

For the Love of the Family Ministries

Missionaries to America's Forgotten Mission Field, the Family

Encouragement For The Pastor

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Encouragement For The Pastor

We live in a difficult day for the man of God. This morning as I was praying the Lord spoke to my heart to write something for pastors. I have been a pastor for 30 years and through For the Love Of The Family and our related mail lists several thousand pastors read what we write. I believe today that the Independent-Fundamental Baptist home is in trouble as well as the Independent-Fundamental Baptist Church. We have lost our way. We cannot have strong families without strong churches and we cannot have strong churches without strong families. The two go together and at the center of that is a strong man of God who teaches and preaches God's Word and cares for his people. Being a good pastor is a tough job in this day of apostasy and compromise.

I get the opportunity to talk with and counsel with many pastors through For the Love of The Family. Many pastors are discouraged today. Hardly do I ever talk with a pastor who is happy with the way things are going.

They are concerned about the families of their church and their drift toward the world. They are concerned about the sin that is so prevalent in their lives, and the disasters that are coming out of their homes in the form of their children. The pastor is under pressure from their church folks to have activities "to keep folks interested" and to bring in worldly entertainment to appease the flesh, Romans 6:11-16.

Of course, the fear is if we do not do that then we will lose people down the street to the more liberal church. I hear pastors say, "I am just tired of fighting." Maybe they are just tired of standing for what God says? Then you have those who say, "Well we just are not growing under your ministry." I have found that is an easy phrase for saying, "I just do not want to live a godly life." However, all these things and others can wear on you.

The pastor who thinks that if I only preach the Bible and stand for right we are going to have a small church. Then there is the pressure from the publications that want to “tell you how to build the biggest church.” If you are not building a big church and baptizing 300 people a year you are a failure in the ministry. Dear brother, when you get on the inside of some of these organizations you find that maybe it is not all that it is cracked up to be. **No man is a failure for God who has been faithful and done what he can do for God wherever God has put Him!** Do not let anyone diminish your work for the Lord because you have not reached as many people as another supposedly has.

Don't get me wrong, each of us is to be concerned about the souls of men, be filled with the Spirit, and to seek to win the lost. I just don't have to turn it into a carnal contest.

I also want to thank God for men who have been faithful to God's Word and have won many to Christ. Call me skeptical, but I sure would like to see a whole lot more concern about holiness in the lives of pastors, churches, and families, rather than a worldly carnal, activities oriented machine.

However, if you are going to stand for holiness, you are probably going to have a somewhat smaller church. Let me say to you, there is nothing wrong with that. It is also nothing to be discouraged about.

One of these days when we stand before God He is going to be concerned about the quality of our work. Did we have the right motives for what we are doing? “For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” II Corinthians 10:12. Let me ask you how are you doing with this verse? In I Corinthians 3:1-9 the Apostle Paul said, “This was carnal and it leads to a carnal church.” I would encourage each pastor to think about that. Don't be so concerned about how you compare with the other guy, but concentrate on what you are doing for God. Yes, we can learn from other people, but we need to make sure what we are learning is what God's Word says not a compromise with the world.

Many pastors have quit going to preacher's fellowships because of this. I can understand how you feel. Pretty tiring when you go for encouragement and get carnality. Do not misunderstand, I am all for good godly men seeking to encourage each other in the ministry. I am opposed to the fellowship becoming more important than your local church. Many men have been lead astray because they sought fellowship and were uncomfortable with what they saw, but felt they wanted the fellowship and ended up being a compromiser.

A few years ago I had lunch with a pastor who was heavily involved in a fellowship that supported and encouraged Southern Gospel music. Pretty worldly things went on. I asked him straight forwardly, “Why are you being a part of this?” His answer was revealing. He said, “Well if I don't go there I won't have any fellowship with anyone. We don't make music an issue.” The man is a deceived compromiser and he involved his church in the compromise. Why, just for fellowship! We have the mutual admiration society of compromise today! Titus 2: 12, “Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” Dear brother pastor, let me say to you, no one wants to be enemies and there is not a need to be enemies. However, the pastor who does this is just being a compromiser and it is utter non sense to compromise your church and your life just for fellowship. Let me tell you if there is not a sound fellowship in your area, find another pastor or two that you can have fellowship with who stand for right and have fellowship with them and encourage each other. There are things we just should not participate in. Many pastors today are involved in everything to make them selves look good and be a politician. The ministry is no place for a politician!

Many of the pastors who I counsel are in serious trouble because of weakness in their devotional life. Guys, let me say to you, you cannot do the work of the ministry without a real relationship with God through His Word. You know the devil uses discouragement in your life when you are not spending meaningful time with the Lord. Let me say to you, just going through the motions is not going to do it either. God does not bless Bible readers he blesses Bible mediators. Especially when things are not going well, and you are feeling the pressure and the weight of everything you deal with remember James 4:6-8, "But he giveth more grace (divine help), Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. **Submit yourselves therefore to God.** Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you**....." There is a lot in these verses, but did you notice who was involved here, the devil. The devil's goal in your life is to get you to quit drawing nigh to God by outside pressure in your life. He uses your pride to do it. I know, we have went to Bible College we know the answers. Yes, but we are being independent of God (proudful) by not submitting (yielding) ourselves to God daily and moment by moment. God will resist us unless we are a submitted man of God. You cannot do the work of the ministry in your own power and be sloppy in your devotional life. Many times the pastors I counsel with have not been reading their Bible except to get a message. I am amazed at that, but should not be. Guys, you have to deal with sin every day in your life and let God speak to you to refresh your life and make His presence real in your life. Otherwise you, your family, and your church will be destroyed. Proverbs 13:13, "Whoso despiseth (does not give proper attention to) the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded." Pastor are you giving proper attention to the Word so you can do God's work properly and right. There is no need for a pastor to be discouraged. If the weight of everything is tough, get alone with God and get it fresh from Him. Make sure you ask God to show you any sin in your life, and repent of it. Find out what God's Word says about it and make biblical long term change in your life, Ephesians 4:22-24.

You have to spend meaningful time with God daily. You need to teach your people how to do so. If you do not know how look in the catalog of our web site www.fortheloveofthefamily.com, and get the booklets, "*How To Have A Daily Time With God*" and "*How To Have A Real Relationship With God.*" In fact, I would recommend you buy one of each of these booklets for yourself and every family in your church

Maybe you are dealing with a difficult person today. Don't worry and fret about them where it causes you to react rather than trust God. What do I do with a difficult person? "Lord I want to turn them over to you." Every time they come up in your mind, "Lord I want to turn them over to you." You will be surprised what God will do for them and you. Each of us wants joy and peace in our lives and we can and should have that in the ministry, Philippians 4:4-9. No, it does not mean there will not be difficult days. It means if my relationship is right with God I will be able to turn it over to Him and have peace and joy in the work God has called me to do. That is what the Apostle Paul did. Are you any different? Why do we think we are different?

Many of the pastors I counsel with run their life in anger. They are angry at home and angry at church. Many times they preach in anger. Guys, it is sin! Ephesians 4:31, "**Let all** bitterness, and **wrath, and anger**, and clamour (public quarreling) and evil speaking, **be put away from you**, with all malice." Let me ask you a question, what part of **all** do we not understand? It is to be put away. You cannot do the work of God and be an angry mean spirited person.

Many pastors are angry in the pulpit and justify it by saying, "Well God is angry at sin." I understand that but you are not God and should not pretend to be. There is nothing wrong with being forceful in

preaching and showing energy. In fact, many pulpits could use some energy. However, to get mad at your people and browbeat them is not being a man of God it is being a bully. You are called to be a Shepherd not a mean spirited person. That does not mean we should not deal with sin and preach against it, but we are to do so with the right spirit not an angry spirit.

I was speaking at a Bible College a few years back. In an afternoon session I was teaching on anger. I talked about angry pastors and a pastor was there visiting one of his students and decided to stay for the afternoon session. After the session was over he came up to talk with me in tears. He said, "I am so glad I stayed this afternoon. I had thought about going on home. You know Pastor Coomer; I have done exactly what you said today, preached in anger. Some of our people did not do what I thought they should. do and it made me mad. Some others of our folks said, "Pastor you really gave it to them today." I was mad! I realized today that God was not in what I was doing and I asked God to forgive me for my sin and repented of it. I just wanted you to know how much you helped me today." The power of the Holy Spirit does not need ungodly anger it needs submission by the man of God of his own life to be filled with the Spirit of God.

Pastor are you discouraged today? If so, you need to think about the great love the Saviour has for you. He wants you to be His man in the community you are in. He wants you to have a real, intimate, personal, and passionate relationship with Him. Are you failing to get it fresh from God each day? If so, the place to start is by asking for forgiveness, and making it a priority of your life to have a real relationship with the One who loves you and gave himself for you. Isn't it a joy to spend intimate time with the Saviour? It is the great need of the ministry today. Pastor do God's work in God's power and you never need to be discouraged.

May the Lord bless you today in the great work you have to do for Him! Do it with passion, joy, and in God's power.

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