

PART I

THE PASTOR—HIS PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

CONFLICTS WITHIN ONE'S SELF

I. **Struggle With the Call to Ministry**

- A. What Constitutes a Call?
  - 1. God calls and it may be spectacular or commonplace, but there is an inner conviction that God has placed His hand on a person for special service.
  - 2. God may call several times and confirm the call numerous times to the pastor.
  - 3. The call has little to do with external appearances but of the heart.
  - 4. Responding to the call is a willingness to leave family and possessions to follow Christ.
  - 5. The call is accompanied by a powerful anointing of the Holy Spirit.
- B. A driven person : (1) is gratified by accomplishments; (2) loves power; (3) loves success; (4) compromises integrity for success; (5) is project and goal oriented to the exclusion of people; (6) is highly competitive; (7) becomes angry at opposition, (8) is obsessed with and gives the impression of being busy; (9) seeks to control everything; (10) has a large ego but is inwardly insecure.
- C. A called person (1) knows God has called him; (2) senses he/or she is a person of destiny; (3) knows who he is in Christ and does not have to be somebody he is not; (4) understands everything has been given by God and can be taken away by God; (5) serves God for the praise of God, not men; (6) grasps he is not indispensable to God's work; (7) longs to do his best for God and does not conform to man's whims; (8) committed to do God's will at all cost, even if it diminishes his own glory; (9) is content in his ministry; (10) has a sense of joy and peace in doing ministry.

II. **Struggle With Sin** (Gal. 5:16-18; Rom. 7:13-25)

- A. The pastor will have conflict with sin (sin nature).
- B. The pastor who walks in dependence upon the Spirit will not gratify (fulfill, perform, bring to completion) the sinful desires of the flesh. It does not say he won't have desires but he will not bring them to completion.
- C. The pastor will struggle with evil thoughts (lust, sex, grudges, power, jealousy, anger, etc.). The pastor can put down the sinful desires of the sin nature if he is depending on the Spirit moment by moment.
- D. The Spirit and the sin nature are in conflict (war) so that the believer does not always do what he wants to do. Pastors sin and sometimes grievously. Conflict with sin is normal, not an abnormal experience.
- E. The sinful nature within is capable of all kinds of evil. If the pastor is not walking or living by the Holy Spirit, any sins could be committed. Sin has devastating effects on all Christians, especially the pastor. Most conflict goes on in the mind before sin is committed.
- F. Those pastors who continually and habitually do acts of the sin nature may not be saved (inherit the kingdom of God). They are hypocrites and charlatans who were never saved. If there is no desire to control the sin nature, then one should question salvation.

III. **Struggle with Satan and Demons** (Eph. 6:10-20).

- A. A pastor fights on three fronts: the world, flesh and the devil.
- B. Satan work is a murderer (John 8:44); arouses hatred (John 13:27 cf. John 6:70); accuses the brothers (Rev. 20:20); deceives (2 Cor. 11:3); impersonates light and righteousness (2 Cor. 11:13-15); hinders (1 Thess. 2:17-18); schemes (Eph. 6:11); and devours Christians (1 Pet. 5:8).
- C. Any Christian or non-Christian can be demonized, but only unbelievers can be demon possessed. Christians, even pastors, can be obsessed and highly influenced by demons but they cannot be possessed.

- D. A pastor fights Satan by resisting the devil (James 4:7, 1 Pet. 5:9); putting on the armor of God (Eph. 6:10-17); and praying (Eph. 6:18-20).

#### **IV. Struggle with the Devotional Life**

- A. A pastor must find time to worship, show devotion to and cultivate a relationship with God. Without devotion to God, the pastor will (1) lose perspective on God, (2) lack a life-giving relationship and friendship with Christ, (3) have a life of guilt and shame, (4) lose a sense of accountability to God, (5) think more highly of himself and less highly of Christ, (6) open himself to all kinds of possibilities to sin, (7) have no spiritual reserve for times of crisis.
- B. Ways to cultivate a devotional life are: (1) silence and solitude, (2) fasting, (3) observing a Sabbath rest principle, (4) listen to God, (5) memorize scripture, (6) meditate on scripture, (7) personal, private worship, (8) read devotional books, (9) read a Psalm and pray over every sentence, (10) praying with pencil and paper to write down thoughts, (11) read missionary biographies, (12) read scripture out loud, (13) pray before falling asleep and upon awaking, (14) plan time to worship with other Christians, (15) write a devotional commentary on various Psalms, (16) pray continually, (17), journal so as to remind yourself of God's goodness and loving discipline.

#### **V. Struggle with Time Management**

- A. General principles of time use are: (1) commit each day to the Lord, repenting of sin and asking God for direction; (2) pray with paper and pencil to put down thoughts; (3) do creative work at the time of day you are at your best; (4) learn to live with interruptions.
- B. Some time wasters are: (1) misplaced items; (2) lack of preparation; (3) commuting long distances to and from work; (4) misuse of the telephone; (5) unprofitable reading; (6) anxiety over things you did or did not do; (7) television; (8) talking in circles; (9) interruptions; (10) day dreaming; (11) gossiping.
- C. Some hints on time management: (1) at the beginning of each week and each day make a list of things which need to be done and prioritize; (2) write down everything and take notes if possible; (3) discourage interruptions; (4) learn to say "no"; (5) when asked to do something, never say, "yes" immediately; (6) have your own work area; (7) be relaxed and laid back; (8) be a good listener; (9) use waiting time effectively; (10) have a filing system; (11) be punctual; (12) avoid procrastination; (13) go to bed at a decent hour; (14) take afternoon naps if needed; (15) don't complain about things that need to be done; (16) read your mail once and answer immediately; (17) keep a calendar or day-timer with you; (18) get up early and get a good start on the day; (19) do your devotions the first thing in the morning; (20) recognize interruptions are divine; (21) try to think of ways to do things more efficiently; (22) guard the over-use of the telephone; (23) clear off your desk after each day's work.

## **CONFLICTS IN THE CHURCH**

### **I. Attacks On Men In The Ministry**

- A. Definition: All professions involve stress, but in the ministry men (and women) are under direct attack from the world, flesh and the devil.
- B. Direct Attacks:
1. Negative attitudes towards the pastor.
  2. Personality conflicts with the pastor.
  3. Sexual lusts towards the opposite sex.
  4. Power struggles with church leadership.
  5. Conflicts in the home between husband/wife/children.
  6. Divisions within the local church.
  7. Physical health of the pastor.
  8. Attempts to remove the pastor.
  9. Discouragement over the ministry.
  10. Depression from total discouragement.
  11. Temptation to compromise truth to please people.
- C. Subtle Attacks

1. An unhealthy concern about money.
2. An unhealthy desire to be successful.
3. An unhealthy desire to be praised by men.
4. An unhealthy view of one's importance which results in pride.
5. An unhealthy view of being busy.
6. An unhealthy view that thinks one's example is not as valuable as what one says.
7. An unhealthy view of the church where expectations are too high and one is crushed by betrayals.
8. An unhealthy view of work whereby one becomes lazy and indifferent.
9. An unhealthy understanding of God's plan whereby one becomes angry with God when things don't go as planned.
10. An unhealthy view of knowledge whereby one becomes unteachable with no desire to learn.

## II. Conflicts With People

- A. Personality Conflicts Within the Church
  1. Conflicts with the Congregation
  2. Conflicts with the Staff
  3. Conflicts within the Leadership (Elders, Deacons)
  4. Conflicts with Other Pastors
- B. How to Settle Conflicts
  1. There are Three Opportunities in Conflict (1 Cor. 10:31; 11:1)
    - a. The opportunity to glorify God.
    - b. The opportunity to serve others.
    - c. The opportunity to be like Christ.
  2. The Need for Confession (Prov. 28:13; Matt. 7:3-5)
    - a. Address all the parties involved.
    - b. Avoid words like "if" or "but" or "maybe."
    - c. Admit specifically to the accusation or sin.
    - d. Apologize with humility to the person wronged.
    - e. Accept all the consequences of your actions.
    - f. Alter your behavior immediately.
    - g. Ask the offended party for forgiveness.
  3. The Basic Steps for Resolving Conflict (Prov. 19:11; Matt. 5:23-24; 18:15-20).
    - a. Overlook minor offenses in the other person.
    - b. Talk to the person in private.
    - c. If not satisfied with the person's response, then go a second time, taking one to two others.
    - d. If there is still no satisfaction with the response, then tell it to the whole church.
    - e. If there is still no satisfactory response, then treat the person as an unbeliever.
  4. The Results of Forgiveness (1 Cor. 13:5; Eph. 4:32).
    - a. I will not think about the incident.
    - b. I will not bring the incident up and use it against the person who has been forgiven.
    - c. I will not talk to others about the incident.
    - d. I will not allow this incident to stand between the other person and me nor will I let it hinder our relationship.
  5. The Proper Way to Negotiate (Phil. 2:3-4; Eccl. 9:16).
    - a. Prepare by studying all aspects of the situation.
    - b. Always positively affirm your relationship with the other person.
    - c. Understand the other person's interests by listening very carefully.
    - d. Try always to search for creative solutions to the problem.
    - e. Evaluate all the options objectively and reasonably.
- C. How to Handle the Extreme Conflict of Antagonists
  1. Definition: An antagonist is a person who, on the basis of weak or unprovable evidence, goes out of his (or her) way to make unreasonable demands, usually attacking the person or performance of others.
  2. How to Identify an Antagonist.
    - a. They are negative, pessimistic and enjoy tearing down others.

- b. They are very self-centered and love getting personal attention.
  - c. They cry out for justice and want “to get even.”
  - d. They are inflexible, rigid and have unhealthy desires to be precise and extremely accurate.
  - e. They need to be in authority and make others submit to them.
3. How to Prevent an Antagonist from Coming to Power.
    - a. Always follow established church procedure.
    - b. Be sure the antagonist, as well as others, knows how to file a complaint in the church.
    - c. Be sure all positions in the church have a ministry description.
    - d. Do not let all the power in the church rest in one committee.
    - e. Use church discipline when necessary, for attitudes as well as actions.
    - f. Let people know what you are doing before you do it.
    - g. All the leaders in the church must be united because antagonists thrive on any friction or division.
  4. How to Relate to the Antagonist
    - a. Always act professionally with integrity.
    - b. Never try to please an antagonist.
    - c. Always be accurate in your statements.
    - d. Do not praise the antagonist to get him to like you.
    - e. Let the leadership know who the antagonists are.
    - f. Choose your battles wisely because an antagonist will fight every battle.
    - g. Guard your tongue and attitude when talking to an antagonist.
    - h. Don't seek sympathy from others about the abuse you are taking from an antagonist.
    - i. Never call for a vote of confidence.
    - j. Don't recommend counseling to an antagonist.

### III. Stress and the Ministry

- A. Definition of Stress: Improperly managed stress results in depression, emotional breakdown or pastoral burnout.
- B. The Causes for Stress
  1. Physical exhaustion brings on stress.
  2. Failure to achieve the ideal causes frustration.
  3. An unrealistic view of the pastor's importance sets up a conflict between what the Bible says and what the pastor thinks or wants.
  4. Pastors are always faced with criticism and this takes its toll on their emotions.
  5. Many pastors have a deathly fear of failure.
  6. Congregations have unrealistic expectations for the pastor (and his wife and children).
  7. Because the pastor gives much of his energy to others, he has little to give to his family, which creates great stress in the home.
  8. Pastors have a greater conflict with right and wrong and between what they know and what they actually do.
  9. Pastors deal with sickness, death and people's problems so this wears on their emotions.
  10. There is much jealousy between pastors and this causes some pastors to be disappointed with God's plan for them.
  11. Pastors often fantasize about bigger churches or bigger salaries and when it doesn't happen they are angry with God.
  12. Pastors are bitter that they make less money than others in the world who are less talented and educated.
  13. Pastors often get bogged down with excessive administration.
  14. The ministry is never finished and this frustrates some pastors.
  15. People's needs are never-ending and this drains the pastor emotionally.
  16. A pastor may not have solved his own thinking on death, sickness, growing old, etc., and he closes down when these things happen to him.
  17. Pastors often move from church to church and this causes frustration.

18. Pastors may go into depression when they experience the death of a loved one or financial crisis.
  19. Men who are Calvinistic in their theology are realists and sometimes that realism causes them to see the darker side of life.
  20. Pastors are special targets of Satanic and demonic activity.
  21. Pastors have many conflicts with people, staff, other pastors, etc., and this takes its toll emotionally.
- C. How to Recognize the Signs of Stress
1. There are physical symptoms: headache, chest pain, diarrhea, fatigue, insomnia, low sex drive, shaking, teeth chattering, cramping and aching muscles, high blood pressure, blurry eyes, etc.
  2. There are psychological symptoms: negative attitudes, lack of concentration, bored with life, running from reality, quick tempered, angry inside, blaming others, etc.
  3. There are spiritual symptoms: no desire for the Bible, mechanical prayers, aloofness from spiritual reality, wanting to quit the ministry, feeling trapped in life, etc.
- D. Cures for Stress
1. Exercise regularly.
  2. Eat a proper diet.
  3. Get adequate sleep.
  4. Get a yearly physical examination from a medical doctor.
  5. Reduce your schedule.
  6. Spend time with your family.
  7. Learn to relax and enjoy life.
  8. Have a good relationship with your spouse.
  9. Learn to laugh about life.
  10. Face your fear honestly.
  11. Surround yourself with qualified leaders.
  12. Cultivate a friendship with fellow pastors.
  13. Cultivate friends inside the church.
  14. Cultivate friendships outside the church.
  15. Develop a solid devotional life.
  16. Have set times to pray.
  17. Practice God's sovereignty every day.
  18. Get a right view of yourself.
  19. Pray for other pastors.
  20. Think positively about life.
  21. Keep positive letters and notes others send to you.
  22. Keep a diary, especially in a time of crisis.
  23. Read biographies of other pastors and missionaries.
- E. God's View Towards the Ministry
1. A pastor must do his ministry for God and not man.
  2. Men will always disappoint the pastor (Jer. 17:5).
  3. God is the final judge of one's ministry (1 Cor. 4:2-5).

#### **IV. Questionable Practices or Christian Liberty**

- A. Introduction
1. A Christian may claim, "I'm free in Christ. I'm so liberated I'm free to sin!"
  2. One must distinguish between freedom and moral law and freedom in questionable practices.
- B. Freedom and Moral Law
1. Christians are spiritually free in Christ (John 8:38)—free from the guilt, penalty and dominion of sin (Rom. 6:18), and set free from the condemnation of the Mosaic Law.
  2. Christians are still bound by the moral law of God which consists of all the moral commands of the Old Testament, Jesus and the Apostles.
  3. No Christian is free to break the moral law by lying, cheating, drunkenness, gossip, jealousy, anger, slander, bitterness, envy, hate, prejudice, murder, pre-marital sex,

- extra-marital sex, failure to keep the Lord's Day, or read the Bible, pray, tithe, witness or whatever standard the moral law sets for Christians (Rom. 6:18, 22).
4. With spiritual freedom in Christ comes responsibility and limitations. Freedom demands a different lifestyle (Rom. 6:1; Heb. 12:14).
- C. Freedom and Questionable Practices
1. Questionable practices are acts, not sinful in themselves nor specifically commanded against in Scripture, which may become sinful for individual Christians if practiced or abused.
  2. In the New Testament, there were only three questionable practices: observing Jewish religious days, drinking wine and eating meat sacrificed to idols (Rom. 14; 1 Cor. 8, 10).
  3. Modern-day questionable practices among Christians are tobacco use, alcohol, dancing, cosmetics, clothing, hair styles, television, movies, card playing, body piercing, music, etc.
  4. Questionable practices vary from culture to culture.
- D. The Weaker Brother
1. He has religious opinions based on his background which affects his conscience, prohibiting him from freely engaging in certain questionable practices because to do so would be sin.
  2. The weaker brother should never violate his conscience (Rom. 14:14; 14:23).
  3. The weaker brother (or sister) must always go by this principle: "When in doubt, don't!"
- E. The Legalistic Brother
1. He insists all Christians conform to his opinions of conscience in questionable practices.
  2. He is never to judge or bind another man's conscience (Rom. 14:10).
  3. The legalistic Christian needs to have his bound conscience freed up to enjoy all or some questionable practices, or at least tolerate those who have freedom to do things which he cannot do.
- F. The Libertine Brother
1. He abuses Christian liberty by getting as close as possible to breaking the moral law without actually doing so.
  2. He will not set aside his rights for the weaker brother.
  3. He often flaunts his liberties to make the point he is really free.
- B. The Stronger Brother
1. He appreciates his liberty in Christ and is not bound by legalistic restraints.
  2. As free, he voluntarily limits his freedom if it causes a weaker brother to stumble.
  3. The stronger brother must ask these questions:
    - a. Does this practice cause my weaker brother to stumble (1 Cor. 8:9 cf. 8:11; 10:32)?
    - b. Does the practice build up my weaker brother (1 Cor. 10:33)?
    - c. Does this practice bring me under its power (1 Cor. 6:12)?
    - d. Does this practice glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31)? Can I take Christ with me in whatever questionable practice I choose to do?
    - e. Does the practice profit (1 Cor. 10:33)? That is, does it encourage or discourage the non-Christian to come to Christ?
  4. The stronger brother may use his liberty in private without boasting of his freedom before others (Rom. 10:22).
  5. He will not destroy a weaker brother (1 Cor. 8:11) or the work of God (Rom. 14:20) for a momentary pleasure from some questionable practice.
  6. Love rules the stronger, balanced brother and he will never do any questionable practice if it will cause a brother or sister to stumble (1 Cor. 8:13).

## CONFLICT WHICH RESULTS FROM MINISTRY

### I. Relating to the Wife

#### A. Basic Facts

1. God calls men to be pastors and women to be pastor's wives.

2. A church calls a wife as well as a pastor.
  3. A pastor's wife should not be expected to do any more or any less than any other woman in the church.
  4. A pastor's wife has seasons of ministry based on family needs.
- B. Biblical Exhortations (Eph. 5:22-33)
- C. Practical Suggestions for a Happy Marriage
1. Spend quantity and quality time with your wife.
  2. Have one night a week as family night.
  3. Try to date your wife at least twice a month.
  4. Be a good listener.
  5. Help out with household chores.
  6. Treat your wife like a lady.
  7. Do not criticize your wife in public.
  8. Let your wife develop her own personality.
  9. Try to go to bed with your wife at the same time.
  10. Do not tell stories about your wife from the pulpit unless she gives permission.
  11. Do not go to sleep without solving your problems (Eph. 4:26). If you are up late one night doing ministry, then go to work a little later the next morning to spend time with your wife.
  12. Do not yell and scream at your wife.
  13. Give your wife time to do things she likes.
  14. If you get angry with your wife, get out of the room to cool off.
  15. Keep a sense of humor about your wife's idiosyncrasies.
  16. Surprise your wife sometimes.
  17. Remember birthdays, anniversaries, etc.

## II. Relating to Children

- A. Some Basic Facts
1. A pastor cannot divorce his personal life from his family life and without a solid family, he has nothing.
  2. What should it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his wife and children?
  3. Satan makes a concerted effort to destroy the marriages and families of pastors.
- B. Practical Suggestions About Relationships With Our Children
1. Be real, vulnerable and don't pretend before your children.
  2. A congregation should not expect pastor's children to do any more or any less than other children.
  3. Share the good, bad and ugly with your children, especially around the dinner table.
  4. Every child is different and needs to be trained up according to his or her particular personality and needs.
  5. Never allow children to sass, talk back or strike parents.
  6. Surround children with other adults who have the same beliefs and value system.
  7. Enjoy God before your children.
  8. Make much of culture—Christmas, Easter, holidays, etc.
  9. Do not force your children to do extra-curricular things in the church that they do not want to do.
  10. Encourage children to enjoy life, experience new things, without sinning.
  11. Read Christian and good secular literature to your children.
  12. Try to control or even eliminate television.
  13. Do not force your children to do spiritual things just because they're preacher's kids.
  14. A father and mother should do adult activities apart from the children at times.
  15. Don't have a child-centered home.
  16. Try to find a little time each day when each child will receive your individual attention.
  17. Listen to the music and fads of your children.
  18. Make one evening a week family night.
  19. Always explain to children why they are being disciplined.
  20. You don't need money but love to make a happy home.
  21. Attend events that your children are participating in.
  22. Play a lot of games with your children.

23. Open your home to your children's friends.
24. If you have an open home, you cannot have a perfectly clean house.
25. The best time to talk spiritual things with teenagers is usually late at night.
26. Don't hide your marriage problems from your children because they need to see how parents solve problems biblically.
27. Be sure to show affection.

### **III. Leaving a Church and Candidating**

#### **A. When Is It Time to Leave A Local Church?**

1. You may leave when you have clear vision as to what God wants to accomplish in your ministry, but you are hindered on every side where you are.
2. You may leave if the goals of your vision for the church have been accomplished.
3. You may leave if you feel you have taken a ministry as far as your spiritual gifting allows.
4. You may leave if you have a mystical sense that God wants you to take another ministry. The urging is strong and can't be shaken over a long period of time.

#### **C. What To Consider Before Leaving A Church**

1. God must give you release before you go—a sense of peace.
2. Feelings may be deceptive so do not make a quick decision to leave.
3. Be very cautious about leaving a solid church for a bigger church with more salary.
4. Try not to leave your present ministry until you have another ministry.
5. Difficulties, struggles or attacks don't necessarily mean it's time to leave a church.

### **IV. Setting Goals**

#### **A. Thoughts on Goal Setting**

1. Setting goals helps a pastor to move forward.
2. No goal setting is perfectly achieved.
3. All goals must be placed under the sovereignty of God and are subject to change.

B. A Desire: A desire is something we hope will happen but may not.

C. A Goal: A goal is something that can be attained and objectively measured.

D. Objectives: Objectives are measurable planned steps to achieve the goal.