

# THE CHURCHS' DUTY TO HER PASTOR

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"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation," - Heb 13:7

It is a very high calling to be called to pastor one of the Lord's churches. To be called as President of the United States of America would be a step down. My dad used to like to say that when he became king of the world, everything was going to change. As a child I thought that was foolish, but now I wish he was king of the world because we need changes. But If I could be king of the world, it would be a step down from being a pastor of one of the Lord's churches. If I were the richest man in all of the world— if someone would come to me and offer me all of the money that would make me the richest man in the world to quit pastoring the Lord's church, it would be a step down. If I were to be the most popular, the most famous man living, with all the tabloids writing and making up stories about me; and I was to be known and my name on the lips of every human being, and leave pastoring one of the Lord's churches, it would be a step down. Therefore, the church should be very wise and very prayerful in calling a man to pastor them in one of the Lord's churches.

I want to say, from the onset, that God will not bless a church that does not treat the pastor right. God will not bless a church, possibly, if the pastor doesn't treat the church right. He will probably be soon down the road and someone else will come in his place. It is of tremendous importance in a relationship between a pastor and his church, and every member of the church. You cannot separate yourself from the church if you are a member thereof. So, if I preach the Lord's church's' duty to the pastor, I am preaching the duty of every single member of the church concerning their relationship with the pastor. It is a relationship that is to be taken very seriously! We are about the King's business! We are doing God's work! We are responsible here upon this earth for perpetuating the truth of the Word of God. We, as churches, have been given the commission of God to preach the gospel, to teach all things, to baptize and carry out the ordinances of God. I urge you to be very careful, as a member of one of the Lord's churches that you never do anything that might harm the work of God's church.

I am very blessed by God, for I believe that Grace Baptist Church of Gladwin, Michigan epitomizes, and has for twenty five years now, on how a church should treat a pastor. I cannot separate how they treat me from this message. There are several things I want us to notice in this message:

## I.

**It is the church's' duty to be present in the church services.** It is not just the duty of the pastor. I will never understand poor church attendance. I will never understand why it is that some people seem to think that they have no need for the house of God. Some people just need Sunday morning services. Some people just need Sunday school, Sunday morning and Sunday night. Some people need Wednesday night thrown in. Then we have the "Super-holy" and the "Super-sanctified" people who need only one service a week. The pastor must really be doing a good job on that group of people! Beloved, it is your duty as a member to be in the house of God when the church doors are open.

The pastor is as a cook that has worked exceedingly hard to prepare a meal. I will tell you, if my wife invites you to dinner, and you tell her you are coming but do not show up, she is not going to be happy. You have hired your pastor. You ought to show up to eat the spiritual meal that he has prepared for you.

Not only is it your duty to be there; It is your duty to be on time. As much as I don't understand some not being there, I don't understand why some people are habitually late in coming to the house of God. You wouldn't treat your job like that. You would not be happy if the pastor came in five minutes late, and every week made a habit of not being on time. Now I coach varsity football and we have an attendance policy. Part of that policy is that after the second unexcused tardy, you miss playing time. How much of more import is the house of God? It is rude, Sunday after Sunday, to interrupt the services of God by coming in late, and I will assure you that pastors are not the only ones that feel that way.

## II.

**It is the church's' duty to have passion for the pastor.** You are to love him, first of all, as a person even though at times he may appear or seem unlovable. He might preach a sermon that just burns you up. He might preach a sermon that angers you, but you still need to love him. You need to understand that we have flaws and that we might annoy you once in a while. But as a brother in Christ you need to love and have passion for your pastor.

You need to love him because of his position and placement by God. The church prayed about his calling. Hopefully, they spent many hours on their knees prostrate before God saying:

"Lord, who would you have to come and lead your church? Who would it be?" praying sincerely and earnestly, 'God, send the man that you want to be our overseer.'" Hopefully when your pastor received the call, he prayed earnestly: Lord, let me know. Should I go? Is this the place you would have me to be? Are you calling me to be pastor of this church?" Realize God has brought you together. Have passion on him for his position as pastor of the Lord's church.

## III.

**It is the church's' duty to pray for their pastor every single day.** Realize you ought to pray for the pastor. First of all, pray about his studying. Pray as he is in the study reading and searching the Word of God. You may have no idea how much time he spends studying and meditating upon that which he has studied.

Pray that God will keep him from error. Sometimes I think it has happened to some that they think they have found some new thing. They will have come up with some new doctrine to impress the people. While they are in their study, they will get a "flash." They think it is from the Holy Spirit, but it is not. They will come up with this "new doctrine." So you pray that as the pastor studies, God will lead him, guide him, direct him, keep him from error, and teach him the truths of the Word of God.

Pray about his subject. I urge you, don't tell your preacher what to preach. Don't tell him what he can preach or what he can't preach. Leave that up to God! God does not need your help God will instruct the preacher. He will give him the message.

Pray that God will give him the subject. I'll tell you, it's hard sometimes, knowing what to preach week after week, after week. Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night. Special services here and there; and it goes on over and over again. "What do I preach next week?" When I finish preaching on Sunday night, that night my mind starts going to next Sunday. Our minds are continually on the subjects that God would have us to preach.

Pray about his sermon. Pray that the Holy Spirit of God will be upon him. Pray that the Spirit of God will give him the physical strength to proclaim the Word of God. Pray about the sermon that you would have him to preach, that the Holy Spirit will be with him and anoint him every time he preaches the Word of God.

## IV.

**It is the church's' duty to participate with the pastor.** First of all, you are to hear him. Do you think preachers are dumb? You think we don't look over the congregation and know who is listening and who is not? If your eyes are closed, you are probably not listening, but you might be, If you are looking out the window, we know you are probably not listening. If you are clipping your fingernails, we are suspicious that you might not be giving us your attention. If you are whispering to somebody beside you, maybe we should assume that you are saying, "Boy, he's preaching good!" But we usually assume something different. If I see you passing a note—well, you get the point. We know who's listening. Hear you pastor! Why in the world are you paying him to preach the Word of God if you are not going to hear what he has to say?

Hold your pastor accountable. Try what he preaches by the Word of God. Go home after the church service and examine what he had to say that day; then believe! When you sit in the congregation, you will get more out of church services if you will sit there believing that God gave the message. Listen to him! Don't distract others. Give him a full hearing without prejudice. Don't tell him, "I don't believe that." Listen to what he says.

Not only hear him, but heed him. Do as he preaches. If the preacher preaches that we need to pray more, pray more. If he says you need to read and study the Word of God more, read and study the Bible more. If he says you need to be busy witnessing to the lost, you should witness to lost souls, Heed what your pastor has to say. Heed the truths. If he preaches the Word of God, you need to heed what he says and be busy doing it.

## V.

**The church has a duty to the pastor's partner.** Now, you may not like this, but you have a duty to the pastor's wife. I wonder how many preachers wives just kind of get caught in the middle of the pastor's wife's job? You owe something to the pastor's partner. You owe her respect. You know, preacher's wives are all different. Some of them are very extroverted, very outgoing, very friendly and delightful all of the time. Some are very shy. There is no role for the preacher's wife. She ought to be what she is for God. She ought to do what every other woman in the church does; that is, in obedience to the Word of God. So you understand when you call a pastor, you also get the pastor's wife. She came with the deal, and I might add, it's a good deal.

But understand that she does not want to hear you talk about her husband. She does not want to be the sounding board of you talking about other members in the church. You know that she will go and tell her husband. She wants you to respect her. She wants you to treat her kindly. Don't gossip to her. Don't judge her and tell her how you think she should be, as long as she is living in accordance with the Word of God. It is the church's' duty to respect the pastor's wife.

## VI.

**It is the church's' duty to put up with the pastor.**

Sometimes you have just got to put up with us there is no "S" on his chest for "Superchristian." We are not special. I'll tell you something: We are no more obligated to be godly than you are. I'll tell you something else: I am no more obligated to be in God's house when the doors are open than you are. I may be obligated to you as your leader, but I'd rather be obligated to God. That's why when you come to the house of God, you've got to put up with us when we are in a mood. Sometimes we get discouraged. Do you know what it is like to preach and preach and preach and see nothing? Do you know why they called Jeremiah the "weeping prophet"? Because he preached about repentance again and again and again, and got nothing.

I've been preaching a series on Elijah the prophet. Elijah was there on Mount Carmel doing a great work for God. After he had completed that work, he ran twenty five miles in front of Ahab's horse and got to Jezreel before Ahab did. Ahab went in and told his wife Jezebel what Elijah had done to killing the prophets of Saal. She replied, "Go and tell Elijah that by this time tomorrow he is going to be just like those prophets he killed." Elijah fled upon hearing this. He ran and sat under a Juniper tree and asked God to kill him.

Beloved, sometimes preachers get discouraged. He might forget to say good morning. He might not smile like you want him to. Sometimes we get depressed, and sometimes we get delighted. You can't make people happy. We get up and we get down. We get happy and we get sad, so put up with us when we are in a mood.

Put up with us when we serve a bad meal. My wife is a great cook, but there are some things she serves that I don't like much. But I would never, ever say that It was a bad meal. But when I am eating something besides that, she might get the hint. Don't think that you are the only person that knows we preach a bad sermon sometime. We know it too. There have been times when I have been preaching that I would keep looking at the clock. I kept looking at the clock because I couldn't wait for thirty minutes to be done so that I can sit down and shut up. Sometimes we have good material, but we don't know where the delivery went. I have stuttered and stammered. I have lost my place and sometimes I had no idea what I was saying. There are other times when what I had, I thought, was bad material. But the Holy Spirit gave me a delivery that seemed to stir the people up. There were other times that I had bad material, a bad delivery and was glad to go home.

I'll tell you, preaching is odd. You will never understand it until God calls you to preach. You will never understand how helpless we feel standing back here; so, sometimes you just have to put up with us when we preach bad sermons or are in a mood.

Pray harder for us. God will make a better preacher if the church prays for the preacher, I'll tell you, pray all week long:

"God, bless the preacher. Give him the strength." I guarantee that you will get more out of the message come Sunday.

## VII.

**It is the church's' duty to pay the pastor.** The church I pastor pays me good. I am the best paid pastor in Gladwin, Michigan. I had cancer three years ago. Since I had cancer, my insurance has gone. The church pays over \$15,000.00 a year for my health insurance. They pay my house. They pay my utilities. They pay my phone bill. They give me all of that plus, they pay me a very good salary. They help me pay my taxes. They pay the pastor well.

I want you to understand something: Missionary work begins with your pastor. Take care of your pastor. Your pastor should be loved like a brother. Your pastor did not take an oath of poverty, and poverty does not keep him humble. Pay him the best you can pay him and hopefully he will feel obligated to work the best he can work. Don't begrudge him nice things. Don't be jealous of his pay. The Lord lead you to take care of your pastor.

## VIII.

**It is your duty to let your pastor preach at other places.** Preachers need preaching to. If we don't need It, we like it. We enjoy hearing other people preach the Word of God. When he goes to a Bible conference, don't tell your preacher that he has got to be home by Sunday morning for Sunday services. Let him stay for the whole conference. There are times that he may have to leave early, but let your preacher preach! Let him go somewhere else and expound the Word of God.

## **IX.**

**It is your duty to protect your pastor.** Protect him from slander. You should never let anyone talk bad about your pastor. Protect him from members. If members come to you complaining about your pastor, tell them to see the pastor! Protect him. Stand behind him. Protect him from non-members. If some come to you criticizing his doctrinal stand, let them know that you believe just like he does. Protect him from straying. Don't let him preach heresy. Don't let him get up and preach something that is contrary to the Word of God. Oftentimes when a preacher goes into heresy, it won't be long before the whole church goes with him. Hold him accountable for what he preaches, and stand behind him when he is right in preaching the Word of God.

## **X.**

**It is your duty to praise your pastor.** Don't praise him too much. Don't get carried away. But if he preaches a good sermon, tell him so. Sometimes just tell him you appreciate him as a pastor. Build him up. Set an example before your children by respecting the pastor.

## **XI.**

**Lastly: Sometimes it is your duty to pity your pastor.** Pity him for the missions he sometimes has to do. When he has to tell a wife or mother that they have lost a son or husband. Or he has to tell a spouse that their wife or husband wants a divorce. Sit and try to witness to a hardened lost man while he is on his death bed; his Christian daughter standing there with tears running down her eyes.

May pastors do their duty and may churches do their duty for the good of God's churches and for His glory.