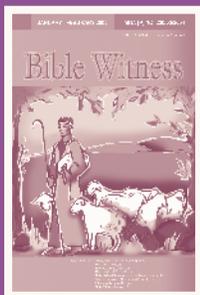


Bible Witness



Articles Inside: Dedication to a Long Serving Pastor
Know Your Pastors
Wanted are Faithful Men
Shepherds of God's Flock
Biblical Guidelines on How to Relate to Your Pastors
Advice on How to Encourage Your Pastors
A Plea to Pray for Pastors
Bible Trivia - Genesis 6



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Dedication to a Long Serving Pastor

This issue of the Bible Witness magazine focuses on the topic, "Know Your Pastors." We would like to dedicate this issue especially to the honour of Rev. Dr. Timothy Tow, the founding pastor of the Bible-Presbyterian Churches in Singapore.



To date, he has served the Lord for 54 long years as a pastor, faithfully feeding the flock of God with unadulterated preaching of God's Word. After ministering for 53 years to the same congregation (which has grown from a hundred to more than a thousand under his pastoral care), when his unwavering position on the Perfect Preservation of the Scripture was opposed, he calmly left it and then took upon himself the pastoral care of a smaller group of believers who was one with him in doctrine. Now, at the age of 84, he continues to pastor a congregation of about three hundred. His is a marvellous testimony of how a faithful servant of the Lord should serve among His Master's flock with undying love and utmost zeal.

We conclude this dedication with one of his very thought provoking sayings, for the edification of all faithful pastors and their congregations – "The pastor is willing to be wronged even when he is right as the Lord says, 'Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many' (Matthew 20:28)."

Dear Rev. Tow,

May the Lord's grace be abundantly yours!

While I was putting together this issue of Bible Witness, I was stirred in my heart to express my gratitude towards you in this first page.

Since June 1987, when the Lord led me to be your student in Far Eastern Bible College, I have received many blessings from your pastoral heart. Your teachings of God's truth, personal encouragements, and help came to me as gifts sent by the loving hand of God.

Thank you for equipping me for the work of the Gospel. Thank you for encouraging me to take up the pastoral ministry in Gethsemane B-P Church. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to teach in FEBC. Thank you for showing me what it means to be a faithful servant of God. Thank you for solemnizing my marriage to Carolyn.

My wife, my three children, Gethsemane B-P Church and the Bible Witness team join me to thank you and your dear wife, Mrs Ivy Tow, for your pastoral ministry.

*Lovingly in Christ,
The Editor*



Know Your Pastors

Knowing their pastors is a biblical duty of all church members. In his first epistle to the church in Thessalonica, the Apostle Paul wrote, “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).

The implication of the Greek word translated “know” is more than just recognizing or identifying pastors and acknowledging the role of the pastor in the leadership of the church. It is also a call to rightly understand the nature of the work of the pastors and then to give due regard and appropriate response to what they do in their leadership and ministry. Members of the church are given charge here to be aware of the person, work, troubles, challenges, burdens, needs and vision of the pastor. Paul is urging his readers to go beyond a superficial knowledge of their pastors.

What should you know about your pastors?

Know their labour (“to know them which labour among you”)

While Paul urges his readers “to know” their church leaders, he describes them as “them which labour among you.” Every faithful pastor is full of labour. The Greek verb for “labour,” *kopiao*, is a derivative of the noun *kopos*, which is often translated as “trouble,” “weariness,” and “labour.” The use of the

word *kopiao* serves as a special reminder to the readers that their good pastors who are very earnest and diligent in their pastoral work often wear themselves out. They often feel spiritual, physical, emotional and financial weariness.

Nonetheless, good pastors continue to toil day and night for the nurture and care of their congregation. Paul reminded the people of the church that their pastors’ work is “among you.” In other words, the pastors’ labour is to meet the needs of the people. Members of the church who do not take into consideration the labour of God’s servants in their midst will not only be unthankful for their many services, but will also be unable to give the encouragement and support that they so desperately need. It is not uncommon for those who are ignorant or negligent of the loving labour of their pastors to become unhelpful, inconsiderate, rude and provocative in their words and deeds.

It seems obvious from Paul’s words that some feelings of tension and misunderstanding had arisen between the members and leaders of the church in Thessalonica. It was obvious to Paul that the members had not appreciated or rightly understood the nature of the work of their leaders. Therefore, he decided to exhort the church members to know the worth of their leaders. No church member should be ignorant of their leaders. They should discover and ponder upon the true character and work of their pastors to come to a full understanding.

For instance, a pastor, who has promised to meet a church member at a particular time, may call the member a few minutes before the appointed time to ask for a postponement of their meeting, due to some very troubling matters that broke out all of a sudden. If the member is inconsiderate of the situation that his pastor is facing, he may start complaining and accusing the pastor as one who does not love and care for him. He may then tell others that the pastor cares for everyone else, but him. Sometimes, the nature of the emergency situation might require the pastor not to disclose the problem to the member who had the appointment. If the member is both ignorant and angry, he would start gossiping about the pastor - "he avoided meeting me with some lame excuses." How difficult and painful such occasions can be for that pastor! May we, therefore, be careful to understand our pastors' labour, and respond to them with patience and supportive behaviour.

Know their authority ("to know them which . . . are over you in the Lord")

Another aspect that all church members should endeavour to understand is their pastor's God-given leadership role. While exhorting his readers to know their pastors,

Paul reminded them that pastors "are over you in the Lord." The Greek word translated as "are over," *prohistamenous*, carries ideas such as "to place at the head," "to preside over," "to superintend," "to rule," "to go first," etc. The phrase "are over you" indicates their pre-eminence as pastors or leaders in the church. In fact, another biblical word that depicts the role of "elders" or "pastors" is *episkopos*, and it is translated as "bishops" (Philippians 1:1) and "overseers" (Acts 20:28). Pastors oversee the work of the church as well as the welfare of our souls.

Pastors are over us "in the Lord." It is the Lord who calls them and appoints them over the congregation. When the congregation approves the appointment of a pastor,



they are just recognizing the Lord's own appointment of that man. So we must be careful to acknowledge the office and ministry of the pastors as appointed by the Lord. The Lord appoints them to "rule" over all the members of the church (cf. Hebrews 13:17). They have God-given authority to teach us as our shepherds (cf. Ephesians

4:11). Their pastoral authority is linked to their faithfulness to God's Word. Those men who take the office of pastorship without total submission and loyalty to the Word of God do not wield the authority from God to watch over the souls of His people. Those who compromise and dilute the truth of God's Word are false shepherds, who do not care for the flock of God. The pastors, who preach faithfully and with authority, are leading their flocks as God would direct. Such pastors ought to be respected and obeyed.

Though the pastors are with spiritual authority, they are particularly cautioned by the Apostle Peter "neither as being lords over God's heritage" (1 Peter 5:3). This Scriptural guideline sets a certain boundary for the exercising of pastoral authority. How far a pastor should exercise his authority is not specifically mentioned; nonetheless the biblical counsel is that he cannot become like a despot or an authoritarian, who is without mercy and love. A pastor is to be cautious not to become like an autocrat, and at the same time the congregation is to be careful not to usurp his leadership and authority over them. The relationship ought to be guarded and nurtured by a mutually loving and godly relationship.

Know their admonitions ("to know them which . . . admonish you")

Another aspect that Paul urged his readers to get to know concerning their pastors is their admonitions. He wrote, "Know them which . . . admonish you." The word "admonish" is from the Greek word, *noutheteo*, which can either mean "to rebuke for the wrong done," or "to warn about the

consequences of a wrong action." It is always done to prevent the hearers from spiritual dangers and also to guide them into the safety of God's truth. It is a pastor's duty and calling to provide instruction as to correct behaviour and belief. To ignore the warning and advice given by a faithful pastor is to invite trouble into one's own life.

Conclusion

How much do you know your pastor? Think, pray and do whatever necessary that you will be able to know him and his labour for the church and respond to it appropriately. As much as your pastor wants to know you, there must also be some effort from you to know him. Then both will know one another and be a blessing to each other.

Such knowledge would not materialize, if people do not make sincere effort to know the pastor. This would mean that members of the church must, first of all, assume the fact that knowing their pastor is a God-given responsibility. Secondly, they must make every attempt to get to know their pastor. This would then mean carefully reading his articles in the church bulletin, listening attentively to announcement concerning his visions, plans and concerns about the ministry, meeting up with him to know his plans and desires, inviting him to your home to have fellowship, etc.

Such concern for the pastor has to be frequent and lasting. If it only happens very rarely, it is as good as it is not happening. Be a loving friend and supporter of your faithful pastors.



meet the “felt needs” of the congregation, and avoids being too harsh on sensitive ears and young minds. The majority opinion of the congregation determines his agenda and weekly sermons. Democracy substitutes theocracy in the church. Christ is dethroned and men are enthroned. The preacher becomes the motivator, the pastor becomes the resident clown, and God’s prophet becomes men’s puppet.

In the name of democracy, unity and Christian charity, some are willing to compromise anything but their own income. They want both the riches of heaven and the riches on earth. They covet the eminence among men, but at the same time, put on an acquiescent front. They desperately try to convey an image of meekness, yet their ad hoc subversive sermonettes betray their character. As lost sheep and goats clutter around the feet of these perfidious gainsayers, generous doses of theological jargons and histrionics are thrown to impress innumerable benighted souls. The eternal state of these souls is not their priority, but the present state of their wallets is.

We know that the leaders of churches are not necessarily the pastors. Whosoever controls the crowd, whosoever writes the cheque, and whosoever gives the speech often is the “pastor” even if he is not officially one. These men are adept at garnering the support they need to win the majority vote. Instead of leading the flock to where they ought to go, they lead them where the crowd wants to go.

The leadership of God-ordained men is needed to salvage the spiritual state of churches today. We require pastors who

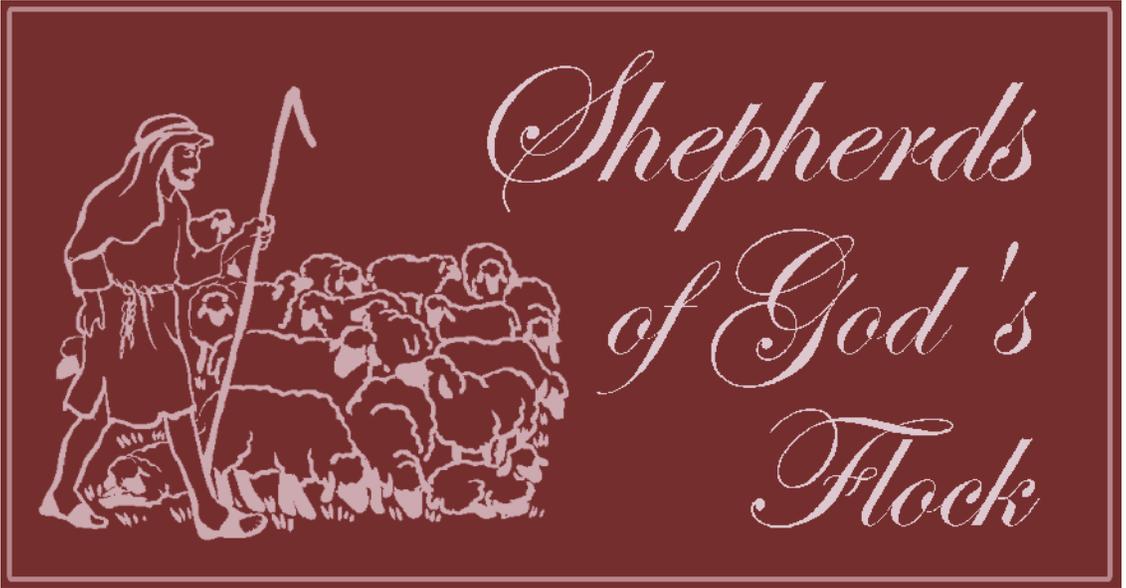
serve the Lord and not their own bellies. We want ministers who are not fearful of men, and are willing to preach God’s Word uncompromisingly. We need faithful men to uphold the banner of truth in the midst of spiritual decline and apostasy.

We cannot avoid the influx of falsehood and worldly philosophy when we have “whited sepulchres” heading the congregations. These are indeed beautiful outwardly, alluring men with their carnal wisdom and apparent rationality, “but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness” (Matthew 23:27).

When the perfect Word of God is denied its authority in the congregation, how can we ever expect sinful men with totally depraved hearts to lead the flock to green pastures and still waters? It is of little wonder that some churches find themselves in parched lands and turbulent waters. “But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire” (2 Peter 2:22).

The Word of God tells us that “judgment must begin at the house of God” (1 Peter 4:17). Before the judgment of God befalls us, faithful leaders must direct the church to repentance. Now is the acceptable time for a complete separation from doctrinal errors and ecclesiastical ecumenicity. We must cease from all compromise with unbelieving rationalism, and begin transforming the world with the perfect Bible of our perfect God, who is forever blessed.





This article is written to help the believers to appreciate the importance of their pastors' work.

**“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away”
(1 Peter 5:1-4).**

Peter wrote those words to Christians living in a culture that was thoroughly familiar with sheep and shepherding. Perhaps a careful look at the role of shepherds and the nature of sheep will enlighten us with some helpful principles of church leadership.

Shepherds are “deliverers”



A sheep is gentle and meek, but unlike other animals, it has no sense of direction and no instinct for finding its way home. A sheep can be totally

lost within a few miles of its home. Within its range of familiar territory, a sheep does fine. It knows its own pasture and the place where it was born and suckled by its mother. It will invariably rest in the same shade every day and sleep in the same fold. It will stay in the home range more than any other grazing animal. But if it wanders from familiar surroundings, the result can be disastrous. Lost sheep will usually walk around in endless circles, in a state of confusion, unrest, and even panic.

The Prophet Isaiah described lost men as those who, like sheep, have gone astray – each one turning to his own way (Isaiah

53:6). When Jesus saw the spiritually disoriented, confused, and lost crowds, He likened them to sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36). Like lost sheep, lost people need a rescuer to lead them back to the safety of the fold.

So pastors, being shepherds appointed to care for the souls, must go searching for those who wander in sin and guilt, and deliver and bring them home to the Lord and His people.

Shepherds are “providers”



Sheep spend most of their lives eating and drinking, but they are indiscriminate about what they consume. They do not know the difference

between poisonous and non-poisonous plants. Therefore the shepherd must carefully guard their diet.

When grazing, once they devour their own range, they are unable to move to a new range on their own. If not led to green pastures, they will continue to eat the stubble of the old pasture until nothing remains but dirt. Soon they will run out of food altogether and starve to death.

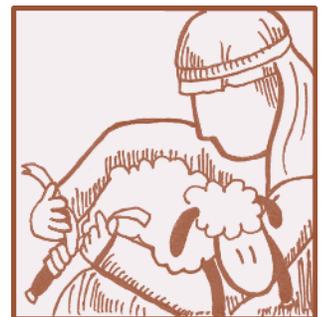
Drinking presents other challenges. Sheep must have clear water that is not stagnant and filled with potential disease. It cannot be too cold, too hot, or moving too rapidly. It must be close by and easily accessible.

They must be led, as the psalmist said, beside the still waters (Psalm 23:2). Most animals are able to smell water at a distance, but not sheep. If they wander too far from their own pasture, they can sense no water hole, though it may be near.

Likewise, pastors are “to feed the flock.” The Apostle Paul exhorted the leaders of the Ephesian church, “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:26-27).

Shepherds are “nurses”

Young lambs are cuddly, soft, clean animals. But that comeliness will soon change. Older sheep are rarely white and almost never clean. They are often stained and very greasy. Their wool contains an immense amount of lanolin, which attracts and holds dirt, weeds, seeds, and almost everything else blowing around in their environment. Because they have no capacity to clean themselves, they remain dirty until the shepherd shears them.



Dirty wool of the sheep provides flies a place to lay their eggs, which hatch into maggots that invade the sheep. The shepherd must dip the sheep to keep them clean. Wet and swampy grounds also pose a threat. If the sheep spend too much time in wet terrain, they can develop foot rot or dangerous abscesses under the hooves.

Most diseases that afflict sheep are highly contagious. Parasites, infection, and other ailments spread quickly from sheep to sheep, making it urgent that the shepherd be on guard at all times so that he can diagnose and deal with the sheep's infirmities before an epidemic ravages the flock.

Like a shepherd, a pastor must aid the flock of God to avoid getting trapped in worldliness and other sins that endanger their souls. So Paul wrote to Timothy, a young pastor, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Timothy 4:2-5).

Shepherds are "protectors"

Sheep are almost entirely defenceless. They can't kick, scratch, bite, jump, or run. They need a protective shepherd to be assured of survival. When attacked by a predator, they huddle together rather than run away. That makes them easy prey.



If a full-wooled sheep falls on its back, often it is unable to roll back onto its feet. In most

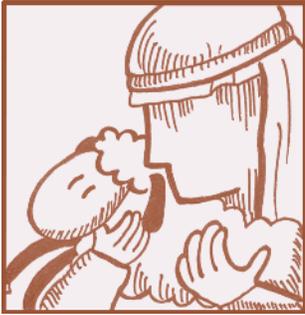
cases, it will simply give up and die unless a shepherd comes to its aid. When a sheep lies on its back for a long time, its circulation stops. If the shepherd sets it back on its feet before circulation is restored, the sheep will fall over again. The shepherd might have to carry it for an hour or more before it is able to walk again on its own.

The church also can easily fall victim to her enemies, such as false teachers and unregenerate, sensual men. Pastors are appointed to defend the church by exposing evil men and their false teachings and practices. The Apostle Paul told the Ephesian church leaders, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:29-32).

God was very displeased with shepherds of Israel who neither warn nor protect God's people. "Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will

require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them” (Ezekiel 34: 7-10).

Shepherds are “comforters”



Sheep lack a self-preservation instinct. They are so meek that if you mistreat them, they are easily crushed in spirit and can simply give up and

die. The shepherd must know his sheep’s temperaments and take care not to inflict excessive stress.

The Apostle Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica to provide the pastoral comfort and encouragement. We read in 1 Thessalonians 3:2-3, “And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: that no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.” A pastor ought to be a comforter to God’s people in their sorrows and troubles.

Shepherds are “leaders”

Sheep are innate followers and very easily led astray. In New Zealand, about 40 million sheep are led to the slaughter each year. A specially selected male sheep, aptly called the “Judas” sheep, leads the unwitting

sheep to the killing floor. Unaware of what is about to happen, the sheep blindly fall in behind the Judas sheep and follow him to their deaths.

Sadly, unfaithful or false shepherds can lead sheep astray as well.

In Jeremiah 23:1-2, the

Lord pronounces judgment against the unrighteous rulers of Judah, whom He likened to unfaithful shepherds: “Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.”



The Chief Shepherd



Jesus is the perfect example of a loving shepherd. He epitomises everything that a spiritual leader should

be. Peter called Him the “Chief Shepherd” (1 Peter 5:4). Jesus called Himself the “Good Shepherd,” who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11). In John 10:27-28, He says, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never

perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

He is our great Rescuer, Leader, Guardian, Protector, and Comforter. Through His undershepherds, the pastors, the Lord extends His pastoral care upon His people.

Conclusion

Shepherding the flock of God is an enormous task, but to faithful elders/pastors, it brings the rich reward of the unfading crown of glory, which will be awarded by the Chief Shepherd Himself at His appearing. “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” (1 Peter 5:4).



“As an aside, no music is more sweet to a gospel preacher than the rustle of Bible pages in the congregation. Many times when I have been in the pulpit and I have read a passage of Scripture, nobody has followed me to see if I was quoting correctly. I strongly urge you to take your Bibles with you when you go to church.

What is the best way of hearing the Word? Is it not to search and see whether what the preacher says is really according to the Word of God? Thus, I entreat you to search the Scriptures to see if what is being taught to you is true.”

C. H. Spurgeon

Biblical Guidelines on How to Relate to Your Pastors

Clear instructions are given in the Scripture concerning how believers should relate to their pastors. The unity and effectiveness of a local church are greatly dependant on the good relationship between the congregation and the pastor. Therefore, the Lord provided specific guidelines in His Word concerning the attitude and response of believers to their

faithful pastors. It is important that believers understand and yield themselves to fulfil the biblical instructions on this matter.

Obey Your Pastors

Hebrews 13:17 exhorts all believers, “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit

yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”

The Greek word for “obedience,” *peitho*, literally means “to be continually persuaded.” It emphasises that believers must be ready and willing to be persuaded by the biblical doctrines and principles that the pastor proclaims. This thought is further enhanced as we are also commanded to “submit.” When these two verbs are used together, the idea of obedience becomes all too apparent. So, we are taught in this verse that compliance to pastoral instructions is required of all believers.

It is also important for us to note that Hebrews 13:17 expects all believers to voluntarily submit to their spiritual leaders. The exhortation to “submit yourselves” is a call to make every effort to subject ourselves to the spiritual leaders whom God has appointed. Submission has to be voluntary on the part of every believer.

The world may describe submission as weakness; but the Word of God views it as a spiritual virtue. It is the spiritual power that restrains all our prideful and rebellious attitudes. It is a very high and noble virtue, which pleases the Lord. Submission of believers to their godly pastors promotes obedience, righteousness, unity, peace and joy in the church. In so doing, the glory of the Lord shall reign.

Hebrews 13:17 clearly tells us the main reason why members should be submissive to their pastors – “for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.”

Only submissive and obedient members can receive the full pastoral care offered by faithful pastors, who minister with their final accountability to God in view. If you remain obedient, the biblical teachings of pastors will protect you from sin and falsehood. Furthermore, the biblical guidance which the pastors give will help you to grow in faith and in holiness unto the glory of Christ. So let us joyfully submit and obey our godly pastors.

Bring Joy to Your Pastors

At the end of Hebrews 13:17, believers are exhorted that their attitude towards their pastors’ ministry should help them to “do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” The Greek grammatical construction of this verse clearly expresses this to be a command to all believers that their responses to and relationship with their pastors will enable them to truly enjoy their pastoral work.

The church in Philippi brought much joy to the Apostle Paul that he wrote to them, saying, “Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved” (Philippians 4:1). Similarly, he rejoiced and thanked the Lord for the members of the church in Thessalonica. He wrote about them in 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20, “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.” Later, he repeated the same sentiments, “For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God” (1 Thessalonians 3:9).

If you bring grief, instead of joy, Hebrews 13:17 warns us that it “is unprofitable for you.” The Greek word translated as “unprofitable” does not only imply “no advantage” or “without special benefit,” but also “hurtful” or “pernicious.” It cautions us that we will be hurting ourselves, if we cause grief in the hearts of those whom God has appointed to watch over our souls.

Remember Your Pastors

In Hebrews 13:7, believers are urged to “remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God.” The Greek word for “remember” is *mnemoneuo*, which brings to mind such ideas as “be mindful of,” “call to mind,” “make mention of,” “to think of and feel for a person or thing,” etc. There are great spiritual advantages in remembering fondly your pastor’s preaching, passionate pleading, prayer, private counsel, and example. Keeping them upfront in your mind will certainly influence your life to excel in your walk with God, just as they have done.

Follow Your Pastors

The last part of Hebrews 13:7 exhorts us further - “whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” The word “follow” is the translation of *mimnisko*, which literally means “to mimic” or “to imitate.” The word “considering” is *anatheoreo*, which means “to observe attentively.” The phrase “end of their conversation” is more clearly “the outcome or issue of their manner of life.” The exhortation, then, is to observe their leaders who spoke the Word of God to them, with

the intention of imitating their lifestyle. They are also urged to imitate their faith while they observe attentively the kind of lives they lived in obedience to the Word of God and the outcome of their lives. Paul urged in 2 Thessalonians 3:7 that “for yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you.” Therefore, no believer is to despise the lifestyle of a godly pastor, but rather imitate it.

Express Loving Loyalty to Your Pastors

Pastors often bear much burden in their hearts. Many of the burdens of the people in the church often become the pastor’s burden. He bears them in his heart to give the right counsel, to pray for them earnestly, and to care for them. In such emotional, mental, physical and spiritual struggles, the expressions of sincere love and loyalty from members of the church go a long way to bring cheer and comfort to his heart. The Apostle Paul illustrates this truth in 2 Corinthians 7:5-7, where he wrote, “For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; and not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.” He again wrote in v. 13-16, “Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed

by you all. . . And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. I rejoyce therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.”

Co-Labour with Your Pastors

The Scripture enjoins believers to co-labour with their pastors. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58). The Apostle Paul was full of thanks when he recollected the work of the believers in the church of Thessalonica. He wrote, “We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father” (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3). Believers ought to serve to fulfil the vision and desire of their pastor concerning the ministry. They can labour in evangelism, mission, music, teaching, visitation, encouragement, care for the needy, etc. Brethren whom the Lord has equipped with spiritual gifts must co-labour with him in the leadership, as pastors, elders and deacons. One such man was Epaphroditus, whom the Apostle Paul describes as “my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me” (Philippians 2:25, 30).

Honour Your Pastors

The Apostle Paul instructs believers “to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake” (1 Thessalonians 5:13). Members of the church must honour their pastors very highly. The phrase “very highly,” in the Greek text, is a compound word made up of three prepositions for the sake of emphasis. The exhortation is therefore to give great honour to pastors. We should relate to them with much respect and submission. The respect and honour should not be only when they are right before our eyes, but at all times. We must not malign them, but talk about them with respect. Paul taught the Corinthians to “let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Corinthians 4:1). Paul commended the Galatian church for the honour and love they bestowed on him, saying, “And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus” (Galatians 4:14). In 1 Timothy 5:17, Paul wrote, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” The context of this exhortation is Paul’s instruction to support the teaching elders or pastors financially. He reminded them that “the labourer is worthy of his reward” (v. 18). In Galatians 6:6, Paul instructs, “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.” Not to reward the labour of a pastor, in a spirit of high honour, is unbiblical.



Advice on How to Encourage Your Pastor

Many of the following suggestions are recollections of the kind deeds that I have received from brethren, which have often encouraged me in my pastoral ministry in Gethsemane B-P Church. The following advice can be applied not only to your pastor, but also to all those who serve the Lord full-time in your church, such as preachers, missionaries, etc.

1. Pray regularly for your pastor with thanksgiving for his ministry; and let him know that you are praying for him. He faces the same issues and temptations as you do. He has the same enemy as you: the world, the flesh, the devil!
2. Consider gathering a group of people or the group you are part of, to pray for your pastor and his ministries. Pray also for his family.
3. Join the church prayer gathering and pray with your pastor and other leaders.
4. Decide that you want to learn from your pastor. Let the Sunday sermon be the beginning of your study for the week. Take what you have heard and apply it to other reading, study, and Bible reading.
5. Sit towards the front of the sanctuary during worship. The vacant space between the preacher and the people is debilitating.
6. Listen to his preaching and teaching with interest. Give the preacher your full attention, with eye contact, with nods of approval, and even with "Amen"s. (Please do not overdo them, and distract him while he preaches.)
7. Let him know that you appreciate his message. You may briefly indicate how you have been blessed by the message. Nothing so excites a pastor than seeing people respond to his preaching and teaching.
8. If you have questions about your pastor's teaching, study them carefully in the light of the Scripture. Discuss it later, at an appropriate time, with your pastor, honestly and fairly, and then allow the Holy Spirit to guide and teach you the truth.
9. Walk the talk of your Christianity for all to see and thus bring glory to God and encouragement to your church family.
10. Treat him as a good and respected friend. Invite him to family functions. His family is just as real as yours - experiencing good and bad times as well.
11. Get to know your pastor's family as you would any family you befriend. Get to know their interests and problems. (Nonetheless, do not impose on the privacy of your pastor's family. They need quiet, undisturbed family time together too.)

12. Let him know that you are willing to serve the Lord together with him, and ask for advice on how you can serve in the church.
13. Offer your skills to help in his work to make it easier. Are you proficient with computers? Help your pastor to fix his computer problems or to learn his new programs. Are you a mechanic? Offer to service the car free of charge or at a reduced fee. Are you a medical professional? Provide your pastor with medical care.
14. Be kind to his wife and children. Do not think of them as assistant pastors! Let them have the freedom to exercise their God-given gifts to serve like any other believer. Love and respect them, for they too need much encouragement.
15. Give your pastor and family a special treat, depending upon your own resources. Invite them out for dinner as your guest, or offer to pay the cost for a special retreat or camp event, or purchase books or equipment useful for his ministry, or give him a gift of a few vacation days in a resort so that he can rest and recuperate from his tiredness.
16. Care adequately for his physical needs. As the Lord enables you, support him with love-gifts for his needs in ministry - to buy books and necessary equipment, travelling expenses, etc.
17. Be aware of the heavy demands on your pastor's time - he is on call 24 hours a day. Respect his needs without unnecessary interruptions to his time for study, writing, and personal prayer. So make sure he is free to talk; and also try to limit your calls.
18. Are there some small jobs you could do to help free up his time? Try to think of what you can do for him and do them with joy.
19. Do not engage in unjust criticism of your pastor. Sometimes his message may not appear so "tasty" to you. But to some others, it would have been a great blessing. Sometimes you may not feel that his visions and plans are necessary. But there are many others who are fully supportive. Let no one be quick to judge or criticise his pastor with a casual attitude. We can only speak against them if they have departed from the truth of the Bible, either in doctrine or practice. Abandon preconceived expectations of your pastor. Drop all personal agendas and preferences about how your pastor leader should operate. Do not expect him to do things the same way as other pastors. Instead, focus on how your pastor is being used by God to do effective ministry in your congregation. Pray and reflect on the ways you can support your pastor in his work.
20. If anyone approaches you with negative comments or gossips about your good and hard working pastor, discourage such a one. If you hear a negative comment, respond with a positive one. Quell gossips!
21. If you find a real need to improve his ministry, offer your help, by saying, "Pastor, I would like to offer my help in" This would be far better than confronting him with discourteous and negative remarks.
22. Express your appreciation in writing. A compliment spoken is always welcome, but one received in writing can be read over and over again over many months and even years.
23. Specifically identify how his ministry is blessing you personally. Encourage your pastor by explaining, in detail, how you took his advice from a message or counselling session and applied it to your life.
24. Ask yourself: How am I encouraging my pastor regularly? What can I start doing that I have not done in the past to encourage him? Am I showing my support and encouragement in what I say and do?
25. Ask the Lord to show you different, innovative ways to encourage him.



A Plea to Pray for Pastors



Such is the importance of the Christian ministry, that we are constrained to entreat for it one particular favour. It is a request in which we feel a very deep personal concern, Pray for us! "Brethren, pray for us," pleads the Apostle in 1 Thessalonians 5:25; pray for us is the hearty response from every Christian pulpit in the land, and in the wide world. If the prayers of good men were entreated by such a man as Paul; and if, with his giant intellect, his eminent spirituality, and his intimate communion with God and things unseen, this holy man needed this encouragement and impulse in his work, who will not say "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified!" (2 Thessalonians 3:1).

It is a delightful thought to a young man entering upon the ministry of reconciliation that, unworthy as he is, the prayers of thousands of God's people are continually going up, on his behalf, to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God. He seems to hear the church of God saying to him, "We cannot go to this sacred work, but we will follow you with our prayers!" He seems to hear many a Christian parent say to him, "We have no son to send to this hallowed vocation; but you go to it, and you shall not lack an interest in our prayers!" Not a few of the churches of this land have enjoyed the high privilege of sending forth into the spiritual harvest a considerable number of beloved youth from their own more immediate family. And it has been the practice of such churches, to an extent that is gratefully remembered, to assemble for the more special service of commending their

young brethren to the care and faithfulness of a covenant keeping God. How fitting, in every way, is such a service! How full of encouragement to the heart that trembles under a view of the responsibilities of the sacred office! How delightful this spiritual stimulus to a mind almost ready to sink under its own conscious infirmities! And how unspeakably precious the thought to all who labour in this great work, whether in youthful, or riper years, that they are thus habitually remembered in the prayers of the churches! Let the thought sink deep into the heart of every church, that their minister will be very much such a minister as their prayers may make him. If nothing short of Omnipotent grace can make a Christian, nothing less than this can make a faithful and successful minister of the Gospel!

We entreat the churches to regard with a more deliberate and devout mind the great work itself to which their ministers are devoted. To explain the doctrines and enforce the duties of genuine Christianity; to defend the truth against all the subtlety and the versatility of error; to sustain within their own minds that sense of God's presence, and of those moral sanctions which are revealed in His Word. And to experience that deep and tender impression of the things that are unseen and eternal, that are necessary to give earnestness to their preaching, as well as that consistent life and bearing that are necessary to give power to their preaching; to do this in a way that

shall adapt itself to different times, places, occasions and characters, and without being disheartened by difficulties, overwhelmed by enemies, and weary of the yoke which they have taken upon themselves, is no ordinary work! If a people are looking for rich sermons from their minister, their prayers must supply him with the needed material; if they seek for faithful sermons, their prayers must urge him, by a full and uncompromising manifestation of the truth, to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God (see 2 Corinthians 4:2). If God's people are going to expect powerful and successful sermons, their prayers must make him a blessing to the souls of men! Would they have him come to them in the fulness of the blessings of the Gospel of peace, with a pounding heart, a burning eye, and a glowing tongue, and with sermons bathed in tears and filled with prayer? If so, their prayers must urge him to pray, and their tears inspire his thrilling heart with the strong yearnings of Christian affection. It is in their own closets that the people of God most effectively challenge their beloved ministers to take heed to the ministry they have received from the Lord Jesus (see Acts 20:24).

And who and what are ministers themselves? Frail men, fallible, sinning men, exposed to every snare, to temptation in every form; and, from the very post of observation they occupy, they are an easier target for the fiery darts of the foe. They are not trite

victims the great Adversary is seeking, when he would wound and cripple Christ's ministers. One such victim is worth more to the kingdom of darkness than a number of common men; and for this very reason their temptations are probably more subtle and



This is an excerpt from the book "Power of Pulpit" written 200 years ago by Gardiner Spring. We publish this for its great value in moving the hearts of church members to earnestly pray for their pastors.

severe than those encountered by ordinary Christians. If this subtle Deceiver fails to destroy them, he cunningly aims at neutralizing their influence by quenching the fervour of their piety, lulling them into negligence, and doing all in his power to render their work burdensome. How perilous is the condition of that minister then, whose heart is not encouraged, whose hands are not strengthened, and who is not upheld by the prayers of his people! It is not in his own closet and on his own knees alone, that he finds security and comfort, and ennobling, humbling, and purifying thoughts and joys; but it is when they also seek them

in his behalf, that he becomes a better and happier man, and a more useful minister of the everlasting Gospel!

Nothing gives a people so much interest in their minister, and interest of the best kind, as to pray for him. They will love him more, respect him more, savour of life unto life in them that are saved, and in them that perish of death unto death (2 Corinthians 2:15, 16). The same light and motives that are the means of fitting some for heaven, when abused and perverted, only fit others for hell.

Oh, it is at a fearful expense that ministers are ever allowed to enter the pulpit without

being preceded, accompanied, and followed by the earnest prayers of the churches. It is no marvel that the pulpit is so powerless, and ministers so often disheartened, when there are so few to hold up their hands. The consequence of neglecting this duty is seen and felt in the spiritual declension of the churches, and it will be seen and felt in the everlasting perdition of men; while the consequence of regarding it would be the ingathering of multitudes into the kingdom of God, and new glories to the Lamb that was slain!

On his behalf therefore, and on the behalf of his beloved and respected brethren in the ministry, the writer would crave an interest in the prayers of all who love the Saviour and the souls of men. We are the dispensers of God's truth and, at best, fall far below our mighty theme. The duties of our calling return upon us with every returning week and day. They often come upon us with many and conflicting demands. They sometimes put a demand upon all our thoughts, and at the very time when we have lost the power of thinking; and sometimes they call for all the intensity and strength of our affections, just at the time when we are the least capable of expressing them. There is also associated with these demands that pressing distress, and decaying anxiety which exhausts our vigour, cripples our courage, and drinks up our spirits. And then, in addition to all this, there are so many disappointments in our work, that we desperately need the sympathy and comfort of the prayers of God's faithful people!

Our spirit is sometimes stirred within us, and we go forth to our people flooded with the hope of rescuing them from everlasting burnings; and in some unfortunate hour of

self-sufficiency, we vainly imagine the work and triumph are our own. We are ready in season, and out of season (2 Timothy 4:2); we make a business of preparing for the conflict, sometimes polishing our arrows and sometimes leaving them rough and barbed. We put on our armour, and enter the field with the determination to layout all our strength, and with the confident assurance that we must complete our assigned task. But what a lesson of self-abasement! We cannot convert a single soul. "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented" (Matthew 11:17). We press home the Divine commands, and they trample upon His authority; we press home His threatenings, and they despise His justice; we speak tenderly of His promises, they heed not His faithfulness; of His Beloved Son, and they tread Him under their feet; of His patience and long-suffering, but their impenitence and obstinacy are proof against them all. We reason and plead with them, until the obstacles to their conversion seem to us to rise higher by every effort we make to overcome them; until, finally, we sink in dejection, and cry out, "What mighty power can break these granite-like hearts? What omnipotent grasp can rescue these perishing men from everlasting burnings?" Oh, you blood-bought churches, your ministers need your prayers, for the exceeding greatness of that power which God worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead (Ephesians 1:19, 20).

We have a concert of prayer for the heathen, another for Sunday Schools, and yet another for the blessing of God upon the distribution of religious tracts. Why should we overlook the great means of God's own appointment for the salvation of men? May there not be

something in the form of a concert of prayer for the ministers of the Gospel? If nothing better can be suggested, why may there not be a general understanding among Christian men, and Christian families, to set apart the morning of every Lord's Day, for this great and special object? This was the practice in the family of my venerable father, and it has long been my own as well. And it is a most precious privilege. The time is a very appropriate one; and such a ministry of prayer would not fail to exert a delightful influence on the privileges of the sanctuary. "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24). Should God be pleased to give to the churches the spirit of prayer for their ministers, it would be with the purpose of answering it. "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer" (Psalm 102:17; cf. Nehemiah 1:5, 6). It is written, that "The LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence" (Isaiah 4:5); nor will the altar be profaned, nor the incense less fragrant, if those words of hope are more often upon the lips of those who offer it, "Clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy!" (Psalm 132:16). Nor is this all! Let the ministers of the Gospel have an habitual remembrance at the domestic altar every day. "It is no small thing," says a modern writer of our own city, "for any congregation to have daily cries for God's blessing ascending from a hundred firesides." What a spring of refreshment to a pastor! The family devotions of praying Kidderminster, no doubt, made Richard Baxter a better minister, and a happier man; and it is possible we are reaping the fruits of

them in his books *The Saints Everlasting Rest and Dying Thoughts*.

You then, who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest (Isaiah 62:6, 7). When the churches cease to pray for ministers, ministers will no longer be a blessing to the churches. Brethren, pray for us, that we may be kept from sin; that we may walk carefully, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time (Ephesians 5:16); that our hearts may be more devoted to God, and our lives a more impressive example of the Gospel we preach; that we may be more completely furnished for our work and our conflicts, and put on the whole armour of God; that we may be more faithful and wise to win souls, and that we may discipline our body, and bring it into subjection, lest after having preached to others, we ourselves be cast away (1 Corinthians 9:27). When we turn our thoughts toward barren ordinances and a fruitless ministry, our hearts sink within us, and we would gladly throw ourselves at the feet of the churches and implore a remembrance in their prayers. If you ever enter into the "secret place" of the Most High, and get near the heart of Him whom your souls love, plead earnestly that His own power may attend the stated ministries of His Gospel. If you ever lie on Jesus' bosom, please remember us! Open your desires; tell your Immanuel of His costly sacrifice and wonderful love; tell Him of His power and our weakness; speak to Him of the unutterable glory, and the interminable anguish beyond the grave. With tears of solicitude press home your plea, and tell Him that He has committed the treasure of the glorious Gospel to earthen vessels, in order that the excellency of the power may be all of God! "Brethren, pray for us!" AMEN!

BIBLE TRIVIA - GENESIS 6

CHOOSE THE CORRECT ANSWER:

1. What was wrong with the marriage between "sons of God" and "daughters of men" that displeased God?
(a) they took wives according to their own choice
(b) they did not love one another
(c) they married people of other race
2. The children who were born in the marriages of "sons of God" with "daughters of men" became
(a) dwarfs (b) angels (c) giants or mighty men
3. Who said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man"?
(a) Noah (b) the Lord (c) Adam
4. The Lord reduced the years of man's life on earth to
(a) 150 (b) 220 (c) 120
5. Noah found in the eyes of the Lord.
(a) grace (b) righteousness (c) hope
6. Noah was and in his generation.
(a) just, perfect (b) evil, violent (c) sick, weary
7. Which of the following two men walked with God?
(a) Lamech and Shem (b) Enoch and Noah (c) Cainan and Jared
8. The three sons of Noah are
(a) Shem, Ham and Japheth (b) Bill, Phil and Will (c) Sheth, Heth and Jephthah
9. Which of the following describe the time of Noah?
(a) holy and gracious (b) united and harmonious (c) corrupt and violent
10. From which kind of wood did God ask Noah to make an ark?
(a) teak (b) cedar (c) gopher
11. God said that He would destroy with flood.
(a) Palestine (b) the earth (c) the Ararat region.
12. God said that flesh on earth shall die.
(a) all (b) no (c) some

Answers to Vol. 4, Issue 5 - Bible Trivia from Genesis 5 & 6.

Pg. 22 - 1. (d); 2.(a); 3. (b); 4. (e); 5. (c); 6. (f); 7. (i); 8. (g); 9. (h); 10. (l,k,j); 11. (n); 12. (m).

Pg. 23 - 1. T; 2. T; 3. T; 4. T; 5. T; 6. T; 7. F; 8. F; 9. F; 10. F; 11. T; 12. T.

O Blessed Hope

S. H. Tow

Arr. from Alice Hawthorne

Hark! 'tis the voice of the Sav - iour, Brea-thing a mes-sage un - heard;
Hope is our an - chor so sted - fast, Hope is in Je - sus our Lord;
Je - sus may come in the mor - ning, Je - sus may come in the night;

Hope, with a glad con - so - la - tion, Comes with a com - for - ting word;
He our fore - run - ner is en - tered In - to the veil by His death;
Will the Lord find you still watch - ing? Is He your soul's pure de - light?

Wait till the test - ing is o - ver, Wait till the tri - al is past;
Come to my heart O Lord Je - sus, Come O blest Sav - iour di - vine;
O see the signs of His com - ing; Hark! the foot - steps at the door!

Look for the Sav - iour's ap - pear - ing, Look for His com - ing at last!
Come O Thou blest Hope of glo - ry, Come O Thou Sav - iour of mine.
Should the Lord find you still watch - ing - That will be joy e - ver - more!