



# **What's a Pastor to Do?**

**By**

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*Teaching Notes* are Bible studies we taught before GraceLife Ministries began publishing articles online in 1995. Some were presented as sermons, others as group studies.

Our hope is that these older studies will be a blessing to you in your life and ministry. Please use them in any way God leads you.

These teaching notes are from a series about **Church Growth** taught over a period of several months.

[These notes are from a study more than 45 years ago.]



Pastor A is having an identity crisis. Pastor B is thinking about quitting the ministry. Pastor C is married and having an affair with one of the women in the church. These are real-life situations. Thousands of Bible-believing pastors find themselves visiting therapists, quitting the ministry, or committing adultery every year. How can this happen? These are our spiritual leaders?

There are no simple, quick, or easy answers to this question. Most Christian pastors I know got into the ministry because they wanted to serve Christ. They love Jesus, but somewhere their beliefs and practices strayed from God's ideal for Christian leaders.

Many former pastors interviewed about why they quit the ministry blame the 'people in the pews' or the 'church board.' National surveys conducted by major denominations show pastors' job satisfaction at an all-time low. What happened? What's a pastor to do?

1. First, we need to understand that pastors are human beings. They are flesh and blood, subject to every pain, sorrow, illness, disappointment, and stress every other human faces.
2. Second, saved pastors are Christians. They are sinners saved by the miraculous grace of our loving God.
3. Third, they are gifted servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. They have a special calling for a special job – shepherding the flock of God.

Those three truths should lead pastors to accept some realities –

- Pastors are not perfect. Pastors make mistakes.
- Pastors need a lot of help. They don't have all the answers to everyone's problems or needs. Pastors are not smart enough, wise enough, or strong enough to do it all by themselves. That's one of the reasons that the Apostle Paul established multiple 'elder/overseers' for each church, rather than just one man as the leader.

- Pastors get off track sometimes. Pastors can get so caught up in the administration of a church and the problems of the day-to-day that they lose sight of their calling from God.

So, what's a pastor to do?

- Realize that God loves you and is a full partner in your ministry.
- Forget every preconceived idea about your ministry and start fresh by studying the Word thoroughly to find out what God says about your ministry as a church leader.
- Determine to do whatever God says no matter what changes it will mean in your ministry.
- If your church does not have multiple 'elder/overseers,' follow Paul's direction and surround yourself with godly men who will help guide the work God has given you all to do.

Every six months or so I find myself in need of some 'continuing education.' I need a gentle push back to the center of my calling. That push comes from the words of Christ through the Apostle Paul in the 'Pastoral epistles' – 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

Here's some of what you'll discover there –

- Pastors should guide their people toward a life of love
- Pastors should guide their people toward 'sound doctrine'
- Pastors should guide their people toward peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness
- Pastors should guide their people toward helping each other, without anger or disputing
- Pastors should guide their people toward building up each other in faith and good works
- Pastors should guide Christian men toward lives of morality, decency, kindness, and good works
- Pastors should guide Christian women toward lives of modesty, decency, propriety, and good works



- Pastors should focus on God's will for 'elder/overseers' rather than their own will for fame or fortune
- Pastors should be an example of godliness in every aspect of their lives – including their families and their reputation in the community

[Thank you for reading these teaching notes from more than 45 years ago. My prayer is they will be a blessing to you and your life and ministry.]

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