

# MIN 381 Pastoral Ministry

## Instructor's Notes – Chad Payne

### UNIT ONE: THE PASTOR'S PREPARATION

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#### I. The Considerations of a Pastor.

1. **The Call.** **Jeremiah 1:5 NIV.** “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” How did you come to know you are called into ministry? For me, it was simply a knowing that continued to grow and which I could not escape.
  - a. *The Call is an Anchor.* It will strengthen and steady the pastor during difficulties. There WILL be seasons when it seems like nothing is working like you expected. There may be others what will cause you to question whether you should be in ministry. But you always go back to the call.
  - b. *The Call must be tested.* It will be tested through time. While emotional experiences eventually fade, a call from God endures. It will also be tested by what doors open. God will make a way in His time. Often this involves delays in which we much remain faithful and wait for God to promote us. **Illustration:** [Pastoring the warehouse.](#)
  - c. Moses waited forty years!! In fact, let's look at some lessons Moses offers.
    - i. God uses diverse methods to call different people and speaks to each individual in a variety of ways.
    - ii. Wait for God's timing; do not get ahead of God.
    - iii. Do not take matters into your own hands; never use immoral, unethical, or illegal means to accomplish God's purposes.
    - iv. Even serious errors do not nullify the call of God.
2. **Character.** “What lies before us and what lies behind us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.” —Ralph Waldo Emerson. That which lies within us is our character.
  - a. *Character is about being.* Character is what God is doing IN us, conforming us to the likeness of His Son. If we do not build our ministries upon the foundation of character, we will not last. Our gifts will take us places our character cannot keep us.
  - b. Notice the qualifications Paul lists for leaders: **1 Timothy 3:2-7 NIV.** <sup>2</sup> **Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled,**

respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup> He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. <sup>5</sup> (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) <sup>6</sup> He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. <sup>7</sup> He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. Paul only mentions one skill: the ability to teach. Everything else is character related.

- c. Character is often built or torn down in the little decisions. **Illustration: Doc's story about his dad turning the cart around for two cents.**
  - d. We often lose character in the tiny compromises that lead to major failures. In his book, "The Best Question Ever," Andy Stanley argues that the best question is not, "Is this sin?" but rather, "What is the wise thing to do?"
3. **Gifts.** It is up to us to cultivate the gifts God has given us. We must be intentional about being lifelong learners. This becomes increasingly difficult once we are in ministry.
- a. "We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us" (Romans 12:6):
    - i. Prophesying
    - ii. Serving
    - iii. Teaching
    - iv. Encouraging
    - v. Giving
    - vi. Leading
    - vii. Showing mercy
  - b. **Recognize strengths.** The temptation is to try to shore up our weaknesses. We do have to do this to some extent, but it is far better to focus on our strengths. Excel in the areas where you are strongest. Focus on the areas that energize you.
  - c. **Recognize weaknesses.** God will place others around you with complementing gifts. We must release them into ministry!
    - i. We cannot do it all. To attempt to do so leads us to burnout. **Exodus 18:14-18.**
    - ii. We must focus on what we alone can do and are gifted to do. **Acts 6:1-7.** The result is that the Word of God spreads!
4. What are three reasons that sharing ministry with others is a practical necessity as well as a biblical imperative?

- a. It is the only way for a church to minister to everyone's needs.
- b. It is the only strategy that allows a pastor to develop the right quality of ministry.
- c. It enables various people to discover and develop their ministry gifts and abilities.

## II. The Devotional Life of a Pastor

1. **Prayer.** My pastor once told me, "You will never preach above what you pray." It was a way of life for Jesus. He would run and hide from legitimate needs in order to spend time with His Father. We must do the same. We are called to lead others into an intimate walk with the Lord. We cannot lead others where we ourselves have not been. We lead by example.
  - a. Prayer is communion with the Lord. We must never allow the work of the Lord to distract us from the Lord of the work! The temptation is to spend time in prayer and study simply to get another sermon.
  - b. Prayer provides insight from the Lord. God works within our hearts in the context of prayer. *Illustration: Journaling to see the pattern of God's dealings.*
  - c. Prayer is a Privilege. Although we must be disciplined the practice of prayer, we must be careful to not simply view it as a task to be performed. *Illustration: Obligated to kiss your wife.*
2. **Study.** **The minister must carefully study God's Word.** *Hebrews 4:12 NIV. For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*
  - a. **We read the bible on at least three levels.** We determine the historical and literacy context first. Then we determine the timeless principle by asking, "How does this passage make God known?" Finally, we consider how to apply the passage in our own lives.
    - i. Preserving the Scripture's objectivity and historical perspective: ***What is the context of the passage?*** (*Using proper hermeneutics - principles of interpretation - whenever reading Scripture, is essential!*)
      1. Historical context (setting)
      2. Literary context - genre, literary conventions being used, etc.
    - ii. Coming to a fuller understanding and appreciation of God's character: ***How does this passage make God known?***
    - iii. Allowing God's Word to change us: ***How can I personally apply this passage?***

- b. **Studying additional writings.** A good balanced library is very important. Be careful not to focus on the newest bestseller. One pastor suggested we should read two dead authors for every living one. And don't simply read stuff you already agree with!
- 3. **Fasting.** Fasting is the spiritual practice of forgoing food for a time to devote oneself to seeking the Lord.
  - a. **Four Types of Biblical Fasts**
    - i. Normal fast: no food (Luke 4:2).
    - ii. Absolute fast: no food or water (Esther 4:16).
    - iii. Partial fast: limited kinds of food (Daniel 10:2–3).
    - iv. Supernatural fast: an absolute fast for an extended period of time (Deuteronomy 9:9; 1 Kings 19:8).
  - b. Although the Bible puts fasting in the same category as prayer and Bible study, many believers neglect it. Nonetheless it should be part of our lifestyle.

### III. The Personal Life of a Pastor

1. One's personal situation impacts how we minister and how others perceive us. We must acknowledge that many do not fit into a cutter-cutter mold of what some believe the pastor's life and family should look like. Each situation provides unique challenges and opportunities.
2. The married pastor's perspective. The married pastor's personal life should reflect his or her priorities. God first, marriage and family second, and ministry third. What happens when a pastor puts ministry above his or her spouse and family? It can be an ongoing challenge to find the proper balance for family and ministry when pastoring. [Story about Kim and WMs.](#)
3. The single pastor's perspective. Many single ministers feel overlooked because most evangelical churches focus heavily on families. Yet both Jesus and Paul taught that there is value in singleness. **There are several common misconceptions about single ministers:**
  - a. Single ministers may not be as complete or spiritually mature as married ministers.
  - b. Single ministers have more time than married ministers.
  - c. Single ministers are threats to married adults.
  - d. Single ministers have fewer problems than married ministers.
  - e. All single ministers want to be married.

4. The female pastor's perspective. The early church provided remarkable opportunity for women to serve in leadership. Especially for the time and culture, Jesus' equal treatment of women was revolutionary.
  - a. Some point to specific passages written by Paul to argue that women should not be allowed to teach or lead men. These passages are addressing specific local problems that needed to be corrected.
  - b. The Assemblies of God holds the position that women can serve in any capacity of ministry leadership (Article VII, Ministry, Section 2).
5. The pastor as a parent. Pastors must recognize that their calling as parent supercedes their calling as pastor. We must not sacrifice our families at the altar of ministry. Instead, we must MODEL godly parenting. Illustration: [Lizi dressing up like me and running out saying she had to write a sermon.](#)
6. The pastor as a friend. Many pastors struggle with the question of whether or not they can have friends in their congregations.
  - a. It is complicated, because it remains difficult to separate the roles. Others will see us as their pastors first and friends second.
  - b. There is also the issue of the power of authority. You have power over others, whether you are aware of it or not.
  - c. It is important to have friendships with other ministers, as well.

## Unit 2: The Pastor's Responsibilities (Part 1)

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### I. The Ministry of Preaching and Teaching

1. **Prioritize.** Remember what we read in Acts 6? The apostles delegated tasks to deacons so they could devote their own attention to what? Prayer and the ministry of the Word. There was a pressing need - a legitimate need - that could easily have pulled them from what they needed to do most. The same is true for us. We must be very intentional about setting and maintaining priorities.
  - a. When establishing priorities, a pastor first ask, *“what has God called me to do?”* God gives us the strength and ability to accomplish what He has called us to do if we don't overwhelm ourselves with nonessential tasks.
  - b. If you do not control your calendar, it will control you. You will spend your time reacting rather than acting. Our responsibilities change and grow all the time depending on the season of the church. So how do we address it?
    - i. Admit your weaknesses. You cannot do it all, nor were you meant to. *Illustration: “Superpastor had to die.”*
    - ii. Determine your God-given tasks. What has GOD called you to do? That is different from what you feel others expect you to do.
    - iii. Decide which tasks to delegate. Make a list of everything you do. Everything. Decide which ones only you can do. Now make a list of all candidates who may be able, even with training, to do the others.
    - iv. Decide which tasks to cut. There are some things that simply do not need to be done at all.
  - c. According to the text, God has called every pastor to do four things: Walk with God daily, be a good spouse and family member, preach God's Word, and pray for people.
  - d. **The greatest gift you can give your church is to be a healthy pastor.** Take care of yourself first. Do what is most important first.
2. **Prepare.** The first step in preparing a message is to prepare your own heart. Only after this should you prepare your sermon. Your message should be a fresh message from God for His people. It must deal with the overarching biblical theme as well as provide life application.
  - a. We must faithfully declare the whole counsel of God. This means we preach with balance.

- b. I want to encourage you to develop a preaching calendar. [Illustration: My experience with Glenn](#). If not a year, then a quarter at a time. Get away for a few days to plan calendar. Get away once a month to begin to develop that month's messages.
- 3. **Proclaim.** We must be true and genuine in our delivery. It is not wise to attempt to mimic other ministers. God wants to use your personality and gifts for His glory.
  - a. How to be Open when Preaching
    - i. Share your past struggles.
    - ii. Admit your shortcomings.
    - iii. Avoid focusing on yourself.
    - iv. Follow Jesus' model of opening His life to His followers.
  - b. It is helpful to review video of yourself preaching in order to evaluate your delivery, catch distracting quirks, etc. It's painful at first, but it will help you improve.

## II. The Pastor as Worship Leader

- 1. As pastor, you are the primary worship leader in the church. Over time, you can look at the congregation and see a reflection of yourself.
- 2. **The Holy Spirit's Leading.** Part of the pastor's responsibility is to establish the order of worship for services.
  - a. Here is an example from our text:
    - i. Opening prayer
    - ii. Public reading of Scripture
    - iii. Congregational singing
    - iv. Receiving the offering (worship in giving)
    - v. Special music
    - vi. Pastoral prayer
    - vii. Sermon
    - viii. Altar service
  - b. A program and plan is important, but we must be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. [Illustration: Spontaneous Night of giving at Christ Chapel](#).
- 3. **The Holy Spirit's Gifts.**

- a. We must make room for the Holy Spirit's gifts during the worship service by teaching our congregations about the gifts and training them to use them.
    - i. Instruction: Tell them.
    - ii. Demonstration: Show them.
    - iii. Participation: Let them do it with you.
    - iv. Ministry: Let them do it.
  - b. Scripture tells us in 1 Corinthians 14 to be mindful of the unbeliever and the uninitiated when exercising spiritual gifts. Pastors should use these times as a teaching moment.
4. **The Worshipper's Decision.** Every sermon should either solve a problem, meet a need, or improve something or someone. It should lead to a decision by the listener.
- a. Invite everyone to respond to the message. We must preach with the end in mind. What do we want to accomplish?
  - b. Invite people to pray at the altar. What are some conceptions and misconceptions about altar calls?

### III. The Ministry of Pastoral Care

1. **Presence.** One of the most special gifts a pastor can give to a person in a crisis is Presence. For example, when you visit someone at the funeral home that has just lost a husband or a parent, you are the physical representation of God's presence. A physical reminder that God is with them. You don't have to find something spiritual to say. Your presence there speaks volumes.
  - a. You will not always have the answers. Many answers we give seem trite in the moment of someone's greatest pain.
  - b. When I studied hospital chaplaincy, we learned to help people get past the religious dance we often do and avoid the pat religious answers. In essence, we worked to give people permission to honestly open up.
2. **Empathy.** Empathy is the ability to share in others' emotions or feelings, to feel what they are feeling to some degree. There is an element of taking on another's burdens in pastoring. Without empathy, pastors will not be able to adequately minister to people in need.
  - a. The Grieving Process.
    - i. Denial
    - ii. Anger
    - iii. Bargaining

- iv. Depression
- v. Acceptance

There are different dynamics at each stage.

- b. As pastors, we enter into the pain with them to a degree.
3. **Caregiving.** To effectively minister to people in crisis, we must not start out believing we know what they are going through. We must begin by **listening** in order to get **their perspective**. [Illustration: Being told Lizi could have Down's Syndrome](#). I can immediately resonate with those in that situation. It is helpful to imagine what it would be like if you were in the position of those to whom you minister.
- a. Responding to people in crisis. The story of Lazarus is a great example.
    - i. Absorb anger. Jesus did not rebuke Martha when she expressed anger.
    - ii. Reflect faith. Jesus told Mary and Martha His is the resurrection and life.
    - iii. Mourn together. Jesus wept.
  - b. Give people permission to feel whatever they are feeling. Give them permission to be honest and real.

## Unit 3: The Pastor's Responsibilities (Part 2)

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### I. The Pastor as a Leader

1. **Discerning God's Will.** As the pastor, God will speak to you regarding the direction of the church. This is not to say that He will not speak through people within the church, but ultimately, we as pastors are responsible for how the church moves forward.
  - a. **How God Reveals His Will**
    - i. **Through the Scriptures.**
    - ii. **By an inner witness of the Holy Spirit.**
    - iii. **Through providential circumstances or wise counsel.**
    - iv. **By special spiritual manifestations.**
  - b. The Scriptures are the unchanging final authority to which pastors must turn for guidance. All other forms of direction must line up with the Word.
  - c. Pastors and people should not agonize over knowing God's will or missing God's will. Almost all of God's will for our lives is revealed in God's word. If we get that right, and live a life of disciplined prayer, the small specifics of God's will shall usually be easily sensed or seen.
2. **Communicating the Vision.** The first step to getting God's vision for the congregation is to surrender one's own dreams and desires to God. *Illustration: "You don't need a new vision."*
  - a. *Assume nothing.* God may spend months working in our hearts to develop a vision in us. When we share it, we are shocked when people immediately push back. The problem is that we expect them to instantly accept what took months for us to embrace.
    - i. Just because we have said it once, doesn't mean everyone gets it. Just recently I had someone ask me about our vision, and I could think of several occasions where I had described it in his presence over the past year.
    - ii. You will have to share the vision repeatedly. Some leaders recommend sharing some key aspect of the vision at least once a month, reviewing the vision in summary fashion at least quarterly, and in a detailed way at least annually.
  - b. *Involve leaders.* Share with your leadership first and invite questions and input. Keep in mind that criticism is often simply a request for more information.

- c. Promote ownership of the vision.
3. **Motivating the Congregation.** Think about your greatest example in ministry? What made them so special? It was probably the way they model ministry for you. Learn best by example.
- a. Think about what it means to be a shepherd. A shepherd does not drive the sheep from behind. He leads the sheep by going before them. People follow your example. If you remain calm and strong in faith during a crisis, it will help them do the same.
  - b. **Illustration: Announcing what we were giving in stewardship campaign.**
  - c. John Johnson of the Johnson Publishing Company gives good advice.
    - i. Start small. If you are faithful in little things, God will entrust you with more. Get wins under your belt. They build confidence and faith and create momentum.
    - ii. Dream big dreams for your congregation.
    - iii. Work hard. **Colossians 3:23-24.** *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

## II. The Pastor as an Equipper

1. **Developing a Biblical Model.** **Ephesians 4:11-16.** This approach places the pastor in the role of equipper and the body in the role of minister.
- a. **Why Shared Ministry is Essential**
    - i. It is the only way the church can hope to minister to the whole spectrum of its constituency.
    - ii. It is the only strategy that affords spiritual leaders the time and energy necessary to develop the quality ministry the church needs.
    - iii. It concentrates on discovering and developing the ministry gifts and potential of all people in the church body.
  - b. **Refer to Worksheet #9 – Biblical Standards for Choosing Potential Leaders.**
2. **Selecting Materials.** We must be intentional in training members for service. Of these areas, *teaching people God's Word is most important.*
- a. It is the only way the church can hope to minister to the whole spectrum of its constituency.
  - b. It is the only strategy that affords spiritual leaders the time and energy necessary to develop the quality ministry the church needs.

- c. It concentrates on discovering and developing the ministry gifts and potential of all people in the church body.
  - d. Above all else, teaching the congregation God's word, and how to correctly read God's word for themselves, is the most important job of the Pastor, and the greatest need of the congregation.
3. **Implementing Training.** How do we eat an elephant? One bite at a time. How does this relate to us in training others for ministry? One small step at a time.
- a. Shared ministry does not diminish the pastor's office, but it does change his or her role.
  - b. **Guidelines for Training Workers.**
    - i. Select qualified people.
    - ii. Train them.
    - iii. Give them written task descriptions.
    - iv. Establish clear lines of accountability.
    - v. Release them into ministry.

### III. Developing Small Groups

1. **Recognizing the Need.** Someone may start attending your church because of your preaching, but they will stay more likely because of their relationships. This cannot be accomplished during Sunday morning service for one simple reason: The pews are turned the wrong way.
- a. Furthermore, as your church grows, you will not be able to see to every need for each person. Small groups are vital.
    - i. personal ministry,
    - ii. fellowship,
    - iii. pastoral care,
    - iv. discipleship, and
    - v. evangelism.
2. **Designing an Appropriate Model**
- a. Set Goals. What do you want your small groups to accomplish?
  - b. Set Guidelines. What will be your approach? Geography? Age? Interests?
  - c. Make people feel welcome. The circle is very important.

- d. Create an environment for sharing. This is not to be Sunday morning lite. It is a place for interaction and community.
  - e. Encourage pastoral care.
3. **Establishing Group Guidelines**. When selecting leaders, we must evaluate maturity, character, and giftedness.
4. **The Small Group Leader's Job Description**.
- a. The small group leader's job description should include the following:
  - b. the details of when, where, and how often the small group will meet;
  - c. the general format of the meeting; and
  - d. the small group's responsibilities to individual members and to the overall ministry of the church.

#### IV. Chapter 10: Special Services of the Church

##### 1. **Conducting Ceremonies**.

- a. Weddings. Weddings are stressful. [Illustration: Wedding with "Relax" and dancing in the reception.](#) HAVE A POLICY IN WRITING. You can relax restrictions, but it is harder to add them after the fact.
  - i. Counseling. [Share my story - first wedding at NLAG, and how I've relaxed restrictions and come to regret it.](#) Recommend SYMBIS.
  - ii. Planning and order. Go over the order of service. Write it down, because nerves will be frayed during the ceremony.
    - 1. Processional
    - 2. The Welcome
    - 3. The Message
    - 4. Scripture Readings
    - 5. Prayers
    - 6. Special Music or Congregational Worship
    - 7. The Pledge, Vows, Exchange of Rings
    - 8. Pronouncement, Kiss, Presentation of the Couple
    - 9. Recessional
- b. Baby Dedications. It is not giving salvation to the child. It is a covenant made by the parents and by the congregation.

- i. Invite the parents, sibling(s), and grandparents to bring the baby and join you on the platform.
- ii. During the dedication, remind the congregation of truths from Scripture:
  1. Psalm 127:3
  2. Luke 2:22–24
  3. Mark 10:14
  4. Mark 10:16
- iii. Charge parents and the congregation to bring up the baby in God’s ways.
- iv. Pray a prayer of dedication for the child.
- v. Present parents with a certificate and gift from the church.
- vi. **Some ministers dedicate or consecrate babies using a “proleptic baptism” service.** “Proleptic” - prefiguring future action (s) or event(s) that bring to fruition the current action(s) or event(s).
  1. Water is poured over the child’s head claiming her for God and prophetically calling her to someday receive Christ as Savior and follow him in believer’s water baptism by immersion.
  2. Oil is used to anoint the child’s head invoking the Holy Spirit’s presence upon her and calling her to someday meet Christ as baptizer in the Holy Spirit.
  3. On the basis of her parent(s)’ faith, she is welcomed into the covenant family of God with all of the spiritual power and protection and privilege that entails (angelic protection, spiritual insight as God’s word and Christ’s gospel are taught to her, etc.).
  4. The parents and congregation are asked for their covenant commitment to raise the child to follow Christ, they all consent, and they are solemnly charged.
  5. The child is blessed and claimed for the worship and service of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever.
- c. **Funerals**. Keep funerals relatively short. Don’t preach them into heaven or hell. The purpose is to share the gospel and provide closure to the family.
  - i. As soon as you agree to preach a funeral, speak to the funeral director to obtain the obituary and all other information they can share.
  - ii. As quickly as possible, determine who is actually making the decisions (next of kin: 1. Spouse; 2. If none, then Children; 3. If none, then Parent; 4. If none, then siblings).

- iii. The order of service: songs, other speakers, and similar information for the graveside. [Confirm your order of service with Next of Kin](#). Determine this as soon as possible and imply that it is finalized and not to be changed *without advance notice to you*.
2. **Administering the Ordinances**. (Sacraments) An ordinance or sacrament is a physical religious ceremony that represents or points to a spiritual truth or reality, and may be the means by which that reality is encountered or actualized in our lives.
- a. Water Baptism.
    - i. Profession of faith
    - ii. Purpose of baptism
    - iii. Promise of and commitment to a Christian walk
  - b. Communion. Examine ourselves, look back and forward, come for healing.
    - i. Look in three directions:
      - 1. **BACK** to the Lord's death.
      - 2. **WITHIN** to ensure peace in your heart.
      - 3. **FORWARD** to Christ's second coming (1 Corinthians 11:25–26).
  - c. Ordinances or Sacraments should be viewed as holy moments, acts of worship, ways and times of genuinely encountering God in grace and power.
    - i. The Scripture, the most ancient church, and the church throughout history always viewed Holy Communion and Water Baptism as supernatural encounters with the risen Christ in the power of the Spirit.
    - ii. All believers are expected to follow the Lord in water baptism and to partake of communion with their church family.

## Unit Four: The Pastor's Relationships

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We must be able to manage relationships well. We must have the heart of a dove and the hide of a rhino. We must be able to deal with others.

### I. Working with Lay Leaders: Elders, Deacons, and Trustees

1. **Choose leaders.** We need a screening process for selecting board members, etc. Elections from the floor are merely popularity contests. *Illustration: Person almost elected because he wanted to change how I did things.*
  - a. The model from Scripture is somewhat vague. I think it is intentionally so. Church structures vary by culture and need.
  - b. Nonetheless, the qualifications are clear. For example, in Acts 6, some of the qualifications for deacons were that they must be filled with the Holy Spirit and with wisdom.
  - c. *Six Steps for Choosing Lay Leaders.*
    - i. Receiving nominations from the membership
    - ii. Appointing a committee to review nominations
    - iii. Presenting a report to the official board
    - iv. Submitting the pastor's selections to the board
    - v. Receiving the board's review and ratification of the pastor's selections
    - vi. Presenting the nominees to the membership for a vote
2. **Define Roles.** Much conflict stems from not having clearly defined roles. I've had some people go to board members to voice complaints. It's because they come from backgrounds where the board represents the congregation to the pastor. But that is not biblical. The board is to represent the pastor to the congregation.
  - a. Define roles.
  - b. Include board members in planning and ministry.
  - c. Encourage reasonable expectations.
  - d. Build relationships.
3. **Build Relationships.**
  - a. Fellowship, Prayer, and Ministry. Create opportunities to build relationships. *Illustration: Going to board member's son's funeral.*

- b. Retreats.
- c. Agendas. Submit agendas ahead of time.

## II. Pastor-Staff Relationships

1. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NIV. Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: <sup>10</sup> If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. <sup>11</sup> Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? <sup>12</sup> Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.
2. You will be most impacted by those closest to you.
3. **Identifying Needed Staff Positions.**
  - a. Two Principles for Building Your Staff
    - i. Build your staff based on your God-given vision, not on your congregation's perceived needs.
    - ii. Add staff to facilitate growth, not simply to maintain the status quo.
  - b. Value Team Ministry. If we are insecure, we can feel threatened by staff members. The truth is, when we elevate them, we are elevating ourselves.
  - c. Focus on Vision. The vision should determine who you hire.
4. **Choosing the Right People.** Guidelines for Staff.
  - a. Guidelines for Choosing Staff
    - i. Do not select a friend to serve on your pastoral staff.
    - ii. Do not select a primary leader to fill a supporting role.
    - iii. Do not plan to change anyone after you put him or her on staff.
    - iv. Check references for potential staff members.
    - v. Remember that attitude is more important than talent or experience.
  - b. Hire slowly, fire quickly.
  - c. Watch for: Character, Competence, and Chemistry.
5. **Building Team Spirit.**
  - a. Communication. The author recommends weekly staff meetings. That is best in many settings. For my setting, personally, monthly meetings work best, with individual conversations throughout the month.
  - b. Care. Demonstrate appreciation on a regular basis.

- c. Loyalty. Loyalty goes both ways. Correct in private, affirm in public.
- d. Trust. Trust builds with time.
- e. Respect. Respect one another in how you communicate with each other and about each other. Don't use sarcasm or gossip. Remember, if they will gossip with you, they will gossip about you. As the author suggests, it does undermine the cohesion of the team.

### III. The Rhythm of Life in Ministry

1. **Get in Step with the Rhythm of Work**. Unbalanced work leads to burnout. Research tells us that only 1 out of 20 who begins in ministry finishes in ministry.
  - a. Learn limits. The work of ministry is never done. There is always another sermon to prepare, another call to make, another decision that needs attention.
  - b. Follow Jesus example. Jesus would often hide from the crowds to rest. Our ministry is to be God-centered, not need-centered.
2. **Take time for the Rhythm of Rest**. What is the principle of Sabbath rest? It means that we rest one day out of seven. This is absolutely vital. Some have said, "Well, the devil doesn't take a day off!" Yes, but he isn't our example!
  - a. Think about the commandment of Sabbath and what it meant to Israel. They had been slaves, valued only for what they could produce. Sabbath meant God valued them for who they were.
  - b. Take a day off and protect it!! *Illustration: Glenn asking why my cell phone was on.*
  - c. Life must be lived with a rhythm. We cannot live on the constant adrenaline that comes from stress. It wrecks us physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Many of our churches are too busy.
3. **Live in the Rhythm of Worship**. Our rhythm must be: Work, Rest, and Worship.
  - a. Worship is a lifestyle and a discipline. *Illustration: "You came here for Me."* Everything we do is worship.
  - b. Worship is "Worth-Ship." It is acknowledging and "making large" that which is before us.

### IV. Keeping Your Passion for Ministry

1. **Guard Your Faith**.

2. **Illustration: Compare Mary and Martha.** What can a pastor do to balance time spent in the “kitchen” of ministry? Are we more likely to hear from God when we are in the “kitchen” of busyness or when we are “at the feet of Jesus”?
3. **Guard Your Heart.** Have you ever considered that success can be dangerous? It tests our character and integrity.
  - a. “Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.” (Proverbs 4:23)
  - b. **Guard your heart from...**
    - i. the danger of success,
    - ii. the danger of comparison, and
    - iii. the danger of greed.
4. **Guard Your Spirit.** A pastor will have many opportunities to become wounded emotionally and spiritually. If we do not handle those wounds correctly, we will likely grow bitter.
  - a. Keys to Guarding Your Spirit
    - i. Be yourself—determine that you will never let anyone make you into something you are not.
    - ii. Do not misinterpret God’s role—never blame God for the things His children do.
    - iii. Remember God’s immeasurable love—be aware that God loves the people who hurt you as much as He loves you.
    - iv. Choose forgiveness—be aware that unforgiveness hurts you more than anyone else.
    - v. Remember that in any situation, you always have a choice in the way you respond.
  - b. Handling Criticism.
    - i. Make the criticism a matter of prayer.
    - ii. Consider the source.
    - iii. Carefully weigh the criticism, separating what is valid from what is not.  
**Illustration: My friend breaking down complaint letter with me.**
    - iv. With God’s help, make any needed corrections.

## V. Lessons from the Pastorate

1. **Ask God for Wisdom.** No one enjoys being criticized or complained about. Many pastors allow criticism to drive them to defend themselves, rally support, respond in anger, or even resign. Instead, the pastor should use those opportunities to ask God for wisdom,

so that the pastor may respond with humility, work for restoration, and find clear direction.

2. **Take Responsibility for Your Mistakes.** No one is perfect, not even pastors. When they do make a mistake, they must take responsibility and admit it.
  - a. Admit your mistakes and accept the consequences.
  - b. Focus on the future, not the past.
  - c. Learn from failure.
  - d. Confess mistakes publicly and ask for forgiveness.
3. **Seek to Serve.** Biblically, the position of pastor is not that of CEO but of a humble SERVANT.
  - a. “Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’” (Matthew 20:25–28)