

# Congregational MINISTRY



*"I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth." – I Corinthians 3:6-7*

**by Ron Bontrager**



# CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY

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**Congregational Ministry**

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Printed and Bound in the United States of America

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## Instructions and Requirements for Level II Students (Certificate of Basic Biblical Study)

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Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the DVD or CD,. Listen to the recorded lecture as you follow along in this course Study Guide book.

**Course Description:** This course examines the work of a minister in a local church setting in the United States. Major Emphasis include the minister's work, his interpersonal relationships, his response to ministry stress, and his personal life.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To understand both the Biblical and practical works of a preacher
2. To appreciate the need to work well with others.
3. To understand and be prepared to handle the struggles of ministry
4. To gather the resources and convictions necessary to "fulfill your ministry"
5. To become more like our Lord and Teacher, our model for ministry.

**Course Assignments:**

**Reading/Report (40%):** One book will be required reading for Level II students in this course. For the current book required for this course please go to the Credit Requirements page, click on the Resources tab at [www.satelliteschools.org](http://www.satelliteschools.org). A one page evaluation paper of this book is also required to be turned in by the end of this course.

**Exams: (60%)** There will be two Exams to complete for this course. The Mid-term Exam is to be done at the end of lesson twelve (12), and the final Exam is at the end of lesson twenty four (24).

\*All assignments must be completed to pass the course.

**Grade Scale:**

Reading:	20%
Report:	20%
Exams	<u>60%</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Instructions and Requirements for  
Level III Students  
Bachelor Degree or Certificate of Advanced Biblical Studies**

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Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the DVD or CD,. Listen to the recorded lecture as you follow along in this course Study Guide book.

**Course Description:** This course examines the work of a minister in a local church setting in the United States. Major Emphasis include the minister's work, his interpersonal relationships, his response to ministry stress, and his personal life.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To understand both the Biblical and practical works of a preacher
2. To appreciate the need to work well with others.
3. To understand and be prepared to handle the struggles of ministry
4. To gather the resources and convictions necessary to "fulfill your ministry"
5. To become more like our Lord and Teacher, our model for ministry.

**Course Assignments:**

**Reading/Report (30%):** Two books will be required reading for Level III students in this course. For the current books required for this course please go to the Credit Requirements page, click on the Resources tab at [www.satelliteschools.org](http://www.satelliteschools.org). A one page evaluation paper for each one of these books is also required to be turned in by the end of this course.

**Writing Assignments: "My Ministry Priorities" Paper (20%):**

Each Student will write a 4-5 page paper, explaining his top five ministry priorities. This paper is due prior to taking the final exam.

**Exams: (50%)** There will be two exams to complete for this course. The Mid-term Exam is to be done at the end of lesson twelve (12), and the Final Exam is at the end of lesson twenty four (24).

\*All assignments must be completed to pass the course.

**Grade Scale:**

Reading:	15%
Evaluation Papers:	15%
Writing assignment:	20%
Exams	<u>50%</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

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## LESSON ONE

# INTRODUCTION

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### INTRODUCTION

**W**elcome to Sunset International Bible Institute video series. This course focuses primarily on the work of a preacher (a.k.a. evangelist, minister) in an established congregation in the United States.

We give emphasis to four major areas of study in this course, which include 1) the minister's work (from both Biblical and contemporary perspectives), 2) his interpersonal relationships (ministry involves people, and not all act like Christians), 3) his response to ministry struggles (we can't be naïve, deceiving ourselves into thinking that ministry is easy with no stress involved), and 4) his personal and spiritual life.

If this were a course in Sales, I'd tell you that you will need to **pick yourself up** after a day filled with disappointments; if it were an Education course, I'd say you have to **have tough skin** to handle parents who never seem to be satisfied; if this were Biology 101, I'd teach you to **never stop examining the evidence**, even if it means looking at the same information over and over, in order to prove the hypothesis correct.

In the study about the work of a preacher, and you will be challenged to do all of the above, plus, trust God. Paul instructed Timothy, "be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry" (2 Timothy 4:5, *NAS*).

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**LESSON AIM:** To examine some of the blessings of being a proclaimer of the Gospel and some challenges that accompany those blessings.

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### THE SO-CALLED PERFECT PREACHER AND THE REAL PREACHER

- The perfect preacher preaches exactly 10 minutes.
- He condemns sin but never hurts anyone's feelings.
- He works from 7 a.m. until midnight and is also the church janitor
- The perfect preacher makes \$200 a week, wears good clothing, drives a good car, buys good books, and donates \$50 a week to the church.
- He is 29 years old and has 40 years of ministry experience.
- Above all, he is handsome.
- The perfect preacher has a burning desire to work with teenagers, and he spends most of his time with the senior citizens.
- He smiles all the time with a straight face because he has a sense of humor that keeps him seriously dedicated to his church.
- Every day he makes 10 visits in the homes of members, teaches 5 evangelistic studies, and is always in his office whenever he is needed.
- The perfect preacher always has time for elders meetings and all of the church



committees.

- The perfect preacher is always . . . at the church right next to yours!  
So, if your preacher does not measure up, just send this notice to six other churches that are tired of their preacher, too. Then, bundle him up and send him to the church at the top of the list. If every church cooperates, in one week you will receive 1,234 preachers. Surely one of them will be perfect for you. Have faith in this letter; one church broke the chain and got its old preacher back in less than three months.” (adapted from Father McGinn; received from Mountain Wings)

#### **A. Challenges for a Lifetime of Effective Ministry**

1. A friend would entitle this, “Why Would Anyone want to be a *Loco* Preacher?” Ministry isn’t crazy; really it isn’t.
2. Much of the following material is adapted from Paul Cedar’s article in the book, *Mastering the Pastoral Role*.

#### **B. The Difficulty of Being a Preacher**

The two most difficult jobs in the world are being President of the United States and the preacher of a local congregation. Here are 3 reasons why:

1. Unfinished projects. Preachers rarely see their work neatly and tidily wrapped up.
  - a. The job of evangelism and growing people to maturity in Christ is never finished.
  - b. One preacher said, “The one thing I enjoy most in ministry is Saturday when I mow the lawn. It’s the one thing I do each week that I can look back and see what I accomplished.”
  - c. The most worthy of accomplishments – church growth – is tangible. Salesmen, farmers, and brick-layers can measure results; preachers rarely can.
2. Immature brethren. People, especially immature brethren, and their problems can be very burdensome and frustrating, as well as time-consuming.
  - a. Preachers are “enablers,” and can give only so much until they are exhausted.
  - b. Often, a minister doesn’t know his own limits, nor how to recover from “over-doing it.”
3. Daily pressures. There are constant daily pressures to do things:
  - a. Teaching the lost and preparing sermons
  - b. There are sick to be visited,
  - c. Bulletin articles to be written, meetings to attend, plans to be made and implemented, conflict to resolve, budgets to be met, and the list goes on and on.

#### **C. The “Job” Can Become a Formula for Rapid Burn out**

1. Causes of burn-out:
  - a. Criticism by members
  - b. Immaturity of members
  - c. Lack of appreciation

- d. Apathy in members – These can cause deep personal pain.
- 2. Different ways to respond to these:
  - a. Some have looked to sexual gratification; others have given up and quit while others just slowly wear themselves out.
  - b. There are better ways – you can:
    - 1) deepen your relationship with God,
    - 2) re-dedicate yourself to your mission,
    - 3) balance priorities,
    - 4) keep reminding yourself of the Joys of Ministry.

**D. The Joys of Ministry** – five activities that can bring joy.

- 1. Participation with God – in the greatest work ever given to man (Matthew 28; 2 Timothy 4:2, 5).
- 2. Entrance into the private lives of people. In an impersonal world. Preachers have an “open invitation” into their “client’s” private lives: birth, illness, marriage, death . . . “pastoral” care.
- 3. Public proclamation of things that *really* matter – things eternal, to those we love. Preaching must not be impersonal. (cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:8)
- 4. Spiritual counsel and guidance.
  - a. More than psychological.
  - b. Understanding that spiritual dryness complicates most problems, the preacher offers God’s counsel for a better way of life.
- 5. Being a living-witness to the working of God’s Grace in peoples’ lives.
  - a. The joy of seeing a “sinner” who changes his life around.
  - b. The joy experienced in seeing new Christians grow and mature in Christ Jesus.
  - c. The joy of seeing and helping someone struggling with sin in their lives become victorious over that sin.
  - d. The joy of seeing a grieving sister who begins to serve the next grieving sister

## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE**

---

1. What are three reasons a preacher's job is so difficult as given in this Study Guide.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. List the five "joys" gained from being a minister.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. List four things that can cause burnout.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. What are four positive ways one can respond to the four things above.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON TWO

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Preaching*

---

### INTRODUCTION

**I**n the previous lesson we gave an overview of the course, we gave the four major units of study. We talked about some of the joys that are part of congregational ministry.

Some things that will now be considered are the educational work of the congregation in the teaching ministry of the preacher, visitation and the importance of working with and without elders. Lessons on making and implementing change in a congregation when change seems to be necessary. Some of the less exciting works of the preacher that involves administrative work, office work will be considered. The importance of community involvement and the preacher's life in community where he lives will be discussed. We'll wrap up the unit by looking at the preacher/minister as a servant who is serving God and others.

This section will survey some of the assignments that will likely be given to the preacher in his role as a minister in a local congregation. Preachers need to understand that leaders vary in their interest, their desires, their experiences and that influences their conclusion as to what the preacher ought to be doing. From the biblical text there are a lot of generic statements about what the work is. It doesn't say where and how often and how long the preaching ought to be and other things like this. The New Testament speaks of the work of evangelism and teaching and helping others mature without giving many specifics. This section will look at the biblical foundations for ministry and some things in the contemporary world you might be expected to do and how to work within that framework.

---

**LESSON AIM:** To give instruction and general information as to the work and involvement of the preacher in his work with a local congregation of the Lord's people.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Learn the biblical foundations for preaching and the work and ministry of the preacher.
  2. Explore the ins and outs of preaching in our contemporary world.
  3. Remember several characteristics of good preaching.
- 

### THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR PREACHING

#### A. A Preacher's Four-fold Description

1. The preacher is a proclaimer – *kurux*.

- a. Greek word to describe a herald/messenger.
  - b. The kerux conveyed the message of kings and other officials to the people.
  - c. Likewise the preacher speaks the message of King Jesus to His people.
2. One who speaks with authority.
  - a. His message was a conveyed message – it was a message received from someone who had authority
  - b. He received authority to speak from the one whose message he spoke.
3. One who speaks so that others can hear and respond.  
Ancient speakers/preachers were people with loud voices.
4. One who is deeply convicted of his message.
  - a. 2 Timothy 3:14, *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, **knowing from whom** you learned it.*
  - b. 2 Timothy 3:16, *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,*
  - c. It is not our genius it is not our discovery but rather it is the word of God.

#### **B. The Preacher's Primary Function –To Proclaim God's Saving Message of Grace in Christ Jesus**

1. The message is “salvation by grace through faith” (Ephesians 2:8-9).
2. The grace of God is also the message that helps people grow in response to salvation (Titus 2:12)
3. The message of grace is tied up in the work of Jesus Christ – in the person of Jesus Christ as Lord (2 Timothy 2:8).
  - a. He is the Savior of the world and consequently He is the reason and therefore the motivation for all that we say and all that we do.
  - b. The Preacher needs to be constantly presenting the message of Christ to encourage people to become more like him.

### **PREACHING IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

(the need for good preaching)

#### **A. Theology for Preaching**

1. Encapsulated in the phrase: “Preach the Word.” ...*preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.* (2 Timothy 4:2)
  - a. God is a communicating God and the preacher is to communicate His Message.
  - b. God acts in a way that would call people to listen to Him and respond to His message.
2. The witness of History.
  - a. When Preaching is strong many people respond and there is church growth.
  - b. Strong Preaching in the restoration era brought about rapid church growth.

## **B. Contemporary Challenges**

1. A world that is increasingly non-Christian.
  - a. New ideas and new things that consume one's thinking.
  - b. Changes in our society and family in communication and technology and mobilization among people in our society.
  - c. Values that are honored and extolled in society which run counter to the message of Christianity.
    - 1) Values such as tolerance, relativity, a lack of honesty, selfishness and materialism.
    - 2) These all seem to hinder interest in the gospel.
  - d. Many people living in this kind of society really don't want to hear the distinctive message of Christianity.
2. Lifestyles of people hinder their interest in the gospel.
  - a. An increasing lack of interest or a lack of personal commitment to relationships.
  - b. A loss of integrity among many people causes them to reject the truth of the gospel.
3. God's people living in a non-Christian society need to hear the message of truth and they need to hear it clearly.
4. Preachers must remember the truth that preaching is the event through which God speaks.
5. Jesus' parable of the sower who went forth to sow and encountered different kinds of hearts (soils).
  - a. The sower is emblematic of the gospel preacher.
  - b. Preachers must not forget whom they are serving – the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - c. Preaching stands as an event through which God speaks to people.

**NOTE:** Preachers need to consider themselves as God's spokesman preaching His word, giving His message to His people!

## **FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD PREACHING**

### **A. Preaching That Presents the "Gospel" as Good News from God**

1. Be convinced and committed to the fact that the gospel is good news.
2. Good news should be presented with joy and excitement.

### **B. Preaching That Presents Motivation and Persuasion, Based on God's Character and Blessings**

1. Fear and guilt producing sermons motivate only temporarily.
2. Long-term motivation is created and maintained when people are reminded of God's goodness and blessings.

### **C. Preaching That Exposes the Biblical Text – Biblical Exposition**

1. Biblical exposition not personal stories communicates God's will.
2. People pleasing sermons do not always supply what people need to hear.

**D. Preaching That Presents the Savior – Gospel (good news) Sermons**

1. The heart and soul, the deep message of the gospel that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.
2. Some of the great words like redemption, reconciliation, justification, propitiation need to be explained because they all relate to the gospel message.

**E. Preaching That Reflects Good Planning and Preparation**

1. Planning ahead keeps the preacher and his material fresh.
2. Being prepared by early planning gives strength to the communication of the message to people who need to hear the voice of God.

**EIGHT THINGS TO ENHANCE PREACHING****A. Visual Aids; Electronic Media**

1. Where people can eyeball the message.
2. Be careful to use visual aids wisely.

**B. Relevance – How the Message Relates to Modern Circumstances**

1. Not just what is in the biblical text but how does it apply today in this situation.
2. Be relevant to today's time, places and where people are in their live at the present time.

**C. Variety**

1. In style and approach to preaching.
2. Predictable preaching is not profitable preaching.

**D. Narrative Sermons**

1. Telling Bible stories and making application.
2. People relate more to stories and illustrations.

**E. Direct Application**

1. Not always direct application.
2. Illustration of Nathan's approach about David's sin with Bathsheba.

**F. Good, Contemporary Introductions, Conclusions, and Illustrations****L. Preacher's Projection of Excitement and Conviction**

1. You cannot convict someone of something of which you are not convicted.
2. Excitement in the speaker creates excitement in the listener.

**G. Preacher's Exemplary Life**

## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO**

---

1. List four statements that answer the question: "What is a Preacher?"

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the five characteristics of good preaching:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_

3. List the eight things that will enhance preaching.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_



## LESSON THREE

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Evangelism*

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### INTRODUCTION

**I**n our study of congregational ministry we're in unit one, the work of the minister. In part one we looked at the minister and his work in preaching the gospel. Today in a similar way we'll look at his work in evangelism. Not so much the public proclamation, but more like the one on one kind of teaching. Of course, like our study on preaching, this part of the study does not go into all the ways to teach and what we are to teach in a small evangelistic study. This lesson is more of an encouragement to teach and just how important this work is in the preacher's life. This lesson will be looking at several methods or possible ways to reach out to others with the saving truth about Jesus Christ.

In a book by Rick Warren entitled "*The Purpose Driven Church*" he made this comment: "Church leaders should stop praying 'Lord bless what I am doing' and start praying 'Lord help me to do what you are a blessing.'"

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**LESSON AIM:** To expose the student to various aspects of the preacher's work of evangelism in a contemporary world.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Learn that evangelism has a biblical background in both the New and Old Testaments.
  2. Discover some of the perceptions people have of the work of the preacher.
  3. Examine the preacher's responsibility in the area of evangelism and look at a few methods and opportunities for evangelism.
- 

### BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR EVANGELISM

#### A. Evangelism in the Work of a Preacher

1. The Greek word: *euaggelistēs*, means "a bringer of glad tidings."
  - a. Same basic word for "gospel."
  - b. The gospel message is the message of the saving truth found in Jesus Christ.
  - c. An evangelist is one that would bring that message to others.
2. Illustrated by Paul in Romans 10, quoting Isaiah 52: *...how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good tidings of good things.*
3. Evangelistic work is not restricted to teaching the lost.

- a. Romans 1:15, *So I am eager to preach the gospel to you (Christians) also who are in Rome.*
- b. He's talking about his brothers and sisters in Christ and he wants to preach the gospel to them.
- c. Ephesians 4:11-12, *And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,*
- d. Matthew chapter 28, make disciples of all the nations and **continue teaching** them.

#### **B. Themes That Relate to the Preacher in the Books of 1,2 Timothy and Titus**

1. One: Preaching the word to both the lost and the saved.
2. Two: The preacher's own personal spiritual life.
3. Three: The call to fight the good fight of faith and to endure difficult times.

**NOTE:** Those are good books to read to help in the preacher's overall view from a biblical perspective of the work of an evangelist and how in the local church he is to carry out the work as a local evangelist.

### **EVANGELISM IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

#### **A. Mis-conceptions of the Work of the Preacher**

1. One mis-perception: A minister or the evangelist is to establish the church and then leave it as soon as he can.
2. Another mis-perception: The minister must rule his congregation – in other words he is the authority above anyone else.
3. Another mis-perception: The minister must do all the work, that's what he is paid for – in other words he is a hireling.
  - a. He should certainly preach and teach and evangelize.
  - b. He should also mow the grass, change the water in the baptistery, take care of all the electrical and plumbing needs, etc.
4. Another mis-perception: The minister is simply a clergyman with just a job (not a ministry) as other people have jobs.

**NOTE:** There are many other mis-conceptions as to what the evangelist should be and do.

#### **B. The Need and Importance of a Clear "Ministry" Description**

1. A firm agreement between the preacher and elders as to the main thing/s that should occupy his time and effort.
  - a. The first priority, the second priority, etc.
  - b. Does he have enough time to do all that is really important?
2. An agreement between preacher and church leaders is important because – without an agreement, assumptions can destroy a work and maybe even destroy a worker.
3. Things the preacher really needs to understand and come to terms with.
  - a. The average church member has only limited knowledge of what the

- Bible says about ministry.
- b. The minister needs to maintain an attitude of humility, not one of superiority.
- c. Everyone is conditioned by past experiences and by personal preferences and therefore often times wants the preacher to meet those expectations.
- 4. When all is said and done: “do the work of an evangelist.” (2 Timothy 4:5)

### **C. Some Areas of Evangelistic Outreach**

1. Teach by training. Have a training class to teach others how to go about reaching out to the lost.
  - a. Present methods and what Scriptures ought to be used in a personal evangelism study.
  - b. Discuss manners and attitudes and the importance of these in evangelistic work.
2. Teach by example. Part of the teaching should be outside of the classroom – The Minister must be an example of Evangelism.

### **B. Various Methods and Opportunities for Evangelism**

1. Direct, personal evangelism.
2. Not everyone is going to fit into one kind of approach – be diverse, present people with many opportunities.
3. General, miscellaneous outreach (indirect evangelism)
  - a. Caring/benevolence.
  - b. Correspondence courses.
  - c. Jail ministry.
  - d. Small group Bible studies.
  - e. Hospital and nursing visitation.
  - f. Gospel Meetings follow-up.
  - g. Campus ministries.
  - h. Visiting spouses of Christians and visitors to the assembly.
  - i. Friendship evangelism.
  - j. Newcomers to the city or community.
  - k. Friends day and VBS follow-up.
  - l. Special concerns (disaster relief, personal tragedies, etc.)
4. The minister is an encourager of evangelism, even as Christ was.  
John 4:34-38

*Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”*

### SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE

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1. Define the Greek word *euangelistēs* and explain its meaning in relation to a preacher.

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2. What are four mis-conceptions concerning the work of a preacher given in this study guide.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Explain why an agreement between a church and the preacher is important.

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## LESSON FOUR

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Education*

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### INTRODUCTION

**A**s this course of study proceeds it would be well to review a bit. The study has involved so far the work of a preacher as it relates to preaching, and evangelism. Preaching includes sermons to the saved and the unsaved in the local assembly. Evangelism extends the work of the preacher beyond the walls of the church building and into the contemporary world of the unsaved.

There is another aspect of the preacher's ministry, that of teaching in the church's educational program. In this particular part of the preacher's responsibility he is to educate the members among which he ministers in Bible truths and doctrine and Christian living.

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**LESSON AIM:** To make each aspiring preacher aware of his responsibilities and opportunities in the education process of the local church.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Consider the biblical foundations for education from Ephesians 4:1-16.
  2. Learn several keys to effective ministry including certain characteristics of the preacher which affects the preaching ministry.
  3. See some important traits in the preacher which affects his success.
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### BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR EDUCATION

#### A. God's Provision for Maturing His Church

1. The necessity, the assignment given – maturing members, (Ephesians 4:11-16).
2. The means of maturing provided by God.
  - a. Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers – these are God's gifts to the church.
  - b. The Apostles' and Prophets' writings (the Bible) are the source and means by which Evangelists and others are to accomplish the task.
3. Areas where the saints should be equipped.
  - a. Works of service.
  - b. Building up the body of Christ.
4. The goal: The unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God.
  - a. A mature man – to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ.
  - b. Strong in the Lord – in contrast to those who are tossed about by every

wind of doctrine.

5. One of the preacher's assignments is to equip the saints by teaching them the word of God – the means by which faith is attained and strengthened.
6. Teaching faithful men in and out of the classroom (2 Timothy 2:2, *...and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*)

#### **B. Foundations of Mentoring**

1. Paul's example in 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12.
  - a. He taught them the gospel and gave instructions for living out the word of God in their lives.
  - b. He showed them by his example and gently mentored them into being what he himself was.
2. The approach to teaching today is to be the same as that of Paul.
  - a. Giving people information and living the life of Christ among people,
  - b. Showing them how that life is lived out and encouraging them to get involved.

#### **C. Five Keys to Effective Ministry**

1. Be biblical. The preacher must be biblical to be effective in ministry.
2. Be genuine and sincere.
  - a. Pure motives – not seeking the glory of men.
  - b. Not from pretext or greed.
3. Be sensitive and compassionate. Paul's wording, "as a nursing mother."
4. Be consistent in teaching and in life.

1 Thessalonians 2:9-10, *For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers.*
5. Be inspirational – Inspire and motivate others to do good works.
  - a. Exhorting, encouraging and imploring is the need.
  - b. With the gentleness and compassion of a father.
  - c. The goal, to move God's people to walk in a manner worthy of God.

#### **D. Teaching in the Contemporary World**

1. Preachers/teachers need to be prepared to teach.
2. Preachers/teachers need to be willing to teach.
3. Preachers must be sensible, determining how much time he has for teaching.
4. Preachers should use Bible classes as a tool to encourage church growth.
5. Preachers can be more fruitful by using printed materials, hand-outs.
6. Preachers may use visual aids and electronic media to assist in getting their message across.

#### **E. Special Teaching Opportunities**

1. The Ladies Bible Class.
2. The Tomorrow's Timothys' class, for elementary school-age boys.
3. Teaching teenagers.

## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR**

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1. Write out the passage of scripture in 2 Timothy that describes one aspect of the preacher's ministry.

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2. What are five keys to be an effective minister?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

3. What passage of scripture tells one that the preacher is to preach to members of the church? For what reason/s?

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## LESSON FIVE

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Visitation (1)*

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### INTRODUCTION

**V**isiting the various groups of people in the congregation is part of the work of the local preacher. Some might object to this or think that, in general, visitation is the work of someone else, especially as it involves members of the congregation. The general thinking in most people's mind is that it is the responsibility of the bishops/elders, and that it is part of the task of shepherding by leaders in the church. And while that's true it does not mean that a preacher can't visit members of the congregation as well. It needs to be communicated clearly that there are certainly some benefits for a preacher who spends time visiting the congregation. How else would he learn of the needs and desires of the people to whom he preaches?

Another area of the visitation ministry of the preacher has to do with people in the hospital. This is a ministry that can and should be developed into a major part of any congregation's outreach.

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**LESSON AIM:** To impress on the student the great value and fruitfulness of visiting, especially church members and those in the hospital.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Be informed of the value and the benefit of a well-planned visitation ministry.
  2. Learn that the ultimate goal, purpose of visiting non-members is to share the good news of salvation with them.
  3. Discover the value of hospital visitation and some guidelines that will be necessary in your visiting hospital patients.
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### THE VALUE OF VISITING MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS

#### A. Benefits Gained by Visiting the Members

1. Visiting members helps the preacher to be a better servant to them.
2. This will gain more respect for the preacher – they will know the preacher took time to visit them and this showed his concern for them.
3. Brethren will have a greater respect for the word of God.
  - a. Often times people associate preaching with the preacher – if they like the preacher they're probably going to like the preaching.
  - b. A personal acquaintance between the preacher and members will serve



- to enhance preaching.
- c. If members don't know or like the preacher they won't like his preaching or what he preaches.
- 4. Preaching will be more relational – it will be out of the knowledge and awareness of what's going on in the congregation.

## **B. Visiting Non-members**

1. The prime purpose of visiting non-members is evangelistic.
  - a. Focus on relaying to them the good news about Jesus Christ.
  - b. After that initial contact the preacher needs to visit the visitors to the assembly for the purpose of studying the Bible.
2. Some opportunities for visits would include:
  - a. **Spouses of members.**
    - 1) Many times the spouse will attend church with his/her Christian mate and listen to sermons and become acquainted with people in the church.
    - 2) They might also have gained a certain amount of Bible knowledge.
    - 3) This person perhaps already has an understanding of God because of the Christian spouse who has been living the Christian life before them.
    - 4) Speak to and get prior agreement from the Christian spouse.
  - b. **Visitors to the assembly.**
    - 1) Show them a proper respect by saying thank you for the visit.
    - 2) Ask them to let you come and visit them in their homes.
    - 3) These may be people new to the community or new people to town.
    - 4) They may be attending because a friend has invited them.
  - c. **Friends of members.**
    - 1) When visiting congregation members ask them about others they know who might be willing to study.
    - 2) Co-workers of members could be good prospects.
  - d. **Newcomers to the city** – an area where potential converts are found.
    - 1) Some communities have a newcomers list – by getting that list you're aware of when people move into your community.
    - 2) Supply them with information about the community.
    - 3) Let them know they are welcome in the church where you attend.
    - 4) Help them get involved in community activities.
  - e. **Other possibilities:** Scouts, school activities or sports activities, etc.

## **HOSPITAL VISITATION**

### **A. Characteristics of Hospital Visitation**

1. The visit should be **ministry-centered**; for the purpose of service; be prepared/know the following:
  - a. Know the name of the person being visited (nickname, also).
  - b. Know something about the patient's medical history. Caution: if you *have* to ask about the patient's problem, don't ask a female.
  - c. Know something about the person's present condition.

2. The visit should be **patient-centered**; be concerned about the patient's feelings.
  - a. Emotional and spiritual factors must be considered.
  - b. Many times people in the hospital have **a feeling of helplessness**.
    - 1) They're confined to a bed in a strange setting.
    - 2) They're surrounded by nurses, doctors, other patients and sometimes other beds.
    - 3) Their clothes are taken away and they're given a strange gown to wear.
    - 4) Sometimes you don't get to select your own food.
    - 5) For many it's just a lack of privacy being examined by all kinds of people in all kinds of ways at all times of the day.
  - c. Many patients are concerned about the illness itself. Questions they may ask:
    - 1) How long will it take for me to get over this or is this a sickness that will plague me?
    - 2) How much pain will I feel?
    - 3) What will the recovery be like?
    - 4) Is it hereditary – did I receive it from my parents or relatives – will I pass it on to my children or my grandchildren?
  - d. Many people in the hospital worry about their family.
    - 1) If I die what will the family do without me – who will take my place in the family circle?
    - 2) How can I keep my family from worrying about this?
  - e. Some will worry about finances – medical costs and future bills.
  - f. Many people also worry about their job – will they lose their job? Will they be able to perform their job?
  - g. Some may have a sense of guilt.
    - 1) A good time to be there to listen to one who might want to confess sin.
    - 2) A good time to speak to them about God and his forgiveness and his willingness to rebuild broken parts.
    - 3) Some think there must be a reason for anything bad that happens in their lives.
    - 4) They may think that God is punishing them in this way.
  - h. Some people have an extreme fear of pain.
  - i. For some there's the fear of a physical handicap or deformity because of their sickness.
  - j. Most people, of course, have the fear of death, of facing the unknown.
  - k. Some even have the fear of getting better.

**NOTE:** There are some things that come up that the preacher will never be prepared for mentally or emotionally. But living a good Christian life can help one deal with what might be the shock.

3. The visit should be **illness-centered**.
  - a. Surgical patients (generally, critically ill for a short period of time)

- 1) Don't spend excessive time with these patients – several 3 to 5 minute visits are best.
- 2) Encourage the family (crisis builds slowly).
3. The best visit is the night before surgery, pray with the family; and offer the assurance of God's concern.
4. If possible, be with the family in the waiting room during surgery
- b. Medical patients:
  - 1) Recognize and understand their changing moods.
  - 2) They may be highly excitable (and apprehensive).
  - 3) Visit regularly – they may feel forsaken and alone.
4. The visit should be **Christ-centered**.
  - a. Prayer, almost always, should be short and specific and personal.
  - b. Talk about a spiritual thought – an applicable scripture may be used.
  - c. Avoid large amounts of unimportant and unrelated discussion – not a time for chit-chat.
  - d. Don't make it preacher (self) – centered, or business-meeting centered, or gossip-centered.
  - e. Bring an awareness of the presence of God and resources available in Him – Biblical “prescriptions” in addition to doctor-prescribed medicines.

#### **B. Proper Procedures for Hospital Visitation**

1. Respect the hospital and its staff.
2. Observe visiting hours (when posted); if you go at other times, go only at the patient's request and tell the nurse why you are there.
3. Observe and obey signs on doors – they're there for a purpose.
4. Smile – don't go in with a down-cast look on your face – your countenance may determine the patients out-look.
5. Always knock before entering the room – their privacy is important.
6. Talk in a natural way; don't be loud and/or rowdy – especially if there is a roommate.
7. Assist in any way possible – make calls, run errands, help rearrange pillow.
8. Offer to leave the room when the doctor enters.

## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE**

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1. List four benefits gained by visiting members of the church.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. What is the preacher's prime purpose for visiting non-members?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What four things should characterize hospital visitation?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. List eight procedures discussed in this lesson one should follow when visiting in the hospital?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 7) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 8) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON SIX

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Visitation (2)*

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### INTRODUCTION

**H**ospital visitation as a part of the ministry of the preacher is a very important aspect of his over-all work. Hospital visitation is a ministry that doesn't come naturally to all people, for some it must be developed. It is a ministry where care and concern for people is manifested the most. It can be very beneficial or it can have destructive results which can harm both the patient and the influence of the church represented by the preacher. This lesson will consider the final twelve "proper procedures" for visiting someone confined to the hospital.

Visiting the church family is also an important aspect of the preacher's ministry. It has a significant importance to church growth both in numbers and in spiritual health. This ministry rests in the area of the preacher and the church leaders.

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**LESSON AIM:** To enhance and enlarge on the discussion of visitation and the benefits that can accrue in the way of fruit borne and blessings for the preacher.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Continue to be informed about the proper procedures involved in visitation by looking at the final 12 items on the list of procedures in the previous lesson.
  2. Consider the preacher's involvement in shepherding as he visits those in the congregation.
  3. Know the various groups the preacher should visit and take note of some guidelines as the visits are being made.
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### HOSPITAL VISITATION (cont.)

#### A. Proper Procedures in Hospital Visitation (cont.)

9. Keep things told to you in the hospital room confidential – by patient or family (Unless given permission).
10. Stand in a position where it is easy for the patient to see you.
  - a. Do not stand in front of a window with open blinds,
  - b. Don't stand or sit where the patient has to move his/her head to see you.
  - c. Often, it is hard for a patient to see someone when he/she is sitting down.
11. Don't instruct the nurses on what they should do to help the patient.
  - a. Don't be harsh or critical when talking with the nurse or doctor.

- b. Don't join the patient's negative criticism of hospital staff.
- 12. Avoid whispering with the doctor or family; go outside the room to discuss things the patient doesn't need to hear (even when you *think* he/she is sleeping).
- 13. Stay only 5-10 minutes if surgical patient, 10-20 minutes if medical patient.
  - a. Be aware and concerned about the time spent with patient.
  - b. Remember the patient may need the rest from a host of other visitors.
- 14. Offer to say a prayer before leaving.
  - a. Ask the patient if he/she would like for you to pray.
  - b. Prayer for the patient sometimes creates a link to God.
- 15. Help the patient think about God – bring up an awareness of God into the room.
- 16. Don't walk into intensive care unit without permission of medical staff.
- 17. Turn off your cell phone.
- 18. Don't discuss what you know about others who have had the same type of surgery or illness.
- 19. Be cautious with women only in a room.
- 20. If many are to (e.g., teens) go with you, inform the hospital staff prior to your visit.

**B. The Golden Rule** – “Do unto others . . .” is always a good measuring stick for hospital visitation.

## VISITATION WITHIN THE CHURCH FAMILY

### **A. The Preacher's Relation to Pastoring**

- 1. Don't assume the role of a shepherd. You are not the pastor/elder/bishop.
  - a. Pastors should pastor.
  - b. But it's ok for preachers to “pastor” also.
- 2. Be willing to shepherd. Positive results when the evangelist also “shepherds.”
  - a. It makes him a better servant.
  - b. Brethren respect the preacher more.
  - c. Brethren will have a greater respect for the Word
  - d. The preacher will preach better sermons.
  - e. Some ministry assignments are the responsibility of both the shepherds and the preacher.
- 4. Shepherd – don't BE the shepherd. Avoid doing too much shepherding.
  - a. The preacher will lack sufficient time for sermon/class study and evangelism.
  - b. Avoid giving people the impression that this is the work of the local preacher (the denominational model).
  - c. And don't let the elders pressure you into doing their work.

### **B. The Preacher's Relation to Members and Ministry**

- 1. Spend time with the people, getting to know them.
  - a. Showing that he cares for them, and winning their respect by his good deeds.

- b. Preaching improves (relevance and motivation to act upon the Word preached) when the preacher knows the people to whom he is speaking each week.
- 2. Be true, open and honest in teaching and actions.
  - a. The example of the Pharisees: Matthew 23, “do what they say, but not what they do.”
  - b. The example of Jesus, the good shepherd, in John 10.
- 3. Be actively engaged in ministry.
 

If you tell them your pastors are supposed to pastor and you’re supposed to “win souls” (or whatever else you’re supposed to do), then be active, out among the people, trying to win souls.

### C. Various Groups the Preacher Should Visit

- 1. **The elderly:** – encourage them and assure them of their salvation.
  - a. In their homes – building relationships.
  - b. In a nursing home – assuring them they are not alone.
  - c. In a retirement home – making them aware they can still be active in the kingdom.
- 2. **The bereaved:** Be gentle, patient and sympathetic.
  - a. Remind them of a God who keeps His promises.
  - b. Remind them of the presence of God – even in their times of distress.
- 3. **New members:**
  - a. Do something to integrate new members into the fellowship of the church.
  - b. Let them know about the various opportunities for Bible study by informing them of the different classes available.
  - c. Share with them the various ministries in which they may become involved.
- 4. **All members:**
  - a. Visiting all members will build lasting relationships.
  - b. The preacher will feel the pulse of the people and get to know their wants and needs.
  - c. It will create familiarity and appreciation, in the hearts of both the people and the preacher.
- 5. **Those who have fallen away:**
  - a. Restore with patience and gentleness – *...you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.*
  - b. Go with elders. Restoring the fallen is a mutual ministry.
  - c. Prayer (James 5:16 – *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*)  
(cf. Luke 15:7 – *... I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.*)
  - d. To build relationships. If needs are not known, they will not be met.
  - e. Forgiveness of all involved. Forgiveness is commanded by Jesus Christ

(Matthew 6:14-15).

- f. To discover the problem and or cause.
  - g. To rebuke; implore; call for repentance.
  - h. With a spirit of love. *But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.* (1 Timothy 1:5).
6. Get others involved – when others are involved visitation will permeate the entire congregation.
- a. Information should be given to elders.
  - b. It is better for the preacher and elders to visit together.
  - c. Train others to visit (take others with you): an elder, a “mentoree,” teachers, members.
  - d. Begin a visitation program – In a class related to visitation, talk about:
    - 1) Personal relations skills.
    - 2) Purpose-oriented visits (types, purpose, etc.).
    - 3) What to say.
    - 4) When should a visit be made, and how long should it last.
    - 5) Go in pairs.
    - 6) Go with information (handouts).
7. Be an example – be involved in what you’re trying to teach and train others to do.

#### **D. Benefits of Visitation**

1. You will be blessed – even more than the person or persons visited. Jesus said, *I is more blessed to give...* (Acts 20:35)
2. It creates openness and friendliness.
3. It improves relationships with members and non-members.
4. Visiting gives credibility to the preacher’s ministry.
5. It enhances ministry involvement in members – it gets members involved.
6. It has the potential to improve the preacher’s preaching.

#### **E. Some General Principles of Visitation**

1. Begin by stating why you are there.
  - a. This is especially true if you go uninvited.
  - b. Should you call first or just “show up?”
2. Be courteous and respectful. When you’re in someone’s home or place of business.
  - a. Be brief.
  - b. Be friendly, but don’t assume you’re a “friend of the family.”
  - c. Establish a relationship (build rapport)
  - e. Be a good listener by asking questions and showing genuine interest.
  - f. Invite to worship.
  - g. Offer a service.
3. Miscellaneous concerns.
  - a. Be impartial (visit everyone, not just those of a certain “group”).
  - b. Don’t be pushy, but go as far as you can in teaching.
  - c. Take someone with you.
  - d. Keep good records.



- e. Avoid every appearance of evil – There are some cases where it is a must that two people go! (e.g., what will neighbors think of the person you are visiting?)

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIX**

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1. List at least five groups the preacher should visit in his ministry.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Discuss the preacher's relationship to shepherding.

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3. List five groups the preacher should visit.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON SEVEN

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *In a Church Without Elders*

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### INTRODUCTION

**T**he preacher's work in any circumstance is no easy task but in a church without elders/bishops it is especially challenging. The leadership of the church, designed by God Himself, has purpose and plan in the overall growth and outreach of the church. A church without proper leadership i.e. elders, may be like a flock of sheep without a shepherd, they may wander around accomplishing very little and not reach the potential God has planned for them. Also, a church without elders may indicate a church with very little spiritual maturity. How is a preacher going to be able to perform his ministry in a situation such as this? This lesson will explore some ways the preacher can respond in this kind of circumstance.

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**LESSON AIM:** To offer guidance to the preacher in his efforts to establish elders in a church in which there are no elders.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Understand that a church that has no elders may be as biblically organized as churches which have shepherds.
  2. Look at steps necessary in establishing a biblical eldership in a church and some hindrances that may arrive.
  3. Consider some suggestions for the preacher working with a congregation that has no elders.
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### LEADERSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

#### A. The Reality of Churches Biblically Organized Without Elders

1. The Bible ideal is for a church to have elders – maturity a must.
  - a. A part of God's plan for church leadership.
  - b. Before there were elders there were churches.
  - c. Churches can exist without elders.
  - d. Qualified men are necessary before a church can have elders.

**NOTE:** A church with unqualified elders is not biblically organized! Better to not have elders rather than have unqualified men as elders.

2. The preacher must have a viable plan to lead the congregation into having a biblical eldership.

- a. This can be a great challenge for the preacher.
- b. It is a great need for the welfare of the church.
- c. Titus 1:5, *This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you* (ESV)
- 3. Dangers involved for the preachers where there are no elders
  - a. First danger: Everybody becomes the preacher's boss.
  - b. Second danger: The preacher becomes the boss.
  - c. Neither of these situations is God's plan of church leadership.

#### **B. Moving a Church Toward Biblical Leadership**

- 1. The preacher's purpose and plan.
- 2. An evaluation, portrait of the church and the men in the church. Are there:
  - a. Men of prayer?
  - b. Men who have a benevolent spirit – men already involved in ministry.
  - c. Men whose family life is biblically based.
- 3. Bringing people to spiritual maturation should be the goal of every preacher.
  - a. The goal of having elders ought to be secondary to this.
  - b. Having unqualified men as church leaders is worse than having no elders.
  - c. Train men by having potential elders minister along side the preacher.

#### **C. Steps Necessary in Establishing Elders in a Congregation**

- 1. Understand the necessity and be committed to the process.
- 2. Teach on holiness and spiritual giftedness.
- 3. Teach on the need of loving others.
- 4. Set an exemplary life before them – showing them the life you want them to live.
- 5. Speak of being an elder as something to desire and aspire to.  
I Timothy 3:1, *The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.* (ESV)
- 6. Set a target date where goals and objectives can be measured.
- 7. Provide resources and opportunities for ministry, including leadership responsibilities and rewards.
  - a. Study with prospective leaders books on leadership.
  - b. Encourage them to attend leadership seminars, etc.

#### **D. Hindrances in Establishing Elders in the Local Church**

- 1. A church that has not converted many people in recent years.
- 2. A church whose male membership is young of age.
- 3. A church filled with immature members.
- 4. The limited time the preacher has to devote to developing elders.

#### **E. Suggestions for the Preacher in a Church Without Elders**

- 1. Utilize the resources you have – spiritual men and women who are servant leaders.
  - a. Honor their giftedness and put them to work.
  - b. Nurture their servant hearts and activate their spiritual gifts.

2. Convey to them what a blessing they are to the over-all well-being of the church.
3. Let them know that their involvement frees you to do the evangelistic work needed for the church to grow.
5. Employ a ministerial accountability system.
  - a. Communicate clearly with the congregation your ministry activities.
  - b. Keep a daily log – both to inform and for your own safety.
  - c. Be available to people by phone.
6. Be a vision-caster.
  - a. Visions that deal with short-term growth.
  - b. Long-term visions concerning the growth of the church.
7. Assist others in problem resolution.
  - a. Don't try to be the expert in problem-solving.
  - b. Work with others in solving problems.
  - c. Proverbs 11:14, *Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.* (ESV)
  - d. Proverbs 15:22, *Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.* (ESV)
  - e. Proverbs 24:6, *...for by wise guidance you can wage your war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory.* (ESV)
  - f. Romans 12:18, *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.* (ESV)

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN**

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1. Discuss and show how a church can be scripturally organized without elders.

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2. List two dangers for the preacher in a church without elders.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_

3. List four hindrances in establishing elders in the local church.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON EIGHT

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Church Without Elders (2)*

### *Implementing Change*

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#### INTRODUCTION

**T**he preacher's involvement in the local church with no elders/shepherds will take on many shapes. In lieu of shepherds much of the work of shepherding will be required of him. Much of this was discussed in the previous lesson, but more needs to be said concerning this. This lesson will continue the discussion of the preacher in a church without elders, then we will consider how change can be accomplished.

Change, any change, can be very traumatic in the minds of many people and probably more-so when church members are involved. The preacher needs to be sensitive to change in his own life and in the life of the church where he ministers. A great deal of good can be the result of changes made in the overall life and structure of the church. A lot of harm can also be brought about if change is not handled with a lot of wisdom and sensibility.

Some examples of change that demand effort and can result in problems: worship time, songbooks, worship-styles; Small groups ministry; Benevolent outreach; a "visitor's center" in the foyer; bulletin format and attendance cards. Changes such as these may be accompanied with difficulties, but may also bring blessings.

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**LESSON AIM:** To provide the student with some suggestions and guidelines in working with a church without shepherds and implementing positive change to promote church growth.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Look at some ways a preacher is involved in pastoring/shepherding in his ministry.
  2. Be aware of certain aspects and attitudes to consider when attempting to make changes in a congregation.
- 

#### LEADERSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH (cont:)

##### A. Standardize Meetings

1. Standard, well ordered and regular. Robert's rule of order is a good guide.
2. Publish agenda in advance.
  - a. This will keep things clear, open, prepared, and it avoids "hidden" agendas of others.

- b. Sometimes, there might be “meetings before the meeting,”
  - c. Suggestions from others as to what they want on the agenda.
- 3. Write down minutes of the meeting.
  - a. Get the information, accurately; make it available.
  - b. Hold people accountable to do the work/assignments.
- 4. Keep it in a file for future reference.

#### **B. The Preacher’s Part in Shepherding the Church**

- 1. Shepherding is an important part of the preacher’s work (Ephesians 4:11).
  - a. The preacher is not the only one who should do this.
  - b. The minister should do shepherding because it’s part of his work.
  - c. Many in both congregation and community – right or wrong – think it’s his work.
- 2. Pray over the sick (James 5:14).
- 3. Search for and restore lost sheep (James 5:19-20; Galatians 6:1-2).
- 4. Admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone (i.e. bind up the wounded and make strong again), *And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.* (1 Thessalonians 5:14)

#### **C. The Preacher Is Not to Be a Pastor/Elder**

- 1. The preacher is not a replacement for an eldership.
- 2. The preacher must not assume the position of the prime minister, the main guy, the chief.
- 3. The preacher should never be a “One Man Show.”
- 4. The preacher should always remember he is called to “do the work of an evangelist” (2 Timothy 4:5 – *As for you . . . do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry*).

**NOTE:** The work assignment of the preacher would be more difficult to accomplish if he were also required to do the work of a shepherd. Which raises the question: Should a preacher also serve as an elder in a local congregation of the Lord’s church?

### **MAKING CHANGE (WHEN CHANGE NEEDS TO BE MADE)**

Four important things to consider when making change.

#### **A. Determine – Who Decides What and When – Who Makes The Decision**

- 1. Does the preacher decide – Sometime he may have good ideas.
- 2. Who made him the boss? (Were you hired to be a change-agent?) When does he decide?
- 3. Be careful not to push your agenda.
- 4. Remember that preachers are dispensable.
- 5. Remember the “one-year Moratorium” principle.
  - a. The preacher needs time to be accepted and trusted.
  - b. The preacher needs to prove his trustworthiness in his involvement in congregational life.

**B. Analyze – the Scene as to What Others Are Saying/Thinking**

1. Listen to the “legitimate” complaints.
2. Be aware of and search for hidden agendas.
3. Survey the congregational interests.
4. Work with others of like mind.
5. Respect the reasons of those who resist change.

**C. Prayer – Individual and Congregational**

1. Seeking God and His will (which includes unity, not division) in all things.
2. Pray for: wisdom, patience, thoroughness (in the work), understanding, growth, and unity.

**D. Prepare – the People for Making Change**

1. Understand the difficulties (in the minds of people) in making change
  - a. Studies have shown that 47% of Americans resist change.
  - b. The other 53% may not welcome change, but they are open to the possibility of some kind of change.
  - c. Nearly half of the membership will not want to change.
    - 1) They prefer the comfort of the “known” and feel threatened by change.
    - 2) Some will think, “does change mean we’re doing something wrong?”
    - 3) Others believe, “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”

**Summary:** Be aware of these, and try to accept them, and you won’t be shocked or feel personally rejected if many resist your ideas for change.

2. Prepare the people for change. Change will be accepted when people are prepared for it. (avoid surprises)
  - a. “Size up” your setting: rural or urban; blue collar or white collar; older or younger; unknown or known (re. the proposed change).
  - b. “Size up” your leadership.
  - c. Determine who are the “movers” and “blockers.”
3. Understand the Proponents and Opponents of Change: Four types of people in a congregation: Radicals, Progressives, Conservatives, Traditionalists.
  - a. Traditionalists do not want change – work around these people.
  - b. Conservatives are open to change but very cautious about it.
  - c. Progressives are proponents of change and the movers in the church.
  - d. Radicals want change if just for the sake of change.
    - 1) Often very critical.
    - 2) Like to upset the status-quo.
    - 3) Very rarely find a radical in the eldership.
    - 4) They generally are more talk than walk.
  - e. Most elders fit in the traditionalist category.

### **Conclusion**

When considering change in a congregation, one of the most important elements is understanding the resistance of change that many have. Also there needs to be an understanding of the people among whom one is working as to the likelihood of change. These things are very significant in the process of change.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT**

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1. What are four things to consider when making changes in a congregation?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. List the four types of people/personalities within a congregation to consider when planning any changes in a church.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_



## LESSON NINE

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *In a Church Without Elders (3)*

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### INTRODUCTION

**I**n this study of Congregational ministry the work of a preacher in the local congregation is being considered. Sizing up the leadership and making decisions about the approach to change are important factors before proceeding in any attempt at change in the local congregation. Should the change originate from the leadership or from within the membership itself? What steps are to be taken that are more likely to bring about change? These are just two questions to be taken into consideration in this lesson.

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**LESSON AIM:** To give the student information on where to start a change process and action steps on furthering the change.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. See that change can originate either from the leadership in the church or from the “rank and file.”
  2. Learn five action steps in the process of making successful change in a local congregation.
- 

### MAKING PREPARATIONS FOR CHANGE

#### A. Important Consideration in Successful Change

1. The beginning place of change. Change needs to be suggested from the **top down**, or from the **bottom up**.
  - a. If from the bottom up, you will need to seek out (or follow) those of like interest to make a presentation to the leaders.
  - b. You must be specific in purpose and objectives, process, etc. – a step by step approach and show how this can benefit the congregation.
  - c. Avoid a cunning or hidden plan to change things.
  - d. Patience is very important – it takes time for change in anything.
2. The rationale for change.
  - a. Prepare a rationale. Include a step-by-step process.
  - b. This must be informational:
    - 1) Why this change is important to the well-being of the church.
    - 2) How it will benefit the congregation and bring glory to God.
3. Important considerations/questions.
  - a. Is this an idea that you feel certain has God’s approval?

- 1) Is it in harmony with God's overall plan for the church and the church's outreach.
- 2) Are other churches using this and if so, has it been beneficial to that congregation?
- b. How this will promote spiritual growth in the church.
- c. Will this change result in division – will it cause more trouble than what it is really worth?

## **B. Action Steps in the Process of Making Change**

1. Begin talking (or listening) one-on-one with the **progressives**.
  - a. If positive feedback is observed, awareness can be raised by presenting non-threatening ideas to others.
    - 1) Seek out leaders who are progressive for advice.
    - 2) Understand the limitations and the importance of going slowly.
    - 3) Try to extol the value of some good program in another congregation.
  - b. Allow time for reaction – mind-sets do not change quickly.
  - c. Prepare a detailed, informative plan.
2. Build a support group from formal and informal leaders.
3. Go “public” – Communicating it to the congregation.
  - a. Provide complete, and all necessary information – very important.
  - c. Explain why, what, when, etc.
  - c. Avoid surprises.
  - d. Being open and informative are of extreme importance.
  - e. Ask the congregation to “buy into” the program.
  - f. Continue to pray and ask others to pray about the change (further “research” and implementation).
4. Understand that change can be chaotic.
  - a. There will be struggles, setbacks, etc. in implementation of change.
  - b. There will be criticism.
  - c. There will be “growing pains.”
  - e. Flexibility and adaptability are necessary ingredients of making change successful – make adjustments along the way will need to be made.
  - d. Change will test your faith; if it's a good thing, Satan will oppose it.
5. Proceed slowly with any additional change.
  - a. Give people time to see the benefits of change.
  - b. Those who resist change will be suspect (what's next, instrumental music?) if there is too much, too fast.

## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE**

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1. List the five action steps in the process of making changes in a church.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. What are three important considerations to be noted before making any change?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Where are the two beginning locations in making changes?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON TEN

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Office and Administration*

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### INTRODUCTION

**I**n Second Timothy chapter 4 verse five the Apostle Paul told his friend Timothy “be sober in all things endure hardship do the work of an evangelist.” The work of an evangelist is many-faceted and involves aspects that are not explicitly dealt with in the New Testament. The New Testament was written when churches were being established and the Christian message was spreading all over the world. However, as we read the New Testament we see generic statements about what a preacher is to do. At times we find out that in the local congregation in our contemporary times there may be additional activities that are given to the preacher. Some of those generic statements about preaching and serving and ministering to others find specific application in modern times, among those include what a preacher does while he is at the church building. Some questions that will be dealt with in this lesson are: “How much time do I have to spend in the office?” “I’m not an administrator!” “Do I have to wear a tie to the office?” “Do I supervise the secretary’s work?” etc.

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**LESSON AIM:** To provide the preacher some guidelines concerning his time and activities in the office.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Discover several things that can and should be accomplished during the time the preacher is in his office.
  2. Learn that the Administration of Church Programs will consume much of his office time.
- 

### THE PREACHER AND HIS OFFICE TIME

#### **A. Discipline of Personal Time (in the office)**

1. So much can and must be done.
2. Planning and discipline is necessary.
  - a. There are many things to do and so much of the preacher’s work/time is not supervised.
  - b. Be sure to keep the main thing the main thing.
3. Personal study/prayer is an important thing to protect.
4. Sermon and other lesson preparations.
5. Planning your week’s activities.

- a. Looking to see who visited the assembly the previous week.
- b. Planning visitation schedule for the coming week.
- c. Don't take Monday as your day off.

**B. Public Relations** (being up-to-date is very important in each of these areas)

- 1. The Church Bulletin.
  - a. Do not be in charge of editing and publishing the bulletin.
  - b. Write articles for the bulletin.
  - c. Make your writings uplifting and spiritual in nature.
- 2. Newspaper articles – helps others to know about the church.
- 3. Brochures – something to hand out to people you visit.
- 4. Pictorial directories – a good way for new member to place faces with names.
  - a. Preacher may have an article in the directory.
  - b. The preacher will likely be up front and more people will see him there.
- 4. Advertising.
- 5. Develop a web site.
- 6. Church sign/marquee.

**NOTE:** The preacher will likely be involved in almost every aspect of church life and will be the leader in many of the activities of the congregation.

**C. Additional “Office Hours” Activities**

- 1. Meetings with others on staff – ministers, secretary, elders and ministry leaders.
- 2. Visitors (personal and via telephone).
  - a. Members – some people have nothing to do and they want to do it in your office.
  - b. Non-members.
  - c. Salespersons.
- 3. Requests for help: individual benevolence; children's homes, etc.
- 4. Office Machines.
- 5. Security – the preacher's presence in the building gives some feeling of security to the secretary – not being alone in the building.
- 6. Repairs to building and grounds – should be the work of deacons or some other qualified person.

**D. Administration of Church Programs**

- 1. Locating and training capable workers (“equipping”). This should be of primary importance to both the preacher and the elders.
- 2. Oversight of works delegated to others – can be time-consuming and deprive the preacher of his primary ministry.
- 3. Need for Committees (must get others involved; help them grow to maturity).
  - a. Visitation – very high on the list.
  - b. Finance – who's going to handle the books, write checks, in charge of the budget, etc.
  - c. Missions – how is the church to reach out to other people, locally and abroad? Find people who have a heart for missions.

- d. Worship – planning a worshipful experience – the preacher should be involved in this area of ministry.
- e. Education – a very important work that the preacher should be involved in – not just in teaching but in planning the entire program of teaching.
- f. Benevolence – not only to fill a physical need but also their spiritual deficiency.
- g. Building and Grounds – should be someone else’s area of ministry.
- h. Publicity – preacher should be aware it is done.
- i. Youth – recruit parents to be involved.
- j. Congregational care – making sure that everyone is helping everyone else to grow and mature.

**THERE ARE NO SELF-TEST QUESTIONS FOR THIS LESSON**

## LESSON ELEVEN

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Community Involvement*

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### INTRODUCTION

**I**n the community, away from church people, and even in the minds of some members of the church there are some preacher “stereotypes.” Many people consider preachers as lazy golfers, or fishermen, or those who spend their idle time just drinking coffee with some friend or good old boy. Some see him as a friendly man who holds hands with all the old ladies and spends little time on other important aspects of his ministry. He may be looked on as a sissy, righteous (never sins), killjoy, and a non-athlete. A good way to combat that kind of “stereotyping” is to become involved in the community and in community projects. Preachers should be looked upon as common human beings like everyone else in the church and community.

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**LESSON AIM:** To examine the importance and fruitfulness of the preacher’s involvement in the community in which he lives.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Examine several positive results of the preacher being involved in the local activities of the community.
  2. Take note of various ways in which the minister can be involved and the fruit that can be borne by his involvement
  3. Learn that the true essence of the minister’s work is to be a servant..
- 

### REASONS WHY A MINISTER SHOULD GET INVOLVED

#### **A. To Kill the Negative Stereotypes Held by Many People**

1. Be a servant within his society.
  - a. The blessings go both ways.
  - b. Minister must not isolate himself from his community by spending so much time in his office or with Christians only.
2. Members are part of the community.
  - a. If they are not involved it will be easier for them to get involved.
  - b. The preacher’s involvement will set the example for others.
3. Preachers should not isolate themselves from church members or the people of the community.

### **B. Being Involved Creates Opportunity for Bible Studies**

1. Getting to know people often breaks the negative preacher image.
  - a. Show them who/what you are and what you value.
  - b. Community involvement helps establish credibility.
2. Community involvement creates opportunities for service and evangelism.

### **C. Have a Voice in Community Events/directions**

1. The preacher who is respected may have an influence in determining the moral character and nature of the community.
2. The preacher may be the steadying factor in his community.

### **D. An Involved Preacher Can Get Other Christians Involved**

1. Christians are to be a light to the world (Matthew 5:16).
2. Must be in people's midst to be effective lights.

## **WAYS A MINISTER CAN GET INVOLVED**

### **A. Various Activities Can Allow the Preacher to Be Involved**

1. Activities such as school PTA, volunteers, tutors, coaching, scouts , etc.
2. Athletics and Recreation.

### **B. Other areas of community involvement:**

1. Civic/Service Clubs, Schools, Writing for local newspaper,
2. Attending city council meetings, be part of "Protest" groups (e.g. anti-porn, M.A.D.D., anti-gambling).

### **C. Rewards of Being Involved**

1. A personal sense of belonging.
2. Friendships made and deepened.
3. Opportunities for Evangelism.
4. Glory to God and His Church.
5. Home life is improved.
  - a. As you serve your community you are serving your family, which is part of the community (don't forget this).
  - b. Often, the family is a participant and recipient of the community service

## **SUMMARY: A MINISTER'S WORK AND CHALLENGES**

### **A. Serving People (Imitating Christ) in All Things**

1. The minister should never forget what the name means: he is a servant.
2. Word Study:
  - a. The *diakonos* – "a servant, minister; one under the authority of another." Colossians 1:7, 23, 25; *just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,*
  - b. The *diakonia* – "the service; ministering the commands of another." Colossians 4:17, *Say to Archippus, "Take heed to **the ministry** which you*



*have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."*

1 Timothy 1:12, *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me **into service**.*

2 Timothy 4:5, *But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, **fulfill your ministry**.*

- c. The *doulos* – “serving, being subject to; a slave, a bond-servant of another.”

Galatians 1:10, *If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.*

Philippians 1:1, *Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus,*

2 Timothy 2:24, *The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,*

3. Biblical Emphases:

- a. Use the gifts you have: *Serve one another, to God's glory and man's benefit.*

1 Peter 4:10-11, *As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies.*

- b. Use the gifts with the proper attitude: *And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful (2 Timothy 2:24).*

- c. Know and understand Who you serve: *It is the Lord Christ whom you serve (Colossians 3:24).*

## **B. The Great Challenge in Ministry**

1. A minister is a servant.

- a. The preacher must humble himself, submit to God, and serve people.
- b. The preacher is not now nor ever will be above “servant status,” (see Luke 17:7-10).
- c. *Have this mind in yourselves . . . [Jesus] took the form of a servant... (Philippians 2:5-8)*

2. Leaders among God's people are not to imitate the Gentiles' model; they love to “lord it over them.”

Jesus said greatness was in serving, being a slave, and sacrificing one's self (His example) (Matthew 20:20-28).

## **Summary Thoughts**

1. Accept that you are a servant. Rejoice in the fact that you can serve in this way.
2. Expect to be treated like a servant. How else would a servant expect to be treated?
3. Don't be surprised when you are treated the way servants are treated.
4. Remember that Jesus came “not to be served but to serve.” That is the preacher's calling as well!

**THERE ARE NO SELF-TEST QUESTIONS FOR THIS LESSON**

## LESSON TWELVE

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *His Relationship With Elders (1)*

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### INTRODUCTION

**W**hat are the essential courses for the most effective training in preparing men to preach and work in a local church setting? Elders would answer that question with this observation, “teach them how to get along with people and how to work with elders.” In other words, more often than not a man’s work is weak, disastrous, or terminated because of inadequate relationships with others, especially those with whom you may disagree.

The most effective and enjoyable ministry is when there exists a good relationship between the minister and his elders, the preacher not viewing elders as enemies or as the ones who “hold back the church.” Ministers *have* to work with church leaders; they have similar “jobs, assignments” and concerns for the people (e.g. Ephesians 4:11ff). Ministers need to work with their elders (and/or other church leaders) in peaceful and harmonious ways.

Preachers cannot have a stubborn will/spirit – which is unwise, un-Christ-like, and sinful – and do their work effectively. Submission is an absolute necessity.

A good relationship between a minister and his elders is the key to good, effective, enjoyable, and long-term ministry. If he does not work well with his elders, he will leave, or he’ll stay and be unhappy, critical, and perhaps divisive. If he does not work well with his elders, then whether he goes or stays, nobody (except the devil) wins.

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**LESSON AIM:** To examine the kind of relationship the preacher must have with church leaders necessary to accomplish his ministry in the local church.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. See that the proper relationship of the preacher in relation to elders is one of submission and cooperation.
  2. Understand that to accomplish the work-assignment for both the preacher and church elders/leaders there must be mutual respect exhibited by both.
  3. Learn that allegiance to Christ is an absolute necessity.
-

## **BIBLICAL GUIDELINES IN WORKING WITH ELDERS**

### **A. Submission of the Preacher to Elders (1 Peter 5:1-5)**

1. The command to submit.
  - a. Ministers are part of the “you younger men” who must submit to the elders. *In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders* (v. 5).
  - b. Ministers are under the oversight of the elders along with the rest of the congregation.
2. Humility is also emphasized here – being humble is a requisite of receiving God’s grace/favor which is needed to be an effective minister. *...clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”*
3. Not only is the “proud” preacher in opposition to God – he is opposed by God.

### **B. The Aim and Goal of the Preacher (Ephesians 4:11-16)**

1. The minister’s assignment – “the equipping of the saints.” This would include equipping the shepherds and deacons along with all the congregation.
2. The fruit or goal of this ministry – the work of Ministry and the state of Maturity – no longer children.
  - a. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.
  - b. The unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.
  - c. A perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.
3. The preacher is to be a co-worker with the elders in accomplishing this goal.

### **C. The Preacher’s Respect for Elders (1 Timothy 5:17-22)**

1. Elders “who work hard at preaching and teaching” (NASV) are to receive **double-honor**.
  - a. They are to be honored for their work in teaching.
  - b. They are to be honored for their shepherding work.
2. Be careful when receiving an accusation against an elder. The biblical standard is “at the mouth of two or three” witnesses. *Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses*.
  - a. Be careful not to listen to one person’s gripe or complaint.
  - b. Be primarily on the side of the elder, they are your co-workers!
3. When there is the necessity of rebuke – relate carefully and wisely with the elders (Galatians 6:1-2) *...you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently*.
4. “Maintain these principles without bias” – Don’t show favoritism between elders, some you may relate to very well and others not so well.
5. “Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily.” *I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.*(NASV)  
This requires insight, wisdom, understanding and patience.

## **PRINCIPLE FOR WORKING WITH ELDERS**

### **A. Getting to Know Your Elders**

1. Take the initiative.
2. Mix work and play (include family involvement).
3. Let them know your spiritual needs – and your struggles for holiness – and seek accountability (spiritually).
4. Prioritize your work for the first year.

### **B. Prayer and Study with the Elders**

1. When and Where:
  - a. Not just as a part of “business” meeting – this setting may communicate business instead of family.
  - b. In someone’s home – this will provide a more informal environment and will be conducive to strengthening relationships.
2. What to study:
  - a. Jesus, the Good Shepherd.
  - b. Leadership principles and communication styles.
  - c. The work of elders (biblical and practical).
  - d. Principles of Church Growth.
  - e. Generational issues, Bible books, etc.

### **C. Shepherding the Flock Together**

1. Paul’s instruction to evangelists, pastors and teachers, (Ephesians 4:11-16).
  - a. The assignment and work of elders – equip the members for works of service.
  - b. The work of Preachers is the same – along with preaching the gospel to the lost.
2. Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus gives an overview of the work of preachers as they work with elders.

## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWELVE**

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1. List the scripture which shows the truth of the following statements:
  - 1) The command for preachers to submit to elders: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) The aim and goal of the preacher: \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) The preacher’s respect for elders: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Which epistles in the New Testament gives an overview of the work of the preacher? \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON THIRTEEN

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *His Relationship With Elders (2)*

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### INTRODUCTION

**B**uilding and maintaining a good working relationship with congregational leaders is extremely important to the health and growth of the church. People, like horses, accomplish the most when pulling in the same direction. Unlike draft animals people work best when good attitudes and kindred spirits are evident and all have the same goals in mind. This is especially true when it comes to the relationship between elders and preachers. When there is little unity and common goals in the church leadership then that oftentimes reveals itself in the congregation itself. Building and maintaining good relationships requires an intentional effort on all concerned and a clear understanding of the responsibilities of all involved.

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**LESSON AIM:** To continue to consider several things and attitudes that will enhance and strengthen a good working relationship between elders and preachers.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Consider several areas where a preacher has a definite and powerful influence on the relationship between him and his elders.
  2. Learn the importance that a good understanding on the preacher's salary and working expectation can have on his overall ministry.
- 

### SUMMARY THOUGHTS ON WORKING TOGETHER

#### A. Remember the "Chips" Principle

1. You lose chips when you receive discouraging words.
2. You gain chips when you hear encouraging words.
3. The more chips you have the better you serve.

#### B. Strive for Clear, Open Communication

1. Hidden agendas on either part can destroy a good ministry.
2. Be clear, concise and honest in your communication.

#### C. Watch Each Other's Back

1. Do not listen to criticism and negative talk.

2. Defend and show respect in the face of critical comments.

**D. Maintain Confidentiality**

1. What goes on in the elders' meeting must not be revealed by the preacher.
2. Do not use the pulpit to air personal like or dislikes.
3. The preacher can lose much credibility by violating this principle.

**E. Pray For, Support, and Encourage One Another**

1. Prayer with and for the elders will go far in promoting unity of purpose.
2. Never express negative thoughts concerning the elders in the presence of others.

**F. Build a Strong "Team" Atmosphere**

1. There should never be an atmosphere of opposition between elders and preachers.
2. Preachers should be intentional about building a strong team atmosphere.

**A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR A PROFITABLE MINISTRY**

**A. Getting Started – Building a Good Relationship from the Start, on "Business" Matters**

1. The Minister's job description.
  - a. The work: what is to be done – the amount of time each week (reasonably speaking) to be spent on each area of responsibility – when is the work to be done – where is the work to be done, etc..
  - b. Personal Study: how much time per week . . . where . . . .
  - c. The areas of emphases (time) should reflect the desired goals.
2. Financial arrangements:
  - a. Salary,
  - b. Work-related expenses, including use of automobile,
  - c. Health insurance,
  - d. Social security and/or retirement.
3. Benefits:
  - a. Day(s) off, vacation – should be clearly designated.
  - b. Preaching elsewhere (meetings, seminars, workshops, etc.).
    - 1) Salary continuation?
    - 2) Who pays the expenses related to the minister's travel?
  - c. Attendance at seminars, workshops, etc.
  - d. Continuing education (who pays?).
  - e. Important considerations.

**B. Work Schedule and Accountability**

1. Reports to elders.
  - a. What to include.
  - b. How often.

- c. Attitude of the preacher.
- 2. Evaluations by elders.
  - a. How often.
  - b. Should be based on the job description.
  - c. Be careful with pride, anger and disgust, rejection.
- 3. Strive to work well with your elders; it can contribute significantly to your own physical and mental health. Plus, it will determine effectiveness in ministry, your family's well-being, long-term ministry, and GLORY to GOD.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THIRTEEN**

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- 1. List six principles which enhance a good relationship between elders and ministers.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. List three important things to address in building a good working relationship from the beginning.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON FOURTEEN

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Working with Critical Members*

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### INTRODUCTION

**C**onflict in the church often begins when criticism raises its ugly head and shoots its arrows of destruction toward the preacher and others in ministry. Sometimes this comes about because the preacher has not, maybe cannot, build and maintain good relationships with others. However and from whomever it comes the preacher must be able to deal with it before it destroys him and his ministry. A preacher might very well know the Bible but might not know how to relate well with people, and as a consequence his ministry might be short lived in that place. It is very important that a preacher learns how to deal with people and relate well with people for that makes ministry very interesting and much more effective.

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**LESSON AIM:** To understand the destructive nature of criticism, the reality of it in a congregation and how to respond to personal criticism.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Learn some positive steps to take to establish good relationships within the church where the preacher serves.
  2. Examine some preventive things to consider in building proper relationships.
  3. Understand that there will be criticism and how to handle that criticism.
- 

### BUILDING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE CHURCH

Preventive; taking steps that might avoid conflict.

#### A. Realize That Neither People Nor Churches Are Perfect

1. Churches are populated with imperfect (yet redeemed) people, people just like you and me.
2. Primary relationship must be with God, which is the cornerstone of all meaningful, relationships.
3. Next, family. When these are strong, you're ready to build relationships with other individuals.

#### B. Ministry to Individuals

1. Show genuine love and care.



2. Prayer is always appropriate – pray about people, for people and with people.
5. A preacher’s relationship with his Creator always precedes all other relationships.
3. Work with others.
4. Support them in what they’re doing and praise them for their work.  
Praise them – each week, publicly commend someone.

### **C. The Preacher as Leader – Important Leadership Principles**

1. Lead with a gentle hand – harshness never accomplishes the will of God.
2. Get close to people – you cannot minister to people from afar, at arm’s length.
3. Be willing to listen to others – let people express what is their concern.
4. Welcome feedback – don’t just listen but let them know their input is important to the overall ministry of the church.
5. Know what’s going on in the church – (listen without being “nosy”); don’t run or hide from problems.

### **D. Not Everyone Loves the Preacher**

1. Recognize that there *will be* criticism (fair or unfair); be ready for it.
2. Areas where the preacher may receive criticism.
  - a. Criticism about the preacher himself – his personal life, his mannerisms, etc.
  - b. Criticism about his preaching – his sermons are too long, too short, too much Bible, not enough Bible.
  - c. Criticism about his work – he doesn’t visit enough, he’s never in his office, he doesn’t teach enough people, etc.
  - d. Criticism about the his Family – his kids are unruly, his wife is unfriendly, etc.
  - e. Criticism about the Elders – all criticism about elders should be viewed in light of 1 Timothy 5:19.
  - f. Criticism about the Congregation – too conservative, too liberal, doesn’t minister to its own members, etc.

## **RESPONDING TO CRITICISM**

### **A. Biblical Examples To Follow**

1. How Jesus handled criticism – throughout His ministry, He was criticized by Jewish leaders.
  - a. He sought quiet times and talked to God.
  - b. He continued teaching the people.
  - c. He didn’t lower himself to the level of the critics.
2. How the Apostles and early church handled criticism – “Food for the widows” (Acts 6).
  - a. They assigned the task of feeding the widows to others.
  - b. They devoted themselves to the ministry of the word and prayer.

3. Discussion because of the conversion of Gentiles (Acts 15).
  - a. Paul, James and others discussed the complaint and came to a reasonable conclusion.
  - b. Communicated the solution to the rest of the brethren.
4. Paul and Barnabas, (Acts 15). Differences of opinion concerning John Mark resolved in a Christian manner and the work of preaching the gospel continued and progressed.

#### **B. Biblical Principles To Adhere To**

1. Trust in God (and depending on Him), e.g., (Acts 4, 5).
  - a. Threats of Jewish leaders might stop the ministry of the apostles.
  - b. Trusting in God empowered the apostles to continue the work.
2. Offer better solutions: say “no” when your work might be stopped because you are asked to do something that others can do, e.g., (Acts 6).
3. Seek the other’s highest good, (Philippians 2:3-4, *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others*).
4. Be an example, (1 Timothy 4:12, ... *but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity*).
5. Show genuine love; be devoted to one another, (Romans 12:10, *Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves*).
6. Seek peace among all, (Romans 12:14-18, *If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*).

#### **C. Examining the Situation**

1. Examine yourself: is it true? do you need to repent? what are your motives? are you being selfish, full of pride, desirous to rule, or pushing your agenda? Are you looking at the speck in the critic’s eye while you have a beam in your own?
2. Examine your relationship with God: prayer, submission to His will, desire for unity.
3. Stay focused on the problem, not personalities.  
**NOTE:** If we fail here (and focus on personalities), greater damage will be done. Most church splits are over personalities.
4. Look at both sides objectively; look for “kernels” of truth in the accusations and/or criticisms.
5. Love people; look for a heart crying to be loved; make your critics your friends.
6. Remember that while you seek a peaceful resolve of the problem, you can’t “walk the fence” indefinitely.
  - a. Dissatisfaction increases with unresolved criticism.
  - b. People begin to leave.
  - c. Better to deal with any problem quickly – A problem solved prevents other problems.

- d. Action must be taken – (Most of the time).
- 7. Rebuke privately, not publically, with patience and instruction in the Word, (2 Timothy 4:2).

**Summary:** Critical people discourage us, anger us, frustrate us, and stand in the way of completing our tasks. They might make us want to leave (to run from the problems); they might cause us to quit ministry. Know they're there; deal with them; refocus on what's important in ministry (re-tool, if necessary). Don't quit!

#### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOURTEEN:**

1. List five important leadership principles.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Give three things Jesus did when He was confronted by critics.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
3. How did the apostles handle criticism in Acts chapter six?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
4. List six biblical principles to remember when dealing with any problem.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON FIFTEEN

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *The Minister and Stress*

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### INTRODUCTION

**W**hat is it that makes the exercise of faith such a struggle when, in fact, it is the gateway to the eternal rest of God? Why is it that our enthusiastic dedication to ministry has grown cold to the point we are tired of the ministry we committed to? Why is it many preachers have tired of studying their Bibles? Why do our great words of victory fail when we need them the most?

Unit three deals with ministerial stress and burnout. We will be looking at this from four different aspects: 1) first the reality of ministerial stress 2) learning to deal with stress 3) standards for success in ministry, and 4) dealing with burnout in ministry. Perhaps a minister has had a failure in ministry, some help will be offered in that area. A minister is not to think there's no stress in ministry, that working for God doing God's will is all fun and glory. There is a lot of enjoyment and we see the glory of God at work but there are stress factors also that come with ministry.

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**LESSON AIM:** To understand that stress is a reality in the life of the preacher – to see some of the consequences of stress and how to properly respond to stress.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. See the negative consequences that stress can have in the life and ministry of the preacher.
  2. Examine some of the ways stress can affect the physical health and welfare of the preacher.
  3. Understand the ways and means a person can and should respond to ministerial stress.
- 

### THE REALITY OF MINISTERIAL STRESS

#### A. Definitions and Explanations

1. Stress defined and explained.
  - a. "Stress . . . the body's non-specific response to any demand made on it." (Howard Norton)
  - b. Stress is the spice of life or the kiss of death, depending on how we cope with it.

- c. Stress gives us the means to express our talents and energies, and pursue happiness; it can also cause exhaustion and illness, nervous breakdowns, heart attacks, and accidents.
- d. Stress is not necessarily synonymous with nervous tension or anxiety (these are the ways stress affects certain individuals).
- 2. Stress can be painful or delightful: “A lash of the whip and a passionate kiss can be equally stressful. Although one can cause painful distress and the other delightful eustress, both make certain common demands, requiring adaptation to a change in our normal resting equilibrium.”

### **B. The Ministry of the Word Is a Very Demanding Job**

- 1. Seen in Scripture: In the lives of Moses, Ezra, Jesus, Paul.
  - 2. Seen in the lives of other ministers.
  - 3. Seen in one’s own self and family.
- NOTE:** just because we are involved in a noble cause does not mean that we will be free from stress; ministry is a demanding work.

### **C. Need for the Awareness of Stress in Our Lives**

- 1. See the Holmes and Rahe “Life Change Unit” chart, a Life Stress Inventory, developed by 2 psychologists in 1967 (5,000 patients studied to see if there is a connection between stressful life events and physical health. Research: Yes!
- 2. The likelihood of exhaustion and illness is possible to predict, based on the kinds of conflict we have encountered in the past year. The more LCUs in a given year, the greater the possibility of a major illness within the year after the stress.
  - a. 0-150 LCUs in a year = little likelihood.
  - b. 150-199 LCUs, a mild crisis, and a 33 percent chance of an illness.
  - c. 200-299 LCUs, 50 percent chance of an illness.
  - d. 300+ LCUs, a major life crisis, and an 80 percent chance of a serious illness.
- 3. Some illnesses associated with stress (all affected by too much stress).
  - a. Heart attack.
  - b. Hypertension.
  - c. Ulcers.
  - d. Diabetes.
  - e. Backache and headache.
  - f. Allergies.
  - g. Arthritis.
  - h. Sexual dysfunction.
- 4. Some special stressors in the life of a minister.
  - a. Unclear job description.
  - b. No real “bottom line” (how am I to be evaluated).
  - c. Multiple bosses.
  - d. Congregation has unrealistic expectations (or minister thinks they do).

- e. Always “on call.”
  - f. Fear of being known (it is as though the preacher’s family lives in a glass house), resulting in feeling of inadequacy.
  - g. Pressure on family to conform, or be perfect.
  - h. Lack of prestige in community and in the church.
  - i. Attitude of others: the holy man, non-producer, lazy, killjoy, fanatic, patsy.
  - j. Feelings of insecurity: no contract, money shortage, short career, youth cult, danger of becoming the scapegoat for a problem (“he’s expendable”), anyone can take a “pot shot.”
  - k. Mid-life crisis (trapped; what else can I do?).
  - l. Over identification with success and failure of the church.
  - m. Lack of personal satisfaction: reward, respect, promotion.
  - n. Lack of freedom.
  - o. Loneliness.
5. Some symptoms of Stress overload.
- a. Increase in pulse rate; pounding of the heart.
  - b. Irritability.
  - c. Insomnia.
  - d. Loss of power to concentrate.
  - e. Increased desire to move about; tendency to sweat.
  - f. Unexplained fear (trembling) at the doing of simple and/or common tasks.
  - g. Stuttering and other speech difficulties.
  - h. Indigestion.
  - i. Headaches.
  - j. Pain in neck and lower back.
  - k. Loss of appetite, or excessive appetite.
  - l. “Grayness” in view of life.
  - m. Withdrawal.
  - n. Nothing to look forward to.
  - o. Depression.

### **C. Learning to Manage Stress in Our Lives**

- 1. Biblical Perspectives.
  - a. Be sure that your purpose in life is right, (Matthew 6:1-8).
  - b. Be sure that you are striving to live right, (Matthew 7:1-5).
  - c. Deepen your relationship with God through prayer, Bible reading, meditation, etc.
  - d. Trust in the promises of God, (1 Peter 1:3-6).
- 2. Practical advice.
  - a. Establish worthy and realizable goals.
  - b. Plan your time wisely: for self, family, ministry.
  - c. Keep your body in good physical condition: proper rest, diet, exercise.
  - d. Have a confidante.

- e. Let the child in you have some fun: hobby, sports, travel, etc.
- f. Remember that the church is the Lord's, not yours.
- g. Remember that you are not the sheriff.
- h. Laugh yourself silly.
- i. Get plenty of physical touch (be careful with whom).

**Conclusion:** We are never going to be free of stress. Our task is to learn to take advantage of its positive benefits and manage well the negatives, for our good, the good of our families, and the good of the Lord's kingdom.

## Life Change Units

Event	Impact, in LCUs
1. Death of a spouse .....	100
2. Divorce .....	73
3. Marital separation .....	65
4. Jail term .....	63
5. Death of close family member .....	63
6. Major personal injury or illness .....	53
7. Marriage .....	50
8. Fired at work .....	47
9. Marital reconciliation .....	45
10. Retirement .....	45
11. Change in health or behavior of family member .....	44
12. Pregnancy .....	40
13. Sexual difficulties .....	39
14. Gain of new family member .....	39
15. Major business readjustment .....	39
16. Major change in financial state .....	38
17. Death of close friend .....	37
18. Change to different line of work .....	36
19. Major change in number of arguments with spouse .....	35
20. Mortgage .....	31
21. Foreclosure of mortgage or loan .....	30
22. Major change in responsibilities at work .....	29
23. Son or daughter leaves home .....	29
24. Trouble with in-laws .....	29
25. Outstanding personal achievement .....	28
26. Wife begins or stops working outside of home .....	26
27. Beginning or ending of formal schooling .....	26
28. Major change in living conditions .....	25
29. Revision of personal habits .....	24
30. Trouble with boss .....	23
31. Major change in work hours or conditions .....	20
32. Change in residence .....	20
33. Changing to a new school .....	20
34. Major change in recreation .....	19
35. Major change in church activities .....	19

36. Major change in social activities .....	18
37. Loan (auto, TV, appliance, etc.) .....	17
38. Major change in sleeping habits .....	16
39. Major change in number of family get-togethers .....	15
40. Major change in eating habits .....	15
41. Vacation .....	13
42. Major Holiday .....	12
43. Minor violations of the law .....	11

Source: Idella M. Evans and Ron Murdoff. Psychology for a Changing World, 2nd ed. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1978. (An adaptation of the scale of Homes and Rahe, 1967.)

## **WHY MINISTRY IS SO TOUGH TODAY? (London & Wiseman, chpt. 2, pp. 35-58)**

### **A. Revolutionary Changes**

1. Changed concepts of ministry (by both preachers and members).
2. People are harder to reach.
3. Non-biblical norms to evaluate success.
4. Shifts in moral, social, and economic conditions.
5. The performance factor.

### **B. Ministry Hazards**

1. The “walk-on-water” syndrome.
2. Disastrous personal problems.
3. Church member migration.
4. Technologically-shaped preferences.
5. Distracted people.
6. Consumer mentality.
7. Suffocating expectations.
8. Decimated absolutes.
9. Money struggles.
10. Dysfunctional people.
11. Pastoral defection.
12. Sexual temptation and infidelity.
13. Leadership crises.
14. Loneliness.
15. Institutional baby-sitting.
16. Self-saturated ministry.
17. Emerging evil in society.
18. Lost church members.
19. Un-empowered ministry.
20. Clergy abusers.



## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIFTEEN**

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1. Understanding that stress is inevitable in the life of the preacher, what are four biblical perspectives that will help him manage stress?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are five revolution changes today that affect the preacher's ministry?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON SIXTEEN

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Learning to Deal With Stress*

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### INTRODUCTION

A quote from a book by Malcolm Smith entitled “Spiritual Burnout” serves as an introduction to this lesson. “In dealing with the problem of spiritual burnout and exhaustion, we must not forget that we are spirits who live in physical bodies. And the resurrection of the body has not yet taken place! If we abuse our bodies, through the food we eat, lack of sleep, an overloaded schedule, little or no time to rest and recreate we can be sure that it will be reflected in our frayed emotions, minds and weary spirits.

“If we are under great physical, emotional or mental stress that too will reflect in our spirits. At such times, we must be aware of the possibility that our spiritual energy will be drained.

“This is especially true of those who are involved in ministry The mental and emotional strain of becoming deeply involved in the problems of others drains our energy and strength.”

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**LESSON AIM:** To alert the preacher of the reality of stress and be aware of some signs and solutions to preacher stress and burnout.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Become aware of the reality of stress and learn the differences between stress and burnout.
  2. Learn that there are “red flags” indicating the probability of stress in one’s life.
  3. Discover some ways that stress can be handled in one’s life.
- 

### PREVENTION, IDENTIFICATION AND PRESCRIPTION

#### A. Sundays Are “Heavy Adrenalin Days” for Preachers

1. Getting “charged up” for the big event
2. Lots of energy is required for preaching (to be interesting)
3. When dealing with people, their needs and demands surface.

#### B. Differences Between Stress and Burnout

1. Stress is biological

- a. Too much adrenalin and too much pressure
  - b. The loss of fuel and energy which produce panic, anxiety
  - c. Body reacts: high blood pressure, faster heartbeat, ulcers
  - d. Stressed individuals are over-engaged, too many deadlines
2. Burnout is more of an emotional response.
  - a. Demoralized (loss of affirmation), loss of hope.
  - b. Result: disengagement from main task; discouragement; loss of care; isolation.
3. Both can lead to depression and possible need for medicine.
4. They can easily lead a person to erratic behavior.
5. MUST AVOID – The Four A’s” (as identified by a Harvard Medical School specialist):
  - a. Arrogance.
  - b. Addiction.
  - c. Aloneness (isolation).
  - d. Adultery.

### **C. Some “Red Flags” Indicating Stress/Burnout**

1. Denial of addiction; resist routine things
  - a. Addiction to anything takes one out of the routine activities of life.
  - b. Be wary of anything that others see as a danger to your life.
2. Frequent illnesses – be aware that frequent illnesses may be a signal of problems of stress.
3. Hate the telephone, avoid people – avoiding anyone who might come near because they bring stress in ones life.
4. Panic when new problem arises – overreacting, making little problems into big problems.
5. Loss of self-confidence – this also involves losing confidence in God’s oversight in one’s life and activity.
6. Staring at nothing; procrastination; avoidance of “the main thing.”
7. Weakness in regard to temptation and hatred of sin (i.e. no longer “hating that which is evil).  
 A little humor: “cartoon” of a preacher who re-positions the name “tag” on his desk, under the heading of “Great Moments in Sermon Procrastination.”

## **SOLUTIONS IN HANDLING STRESS**

### **A. Staying Healthy and Keeping A Healthy Ministry**

1. Need to build a strong support system.
  - a. Another reason for a good relationship with elders.
  - b. Be careful not to overload the family system for a solution.
  - c. Look outside family, to peers, friends, and others who will be able to nurture you (but not a women).
2. Need ministry management – know your limitation, what you can and can’t do.

3. Need to respond “Christianly” – in a way that brings glory to God.

**B. Steps to Help Ministers “Finish Strong”**

1. Take a day other than Monday as your “day off.”
2. Know yourself – know how far you can go, assess your strengths and weaknesses.
3. Let your spouse be part of the solution – but remember to protect your spouse.
4. Seek friendship/support from other ministers (avoid isolation).
5. Take charge of your prevention and recovery (do something about it). – Don’t just expect others to solve your problems.
6. Confront your addiction – if you have an addiction.
7. Limit the number of “clinging vines.” – you can’t be an emotional anchor for everyone.
8. Do more of what you want to do – what brings you enjoyment, get away from the job for a little while.
9. Love and serve people, even problem-people, because “love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8) and “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIXTEEN**

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1. List four of the “red flags” indicating stress in one’s life that most affects you.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Write down the three things needed by the preacher in order to stay healthy and have a healthy ministry.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON SEVENTEEN

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Standards For Success in Ministry*

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### INTRODUCTION

**H**ow does one measure success in ministry? Is it measured by or in the same way the world measures success? Should a minister's work be evaluated by numbers or the size of the congregation or the number of conversions he is responsible for? Since the preacher is involved in spiritual work, perhaps his success or lack of success would be better judged as to how it pleases God Himself. In other words, how does God view the minister, both his spiritual life and his ministry? When evaluating the preacher's success or lack of success is left up to people (members or others) the evaluation is generally way off-centered.

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**LESSON AIM:** To examine and study six attributes of a ministry that is pleasing to God.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. See several things which may destroy a minister and his ministry when the negative emotion of disappointment sets in.
  2. Learn that a successful ministry cannot be measured by worldly standards but whether or not it is pleasing to God.
  3. Know six things that must be present for a ministry to be pleasing to God.
- 

### WHEN DISAPPOINTMENT SETS IN

#### A. Several Negative Emotions Can Occur

1. Heartaches.
2. Discouragement.
3. Disillusionment.
4. Sense of failure.

#### B. Strong Temptations to Abandon Everything

1. Ministry.
2. Family.
3. God.

## IDENTIFYING SUCCESS IN MINISTRY

### A. A Faithful Ministry is Pleasing to God – Being Dependable, Responsible

1. The Hughes' search and discovery: "No place in Scripture where we are called to be successful. Rather, we discovered our call is to be faithful."
  - a. The way the world judges success often times is the wrong way to determine real growth.
  - b. Paul's reflection on a successful ministry: *Let a man so account of us, as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.* (1 Corinthians 4:1-2).
  - c. Faithfulness is what makes ministry well pleasing in the eyes of God.
2. Wrong assumptions:
  - a. If things are going well, God is blessing us.
    - 1) Consider Moses, water from the rock; God wasn't pleased (Numbers 20:8-12).
    - 2) The people of Israel asked for a king and God allowed them to have a king. You'd think that was something from God.
  - c. If things aren't going well, God is not blessing us or, what we're doing is unimportant.
3. Faithfulness is seen in our obedience to God and His Word; it is knowing *and* doing.
4. Be careful in the use of time (God knows), Colossians 3:22ff.  
*Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,*

### B. A Serving Ministry Is Pleasing to God

1. Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus the Lord taking the role of a servant (John 13).
2. You are never too big or too important to stoop to the needs of others; Peter and others had trouble understanding this. ( John 13, Matthew 20)
  - a. You are never more Christ-like than when you are serving.
  - b. This can be a tough assignment to fulfill. A conductor was asked, "what's the most difficult instrument to play?" He responded, "second fiddle."
3. The world's view of success: being the boss, ruler.
  - a. Even in the church, many define success as lordship.
  - b. A philosophy that values being served is not following Christ.
4. Be careful not to boast in your service and humility

### C. A Loving Ministry Is Pleasing to God

1. First priority is to love God, Deuteronomy 6, Matthew 22, John 21.
  - a. Deuteronomy 6:5, *Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*

- b. Matthew 22:37 Jesus replied: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”*
- 2. Second priority is to love God’s people.
  - a. Love for God is shown in the way we serve His people.
  - b. Sometimes we might serve people that we don’t even like.
  - c. We might go through the motions of doing what’s right, even though we don’t want to.
- 3. There is no success in ministry if love is not present. (1 Corinthians 13:1-4)
- 4. Love, manifested, is serving and obeying God and praying to Him.
  - a. Serving with love for people is pleasing to God.
  - b. Serving in the absence of love is not pleasing to God.

#### **D. Believing and Trusting in God and His Promises Is Pleasing to God**

- 1. Ministry outside the realm of trusting belief is displeasing to God. Hebrews 11:6, *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*
- 2. Never stop believing what you believe – the great truths and promises from God.
  - a. Jesus promised His rest in Matthew 11 verse 28.
  - b. He promised us peace in the Gospel of John chapter 14.
  - c. He promised us an abundant life in John chapter 10, verse 10.
  - d. And the list can go on and on. Ones that are very important for the minister to believe is in Romans 8:28, *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.* And in Philippians 4:13, *I can do all things through him who gives me strength.*

#### **E. A Ministry Bathed in Constant Prayer Is Pleasing to God**

- 1. Building a relationship with God – a relationship of openness.
  - a. We can always enter into His presence. (Hebrews 4:14-16)
  - b. Understand that He is always in our presence.
- 2. *Pray without ceasing*, (1 Thessalonians 5:18).
- 3. Two parables of Jesus, Luke 11 and 18, emphasize the importance of persistence in prayer:
  - a. Shamelessness, frequency, not losing heart.
  - b. Remaining faithful when we don’t receive what we are seeking.
  - c. It’s a result of knowing God, and knowing that God comes through.
  - d. Spending much time in Scripture.
- 4. Charles Hodge in one of his books list six ways God responds to our requests: Yes, No, Wait, Substitute, He changes us, He gives us Himself.
- 5. The example of Jesus: examine it, be impressed with it, imitate it.
  - Prayer draws us nearer to God, and that’s well pleasing to Him.

#### **F. A Ministry Wrapped in Holiness Is Pleasing to God**

1. God call us to holiness.
  - a. 1 Peter 1:16 (from Leviticus 19:2), ... *for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."*
  - b. Holiness is that activity in life that says "different, unusual, not that which is normal, holiness." Scripture calls us to a holy lifestyle.
  - b. This is foundational to true success because no one can be regarded a success who pursues a life contrary to God's will.
2. Holiness is essential, (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8).
  - a. We live in a world with much immorality.
  - b. Sanctification – the root word is the same as the word for holy or holiness or even the word Saint.
3. Some tough questions related to holiness:
  - a. Are we being desensitized by the present world?
  - b. Do things that once shocked us now pass us by with little notice?
  - c. With nothing else to do, where do our minds wander?
  - d. What are we reading, watching (TV, movies), viewing (online)?
  - e. How much Scripture are we reading?
4. Godliness is a similar word. 1 Timothy 4:8, *For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.*
  - a. By definition, the word in essence means "to be in awe of God," and therefore to show respect and reverence.
  - b. Disciplining oneself on godliness, makes it's easier for one to live the life of holiness.
5. Matthew 5 & 18, if hand/eye/foot causes one to sin, remove them! Jesus is talking about radical removal in these figures.
6. Make a covenant with your eyes; cf. Job 31:1, *I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman.*  
 So don't seek the world standards for success, seek these qualities of life to help you be well pleasing to God in your ministry.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVENTEEN**

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1. List six descriptions of a ministry that is pleasing to God.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6) \_\_\_\_\_
2. What are two wrong assumptions a preacher might make concerning the success or failure of his ministry?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_



## LESSON EIGHTEEN

# THE MINISTER'S WORK

## *Dealing With Burnout*

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### INTRODUCTION

**T**his lesson in many ways, is the hardest lesson to teach in this course. It's sad, it's unpleasant at times, but it's part of curriculum because it is very necessary. It deals with burnout and how to survive burnout, or perhaps even failure in ministry. Really this lesson has to do with rebuilding.

"A person is healed of burnout when he receives a fresh revelation of Who God is. This does not make sense to human reasoning. We think that we would be healed if we could see God judging all the people who have disappointed us or, at least, making them come and tell us how wrong they were! We would be satisfied if there was a demonstration of power that ordered life in the way we feel it would show God's glory the best.

We come to God and demand a formula, a series of steps we can tell others we followed to get out of the pit of spiritual exhaustion. But God frustrates us, He doesn't give us a formula . . . He gives us Himself! Understand Who He is, and everything begins to fall into place. The answer to spiritual burnout is to respond to God afresh, and discover a new relationship with Him." (*Spiritual Burnout*, Malcolm Smith, pg. 168)

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**LESSON AIM:** To examine some things involved in ministry burnout and then to discover some ways and means of being restored to meaningful ministry following ministry burnout.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Notice some avenues one can take to evaluate one's life and ways to regain the ministry that was lost due to burnout.
  2. Discover several steps which can help in surviving a failed life and ministry.
  3. See that restoration and reinstatement are not synonymous and that restoration does not guarantee reinstatement.
- 

### REGAINING STRENGTH FOR MINISTRY

#### A. Analyze your life and ministry

This is the first and perhaps the most critical step to restoration.

1. Questions to be addressed:
  - a. Is it advisable to return?
  - b. Does my family “approve” of it? It may be that your family is also going through burnout.
  - c. Is it too much pressure on children?
2. Sometimes it is not best for one to continue in ministry.

**B. Re-prioritize Your Life and Ministry**

- a. Determine what’s most important and manageable.
- b. Look for other areas of ministry in which to be involved.

**C. Seek Help to Re-prioritize One’s Life and Ministry**

1. Seek help from God.
2. Seek help from family.
3. Seek help from other ministers.
4. Seek help from friends who will keep you accountable.
  - a. A change of pace, slow down is helpful.
  - b. Proper rest is extremely important.
  - c. The right attitude toward the ministry and others. Make sure your view of others is the same as God’s view.
  - d. A spirit of forgiveness and acceptance of self and others. Ask God to build this spirit of forgiveness toward yourself and others.

**D. Get Proper Therapy – Both Spiritual and Physical**

1. Physical rest and recreation, exercise and laughter will enhance the process of recovery and restoration.
2. Psychological counseling is important in rebuilding one’s life.
3. Medical evaluation and help may be needed.

**SURVIVING A FAILURE**

**A. Priority #1: Return to God**

1. Repentance and confession; a broken and contrite heart. Read and consider David’s prayer in Psalm 51.
  - a. *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*
  - b. Psalm 51:2, *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin.*
  - c. Psalm 51:3, *For I know my transgressions; And my sin is ever before me.*
  - d. Psalm 51:4, *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, And done that which is evil in thy sight.*
  - e. Psalm 51:7, *Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*
  - f. Psalm 51:8, *Make me to hear joy and gladness, That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.*

- g. Sin, continued in will deceive and may cause one to think sins are not grievous.
- h. What God wants is a broken and contrite heart.
- 2. Re-train yourself unto godliness.
  - a. 1 Timothy 4:7f, *And exercise thyself unto godliness.*
  - b. Practice the spiritual disciplines (prayer, reading and memorizing Scripture, etc.)
- 3. Seek forgiveness from people offended.

## **B. Strengthen Your Family**

### **C. In Humility Be a Jesus-like Servant**

- 1. Serve quietly – without seeking recognition.
- 2. Stay away from the crowds; be silent without isolating yourself.

### **D. Learn Again to Appreciate “Simple” Things**

- 1. Take note of God’s wondrous creation – birds, flowers, stars, etc.
- 2. Turn off TV; go on walks.
- 3. These things can help one recover from a heart-rending experience.

### **E. Celebrate Forgiveness**

- 1. Do not linger in guilt – accept with gratitude the forgiveness God grants to you.
- 2. In celebrating God’s forgiveness, do not boast in sin and wrong doing. Don’t dwell on wrong doing.
- 3. Psalm 32, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no guile.*

### **F. Pitfalls to Recovery**

- 1. Don’t try to spread the blame – personal reflection and confession is critical to recovery.
- 2. Don’t complain about the way others are treating you – know that you are in good company, i.e. the prophets and Jesus himself.
- 3. Don’t concentrate on the sins of others – often a way to ignore the sins one has done and is not helpful.
  - a. This is an escape; it fails to look closely at self and the problem at hand.
  - b. Such thinking never brings rebuilding; it hinders and usually defeats the process.
- 4. Don’t linger in guilt; this is Satan’s tool – otherwise one may be overcome with “excessive sorrow.” (2 Corinthians 2:5-11)

## **ATTEMPTING A MINISTRY COME BACK**

### **A. There Is Always Hope of Restoration**

1. Forgiveness is practiced by God!
  - a. Jesus and Peter – Jesus not only forgave Peter but restored him.
  - b. Jesus commissioned Peter as well – “feed my sheep.”
2. The forgiven must practice forgiveness.
  - a. Matthew 6:12ff, *and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ...For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*
  - b. Matthew 18:35, *So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”*

**B. There Is Not Always Hope of Reinstatement**

1. Restoration to one’s previous position is not always possible and often times not advisable.
2. Restoration and reinstatement are not synonymous terms.
  - a. Since the sin of Adam and Eve, no one has returned to the Garden of Eden.
  - b. King Saul lost the kingdom even though he expressed sorrow.
  - c. David did not lose his position after his sin with Bathsheba.
  - d. Sometimes – most of the times – the best way to help a forgiven person is to keep him/her away from a former situation and/or position.
  - e. Reinstatement affects more than the offender; the church may need its integrity protected (otherwise its overall effectiveness might diminish).

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHTEEN**

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1. What are four important steps to take in regaining one’s ministry?

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

2. List four pitfalls to recovery.

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON NINETEEN

# THE MINISTER'S PERSONAL LIFE

## *The Minister's Family*

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### INTRODUCTION

**K**now this: a good preacher must be a good man. He must be a devoted, transforming disciple of Jesus Christ. He will never be able to minister effectively to others if he has not *first* nurtured his relationship with Him. The minister will be a better husband, father, and minister as he grows spiritually.

The preacher is not his own, but he is not the congregation's, either. You have a "job" to do (and the "Boss" has expectations), but he also has a life. He needs to care for it. *Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you* (1 Timothy 4:16).

Right or wrong, most "people demand a higher standard from the minister than from others" (Stone 44). The preacher must be convinced he is up to the task and committed to fulfilling his ministry. And remember: Jesus grew *in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and men* (Luke 2:52).

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**LESSON AIM:** Realize that a preacher's congregational ministry can only be successful when he has strong family relationships.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Understand the relationship between congregational ministry and family ministry.
  2. Learn some ways to build and maintain strong and healthy marriages.
  3. Examine ways and means of having and maintaining good relations with one's children.
- 

### THE MINISTER AND HIS WIFE

#### A. The Importance of Building a Strong Marriage

1. Reasons as it relates to ministry.

Proverbs 18:22, *He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD.*

1 Peter 3:7, *Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.*

- a. To be an example to the congregation.
  - b. Problems at home carry over into less-than-optimum ministry.
  - c. A good home helps with mental and emotional stress.
  - d. If you don't build a strong marriage, you are much more susceptible to the opportunity to ruin your ministry and your congregation's influence in community.
2. Ways to build and maintain a healthy and strong marriage.
  - a. Reading the Bible together and praying together.
  - b. Dating – special outings – just husband and wife together.
  - c. Sitting together during the assembly – showing her and the members the respect and love for each other.
  - d. Quality time – quite time when home – doing things together.
  - e. Plan vacations that meet each other's needs – when ministry duties can be put on hold – both physically, mentally and emotionally.
3. Resolve family problems quickly. "Don't leave home without it" (peace).
4. The preacher's wife is a member, too and she needs a minister as do the other members.
5. The preacher should be aware and considerate of his wife's involvement in the work of the local congregation.
  - a. Teaching – be aware of her involvement and the time restraints placed upon her.
  - b. Visitation – she can be a great co-minister in visiting.
  - c. Her own giftedness, interests, available time, and personality.
6. Should the minister's wife have a job outside the home?
7. Protect your wife (some potential "dangers" for the preacher's wife).
  - a. Living in "the Fish bowl."
  - b. Many will have a job description for your wife,
  - c. Different standards exist (re. women, mothers); learn to deal with them.
  - d. As homemaker (especially if you live in the "parsonage"): cleaning and child-rearing.

## THE MINISTER AND HIS CHILDREN

### **A. Be Involved in Their World(s)**

1. School.
2. Sports.
3. Other activities (e.g., hunting, fishing, working on the hot-rod car).
4. Teach them about God (Deuteronomy 6:1-6).

### **B. Schedule Time to Be with Them**

1. Caution: don't bring your work home with you (unless you work after they go to bed).
2. Take them with you in your work (e.g., visiting the hospital).
3. Your day off should include them.

### C. Protect Your Children

(some potential “dangers” for the preacher’s children)

1. Be careful with *your* expectations of them.
  - a. Never say, “you can’t do that because you’re the preacher’s kid.” A thing is either right or wrong, for all. (If you fail here, you will likely build resentment in your children toward ministry.)
  - b. Don’t put unnecessary pressure on them to be in all youth activities, to be the “smartest” kid in Bible class, participate in Bible bowl, and/or become preachers, etc.
2. They too live in a fish bowl (the congregation’s expectations).
3. Different standards.
4. The “PK” syndrome.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINETEEN**

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1. The teacher gives five ways to build and maintain a strong and healthy marriage. List these below.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
2. What are three important things to remember concerning the preacher and his children?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON TWENTY

# THE MINISTER'S PERSONAL LIFE

## *The Minister's Spiritual Growth*

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### INTRODUCTION

**S**piritual growth does not come automatically and not always easy. Guiding others to spiritual maturity does not automatically lead one to spiritual growth himself. There is a *constant* need for self-discipline (1 Corinthians 9:26f) and *to exercise thyself unto godliness* (1 Timothy 4:7f).

The minister, like any other Christian, must make a deliberate effort to grow. Spiritual renewal takes effort, demands attention, and pays great dividends. Like a world travel plan, it's worth the time it takes to refuel the plane.

The preacher must never let himself be deceived into thinking that he is exempt from Satan's attacks. He, like all Christians, needs the whole armor of God. Ministers sin, and they, too, need an advocate. You can grow spiritually if you enter every encounter with Christ in His Word with a readiness of heart, mind and soul, made more ready through fervent prayer, sincerity of purpose and purity of life

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**LESSON AIM:** To show the importance for the minister to develop spirituality in his life and thus to avoid the pitfalls of sin placed in his path by the adversary.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Study and recognize the place of prayer in advancing spiritual growth in the minister's life.
  2. Understand that continuing Bible reading and study supplies power and freshness for the preacher.
  3. See the value of having an accountability group in maintaining spiritual growth.
  4. Look at seven deadly sins that the preacher needs to be aware of and how to avoid involvement in them.
- 

### THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN A MINISTER'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH

#### A. The Time and Place

1. A planned time and place.
  - a. Be intentional – with purpose and specific.
  - b. Any time and any place – in vehicle; while walking; at every impulse.



2. Constant in prayer – not just sporadically.

### **B. Several Different Ways to Approach Praying**

1. The P-A-C-T prayer.
  - a. Petition – *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*
  - b. Adoration (see Romans 11:33-36).
  - c. Confession – of sinfulness and need for God.
  - d. Thanksgiving – *...with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*
2. Fervently, cf. James 5:18, *Elijah ... prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.*
3. With a list; with the Bible and a notebook; while you are on a walk.
  - a. Pray for wisdom.
  - b. Pray for a pure heart, with sincerity.
  - c. At times connect your praying with fasting – goes along with consecration.
4. Praying the Psalms and other Scriptures.

### **C. What to pray for and with whom**

1. With elders and leaders.
2. For unity, evangelism, understanding of Scriptures.

### **D. The “Who” of Prayer Is Most Important; Build Your Relationship with God**

## **BIBLE STUDY – THE POWER IN A MINISTER’S LIFE**

### **A. For Personal Growth – Not Just for Sermons and Classes**

1. Daily, slowly, small portions . . . for yourself.
2. Read the entire Bible each year.
3. “If you’ll just read the Bible every day before you eat, you’ll read the Bible every day.”
4. Reflections on the Word of God: Psalms 1, 19, and 119.

### **B. Commit Scripture to Memory**

### **C. Meditations**

1. Write your own psalms reflecting on your deepest concerns about God.
2. The word of God strengthens the preacher’s personal life.
3. Read and study the Bible to help in one’s struggle against sin, Ephesians 6:13-14; cf. Psalm 119:9, 11

## **READING – THE FRESHNESS IN A PREACHER’S LIFE**

### **A. The Importance of Reading**

1. Books on spiritual living (e.g. Lucado, Swindoll, Foster);

2. Christian classics; biographies

**B. Histories and Literature**

1. To gain a large source of illustrative material.
2. To become better acquainted with broad-based education of membership.
3. To expose the preacher to a variety of English literature and promote proper English grammar.

**C. Newspapers and Magazines of Local, National, and World Events**

1. Discern God's involvement in world events.
2. Pray for His people there and others who might become receptive to the message.

**D. Books/Magazines of Personal Interest – TV Guide . . .**

**ACCOUNTABILITY GROUP – SUPPORT IN A MINISTER'S LIFE**

**A. Reasons and Importance of Support**

1. There is a tendency for a minister to think that he is above others (in biblical knowledge and ministry activity) and thus cannot be helped by them.
2. This gives others "permission" (and you need them to have this) to ask you about your progress in spiritual growth, and motivates you to "stick with it."
3. Others need you to help them.

**B. The Means and Mechanics of Support**

1. Friends of like interest, desiring growth.
2. Mutual ("one another").
3. There must be privacy and confidentiality.
4. Where: at a restaurant, church building, someone's home, fishing boat, etc.

**C. Seven Questions to Test One's Spiritual Growth**

Seven questions (Farrar and Swindoll, in *Point Man*, pp. 150-52)

1. Have you been with a woman this week in such a way that was inappropriate or that could have looked to others that you are using poor judgment?
2. Have you been completely above reproach in all your financial dealings?
3. Have you exposed yourself to explicit material this week? Time that should be spent daily in prayer and the Scriptures.
4. Have you spent daily time in prayer and the Scriptures this week?
5. Have you taken time off to be with your family?
6. Have you fulfilled the mandate of your calling this week?
7. Final question: Have you just lied to me?

**D. Avoiding "The Seven Deadly Sins"**

(notes from article in *Leadership*)

The listing of the seven deadly sins. Each one is defined, their synonyms and an

antidote given as well. How to deal with this from the biblical perspective 1.

**Envy** – a displeasure at the good of another.

- a. Includes ingratitude for our own gifts and longing for someone else's.
  - b. Dissatisfaction with what you have and a lack of happiness for what others have.
  - c. The antidote here is loving excellence for its own sake. The Bible says in Galatians chapter 5 verse 25, *Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*
2. **Greed** – that craving for; or that preoccupation with material things.
- a. The word miser comes from the root word.
  - b. From that root word comes the word “miserable misers.”
  - c. The antidote is generosity – giving away things of value to you.
    - Giving cheerfully – God loves a cheerful giver – be careful with the sins of greed.
3. **Gluttony** – the appetite that is not restrained.
- a. Can be an addiction – whether it be eating, drinking, sleeping.
  - b. The list can go on and on some people play to access and they don't give the proper amount of time to what really matters.
  - c. Preachers can be susceptible to this because oftentimes their work is unsupervised people don't know what they're doing when they're away from the building.
4. **Anger** – rage, resentment and bitterness toward others, indignation.
- a. Antidote – compassion gentleness quickly settling wrongs with others.
  - b. Paul said in Ephesians chapter 4 don't let the sin go down on your wrath.
  - c. Anger is destructive and often leads to more grievous sin.
    - Example of Cain and Abel in Genesis four.
    - Interesting that murder is not on this list, neither is sexual immorality.
5. **Slothful** – to be lazy, negligent to be filled with apathy, to be despondent, have a sense of helplessness.
- a. To be a sloth is to be listless to avoid what needs to be done maybe even procrastination is included.
  - b. The response – courage faithfulness enthusiasm about our work.
  - c. Serving the Lord heartily, Colossians 3:23 says not to please men not to please our elders not to give an impression upon people but with a good heart devoted to God and to be active in serving others.
6. **Lust** – the word is luxurious or to luxuriate – time to be filled with luxurious things.
- a. The way we use English language, lust is letting your thoughts dwell on that which is impure.
  - b. Sometimes lust would include gratification without giving.
  - c. Not just desires as you look upon a woman but lust for other things.
  - d. Have an appetite for that which is not yours by right.
7. **Pride** – a sense of superiority.
- a. Pride can be very destructive to a minister having a sense of superiority.
  - b. I'm better than others after all I've been to Bible school.

- c. Pride that might come with one's position.
- d. A sense of entitlement.
  - Pride goes before destruction says the writer in Proverbs.
  - In the New Testament James and Peter said that God is opposed to the proud but he gives grace to the humble.
- e. Humility is the antidote for the seventh of the seven deadly sins – humility, considering others better than yourself.
  - Recognizing that every good thing about me comes from God who expects each gift to be used in serving others.

## SUMMARY

Be concerned and active in the development of your own spiritual life. Paul while writing to Timothy in First Timothy chapter 6 mentioned about the dangers of pursuing money and the temptations that come along with it. My challenge to all of you is what Paul wrote to Timothy as he closes out his first letter: *But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.* (1Timothy 6:11)

## SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY

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1. What is involved in the “P A C T” prayer plan/

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

2. List the seven deadly sins.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON TWENTY-ONE

# THE MINISTER'S PERSONAL LIFE

## *The Minister's Physical Wholeness*

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### INTRODUCTION

**P**hysical health and wholeness are often neglected by those in preaching ministry. As important as spiritual wholeness is, attention to a person's physical health is also necessary to the success of the preacher's ministry in the local church and community. Balancing the time spent on either is of upmost importance; neither should be neglected.

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**LESSON AIM:** To examine the importance and means of promoting physical wholeness.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Look at several things and ways that promote and build physical wholeness.
  2. Learn two things that will help one to be relieved of stress.
  3. Determine the importance and feasibility of continued education after completing school.
- 

### THE MEANS TO PHYSICAL WHOLENESS

#### A. Regular Exercise

1. Suggestions of what to do.
  - a. Daily walking – 30 minutes per day, is the best thing you can do.
  - b. Golf, swimming, gym/exercise club.
2. Result: regular exercise means we need less sleep to get proper rest.
  - a. Lack of proper rest contributes to stress.
  - b. Lack of proper exercise could also lead to weight gain and even cause one to leave the ministry.

#### B. Good Eating Habits

1. Be aware to the liquids consumed.
  - a. Drink 8 to 10 8oz. glasses of water daily.
  - b. Avoid drinking too many soft drinks.
  - c. There is too much sugar and caffeine in most regular soft drinks.
  - d. Avoid alcoholic beverages.

2. Be aware of the foods consumed.
  - a. Beware of foods high in sugar content.
  - b. Beware of eating large quantities of foods high in carbohydrates – (bread, pasta, rice, cereal, potatoes).
  - c. These break down in our system as sugar. These starch foods . . .
    - 1) Cause salt and fluid retention by the kidneys.
    - 2) Stimulate cholesterol production.
    - 3) Thicken muscular portion of artery walls, resulting in increased blood pressure.
    - 4) Prevent fat cells from releasing fat to be burned for energy.
3. Foods that are low in carbohydrates (fresh fruits and vegetables) are excellent.
4. Enjoy foods high in protein – lean meats, fish, poultry, eggs, dairy products. These foods release a hormone called glycogen which causes the body to react opposite to the 4 ways it acts when foods high in carbohydrates are consumed.

**Summary:** “It is not the minutes that we spend at the dinner table that cause us to gain weight; it’s the seconds.”

### **C. Proper Rest and Relaxation**

1. Regular sleep: whatever you need, get it.
  - a. Most doctors suggest 7-8 hours nightly.
  - b. Go to bed trusting in the Lord – not filled with anxiety about tomorrow.
  - c. Be an example to the brethren and the community.
  - d. Set the lead in anxiety free living.
2. A report I saw on the “Today” show: a medical doctor and a nutritionist said that recent research has shown that sleep depravity contributes to obesity. If we get less than 7 hours of sleep, our hormones will be “messed up,” resulting in a stronger appetite that lingers throughout the day.
3. Remember Mark 6:31, “Jesus said to His disciples: *Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.*”
  - a. Be sure to pace yourself.
  - b. Take a day or two off each week (Monday is NOT a good day off).
  - c. Turn off the TV.
  - d. Have some fun.
  - e. Take the annual vacation and get out of town; family enjoyment and rest.

**Summary:** The happy, healthy person is one who finds the proper balance in exercise, diet, and rest.

## **SOLUTIONS TO STRESS**

### **A. Stress-Busters**

1. One defense against stress is having a hobby.
2. Some hobbies to consider:

- a. Outdoors: golf, fishing, hiking, etc.
- b. Woodworking.
- c. Gardening.
- d. Reading, etc.
- 3. Need for friendships.
  - a. Life is to be lived with others.
  - b. Great source of encouragement.
  - c. Loneliness complicates life's difficulties.
  - d. Build a good relationship with your wife (not another woman).
- 4. Need for laughter – be around people who help you laugh.

#### **B. Beware of and Be Ready for Mid-life Changes**

- 1. Life happens! This is the time for change: reading glasses, hearing aids, metabolism slow-down, and menopause (or, “man-on-pause”).
- 2. All of these significant “change in life” experiences are critical passages. that are often handled poorly. So be wise and keep your focus on God.
- 3. Be alert concerning these life changes – “...*be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*”
  - a. Satan knows what you're going through.
  - b. The enemy knows your vulnerability. “*We are not ignorant of Satan's devices.*”
  - c. The deceiver wants you.

### **CONTINUING EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT**

#### **A. Staying Current in Personal Study**

- 1. Don't stop studying the Bible, history and current events, people . . . life!
- 2. What to study – study things that are helpful to ministers.
  - a. Books and periodicals – all kinds and written by a variety of people.
  - b. Biblical studies – your can't teach what you don't know.
  - c. Have a good knowledge of Church “issues” – not just about them. but study them so as to be able to talk about them intelligently.
  - d. Contemporary culture and generational issues are important to know.
- 3. Attend seminars, workshops, lectureships; allow yourself to be taught by others.
- 4. Your post-SIBI “notebooks” if you kept one.
  - a. A preacher needs to have a good filing system.
    - 1) Need a method to “store” material (e.g. *Baker's* ).
    - 2) Don't rely on your memory.
    - 3) Don't just throw everything into a shoe box.
  - b. What to “file” away for future reference.
    - 1) Helpful materials for Bible study.
    - 2) Sermons (notes, tapes, etc.).
    - 3) Resources from workshops, seminars, etc.
    - 4) Chapters and/or articles in books and journals.

5) Illustrations.

**B. Additional Learning through Formal Education**

1. Pursuing a Degree.
  - a. Completing a Bachelor degree.
  - b. Post-graduate study.
2. Positives and Negatives of formal education.
  - a. Positives:
    - 1) Increase knowledge.
    - 2) Expand your potential for future service.
    - 3) Maintain study disciplines.
    - 4) Meet people.
  - b. Negatives:
    - 1) Expensive.
    - 2) Time.
    - 3) Tiredness.
    - 4) Solomon: *“For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief;”* and, *“Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body”* (Ecclesiastes 1:18, 12:12).

**NO SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-ONE**



## LESSON TWENTY-TWO

# THE MINISTER'S PERSONAL LIFE

## *The Minister's Financial Matters*

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### INTRODUCTION

**W**hy do so many preachers have financial problems? Is there a way to avoid this? Do preachers, “suffer alone with money problems”? Don’t become a financial burden on others by not taking care of your finances. A preacher must be a good steward of his finances; this is possible through wise planning. Some “faulty thinking” –

1. Taking less money means you’re more spiritual.
2. Because you are a preacher you are destined to be poor for the rest of your life.
3. Don’t be deceived into thinking accidents won’t happen to you because you pray that they won’t. Faithfulness to God does not make us immune from having automobiles that need repairs, appliances that quit working, children that need braces, and sicknesses (to self, spouse, children, parents), etc. These do happen (!) to even the most faithful, spiritual, and prayerful Christians. Pray that these won’t happen, and if and when they do, that they won’t all happen within a few months of each other. Follow the principles of Proverbs 30:7-9, “*Two things I ask of you, LORD; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.*”

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**LESSON AIM:** To explore the preacher’s responsibility of being a good steward of his finances, his own physical well-being as well as his ministry assignments from God.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Understand the dangers of not being a good steward and some observations about how to avoid those dangers.
  2. Learn some pointers on how to overcome the circumstances when one’s finances aren’t sufficient for him and his family.
  3. Know that the preacher’s situation is unique in his relationship to the taxing entities of the civil government and how to approach his responsibilities in these areas.
-

## **BEING A GOOD STEWARD OF YOUR FINANCES**

### **A. The Danger of Not Being a Good Steward**

1. To do otherwise can be a great detriment.
  - a. To you and your ministry.
  - b. To the congregation and community.
2. Problems here can become the second biggest threat to effective ministry.
  - a. The first being sexual sins.
  - b. This too can ruin one's ministry.

### **B. Financial Matters to Be Considered**

1. An annual review of the preacher's support is necessary.
  - a. A cost-of-living "adjustment."
  - b. Ask leaders to consider giving a raise.
2. A mutual understanding of responsibility is critical to a successful ministry.

### **C. Know Who Pays for What**

1. Health insurance.
  - a. If the church pays or reimburses, then don't subtract from salary.
  - b. Be careful and wise when buying health insurance.
  - c. Know your insurance agent.
2. Social Security – church can only increase your salary to cover this.
3. Retirement plans. Put aside money early in life for retirement – no later than age 35.
4. Business expenses – a reminder, keep good records of all transactions.
  - a. Be careful about buying non-essentials on credit.
  - b. Maintain your vehicle properly.
  - c. Make investments wisely – get help from professionals.
  - d. DO NOT leave town without having all your bills paid!

### **D. Possible Actions If Finances Aren't Sufficient**

1. Request an increase – let them know why you are in need of a raise.
2. Ask for permission and be prepared to take a second job – let the church leaders know why this is necessary.
  - a. Should the minister's wife have a job?
  - b. Leave – maybe because of a community situation.
3. Underlying principles: pray about it and be careful not to complain about it – strive to live within your means.
4. Don't let money be the major determining factor for your work with the church.
  - a. A lack of adequate financial support is a legitimate reason to seek another ministry and another place.
  - b. Financial struggles can cause great stress on one's family.
5. Beware of greed and envy of what some others in the congregation may have.

## UNDERSTANDING THE MINISTER'S UNIQUE FINANCIAL SITUATION

### A. A Few Observations

1. Ministers are in a “class by themselves.”
2. Their unique situation: they are considered to be “self-employed” for social security purposes, and at the same time being an employee of a local church.
3. If this is misunderstood or ignored, it can destroy a man’s credibility.
4. Difficulties are not necessarily because ministers’ salaries are low, but more likely how ministers spend and/or save their money.

### B. A Minister Is Considered Self-employed

1. He must make quarterly income tax payments (Form 1040-ES).
2. He must make quarterly social security tax payments.
  - a. These payments are due April 15, June 15, Sept. 15, and Jan. 15.
  - b. Money should be set aside monthly to prepare for the quarterly payments.

### C. Minister’s Housing Allowance

1. The amount spent by the minister, for housing related expenses, reduces your income tax burden.
  - a. This doesn’t apply if the church provides housing.
  - b. If the minister rents or buys his own house the amount he spends for housing is considered tax free.
2. Be sure to keep good records and receipts – in case of an IRS audit.
3. Note: Housing expenses are not exempt from Social Security tax.

## MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR INCOME

### A. Keep Receipts and Monthly Expenditures

1. All housing receipts (unless a house & utilities are provided) for whatever it takes to maintain a home.
  - a. Rent or house payment.
  - b. If buying a house – property taxes and interest on loan.
  - c. Utilities, including telephone service except for long distance calls.
  - d. Mortgage or renter’s Insurance.
  - e. Appliances, furniture, computers.
  - f. House maintenance (e.g., painting, pest control), upkeep (e.g., light bulbs), cleaning supplies, and repair.
  - g. Yard care (mower, rakes, fertilizer, grass seed, flowers).
2. Keep a record of all “business” expenses.
  - a. Mileage for visitation and other required work (50.5 cents per mile); food (50%) while traveling (only if work requires that you stay overnight).
  - b. Furniture: chairs, desks, bookshelves, computer, clock, pictures.
  - c. Office supplies: copies, postage, paper, computer supplies.  
Entertainment (50% of food expense).
  - d. Personal items that help you in your profession: books, religious journals,

- Bible-study tapes, seminars.
- e. Advanced education (if elders will say this is with their approval, and for your advancement).
- 3. Keep record of all income earned.
  - a. Church is required to provide a W-2 form.
  - b. Additional “preaching” income: funerals, weddings, Gospel meetings and lectureships.
  - c. Additional income (e.g., lawn work).

## **B. Should a Minister Pay Social Security?**

What the Law says:

1. “. . . because of your religious principles, you are conscientiously opposed to accepting, for services performed as a member of the clergy, any public insurance [including payments in the event of death, disability, old age, or retirement].
2. “Your conscientious opposition must be based on the institutional principles and discipline of your particular religious denomination or it must be based on your individual religious biblical principles.”
3. Opposition based on the general conscience [i.e., “I just don’t want to give money to the government”] will not satisfy this requirement.
4. According to the law, you CANNOT claim this exemption because:
  - a. You think you can handle your money better than the government (i.e., practice good stewardship of your finances),
  - b. You have heard that Social Security will not be around by the time you reach retirement age,
  - c. You are already vested (= having paid in to Social Security for 40 quarters).
5. If you opt out, you must fill out and turn in Form 4361 (and make a note of it every year on Form 1040).
6. If you opt out, it is irrevocable (i.e. you can’t change your mind later).

## **C. Final, Summary Thoughts**

1. Have a system for recording and storing information,
2. Personal integrity.
  - a. Be honest regarding all income and expenditures.
  - b. Glorify God through proper money management.
- 3.. Get familiar with the tax forms; helpful resources:
  - a. B. J. Worth, Income Tax Guide for Ministers and Religious Workers
  - b. A\$\$IST: Mitch Monroe in Lubbock, 792-6113.

## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-TWO**

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1. What is unique about the minister's financial circumstances in relation to taxes and social security?

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2. Being self-employed, what is the minister's responsibility concerning payments to IRS and SS?

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3. Should a minister opt out of paying into Social Security? Explain your answer.

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## LESSON TWENTY-THREE

# THE MINISTER'S PERSONAL LIFE

## *The Minister's Preaching Tenures*

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### INTRODUCTION

**A** quote from Roger Pascoe will introduce us to this study. "Ministry is not about ritual or routine religion but a living relationship with God. It is not about numerical growth but spiritual growth. It is not about programs but about people – people who are wholly focused on God, powerfully filled with the Spirit, and happily united in a community of grace; people who vibrantly exalt Christ, openly perform works of faith, accurately teach the truth, boldly proclaim the gospel in word and deed, and authentically depend upon prayer." *What Is Church Ministry?* Dr. Roger Pascoe, President, The Institute for Biblical Preaching (Cambridge, ON, Canada)

These things can only be accomplished when a minister is given time to build them in the church where he serves.

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**LESSON AIM:** To ascertain the circumstances concerning when and how a preacher should leave a ministry place.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Examine the effects and reasons for short-term preaching tenures.
  2. Learn that long-term ministries are rewarding and fruitful in contrast to short-term ministries.
  3. Reflect on some circumstances and situations that would determine whether a preacher should leave a ministry.
  4. Determine the validity of the statement, "It is God's will that I do this or that."
- 

### TO GO OR NOT TO GO

#### A. The Effects of and Reasons for Short-Term Preaching Tenures

1. Negative Results. Some congregations might encourage rapid preacher turnover; the results/consequences are often very negative.
  - a. Church growth is hindered. This is a good way to stop the church from growing – it takes time to plow, cultivate and plant before a harvest is possible.
  - b. The minister's influence is hindered. This is one of the best ways to

- destroy the positive influence of a minister's leadership.
- c. The church's needs often go unmet. Many needs are fulfilled when friendships are established with the preacher.
- d. The church's reputation in the community is hurt. (Why can't the Church of Christ keep any of its preachers?).
- e. Lack of enthusiasm and consequent "trial period" for each new minister. The members' perception may be, he's only going to be here for a short time, why get excited about it?

**NOTE:** In many places, a lot of good work is accomplished, every three years (it usually takes two years for the church and minister to get "acquainted"). It takes some time for trust to be built up.

2. Hindrances to long tenures.

- a. Limited financial resources – small and poor churches have difficulty retaining a preacher because of this.
  - b. No "community life" for minister's family – no involvement for the children.
  - c. A "no growth" community (little or no potential).
  - d. There might be a "trouble-maker," and church leaders allow him/her to "run him off" without discipline applied.
  - e. If it's the first job for the new preacher, he may go into it thinking he's there only temporarily (get a little experience, then move on to better place).
3. Some preachers move frequently because they are fired. Reasons. . .
- a. Poor study habits; satisfied with past sermon outlines (run out of sermons every 2-3 years).
  - b. Preaching is not a ministry it is "nothing more than a job."
  - c. Lack of concern for people and their needs – a reflection that it is "only a job" to be done without any concern for the people.
  - d. A trouble-maker; one who does not get along with others; one who has "an agenda;" one with a negative spirit.

## **THE CHALLENGE OF HAVING A LONG MINISTRY HISTORY**

Most of the information in this section is from Lynn Anderson's book, *Freshness for the Far Journey*

### **A. The Blessings of a Long-term Ministry (185-88)**

- 1. Rapport with people:
  - a. Watching people grow and go through stages of life.
  - b. Allows one to develop a close relationship with people.
  - c. The longer the preacher stays the more time he has to developed those good relationships.
- 2. Credibility:
  - a. For the preacher to get a sense that people trust and respect him.

- b. Credibility determines whether one's message is believed.
  - c. As ministers representing God we want to be people of credibility.
- 3. Access:
  - a. Available to minister to their needs – weddings, funerals, etc.
  - b. To listen to and empathize with them in time of sorrow.
- 4. Personal satisfaction and self-esteem:
  - a. When a person feels good about himself and his ministry his work can only be more effective.
  - b. The satisfaction of knowing the Lord's work has been accomplished here.
  - c. This may be the greatest blessing for the preacher who spends a long time in one place.
- 5. Family stability:
  - a. It's hard on children and a wife to move every two or three years.
  - b. Quite often hard to establish roots when you move that often.

#### **B. Circumstances Which Are Not Good Reasons to Move (192-94)**

- 1. Frustration and/or impatience:
  - a. Not when you're frustrated and impatient – just because things have come up and their bad for a little while.
  - b. Someone or something has bothered me now I'm down – that's not a good time to make a decision to move.
- 2. Problem person(s):
  - a. There will be a problem person wherever you go.
  - b. See in that "problem person" a challenge but not an excuse to leave.
- 3. Desire for more money:
  - a. Satan wants us to make moves simply for money reasons.
  - b. This may establish a pattern that one will always be looking for more money.
  - c. The desire for more money is usually not a good reason to move.
- 4. Getting your feelings hurt:
  - a. Sometimes people hurt us sometimes we hurt ourselves and sometimes we just get down.
  - b. There are many ways our feelings are hurt – maybe we just get laughed at and ridiculed.
- 5. "Maybe it's God's will":
  - a. There's a danger in justifying any decision with the words "it is God's will."
  - b. God has placed it on my heart or gave me a sign.
  - c. This can just be your own formula to justify what you want to do.

#### **C. When it *Is* Time to Move (195-99)**

- 1. When the preacher's integrity is challenged – when a preacher is asked to adhere to and preach a doctrine contrary to his biblical beliefs.
- 2. When family needs are lacking:
  - a. Sometimes family needs are not being met and changes need to be made



- to maintain a healthy family.
- b. A preacher needs a healthy family to be effective in ministry.
- 3. When the minister-congregation relationship is not healthy:
  - a. The minister and the congregation just don't get along any more.
  - b. When the preacher and the congregation has different view-point as to the direction the church should be going.
  - c. Different doctrinal understandings.
- 4. When it seems certain that it is God's Will.

## MAKING A DECISION TO MOVE

- A. Trying to Determine God's Call** – Does God actually call a man to go to a specific place? He has in the past but does He do so now?
- 1. Ask Moses, Jeremiah, Saul of Tarsus.
  - 2. Anyone seen or spoken to a burning bush lately? Don't be "blinded" by the light.
  - 3. Is the call instant, obvious, and beyond all doubt?
  - 4. Does the "Behold, I know the plans I have for you" (Jeremiah 29:10) apply to everyone? If He has such plans, does He let us know what they are and how does He let us know what they are?

**B. The D-O-A principle: Desire + Opportunity + Ability**

- C. A Good, Challenging Book:** *Experiencing God* (Blackaby and King)
- 1. Is God at work in this activity, and is He calling you to it?
  - 2. Helpful suggestions for discerning God's call: Scripture, Prayer, Circumstances, and Godly People.
  - 3. Be aware of this: Making the decision leads to a crisis of belief; requires obedience and major adjustments.

## WHEN THE DECISION IS MADE TO LEAVE

- A. Avoid Leaving in an Unchristian Way**  
(e.g. causing a split, dishonoring the leadership, burning bridges)

**B. Leaving Gracefully**

- 1. Notification: elders, congregation (public announcement).
- 2. Express thanks and let the congregation do same to you.
- 3. Depart in peace by leaving open the possibility to return.
- 4. Pay debts.
- 5. Arrange for the spiritual care of those with whom you've been working: counselees, lonely and/or troubled people, those nearing conversion.
- 6. Give special attention to personal and family stress; look realistically (not just idealistically) upon the adjustments that will have to be made.
- 7. Do not undermine your successor.

8. Move forward – don't dwell on past: failures or successes, heartaches, mistreatment, etc.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-THREE**

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1. What are five negative results of short-term preaching tenures?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
2. List five hindrances to long preaching tenures.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
3. What are five blessings of a long-term ministry?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
4. What five circumstances in a preacher's ministry which are not good reasons to move on?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
5. List four circumstances when a preacher maybe should move.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON TWENTY-FOUR

# THE MINISTER'S PERSONAL LIFE

## *The Minister's Final Challenges*

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### INTRODUCTION

**S**o you still want to preach. A look into the future might either strengthen one's desire to preach or it might cause one to rethink his decision to spend a lifetime in ministry. Here is a survey consisting of some soul-searching questions and observations examining one's ministry ten years later.

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**LESSON AIM:** To consider ten questions/observations evaluating a preacher's ministry ten years after beginning.

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### REFLECTIONS AFTER TEN YEARS OF MINISTRY

#### A. Top Ten Mistakes a Rookie Preacher Makes

(Ron Bontrager's adaptation of a post by Dale Jenkins, March 16, 2012)

1. Taking one's self too seriously: I thought a preacher was supposed to wear a suit even if he didn't want to. Be real, not a poser.
2. Letting the backpack get full before studying and doing other important work.
  - a. Be careful how many stones you let people "put in your backpack."
  - b. Be careful as to how many responsibilities and appointments one lets accumulate.
3. Not letting the church know his core beliefs.
  - a. The temptation is to preach your favorite three or four series that first year in a work.
  - b. Unless it's a first principles series people will not know what you believe and it will come back to haunt you.
4. Courting the younger "set."
  - a. We tend to want to be around those closer to our own age.
  - b. We also have bought into the concept that younger families are most attractive for the work.
  - c. There is no intrinsic value of a young soul more than an older one.
5. Neglecting his family.
  - a. If you win the whole world to Christ and your wife and kids are lost, you will be miserable!
  - b. If you lose your family it will affect your effectiveness with many folks.
  - c. However, don't use your family as an excuse not to work.

6. Trying to do it all. You can't!
  - a. You will wear yourself out.
  - b. You are robbing people of their chance to grow and become more for the Lord.
7. Not being himself and finding his own voice.
  - a. Do not try to imitate other preachers.
  - b. Be the best you can be and God will be pleased.
  - c. You need to be okay with it, too.
  - d. In trying to imitate someone else – the lack of sincerity usually shows up, in embarrassing ways.
8. Not learning to live within his means.
  - a. Don't be so generous that you don't have enough left for basic expenses.
  - b. Don't let the "debt monster" destroy you.
  - c. Don't use credit cards to spend money you don't already have.
  - d. Be honest with your leaders. If you need more money, show them why in clear terms and see if they will help. But don't go to that "well" too often.
9. Not keeping leaders informed:
  - a. Elders do not like surprises. If you want to try something, and you've had time to think it through, but they haven't, first present it to them and let them ask questions.
  - b. It is better them asking you before and you realizing it was unwise than after and you looking for another job.
10. Not realizing his significance in affecting change or over-estimating his significance in affecting change.
  - a. The church is bigger than you or any other person on earth.
  - b. When you go down the road in a van, be it moving or hearse, the church will go on.

**NOTE:** The church has a Savior and He is not you. If you do your work well, people will see Him in you and want to be like Him. And that is one of the greatest joys a minister can experience.

## **B. Allow God To Determine The Outcome**

"Give God your lunch and trust Him to feed His People" (Ron Bontrager's revision of "A Final Word," by Haddon W. Robinson in *Biblical Preaching*, 2nd ed., 2001)

1. Ever wonder about that boy who gave his "lunch" to Jesus . . . it must be important, because all four Gospel writers included it. Even before Jesus took the food and used it to feed thousands, it was a miracle, of sorts, that the boy even had food at that time of the day. Perhaps his mother had packed him a lunch earlier in the day, but the fact that he hadn't already eaten it all is amazing. I certainly wouldn't have waited that long to eat my food.
2. Imagine the scene: Jesus needs your food to feed the crowd. He must have thought something like, "mister, you must be crazy. All I've got are these five rolls and a couple of fish sticks, and I'm getting real hungry myself. I haven't eaten since breakfast, and this won't even be enough for me."
3. And Andrew, of course, had to be thinking the same thing. "This boy has a

small portion, barely enough for him; how far will it go among so many?"

4. Can you identify with that youth and with Andrew?
5. Every preacher can. Entering the pulpit I often wonder, "how can this sermon feed so many? All I have is something off the value meal, and it's full of carbohydrates."
6. It is near foolishness to believe that our Sunday messages can meet the hungers of an entire congregation. Only Christ through His Spirit can do that. You and I must give our sermons to Him; preaching is, ultimately, His work.
7. Of course, we must not give to God that which costs us nothing. We must study and prepare well and give Him our best. Yet, in the final analysis there are no great preachers. There is only a great God and Savior who does amazing things when we place ourselves and our preaching into His hands.
8. Even in our best weeks we have only a small order of fish and chips. But we serve the living Lord. Give Him your small lunch and trust Him to feed His people.

### **Conclusion**

My prayer for each one of you is that this material is a blessing to you and all people God will put in your lives to influence with the Gospel. Feel free to contact me at Sunset; send me an e-mail message at our website or give me a call sometime. I want to help you commit yourself to a lifetime of effective ministry. Again listen to Paul's admonition to his son in the faith: 2 Timothy 4:5 – "be sober in all things . . . fulfill your ministry." May God richly bless you.

**There are no self exam questions for this lesson.**

## Congregational Ministry

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# *Study Guide*

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He has served as a minister for congregations in Texas, New Mexico and Arkansas. He and his family were also part of a mission team to Salvador, Brazil (1984-88). Since 1997 he has been an instructor at Sunset International Bible Institute, and presently serves as Dean of Preaching Ministries at Sunset.

Ron and wife Bev have three adult children and several grandchildren. Ron is a passionate New York Yankees baseball fan, and has even written a book about his love for the team and game.



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