to ascertain if lack of religious support and increased religious opposition were significant factors in their decision.

Implications

That marital separation is a significant spiritual crisis for individuals who are active members of religious congregations is strongly supported by this research. Marital separation causes these

individuals to struggle with their church's and their own position on marriage and divorce. Those who are traditional in their beliefs are more apt to worry and lose sleep over the separation. Interestingly, although such things as prior relationships with clergy or congregation and religious support appears to have little effect on religious stress, some interactions with congregation members increase stress. For example, the more they attempt to stop the separation or relate the church's position as antidiivorce, the more religious stress increases.

Another finding of major interest is the fact that stress or worry over marital separation apparently does not directly affect continued participation in church activities or the importance of clergy and friends in the congregation. Not too surprisingly, it is the reactions and actions of those people who were part of the separated individual's pre-separation church family that affect continued participation. If people experience little or no emotional support, have repeated reminders that their church frowns on divorce, sense disapproval of the separation and a lack of warmth or friendliness from clergy and/or congregation, they are likely to become less active in church activities and place less importance on their friends or clergy in the congregation.

In addition to the above, it is noteworthy that initiators with children report greater emotional opposition from both clergy and congregation. Also, the more separated individuals openly question traditional beliefs, the more emotional, cognitive, and tangible opposition they report from congregation members. Marriage officiants give significantly more cognitive opposition and less support, suggesting that they may feel compelled to prevent or discourage separation if they married the couple.

All of the above is compelling evidence that, for those individuals who possess some sort of religious faith, marital separation is likely to precipitate a religious crisis. The resolution of this crisis will be affected by religious beliefs and attitudes of the individual themselves as well as by the religious attitudes and actions of their clergy and other congregation members. Further research into this area will hopefully strengthen the results found here and also clarify the findings so that those religious individuals who experience marital separation or who will interact with separated individuals in their congregation will be more sensitive and aware of the religious crises marital separation precipitates, as well as understand their role in helping or hindering people as they attempt to cope with their spiritual concerns.

In addition to providing important information on the religious stress of marital separation, this investigation has also demonstrated that mini-networks within an individual's global network can be significantly affected by specific life crisis events. Social support and stress research has typically examined global networks (except perhaps for family interactions) and by virtue of being too broad has perhaps lost important information about how stress, social support and social opposition interact with each other to the detriment of the mini-network itself.

Finally as Fiore et al. (1983) maintain, opposition as well as support from one's social network can have significant impact on individuals within that network. In view of the fact that social networks can be both supportive and oppositional in the face of life crisis events, future research must not ignore the role that opposition plays in the stress associated with events in the lives of individuals.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH BUILDING

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824

Dear

I am a graduate student in Clinical Psychology at Michigan State University. I am conducting research on the impact of religious congregations, clergy and personal religious beliefs on the stress of marital separation.

As you are probably aware, marital separation is a stressful life event which affects almost two million people each year. Divorced and separated individuals have a higher incidence of motor vehicle accidents, psychiatric admissions, and death by homicide, suicide and cancer than other individuals. Separated individuals also face various pressures, such as financial concerns, child custody disputes and legal and emotional stress. In addition, for many individuals, marital disruption is a religious issue which raises questions and conflicts that can negatively affect their overall adjustment to the separation.

There is increasing research evidence that social networks can be sources of support during life crisis events, and can be significant factors in helping individuals cope successfully with these crises. However, there is also evidence which suggests that these same networks can be additional sources of stress if, for example, they disapprove of the person's behavior or refuse to lend support when needed. In addition, individuals will feel different amounts of religious stress over the separation depending on their own personal religious beliefs.

In order to better understand the church's role in helping its members cope successfully with the life crisis event of marital separation, I am conducting research to determine what kind of reactions individuals receive from their religious congregations and clergy. I will also be looking at how their personal religious beliefs affect marital separation adjustment. Hopefully, the information obtained from this research will be beneficial to clergy and members of religious congregations as they attempt to help individuals cope successfully with the religious aspect of marital separation.

I am writing to ask if you would be willing to help me contact individuals in your congregation who were separated from their spouse no more than five years ago. I would like to ask them to fill out several questionnaires. Their responses will be kept confidential and anonymous and they and you are welcome to see the results of this research upon completion of the project.

I will be calling you within a week so that we can discuss this request further. If necessary, I would also be willing to meet with you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Ann-Marie Scheerbaum

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH BUILDING

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824

Dear Church Member:

I am writing to ask if you would be willing to participate in a research project that will be looking at the impact of marital separation on individuals who were actively involved in a religious congregation just before and during their first few months of marital separation.

This letter and packet of questionnaires were mailed by your clergy so that I would not know your name and you would therefore remain completely anonymous and your responses would be confidential.

As you are probably aware, marital separation is a stressful life event that affects more than two million people each year. There is a growing body of evidence which suggests that marital separation can cause both emotional and physical stress for individuals coping with this crisis. In addition, marital separation is often a religious issue which can raise questions and conflicts for many individuals.

In order to better understand the church's role in helping its members cope successfully with the life crisis event of marital separation, I am writing to ask if you would be willing to fill out several questionnaires. These questionnaires will be asking you to think about your marital separation from a religious perspective as well as asking you to answer some questions about your religious beliefs and your involvement in your congregation both prior to and after your separation.

All information is completely confidential and anonymity will be preserved. No obligation of any kind is involved and you may change your mind about participating at any time. In addition, no financial cost is involved. By sending back the completed questionnaires, you will be giving your consent to participate in this project.

It will probably take you an hour or two to complete the enclosed forms. Please do not put your name on the questionnaires. In this way your identity will remain anonymous and your responses confidential. A stamped self-addressed envelope is included. Please return these forms within a week of receiving them. Once I have received all the completed questionnaires I will be able to begin analysing the information.

Thank you in advance for taking part in this project. When it is completed you may have access to the results if you so desire. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me and I will be happy to discuss this with you at greater length. I can be reached at 355-9564. If I am not available, the secretary will take a message and I will return your call as soon as possible. You do not have to leave your name, just say that you are calling about the religious marital separation project.

Sincerely,

Ann-Marie Scheerbaum

RELIGIOUS SOCIAL SUPPORT QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTIONS:

Please think back to your religious congregation and clergy as they were just before and during the first 6 months after your marital separation.

List on the next page the 10 people that you were closest to in your congregation. If you cannot think of 10 people, list as many as you can. This list can include some of the same people you listed on your Religious Opposition Questionnaire.

After you have listed the members of your religious congregation, please list all the clergy of your congregation.

PLEASE DO NOT USE THE PERSON'S REAL NAME. USE MADE-UP NAMES, FIRST NAMES, OR INITIALS. PLEASE PUT A CAPITAL "C" AFTER THE CLERGY NAME SO THAT I WILL KNOW THE PERSON IS A MEMBER OF THE CLERGY.

You will notice that there are 5 columns after the column for names. These columns are labeled 1. CLOSENESS, 2. NUMBER OF CONTACTS PER DAY/WEEK/MONTH, 3. RELIGIOUS EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, 4. UNBIASED RELIGIOUS INFORMATION, 5. TANGIBLE SUPPORT.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE 5 COLUMNS:

Please circle the BEST answer.

1. CLOSENESS:

Closeness means how important this person was to you. For example, was this someone you confided in, shared things with, enjoyed being with, someone you considered a "very good friend"?

2. NUMBER OF CONTACTS PER DAY/WEEK/MONTH:

How often (rough estimate) did you see or talk to this person?

3. RELIGIOUS EMOTIONAL SUPPORT:

This means letting you talk about your marital separation and your feelings about the religious issues of separation and being supportive and nonjudgmental. Nonjudgmental means not telling you that you are a bad Christian person and ought to be punished for what you are doing, etc. It may mean giving you a shoulder to cry on, being a good listener, letting you know that you are "ok" and still a good Christian person.

4. UNBIASED RELIGIOUS INFORMATION:

This means giving you information about your options regarding divorce from your church's perspective. This means telling you what your church or religion allows or does not permit about marital separation or divorce. It may also include telling you where to go for information.

5. TANGIBLE SUPPORT:

This means offers of financial aid, food, shopping, babysitting, a place to live, rides to the doctor, etc.

Names	Closeness		Number of Contacts	Religious Emotional Support			Unbiased Religious Information			Tangible Support			
	Very Distant 1 2 3 4 5	Very Close 1 2 3 4 5		Never Some- times Often	Some- times Often Almost always	Almost always	Never Some- times Often	Some- times Often Almost always	Almost always	Never Some- times Often	Some- times Often Almost always	Almost always	
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			day __week__ __month__	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5
			day __week__ __month__	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5
			day __week__ __month__	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5
			day __week__ __month__	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5
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			day __week__ __month__	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5
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			day __week__ __month__	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5
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			day __week__ __month__	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	1 2 3 4 5	0	

RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTIONS:

Please think back to your religious congregation and clergy as they were just before and during the first 6 months after your marital separation.

List on the next page the 10 people who gave you difficulty or were problems to you when you were first separated. If you cannot think of 10 names, please list as many as you can. This list can include some of the same people you named on the Social Support Questionnaire.

After you have listed the members of your religious congregation, please list all the clergy of your congregation.

PLEASE DO NOT USE THE PERSON'S REAL NAME. USE MADE-UP NAMES, INITIALS, OR FIRST NAMES. PLEASE PUT A CAPITAL "C" AFTER THE CLERGY NAME SO THAT I WILL KNOW THE PERSON IS A MEMBER OF THE CLERGY.

You will notice that there are 5 columns after the column for names. These columns are labeled: 1. CLOSENESS, 2. NUMBER OF CONTACTS PER DAY/WEEK/MONTH, 3. RELIGIOUS EMOTIONAL OPPOSITION, 4. BIASED RELIGIOUS INFORMATION, 5. REMOVAL OF TANGIBLE SUPPORT.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE 5 COLUMNS:

Please circle the best answer.

1. CLOSENESS:

How important was this person to you? For example, was this person someone you confided in, shared things with, enjoyed being with, someone you considered a "very good friend"?

2. NUMBER OF CONTACTS PER DAY/WEEK/MONTH:

How often (rough estimate) did you see or talk to this person?

3. RELIGIOUS EMOTIONAL OPPOSITION:

This means verbal arguments aimed at making you feel guilty about the marital separation. For example, telling you that you are a sinner, you are not being a good Christian, you should try harder to save your marriage, etc.

4. BIASED RELIGIOUS INFORMATION:

This means an attempt to talk you out of your separation by telling you the church is against divorce, it is a sin, it is against your religious beliefs, etc.

5. REMOVAL OF TANGIBLE SUPPORT:

This means, for example, refusing to continue watching your children, firing you from a church job, no longer driving you to the doctor's, etc.

APPENDIX B

MARITAL SEPARATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Today's date _____

Sex: _____ Male _____ Female

Number of children _____

Amount of time separated from spouse _____ months/years

1. Thinking back, was it you or your spouse that first suggested the idea of separation?

_____ respondent _____ spouse _____ mutual

2. Later on, which of you continued to insist most on a separation?

_____ respondent _____ spouse _____ mutual

PLEASE THINK BACK TO JUST BEFORE YOUR MARITAL SEPARATION TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

3. What was your religious affiliation? (E.g., Catholic, Methodist, etc.)

4. How many years were you a member of the congregation (e.g., First Presbyterian Church of Jackson, St. Mary's Church of Lansing) you belonged to just before your marital separation?

_____ years

5. How many years were you involved in church-related activities (e.g., church religious service, guild or committee, fund raisers, etc.) before your marital separation?

_____ years

6. How many times a month were you involved in these church-related activities?

_____ times/month

7. In general, how would you describe your relationship with the clergy of your congregation?

Very Distant

About Average

Very Close

1

2

3

4

5

8. In general, how would you describe your relationship with the members of your congregation?

Very Distant		About Average		Very Close
1	2	3	4	5

9. Did any clergy in your congregation take part in your marriage ceremony?

_____yes _____no

10. What was your understanding of your religious affiliation's OFFICIAL view of divorce? That is, in general, what was the Baptist, Methodist, etc., view of divorce as YOU understood it?

Divorce was:

Don't know	Never acceptable	Sometimes acceptable	Almost always acceptable
0	1	2	3

11. What was your personal view of divorce just before your marital separation?

Divorce was:

Never thought about it	Never acceptable	Sometimes acceptable	Almost always acceptable
0	1	2	3

12. What was your clergy's view of divorce?

Divorce was:

Don't know	Never acceptable	Sometimes acceptable	Almost always acceptable
0	1	2	3

13. What was your religious congregation's view of divorce?

Divorce was:

Don't know	Never acceptable	Sometimes acceptable	Almost always acceptable
0	1	2	3

14. Did any of your clergy attempt to stop you from leaving your spouse or attempt to stop your spouse from leaving you?

_____yes _____no

15. Did any of your close friends in the religious congregation attempt to stop you from leaving your spouse or your spouse from leaving you?

_____yes _____no

16. Did your clergy consider divorce a sin?

_____yes _____no _____don't know

17. Did you consider divorce a sin?

_____yes _____no _____no opinion

18. Did most of the members of the congregation that you knew consider divorce a sin?

_____yes _____no _____don't know

19. How many close friends did you have in your religious congregation?

20. In general, how would you describe the religious congregation members' response to you after your marital separation? That is, how warm and friendly were they?

Not at all warm or friendly	Somewhat warm and friendly	Very warm and friendly
--------------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------

1	2	3
---	---	---

21. In general, how would you describe your clergy's response to you after your marital separation? That is, how warm and friendly were they?

Not at all warm or friendly	Somewhat warm and friendly	Very warm and friendly
--------------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------

1	2	3
---	---	---

22. In general, did your religious congregation approve or disapprove of your decision to separate?

Totally disapproved	Neutral	Totally approved
---------------------	---------	------------------

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

23. In general, did your clergy approve or disapprove of your decision to separate?

Totally disapproved Neutral Totally approved

1 2 3 4 5

24. Did you consider marriage a religious sacrament or rite prior to your marital separation?

_____yes _____no

25. When you first became separated from your spouse, how often did you worry over the religious/spiritual meaning of marriage?

Never Sometimes Often Almost Always

0 1 2 3

26. When you first became separated from your spouse, how often did you feel you were committing a sin by separating?

Never Sometimes Often Almost Always

0 1 2 3

27. When you first became separated from your spouse, how often did you find yourself concerned with your church's view of divorce?

Never Sometimes Often Almost Always

0 1 2 3

28. Were there times when you were first separated that you could not take care of things because you were dwelling on the spiritual/religious aspects of your separation?

Never Sometimes Often Almost Always

0 1 2 3

29. When you were first separated, did you ever have trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep because you were thinking about the spiritual/religious aspects of your separation?

Never Sometimes Often Almost Always

0 1 2 3

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ALL REFER TO YOUR PARTICIPATION IN
CHURCH-RELATED ACTIVITIES TODAY:

30. Are you as actively involved in church-related activities as you were before your separation?

Much less	Somewhat less	About the same	Somewhat more	Much more
1	2	3	4	5

31. Is the decision regarding involvement in church-related activities related to your marital separation?

_____yes _____no

32. Are you a member of any church-related committees or a lay participant in religious ceremony?

_____yes _____no

33. If your answer to #32 is NO, is this related to your marital separation?

_____yes _____no

34. Are you presently a member of the same congregation as before your separation?

_____yes _____no

35. If your answer to #34 is NO, was your decision to leave related to your marital separation?

_____yes _____no

36. If you answered YES that you changed congregations because of your marital separation, was this decision due to a feeling that you were not accepted by your religious congregation or clergy because you were separated from your spouse?

_____clergy was not accepting

_____most of religious congregation was not accepting

_____other, explain

- | | | | | |
|------------|---|----------|---|-----------|
| Not at all | | Somewhat | | Very much |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

- | | | <u>Participated and it was...</u> | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| | Asked but
did not
participate | Not at all
helpful | Somewhat
helpful | Very
helpful |
| Was not asked | | | | |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- yes no

- yes no

- | Very distant | | About average | | Very close |
|--------------|---|---------------|---|------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

- | Very distant | | About average | | Very close |
|--------------|---|---------------|---|------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

-

- | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---------------|---|----------------|
| Not very important | | About average | | Very important |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

45. How well-adjusted would you say you are to your marital separation as far as your religious beliefs are concerned? That is, how often do you worry about whether you committed a sin or disobeyed the law of the church?

Never	Sometimes	Often	Almost always
0	1	2	3

Part I (Please answer these questions as you would have just before your marital separation.)

Part I concerns statements about your religious development. There is no consensus about right or wrong answers; some people will agree and others will disagree with each of the statements.

(SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly agree)

- | SD | D | | | A | | | SA | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 1. The church has been very important for my religious development. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 2. Worldly events cannot affect the eternal truths of my religion. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 3. My religious development is a natural response to the innate need of man for devotion to God. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 4. It might be said that I value my religious doubts and uncertainties. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 5. My minister (or youth director, camp counselor, etc.) has had a profound influence on my personal religious development. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 6. God's will should shape my life. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 7. On religious issues, I find the opinions of others irrelevant. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 8. It is necessary for me to have a religious belief. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 9. When it comes to religious questions, I feel driven to know the truth. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10. I find my everyday experiences severely test my religious convictions. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 11. A major factor in my religious development has been the importance of religion for my parents. | |

SD D A SA
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

12. I do not expect my religious convictions to change in the next few years.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

13. Religion is something I have never felt personally compelled to consider.

SD D A SA
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

14. I have been driven to ask religious questions out of a growing awareness of the tensions in my world and in my relation to my world.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

15. My religion serves to satisfy needs for fellowship and security.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

16. My religious development has emerged out of my growing sense of personal identity.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

17. My religion is a personal matter, independent of the influence of organized religion.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

18. Whether I turn out to be religious or not doesn't make much difference to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

19. Certain people have served as "models" for my religious development.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

20. I have found it essential to have faith.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

21. It is important for me to learn about religion from those who know more about it than I do.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

22. God wasn't very important for me until I began to ask questions about the meaning of my own life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

23. I find it impossible to conceive of myself not being religious.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

24. The "me" of a few years back would be surprised at my present religious stance.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

25. Questions are far more central to my religious experience than are answers.

SD D A SA

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 26. Outside forces (other persons, church, etc.) have been relatively unimportant in my religious development.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 27. For me, religion has not been a "must."

Part II (Please answer these questions as you would have just before your marital separation.)

Part II concerns the prevalence of various types of religious ideas and practices. Again, there is no consensus about right or wrong answers; some people will agree and others will disagree with each of the statements.

SD D A SA

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1. Although I believe in my religion, I feel there are many more important things in my life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 2. It is important to me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and meditation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 3. It doesn't matter so much what I believe so long as I lead a moral life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 4. If not prevented by unavoidable circumstances, I attend church.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 5. The primary purpose of prayer is to gain relief and protection.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 6. The church is most important as a place to formulate good social relationships.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 7. I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 8. What religion offers me most is comfort when sorrows and misfortune strike.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 9. I pray chiefly because I have been taught to pray.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10. The prayers I say when I am alone carry as much meaning and personal emotion as those said by me during services.

- | SD | D | A | SA | | |
|----|---|---|----|-----------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 11. Although I am a religious person I refuse to let religious considerations influence my everyday affairs. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 12. A primary reason for my interest in religion is that my church is a congenial social activity. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 13. Quite often I have been keenly aware of the presence of God or the Divine Being. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 14. I read literature about my faith (or church). |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 15. If I were to join a church group I would prefer to join a Bible Study group rather than a social fellowship. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 16. Occasionally I find it necessary to compromise my religious beliefs in order to protect my social and economic well-being. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 17. One reason for my being a church member is that such membership helps to establish a person in the community. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 18. My religious beliefs are what really lie behind my whole approach to life. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 19. Religion is especially important to me because it answers many questions about the meaning of life. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 20. The purpose of prayer is to secure a happy and peaceful life. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 21. Religion helps to keep my life balanced and steady in exactly the same way as my citizenship, friendships, and other memberships do. |

Part III (Please answer these questions as you would have just before your marital separation.)

We now turn to another area of religious life--religious belief. Each of the following statements expresses a belief. As on the previous statements, circle the number that best indicates your agreement or disagreement with the belief stated. Again, there are no right or wrong answers.

- | SD | D | A | SA | | |
|----|---|---|----|-----------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 1. I believe in the existence of a just and merciful personal God. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 2. I believe God created the universe. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 3. I believe God has a plan for the universe. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 4. I believe Jesus Christ is the Divine Son of God. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 5. I believe Jesus Christ was resurrected (raised from the dead). |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 6. I believe Jesus Christ is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 7. I believe one must accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to be saved from sin. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 8. I believe in the "second coming" (that Jesus Christ will one day return to judge and rule the world). |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 9. I believe in "original sin" (man is born a sinner). |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 10. I believe in life after death. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 11. I believe there is a transcendent realm (an "other" world, not just this world in which we live). |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 7 8 9 | 12. I believe the Bible is the unique authority for God's will. |

APPENDIX C

Frequency Distribution of Religious Denominations
at the Time of Marital Separation (N=70)

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Unitarian Universalist	1	1
Congregational	1	1
House of God	1	1
Baptist	1	1
Christian Independent	1	1
Mormon	1	1
Church of God	2	3
Interdenominational	2	3
United Church of Christ	3	4
Nondenominational/Protestant	4	4
Episcopal	5	7
Catholic	10	14
Lutheran	12	17
Presbyterian	12	17
Methodist/United Methodist	14	20

Religious Denominations That Participated
in the Research

Denomination	Number of Packets Requested by Clergy	Number of Packets Received by Separated Individuals
Friends Meeting	3	0
Congregational	5	4
Unitarian Universalist	5	4
United Church	5	5
Assembly of God	5	1
Christian Church	6	2
Trinity Church	7	7
Church of God	6	6
United Church of Christ	10	4
Missionary Church	10	6
Episcopal	11	9
Catholic	15	10
Baptist	25	3
Interdenominational	20	11
Lutheran	26	22
Presbyterian	25	12
Methodist	25	19
Divorce Support Group	20	15
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	229	140

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